

potent an influence upon the conduct of members of other professions? My question has special allusion to the practice, which so frequently and so obviously "sticks out" of some of our magazines, of shorthand writers and would be journalists writing elaborate biographical puffs of themselves, and indulging in such nauseating self-glorification that if written of them by even another's pen it ought to sicken those possessed of a particle of modesty or self-respect. This degrading practice has long been common on "the other side," though it has only been indulged in to any extent by the veriest of amateurs, who either were hopeless of attaining in any other way the notoriety for which they thirsted, or lacked the patience to acquire it by more legitimate means. Canadian shorthand writers, I am glad to say, have hitherto shown too much good sense and self-respect to descend to such self-beslobbering, and whenever the disposition has manifested itself among us it has only been by weeds of foreign growth. Now the appearance of this practise here is, to my mind, one strong reason among others why shorthand writers should unite in a purely Canadian organization—one which ought to be so broad and so homogenous that it may take cognizance, not merely of rates, tariffs and the like, but of the professional conduct of its members. I believe it is a fact that some men—known to themselves at least as very distinguished journalists, scions of aristocratic stock and stenographic Admirable Crichtons—have actually paid for the administration to themselves of this self-prepared "taffy"—this "cheap and nasty" gratification of morbid vanity. If this is a fact, Mr. Editor, don't you think the whole question is one which might profitably be discussed in your columns?

Yours truly, STENOGRAPH.

GOING TOO FAST!

To the Editor of the WRITER:

DEAR SIR,—On being asked once by a city clergyman to estimate his speed, I carefully took his measure and set him down at 140, but he smiled and informed me that he never exceeded 125 by the hour, as he had taken pains to ascertain. Nor would he believe that the 'cloth' in general much exceeded that figure. However that may be, many of our best reporters, including those of Congress, find it necessary to maintain an average speed of 150, taking one speaker with another, fluctuating, in all likelihood, from 125 to 175, or over. What some of these gentlemen might do on a test case, we have no means of knowing. But here comes Mr. Thos. Pray, jr., with an average, on a long stretch, of 196 words per minute, giving him a range, it may be, of 171 to 221 words. I am trying to be fair, sir. It is clear that no 125 words of lawyer or witness would meet the requirements—not even for ten minutes, or who on earth could talk fast enough to let him catch up? As regards speed, Mr. Pray stands in the same relation to the majority of our best reporters that those gentlemen do to their

amanuenses. That was a most remarkable achievement and, so far as I know stands unrivalled. And in Graham's system, too. What says Mr. D. L. S.—b? Not only so, but Mr. Pray attributes Mr. Read's supposed defeat partly at least to that gentleman's inability to write the "Standard;" and, though that bright idea may cause a merry ripple all along the line, yet there's no getting over the fact that the swiftest known writer in the world is "a valiant *Standard*-bearer."

The "baker's dozen" story will bear "boiling down" to little or nothing. That, I fear, is the kind of talk that made King David declare in his wrath that *all* men were liars. He might well have added—merely by way of rounding out the sentence—that reporters were no exception. We have all done too much in that line in the past. Let us now settle down to facts and stop watches.

Yours truly,

OUTSIDER.

Cantonsville, Md., Aug. 10.

THE COMING CONVENTION.

To the Editor of the WRITER:

The International Shorthand Writers' Convention will meet at the Palmer House, Chicago, on Thursday September 1st, 1881, at 9 a. m. All shorthand writers in the United States and Canada are earnestly invited to attend. Arrangements are also being made for a banquet on the evening of the 1st, at which there will be a rare feast of toasts and responses. The object of the convention is to effect an organization to advance the interest of shorthand in the United States and Canada.

The following are some of the questions that have been asked us concerning the convention and organization:—

"In what way can a general organization benefit the Law Stenographers?" "Will the large and increasing army of shorthand writers engaged as amanuenses, be profited by organization, and can such an organization in any way affect the demand for, and pay of amanuenses?" "Will the subject of a universal system of shorthand receive consideration, and is it practicable?" "Can a convention or organization assist in establishing practicable schools for teaching shorthand?" "What should be the standard of admission to membership in the organization, and should there be a graded membership?"

Correspondence in relation to these, or any other matters of interest to convention or organization, will be gladly received and considered. The committee having charge of arrangements for the convention, wish to know as early as possible, the names and addresses of all shorthand writers who expect to attend the convention. Arrangements are being made with the various railroad lines leading to Chicago, to give reduced rates to shorthand writers attending the convention.

Communications on the subject may be addressed to

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