

H. C. LAMBERT.—Aged 21: learned Graham's system at the age of 13, and has for the past six years been employed by Tinsley & Morgan, of Syracuse.

F. J. MORGAN.—Is 31 years old; was born and has always lived in Syracuse; received an academic education; learned Graham's system in 1870; went into partnership with C. G. Tinsley in 1872, and they have since been the official stenographers for the fifth Judicial Court.

REPORTING IN THE LAW COURTS.

BY GEORGE EYEL.

THE adoption by the Law Society of Ontario of a system of short-hand reporting in the Superior Courts of the Province has thus far been regarded as little more than an experiment; but the system has proved so successful notwithstanding its imperfections, that its gradual extension to other courts may be confidently expected; while a return to the slow, cumbrous, and old-fashioned method of recording evidence which preceded it is an alternative that can scarcely be desired by the most conservative member of the legal profession. The saving of the time of the judges, counsel, witnesses, jurors and court officers, and the immense consequent saving in the actual cost in the administration of justice; the economizing of judicial labor, and the greater accuracy which the use of shorthand ensures in the recording of evidence are advantages which have been so clearly demonstrated in favor of the system that they have evoked for it from judges and others—some of whom at first either openly opposed or dubiously tolerated the change—the most unqualified expressions of approval. But while its advantages have been made manifest during the short period it has been in operation, its imperfections, though chiefly confined to matters of detail, are of sufficient importance to merit attention. The lawyer asks a long question, or rather lays down a series of affirmative propositions involving considerations of time, place, minute details of conversations and the succession of circumstances, and winds up by categorically interrogating the witness as to the truth or falsity of the narrative. The court stenographer, while the question is proceeding, is probably sharpening his pencil; but so soon as the witness begins his reply, he immediately sets to work as best he may, mentally to construct and manually to record a narrative which shall be, barring perjury, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Meanwhile, his learned friend who, like time and tide waits for no man, is firing at the distracted witness another section of the testimony given in direct examination, more or less amplified from a fertile imagination, involving another set of circumstances, and to the reporter, another process of dove-tailing questions and answers; and the mind of the unfortunate

stenographer, to say nothing of his pencil, is going through the very multiplex operation of "taking" it all in narrative form for the information and guidance of counsel and the full court in term! The matter is more serious than may appear at the first glance; for not merely questions of property or of civil rights, but questions of life or death may depend upon the accuracy with which the reporter is able to record testimony under circumstances which render absolute accuracy almost an impossibility. The truth is that a thoroughly efficient system of official shorthand reporting implies not merely the taking but the transcription of the evidence in the form of question and answer, by reporters who are competent for the work. The testimony in parliamentary investigations, which are usually of far less immediate and serious moment to the individual and society, is invariably so reported; so, too, is the evidence in the law courts of the United States. But in order to have this done, it is incumbent on counsel when examining witnesses to see that they do not violate the conditions under which alone such a result is possible. The work of the reporter must be recognized as a part of the work of the court; counsel should conduct examinations with an eye to all questions as well as all the answers being taken down, and the limits of stenography as a means of recording spoken language should be observed.

THE USE OF SHORTHAND.

THERE is one reason above all others why young persons should learn shorthand, and that reason is that in a very few years every individual who cannot read and write shorthand will be behind the times. The progress of phonography during the past few years has been such that we may safely predict that the use of longhand in our own every-day correspondence will become the exception and not the rule in a comparatively short time. Many people are prevented from learning shorthand by the erroneous idea that it is a system of writing adapted only to the wants of the professional reporter. There could not be a greater mistake than this. It is true the old systems of shorthand were used only by professional reporters. These old systems were based generally on the Roman alphabet, and followed that alphabet, right or wrong, in all its erratic whims. The consequence was that these systems were for the most part so imperfect that reporters were unable to read one another's notes. Not so with phonography. This is a system of writing based on purely scientific principles and is as well adapted to the wants of the man of literature, the man of science and the letter-writer as it is to the reporter, while it is as legible as ordinary longhand. Phonography does look a little complicated to those who know nothing of it, but it is an established fact that any person of average intelligence can master it."—*Phonetic Journal*.