

## THE NEWSPAPERS OF THE WORLD.



HAT our American cousins love to do all things on a large scale, appears to be the natural consequence of living in so vast a country, and being surrounded by such large influences and interests. But to those who are not yet accustomed to their manner of work, its minuteness and accuracy are a source of equal wonder. It is like looking alternately through the large and small ends of opera-glasses. The latest instance of this sort which has come to my notice, and calls forth these comments, is a sample of what its author would call "Judicious Advertising."

It is hard enough that, as we approach our own railway stations, our eyes should be annoyed by the reiterated yellow and blue advertisements of mustard and laundry-blue manufacturers, but mercifully we are not yet given over to the hands of barbarians who paint their own horrible names in gigantic characters on the face of crags which we would fain have deemed inaccessible, but which to these indomitable advertisers of the States offer only a desirable field for obtaining cheap notoriety.

If only these Goths would abstain from desecrating beautiful nature, we could better forgive them for elaborating their really ingenious devices on the railway fences and such-like tempting spots. For instance, we could scarcely withhold some admiration from a draper near San Francisco, who attracted our attention by a long disjointed sentence which compelled us to read it while slowly moving across the great sea-bridge—"IF YOU SHOULD MEET WITH A RAILWAY ACCIDENT AND BE KILLED you could not then, on reaching the City of San Francisco, visit the store of the world-famed Elijah Thompson, and buy the best linen shirts at twelve dollars the dozen."

But it was not of such oddities in the advertising line that I purposed now to speak. The latest sample which has been brought to my notice, has reached me in the form of two large handsome volumes, bound and edged with scarlet, and extensively gilt. They are decorated on one side with the design of an archway, of which each stone represents some good quality, while the honoured centre announces that "JUDICIOUS ADVERTISING is the KEY-STONE OF SUCCESS."

This work contains the names of 34,000 newspapers, magazines, and quarterlies, published in every empire, kingdom, nation, province, and island of the globe, with much curious information regarding them, and many other matters.

The first volume, as might be expected, is well filled with the 11,207 newspapers and periodicals of the United States, and 624 of British North America. The second volume is devoted to all the rest of the

world, and very curious lights are thus thrown on the characteristics of various nations.

How the grand total is distributed over the earth, and the number of copies per annum in proportion to each inhabitant, is shown below.

	Population.	Number of Publications.	Proportion per Head.
Europe ... ..	301,356,369	19,557	24'38
North America ... ..	76,033,776	12,400	36'66
Asia ... ..	1,007,128,657	775	0'01
South America ... ..	29,988,509	699	3'92
Australasia ... ..	3,670,850	661	30'63
Africa ... ..	205,000,000	182	0'01

Hence we perceive that Europe still keeps precedence numerically, though, in view of the proportion to population, North America and Australasia have far outstripped the Old World, notwithstanding the vast extent of territory over which they are scattered. Europe and North America combined are shown to have an area of only one-fourth of the habitable globe, and one-fourth of its population, yet they produce considerably more than nine-tenths (93'23 per cent.) of all publications in existence.

How the proportion per head is arrived at, does not appear, inasmuch as a certain number of English publishers refuse to make known their circulation. These, however, are but a very limited number, so are not supposed largely to affect the total. A free calculation shows that, including dailies, weeklies, and monthlies, the presses of America annually issue nearly 2,800,000,000 copies per annum—a ceaseless shower of literary snow-flakes for ever floating around each remote centre of Anglo-Saxon life. Australasia annually distributes upwards of 112,000,000 copies of her home-printed papers, while the annual production of Europe runs up to 7,300,000,000 copies—mingled showers of every conceivable quality, good, bad, and indifferent, every shade of opinion, and on every topic under heaven.

A further calculation shows Great Britain to be the country best supplied with newspapers, while Belgium ranks next, and the United States third. The ratio of copies yearly distributable to each person in these three nations is as follows: Great Britain, 64'01; Belgium, 59'20; the States, 51'06.

But while the total number of British publications does not exceed 4,082, the German Empire produces 5,529 periodicals of all sorts, and thus ranks next to the United States in the variety of literature she provides. It is considered somewhat remarkable that, in a land so eminent for scholarship, there should be so small a proportion of monthly and quarterly magazines—not more than five per cent. of the grand total.

London, as might be expected with its population of 4,000,000, takes precedence of all other great cities in its list of publications, which very nearly approaches 2,000. These have an annual circulation of about 1,017,000,000 copies. The mere list of their names occupies seventy-three pages of fine print in this great

Directory, and in looking over them one feels positively bewildered to think of all the enormous amount of incessant quill-driving and editing involved by the never-ending requirements of so vast a multitude of publications.

