

**MEDICAL REPORTING;  
CASE TAKING, AN  
ATTEMPT TO PROVE  
THAT IT IS NECESSARY**

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Medical reporting; case taking, an attempt to prove that it is necessary by Samuel Crompton

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**SAMUEL CROMPTON**

**MEDICAL REPORTING;  
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THAT IT IS NECESSARY**



# MEDICAL REPORTING;

OR,

## CASE-TAKING:

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE MEDICAL ATTENDANTS OF FAMILIES TO RECORD THE PARTICULARS OF THEIR PATIENTS' ILLNESSES, AND THE PECULIARITIES OF THEIR CONSTITUTIONS; IN ORDER TO TREAT THEIR ILLNESSES WITH DUE CARE;

WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE HITHERTO PREVENTED MEDICAL CASE-TAKING FROM BECOMING GENERAL.

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BY SAMUEL CROMPTON,

SURGEON TO HENSHAW'S BLIND ASYLUM, MANCHESTER.

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'Exact information is difficult to furnish, from the general neglect of all Medical Reporting; and this arises less from indifference or want of zeal, than from no general mode being devised that all may adopt.'—*Dr. Barlow, of Bath, in the Transactions of the Provincial Medical Association.*

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PRINTED IN PHONOTYPY.

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7. The Insular Possessions of the United States  
8. The Government of the United States  
9. The History of the United States  
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30. The Constitution of the United States

TO JAMES BEARDOE, ESQ.

OF ARDWICK,

A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL MANCHESTER INSTITUTION,

ETC. ETC. ;

AS A SMALL BUT SINCERE TOKEN OF THE WRITER'S

GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM.





## INTRODUCTION.

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THE reader will expect to be informed why the following pages are not printed in the ordinary type. I am prepared to hear the types in which they *are* printed, condemned by all my readers who are not acquainted with the discoveries of Mr. PITMAN, of Bath, and who have not observed the extreme care with which his inventions have been matured, or who have not inquired into the principles on which they are founded. If there be among my readers one person more violently opposed to Phonotypy than the rest, I can assure him that I was at one time quite as strongly opposed to it;—and I would earnestly request him to read the following statement of the difficulties and prejudices that I had to overcome, before I arrived at my present conviction, which is, that the odd-looking characters in which this book is printed, are part of *one of the greatest inventions of modern times*. When I began to practice medicine, I thought that it was my duty to keep records of my patients' illnesses, and I tried to do so in the manner which I was accustomed to pursue when I was Clinical Clerk to Dr. P. M. Latham, physician extraordinary to the Queen, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. I found, however, that a briefer mode of reporting was necessary than that which is adopted in the London hospitals, and that *formulae* were also needed for the purpose of taking cases well. From that time to the present, (a period of seven years,) my attention has been continually directed to the discovery of a better mode of reporting cases. The first thing to be done was to discover a *briefer mode of writing*. The ordinary systems of short-hand were altogether unsuitable, because they were not legible or decipherable some months after they were written. In 1841, a lecturer came to Manchester, professing to teach a new kind of short-hand, which he said was decipherable at any distance of time. I did not attend his lecture, for I had seen no notice of its being about to be given, but I read a very strong condemnation of the system in a leading journal, from which I drew the inference that this new mode of writing was not worthy of my attention. But this lecturer was Mr. PITMAN, who came to teach the very system of writing which it is the object of these pages to recommend as the only means of overcoming the *first* difficulty in taking cases in the private practice of medicine. The

man who wrote that attack on Mr. Pitman's short-hand, *made me waste several years of my life*. The attack was unjust, and the proprietors of the journal in which it appeared, afterwards declared that they had been *mistaken*. But the prejudice I had imbibed was not easily removed. I made no inquiries respecting *Phonography*, till, one day, while I was waiting for a newspaper in a public room, I took up a copy of Mr. Pitman's Manual of *Phonography*, and read the Introduction, which made a considerable impression on my mind. I soon afterwards bought a copy of his book, and began to pay some little attention to *Phonography*. But it was a long time before the great advantages of the art as a means of recording cases, became strongly fixed in my mind; and it was still longer before I understood the vast importance of Mr. Pitman's discovery of *Phonography*. It is only within the last five or six months that I have clearly seen the advantages of *Phonotypy*, that is, of the mode of printing adopted in this pamphlet. I candidly confess that the new characters do look very *queer*, but when I feel disposed to laugh at them, I call to mind the following story from Goldsmith:—

