

AGAINST THE METRIC SYSTEM.

To the Editor "The Monetary Times":—

In your issue of June 29th, Mr. E. Johnson, Secretary of the Decimal Association, mentions having sent you a 15-gram weight, which he states "is the limit of weight now allowed by the Post-Office for letters to foreign countries within the Postal Union, stamped 2½d." He follows this up by claiming:—(1) That a benefit is conferred on the public by the first use of the metric weights in a Government Department; and (2) that the Post-Office has found it not only advantageous but quite easy to adopt the metric weights to quite an important extent.

Evidently, Mr. Johnson is not keeping up with current events. The Secretary of the General Post-Office at London wrote the Secretary of the British Weights and Measures Association, on June 8th:—

"At the Postal Union Congress which has just concluded its sittings in Rome, the unit of weight for international letters was raised from 15 to 20 grammes. It was moreover decided that in countries such as the United Kingdom, where the decimal-metric system of weights and measures is not in force, one ounce, Avoirdupois, should be equivalent to 20 grammes. The decisions of the Rome Congress will not take effect until the first of October, 1907."

A statement issued by the United States Post-Office Department on June 12th, is to the same effect, and adds, that when the new rate becomes effective a letter weighing six ounces can be sent to Great Britain at the rate now charged for a two-ounce packet.

Both of Mr. Johnson's claims are unfounded. There is no appreciable benefit conferred by the metric system at present. When the new arrangement goes into effect English-speaking countries will have a decided advantage with the 1-ounce unit, as compared with metric countries with the 7-10-ounce (20 gram) unit:—

Weight.	If mailed in English-speaking countries.	If mailed in Metric countries.
1 ounce	5 cents.	8 cents.
2 "	8 "	11 "
3 "	11 "	17 "
4 "	14 "	20 "

It is not likely that such a discrepancy in international postage rates will long continue. We may expect vigorous protests against it from so-called metric countries, and that the next Postal Congress will be called upon to correct it by raising the metric unit to 30 grams (1.06 ounces), simply because a unit for international postage rates gives a financial advantage to one or the other class of countries. To-day it may be the English system; to-morrow the metric that gives such an advantage. The problem of weights and measures is too important and too intricate to be muddled by such claptrap.

Mr. Johnson's second claim is refuted by the reason for the adoption of the ounce instead of 20 grammes as a unit. As the United States Post-Office Department states, it would be extremely difficult for English-speaking countries to express an equivalent weight of 20 grammes. This difficulty is apparent from the following English equivalents of the multiples of the 20-gram unit:—20 grams = .7057 ounces; 40 grams = 1.4114 ounces; 60 grams = 2.1171 ounces; 80 grams = 2.8228 ounces.

The use of either English or metric equivalents is impossible. The unit must be an integral number or simple fraction in one system or the other. The Rome Postal Congress recognized this fact.

Incidentally the action of the Rome Congress in giving each class of countries its own standard brings out the great difficulty in this problem of weights and measures, the incommensurability of English and metric units. That difficulty arises from the blind folly of the founders of the metric system who, in 1790, rejected everything that was established and insisted on having for their system a standard incommensurable with every other standard established on earth.

SAMUEL S. DALE.

Boston, Mass., July 12th 1906.

TRADE OPPORTUNITIES.

The following were among the inquiries relating to Canadian trade received at the Canadian Government Offices, 17 Victoria Street, London, S.W., and 73 Basinghall Street, London, E.C., during the week ending 13th July, 1906.

Correspondent at Brussels wishes to be in touch with owners of asbestos mines.

Copenhagen, (Denmark), importer of duck, goose and other feathers desires relations with exporters.

London firm handling copper, lead, and antimony, ores and metals, will be pleased to hear from producers who can ship supplies.

BUSINESS FAILURES.

ONTARIO.

Cobalt.—Turner & Henderson, contractors. Liabilities about \$5,000; assets nominally \$3,000.

Hamilton.—The Webster Floral Co., Limited. F. H. Lamb is winding up the estate. Incorporated in August, 1904, with an authorized capital of \$40,000.

Hawkstone.—Reid & Co., general merchants. Alex. Reid reported to have failed about 1899, and again in 1904, when doing business in his wife's name. Lately operating in his daughter's name.