But while London shows a longer catalogue than any other city, Paris, with a population of less than 2,000,000, issues 1,553 periodicals, and these have an annual circulation of about 1,100,000,000 copies; so that, in point of fact, the citizens of Paris are far more liberally supplied with daily or weekly literary provender than their British neighbours. In fact it is estimated that the journalistic products of Paris amount annually to almost one-tenth of the issue of the entire press of the globe.

New York and Brooklyn (which bear to one another somewhat the same relation as Birkenhead to Liverpool) have a combined population nearly equal to that of Paris. They produce 587 publications, with an annual circulation of about 516,000,000; Berlin produces 536; Vienna, 483; Madrid, 253; Brussels, 233; Rome, 213, showing a gradual diminution till we reach St. Petersburg, with a population of 667,963, and a newspaper issue numbering 183, and Moscow with a population of 601,969 and only 57 periodicals. The latter, however, are exceedingly varied, and offer something for all tastes—literary classes, medical students, horse-breeders, stock-rearers, musical societies, law, mathematics, horticulture, agriculture, the drama, commerce, satire, history, ecclesiastical questions, science, and a very limited allowance of politics.

I must not omit to notice one point of interest, suggested by the languages which chiefly predominate in this vast newspaper literature. Though there are comparatively few tongues which are not in some measure represented, we find that an enormous majority are published in four languages. As a matter of course English heads the list, inasmuch as English-speaking races have peopled North America and Australasia. The German races rank second, the French third, and Spanish fourth; but, inasmuch as the latter tongue is the *lingua franca* of Mexico and South America, it is probable that it will find a more extensive circulation in print as these nations advance. Meanwhile, the proportion is as follows:—English, 16,500 publications; German, 7,350; French, 3,850; Spanish, 1,600.

Taking the nationality of the 34,000 papers of the world, we find that close upon 32,000 are published in Europe and North America, leaving little over 2,000 for all the rest of the world! South America only issues a sufficient number to allow each of its inhabitants three newspapers a year—exhibiting the curious contrast in this, as in all else, between the great Northern and Southern Continents.

The combined annual product of Asia and Africa amounts to 227,000,000, which, in proportion to the population, would allow one copy in ten years for each person. Of course the newspaper circulation of Africa is confined to the extreme north and south, with a very feeble commencement on the west coast. In like manner Asia has neither supply nor demand

except in parts of Turkey, Persia, China, and Japan. Not a newspaper of any sort is to be found in Arabia, Afghanistan, Beloochistan, or Turkestan.

Strange to say, China, that nation which of all others holds literature (that is to say, its own dry-as-dust classics concerning a remote past) in highest honour, has so small a thirst for news of the present day, that it produces fewer papers than any other nation with the smallest claim to civilisation. The proportion of newspapers to population is in the ratio of about one publication to 2,000,000 inhabitants. The Chinese Empire produces only twenty-two periodicals, of which twelve are in Chinese, nine in English, and one in French. Even of this small number, the circulation is extraordinarily small, and, as a rule, a newspaper may be said to be a thing unknown to the 400,000,000 inhabitants of the Celestial Empire.

With three exceptions, all China's very limited newspaper-list are published at four of the treaty ports open to foreigners. Shanghai has given birth to fifteen—Ningpo, Foochow, and Amoy are answerable for the others. Of the three exceptions, two are published at Hankow, 700 miles from the mouth of the great river Yang-tsi-Kiang—a water-way which, by opening communication with the sea-ports, has perhaps tended to introduce this ephemeral literature. Even Canton (so near to the British colony of Hong Kong, where emancipated Chinamen attain to many enlarged ideas, and which publishes ten English and four Chinese papers) with its population of 1,500,000, has not one publication of any sort.

The third exception, and the sole newspaper of vast Northern China, is the *Pekin Gazette*, a purely official publication, containing only imperial edicts and official information, and to a description of which a special article in this Magazine, entitled "A Chinese Newspaper," was devoted some little time ago.\*

In strange contrast with this terribly conservative old nation, which will not assimilate any new ideas from the outer world, and which cares nothing for any history more recent than that of Confucius, stands the ultra-progressive Empire of Japan, whose people are so painfully willing to adopt indiscriminately whatever new thing is offered to them by foreigners. In nothing is this readiness more apparent than in the rapid development of a wide-spread system of newspapers, of which upwards of 250 are now produced by the native press, and circulate freely among the masses. The newspaper shops in all the principal native cities are invariably crowded with eager purchasers, thirsting for the latest news of all sorts.

