

**THE FACTORS OF SHORTHAND SPEED;
OR, HOW TO BECOME A STENOGRAPHIC
EXPERT. A BOOK OF
PRACTICAL AIDS AND SUGGESTIONS TO
THE STUDENT, THE TEACHER, AND THE
YOUNG REPORTER**

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The factors of shorthand speed; or, How to become a stenographic expert. A book of practical aids and suggestions to the student, the teacher, and the young reporter by David Wolfe Brown

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DAVID WOLFE BROWN

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A Book of Practical Aids and Suggestions to the Student,
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BY
DAVID WOLFE BROWN

Late Official Reporter, U. S. House of Representatives;

Author of "The Mastery of Shorthand," "The Learner's Needless
Burdens," "The Hand and Its Handicaps," "What Has
Half a Century Done for Shorthand?" "The
— Rationale of Phrasing," etc.

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"We are making in office and court and legislative hall, the reputation and the future of shorthand and reporters. If we do well, we shall be honored and well paid; if not, the reverse. Whatever adds to our skill and encourages us all, is desirable. Friendly contests in skill keep alive that 'enthusiastic perseverance which is often mistaken for genius.' I believe in all things which make us better reporters and educate people as to what a stenographer ought to be able to do."—Fred Ireland.

"The race of the accomplished stenographer after, or rather with, the rapid and cultivated speaker, is one of the most interesting spectacles which can engage the attention of the mind. There is an indescribable exhilaration in the contest. *Ce n'est pas la Victoire que fait la joie des noble coeurs; c'est le Combat.*"—Eugene Davis.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

“The Factors of Shorthand Speed” has long been regarded as a shorthand classic. Since its author died, the book has been in great demand, and copies of it have been at a premium. We consider ourselves fortunate in having been able to purchase the copyright from the heirs of Mr. Brown, thereby being enabled to place this helpful and inspiring book in the hands of students and writers of shorthand.

While much of the advice contained in “The Factors of Shorthand Speed” applies to the peculiarities of the style of shorthand most in vogue at the time Mr. Brown acquired the art, and, in fact, up to the time the book was first published, there are enough helpful suggestions of a general nature to well repay perusal by writers of any system. Not a line in the original book has been changed, and the only addition is in the form of occasional footnotes containing comments of an explanatory nature.

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INTRODUCTORY.

"The Speed Secret"

It is a sad fact that many a student, after devoting months to the study of an art which temptingly offers itself as a system of swift writing, finds himself unable to use the art with even the rapidity of longhand. Other students, somewhat more successful, fail after long continued efforts to obtain amanuensis speed. Still others, possessing for months or years the skill of the office stenographer, find themselves constantly baffled in their attempts to follow some of the easiest of public speakers. The young shorthand writer, aspiring to "speed," and perhaps working hard to secure the much-coveted prize, feels often as if there must be some "secret" which others have found, but which has eluded his own patient search.

Appealing to this eager desire for the "speed secret," there appear from time to time men who are ready "for a consideration" to communicate some "short and easy" method of re-

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moving the ponderous obstacles that block the young stenographer's path. While I write, there lies on my desk a pamphlet purporting to come from an "official reporter," and attractively styled "The Speed Secret." A part of the precious information which this pamphlet offers to the world for the paltry sum of fifty cents, is the following:

"Good speed practice for the hand is to write the figure three as rapidly as possible. You will be surprised to find how few threes you can make the first minute, and equally surprised to find how quickly practice increases speed. The sustained precision of hand required to make a couple of hundred threes rapidly is just what is required for shorthand."

But the "speed secret" is not always offered at so low a price as fifty cents. There lies before me another version of the "speed secret," which (though comprised in two typewritten pages) has been sold to many a "speed" seeker for five dollars. The author's advice in this case covers but two points: First, copy over and over again and then repeatedly write from dictation, some of the published specimens of the author's shorthand; second, take care that the dictation is al-

ways about five words a minute slower than the rate at which you can write!

Another author undertakes to show "how great a gain may be realized by writing shorthand with both hands simultaneously!" "It is evident," he says, "that if we can write 100 words per minute with the right hand, and 90 with the left, we can write 190 words per minute, provided we can unite the capacity of the two hands. That is accomplished by employing each hand to write each alternate word of a passage. For example, 'To be contents his natural desire.' 'To' may be written with either hand; but we will suppose it is written with the left hand. A little in advance 'be' may be written with the right hand; and in advance of this, 'contents' with the left; then 'his' with the right; 'natural' with the left hand; and 'desire' with the right hand."

Unfortunately this author does not state that he or any one else has ever been able to reduce this scheme, so beautiful in theory, to actual practice.

Sometimes the shorthand student, disappointed again and again in his efforts to write rapidly, says to himself, "My hand will move only so