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Cherishing
Antiquated Tools

The present clutter of weights and measures would look better in a museum than in the marts of trade, declares Aubrey Drury, director of the All-American Standards Council, writing in the Rotarian (Chicago). In them we "cherish a collection of antiques," he affirms; antiques that may be granted "a certain quaint Elizabethan oddity," but which are in effect costly survivals of barbarism that invite fraud, mistakes, and misunderstandings in business deals. Even the roll-call of the names of these medieval relics, he believes, condemns these measures—revealing them in "all their ugly grotesqueness and diversity." For example:

"How many business men know the absurd unrelated units in which they are supposed to deal? Who will acknowledge acquaintance with these, all and sundry: bushels, pecks, barrels, minims, drams, yards, fathoms, links, chains, inches, lines, grains, drums, scruples, miles, pints and points, mills and gills, stones and cords, fathoms and furlongs, hands and feet, rods and pole, tons and tuns, fluid ounces and troy ounces, dry quarts and wet quarts, hundred-weights and pennyweights—why go on with the rest of the travesty?"

"The truth is, as Gladstone said, that nobody ever really learned this jumble. Who knows definitely, when the word 'ton' is used, what is meant thereby? Or 'quart'—or 'quart'—or 'bushel'—or 'ounce'—or 'hundred-weight'—or 'stone'? Possibly of the same names, many such diverse units are nevertheless of varying sizes and capacities.

"Could there be more flagrant invitations for fraud, mistakes and misunderstandings in commercial deals? Could any Code of Ethics be tight enough against such all-pervasive broadcasters of confusion and delusion? Can the guesswork be taken out of business as long as this jumble persists?"

"Yet modern business men, American and Canadian and British, transact their daily business with these decrepit medieval relics."

Many business folk, of course, know what should be done with these "battalions of irregulars." They should be banished forever, and their place taken by unit weights and measures of the Metric System. Every one knows, too, that such a change was long since made by many nations; and Mr. Drury tells us that in 1921 Japan and Russia definitely advanced to the international decimal standard—"so that in just that one year more humans went onto the metric basis than now in all the world employ the diverse units miscalled English." He goes on:

"Now you may well ask, in view of this world trend to simplified standards, why have the United States of America and the British Commonwealth lagged behind, at the tail end of the procession. To this the answer is: Lack of coordination and lack of leadership.

"We have almost adopted the metric standards several times. But while we were debating, other nations acted. Later, there has appeared an astounding tendency in English-speaking countries to suppress even so much as debate upon this vital topic.

"British countries and the United States do not use the same weights and measures—there is 20 per cent. disparity in our liquid units, for example. But despite the fact that they are unstandardized, Britain and the United States do seem to be waiting each for the other to move. (Not exactly 'watchful waiting,' for we have scarce noticed the world-wide progress to the metric standards.) The situation is something like that in the old song:

Said Chatham, with his sword half drawn,
'I'm waiting for Sir Richard Strachan';
Said Strachan 'I'm longing to be at 'em,
But I'm waiting for the Earl of Chatham'.

"With all its hesitancy, where does the United States of America stand as to the metric advance? A Metric Standards Bill has been introduced in both House of Congress, and hearings are anticipated at which convincing testimony will be presented. The proposed metric legislation applies only to merchandising, manufacturers continuing to use whatever measures they desire in production.

"More than 100,000 metric petitions are pending before Congress, urging metric legislation; and as many of these petitions are from organizations having hundreds and thousands of members, altogether they directly represent millions of voters.

"The States of Illinois, California, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Utah, with a combined population of 15,000,000, have through their State Legislatures officially memorialized Congress to adopt the metric standards for the benefit of all the people.

"As to the multifarious benefits bestowed by metric standardization, one may point to the eloquent testimony afforded by the forty great nations which have already achieved this progress. No people, having adopted the decimal standards, have gone back again to the old rejected standards."—Literary Digest.

FOR SORE FEET—MINARD'S LINIMENT.

Mr. MacDonald

HIS TREMENDOUS ADVENTURE IN WHITEHALL.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who was accompanied by his son, Alastair, and Miss Isobel MacDonald, was recently admitted to the freedom of Edinburgh. At a luncheon afterwards in the City Hall Mr. MacDonald said: "I enjoyed the time of office as Premier. It was a great time. It was a high adventure. There we were, never having been in office, never before having been in authority in any department, never having controlled anything within the region of Whitehall, and suddenly called upon to enter those charmed and horrifying portals without the least preparation, called upon to run the country and keep up its dignity and its weight in the world.

It was exactly like approaching a haunted place, wondering what was going to happen. It was tremendously interesting, and was one of the highest ventures and adventures that any body of men in the history of the country was ever called upon to undertake.

Moscow Cajolery

LONDON—CONFERENCE THAT HELPED "SOLIDARITY."

Following upon the conference last month in London between British trade unionists and Russian Reds, when the question of achieving solidarity with the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions (which is less extreme than the Moscow International) was discussed, the Soviet Central Council of Trade Unions has sent a long letter to the Amsterdam Federation with the object of persuading that body to throw in its lot with Moscow.

The letter says that statements made by Amsterdam leaders, to the effect that they do not intend to alter the position of their International, only "widen the breach." It adds:

We are in favour of a single International Trade Union Federation. Our aim, and, as we believe, the aim of the majority of the class-conscious workers of all countries, is the creation of a single International of the trade union organized workers of the whole world, standing for the point of view of the class-struggle and the final emancipation of the working-class from the oppression of capitalism.

Broken-Up Unions.

How is this to be realized? How are the present prejudices and mistrust between the individual sections of the broken-up trade union movement of the single class of wage slaves to be fought without personal meetings, without considering these important questions in all their aspects and in business-like fashion?

The last conference in London indisputably helped to strengthen proletarian solidarity between the workers of Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

We are of the belief that it would be right if the general council of the I.F.T.C. were to reconsider its decision and were to fix the time and place for a conference conjointly with the U.S.S.R. Central Council of Trade Unions, without any preliminary conditions, to take up the question of realizing unity.

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July 10—Saturia, P. Cher., London
July 11—Ascania, P. Cher., London
July 17—Athena, P. Cher., London
July 18—Athena, P. Cher., London
July 24—Athena, P. Cher., London
July 31—Lettitia, P. Cher., London

FROM NEW YORK TO
June 17—Berengaria, P. Cher., S'mton
June 20—Scythia, Q'town, Liverpool
June 20—Cameronia, L'derry, Glasgow
June 20—Laconia, Q'town, Liverpool
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W. C. WINSOR,
Minister of Marine & Fisheries,
Dept. of Marine & Fisheries,
St. John's, Newfoundland,
June 12th, 1925.
June 12, 31, eod

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The application must be accompanied
by ten typewritten copies of certificates
and recommendations with one
unmounted photograph not larger
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As applicants must appear before
the members of the Committee, those
who intend proceeding to Universities
should send in their applications before
the end of September so that they may
be able to call on the members of the
committee before the commencement
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The following are the conditions
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(a) They must be British subjects
and unmarried.

(b) They or their parents must have
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ceding the selection.

(c) They must have completed their
second year at some recognized
degree-granting University or
College before going into residence
at Oxford.

(d) They must have passed their
nineteenth birthday, but not
have passed their twenty-fifth
birthday on October first of the
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(Birth certificates must be submitted)
Forms of application can be obtained
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A. WILSON,
Sec. Council of Higher Education,
June 13, 61

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