

or measures of one that make the next higher differ in almost the whole scale, and a weight of the same name will differ in the different tables—a complication for which there is no reason in the nature of things or in the requirements of science or trade.

During the hundred and odd years since the metric system was adopted in France, it has gradually been adopted by one country after another until it is now in use in 44 countries of the world, with an aggregate population of 485,000,000. Even Turkey, as backward in some respects as she is, has adopted it, and when Russia joins the metrical countries, as she is now preparing to do, it will leave only Great Britain and her colonies and the United States out of it. It is only a question of time when the Anglo-Saxon peoples will have to adopt it to save their trade with the rest of the world, so we may as well face the problem now as ten years hence; in fact the leading commercial men and manufacturers of both Great Britain and the United States have for some years been advocating the change, and every year, nay every week, shows the increasing urgency of this great step in advance. But the intimacy of the intercourse between the two English-speaking nations requires that they should change over at the same time. It is a change involving some temporary trouble and expense, but the fact that no appreciable portion of the people of any country that has adopted the metric system has ever desired to go back to their former cumbersome weights and measures, shows that the difficulty of making the change is as nothing compared with its benefits when accomplished. The advantages of the metric system in enabling one to calculate percentages so easily is already so much appreciated by English-speaking chemists and druggists, that many even in Canada and the United States have metric scales, as well as Apothecaries' in daily use side by side.

In the dye room the subject is of much interest owing to the prominence of German, French and Austrian manufactures in the chemical and dyestuff trades, and recently the question has become a live one in the yarn-spinning trades by the recommendations of a commission which was formed during the Paris Exhibition to frame a universal system of counting yarn. It is needless to say the commission recommended a universal count based on the metric system, and Prof. Roberts Beaumont, the well-known Yorkshire instructor in the technology of textile fabrics writes forcibly in support of the proposal. He says it is a fact, extraordinary as it may appear, that if a number of manufacturers from the border towns of Scotland, the West of England, the West Riding of Yorkshire and America were in conversation on certain technicalities of their trade, while speaking of the same subject, they would be using totally different terms, and these as confusing as the speech of Babel. The Scotchman in

counting his yarns would use the term "cut;" the West of England man "snap;" the Yorkshireman "skein," and the American, "run." In talking of "setting" or fineness of the fabric, the words "set," "dent," "reed," and "sley" would be used. Sometimes in the fabric there are compound threads of wool, worsted and mercerized cotton, and in that case three systems of counting yarns have to be encountered, the worsted by the number of yards per dram, the worsted by the number of hanks of five hundred and sixty yards per pound, and the cotton by the number of hanks of eight hundred and forty yards per pound. The result is that several calculations must be made before the actual counts of this three-fold thread can be ascertained. Prof. Beaumont wonders that these unsatisfactory methods should have lasted so long and that the "American" should not only have practised them hitherto, but have added to their complexity by the coining of other words such as "runs" and "grains." The principals of the textile schools of the United States have approved the decision of the International Congress, referred to, which was "one universal system of counting yarns, the basis of which would be that a No. 1 yarn would be a length of one meter weighing one gramme; or, in other words a length of one kilometer (about 3,280 feet), weighing one kilogramme (about 2 1-5 pounds Avoirdupois)."

The difficulty in adopting these recommendations is that without the general adoption of the metric system for other trades, its application to yarns would be only a half measure, and therefore unsatisfactory. If the metric system were brought into use, a universal system of counting yarns would follow of itself.

This subject was quite recently brought before the Silk Association of Great Britain and Ireland, and an expert committee has made a report, the substance of which is as follows:

1. Count is the relationship of weight to measure. It always indicates a given length of thread in a given weight. Without this it has neither meaning or use.
2. A uniform international count is, therefore, impossible, until there is a uniform system of weights and measures.
3. The "metric" system of weights and measures is so perfect, and has been accepted by so many countries, and by many scientific societies in our own country, that, most probably, sooner or later, it will be adopted by the British Government.
4. Until it has been so adopted, little good can be obtained by seeking to introduce in this country an international system of yarn counts.
5. The Silk Association should, therefore, in the meantime, press upon Government to introduce, and after two years' notice to make compulsory, the metric system of weights and measures.