

Our confusing system of changing day names for the same *fixed dates* each year, makes it needlessly difficult to decide in advance upon any particular dates in the month for special purposes. We cannot select the occasion and fix a yearly date without involving annual alteration of its week-day name and the erratic occurrence of Sunday on that date postponing the event until a day later. Therefore, fixed market fairs, etc., are delayed and located as the first Monday, second Wednesday, etc., of a month. The months sometimes contain five Sundays, at others four. Those vary from month to month, and year to year, so that the number of working days per month is never constant in any month. The varying four to five Saturdays in a month also affects all estimates of commerce and industry, as workmen usually work only half that day, whereas more steamships sail on that day than any other.

Those divergencies disturb the comparative value of all statistical work now of growing importance industrially, and to the governments whose imports, exports, immigration, etc., returns are distorted by our changing almanac system. All these cause needless work and detract from useful results, as one month's record cannot now be fairly compared with another, nor with the corresponding records in previous years. The confusing months inconvenience everybody.

The most important anomalies and inconveniences thus created by our antiquated almanac system may be summarized as below:—

The months are unequal, involving fractions of weeks, changing week-day names for dates, Christmas and other festivals, fairs, etc.; disturbing market days, periods for legislative, law, university and school terms; stock exchange settlements, payment days for bills of exchange, trade accounts (now being tried at 28 and 30 days): moving dates of recurring business and social engagements, etc.; causing financial trouble to retail trades people, and householders, when five week-end payments for groceries, rent, etc., are required out of a monthly income, or monthly rents out of weekly wages. These operate to the disadvantage of poor people, as the fluctuations of the pawnbroker's business testify.

These inequalities, together with the unequal quarters of the year, disturb the computations for interest, salaries, rents, and all periodical payments. Other inconveniences beyond those named result, but those suffice to show the growing need for improvements in our calendars and almanacs for universal use.

The changing week-day names through dates of the year, and fractions of the week beyond the 28 days each month cause the trouble and confuse ideas of time.

*Two main remedies are needed:—*(1) Treat "Christmas Day," or "New Year's Day," or the 31st December as a holiday, without either