

it is a stimulus to read to some one, rather than to read alone. When you can get a small part of a moderate speaker's address, attend all the public meetings possible, for practice. Work of this kind, kept up unflinchingly, will doubtless bring the success sought, unless the student has unusually poor ability, or is unusually lacking in his early education. Probably the trouble often is, where shorthand students give up in despair, that they have at the outset under-estimated the amount of daily practice required to master the art within say a year or two years, so as to do good amanuensis work. They get a little fagged out, and begin to take it in more and more homeopathic doses, often skipping a day, or even a week, in their practice, until it looks as if their main object was to see how little work they could do on the shorthand without giving it up altogether. The question should be how much, not how little time they can give to it. A whole-souled devotion to the work, no matter what the labor or cost may be—and time need be the only expensive outlay—will do the business, even without a teacher, and without any great genius. To become a good court stenographer doubtless requires more special qualifications. But there is, we think, a great and increasing demand for reliable amanuenses at comfortable salaries. Here, in Chicago, ladies occupy positions in that line in some of the largest houses. We understand Chicago has the reputation of paying clerks, generally, poor salaries. That may be a libel on many excellent houses; but the writer, when applying for a shorthand position, here, at a certain publishing house, was told, when he put his desired salary at what he thought was moderate enough, that they could get a plenty of clerks to do the work for from six to eight dollars a week! We are glad to say that Prof. Brown's Bureau did not have the giving of that desirable (?) position. The writer has found ability to use the type-writer quite a necessary qualification in his own case.

MICROSCOPIC WRITING.

With reference to the query at the end of the notice which appeared in our issue for April, relative to Mr. G. H. Davidson's recent very remarkable shorthand achievement, we learn that it took him about twenty-four hours to write upon the post-card in question the 32,673 words, not consecutive hours, we suppose we need scarcely add. The writer himself does not pretend to decipher the photo, which is, of course, much less clear than the original writing, but he undertakes to read the latter without the aid of any magnifying glass. Mr. Davidson evidently possesses the faculty of writing very minutely, and perhaps some of our readers will hardly credit that he has written the Lord's Prayer four times, in longhand, in the space of a three-penny piece. Here no suspicion arises as to all being written as stated, the words being all legible to the ordin-

ary naked eye. And as he believed that if he tried he could write almost as much again in the same space, we have, with his courteous consent, put his calligraphic powers to a test of our own choosing. We requested him to oblige us by writing in microscopic longhand the daily prayer for printers translated from Ernesti's "Die Wol Eingerichtete Buchdruckerey," dated in the 281st year since the discovery of the art of printing, and quoted by Mr. William Blades in his *Medallic History of Printing*. The prayer is as follows:

A DAILY PRAYER FOR PRINTERS.

O Lord, Almighty God, printing is a noble and a glorious art, a blessing Thou hast reserved for mankind in these latter days; an art by which all conditions of men, and especially thy Holy Church, are greatly nourished. And since, good Lord, Thou hast of Thy free grace given me the opportunity of exercising an art and craft so exalted, I pray Thee to guide me by Thy Holy Spirit in using the same to Thy honor. Thou knowest, dear Lord, that great diligence, continual care, and accurate knowledge of the characters of many languages are needful in this art, therefore I call to Thee for help, that I may be earnest and careful, both in the setting up of types, and in printing the same. Preserve my purity; that so after a life here besting a printer, I may hereafter at the last coming of my most worthy Saviour, Jesus Christ, be found a good workman in His sight, and wear the everlasting crown in His presence. Hear me, dearest God, for Thy honor and my welfare. Amen.

In response to our request, Mr. Davidson encloses us various specimens of his minute writing, and in longhand he has written the above "Printers' Daily Prayer" nearly twice in the space of a three-penny piece. He writes: "Hitherto I have only tried the Lord's Prayer, the wording of which being familiar, people experience less difficulty in deciphering my writing. I enclose a photo of the Lord's prayer, written four times in the space of a three-penny piece, and the longhand of the "Printers' Daily Prayer is equivalent to the former written in five times the same space. You will notice that in the "Printers' Daily Prayer" I have had to divide some of the words, and my divisions have not always been syllabic; but considering the smallness of the space at my disposal you will probably not be inclined to find fault with my production on that account. The shorthand contains the "Printers' Prayer" four times, and the writing is perhaps somewhat closer than that on the card which you recently noticed in your journal. If you could send me a pen finer than the one herewith, which is what I have been using, I could doubtless write very much closer. I have not yet come across any finer nib, but probably you may have done so."

We shall be happy to show to any of our readers the samples of penmanship alluded to above. We perhaps need hardly remark that Mr. Davidson is otherwise entitled to be considered an expert penman when we add that he can write shorthand at the rate of 180, and longhand at the rate of 80 words per minute; and besides he can engross in old style and write ornamentally in black to any degree of elaboration. Moreover he can copy, with pen and ink, woodcuts like *Punch's* cartoons, with such fidelity