

CIRCULATION.

IT is unfortunate that the word chosen to indicate the measure of a newspaper's value to the advertiser should be so ambiguous.

There is no such thing as a standard circulation like there are standard weights and measures. We know that one foot is made up of twelve units of equal and fixed value, called inches. Multiplying these units by any number will not alter their value one iota. Twelve inches equals one foot and ten thousand feet simply means ten thousand feet of twelve inches each; all of which is eminently fit and proper in this practical age.

But when we come to consider circulation in the light of a standard measurement, we find ourselves swamped in a sea of uncertainty. Ten thousand feet undoubtedly means ten thousand feet, but ten thousand circulation may mean almost anything. It all depends upon the principles of the publisher.

Some newspaper publishers claim that circulation means the number of copies printed, regardless of how many are destroyed or returned or given away. Other publishers, who have been endowed with very delicately-poised consciences, base their circulation claims on the number of revolutions made by the presses. This is what is known as "Cyclometer" circulation and is said to effect a considerable saving in the paper bill.

Another subterfuge practised by unscrupulous publishers is the publication of special diminutive editions for distribution in neighbouring countries. Most of the advertisements are eliminated from these miniature editions, but, curiously enough, the extra circulation secured is retained and capitalized.

Then, again, every advertiser is familiar with the old-fashioned publisher whose circulation statement is a succession of strong adjectives and interesting comparisons, such as how many copies of the Sun it would take to reach from the Earth to the Moon. These statements are usually supported by cordial but vague invitations to call and investigate.

And finally, we have to remember the hardened offenders who argue brazenly and often convincingly, that two and two make six or that ten inches equal one foot.