But, though Japan offers the most striking instance of rapid development which the world has ever known, the present enormous efflorescence of the press throughout the world is almost bewildering to those who recall its very limited expansion only fifty years ago. The contrast between the supply of inferior, badly-printed, and wretchedly-illustrated papers and magazines, in the early years of men still only middle-aged, with the superabundant feast now so profusely

\* See CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, January, 1884.

heaped before them, is as marked as that afforded by the early spring, when a handful of half-blown wild flowers rewards the patient seeker, as compared with that wonderful awakening which, perhaps but a few days later, carpets the whole earth with blossoms.

The work to which I have referred, and from which I glean my facts, is illustrated with an exceedingly interesting series of fac-similes of groups of the leading papers of all nations, beginning with one printed in London in the year 1622, when papers and periodicals first began to circulate. It is called "Weekely Nevves from Italy, Germanie, HVNGARIA, BoHEmia, the Palatinate, France, and the Low Countries. Translated out of the Low Dutch Copie and sold at Nicholas Bourne's shop in Pope's-head Pallace." This is apparently the fac-simile of a rudely-carved wood-block, and is the size of an average magazine. Next in chronology comes a "RECVEIL DES GAZETTES de l'année 1631," adorned with the royal arms. This is a fac-simile of the first number of *La Gazette de France*, which continues to run its course.

Very quaint indeed is the title-page of *The Reading Mercury, or Weekly Entertainer*, as it appeared in 1723—a weekly issue of eight pages, also the size of an average magazine, with frontispiece suggestive of Albert Dürer, showing a rude sketch of Reading in the background, with allegorical figures in the foreground and in the clouds.

Next we find a group of early American papers, published at Boston and at Baltimore between the years 1704 and 1775. We may note that 1704 was the year in which the very first newspaper issued by the American press was printed at Boston. Then comes a full-page reproduction of *The Times, or Universal Register*, as printed in London in 1778—a curious sample of an advertisement sheet 100 years ago.

These groups are evidently reduced by microscopic photography, reproduced so as to resemble steel-engraving, and yet be only legible with the strongest magnifying-glass. One such group represents the open broad-sheets of five London "dailies," with the *Times* as a grand centre.

Groups of forty Spanish papers, of sixteen Roman, of forty South American, of twenty-seven religious papers of the Western States, of twenty-two prominent German newspapers, of sixteen French provincial

papers, of fifteen Parisian illustrated papers, of the ten leading fashion journals of the States, and of nineteen German illustrated papers, are given so admirably that we seem to see the very page, grave or comic, illustrated or plain. We wonder, too, at the ingenuity displayed in obtaining such variety in the arrangement of a series of oblong sheets.

A whole page apiece is devoted to the fac-similes of a strange-looking Russian journal and of sundry papers in intricate Oriental characters—the Shah's official organ in Persian character, the *Times* of Constantinople in Turkish, three papers printed at Bombay in cranky-looking Indian characters; also two Chinese papers, and one in modern Greek, printed on the island of Syra.

Then we have full-page fac-similes of a Hawaiian paper, of a Buenos-Ayres journal, of an American-German paper, and of one from Amsterdam; also of the *Indépendance Belge*; the *Times* of Capetown, South Africa; *Le Figaro*, Paris; *La Mode Illustrée*; the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, and a number of other papers, commercial and religious. The *Iowa State Leader*, the *Saturday Evening Call*, and the *Pittsburg Dispatch* are represented with corners of pages cunningly folded back, so as to show the interior and vary the subject. The *Western Rural* shows us a large page of illustrated advertisements of agricultural implements, fat cattle, gigantic vegetables, and bunches of grapes, samples of wire-fencing, and many other objects on so small a scale as to necessitate the use of a strong magnifying-glass to read their story.

Referring to the early history of newspaper advertising, we learn that the very first example of anything of this nature is found in a curious old German newspaper-pamphlet preserved in the British Museum, and printed in 1591. Its *news* is not very recent, being chiefly a summary of events of the four previous years! In 1657 *The Shipping Intelligencer* was published in London, giving details of shipping and commercial ventures, and in the following year *The Commonwealth Mercury* commenced inserting advertisements. Fifteen of these appear in one issue, the cost of insertion being apparently eight lines for a shilling, or twopence per line. But at the beginning of the eighteenth century a State duty of one shilling per advertisement was imposed, whereupon, of course, prices rose.

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