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Alex. H. Crawford

THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED SHORTHAND WRITER.

VOL. II.

TORONTO, MAY, 1881.

No. 1.

Editorial and Contributed.

REPORTING IN THE CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS.

(Concluded.)

ADVANTAGES OF THE AMANUENSIS SYSTEM.

AMONG the advantages of this system are the following:—

(1.) The reporter being relieved to some extent from the drudgery of longhand writing could be in a better condition, both mentally and physically, to take full and accurate notes in the House.

(2.) With the assistance of an amanuensis the note-taker would be able to devote more time, and consequently more attention to the literary character of the report, and also be less liable to misinterpret the utterances of speakers.

Should the Committee concur in these suggestions we would respectfully urge the adoption of the method in force in the United States Congress, namely, that the reporters be paid salaries sufficient to enable them to employ amanuenses. The reasons we urge for having the engagement of the assistants in the hands of the staff are, among others:

(1.) That the reporters, being responsible for the character of their work would feel it to be in their interests to engage only competent men.

(2.) That owing to their professional connection throughout the country, they would have the best possible opportunities for obtaining men whose training and qualifications would fit them for the work.

EXTRA COST TRIFLING.

The net expense involved in the employment of amanuenses, under the above proposition, would be comparatively trifling. The charge for proof-corrections has always been one of the heavy items in connection with the cost of publication. By strengthening the staff in the manner suggested, this particular charge would be reduced to a minimum, both as regards proofs for the daily issue and those which embody corrections made by members for the issue in book form.

Further, we feel assured that members would be spared the trouble and annoyance of making more than the most trifling typographical cor-

rections, for it has been a matter of daily observation by members of the staff that the great bulk of the alterations are to be attributed (1) to inefficient proof-reading, and (2) to the haste with which the manuscript has necessarily been turned out, and to the difficulty experienced by the reporters in taking accurate notes after midnight, owing to their being engaged unremittingly during many hours in the drudgery of longhand writing from which they would be considerably relieved by the employment of amanuenses.

REMUNERATION OF THE STAFF.

The idea entertained by members of the staff when they accepted their present positions, was, that if they could demonstrate the practicability of issuing a daily report of the debates, which should be satisfactory in other respects, their salaries would be made commensurate with the onerous and responsible duties they are called upon to perform.

The salaries now paid are such as cannot afford any guarantee of the permanency of the staff, a feature which the Committee last year regarded as an essential element of the system.

The acceptance of a position on the debates staff precludes shorthand reporters from obtaining employment in that capacity during recess. For such men the only sources of employment are the newspapers and the Law Courts. The staffs of those journals that employ shorthand reporters, are filled almost exclusively with a view to sessional work, and during the summer months their staffs are usually reduced rather than increased. As regards law reporting there is no field for employment in Ontario during recess, as the work is now done by permanent official stenographers.

The remuneration allowed to members of the debates staff can therefore only be regarded as an annual salary, as there is no certainty of obtaining additional employment, and when it is obtained the scale of payment is so low that it cannot be taken into account in estimating the incomes of members of the staff.

Law reporters in Ontario, who are permanent officials of the Courts, paid by the Provincial Government, who enjoy as much leisure as the reporters of the House of Commons and whose positions required much less general experience

and professional training, realize net incomes of from \$1,700 to \$1,800. In Quebec the incomes of first class law stenographers range from \$1,200 to \$2,000.

Under the present system members of the staff are officers of the House, and they venture to submit that their salaries should bear some relation to the responsible and difficult positions they occupy. We are stating what is capable of abundant proof when we say that we are the worst paid officials of the House. The Auditor General's report shows this most clearly. A sessional doorkeeper receives \$800, messengers as high as \$900, while the salaries of translators, assistant-translators, Clerks of Committees, Journal Clerks and other officers of that class vary from \$1,200 to \$1,800. Upon this point we would respectfully suggest the examination by the Committee of the Clerk of the House, himself an experienced parliamentary reporter.

We trust that the facts and figures above presented will be deemed by the Committee as affording sufficient grounds for recommending the strengthening of the staff, and the more adequate remuneration of the members.

WORKING OF THE STAFF.

In order to secure the efficient and harmonious working of the staff, we venture to submit the following suggestions for the consideration of the Committee.

In case disputes should arise among members of the staff in regard to matters connected with the performance of their official duties, the decision of the chief reporter shall be binding, and in case of serious offence he shall have power to prevent any member who may refuse to abide by his decision, from taking his share of the work until the matter in dispute shall have been settled by the Chairman and the Committee.

