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ENGLISH PAPER MAKERS. That there are not numerous corrections to be made by political speakers, who are

WORK AND WAGES OF WRITERS AND COMPOSITORS IN LONDON.

Big Sums Paid Members of Editorial Staffs-Hard and Fast Lines Within Which Reporters Toll-The "Printer's" Duties and Wide Authority.

[Copyright by American Press Association.] News gathering, as it is understood and News gathering, as it is understood and practiced in America, is tabooed in En-glish journalism. Reporters work in restricted paths. They cannot interview and must not anticipate anything in the way of news. If Bob Smith, after a long career of brutality, is at last arrested for beating bis wife, the bars fact may be beating his wife, the bare fact may be tated, but the details of the assault must ot be given until they are set forth off-



M. DE BLOWITZ

cially in the police court next day. Should Sir Humphrey Makeshift elope with Squire Bolingbroke's wife a discreet silence must be preserved until a bill for divorce s filed, and then it is often prudent to only hint at the names of the parties until the trial begins. No comments must be made on a case sub judice. Everything must "happen" in the fullest sense of the term before it can be presented to newspaper readers, and then it must be set forth in a stiff, established form.

Sensationalism is frowned upon, personalities rigidly prohibited and piquant gos-sip strictly forbidden. In fact an English reporter gets no chance to "spread" him-self. He may report a speech in the best style known to the stenographic wit; he mr.y write up a fire in stereotyped phrases, or give the list of prizes at a flower show with the descriptive aid of the catalogue, but to presume to exercise his fancy in recording the shifting scenes of life would entail upon him the severest kind of censure, if not instant dismissal, with the editorial verdict that he was a disgrace to the profession.

One result of this policy of repression is that the reporter becomes a mere machine. He goes through a daily routine mechanically, takes and transcribes his shorthand notes like an automaton, and addles his brain with parrot like phrases that have done duty for time immemorial, and will probably continue to enhance the dulness of British journalism until the crack of doom. He is a reporter pure and simple, whose ears have to be acuter than his eyes, and whose usefulness is graded according to his ability to write shorthand and his celerity of transcription Whatever de-scriptive matter is needed by a British newspaper is generally done by a "special commissioner," whose work is heavy com-pared with that of the average American news gatherer, but who would feel insulted were he classed with the ordinary reporters of his journal

The highest ambition of an English reporter is to be employed on the parliamentry staff of a London daily. Great pains are taken with parliamentary reporting, each journal maintaining a separate force. of from five to eighteen men. Some of the newspapers only give the leading speeches, but The Times prints a very full report, devoting three or four pages a day to the proceedings of both houses. The Han-sard, which is recognized as the official record of the debates, is made up largely from The Times' report, members having the privilege of clipping from its pages and extending and correcting their remarks before publication in the official volumes. The Times has the largest reporting staff in parliament. The men begin with "turns" of half an hour or twenty minutes; late at night the "turns" are cut down to five or ten minutes, and the reporters drive to Printing House square to transcribe their notes. Their quarters are very comfortable. An extensive reference library is at their command, and so that they may not be disturbed in their work of transcription servants are constant y at their elbows to supply every want. In the matter of accommodation, both for editors and reporters, the English journals are very liberal. Each writer Las a separate room, and an electric bell within reach to summon an attendant, and five or six rooms are usually set apart for the re-

keenly sensitive to errors of statement, shows that the English reporter, however deficient he may be in other respects, can be relied upon for the greatest accuracy in reporting the utterances of public men. Even when condensed work is required full shorthand notes are taken. Thick marks are made by the side of important sentences, with the result that nothing material is omitted even if a speech has to be cut down a half or two-thirds.

Almost every prominent newspaper in England is generous in its dealings with its staff. Editors receive annual vacations of from one month to three, reporters have holidays of from two weeks to four, and the compositors, pressmen and stereotypers are granted at least a week in the year with full pay. Then there is a system of pensions for old servants in every department. Englishmen do not change their situations much. It is no uncommon thing to find reporters who have been connected with the same journal for thirty or forty years. When they reach the retiring age in some offices they receive a third or half their salary for life. Compositors fre-

quently step in for pensions after long ser-The "printer," as the foreman of a London daily is called, is a very important personage, and corresponds in some respects to our night editor. The "make up" is completely in his hands. He keeps careful track of the copy, and his word goes a long way with the sub-editor as to what shall or shall not run near press time. His men are the pick of the craft. Each one acquires considerable editorial ability; he is not a slavish follower of "copy," but reads for the sense, and is on the alert for blunders of omission or commission. His proofs are remarkably clean, and the printer keeps him up to the highest notch of perfection. Some of the printers are a little too autocratic and exacting. One on The Standard some years ago forbade the use of slugs to protect the matter after dumping. This rule developed exceptional steadiness of

