

printed matter is now composed, he would have won undying renown. These processes for engraving shorthand are slow, costly and cumbrous. Is there no inventive genius who will take some standard system and modify it to meet this new development called for by the hosts of phonographic readers? The mechanical execution of the book is first-class, and the arrangement of the material is good. The author introduces the shaded strokes at the beginning of the book, as illustrated in our October number, but gradually dispenses with them as he proceeds. This inductive method is employed throughout. There are some confusing illustrations, such as the words *true*, *crew*, *unscrew*, being written with a diphthong of the *yoo* series, as in the word *few*. Is this a "modern" twist? These words are pronounced *troo*, *kroo*, and *unskoo* on this side of the line. The author states clearly and briefly a most important principle in this sentence:—"Nothing gives a stenographer the ability to write an outline with ease and rapidity like a knowledge at the time of writing it that it will be readily legible." This syllogism sweeps away all the sophisticated cobwebs of contracted outlines put forth for brevity alone. In accordance with this truth, a list is given comprising only 160 word-signs, referred to by Mr. Skot in his letter published in the WRITER last month. The other words of the language are to be read by peculiarity of outline. The words *did*, *do*, *had*, are represented by the *T* stroke above, on and through the line respectively—the old vowel scale, *ee*, *a*, *ah*, being adopted. Some new adaptations of curves and ticks have been introduced. The second long dash vowel *o* as in *roam* is written *parallel* to the consonant stem to distinguish it from *u*, as in *rum*, which is written in the usual method, at right angles to the stem. This expedient is not new, having been adopted by Andrews and Boyle as far back as 1847, and later by Marsh. Mr. Thornton extends this principle of distinction to consonants of the *pl* and *pr* series by striking the vowel through the stem *obliquely* if long and at *right angles* if short.

A small hook inside the large shon nook adds *f* read as *of*, as in *confusion of*. A large final hook on straight hooks adds *ter*, or *der*, and the small hook inside this large one adds *n* as in *better than* (*b-shon-n*). *I* and *the* are represented by an oblique tick at the beginning of the next word. The word *or* in such a clause as *May or June* would be indicated by writing the phonographic form for June below that for

May,—a very convenient plan, which applies also to figures. In a phrase such as *did he*, the author allows the form *d-s-r* (up) to be used, as it does not conflict with others.

We have thus briefly touched upon what we consider the salient features of this new scheme, the author of which might properly exclaim, in the words of the poet, slightly modified—

"Man wants but little here below,
And wants that little *light*."

It may be admitted as a mechanical principle, as expressed by Mr. Munson, and expanded by Mr. Thornton, that "increase of speed is attended with decrease of force, and, therefore, that all stems should be written as light as consistent with legibility." It may also be "so apparent that a plain system can be written with a greatly increased rapidity, that it is hardly worth while to demonstrate it." And yet we venture to suggest that the other axiom quoted from Mr. Thornton himself, as to ease and rapidity in writing resulting from confidence in legibility, will commend itself to many stenographers who have studied the *science* of phonography. The shaded systems have the double advantage, as pointed out by the inventor of phonography—(1) the memory is not burdened with a multitude of signs, and (2) the mind perceives that the thin strokes correspond with the light articulation and the thick stroke with the heavy articulation. On the first of these points Mr. Thornton's system is at fault, for it provides *new* forms for words which should be shaded, rather than make them as they should consistently be made. This departure from the pure phonetic basis results in the positive disadvantage of additional forms, which burden the memory, and the negative disadvantage of the loss of the phonetic mnemonic. The book is therefore to that extent unorthodox, and puzzling to students; but to professional stenographers we can confidently recommend it as furnishing valuable information and hints. The argument of numbers is against this, as it is against all new methods; and students who take up Thornton's method would require to discard the special forms when corresponding with writers of other systems. If friend Thornton had compromised the matter by adopting Pitman's, Graham's, or Munson's system, and adapted them to his new ideas, we would have thought the millennium might be near at hand; but these departures from the beaten and well-tried paths confuse and