Should any member of the staff desire to absent himself during working hours, he shall communicate with the chief reporter stating the reason for, and the length of such desired absence, and if a substitute acceptable to the chief reporter be provided, the latter may grant leave of absence for the period specified.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

We desire to call the special attention of the Committee to the wholly inadequate and unsuitable character of the office accommodation provided for the debates staff. The room presently occupied is altogether too small; it cannot be ventilated without creating dangerous draughts, while the fact that it is open to the reception of all the noises from the corridors and post office, seriously inconvenience the staff in the performance of their duties. We venture to suggest that a room at least as large as the present press room is absolutely necessary to enable the reporters to perform their duties with any degree of comfort.

In conclusion we take the liberty of saying that from the experience of the session thus far, we are convinced that if the modifications suggested in this report are adopted, the present

system of reporting and publishing the debates can be rendered as nearly perfect as possible, both for the purposes of a daily report to be placed in the hands of members, and of a permanent record of the debates of the House.

Your obedient servants,

G. B. BRADLEY,	GEORGE EYVEL,
E. J. DUGGAN,	ALBERT HORTON,
ISAAC WATSON,	J. W. MARCEAU,
S. A. ABBOTT,	J. C. BOYCE.

Debates Office, House of Commons,
February 14th, 1881.

ALEXANDER HOPE CRAWFORD, CHIEF OF THE ONTARIO LAW REPORTERS.



ALEXANDER Hope Crawford was born in Alloa, Clackmannanshire, Scotland. He served a seven years' apprenticeship to the printing business, in the offices of the *Alloa Advertiser* and the *Stirling Journal*. His first attempt at reporting was when he had just passed the age of sixteen, and was an effort to report a lecture on antiquities, by the Rev. Charles Rodgers, editor of the *Modern Scottish Minstrel*, in six volumes, in which Mr. Crawford's father's name appears as one of the song-writers of Scotland. Coming to Canada in the winter of 1863, Mr. Crawford was for some time on the *Globe*, and is a great admirer of the late Hon. Geo. Brown, whose kindness to him he holds in grateful remembrance. Afterwards he held the position of private secretary to Mr. P. S. Stevenson, the late General Freight Agent of the Grand Trunk Railway, and for several years was connected with the Grand Trunk, and the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railways. In the spring of 1876, the Hon. Mr. Mowat appointed Mr. Crawford as one of three reporters attached to the law courts of Ontario. From that time forward Mr. Crawford has worked hard to bring the system of reporting in our courts up to the high standard it has now attained. Now, with a staff of seven reporters in the common law courts and two reporters in the court of chancery, the time occupied in assize work is comparatively short. Mr. Crawford feels very proud of the staff of which the Hon. the Attorney-General has appointed him the chief, and more particularly does the chief take pride in the younger members of it, and in everything that will help or give them confidence. Mr. Crawford reported the case of *Fisher v. the Georgian Bay Transportation Company*, and the record of that trial, in two bound volumes, of over 500 pages each, attests to his skill as a manipulator of the type-writer. He uses the perfected type-writer of the Messrs. Remington & Sons, of New York, and has made as many as 12 complete and reliable copies with its aid at one time—using carbon paper, manufactured in Toronto. Mr. Crawford is now a writer of Graham's system of shorthand, and does no discredit to it. He first learned the tenth edition of Isaac Pitman—but prefers Graham's system to that.

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE SCIENCE OF RAPID WRITING.

BY B. BORTON, WOODSTOWN, N. J.

SHORTHAND is not a modern invention. —It has been in use in England three hundred years, and two hundred systems have been published in that country alone during that period. In the olden methods the spelling of words was represented by a set of symbols for letters, but such a plan was insufficient for reporting purposes.

About thirty-five years ago, a great impetus was given to the study of shorthand by the invention of a system of phonography by Isaac Pitman of Bath, England. It consists of an alphabet composed of the simplest geometrical signs, which accurately represent the sound of spoken words, easy to write and legible to read. Less than a hundred years ago, it is said that an apprenticeship of seven years was required before a shorthand student was deemed qualified to report a speaker. To-day phonography has been brought to such a state of perfection that its principles can be learned in a few hours; and an hour's daily practice for a few months will enable any one of ordinary ability to apply his knowledge of the useful art in his correspondence, and if he truly loves the study he will soon be seen in the church or lecture room with note-book and pencil trying to report the speaker. But his first "takes" in public will not be as perfect as he anticipated. Rapidity in writing can only be attained by long and continued practice after the learner has acquired a knowledge of the highest brevity of the art.

"Where little marks comprise

Whole words—a sentence in a letter lies."

