

In order to decimalize our monetary system, the only question is, how shall we alter and arrange our various coins of accounts, so that there shall be exactly $\frac{1}{10}$ of the next upper denomination; and yet, so judiciously, that our habits and notions of value, shall be as little interfered with as possible.

It is interesting, and very satisfactory to see with how slight a change those objects can be attained under the plan proposed. The pound and shilling remain unchanged. The copper coin alone require to be altered in value; but so slightly, that the difference on the penny is only the sixth part of a farthing.

The Pound sterling remains the standard, unaltered. By using florins instead of shillings, in our Books and accounts—we get 10 of these, as the next lower denomination, in the pound, and can still use the sixpence, shilling, half crown and crown, for change, as at present.

But how shall we decimalize our copper coins of account? At present there are 960 farthings in the pound. If we make them a little less in value, so that there shall be 1000 of them in the pound, the object is attained.

Calling the new and smaller farthing a mil, (from mille a thousand), and by making an intermediate coin of 10 mils, called a cent. (from centum a hundred because there are 100 cents in the £1). We have our new decimal table complete, viz:—

10 mils = cent.

10 cents = 1 florin.

10 florins = 1 pound.

Instead, therefore, of keeping our books, and making our calculations in pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings, we will, in future, keep them in pounds, florins, cents, and mils, under the decimal system. [In practice, we will be able to simplify our books and accounts still more, by dropping the cent and keeping our accounts in pounds, florins, and mils. In this we will follow the example of the United States, where though their coins of account are in theory,

10 mils = 1 cent.

10 cents = 1 dime

10 dimes = 1 dollar.

yet, dropping the dime and mil, they keep accounts in dollars and cents (100 cents 1 dollar). This gives them, and will give us, a greater and simpler range in prices, sales and quotations, as well as simplifies their books and accounts.

Although from the very slight change in value, our present farthings will for a time circulate as new farthings or mils, and our half penny and penny as two and four new mils. Likely there will be coined now 1 and 5 mils in copper, and 10 mil pieces in silver change. In America there are 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (3 cent). silver pieces.

As there will be 1000 mils in the £1, there will, of course, be 100 of them in the florin, 50 in the shilling, and 25 in the sixpence; and these values will be stamped on the new silver coins issued.

The florin was introduced some years ago, and marked 'one-tenth of a pound,' to familiarize with this decimal division: and now it is proposed to introduce the coins of the cent and mil to complete the system.

HISTORY AND POSITION OF THE DECIMAL QUESTION.

It does seem strange that we, the most commercial people in the world, should be among the last to adopt so great a simplification as the use of the decimal system of coinage, weights and measures. Sweden is about to adopt a decimal coinage. Holland has it. So have Belgium and Lombardy. I was in the United States at the time of its adoption there, and can say

that the change was not attended with any inconvenience. France. Spain. Portugal. China, Japan, the South American States which revolted from Spain; Russia, Poland, and the Sardinian States have decimal moneys.

Sir Charles Pashley, in 1823, recommended a decimal system, and speaks of himself as the first who did so. But if we mistake not, before that period, an esteemed professor, still of Marischal College, had recommended to the Government the very system now proposed, as well as a more perfect system of weights and measures.

Sir John Wrottesley, in 1824, brought this subject before Parliament, urging that the pound be taken as the unit, and divided into a thousand farthings.

In 1838, Mr. Spring Rice obtained a Royal Commission to inquire into the advisability of a decimal system of weights and measures. They recommended that the coinage should be at once decimalized, dividing the pound sterling into a thousand parts.

In 1843, another Commission, for the same object was appointed, composed also of eminent men; and their report confirms the recommendation of the previous Commission.

Fortified by these opinions, Sir John Bowring, in 1847, induced the Government to make a commencement of the system, by coining the florin, or tenth of a pound.

Early in 1853, Mr. Brown, M. P. obtained a committee of the House of Commons on the subject of a decimal coinage, who unanimously recommended the same system.

In 1854, "The Decimal Association," was formed in London—Mr. Brown, chairman.—consisting of about two hundred peers and M. P.'s, along with many eminent men, representatives of various commercial, scientific, and other interests. Their object is to advocate and advance the adoption of a decimal system, explain its advantages, and urge its adoption by the Government.

The Government, on the other hand, are waiting some "pressure from without" to induce their action. The Committee on Education have indeed called for the teaching of decimals in the Government Schools. But the obtaining of this great reform seems now to rest with the public—who are the parties to be benefited,—ourselves and our children.

The Press has already proclaimed the new system, but it can do much more to advance it.

Petitions and addresses in approbation have been prepared. The Decimal Association Pamphlet gives a list of 52 Mayors and Lord Provosts who have signed in approval.

Also of 2 Memorials to Government.

Petitions from 25 Corporations.

” ” 11 Chambers of Commerce.

” ” 14 Public Petitions.

” ” 17 Scientific and Literary Institutions including the Institute of Actuaries

It is important that means be taken to make this important reform more generally known, that public opinion may be pronounced in favour of it, and petitions to Parliament presented.

It should be taught in schools; for why should our children be longer forced to undergo the drudgery of the present system?—Indeed, it has already been introduced into some schools; and, in Aberdeen, cards and tables for the use of scholars have been prepared and advertised, along with a pamphlet on the subject, by Mr. Davidson, bookseller; so that Aberdeen, which has also, by the Town Council, petitioned for a new system, has not been behind-hand in this matter.