

METRIC SYSTEM IN ORIENTAL COUNTRIES

Britain May Have to Adopt It—Progress in America

Editor, *The Monetary Times*:—

Sir,—In the parliamentary debate of March, 1907, the small majority opposed to the Weights and Measures (Metric System) bill was obtained in part by the argument that our trade with the east might suffer through suspicion and distrust on the part of our Oriental customers if we presented to them such a novelty as the metric system in selling goods. America, also, it was said, might take advantage of this by continuing to use the yard and pound so popular in the east.

This objection was groundless, because the bill did not relate to foreign trade at all, and permitted manufacturers to make goods for export of any size, pattern, mark, or description, and to sell them as they chose.

The time is soon coming when metric usage, instead of being regarded as a hindrance to British trade with the far east, will have to be adopted as a necessity in our dealings with China, Japan, and Siam, which have each taken definite steps to establish that system. Already the advisory council of China has passed the first reading of a law to that effect, and there are now in Paris two Chinese gentlemen studying at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures the technical details of the subject with a view to completing what is planned.

Japan has for the present four legal systems of weight and measure:—(1) The metric, (2) the shaku-kwan, (3) the kujira-shaku and (4) the British yard and pound. The government has declared its preference for the metric system by making it obligatory for the services of the customs excepting a few articles. It is taught in all the public schools, and is prescribed for the army, for medicine and for electrical work. The carat for precious stones is now 200 milligrams. A specially heavy charge (more than threefold) is made for the verification of British weights and measures, and the public registers show a steady increase in metric usage.

Russia Converted to Metric System.

Siam has for some years employed the metric system with much success on its railways and public works, and last year joined the international convention of the metre, from which it has received the apparatus needed for a central bureau of standards at Bangkok. It should interest India to know that the Sanskrit element in the Siamese language has proved useful in connection with the names of the metric units. Siam proposes not to make metric reform compulsory at one and the same time in all parts of the kingdom, but to deal with each province separately at convenient times—a plan which might perhaps be usefully followed by Russia, China and India.

Russia also, which is now one of the great powers of the far east, has adopted the metric system for several purposes, and has announced to the Decimal Association by a recent letter from the ministry of commerce and industry that the metric system is favored, but has to await the necessary arrangement of control and inspection throughout the empire with its 165 millions of people. This conversion of Russia is notable as completing the solidarity of all continental Europe in metric reform, and as being likely to hasten the action of China, her eastern neighbor.

Progress on American Continent.

This note is mainly devoted to metric progress in far eastern countries, but it must not be forgotten that all South and Central America are either metric or tending to be so. The Australasian dominions of Great Britain have urgently pressed the question on her notice, and last, but most important of all as a source of external influence, are the United States of America, which have gone far in preparing for reform, and will act with vigor when the time comes, for they know the truth declared in 1790 by Thomas Jefferson, afterwards their president, that the decimal system then established by him in their money would also in weights and measures bring "the calculation of the principal affairs of life within the arithmetic of every man who can multiply and divide plain numbers." The whole world has now approved his words, and the United States of America are on the way to fulfil them.

Yours, etc.,
The Decimal Association.

London, Eng., November.

Fire Chief Turner reports that during October there were five fires in Point Grey, B.C. The total risk involved to the buildings threatened and their contents was \$71,500: the total insurance, \$30,500, and the loss sustained only \$105.

ANTIMONY, COBALT AND NICKEL

Nearly Forty-five Million Pounds of Nickel Produced in Canada Last Year

The production of nickel contained in nickel-copper matte produced in Canada and exported for refinement was, in 1912, 44,841,542 pounds, as compared with a production of 34,098,744 pounds in 1911. During 1912 there were smelted 725,065 tons of ore, producing 41,925 tons of matte, as against 610,834 tons of ore smelted in 1911, producing 32,607 tons of matte. Small quantities of nickel oxide are also produced in connection with the treatment of the Cobalt District silver ores, remarks Mr. J. McLeish, B.A., of the department of mines, in his annual report. The exports of nickel contained in ore, matte, etc., during 1912, were 44,221,860 pounds, valued at \$4,661,758: being 5,072,867 pounds to Great Britain and 39,148,993 pounds to the United States. In 1911 the exports were 32,619,971 pounds, valued at \$3,676,396: being 5,023,393 pounds.

No Antimony Exported Last Year.

The production of antimony during the past two years was limited to a few pounds of refined antimony recovered at the lead refinery at Trail, B.C. Shipments of antimony ore in 1910 were reported as 364 tons, valued at \$13,906, whilst there was no production of refined antimony in 1910. There is no export of antimony ore recorded in 1912, as against 50 tons valued at \$4,946, in 1911. The imports of antimony or regulus thereof, in 1912, were 998,045 pounds, valued at \$60,456, and of antimony salts 55,683 pounds, valued at \$7,197, or a total value of imports of \$67,653. In 1911, the imports were antimony and regulus of 561,046 pounds, valued at \$36,405, and antimony salts 18,420 pounds, valued at \$2,418, or a total value of \$38,823.

Canadian Smelters Produce Cobalt Oxide.

Cobalt oxide and cobalt material are being produced in Canadian smelters, the production in 1912 of cobalt oxide and nickel oxide being 349,054 pounds, valued at \$156,256, and of cobalt material and mixed cobalt and nickel oxides 1,285,280 pounds, valued at \$163,988. During 1911, the shipments included 154,174 pounds of cobalt and nickel oxide, and 1,260,832 pounds of cobalt material and mixed cobalt and nickel oxides, the value being \$221,690.

HERE IS A WARNING

In sentencing two men at Victoria, found guilty of conspiracy in connection with the operations of the Bankers' Trust Company, Judge Gregory said:—

"I might have given you both seven years in the penitentiary, but I have decided that the interests of justice will be fully met if I sentence you each to serve three years and one-half in the Provincial penitentiary. There must be a lesson taught to people who promote companies and sell stock that they cannot enter into extravagant statements. The half year I have added so that you will each serve a full three years as your punishment."

WHERE CANADA DOES BUSINESS

The countries with which Canada did business in 1912-13 are as follows, the figures being those of merchandise exported to and entered at customs for consumption, the latter being usually somewhat less than the total value of imports given:—

	Exports to	Entered from
United Kingdom	\$177,982,000	\$138,761,000
United States	167,110,000	411,142,000
France	2,564,000	15,379,000
Germany	3,402,000	14,214,000
Spain	48,000	1,258,000
Portugal	49,000	343,000
Italy	605,000	1,713,000
Holland	2,741,000	3,100,000
Belgium	4,808,000	4,020,000
Newfoundland	4,728,000	2,056,000
West Indies	6,237,000	10,576,000
China and Japan	1,881,000	4,256,000
South America	4,352,000	10,528,000
Australia	3,096,000
Switzerland	4,296,000
Other countries	12,722,000	23,857,000