Benn Pitman, a brother of Isaac Pitman, the founder of phonography in England, came to this country 1850, and, desiring to introduce his own and his brother's works, in a few years published upwards of thirty works of phonography. None but stenographers of skill and established reputation are engaged to report important law cases or speeches by eminent speakers. The great trial of Benjamin Hunter for murdering Armstrong in Camden, a few years since, was reported by R. A. West, one of the ablest stenographers in the country. Benn Pitman, on arriving in this country from England, settled in Cincinnati, and was engaged in some of the leading law cases, such as the trial of the Lincoln assassins.

Of all the numerous systems in use at the present day, Pitman's, for easiness and beauty, is undoubtedly the best, and every practitioner of his system will say, I think, that Pitman's phonography is used by three-fourths of the shorthand reporters in the United States.

One of the first obstacles—and to some a very formidable one—to be overcome by the student in his ardor to become famous in the profession, is to learn to decipher his notes with accuracy and facility. The wife of Benn Pitman was almost as expert a shorthand writer as her husband,

and was peculiarly apt in deciphering her husband's notes. When taken in a great hurry he could hardly decipher his characters; she always read them as easily as ordinary print.

A phonographer named Gales, who reported the great speech by Daniel Webster, in reply to Hayne, could not decipher his own shorthand after an interval of a few days. It frequently occurred that when he could not read his notes, Mrs. Gales could, and to her all honor is due for the preservation of Webster's memorable oration. It is said that the statesman rewarded Mrs. Gales with a thousand dollars as a Christmas present.

Far be it from me to discourage anyone from commencing the study of shorthand, or the beginner from continuing it; but unless the learner who reads this paper possesses certain qualifications for professional reporting he will not be likely to achieve much success. He must make himself content in some other field of shorthand labor. David Crosby, at an annual dinner of the Law Stenographers Association, in New York, some years ago, said his experience gave him great respect for the art. He had learned its difficulties, and he could not but think in looking around him how many failures in phonography each gentleman present represented. He presumed it was safe to say that for one person who had achieved the facility each member of the association possessed, at least one hundred have tried and failed. Another member said the requisite qualifications are possessed by few even in this land of public schools.

Some one has said: "The lovers of beautiful things will find in phonography sufficient to satisfy the most fastidious taste. Its faultless curves and graceful outlines are the admiration of all, making a page of phonographic print or writing bear more resemblance to a finely executed picture than anything else." I do not think the uninitiated, in gazing upon a page of shorthand manuscript hurriedly written, will see anything very graceful or picturesque about it; while the advanced student will study the same page as some will study a painting and take infinite delight in deciphering the insymmetrical characters, some of them void of all semblance of geometrical shape.

The demand for shorthand writers is increasing. Not only are stenographic notes taken of the proceedings in the Courts throughout the country, but shorthand amanuenses are being employed by merchants, lawyers, authors and editors, railway companies, conventions, boards, committees, societies, and other bodies wishing a faithful report of their proceedings. The art of shorthand is familiar to many men of erudition and learning. Charles Dickens, it is stated, was one of the most able stenographers that ever sat in the reporters' gallery in the British House of Commons. Hon. Chas. Sumner was a skilled writer of phonography, and it is used by a number of prominent men to-day, such as W. B. Crittenden, and others whose names I cannot at present recall. Many ladies

have learned the art and some are doing well. Mrs. H. A. Johnston, of New York, is one of the best phonographic amanuensis in the United States; Miss Cook receives \$1,600 a year as stenographer in the Indian office at Washington; Mrs. Helen J. Palmer is reporting for one of the New York courts. Lucien B. Ware and Morris P. Borden, two studious youths of Woodstown, learned shorthand a few years ago and to-day are filling very lucrative positions as amanuensis; Mr. Ware in the Pacific Railway Company, and Mr. Borden, at last accounts, was with his dexterous pen making symmetrical curves, straight lines and circles at Hot Springs, Arkansas. Let nothing I have penned deter the shorthand student from pursuing his studies with unabated ardor. I want him to feel that he can acquire all the qualifications requisite for eminent success in the reportorial profession. Though phonographers can be counted by hundreds, the talented and competent ones find something to do.

