

tions. Should he possess the traits of neatness and carefulness his shorthand will bear evidence of the fact. His 's will be upright, his half-length characters the proper size, and he will be particular as to his punctuation points. If he be of a nervous, dashing, disposition, his outlines will in all probability be large, inclined slightly forward, and made with an eye to speed more than to accuracy. So with all the various types of character. Diviners of character from handwriting would have an easier task if everybody wrote shorthand. The use of contractions and abbreviated outlines is another way in which the tendency to vary from book forms manifests itself, and I think their plentiful use—or the reverse—depends quite as much upon the taste and temperament of the writer as upon his acquaintance with them, or even upon the rate at which he finds it necessary to write. Beginners generally take more kindly to abbreviations than do advanced phonographers, from the idea that they will thus be enabled to increase their speed. Their expectations are not always realized, for, as a rule, the shorter an abbreviation the more difficult it is to form, and the greater the mental strain to recall it without hesitation. It is a truism that legibility ought to be considered in note-taking quite as much as speed, and the aim of the reporter should be to discover by what means he can enhance the former without decreasing the latter. If he possess manual dexterity rather than a retentive memory, he will in all probability find it to his advantage to discard the use of contractions to a very great extent. But should the opposite be the case, a contracted style of writing will be an evident gain, as the necessary abbreviations will occur to him without any appreciable effort, and from his ready recognition of them, he need lose no time in transcribing.

The size of the characters is another point upon which shorthand writers vary widely, from the microscopic outline of the Scotch minister, who could indite a sermon upon a single page, to the sprawling hieroglyphics of the reporter who has to skip every alternate line in his notebook to get elbow-room. The rate at which characters are formed in many cases determines their size, and they are enlarged or lessened according to the idiosyncracies of the writer. Under the influence of a burst of speed the methodical man will contract his outlines and take his pencil more closely under control, while his dashing neighbour is tearing away with all his characters at double-size, in the endeavour after the greatest possible scope and freedom.

Phraseography, the use of vowels in practical reporting, and some other points, with regard to which the practice of reporters varies, may, together with those I have already mentioned, be safely left to the discretion of the individual phonographer. The learner will find it to his advantage to carefully ascertain what are his strong and what his weak points, and mould his style accordingly. He will find the necessities of his own temperament the best guide to the formation of a swift and legible style of note-

taking, bearing in mind that the best style to him is the one which he can write most rapidly and read most easily. If, after he has thoroughly acquainted himself with the system he has adopted, and tested himself in the various ways of writing it, he finds one particular method peculiarly suited to himself, he should not hesitate to make it his own, though it may differ widely from the style of his text-book. In the underlying principles of his system he may not be able to make any advantageous alterations, but speed lies in the details, and as to these he should allow no cast-iron rule to prevent him from adopting what he has proven to be good.

PHRASEOGRAPHY.

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(Concluded.)

NEARLY two years ago a discussion of the comparative merits of what were called the new and the old vowel scales—viz., that in which *ee* was written in the first position, and *ah* in the third, and that according to which the positions of those vowels are reversed—was for some time carried on in the columns of *Brown's Phonographic Monthly*, published in New York; and in the course of the controversy one writer gave a table showing the distribution of 13,600 words among the three positions according to the accented vowel of each word to be as follows:—

	BY THE OLD SCALE.	BY THE NEW SCALE.
1st Position	6,000.	3,850.
2nd "	4,650.	4,650.
3rd "	2,950.	5,100.
	13,600.	13,600.

From this showing the editor of the periodical in question drew the inference that a disadvantage accrued from the use of the new vowel scale because it placed more words in the third position than in the first, while, on the other hand, more than a counterbalancing advantage attended the use of the old scale because by it more words are placed in the first position than are accorded to the third position by the new scale. I did not myself give the matter much thought at the time; but a consideration of it recently has led me to a conclusion quite in the opposite direction to that of the editor of the *Phonographic Monthly*.

Whichever vowel scale is used, the normal starting point for each outline—as I have already pointed out—is the height of a T-stroke above what is called "the line of writing." In cases in which the initial stroke is written upward it commences at the line of writing and extends the length of a T-stroke upward in a direction inclined to the right. As horizontals do not carry the hand either up or down, except to the slight extent necessary in the making of the curved signs, and as the bearing of horizontals used in word signs on the point which it is my present aim to illustrate is about the same whichever vowel scale is employed, they may be