

Q.—Is there any call for beginners who are only capable of taking down about sixty or seventy words per minute?—W. T. S. A.—No. But young, pushing fellows don't wait for a "call"—they offer their services to publishers as reporters, and to professional stenographers as amanuenses, not asking salary. In such positions they soon work up speed, and in due time the "call" comes, and they step into the elevator and are carried upward.

Q.—Is not Benn Pitman's system used more by phonographers than any other?—W. T. S. A.—It is stated that it is used by three-fourths of the writers in the United States; but it is impossible to give exact statistics. We feel quite safe in saying that Benn is not at the head of the list of popular authors, taking the world over. This is not the fault of the system, but arises from the fact that its author is practically out of the business, and has published no phonographic literature except text-books. Benn's system is used by nearly all the reporters, and by a great many amanuenses, at Washington,—so we are informed by a resident at the capitol.

A correspondent suggests that the International Association should have a solemn initiatory ceremony. Certainly; but perhaps most of the candidates will find it solemn enough when they have to write 750 words in five minutes!

C. W. P. asks how to improve in speed. He used to have a person read to him, but has no reader now, and has gone back. He writes Benn Pitman, has some knowledge of Graham, and can read a good deal of Isaac Pitman. He won't give up Benn, however, unless for a universal system. We advise him to practice at public meetings, and not to be anxious to master the different systems all at once.

On page 54, last month, the first line of the second column should have been at the top of the first column. The printer did not "strike his combinations properly," and so gave a too practical turn to the argument of the article.

Q.—How is it, that writers of the different systems must quarrel so among themselves?—E. D. S. A.—There is no reason why they *must*, and as a matter of fact they *don't*. The publications to which you allude do not represent the "writers of different systems." They represent simply the narrow and selfish views of their respective publishers. Go to a convention of "writers" and you will find nothing but harmony and sincere good-fellowship, and it will be impossible for you to tell, from anything said, what "different systems" are represented. If you now wish to alter your question and ask why "publishers of journals representing different systems must quarrel so among themselves," we would remind you that unregenerate human nature is dreadfully selfish and arrogant, and that those who feel that they *must* quarrel are—well rather *musty*.

A young man in Philadelphia went crazy over phonography, and killed his mother.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Mr. T. Wm. Bell writes a lengthy and vigorous reply to "Outsider," in which he affirms that the statement crediting Mr. Thos. Pray, Jr., of Boston, with having written 14,300 words in 73 minutes "comes from a gentleman whose standing in the journalistic world gives to his utterances sufficient weight to render them capable of resisting something more than the puny efforts of 'Outsider's' pea-shooter." Mr. Bell asks "Outsider's" authority for the statement that Mr. Reed's defeat was partly attributable to his inability to write the "Standard." Finally, Mr. B. questions "Outsider's" knowledge of the Scripture when he speaks of David in his *wrath* declaring that all men were liars.

We hope to be enabled, by the hearty co-operation of the fraternity, to introduce valuable improvements in the make-up of the *Writer* at the beginning of the coming year. There will be only three issues more in 1881, and suggestions are therefore in order *now*. The proposition of Mr. E. D. Synder in the July number, that the printed matter of the *Writer* be doubled for twice the subscription price, is well worth consideration. There is no doubt that double the space could be filled each month with "live" matter; and if the present subscribers are willing to have the price doubled, we have not much fear that future subscribers would see a full two-dollars' worth in a 24-page monthly. Let those now on our list speak out.

In the re-arrangement of our premises, which the demands of our consolidated printing and publishing business rendered necessary, we have not been unmindful of the wants and wishes of our phonographic customers and constituents; and we are happy in being able to offer the use of a room for the meetings of the Canadian Shorthand Writers' Association, when that organization has sufficiently resuscitated to need such accommodation. We are pleased to note that the President is in sympathy with the frequently expressed desire for a real, live Association for Canada. There are a few obstacles to overcome, but they are not such as to discourage. If the professionals are willing to move, the organization can be effected on a workable basis. We pledge voice and pen in behalf of the organization, which should be effected in time for the winter season.

"True ease in writing comes from art, not chance." The poet referred to literary labour, though the sentiment is equally true of shorthand writing. A contributor submits the following as containing in brief form the essential rules for literary composition:—

CONNECT

Brief essays explaining and extending the principles summarized in this formula are invited. The best one will be published, with the author's name appended.