

BUREAU NOTES.

The demand for shorthand writers among Canadian manufacturers, merchants and businessmen was never, in the history of shorthand, so lively, or developing so rapidly, as now. We have new applications constantly coming in for shorthand writers, and fully expect that the number of demands will be constantly increasing. Several times during the past two months we could not supply the demand.

We marvel to discover that in a very large proportion of the cases which come under our notice, shorthanders are not versed in the ordinary rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalizing, paragraphing, etc. There is something radically wrong in our school system, and, unfortunately, many of our young phonographers have the notion that the only thing necessary in order to fill the position of amanuensis is to "get it all down." They do not seem to trouble themselves as to whether or not they can get it back again!

Shorthanders must not presume upon the good nature of business men. The time of the latter is too precious, their business interests are too important, and competition is too keen to admit of much benevolence on their part. When they ask for a shorthand writer they want one who can relieve them of brain worry and mental wear and tear, and lengthen their time by shortening their labors. They do not want tyros whom they will have to instruct in the art of which they are presumed to be masters when they enter the service. Next, shorthanders must be young men of studious habits, and miss no opportunity of perfecting themselves in the art.

The best advice is not always the most pleasant, just as the most valuable medicine is sometimes very acid or very bitter. We believe in selecting advice, as doctors select medicine, to suit individual cases. Some of our applicants need a pretty strong dose of censure; others can overcome difficulty by encouragement and praise; but where we find incompetency and inability, or indisposition to grapple with the difficulties of shorthand, we administer a strong dose of rebuke, and, if possible, dissuade the applicant from remaining in the field. Young men who think that they are heaven-born phonographers are sometimes mistaken, and it doesn't require a very protracted test to discover where the true mettle is and where it is wanting.

As will be concluded from the list of fortunate phonographers who have obtained positions through this Bureau, our Employment Department has during the past two months demanded a considerable portion of our time—for the negotiations necessary in nearly all cases involve more or less time and trouble. The type-writing department has been fully organized, and facilities for teaching, hiring, exchange and sale of machines are now offered

to the fraternity. A lengthy extradition case and an important insolvency contestation have required our personal attendance in court, while a three days' convention was reported by arrangement. A class numbering nearly twenty young men has been put through the elementary course, running over eight weeks, and a second class has been organized and is now at work.

Every applicant who registers with us is subject to a personal test as to ability to take down, to read and to transcribe dictation. The result of these tests, in some cases, is very discouraging to the applicant; but when faithfully told his difficulties, and when hints are given as to how to overcome them, he finds the test of real benefit to him. There have been some peculiar developments in connection with these tests: One applicant can take down correctly but cannot transcribe accurately, though his notes are without fault; others presume upon their memories, and what they do not understand they omit; others take down the sounds and let the sense take care of itself, producing in the transcript arrant nonsense. In a large proportion of the cases we find a crudeness that would not be tolerated by the business man who pays the shorthander's salary.

We have secured a special agency for Remington's famous type-writers, and have made several important sales. There is sure to be a regular demand for operators for these machines in a comparatively short time, and wide-awake phonographers are learning to operate the machine. An unfounded prejudice born of ignorance on the part of those who introduced the machine into Canada years ago, still exists in the mercantile community in this city, but it is rapidly disappearing, and we hope to be able shortly to overcome it entirely. There has certainly been some cause for the disinclination on the part of merchants to invest in these machines; the fact being that there have been comparatively no shorthanders skilled to operate them. Let the latter but master the manipulation, and there will be a "boom" in the type-writing business.

After a phonographer has attained sufficient speed to enable him to do his work as amanuensis without fear of a "break," there is no knowledge he can acquire which will bring him such sure and speedy returns as a thorough mastery of the type-writer. With the aid of this machine, he can do at least half as much more work per diem than he could with a pen; and its quality will be superior and more satisfactory to the employer. Hence, the return in labor being greater in quantity and better in kind, an increase of salary may conscientiously be requested, if not proffered by the employer. But even should there be no immediate increase in salary, the shorthander's type-writing speed will be rapidly increasing by practice, and thus his working capital will be accumulating, to be used to financial and social advan-