

good of shorthand humanity. Logically, friend Wodell should object to the teaching in schools of music—lest professional musicians be knocked “out of tune”; of book-keeping, lest bookers lose their “balance”;—nay, he must object to education of every kind and degree, lest educators be forced to abandon their work of “teaching the young idea how to shoot,” and—shoot themselves in desperation. *Reductio ad absurdum!*—ED.]

“FAC-SIMILE” NOTES.

To the Editor of the Shorthand Writer.

SIR,—I have no doubt that some shorthand writers will pronounce the *fac-simile* notes of Mr. Watters, published in the August number of the WRITER (which, by the way, owing perhaps to some freak of the Post Office, reached me only two months late), very slovenly and ill shapen, and compared with the outlines of the text-books, perhaps they are open to such a charge. But to most verbatim reporters, I fancy, these very qualities are the most convincing proofs that Mr. Watters’ “copy” is just what it pretends to be—a leaf from his note-book. The notes usually produced in rapid verbatim reporting are vastly different from the exact geometric forms which flow slowly from the pencil in cold blood, so to speak. They are as different as is the everyday MS. of the average man of business from the copperplate outlines after which his handwriting is presumably modelled—more so, indeed, in proportion to the greater latitude allowed in selecting phonographic outlines. To the young phonographer who regretfully finds himself gradually but surely drifting away from the strict outlines laid down in the text-books, it may afford an encouragement to know that not only is Mr. Watters one of the most rapid of Canadian reporters, but that he reads his notes with great ease and rapidity. The same remark is true of many first-class Canadian reporters of my acquaintance, and if I may judge by the *fac-simile* outlines published in the English magazines, it is true of the majority of professional reporters in the old country as well. The acute angles of the text-books become well rounded in hurried note-taking, “perpendicular” lines incline, perhaps somewhat crookedly, to the horizon, and horizontals to the zenith; arcs of circles become straight lines, and shading is discarded entirely. In fact so rare is it to find the verbatim notes of a rapid speech written with any thing like geometric precision, that to most reporters the presence of sharp angles and careful shading in a note-book is evidence either that the writer has been “skipping,” or that he has been enjoying what is a very rare treat in this land of fervid declamation—reporting a slow speaker. There are some partial exceptions to the rule, I am aware. There are some reporters so gifted mentally and manually that their notes even when taken very rapidly might almost be printed as models for the beginner. Among such I might mention Mr. T. J. Richard-

son, of Ottawa, one of the best all-round shorthand reporters in America, who writes very plain, legible notes with few of those ingenious contractions so favored by many phonographic authors, and so carefully avoided by experienced reporters. Mr. T. W. Gibson, secretary to Hon. Mr. Pardee, a younger reporter, but one who is thoroughly efficient in every branch of his profession, also writes very clear phonographic outlines—so legible that page after page of his notes may be read by brother reporters. But these, and a few others, are the proverbial exceptions that prove the rule. And while I would strongly advise learners to cultivate precision and neatness in practice as the best foundation on which afterwards to form a good practical “hand,” I think it is well for them to know that it will be as impossible for most of them to adhere to rigid geometric outlines, as for business or professional men to continue writing their correspondence in the fairly shaded script which was “set” them as “copy” in their schoolboy days.

To my mind many of the *fac-simile* notes published in the phonographic magazines are transparent humbug. They pretend to be taken from actual note-books, but they are evidently the result of slow and elaborate writing. They deceive and mislead the young beginner. Let us have a page or two red hot from the speeches of Sir John Macdonald, or Mr. Blake, delivered in the House of Commons, or on the stump, just for a change. I would open the ball myself, but candidly, Mr. Editor, I’m afraid to put forward my uncouth pot-hooks side by side with the tribe of the *fac-similes* who all write so beautifully and so much alike. But if Arthur Wallis, or Albert Horton, or George Holland, or G. B. Bradley, or E. E. Horton, or Isaac Watson, or Joe Duggan, or Colin Campbell should follow the lead of Mr. Watters,—well I’m a coy and bashful creature, Mr. Editor, but there’s no telling what one might do under strong temptation. Meanwhile, I hope you keep a loaded club for the man who writes his *fac-simile* deliberately and with malice prepense.

Yours truly,
L. E.

Toronto, Oct. 30th, 1882.

[Our correspondent has evidently missed several numbers of the WRITER, for we have published *fac-similes* from Messrs. Richardson and Campbell—the former being an extract from one of Mr. Blake’s speeches in the Commons.—ED.]

A TRANSLITERATED TRANSCRIPT.

TEUTONIC TRANSLATION OF THORNTON’S FANTASTIC PHONOGRAPHY.

[For the sake of throwing additional light on the new Light-Line and Lightning Phonography invented and patented by friend Thornton, (but with no serious intention of