But I must conclude. If the reader has followed my pen thus far, he must now know and should ever remember that to attain a knowledge of this beautiful science is not difficult, to become a skilled phonographic reporter, is not easy. Everybody has been told more than once that to attain proficiency in any pursuit, one must have a disposition to work and cultivate a love for the subject he desires to master. An absence of these essential requisites, accounts for the fact that so comparatively few learners of shorthand make anything of it. To me, phonography has always been a captivating and pleasing study and recreation, and had I the freedom to give my whole time and attention to it, I should probably have been better prepared to-day to impart more general information on the subject from my own experience, than is contained in this imperfect essay.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

C. P. C., Montreal, asks:—

1. Will you kindly tell me the speed required to obtain a situation as a shorthand corresponding clerk? A. From 80 to 100 words is generally sufficient. 2. How can a person writing 60 words obtain that speed? A. As good a way as we know of is to get another person who writes the same speed as yourself and practice together, dictating and writing alternately, say half an hour each. Failing this, get some one in the house to dictate. 3. What is the age of the youngest shorthand writer in Canada? (I am 15, and write 60 words per minute.) A. We cannot answer this question, some of our readers may tell you next month. 4. Send me full particulars of your Shorthand Employment Bureau? A. Applicants for employment are furnished with a blank form, as follows:—"Give your full address;" "State when you can assume the duties;" "Are;" "Speed in shorthand and longhand;" "What system of shorthand do you write?" "What is your present employment?" "Past

experience and positions held;" "Lowest salary you are willing to accept;" "Married or single;" "References." This form with half a dozen samples of longhand is returned to us with a registration fee of one dollar, to pay for postage, advertising, &c. One month after we have secured the applicant a position we are entitled to a commission of 5 per cent.

J. H., Stratford, asks:—

Do you or any of your readers know anything of a "fountain pen" sold by D. L. Scott-Browne, it costs \$4.75. A. We have not seen it.

KEY TO REPORTING NOTES OF REV. F. G. MORRIS, EASTHAMPTON, MASS.

State of Mass.

Supreme Judicial Court in and for the County of Essex. Eudicot, J.

Extract from notes of April 21st.

Q. (By Mr. Saunders). Which is the greater strain upon the shaft, raising or lowering?

A. Raising, a great deal.

Q. State whether or not you have made experiments in centrifugal force.

A. Yes, sir, I have.

C. With that shaft revolving so as to lower that gate in one minute, what strain would there be, centrifugal strain?

A. About forty-seven pounds, acting at a leverage one foot from the bearing. (Witness exemplified by the shaft in Court.)

Q. What would be the strain of running down in thirty seconds?

A. It would be one hundred and eighty-nine pounds, acting at the same distance.

Q. Now, what, Mr. Mills, was the breaking strain of that shaft at the same distance?

A. If the shaft were of solid iron of the ordinary quality, it would be about thirty-five hundred pounds.

Q. Taking that shaft with just its conditions, what would be the breaking strain?

A. That is a matter of judgment as to how much the shrink-holes that were there affected it, I have calculated that there is still remaining about seven-tenths of the strength of the shaft. That would be about twenty-five hundred pounds of the breaking strain of that shaft as it was.

Q. Have you made any actual experiments as to the breaking strain of shafts similar to that?

A. I have.

Q. State what you did in regard to that (objected to by Mr. Ives, and objection overruled.) (By Mr. Ives.) I do not understand that any shaft has been broken as *this* was broken.

(The objection was still overruled. Mr Ives excepted to the decision, on the ground that the question was collateral and incompetent, and the exception was noted.)

A. I had these shafts cast at the Lowell machine-shop; two of them being from the same pattern from which this was originally cast, in which the bearing, the diameter at the bearing, was four and one half inches. I had

two others cast from the same pattern, with this change: the pattern was cut, down so that the diameter of the bearing at this place was two and seven eighths inches; all the rest the same. These four shafts were then turned in a lathe to a diameter of two and four tenths inches, which is the diameter of this broken shaft. Besides, I had two other shafts cast—(This part of the answer was objected to by Mr. Ives, and, after some discussion between counsel, was withdrawn.)

Q. Go on with the four.

A. The two shafts that were cast from the original pattern, and cut down to two and forty one hundredths, broke with a weight, that is, a mean weight, of 3295 pounds, at one foot from the bearing. The two that were cast two and seven eighths inches in diameter, and cut down to the same size, to two and forty one hundredths, broke with a weight or strain of 3296 pounds at one foot from the bearing; that was the mean between the two.

(CIRCULAR.)

TO THE SHORT-HAND WRITERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

The importance of organization being generally recognized by our profession, it has been suggested that a Convention of Short-hand Writers be held in Chicago, Ill., on the 1st of September, 1881, for the purpose of effecting a National Organization of the Short-hand Writers of the various States, in order that the interests of our profession may be protected and advanced.

Correspondence upon the subject is solicited, and may be addressed to

GEO. W. BOYDEN,

Sec'y Nebraska State Stenographers' Association, Omaha, Neb.