London.—Thomas Edwards, jeweller. Liabilities to the trade \$2,500, to relatives, \$2,700; assets about \$3,000.

Pembroke.—J. D. Hoffman, clothing and dry goods. Liabilities about \$2,000; assets, \$1,450. Began business last January.

Rodney.—John D. Baldwin, provision dealer. Liabilities about \$2,000.

St. Thomas.—A. C. Pink & Co., wall paper, paints, etc. Liabilities, \$3,500; nominal assets, \$2,300.

Toronto.—Charles V. Connolly, druggist. Assigned to J. P. Langley. Estimated liabilities \$2,000.—David B. Robertson, brass-founder. Liabilities not ascertained.

Vankleek Hill.—James Shea, harnessmaker. Liabilities about \$1,800.

Windsor.—George Lario, hotel keeper. In business here since September, 1905. Previously in same line at Corunna, Kingsville, and Tilbury.

QUEBEC.

Buckingham.—A. D. Charbonneau, baker. Liabilities about \$400.

Beauceville.—G. A. Bergeron, hotel-keeper. Has a mortgage indebtedness of \$7,900, besides moderate trade liabilities. In business since the fall of 1904.

Chambly.—Jos. A. Gagnon, trading as the Hardware Specialty Mfg. Co. Liabilities, \$32,718. Failed at Three Rivers as a grocer 16 years ago. Subsequently in the lumber trade, and ran the Sheffield Cutlery Co., Montreal, which was wound up two years ago.

Chicoutimi.—Mederic Duchesne, waggonmaker. Liabilities, \$3,700; assets, \$3,100.—N. Hamel, liquors. Trade liabilities, \$3,440, besides which he owes some \$1,500 on mortgage, etc.; assets, \$1,840.—N. Hamel, liquors. Trade liabilities, \$3,440, besides which he owes some \$1,500 on mortgage, etc.; assets, \$1,840.

Grand Mere.—Philippe Quesnel, M.D., and drugs. Liabilities, \$4,500; assets about \$1,500. In business since 1903.

Louisville.—F. L. Desaulniers, groceries and shoes. Liabilities about \$2,000.

Levis.—Monarch Mfg. Co., Limited, manufacturers, shirts, etc. Winding up order issued. Incorporated in June, 1903, with capital of \$20,000. Liabilities not ascertained.

Montreal.—Miss A. Bouvier, milliner. Liabilities, \$1,200.—U. Lamarre, boots and shoes. Liabilities about \$3,000. In business five years.—S. Freedman, Son & Co., manufacturing clothiers. Liabilities about \$46,000. Formerly were successful retailers. Started wholesaling in 1902.—M. Glazer & Co., retail clothing. Liabilities about \$3,000. Began business in 1902.—Alphonse Terriault, plumber. Liabilities, \$1,162.—Albert J. Hart, wholesale fruit. Liabilities, \$7,957; assets are small.

Quebec.—J. A. Lesage, retail shoes. Liabilities, \$4,970; assets, \$3,270. In business here since 1901, previously at Nicolet.

St. Dominique de Bagot.—Rudolphe Letestu, hotel-keeper. Reported an absentee. F. X. Bilodeau, assignee. Montreal, has charge of the estate.

Sayabec.—H. Baulay & Co., general store and saw-mill. Assigned as result of fire last month. Liabilities about \$4,000; assets about \$2,500.

St. Joseph de Beauce.—Horace Talbot, tinsmith. Liabilities estimated at about \$1,500. Compromised in May, 1905.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Grand Falls.—A. F. Eisliger, general store. Liabilities, \$6,800, with only nominal assets of \$2,925. Recently offered a compromise at 30 per cent.

Fredericton.—Dever Bros., dry goods. Liabilities, \$7,500, with apparent assets of about a similar amount.

MANITOBA.

Winnipeg.—Jones & Moore Electric Co., Limited. Sheriff took possession a fortnight ago under several judgments, and C. H. Newton, assignee, now in charge. Liabilities not ascertained. Incorporated, September, 1905, with capital of \$75,000.

Oakburn.—Charles Cohen, general store. Frequently sued of late, and meeting of creditors now called. Liabilities not yet ascertained.