

our mode of operations here, we would be glad to give same. We supply transcripts of our notes verbatim—question and answer—at nine o'clock on the morning following the day on which the trial takes place. To get out our transcripts we employ a number of skilled operators on the type-writer, and our work has been favourably commented on. There can be no doubt but that the system you are about to inaugurate will not work smoothly at first. We are interested in seeing that work of such a responsible character is done satisfactorily in the other colonies, so that, in our attempts to introduce the system here, it may not be said that in New Zealand it did not work well.

We desire to intimate that we have copies of the different Acts of Canada and the United States relating to the appointment of official law reporters, and would be very pleased if you would allow us to offer suggestions as to the best mode of dealing with the subject. The work of law-reporting is one of the most delicate operations performed by skilled writers. It cannot be done with satisfaction by newspaper reporters, unless they have had great experience in verbatim reporting. The very nature of their duties as newspaper reporters renders them prone to seize only on what appears to them to be matters of importance, leaving the minor details of the subject to take care of themselves. Such treatment of evidence would not be tolerated.

We repeat that, should you think we could render any service to you in this matter, we desire that you will acquaint us with the fact, and we will give you all assistance in our power.

We have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Justice, Wellington, New Zealand.

STOTT AND HOARE.

No. 3.

The Hon. the MINISTER of JUSTICE to Messrs. STOTT and HOARE.

GENTLEMEN,— Department of Justice, Wellington, New Zealand, 19th May, 1885.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th April last, and to thank you very sincerely for your offer to furnish suggestions as to the best mode of dealing with the subject of official law-reporting in this colony. I shall gladly avail myself of your offer, and beg to invite you to favour me at your earliest convenience with any information which you may be able to give, especially as to the requisite staff, and the cost, regard being had to the peculiar circumstances of this colony, where there are several Supreme Court centres, instead of as in Victoria only one.

In addition to general suggestions on the subject, I should also be obliged for a description of the mode of carrying-out the system in the United States and Canada.

I have, &c.,

Messrs. Stott and Hoare, 80, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.

JOS. A. TOLE.

No. 4.

Messrs. STOTT and HOARE to the Hon. the MINISTER of JUSTICE.

SIR,— 80, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Australia, 9th June, 1885.

We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo, and, as requested, we send you herewith the result of our experience and inquiries on the subject of official law-reporting.

First, as regards America. That country, like New Zealand, has, as is well known, several Supreme Court centres, each State making and administering its own laws. In the great majority of the States the system of official law-reporting has long been a recognized institution. There are, of course, differences in points of detail in the working of the system in the different States; but the following are its main characteristics: (1.) The official shorthand-writer is required to make accurate shorthand reports of all proceedings in Court, except the arguments of counsel. (2.) A certified transcript of such report when made is taken to be *prima facie* a correct statement of the testimony and proceedings. (3.) The official shorthand-writer to furnish—on application by the Court, the State's attorney, or any party to a suit—within a reasonable time, a transcript of the proceedings or any part thereof. (4.) The remuneration varies in the different States; but the general rule is to pay the official shorthand-writer a fixed salary for taking notes, with the privilege of charging a fee of so much per folio for a transcription where required by either the Court or any of the parties to a suit. (5.) The plaintiff on entering his suit pays a small fee, generally \$3, in addition to the usual entering fees, as a kind of tax to provide for the shorthand-writer's salary.

As to Canada, the system in force there is based on the lines of that generally used in the United States.

In England the system has, to a limited extent, been in vogue for some years, there being two official shorthand-writers appointed by the London Bankruptcy Court. These officials, however, do not report every case arising in that Court, but only such of them in which either or both of the parties choose to obtain the direction of the Court that a shorthand note should be taken. This course is very frequently adopted, experience having shown the wisdom of it. In some of the American States, too—notably in that of New York—the system in force is exactly similar to that in the London Bankruptcy Court, viz., that an official reporter is appointed, who only reports such cases as the parties or the Court may require, and such report is the only one made, and is paid for, by the party requiring it, at the rate of \$10 per day, and 20c. per folio for transcription.

In regard to our own method of procedure in Melbourne: As you are aware, there is no official system in force at present, the parties to a suit having to bear all the expenses themselves of the employment of the shorthand-writer, unless the Court shall by special order make it costs in the cause. Notwithstanding this drawback to the employment of members of our profession, we have ourselves been engaged by one or other of the parties, in many cases of importance,