Or to

DAN BROWN,

50 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

John Ritchie, Law Reporter, Chicago; Seates

& Nute, Law Reporters, Chicago; A. M. Griffen, Law Reporter, Chicago; Dan Brown, Chief Chicago Bureau of Phonography; John T. Bell, Pres. Neb. State Stenographers' Ass'n; Chas. A. Sumner, Pres. Cal. State Stenographers' Ass'n; Tinsley & Morgan, Law Reporters, Syracuse, N. Y.; J. S. Harrison, Official Stenographer, Adrian, Mich.; James H. Emery, Law Reporter, Toledo, O.; Frank P. Tupper, Law Reporter, Towanda, Pa.

DEAR SIRS,—

Above is printed call for convention, which I am now sending out, by which you will see that we have changed the time to September 1st. This has been done so as not to interfere with the court work in our Western States, which begins on the first Monday in September. I desire to include as members of convention any of our Canadian neighbors who may wish to attend, and shall be glad to have a good representation. The convention and organization should include shorthand writers of all systems. An organization should recognize every branch of the profession, which, I believe, can be included under four general heads:—*First*. General Reporting—including Newspapers, Congressional, Legislative and Convention work. *Second*.—Law Reporting,—including all branches of legal work. *Third*.—Commercial work including all classes of business correspondence. *Fourth*.—Shorthand publications and instruction. Please take the subject into consideration and give us views through the medium of the SHORTHAND WRITER.

Will keep you posted as to further arrangements.

Yours truly,

DAN BROWN.

Mr. Andrew J. Graham, in his *Journal* for April editorially remarks:—"The words *taken* by Standard Phonography are much more legible than those *not taken* by the inferior systems." No doubt.

Selected.

REPORTING BY MACHINERY.

EVERY now and then we read accounts of machines being invented—always extremely simple and capable of being worked without the slightest difficulty—by which *verbatim* reporting is made as easy as the proverbial process of "falling off a log." Some of these machines are built on the model of the phonograph, while others appear to resemble magnified type-writers, but the rapidity and precision with which they can report a speech or sermon is invariable and remarkable. There is one point which seems to be inaccountably overlooked by the inventors of such machines, and we beg, disinterestedly, to call their attention to it. It is this:—While there is no

doubt in the world that their barrel-organs can take down everything the fastest speaker may say, they do not appear to have the power of rejecting anything,—they lack, in short, the condensing faculty. Let the Frenchman or Italian who invents the next phonographic hurdy-gurdy—and it is always a Frenchman or Italian, never an unpractical Yankee—bring out with it a condensing "attachment," something which will boil down sermons and speeches in first-rate style for publication in newspapers, and we will guarantee that he will sell as many as he can manufacture. It is obvious that by a little ingenuity the machine could be further improved so as to report a speech to suit a newspaper's politics, set the speaker right as to facts, write editorials, or even:

get up clubs and canvass for subscriptions. An alteration in the "attachment,"—twisting a screw, for instance,—would translate a speech spoken in French into the best of English, while the shifting of a lever would turn on the poetry spout, and the novel sight might be witnessed of Jones' stump speech on the corruption of the other party appearing in the next day's issue of the paper in the finest of blank verse, and all this without the interference of human hand or brain! In fact the more the subject is considered, the more extensive does the field for improvement appear, and our only astonishment is that it has not been occupied long ago. We do not care to take up the *role* of a prophet, but we venture to predict the present style of flesh-and-blood reporting will be superseded by machinery before—well, say the 31st of February, 3010.

STARTING IN LITERARY LIFE.

(From the *Phonographic Meteor*.)

IT has been suggested that an article on "Starting in Literary Life" would find many attentive readers. Let us at once say that we do not feel capable of doing justice to such a theme. It is impossible to codify the laws that govern individuals, and advice to persons seeking literary reputation, whether given by us or by others, could not and cannot be relied upon. The doctrine of chance enters so largely into the question that there is a great difficulty in the way of following general counsel. Particular cases require different consideration. In a given instance, one might tell another how to act, but no chart can be laid down to guide a literary explorer, who must discover and do battle with the snags and quicksands that lie athwart his course as well as may be. There is no royal road to success in authorship. Success sometimes comes in a sudden and bewildering manner; but more frequently it has been sought in a way that is heart wearing and tortuous. Consider how long it took Thackeray to win even recognition as an established author! As often as not, the pre-

