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Editorial and Contributed.

JAMES CRANKSHAW.

(See cartoon portrait.)

MR. CRANKSHAW was born at Ardwick in the city of Manchester, Lancashire, England, on the 20th of July, 1846. At the age of thirteen years he was placed in a city warehouse, with the view of fitting him for a commercial calling. It soon became evident, however, that he was not commercially inclined; and, after two years of commercial bondage, for such it was, he took an opportunity which presented itself of entering a law office. During the interim, after leaving school, he had made considerable self-improvement in his education.

Law proved more congenial to his taste than commerce; and, at the end of another four or five years, he became manager in one of the leading law firms of the city, a position which he held for nearly ten years. At the end of that time, he determined to place himself under articles of clerkship in order to become a solicitor; and with this view, he passed the preliminary law examination. Meanwhile, however, untoward events, family bereavements and afflictions, together with personal ill-health caused him to change his purpose for the time being; and he resolved to visit America. Landing at New York, four years ago, his preference for British territory led him, very soon, to proceed to Montreal, where he has since resided.

In his boyhood Mr. Crankshaw learned to write Isaac Pitman's phonography, which, in the performance of his duties as a lawyer's manager had rendered him good service. His health being greatly improved by the climate of Canada, he made up his mind to settle in this country. His practical knowledge of shorthand enabled him to obtain a position in the Grand Trunk Railway offices in Montreal; but he left that position at the end of 1877, to enter the law office of Messrs. Kerr and Carter. Here his taste for the law revived; he proceeded to study the subjects necessary to be mastered to enable him to pass the preliminary Bar examination; having in July last passed that examination,

he placed himself under articles as a law student, matriculated at McGill College, duly attended the winter lectures of the Law Faculty and completed his first year in the University law course by passing the Sessional examination, with great credit, as appears by the University calendar.

With a view to bringing Canadian shorthand writers into communication with each other, Mr. Crankshaw has established amongst us a branch of the English Phonetic Society. Mr. C. adheres strictly to Isaac Pitman's system of phonography; and believes that, thoroughly followed out, it cannot be excelled for beauty, speed and legibility.

INDIVIDUALITY IN SHORTHAND.

By Thos. W. Gibson, Toronto.

TO ANY one unstudied in the "mystic art," it might reasonably seem that the shorthand of those using any given system ought to be quite uniform, and that one stenographer should have little or no difficulty in reading the notes of another, written after a method common to both. That this idea is a mistaken one, the experience of every reporter will show. In the earlier stages of his progress, the student has no motive, and no inclination, to depart from book forms and rules, and his writing consequently approaches the model which he copies in a degree corresponding to his carefulness and industry. But as he advances and becomes familiar with the art, it is almost invariably the case that he will, consciously or unconsciously, modify his style to suit the peculiarities of his temperament. This modification does not necessarily imply the discarding any part of the system which he writes, or the adoption of anything foreign to it, although it may extend to both of these. His mode of making the characters, as it becomes fixed, will diverge from the standard methods of formation for the same reasons that his peculiar method of writing long-hand has departed from the original, and in much the same direc-