'A traveller, in his way to Italy, happening to pass at the foot of the Alps, found himself in a country where the inhabitants had each a large excrescence depending from the chin, like the pouch of a monkey. This deformity, as it was endemic, and the people little used to strangers, it had been the custom, time immemorial, to look upon as the greatest ornament to the human visage. Ladies grew toasts from the size of their chins, and none were regarded as pretty fellows, but such whose faces were broadest at the bottom. It was Sunday—the country church was at hand, and our traveller was willing to perform the duties of the day. Upon his first appearance at the church door, the eyes of all were naturally fixed upon the stranger, but what was their amazement, when they found that he actually wanted that emblem of beauty, a pursed chin?\*' This was a defect that not a single creature had sufficient gravity (though they were noted for being grave) to withstand. Stifled bursts of laughter, winks, and whispers, circulated from visage to visage, and the prismatic figure of the stranger's face was a fund of infinite gaiety; even the parson, equally remarkable for his gravity and his chin, could hardly refrain joining in the good humour. Our traveller could no longer patiently continue an object for deformity to point at. 'Good folks,' said he, 'I perceive that I am the unfortunate cause of all this good humour. It is true, I may have faults in abundance, but I shall never be induced to reckon my want of a swelled face among the number.'

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\* Note of laughter.

Now this new invention of Phonotypy is *the* stranger among us. We may all laugh at it as a very Utopian invention, but we may be assured that our contempt for it will be just as absurd as the laughter of the congregation of *goldred* people mentioned in the story. The truth is, however we may attempt to disguise the fact, that there are deformities in our mode of spelling and printing, not less hideous than those frightful bodily deformities which occur in the Alps from enlargement of the thyroid gland; and however witty we may be at the expense of the strange types and spellings by which it is proposed to rid us of our incubus, the new types are nevertheless the genuine standard of what our writing ought to be, just as the stranger's neck (or as Goldsmith has it, the *chain*) was the true standard of what the human neck should be. Men may say that I am an enthusiast, but I am no *solitary* dreamer; I belong to a body of above a thousand individuals, who have formed themselves into a Society, to carry out Mr. Pitman's grand reform in literature. WATT waited ten years before he could get any one to try his steam-engine; Napoleon's commissioners reported that Fulton's invention of steam navigation was impracticable. Steam vessels now pass from England to America, yet the scientific men of those days (and they were men of great ability) said that it was not possible to pass from Calais to Dover in a steamer!

But it is time to unfold the nature and *principles* of this invention of Mr. Pitman's. No one will deny that it would be a great assistance to a child in learning to read, if the letters in which a book is printed were a sure guide to the pronunciation; that is to say, if the letters suggested the sounds, just as the notes in printed music suggest to the musician the true reading of a piece of music. In music this is accomplished by having signs which always stand for the same note, and no other. The signs which Mr. Pitman has invented represent in like manner the sounds which are heard in the English language. The following instances will show in what respects his system of spelling and printing differs from the old. In the old system of spelling, many words are spelt alike, and yet pronounced differently, or *vice versa*. In the following words ending in *ough*, the pronunciation is in each instance different: *cough*, *bough*, *though*, *through*, *rough*, *hough*, *hiccough*, *ought*; so that the knowledge of the pronunciation of one of these words is no guide to the pronunciation of the rest. Hence it is obvious that the child or the foreigner, in learning our language, has to commit the pronunciation of each word to memory. But why should there not be letters invented which shall show the true pronunciation. Why are there not types invented which will give the child the same assistance in learning to read, as musical notes do in learn-