

Constitution, were stenographically reported; such as the Virginia Convention, where one of the most memorable and important discussions that ever occurred anywhere—a discussion participated in by Madison, Marshall, Randolph, Patrick Henry and George Mason, or the New York convention, in which Hamilton, Clinton and other notables took part, and also those of Pennsylvania and the two Carolinas, were taken in shorthand. We might also mention earlier conventions which met previous to the Revolution to protest against the enforcement of the unjust laws of England, such as the Virginia convention, when Patrick Henry electrified the audience by his intense patriotism at the time he uttered those memorable words which called forth cries of treason from every part of the house; or, on another occasion when he declared: “I know not what course others may pursue, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.” Who, therefore, can say that shorthand has not been of great value to America in preserving the words and thoughts of all of our Revolutionary heroes, including Washington, Madison, Jefferson, and Franklin (who was also a writer of shorthand), from oblivion—words and thoughts which have been of inestimable benefit to our country.

Nor did the use of shorthand end with the formation of our government. The proceedings and debates of the first Federal Congress in 1789 were reported and published by Thomas Lloyd, to whom we have already referred as publishing a system of shorthand in 1793. Of this report Van Buren said: “It was tolerably full and obviously fair.” Shortly after this, Lloyd returned to England, where he published some of the debates, for which he was confined in Newgate as a political prisoner for five years.

As is well known the proceedings of almost every congress have been reported, though they were not reported officially until 1848, when the present method was adopted, namely, that of employing official shorthand writers, and publishing the proceedings entirely under the direction of the government. Prior to 1848 they were reported and published by contract, although at almost every session of Congress resolutions were introduced for the adoption of the method now in vogue.

In the first Congress, 1789, a resolution was introduced banishing reporters to the gallery. It read, in part, “That the several persons who have published the debates in this House have misrep-