

INTRODUCTION.

We owe the Coverley papers to English journalism. They appeared in *The Spectator*, a daily paper, first published March 1st, 1711.

"The first English journalists were the writers of 'news-letters,' originally dependants of great men, each employed in keeping his own master or patron well-informed, during his absence from court, of all that transpired there. The duty grew at length into a calling. The writer had his periodical subscription list, and instead of writing a single letter wrote as many letters as he had customers. Then one more enterprising than the rest established an 'intelligence office' with a staff of clerks." (*Brit. Enc.*) The Paston letters, written in the 15th century, afford good examples of the earlier "news-letters."

In the 16th century "news pamphlets" began to appear, and in the earlier years of the 17th they came in shoals. They bore such titles as *News from Spaine*, *News from all parts of Germany and Poland to this present 20 of October 1621*, *The certaine news of this present week ending 23rd August 1622*. The "news-letters" and "news-pamphlets" appeared at irregular intervals. *The Weekly News from Italy, Germany, etc.*, published May 23, 1622, was the first English *periodical* newspaper. In 1641, the *Diurnal Occurrences or Heads of the several proceedings in both Houses of Parliament*—the first to give authentic reports of the proceedings of parliament—appeared as a weekly. It was followed by shoals of "Mercuries," "Diurnals," "Scouts," "Intelligencers," etc. This