tentious writer is as successful as the most genuine artist in words. As a personal accomplishment it is desirable that all young men who aim at self-culture should know how to deliver themselves after the literary manner, but it is another matter when incapacity tries to force itself unduly into notice, and takes to book-making. This sort of thing saps the foundation on which legitimate authorship rests. Genius will always find a way for itself by virtue of its inherent force; the lower faculty, talent, wants more or less adventitious help in the shape of generous encouragement to enable it to fructify. Public opinion will, in the long run, discern whether a man is possessed of talent or not, and with the knowledge that now obtains will soon snuff out the paste and scissors thing, while appreciating more generously the man who *creates*. But, after all, were we seriously asked by anyone in whom we were specially interested as to the advisability of entering the lists of literature, we think we could not do better than give him *Punch's* laconic advice "to persons about to marry." We have frequently heard the reportorial profession—and it is a profession—run down as being unworthy of the consideration of a man with brains equivalent to his ambition. That the duties of a reporter are frequently of a most difficult kind there can be no question, but that, as we have seen it stated, the reporter is a mere machine, and only in very exceptional cases has a chance of developing himself, no one who knows anything about newspapers will believe for a moment. Had we space we might explode the foolish fallacy with voluming evidence. The profession reportorial is unquestionably an honorable one. It has been honored, and, as it seems to us, emobled, by one of the greatest men of the century, a man who should be an inspiration and an example to every individual member of the newspaper office. Charles Dickens was a reporter, and his struggles with the stenographic art, an acquaintance with which is so essential in the reportorial calling, are duly recorded in a certain book called "David Copperfield." Let us hear no more condemnations of this absurd character.

Editorial Notes.



Capt. E. G. Hall, an accomplished Graham writer, died at Salamanca, N. Y. on the 29th of March last.

We call the attention of Canadian readers to the letter of Mr. Dan Brown, extending an invitation to the forthcoming convention to be held in Chicago. We shall be pleased to give space in our columns to any wishing to communicate their views on this important subject.

Not a few young American lawyers combine Court reporting with the practice of their profession.

The Legislature of Indiana has decided that Shorthand reporters are to be appointed in the Circuit Courts only, the remuneration to be \$10 a day.

The work of moving into our new premises (of which a cut is given in our lithographed pages) has unavoidably delayed the issue of this number of the *SHORTHAND WRITER*. Arrangements have been made, however, for the regular appearance of the magazine on the 15th of each month hereafter.

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Graham celebrated their silver wedding at their residence, in Orange, N. J., on the 6th inst. Only those who attended the first wedding had invitations, with one exception in favor of their daughter Minola, a beautiful and accomplished young lady. A very enjoyable time was spent. We join the friends in wishing the couple many happy years.

Mr. A. B. Walker, a coloured man who has at times acted as stenographer in the Superior Court at Halifax, has just passed his examination and will be sworn in as attorney in June. He is the first coloured man admitted as attorney in any Canadian court.

At a meeting of the members of the press in attendance during the sessions of the Quebec Legislature to report the debates, E. Jos. Dugan, of the Montreal *Gazette*, was elected President for the current year and Mr. Mercier, of *Le Quotidien*, Levis, Secretary. The gentlemen of the press, upon invitation, paid a visit to the Speaker, Hon. A. Turcotte, and presented to him their newly elected officers. The Speaker received the party with cordiality and hospitality.

Our English exchanges for April are at hand, and are well up to their usual level. In the *Phonographer's Herald*, Mr. Thomas continues his notes on Isaac Pitman's dictionary. Some of his strictures upon certain of the "master's" outlines are quite in order. The *Phonographic Monthly* contains, amongst its other articles, a short sketch of Edmund Yates, the journalist and novel-writer, with his portrait. The *Phonetic Journal* is wholly given over to spelling reform, and contains little of interest on any other subject. The *Cabinet* presents its usual budget of sketches and short stories, written in shorthand.

The many friends of Mr. Charles Nicholls, who made himself very popular in this city during his connection with the literary staff of the *Globe*, will learn with regret of his demise, which occurred after a few days illness, at Ottawa, on the 11th inst. Mr. Nicholls was born in England, and graduated at Trinity College, Dublin. He came to Canada when he was quite young, and entered upon his journalistic career, in which pursuit he had acquired considerable popularity, but death had marked him for its prey, and carried him to its domains in his 37th year. His geniality, and love for social intercourse made him a welcome companion to many who now mourn his loss. Deceased, who was an excellent shorthand writer, was for some time connected with the Dominion *Herald* under the old regime.

Pennsylvanian Court reporters get \$10 a day and 25 cents per folio for transcription; in England the fee is one or two guineas a day, according as the case is tried in London, or outside of it, and eight-pence per folio of 72 words for transcription.

Gerald Hextall, in the *Phonographic Meteor* for February, speaking of the WRITER, says:—The originality of the cartoons is unquestionable, and some of the sketches are exceedingly clever. I knew Mr. Bengough's productions long before he appeared upon the phonographic stage, and have always appreciated his genius. A specimen of Mr. B's specialty is the pictorial story in six chapters, illustrative of the vowel sounds, which was reproduced in the *Phonograph* of December last, and which I would advise every one to see who has not already done so.

