

STANDARD MEASURES.

The English standard measure is the yard, and was, by Act of Imperial Parliament in 1824, declared to be the distance, at a temperature of 62° F., between two points on a brass bar made by Bird in 1760, and then in the keeping of the clerk of the House of Commons. This standard was destroyed by fire in 1834, and no copy having been made, the only means of recovering the exact length of the yard is through careful comparisons made before the fire with a standard measure belonging to the Royal Astronomical Society. The Act of Parliament also referred the yard to a natural standard: which is, that the yard shall bear a proportion to the length of a pendulum vibrating seconds in vacuo at the level of the sea in London of 36 to 39.1393 in. This natural standard, however, has been found very defective, and from the many conditions of a vibrating pendulum, it has been found impossible to make use of it for the purpose intended, with the degree of exactness required by the present state of science.

The French standard measure is called the mètre, and is fixed as the distance, at a temperature of 32° F., between two points on a brass bar in the keeping of the Academy of Science at Paris. The mètre is defined to be the ten millionth (10,000,000) part of the