

thus referred to in the article on arithmetic in the "Encyclopedia Britannica:" "Ten is well chosen (as a base) being neither too large nor too small, but 12 might, in some respects, have been found more convenient. All numbers can be expressed with 12 or any other base, just as with 10." Ten does not even stand next to twelve as a measure to work with as sixteen has three measures—2, 4 and 8, but sixteen has the same disadvantage as ten—namely, its indivisibility by 3.

Now look at our present way of measuring time. Is it not the most completely duodecimal of all our measures? We have twice twelve hours in the day, five times twelve minutes in the hour and the same number of seconds in the minute. We have twelve months in the year and the circuit of the heavens is divided into 12 signs of 30 degrees each or 30 times twelve degrees for the circle. When we know the superiority of the duodecimal measure it would be going backward instead of forward to introduce decimals into our time divisions, in which the better plan has prevailed from time immemorial. Rather let us keep to our measure of 12 and divide the revolution of the globe from one midnight to the next into 12 spaces, either to be called hours, or, if preferred, by some new name, to show the difference from the old division. Then the clock faces would remain the same as before and the objection of having to speak of any hour above 12 would be avoided. It is rather curious, by the way, that such is apparently the strongest argument advanced against the proposed change from the present way of counting up to 12 twice in the same day, but it shows that in order to gain the public sympathy, any alteration proposed must have for its recommendation the greatest simplicity; and its terms and divisions be named by the shortest words.

We now come to this point, that having found a hindrance to a proposed improvement in time division or time marking, on account of the possibility of having to take to an inconvenient system, viz: the decimal one, in order to simplify an old but cumbersome fashion, can we not find some better way?