The *Reporter's Magazine* (London, Eng.) for March, alluding to a statement made by Mr. E. E. Horton in the November number of the WRITER, as to Mr. T. A. Reed, the noted English shorthand writer says:—"Mr. Reed has never laid claim to any particular speed. The assertion that he claims as his utmost speed 185 words per minute probably arises from the statement he once made that a sermon of an hour's duration which he reported, when counted showed an average of 185 words per minute; that sermon, he said, was the fastest he remembered to have counted."

A meeting of the Law Stenographer's Association of Montreal was held on the 21st day of April, when the committee, Messrs. Crankshaw, Miller, Thompson, Monier and Phelan, appointed at the previous meeting, reported as to the best means of promoting and protecting the interests of law stenographers. The report was adopted and the following resolutions were carried:

1. That the stenographers practising in the law courts form themselves into an association to be called the Law Stenographers' Association of the Province of Quebec.
2. That its object be to promote social intercourse, advance professional objects and perfect the taking of evidence by stenography.
3. That the employment of incompetent persons to take evidence is an abuse directly tending to shake public confidence in the art of shorthand writing and fraught with danger to pleader and litigant, the association should obtain power to admit to practise shorthand in the courts, such persons as only establish their competency under examination; and that to this end the Association apply for an Act of Incorporation and appoint a deputation to wait upon the judges of the Superior Court, setting forth the views of the Association on the subject.
4. That Messrs. Thompson, Miller, Crankshaw, Monier, McGown, Abbot and Phelan be a committee to draw up the constitution and the Act of Incorporation, and report thereon.

Communications.

To the Editor of the WRITER:

DEAR SIR,—I am a regular subscriber to your journal, and am much pleased with its contents, especially the *fac-simile* notes. Could you not publish some such and give the rate of speed at

which they were taken? This would give one a much better idea of how notes are written by our best reporters when hard pressed. Some of the *fac-similes* you have published—Mr. Bell's and Mr. Butcher's, for instance—are so ex-

tremely neat, that I cannot think they could have been written at any great speed. I think this plan, if it should be adopted, would please many more besides myself; as *fac-simile* notes, when we do not know at what rate they were taken, give us but a faint idea of the writer's *actual notes* when he is "pushed."

Yours, by a large majority,

W. M. HAMILTON.

London, April 30th, 1881.

To the Editor of the WRITER :

DEAR SIR,—D. L. Scott-Browne, Esq., I see tries to make his readers believe that I have been "gulling" you. That *his* portrait, sketch and *fac-similes* are genuine and that yours are not. My opinion is that the man must be mad. It is not at all likely that the fraternity are going to accept his statements for the truth in this matter in face of what is going to be published in other phonographic magazines that have some claim to respectability.

Yours always,

T. WILLIAM BELL.

St. John, N. B., April 21, 1881.

THE SHORTHAND PROFESSION.

To the Editor of the WRITER :

DEAR SIR,—I have been much interested in the discussion carried on in your columns concerning shorthand writers, their qualifications and salaries. Allow me to place before your readers one or two points in connection with this question. "Protectionist" feels that injury is being done to the profession by amateurs of limited speed, who take positions to the exclusion of better men. "Aspirant" answers in effect that the man who satisfactorily fills any position is the best man for the place, and has a right to it—if he can get it. With reference to the employment of shorthand writers in my view, as with other professions and trades, the question is one of demand and supply. Shorthand writing is, as yet, a comparatively new thing in practical business life in this country, and without doubt the number of positions to be filled will multiply greatly within a few years; so also will the number of writers, and in all probability the latter will increase in a much greater ratio than the former. Therefore, from this standpoint, shorthand writing offers no greater or more numerous prizes to its devotees than any other profession, and to encourage students to take up the study by placing before them shining examples of men who have secured very remunerative positions through their knowledge of the art, is to do both the student and the profession an injury, because every ambitious young man naturally is led to infer that he may go and do likewise. The fact is incontrovertible that the positions of reporters to Canadian and American courts are already more than filled, as are perhaps, to a

greater extent, the positions as legislative reporters and scribes on the daily press. In this profession, as in all others, the best man wins, with this difference; that in shorthand writing it is "considerably more so." A physician may be able and conscientious, and yet have many patients die, but no one thinks of calling him to account unless there be palpable evidence of mal-practice. A lawyer may mis-manage his case and yet an intelligent jury give him a verdict, or he may lose it by the obstinacy of one jurymen, and no one accuses him of inability. But a court-reporter is allowed no latitude or grace for sins of omission or commission. If, after working for hours, and being pushed to his greatest speed in attempting to keep up with one judge, two lawyers and a valuable witness, all talking at nearly the same moment, the poor scribe fails to read off, without hesitation, some portion of testimony taken perhaps the day before, he is looked upon as incompetent by both bench and bar. And should he possibly mistake the meaning of a form, and give an incorrect translation thereof, it may be said of him "his occupation's gone." I would sum up my remarks in this way:

