

whom, above all others, it is desirable to leave disengaged, in order that he may be able to give his full attention to every point as it comes up, should be compelled to take down the evidence, not only for his own use, but to serve as a record to be used in cases of appeal. The amount of time thus consumed in taking down evidence in longhand is very great, and the increase in the labour of the Judges far more than those who have not looked into the matter are aware of. With a shorthand reporter to take down important evidence *in extenso*, and to make a fair summary of what is less essential, the Court is in possession of a record as accurate as it is possible or desirable to obtain—far more accurate than any Judge who is not a shorthand-writer himself can produce under the circumstances. Should he deem it necessary to take notes for his own use, time is still saved, because he can afford to make them much briefer than if they are to be the only record of the evidence preserved. It is not too much to say that, even if there were no saving of time or diminution of expense by lessening the duration of Courts as the result of shorthand reporting, the introduction of the latter would still be justifiable, on the ground that it lightens the labours of the Judge, produces a more perfect record of the evidence, and facilitates the administration of justice in cases of appeal.

Ever since 1871 shorthand reporting has been in use in the Courts of Quebec, but its employment there is optional, and there is no staff of reporters permanently engaged for the purpose. The Dominion Controverted Elections Act of 1874 empowers the presiding Judge at any election trial to employ a shorthand-writer to take down evidence, and the expense thus incurred is added to the costs in the case. There are, of course, many cases tried at our ordinary assizes quite as important as election trials, and, with this precedent before them, it is not surprising that the Benchers of the Law Society should soon after have moved in the matter. In a report on the subject drawn up by Mr. Hodgins, Q.C., and adopted by the Benchers in convocation towards the close of 1875, the benefits to be derived from the introduction of a regular system of shorthand reporting in the Courts were so clearly set forth that the Attorney-General promised soon afterwards, in the House, to make provision for trying the experiment on a limited scale. One year's trial has been sufficient to convince all parties, except Mr. M. C. Cameron and the political opponents of the Government, that the success attending the experiment has been such as to warrant an extension of the system in the superior Courts and its introduction into the County Court. The latter step has proved, so far, as great a success as could have been anticipated. A shorthand reporter was employed, for the first time, during the session of the County Court which commenced on the 13th of the present month (March). During the session of twelve days seventy-six cases were disposed of, leaving none untried; while in the December session, which lasted seventeen days—as long as the law allowed—there were only fifty-two cases disposed of out of sixty-one. At the rate of progress secured under the old system it would have required twenty days this year to dispose of the seventy-six cases, and, as the expenses of the Court amount to about \$300 per day, the result is a saving of \$2,400. Should there be as large a saving at each of the four sessions of the Court, the shorthand reporter's salary will be a mere bagatelle compared with the amount saved in the course of the year as the result of his appointment. The system might be extended throughout the County Courts of the province with the most beneficial results. It is not unlikely that a hundred thousand dollars per annum may be saved to the country by this single measure of a reform Government.—*Toronto Daily Globe*.

At the examination of the prisoners concerned in what has come to be called the "Penge Mystery"—simply, I suppose, because all the circumstances connected with the case are so clear—the depositions of the witnesses were taken in shorthand. The result was, the business was greatly facilitated. Phonography has now come to be an universal art, and I have often wondered why it has not been more largely introduced for official purposes into our Courts of inquiry. The saving of time if not of trouble would be immense if Magistrates would adopt the use of shorthand in taking evidence. All the delay that would have happened at the hearing if the clerk had been required to record the testimony of the witnesses in longhand was avoided; the witnesses themselves were able to go on with their stories without stopping, and their answers must certainly have been put down more correctly than they otherwise would have been. I know several coroners who have for years past used phonography for taking evidence, by which they have been enabled to get through their work, not only in less time, but much more efficiently. The present Nottinghamshire coroner, for instance, is one of them. His plan, I believe, is to take his shorthand notes on wide lines, leaving room for subsequent transcriptions on the same sheet, which are signed by the witnesses after the characters have been interpreted to them.—London correspondent of the *York Herald*.

[From the *Otago* (New Zealand) *Daily Times*.]

THE plan of employing sworn shorthand-writers in the New Zealand higher Courts of justice will prove a very valuable reform, provided it can be carried into effect without interference with the other machinery of the Courts. The advantages of the system are, that Supreme Court Judges will be relieved of the mechanical and wearisome task of writing out the evidence for themselves as a case proceeds, and that greater accuracy and rapidity will be obtained. But, on the other hand, difficulties present themselves which are only apparent to those possessing some practical knowledge of the subject. It would never do to allow a practice introduced for the purpose of facilitating Court procedure to be itself the occasion of inconvenience and delay. And yet, if the Government propose to appoint two shorthand-writers to each Court, and if an attempt is made with this staff to secure full records of proceedings, some delay and consequent inconvenience must ensue. Shorthand notes are, of course, utterly useless to the Judge until they are transcribed, and it must not be forgotten that, when the actual work of note-taking is completed, the record of the case so far as it has gone will not be more than a quarter completed. A shorthand-writer will occupy at least three or four hours in transcribing the work of one hour's continuous note-taking, and the notes must be written