

test to be applied in the way of dictation from ordinary matter for five consecutive minutes.

By section 4, certificates under the Act shall be retained until the holder be convicted of any criminal offence, or until he acts dishonestly or with gross negligence in his duties as a stenographer, or against the interests of the profession, in any of which cases he may have his certificate forfeited or suspended by the board.

By section 5, the certificates are to be sealed with the seal of the association and to be signed by the president and secretary.

By section 6, the secretary must furnish the prothonotaries with lists of certificate holders under the Act.

Section 7 provides that certificated stenographers shall certify the depositions under an oath of office, and that they shall hand the depositions to the prothonotaries, who shall pay the stenographers their fees monthly, and secure same by deposits from the attorneys at the commencement of the evidence in cases, and that the rate of stenographers' fees shall not be changed without the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in council.

By section 8 the prothonotaries must not allow uncertificated persons to practise stenography in the courts; but, under pain of committal for contempt of court, no certificated stenographer shall refuse his services in a case without reasonable cause.

Section 9 inflicts a penalty on any person practising as a law court stenographer unless he has a certificate; and it provides that he shall not recover payment for such stenographic work.

The promoters of the Act gave the usual newspaper and *Official Gazette* notices of intention to apply for the Act; they drew up the Bill above summarized; they framed a petition in support of it, and got such petition signed by the leading Queen's Counsel and barristers of Montreal; and, with a view to strengthening it still further, they endeavored to get the endorsement of the judges. Meanwhile, however, a strong opposition manifests itself. This opposition is brought to bear by the incompetent men and their patrons, augmented by certain so-called stenographers who are employed in certain law offices at small salaries under terms by which a so-called stenographer,—in addition to performing ordinary office work,—acts as a court stenographer in his employer's cases, and, instead of personally taking the stenographic fees earned in such cases, allows them to pass into the coffers of his employer.

These opponents of the movement for improvement went so far as to break in upon the meetings of the newly organized association; and, by virtue of their numbers, they professed to take charge of and control such meetings, and passed resolutions,—subsequently publishing the same,—condemnatory of all attempts to bring about a change. In the midst of all this, certain of the judges, to whom the association's proposals for improvement were submitted, declared themselves neutral in the matter. About the same

time the Montreal Bar were holding meetings in connection with their proposed Act for amending procedure, and, on the understanding that the system of taking evidence by stenography would be dealt with and improved in the new Procedure Act, the Law Stenographers' Association agreed to withdraw their bill for incorporation, at all events for the time being.

During the past winter, the subject of stenography has again come up at some of the meetings held by the Montreal Bar for considering the means of improving the administration of justice in the Province of Quebec; and it is now generally understood that suggestions will be submitted to the Local House during the present session with a view to some improvement. The general impression is that there will be official appointments on some similar basis to that so successfully adopted and carried out in Ontario. If, however, the present session of the Quebec Legislature should pass by without any action being taken in the matter, it will certainly be in order for the Quebec Law Stenographers' Association to press forward their bill for incorporation at the next session.

A BAD BREAK—WITH A LESSON.

A Washington despatch to the *Chicago Tribune* contains an interesting and instructive account of a huge shorthand task undertaken without the requisite preliminary precautions, resulting, as might be expected, in disappointment to both parties to the contract. The despatch says:—

"Another of Speaker Keifer's official acts has had an unfortunate result. Some days ago he removed the official stenographer to committees, Mr. Hayes, who had held that position for a number of years, and appointed a man named Dawson. The matter created a little stir at the time, and it will be remembered the venerable Alexander Stephens introduced a resolution, which is now being considered by the Judiciary Committee, inquiring into the authority of the Speaker to make the removal. Keifer's excuse was that Hayes was the stenographer of the Associated Press, and as such was not the proper person to hold the confidential position of committee stenographer. Dawson was assigned to take the report of the proceedings and testimony in the Shipherd investigation, although there appears to have been some doubt in the minds of members of the committee as to his ability to make a proper report, and it is an open secret that one member (Belmont, of New York) personally employed Mr. Hayes to make a report for his (Belmont's) use, because of fear that Dawson was unequal to the task. This morning the printed report of testimony made from Dawson's notes was submitted to the committee, and was found to be grossly inaccurate—"worse than useless," as one member expressed it. Shipherd first called attention to it, and declined to proceed with his testimony unless it was properly recorded. Rice, Blount, Belmont, and