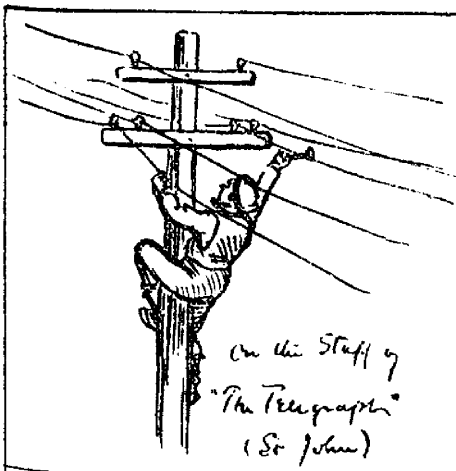
It is contrary to sound principle to prohibit, or attempt to prohibit, instruction in this branch of education. All who can learn it have a right to do so, and others have equally a right to teach them.

Employers will pay shorthand writers salaries, large or small, in proportion, first, to the capacity of the employee to meet their requirements; second, in proportion to the amount of competition among men equally qualified, who may be seeking the place.

The number of writers capable of filling situations requiring a low rate of speed will always be in excess of the number of such positions open. And the number of positions open to men of high attainments as shorthand writers, will continue to be still fewer in proportion to the number of men capable of filling them. This statement may be disputed, but I find it susceptible of proof. Therefore I maintain that the shorthand profession does not offer inducements to any young men except those who have proved themselves of special fitness for it in many ways, and who have, beside their ability to write shorthand well, a good education and a fund of common sense larger than is necessary for success in most walks of life. There are thousands of youths studying shorthand in every large town, inspired by bright visions of erroneous salaries and easy berths just within their grasp. They are deceiving themselves in this regard, and the only return—and it must be admitted it is a great one—they can expect for their labor in acquiring the art, is the advantage derived from the ability to use shorthand in many ways in which longhand is used, and in many circumstances in which longhand is utterly inadequate to fill their wants.

F. W. WODELL.

Hamilton, 5th April, 1881.



On the Staff of
"The Telegraph"
(St. John)



Reporting on
the "Sun"
(St. John)

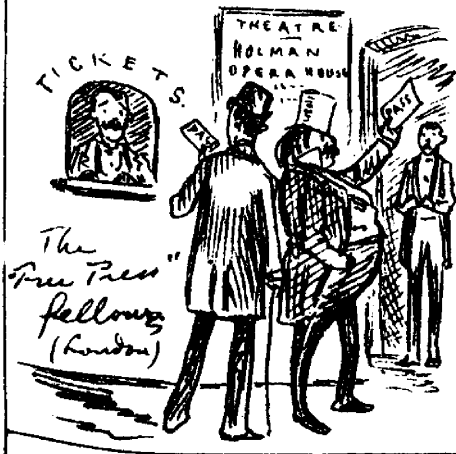


A Sit on
The "Globe"
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GLOBE OFFICE



"Mail"
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The
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THEATRE
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SUBSCRIBE FOR THE
SHORTHAND
WRITER

The
"Advertiser"
(London)

NEWSPAPER SKETCHES.

STARTING IN LITERARY LIFE.

From the Phonographic Meteor.
Isaac Pitman's System.

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A WORD TO REPORTERS.

BY G. C. MATTHEWS, LOUISVILLE.

Benn Pitman's System.

The following is a list of words and phrases written in shorthand, demonstrating the system's efficiency for reporters. The words are arranged in approximately 20 rows, with some words appearing multiple times in different shorthand forms.

Words and phrases include:

- McGowan, Stanley
- and other names and terms.

This column contains a series of shorthand examples, likely representing a specific sentence or phrase. The shorthand is dense and appears to be a continuous string of characters.

A key phrase is highlighted in the middle of the column:

ONLY COUSINS, YOU KNOW.



TAKING HIM DOWN VERBATIM ET LATTERENDUM.

A MATRIMONIAL ADVENTURE.

Isaac Pitman's System.

The first part of the page contains several lines of shorthand text, which appears to be a transcription of the story's beginning. The text is written in a cursive shorthand style.

The second part of the page contains several lines of shorthand text, continuing the transcription of the story. The text is written in the same cursive shorthand style as the first part.

