

says:— We recently drew attention to the low speed test (52 words per minute) in the case of examinations for certificates under the auspices of the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institute. Mr. George Withers, of Liverpool, the well-known lecturer and teacher of phonography, following up the matter in a communication to the *Phonetic Journal*, writes: "It has been objected that this very low rate of dictation is far too easy a test, and that to grant a certificate on such easy terms must be misleading for commercial purposes, inasmuch as a shorthand clerk who could not write much faster than 50 words per minute, or thereabouts, would be of little use in commercial positions. This is quite true, and it is to be regretted that a higher rate of speed was not adopted at the examination. By the passage being given at a speed of 80, 90, or 100 words per minute, the test would have been more satisfactory. Many candidates present at the Liverpool examination could have written at even a higher rate of speed than this. The Society of Arts examination which requires candidates to cover from 120 to 150 words per minute in order to pass, is a more thorough test of shorthand capabilities. Under this test a certificate can only come into the possession of those who are really capable of using shorthand without disappointing expectation when employed in professional or business spheres. It may be well here to remark that *examinations are not intended to be merely passports for proficiency, they are also barriers to incompetency. Too low a standard of proficiency is certainly not desirable in examinations if the certificate to be earned is to be of real value to its possessor.*"

ECCE STENO !

BY H. C. DEMMING, HARRISBURG, P.

[Revised copy of the 'poem' read on the occasion of the banquet in New York city on the 2nd Aug. As the inspiration did not seize the poet until he was eating soup at the banquet aforesaid, it was rather impromptu, but about as good poetry as he can prepare at any time. In fact, he thinks that soup was a stimulus, and ought to have due credit. Seriously, if there is any banqueting at all next year at Watkins, he hopes "there will be fewer courses, and enough ladies present to keep the rougher nature tightly chained." To which we would reply, that the N. Y. S. S. A. should see how we Canadians do such things.]

Ecce Steno ! there he sits
Struggling with his pen and wits :
Swiftly down his short notes taking,
By his crooks and pot-hooks making.

Ecce Steno ! how he works !
Quick and ready, strokes and jerks ;
Surely no cross-questions lacking,
Till his brain is nearly cracking.

Ecce Steno ! how he sweats !
Face aglow,—perspiring jets.
Called upon, his crude notes read
Rising up, and—then receding.

Ecce Steno ! now he takes
To his short script—long hand makes.
Hurrying, pushing, no surmising,
And his copy pile uprising.

Ecce Steno ! now at last
Work revised and midnight past,—
What comes next but the expecting
Ample fee and sure collecting.

Ecce Steno ! full of work
Both with him and shorthand clerk ;

* * * * *
Blissful season, when vacating,
* Martinelli suppers taking.

Ecce Steno ! sober man !
Honor to the shorthand clan.
Temptations great he's e'er resisting,
* Though 'tis genial †Fish insisting.

Ecce Steno ! what comes next,—
(Happily sticking to my text)—
‡Bishop in the rich jokes taking,
§Thornton truly his sides shaking.

Ecce Steno ! hold ! enough !
'Tis now time to take a luff !
For soon now will come the parting,
Back to duty we all starting.

* * * * *

Ecce Steno ! honored man !
Raise his standard, where we can,
* † to Heaven's azure gleaming,
While we have it in our keeping.

*The place in New York city where the Stenographers' banquet was held.
†The gentleman, leading representative present of the New York city Stenographers, by whom the banquet was given.
‡The newly-elected President of the New York State Stenographers' Association.
§The honored retiring President.

MIS-HEARINGS.

BY THOMAS A. REED.

Hearing is as essential to reporting as sight ; and it goes without saying, a deaf reporter is an impossibility. I mean, of course, totally deaf. Partially deaf reporters one does occasionally meet with, but the wonder is how they manage to get their work. They have been receiving assistance from their more fortunate brethren, who are, in most cases, willing to supply their need. I admit that sometimes, when, for instance, you are pressed for time, it is a little trying to have to turn to half a dozen places in your note book, and find out and dictate the passages which your deaf friend has heard imperfectly ; but to refuse