

Communications.

"PROTECTIONIST" ANSWERED.

LONDON, 16th March, 1880.

To the Editor of the SHORTHAND WRITER :

DEAR SIR:—I am a student of Phonography, and read your journal with great interest, having received many practical lessons by reading the various articles contributed to it by experienced men, but I must certainly take objection to a letter in your last by one signing himself "Protectionist," as I cannot understand his object any further than that of discouraging those who are already struggling to attain a point of usefulness in this valuable art. He says that students who write 75 words per minute exclude better men from their rightful positions; if this statement is to be credited, shorthand should not claim the value as is attributed to it, when mere amateurs can satisfactorily fill the positions that are designated by him, professional positions. Now, in my estimation the shorthand amanuensis is a distinct branch of the business apart from the reporting, &c., for many reasons. In the first place the speed is not required, it not being necessary for business men generally to go beyond 100 words per minute in their dictation, and even a less rate is found very admissible and of great value to many; in the second place, an amanuensis having to write from dictation does not require to be such an expert with the language as a professional reporter must necessarily be. Viewing it from this standpoint then, does it seem reasonable that we students, when having acquired sufficient of the art to fill such a position, should be excluded from its use, practically, until we have attained to a speed far beyond its requirements.

I say we must first be amateurs and do amateurs' work before taking our stand amongst the profession.

All the protection we require, and we have it now, is the perseverance, study, and other essential elements that are required to master it, whether with or without an instructor; all have the fullest right to enjoy its benefit, the main object being to satisfy our employers in the capacity we have undertaken. If "Protectionist" is a professional, for I would infer from his letter that he is, it is then not much to the credit of the value of the art, or else to his ability, that he should in this way be clamoring for protection, it lowers the scale of its usefulness to the outside world. I have been studying now 7 months and can take down at the rate of 75 words per minute, but I have studied very diligently to reach that in that time, and hope soon to enjoy its fruits provided I am not one of the "doubtful ones" that our friend speaks of.

Hoping the seed that he thought was going to be so beneficial to the fraternity will have lost its vitality.

I remain, yours very respectfully,
ASPIRANT.

MR. G. R. BISHOP EXPLAINS.

No. 39 Wall St., New York, Feb. 24, 1881.

Finding on p. 11, of *Browne's Phonographic Monthly* for Jan., 1881, what purports to be an abstract of remarks made by me at the meeting of the N. Y. City Law Stenographer's Association, held on Dec. 30, 1880, which abstract not only seriously misrepresents both my language and my meaning, but injuriously reflects on the writing and ability to readily read their writing, of Stenographers whom I highly esteem not only for their proficiency as Stenographers but for their personal qualities, I feel impelled, especially on account of the wrong which the publication, uncorrected, might do to these gentlemen, to call the attention of Stenographers, and of any others whom it may interest, to the following which is a copy of a letter I have this day mailed to the publisher of the *Monthly*. I assume that the document will explain itself:

Very resp'y,
GEO. R. BISHOP.

[Copy of Letter.]

No. 39 Wall St., N. Y., Feb'y 24, 1881.

MR. BROWNE:

DEAR SIR:—I have just seen a copy of the *Monthly* for January ult. My remarks, in calling up the new President at our meeting at 130 Broadway, seem to have got badly distorted in their progress from oral utterance to your pages. The list of words given as possible readings of the sign for *snifter* contains only two of the 15 or 20 that I gave, all the rest being words that I neither mentioned nor thought of; and my reference to some difficulties that might be encountered by an unskilled es-ayer of the forms which Mr. Graham says the "advanced reporter" may with safety use, has been turned into a serious reflection on the legibility of the phonography written by Mr. Graham, and those who adopt his modifications of Pitman. In the face of the fact that probably the readiest reader of stenographic notes among the best known law stenographers of the City is the one who writes the Graham system (so called) most closely, adhering to it with scarcely a deviation, I should not have made, and did not make, any such statement, or imply any such meaning, as what purports (at p. 11) to be an abstract of my remarks, indicates. You will certainly see the propriety of correcting the error.

Yours, &c.,
(Signed.) GEO. R. BISHOP.