

United States Consuls residing in metric countries, the result of a circular letter of enquiry, from which, together with other information, which is equally reliable, it appears that the scheme which is behind the bill still, in a technical sense, before Congress, viz., the adoption of the system for Government purposes in the expectation that the people will soon follow the example of the Government, has now been tried fourteen times, and that laws providing for such Government use are now in force in fourteen countries. These laws are of all ages up to seventy years in Greece, and the information referred to demonstrates that in none of these countries has the example of the Government been generally followed by the people, and that in most of them the people use the system practically not at all. Whatever opinion one may have of the merits of the Metric System and of the wisdom of its adoption, no sensible man can read these consular letters without the conviction that our proposed law is foredoomed to failure, and that the only rational thing to do with it is to abandon it. Fourteen failures ought to be enough. This may sound like "extravagant language" to Mr. Merrill, but more important than this it is true. In view of the disclosures which have now been made, the old claims for the universality of this system can now be repeated only by those who are ignorant or crazy.

The metric case is based upon a supposed state of confusion, a supposed superfluity of units and a supposed series of bad ratios between those units; all of which this bill is intended to remove. Similar laws elsewhere have only served to increase the number of units in a given country, and to introduce far worse ratios between the old and the new units than any previously existing; in other words to do the very opposite of what was intended. In view of this experience continued advocacy of the measure by the metricites is only a case of self stultification.

It is literally true that no people have ever been induced to make common use of this system except by the force of compulsory laws, and I am unable to understand why it should be necessary to compel people to use such a wonderfully superior thing as this is represented to be.

Mr. Merrill says: "The adoption of the Metric System need no more affect the present trade sizes than it would affect the size of a shop in which the articles are manufactured." But he contradicts himself near the bottom of the same column, where he says: "When he [the manufacturer], makes new patterns and drawings, he will naturally make them in the Metric System." Unless the adoption of the system is accompanied by a change in trade sizes then its adoption is meaningless and purposeless. Its adoption in other countries has uniformly meant this very thing, and to the extent to which the system has been adopted this change has been made. In all manufacturing countries there are, however, many exceptions in which the change has not been made, and in these exceptions they use the old units.

Mr. Merrill refers to the opinions of those who have used the Metric System which have been published in the American Machinist, and in this connection it is pertinent to refer to the vote taken among its members by the National Association of Manufacturers a year ago. The questions submitted were so worded that those who had used the system could be identified and their opinions separated from the others. One of the questions asked was if any advantage could be seen from the adoption of the system, and to this, those who had used it, voted 1.44 to 1 that they could see no such advantage, this vote rising in the case of those whose industries came into the metal trade classification, in which you and I are chiefly interested, to 4.1 to 1.

Mr. Merrill says: "The active opponents of the Metric System in the United States are few." In reply to this, I will remind you that the vote of the National Association of Manufacturers—the largest association of its kind in the world—stood 3.35 to 1 against the adoption of the system in Government business. This association not only polled its own members, but it asked many other associations to do the same. As an answer to Mr. Merrill's assertion that the active opponents of the system are few, I include below a clipping from American Industries, the official organ of the National Association of Manufacturers, in which is given the result of this great canvass. So far from Mr. Merrill's statement being true, the fact is that the metricites are too few in number to be worth counting, though it must be acknowledged that they make up in noise what they lack in numbers:

"In order to obtain a still wider expression of opinion, the Association invited a considerable number of other commercial and manufacturing associations to poll their members upon the subject, and in a gratifying number of cases its suggestion has been acted upon. The results are given in Table 4, in which are also incorporated the positions of some associations which have been taken without suggestion on the part of the Association.

"In most cases the vote was upon the following questions, which were sent out by the Association, in order to assist in insuring uniformity:

"In favor of the adoption of the Metric System of Weights and Measures as the legal standard in the United States?

"Against the adoption of the Metric System of Weights and Measures as the legal standard in the United States?

"In favor of the adoption of the Metric System in the Departments of the Federal Government?

"Against the adoption of the Metric System in the Departments of the Federal Government?

"In a few cases other questions were added to the ballots, and in a few others the votes took the form of resolutions passed at conventions."

"The following table contains the results of all pollings of associations of which the Association has any official knowledge. Similar tables which have been published elsewhere have been found to contain so many errors as to make it necessary to omit them:"

Manufacturers' and Builders' Associations.

Against Measure, 21.

American Iron and Steel Association, Philadelphia, Pa.
Carriage Builders' National Asso., Wilmington, Del.
Worcester Metal Trades Association, Worcester, Mass.
National Association Heating Engineers and Contractors, Boston, Mass.
Buffalo Foundrymen's Association, Buffalo, N.Y.
Syracuse Foundrymen's Association, Syracuse, N.Y.
Cook County Foundrymen's Association, Chicago, Ill.
Engine Builders' Association of U.S., Syracuse, N.Y.
Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Asso., St. Louis, Mo.
Pennsylvania Lumbermen's Association, Scranton, Pa.
Manufacturers' Association of New York, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Evansville Manufacturers' Association, Evansville, Ind.
Builders' Exchange League, Pittsburg, Pa.
Contractors' Association, Cincinnati, Ohio.
National Association of Builders, Boston, Mass.
Master Builders' Association, Denver, Col.
National Brick Manufacturers' Asso., Horseheads, N.Y.
Founders' and Employers' Association, Los Angeles, Cal.
National Association of Machine Tool Builders.
The Furniture Association of America.
National Metal Trades Association.

For Measure, 2.

American Foundrymen's Association, New York.
For q., 10.
Against q., 11.
Manufacturers' and Producers' Association of California, San Francisco.

Commercial Associations.

Against Measure, 14.

Holyoke Business Men's Association, Holyoke, Mass.
Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association, Bessemer, Ala.
Board of Trade, Tampa, Fla.
Board of Trade, Indianapolis, Ind.
Minneapolis Retail Hardware Asso., Minneapolis, Minn.
Trade Journal Association, Detroit, Mich.
Merchants' Association, New York.
Iowa Implement Dealers' Association, Nevada, Ia.
Board of Trade, Kansas City, Mo.
Quincy Freight Bureau, Quincy, Ill.
Business Men's Exchange, Erie, Pa.
Chamber of Commerce, Tacoma, Wash.
Chamber of Commerce, Milwaukee, Wis.
Georgia State Agricultural Society, Augusta, Ga.

For Measure, 9.

Boston Chamber of Commerce.
Board of Trade, Bridgeport, Conn.
Merchants' Association, Evansville, Ind.
Chamber of Commerce, Galveston, Tex.
S. W. Mercantile Association, St. Louis.
Pacific Coast Hardware and Metal Association, San Francisco, Cal.
For q., 10.
Against q., 11.
Business Men's Association, Elkhart, Ind.
Board of Trade, Los Angeles, Cal.
Board of Trade, St. Paul, Minn.