

EDITORIAL ITEMS—SHORT HAND WRITERS.

deciding as to the conduct of a professional man thirteen years ago, a matter which the profession even were not agreed upon at the time the events took place. We should not have been surprised if, instead of a nominal verdict for the plaintiff, they had agreed to disagree, though at the same time we are glad that their verdict may be taken as clearing the plaintiff, a legal gentleman now occupying a high position, of any complicity in proceedings which showed every unfair conduct to certain of his brethren who were upholding on behalf of their order, a high standard of professional feeling and conduct. The promptitude of the jury however, in coming to a conclusion, and their simple earnest belief in their capacity to decide such a knotty matter would seem, if technical difficulties could be got rid of, to point them out to an admiring profession as a desirable adjunct to the Law Society.

In small communities where everybody knows everybody else's business, where the prominent lawyers are, as a rule, prominent public men, and where legal matters are more or less mixed up with public matters, there is a manifest difficulty in conducting a legal journal with that freedom of thought and expression that is desirable. We have hitherto erred on the safe side, and we hope to keep our character for calmly discussing legal matters with a scrupulous avoidance of anything approaching to political matters. We mention these things as a reason for having on various occasions declined to discuss subjects which, though legitimate objects of discussion in a legal journal, were in the eyes of many of more importance in other ways. For example, it was difficult to touch the law of libel when libel suits by the score have been brought by or against prominent political partisans, without touching forbidden

ground. It would not have been out of our legitimate province to discuss the mode in which Crown Counsel should conduct public prosecutions, a subject which in fact engaged the attention of the Court of Queen's Bench on a recent occasion, and whether under the circumstances of that case the Crown had a right to order jurors to stand aside. We might have remarked upon the fact that the liberty of the press had often run into license, and that juries had unequivocally set their faces against such things by generally giving verdicts for plaintiffs. We might have discussed whether it is professional for a solicitor to take business coupled with certain restrictions as to remuneration, and whether exception could be taken to the conduct of one professional man to another, under circumstances brought out (whether wisely or not, is none of our business) in a recent case, and which arose out of a story long forgotten, the revival of which could serve no good purpose.

Some of our correspondents will, perhaps, on reflection, better understand our silence on these and kindred matters.

SHORT HAND WRITERS.

In every Governmental department, in other departments of public service, in the office of every manager of any important railway company, in offices of lawyers, bankers, mercantile men, manufacturers, &c., whether in England, the United States or Canada, are to be found labour-saving and time-saving machines, in the shape of short-hand writers. The courts of law, where they would be eminently useful, are alone without them.

The employment of stenographers is daily becoming more common. Where they have once been established they have become a necessity. In most of the courts in England and the United States