

But the new system can only be gradually introduced. The majority of mankind have firmly fixed ideas with regard to the passage of the day and the numbers of the hours by which their social habits are regulated. A proposal suddenly to change the old familiar succession of the hours will be misunderstood. The influence of custom is always powerful under any aspect. It is anticipated that this influence will be the one serious obstacle to be overcome. The belief, however, may be permitted that the change will be rendered easy when men understand that the numbers of such hours have been arbitrarily chosen; that there is no necessary connection between them and the position of the sun in relation to the earth in its daily rotation, and that whatever numbers may distinguish the twenty-four divisions of the day, the recurring phenomena of light and darkness will always regulate sleeping, waking, eating, and working, and all the routine of life in every locality. Noon has heretofore been associated in our minds with the hour of 12, but among the Jews noon was the 6th hour, and astronomers have almost invariably recognized it as the 24th hour. For a year back throughout the United States and Canada the agreement between 12 o'clock and precise noon has been at an end. It may be said that, except on four or five meridians, 12 o'clock is nowhere coincident with mean solar noon. This departure from an old usage must tend to unloosen the traditional idea that the mere numbers of the hours have any necessary connection with the position of the sun in the heavens. If this innovation has any effect it must help to pave the way for still further and more important changes than have yet been introduced. The meridians by which time is regulated in North America are 5, 6, 7 and 8 hours of longitude west from the Prime Meridian. It will only be necessary to move forward our clocks 5, 6, 7, and 8 hours respectively to bring them all into agreement with the time of the Prime Meridian which is Cosmic Time, and thus obtain complete uniformity. It cannot, however, be looked for that Cosmic Time will at once be adopted in ordinary affairs. A generation probably will pass away before it will obtain general acceptance. The difficulties to be overcome cannot be ignored, and we may assume that it will only be step by step that the change will be made, the more advanced nations taking the lead. On this continent positive progress has been made, to be succeeded before long, I do not doubt, by another advance in public opinion, and a general acceptance of the principles