

ISAAC PITMAN ON "PHONOGRAPHY."

Isaac Pitman delivered an address on "Phonography and the Spelling Reform" a short time ago at Bristol, in which he said he knew of nothing which more heightens the joy of life than discoveries and inventions—something new and true and useful, and especially when we have a hand in it ourselves. Almost everything has been made anew within the memory of the present generation. The egg of this new age (or this new order of things), was laid in the middle of the last century. In about seventy years it was hatched; the young eagle came forth, and from about 1820 to the present day those of us who were born in the first twenty years of this century have been wondering at one new phase of life after another, and saying, "What next?" Shorthand has been known and practiced in England for nearly three hundred years. The art is, indeed peculiarly the product of English soil and of the English mind. He merely brought before them a good, and he would now add, a popular system, based on the principles of phonetic science, and harmonizing with the latest deductions of philosophy.

THE REPORTERS' GALLERY IN LONDON.

If the old generation of gallery men who relied much on their literary capacity and very little on their shorthand notes, could only pay a visit to the scenes of their old triumphs they would think that times had very much changed indeed. The close paddock, which they guarded with jealous eyes, has been invaded by associations and combination corps, telephones and telegraph instruments have been brought within the sacred precincts, and the gallery has lost nearly all of its distinctive features which endeared it to the old veterans who look on this as of quite another race of beings. It may be said that the facilities given in the new Houses of Parliament, and the introduction of improved systems of shorthand, give the *coup de grace* to the old order of things. Under the new apportionment it is said that Mr. Goodyear, who was leader of the *Daily Telegraph* corps last session, will form a corps for Scotch work. Four of the *Standard* men have died recently—three from heart disease, and one from apoplexy. The conditions under which London men work are not favourable to longevity. Some of the best assurance offices will not take a pressman's life, except at an advanced premium.—*The Reporter's Magazine*.

THE BENEFITS OF SHORTHAND.

We clip the following extract from an address delivered by Mr. Gordon Fraser, of Galloway, which appeared in the *Phonetic Journal*: "A long time ago the need was felt of a rapid system of recording thought, and we are told that Cicero, the great Roman orator, was on one occasion attended in the Forum by a body of shorthand writers. There were other indications that rapid writing was not unknown about the beginning of the christian era. Dur-

ing the middle ages but little trace of it was to be found. Soon after the invention of printing, however, the art came forth from its obscurity, and during the last three centuries more than two hundred systems of shorthand have been given to the public. Now we have phonography, which combines the brevity and incunuity which is necessary for *verbatim* reporting. The acquirement of this art is sure to improve the taste and increase the sum of knowledge of those who should master it. Its characters had all the charms and fascination inseparable from "lines of beauty," while it improved pronunciation, strengthened the memory, and induced habits of neatness and precision. By its aid, the thoughts of the great and wise might be gleaned from their writings, and the burning eloquence of the orator faithfully secured by its winged characters. Science, art, commerce, and religion itself were indebted to it."

JOURNALISM IN THE FAR EAST.

In the British colony of Hong-Kong, and the treaty ports of China and Japan, there are eleven English newspapers, all of them, with the exception of two, being published daily. In Hong-Kong there are two dailies, the *Daily Press*, and the *China Mail*. Each paper employs shorthand reporters, who find plenty of work to do. The circulation of these papers are necessarily limited, the result being that they are high-priced—£5 per annum. The Chinese, of whom there are about 130,000 in Hong-Kong, do not read the foreign journals to any extent, but few of them being able to read English: still the leading Chinese merchants patronize them. One little Chinaman was employed in translating and reporting on the staff of the *China Mail* for about ten years. He was able to write a paragraph or report a speaker with singular nicety and accuracy. He did not learn any system of shorthand, but he wrote an abbreviated longhand with great rapidity. The native press in Hong-Kong is represented by Chinese issues of the two papers mentioned above, and by a Chinese paper called the *Herald*. It is a startling fact that among the four hundred millions of people in China, there are only three newspapers published—one at Shanghai, and two at Pekin, and yet three-fourths of the male adults are able to read. The *Shanghai Sin Poo* is run by a Mandarin. The *Pekin Gazette*, said to be the oldest paper in the world, is merely a record of memorials to the throne and the Imperial decrees. Shanghai also possesses two English papers, the *Daily News* and the *Courier*. In Foochow we have the *Herald* and the *Shipping Gazette*. The press has advanced considerably in Japan. There are four daily papers published at Yokohama, three English and one French. It has also an illustrated *Punch*, edited by an Englishman. Unlike China, Japan possesses a large number of native newspapers, and they are fairly representative of a people who are energetically engaged in the work of national progress.—*The Journalist*.