nerve in the chapel, since the slightest shakiness was disastrous in the small hours when the "takes" ran about five lines each. The identity of writers is carefully concealed by English journals. Even the names of the editors are not known out-

side the profession. It is always The Times, The Telegraph, The Standard that addresses the public, and in no other coun-try is the editorial "we" so powerful. Many of the minor correspondents are as ignorant of the personality of the managers of the papers as the readers. They deal with The Standard, The Daily News, or The Times. The pay for newspaper work varies with the class of journal served. In London \$5,000 a year is easily earned by a leader writer, and there are several who run as high as \$10,000. Editors-in-chief receive from \$15, 000 to \$25,000. The Telegraph pays its Paris correspondent \$12,500 and expenses. He is very able writer, and sends daily two



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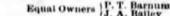


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porters, whose work is not very arduous as In the event of a speech by men like Gladstone or Lord Salisbury from six to eight men are detailed to report it, and their "copy" is all in by the time the speech is delivered. Neither the typewriter nor the phonograph has yet been called in to assist in reporting or transcribing. Some eminent men have graduated from the reporters' gallery of the house of commons. Charles Dickens was a parliamentary hand, and Mr. Lucy, the able editor-in-chief of The Daily News, began as a reporter on that paper.

The city editor of a London journal answers to our financial editor; he has noth ing to do with the news columns, and is held solely responsible for the reports of Stock Exchange and other financial transactions. The chief reporter has charge of the local news in the provinces. In London the minor courts, accidents, fires, etc., are supplied by "penny-a-liners." Reporters' copy is often delivered to the compoding room without revision; this is especially the case at night when parliament sits late.

printed in England; indeed, his letters are perfect pen pictures of life in the gay metropolis, and are comparable in point of attractiveness to the work of the best journalists in America. Men of note like Edwin Arnold, De Blo

witz and George Augustus Sala are said to earn fabulous sums. Arnold is at present writing to The Telegraph from Japan, and Sala has written a daily editorial for the same paper for twenty years, besides contributing largely to periodical literature. The Times has the largest staff of article writers of any journal in the world. A number who have made their mark in different branches of law and science have retainers of from \$1,000 to \$3,000 a year. and receive \$50 for each article they are called upon to contribute. War correspondents and special commissionersmen who do the descriptive work-receive from \$2,500 to \$10,000 per annum. Archibald Forbes had the latter sum, with carte blanche as to expenses, when he was with The Daily News. After his brilliant work during the war between Russia and Turkey the proprietors presented him with a check for \$10,000 in addition to his salary. From \$25 to \$50 per column is the remuneration of foreign correspondents not on the salary list of the leading newspapers. The rates paid by the principal

journals of the provinces are about onethird less all round. London reporters receive from \$30 to \$50

per week; in the provinces juniors get from \$6 to \$10, second and third hands from \$15 to \$25, and chiefs of staff from \$25 to \$40. The London press receives manifold reports of the transactions of the minor courts, accidents, fires, etc., and pays three and four cents per line for what is published. The Times employs several young barristers to make reports of the proceed ings of the higher courts. When cases of unusual public interest are on shorthand reporters are engaged to furnish verbatim accounts.

Compositors work on "piece," and earn in London from \$12 to \$5 a week, according to ability and luck in "takes." Like other English workmen, they do not overexert themselves. A "slogger," or one who is continually on the rush to make a "string," is frowned upon by the chapel. They get their beer or gin at regular intervals during the night, the chapel paying a man to wait upon them in this respect. Time hands get from \$15 to \$29 a k. In certain provincial towns time w paid, usually \$10.50 per week of fift hours. Proofreaders receive from \$1 JOHN W. POSTGATE \$25 a week.

The Depopulation of France.

The low birth rate in France, which means a gradual depopulation of the country, engaged the attention of the French academy the other day. M. Lagneau, af ter reading a paper on the subject, suggest ed these remedies among others: Simplifcation of the marriage laws, limitation of military service, elaboration of the colo-nial idea, naturalization of all the strangers in France, numbering 1,200,000, and the establishment of refuges for poor or unfortunate mothers, who would then have less excuse for abandoning their infants

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