

[This Association is not responsible as a body for any opinions expressed in its Papers by Members.]

DECIMAL vs. DUODECIMAL MEASUREMENTS.

By VILLIERS SANKEY, P.L.S.,

City Surveyor, Toronto.

IN all things it is necessary now-a-days to look for what is useful, convenient and practical. This is more especially the case in things that require accuracy. It is no longer now an argument of any weight to say, "I was taught so," or, "My father did things thus." In matters such as I am going to refer to, no sentimental notion can be permitted to interfere, when common sense points out what is the most useful means to attain a desired end. For a long time I have been considering the question of the great advantage it would be, not only to surveyors and engineers, but also to the community at large, if some convenient method of expressing measurements similar to the system at present in use in the matter of our currency were adopted.

At our last annual meeting I determined to bring the matter before this Association, and to urge it to use all its influence in bringing about the necessary change. You may imagine, therefore, how greatly pleased I was, on reading the valuable paper on this subject by J. P. Bates, C.E. in our exchange of the *Arkansas Society of Engineers, Surveyors, etc.*, vol. 1, November, 1887.

I need not dwell at length, when addressing an Association like this, upon the great benefits to be derived by such a change. They are so self-evident that I will merely state the proposals I would suggest, and discuss a few of the results which are likely to follow. Simply stated then, I desire to express all measures of length, breadth and thickness in terms of feet and decimals. Probably the best way to bring this before you is, first, to draw your attention to the regulations which now govern us. And, for a reason which I will refer to later on, I will first take up the subject of the Dominion standards of measures.

49 Vic., chap. 104, sect. 3, enacts that the bronze bar and the platinum weights as thereafter described shall be the Dominion standards of measure of weight.

Sections 9, 10 and 11 read as follows:—

DOMINION MEASURES OF LENGTH.

9. "The straight line or distance between the centres of the two gold plugs or pins (as mentioned in the first schedule to this Act) in the bronze bar, by this Act declared to be the Dominion standard for determining Standard yard defined.