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Then suppose this line divided in ten millions of equal parts, each of these parts will be a metre.

We will set aside the multiples of the metre as we have no need of them and confine ourselves to the study of its subdivisions. The metre is divided in ten equal parts called decimetres. The decimetre is in turn divided in ten equal parts called centimetres and the centimetre in ten equal parts called millimetres, that is to say the metre contains ten decimetres, hundred centimetres and a thousand millimetres. In other words again the millimetre is the thousandth of a metre the hundredth of a decimetre and the tenth of a centimetre. The centimetre is the hundredth of a metre and the tenth of a decimetre and the decimetre is the tenth of a metre.

One of the great advantages of the metric system is that all its subdivisions are adapted to the decimal system and consequently are very easily figured out, their position in writing tells the value of each figure, as an example, if we have to write a length of one metre, three decimetres, nine centimetres and five millimetre we will put it down as 1,395 taking care to separate the units by a comma.

These few notions will be useful for the understanding of the following lessons and for this reason they are placed at the beginning of this work.

M. B.