

Should the subject meet with the reception which its importance and utility deserve, I shall hereafter examine which is the best method of teaching the art, believing, as I do, that many people are afraid to venture upon the study of Phonography, under the mistaken notion of its being far more difficult than it really is.

For many years after the creation, the human family was so small that all its members were either under one head in one spot, or so near together and their wants so few that artificial means of communication were not necessary; yet, at a very early date, remarkable events had taken place of which the people of that time desired to keep a record; a very rude and simple but efficacious plan for perpetuating the remembrance of such few remarkable events was devised, which was to make a pile of stones, more or less high, on the spot of the occurrence and all that was necessary was to attach a legend to the pile which being transmitted orally from father to son became a tradition, a part of the nation's records: the altar at the passage of the Jordan and the Tower of Babel were illustrations of this.

After the dispersion, men multiplied and wars commenced. Strong men became leaders or chiefs and invaded neighbouring villages, Towns or Provinces, who, after great victories to consolidate their conquests, or to inspire terror in their opponents, sent messengers to other places with a sort of carved work on bark and such like substance representing a man of enormous stature followed by a multitude of men and horses who crushed every thing beneath their feet as a warning of what those who dared resist might expect at the hands of the conqueror. Also when it was desired to perpetuate the memory of a great conqueror, or other great man, they would engrave upon stone, &c., representations of the most remarkable actions of his life; these in the case of several of the heroes of antiquity were so numerous that it became necessary to abridge in some manner the representation of them. This was accomplished by engraving only the most prominent or conspicuous part of the men, animals, &c., coupled with emblems only of their actions, as a hand in the act of striking with a sword for a warrior, or filled with heads of grain for a man of peace and plenty. Here we find the origin of hieroglyphics.

The increasing numbers of the people rendered it necessary to frame laws for their guidance and for the protection of life and property. As it was of the greatest importance that these laws should be permanent like those of the "Medes and Persians," the lawmakers were obliged to find some means for their preservation as promulgated; and as necessity was then, as she still is, the "Mother of Invention" so we find the formation of a regular language and the adoption of certain signs, which in themselves meant nothing but by mutual consent were made vehicles to the sight, of words which were themselves but signs of ideas; here we have writing by means of points of different forms for pens and dyes for ink, this, with but little alteration for hundreds of years, was the only means of communication from one country to another and the only way in which the acts and sayings of learned men or the discoveries in science, &c., could be transmitted to posterity. From pastoral the habits of men had become warlike, from warlike agricultural. This in its turn gave rise to commerce, which, requiring a certain amount of education caused people to enquire if it was not possible to make this education somewhat more easy of acquisition than by the then usual methods. This was solved by the invention of the printing

press and movable types in the latter half of the fifteenth century.

These latter inventions operated such a radical change in the habits of the civilized nations that one would scarcely believe that his ancestors of that time were of the same race if he could see them exactly as they lived in their day. Then men awoke to a knowledge of their rights—they felt that it was not an idle saying that all men were equal before their maker—that the monarch himself and all the members of the government from the Prime minister to the messenger—all lived on the labours of the people and as a natural consequence they felt that they had an interest in the public weal and a desire to know who, in the deliberative assemblies of the nation, really advocated those measures which conduce to its real interests; for that purpose they patronized those newspapers which gave the fullest account of parliamentary proceedings. These in turn feeling that their very existence depended on their proving equal to the task imposed upon them by the public, employed men who by means of contractions, &c., contrived to give their employers, not a *verbatim* report of the speeches, but a more or less complete digest or synopsis of the most important of them. But the utterances of public men, lectures on scientific subjects, &c., were too precious to allow a single word of them to fall unnoticed or unrecorded, and this led to stenography.

As this introductory article has become much longer than I had intended I shall reserve for my next the consideration of the different systems of short hand writing.

## THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

QUEBEC, JULY AND AUGUST, 1877.

Died on Tuesday, the 17th of July, at New-York, whither he had gone on a visit in the early part of the late vacation, *The Hon. Mr. Justice Sanborn*, a member of the Protestant Committee of the Quebec Council of Public Instruction.

Died on the 8th ultimo, at Lennoxville, *The Rev Jasper Hume Nicolls*, D. D., Principal of Bishop's College.

Each of the above named lamented gentlemen, had, during the past 30 years, taken an active interest in Public Education. Obituary notices are given in this number of the Journal.

### The Provincial Exhibition of 1877.

Our readers are aware that the opening of the Exhibition takes place on the 18th instant, at the City of Quebec. It was intimated by the Superintendent in his last annual report that the Department of Public Instruction might take some part on the occasion, and, as this has been decided upon, it is most desirable that this first attempt should be crowned with success, so as to afford, in the exhibit made, a fair illustration of our school system in respect of its distinctive features and