

STENOGRAPHY—ITS UTILITY.

There is a story. A village watch man who had caught a thief red-handed, was detailing before the Munshi of the Thana, the articles recovered. The recorder's pen was running smoothly as the tongue of the reciter was gliding glibly when suddenly there was a dead stop.

"Go on", shouted the Scribbler.

"I can go on, but you can't."

"Why?"

"Where are your materials? The paper you have with you won't do. It is a huge thing with four legs, two horns and a stupendous body."

"Speak right out, man."

It was a big bull. The Munshi at once wrote down the word "bull". The watchman looked agape and flung his arms round his neck, screaming out interjections, voicing forth astonishment at a bull enclosed within half-an-inch space.

Shorthand springs even greater surprise. The formidable looking sesquipedalian words of the English language are 'cabined, cribbed and confined' within even narrower limits. But how? It is a puzzle to the lay world. The rich English language cannot be memorised conventionally. It is a pity that Stenography being 'outside the College curriculum is not within the pale of understanding of the general educated public. It represents quite phonetically—and the alphabet and the method of spelling of the language do not—all the sounds of English. Thus, superfluties are scraped off and the shortcomings supplied. The result is that from the very name, to the uttermost extent of the function, the letters, the diphthongs, the triphones and the rest of the combinations in various ways are perfectly phonetic. The letter 'g' has not the faintest resemblance to the sound of 'ग'. Still, the Almighty

'God' has to suffer the indignity of being enfeebled under the tyranny of English spelling which peremptorily prescribes 'G' for its representation. Quite significantly has a linguist remarked,—“It is ridiculous to write 'God' with 'G.’” The system of phonography as invented by Sir Isaac Pitman, has been brought almost to perfection by brains, working at it for over a century. This subject which the students of our College have the privilege to learn through the kind patronage of our venerable Principal, under a practical life-long veteran, is proving a highly interesting, I should say, “a fascinating study” to quote Prof. Bernard De Bear, the well-known English expert. The study is a positive advantage. It not only enriches the vocabulary of the learned but teaches him correct, up-to-date academic pronunciation as the system follows the Oxford School. It trains his ear in English, sounds as pronounced by Englishmen direct. It is indeed, a valuable aid to qualifying, not merely with a view to being presentable to the cultured Society but to be worth something as a bread-winner in these days of unemployment. Shorthand, besides, if learnt and practised properly, quickens the power of understanding English as spoken by those whose mother-tongue is English. And that goes a long way now-a-days in placing within the reach of the votary of the art, a powerful string to his bow, even if it be a second string.* The game, to all intents and purposes, certainly is worth the candle.

Culture or no culture, the proverb always speaks the unalloyed truth “It is always a question of money”, and when Shorthand renders great help in that direction, its study on that score, if not on any other, cannot be considered negligible, at least by those who cannot avoid the consideration of earning money to enter into their project of high education. The A. B. Patrika lately declares the appointment of a Bengali B.Sc. on Rs 150 a month as senior Reporter to the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, Bengal. He bears the Govt. Diploma for 140 words a minute in shorthand while

holders of the same degree in Science are scouring the streets of the City in vain search for a job of even a quarter of that amount.

Let me conclude here with the immortal words of the sweet Swan of Avon, "Look on this picture and on that,"
More, however, in my next.

Anilendranath Dass.

4th year, B.A.

SOMETHING ABOUT BOY SCOUTS.

Lieutenant General Baden-Powel attained great popularity by his brilliant defence of Mafeking during the Boer War. After the war he organised the South African Constabulary, and was Inspector-General of Cavalry 1903-1907. He founded the Boy Scouts organisation in 1908.

The Boy-Scouts movement, founded by Lieutenant-General Sir Baden-Powel "to help the boys of whatever class to become all-round men," has been developed with great speed and success. There are 10,000 Scouts in the United Kingdom, and over 15,00,00 in other parts of the world. The movement has been extended to girls even.

Every boy who wants to become a Scout becomes first of all a Tenderfoot in some local Patrol, in command of which there is a Scout-master. He is a man who has not lost his taste for the things he loved as a boy, and is ready to give his time to training Scouts, not only for their sake, but because he likes it.

After a month's training the boy promises three things, and if he can pass the tests he becomes a Scout. First, he will do his duty to God and the King; secondly, he will help other