

Miscellaneous.

British Newspapers.

There are 210 newspapers of all descriptions, published in London and the metropolitan districts. Of these twenty are published daily; five of them being devoted exclusively to commercial and shipping affairs. Of the religious class, nine are conservative, advocating the opinions of the Church of England; seven are liberals, and advocate the various opinions of dissenters; and four defend the Roman Catholic creed. Seventeen journals are exclusively dedicated to various branches of commerce; nine papers attend to the concerns of railways, engineering, mining, and building. Agriculture is attended to by eight papers: and the turf, the prize ring, and what the French term *Le Sport*, by seven. Law supports four journals, and medicine the same number. Rifle volunteers and military subjects in general, are attended to by six. Musical matters and the theatre each occupy two journals. Three weekly papers criticise new books. The Pawnbrokers and the police have each one journal; court and fashionable matters have two.

In the thirty-nine counties of England (excluding Middlesex) there are about 580 journals, published at various prices, ranging from 1d. to 5d., nearly one-half the number being sold at 1d.; 230 of these support liberal political and religious views; 110 are conservative, or liberal conservative: 47 call themselves independent, and 193 are avowedly neutral.

The increase in the number of newspapers within the last twenty years may be counted by hundreds, and the circulation by hundreds of thousands. One of the penny dailies has a circulation of seventy thousand, and one of the cheap weekly more than three times as many. The political influence of a newspaper is not always in proportion to its circulation. The *Times* does not circulate sixty thousand copies daily, yet its influence, both on government and throughout the country, is incomparably greater than that of any other journal.

Wales publishes 32 papers; 28 printed in English, 4 in Welsh; of these, one third is liberal, another third neutral, and the remainder various shades.

Scotland publishes 160 papers; of which 90 are liberal, 17 conservative, 14 independent, and the remainder style themselves neutral.

Ireland numbers 138 newspapers; of which 38 are liberal and 38 conservative, 11 independent, and the remainder neutral.

There are 32 papers published in the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands.

The brief summary is 1,142 in number; of which 464 are liberal papers, 190 conservative and liberal conservative, 83 independent, and the remainder neutral.—*Scientific American*.

Important Telegraph Discovery.

An English paper makes public the discovery of a "telegraphic cable" and a mode of working it, that renders distance and the media through which such cable is laid, an auxiliary instead of an

obstruction, obtaining supplies of power from a hitherto unsuspected source. The invention is the product of William P. Piggott, of London, an eminent medical electrician. The peculiarity of the cable is that instead of requiring an enormous electrical charge to be forced through the whole length of a line by powerful batteries, at each successive transmission of a signal, as at present, in long sea and land routes, the wire continues statically charged as it is laid, whilst the least disturbance of the equilibrium of this passive electric charge—inoperative and uninfluenced until called into action by the operator—answers through all its length to the slightest transmitted influence, and so serves every practical purpose. The enormous tension that electric cables now undergo, arising from the great power of the electric current required for long distances, and which is believed to have caused the failure of all marine cables more than three hundred and fifty miles long hitherto laid, is thus obviated. The earth currents, which have previously been great obstacles, are absorbed and utilized. The cable depends for its supplies, either on the voltaic current created by bringing together wires of different electric property in its construction, or by self-acting generators placed at any desired distances throughout its length, as so many relays of power absorbing from the moisture of surrounding media, whether air, or earth, or sea, enough electricity to become statically charged; and so, at the slightest impulse, is capable of conveying communication to any conceivable distance. The invention is in the hands of the British government. Not its least merit is the probability that it will reduce the cost of telegraphic communication to a fifth of the present rates.

Manufactures from Human Hair.

In the Zoology section of the British Association Mr. Danson offered a few observations on the manufacture of human hair as an article of consumption and general use. He submitted for inspection specimens of articles manufactured from human hair, and which appeared to be of a very massive and heavy character. The paper ran thus: Truth goes farther than fiction; therefore I can say my sister conceived the idea, and caused the collection of about 3,500 pounds of human hair, in a few months in Liverpool, by one female, who was merely assisted by her husband and son in carrying it out, received £1 to £2 per week.—We had two shawls made from it—cotton warp, (exhibited to the section.) It is extremely warm and durable clothing; and with care and attention any quantity of the stuff can be obtained. It would appear fabulous to say that 100,000 or 200,000 bales might be obtained perhaps 500,000 or 1,000,000, could be obtained, even within twenty-one years, that is, annually, and of all sorts, both long and short, and of all which is at present wasted and not enumerated in the articles of commerce or of general consumption. I am authorised to state that this has been in the possession of Messrs. R. W. Ronald and Son, of Liverpool, for some years, who will forward 100lb weight to any consumer on receipt of a post-office order for £2 15s. (The items making up this sum, commission, &c., were enumerated.) The article is as collected; and heavy foreign sheep's wool, in dirt and grease,