TRIUMPH OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES.

BY RUFUS P. WILLIAMS.

Two acts concerning the Philippine Islands in which the metric system plays a prominent part passed the last session of the United States Congress. These were respectively approved February 6 and March 3, 1905. A considerable portion of the first one relates to the acquisition and location of mineral lands, and makes compulsory the use of the metric system and the peso. This act takes the place of the law enacted July 1, 1902, in which feet, miles, hectares, dollars and centavos made a general hodge podge. By the present act the provisions of the act of 1902 respecting mineral lands "*are hereby amended by reducing all measurements therein, whether of distance, area or value, to the metric system, to wit, feet to meters, acres to hectares, miles to kilometers, and also dollars to pesos,*" etc. Other lands were "metricised" by the original law of 1902.

The second act, approved just before the adjournment of Congress, relates to duties on imports into the islands, stating "*That the metrical system of weights and measures at present in use in the Philippine Islands shall be continued,*" following which is a list of dutiable goods (nearly fifty pages in all) designated wholly in metric terms.

Several sections of the act of 1902 relate to coinage. The weights of the *constituent metals* are given in our old-fashioned grains, and follow in this respect the present coinage laws of the United States, enacted in 1828, and this part has not been changed, the peso being the standard of value. The subsidiary and minor coins of the Philippines, as legalized by the act of 1902, are shown in the following table:

SUBSIDIARY SILVER COINS.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>	<i>Composition.</i>
50 centavo piece..	192.9 grains troy = 12.5 g.....	silver 90%, copper 10%
20 centavo piece..	77.16 grains troy = 5 g.....	silver 90%, copper 10%
10 centavo piece..	38.58 grains troy = 2.5 g.....	silver 90%, copper 10%

MINOR COINS.

5 centavo piece..	77.16 grains troy = 5 g.....	copper 75%, nickel 25%
1 centavo piece..	80 grains troy.....	copper 95%, tin and zinc 5%
½ centavo piece..	40 grains troy.....	copper 95%, tin and zinc 5%

It will be seen that the 20 centavo piece is a more consistent decimal subdivision than our 25 cent piece. Opponents of the metric system cannot criticise our inconsistency in this as they often have in the silver "quarter." One is reminded, in the *half centavo*, of the half cent of the early days of our Republic. All these coins are the equivalent in composition, as they are in value, of our own corresponding coins, and what specially interests us is that four of the six are metric, and also correspond in weight to ours, as prescribed by acts of May 16, 1866, and February 12, 1873.

We cannot regard these triumphs of the metric system in the "Acts of the Philippines" otherwise than of significant importance. If Uncle Sam's agents find no difficulty in using metric measures in the customs service of the islands, why should they have more trouble in the ports of New York, Boston, or New Orleans? If exports from the islands to the states and from the states to the islands pay duties at the entering port, wherein does the problem of weights and measures differ from that confronting the collector of duties from Germany or France? Unless the influx of manufacturers and traders into the Philippines from the United States and other non-metric countries becomes so great as to drive out the metric system, the acts just passed by the fifty-eighth Congress will not only fasten the system irrevocably on this part of Uncle Sam's domain, but the influence must in time spread to all other parts. Spain and her provinces finally adopted the metric system January 1, 1869. Reversion to an inferior system after so long a time is improbable.

A HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS CLUB.*

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It will be well to explain in starting that the club whose workings are here described was not formed in a public high school, but in Shattuck School, Faribault, Minnesota, a private school for boys. The course in this school, however, is of the same grade as that of a good high school, and the boys are of the

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