

with a view to a more complete standardization of the inch and the foot the world over and to draft legislation . . . legalizing it in various countries as a world standard along with, if not superseding the metric system. p. 211.

The reader is referred to the report to see that the true spirit of the argument of the report has been preserved and also to get the prometric side.

Such a tissue of deliberate misrepresentation needs merely to be presented to scientific men for its refutation line upon line. Were it true that American scientists and teachers are spreading ignorance, this report would deserve to be a "best seller." But the challenge which it contains should not go unmet. The Council of the American Chemical Society at its recent meeting voted to ask the various scientific, educational, engineering, medical and pharmaceutical societies to send representatives to the Pittsburgh meeting of the society in September to consider what further steps can be taken toward the gradual introduction of the metric system. Here is an opportunity to answer the challenge.

The best answer to Mr. Halsey's contention that it can not be done is that *it is being done*. There has just come to hand the current schedule of chemicals of the national government, which is class 4, which has practically all pure chemicals listed in metric units only. Henceforth all pure chemicals appearing on the general schedule of supplies will be listed and purchased entirely in the metric system for the sixteen bureaus of the government.

In a volume which has just come from the press entitled *Metric System for Engineers*, written by Charles B. Clapham, a London engineer, the author gives an unbiased answer to many of the anti-metric arguments. For example, he says:

All the metric screws likely to be required can be cut on the usual English and American lathes, well within the accuracy required for manufacturing purposes, if *one additional change wheel* is provided. p. 33.

He says significantly, p. 148:

In considering the cost and inconvenience aspect, it is to be feared that many false objections have been put forward; etc.

He notes that a hundredweight contains 112 pounds, that a "stone" if used in weighing potatoes consists of 14 pounds, but when weighing butcher's meat contains only 8 pounds! This is far surpassed, however, by the complexity of the United States bushel. The use of the metric system is steadily growing, every school-boy talking of wave-lengths in hundreds of meters. Much further information on metric progress is given in an excellent work on *World Metric Standardization* published by the World Metric Standardization Council of San Francisco.

The *Valve World* for May, 1922, states:

More than 215 member organizations of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States have gone on record in favor of gradual metric standardization. More than 15,000 manufacturers and engineers have petitioned Congress to enact metric standards legislation, and these represent concerns capitalized at several billions of dollars. The states of Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Utah, Illinois, California, North Dakota and Tennessee have officially memorialized Congress to adopt the metric system as the sole system of weighing and measuring for the benefit of all the people of the United States.

One is reminded of an old couple up in Vermont who went to town; and, passing a shop window, Lucy remarked, "George, why don't you buy a new hat in place of that disgraceful old thing?" To which George replied without going inside to inquire the price of the hat he saw, "I can't afford it. I'd have to get used to a new one. Besides I like the old one and I couldn't wear two."

EUGENE C. BINGHAM

#### AMERICAN COMMITTEE TO AID RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS WITH SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

RUSSIAN scientists have been almost completely cut off from access to western European and American literature since 1914. This isolation, coupled with great physical hardships, is naturally interfering with the progress of their work, although it has by no means entirely put a stop to it.

Through many sources appeals are coming from Russian botanists, zoologists, chemists,

physicists, geologists, engineers and others for the recent literature in their respective fields. The craving of these men for contact with the rest of the scientific world is very great. At various times scientific groups in this country have suggested the desirability of sending literature from this country to Russian scientists.

These suggestions have now resulted in the formation of an American Committee to Aid Russian Scientists with scientific literature. The committee has arranged with the American Relief Administration, of which Mr. Herbert Hoover is chairman, to receive the literature collected by the committee and assume the entire care and cost of its overseas transportation and delivery to the distributing agency in Moscow.

The literature will be distributed in Russia among the universities, scientific societies and individual scientific investigators by a special committee representing the Academy of Sciences and other recognized Russian scientific organizations in cooperation with the American Relief Administration which has representatives in Moscow, Petrograd, Kiev, Kharkov, Kazan and other university and academic centers.

The American Committee to Aid Russian Scientists is a voluntary and temporary organization of scientific men. Its activities will continue only until the regular channels for the shipment of scientific literature to Russia are reopened. It has no funds for the purchase of scientific books or scientific periodicals. It must appeal, therefore, to the generosity of the scientific societies of America, government and state scientific bureaus, individual scientists and publishers of scientific books.

The committee desires chiefly to obtain scientific books, scientific periodicals, authors' reprints, publications of government and state scientific bureaus, scientific institutions and university presses which are of an original scientific character or contain technical information, and which have appeared since 1914.

There is in Russia a fairly large number of scientific institutions. It is out of the question at the present time to undertake to supply adequately all those institutions with literature, but the committee hopes to provide at least six copies of each publication, since it feels that

this number may meet at least the more urgent needs of the Russian centers of scientific endeavor at Moscow, Petrograd, Kazan, Kiev, Odessa and a few other principal university cities. If more than six copies can be spared, so much the better. On the other hand, if this number should be burdensome, a smaller number of copies will be of service.

The committee has at its disposal only a limited fund to cover the necessary clerical work. It will, therefore, appreciate it if the contributors of literature will cover the cost of its transportation to New York, from which point all cost of handling and shipment will be borne by the American Relief Administration.

The committee hopes that the response to this request will be whole-hearted and universal. The assistance that American scientists can give to the Russian scientists who are in distress, besides being a good Samaritan act, will be a real contribution to the progress of science. It may also be the means of re-establishing the normal exchange of scientific results between the Russian and American scientists, and will be a fine manifestation of the cooperation of men in science throughout the world.

Contributors should send, in triplicate, with each consignment a list of the publications forwarded by them. These lists, together with all letters containing advices of shipments, express and shipping receipts, should be addressed to the American Relief Administration, Russian Scientific Aid, 42 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

The publications themselves should be sent by express, or, if very heavy, by freight, to the American Relief Administration, care of Gertzen Company, 138 Jane Street, New York, N. Y.

Requests for further information should be sent to the American Committee to Aid Russian Scientists, 1701 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D. C.

VERNON KELLOGG,  
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