

M. Léon in a pamphlet states that the French gold piece of 100 francs weighs 32 3-31 grams; that of 50 francs 16 4-31 grams; and that of 20 francs 6 14-31 grams. He adds:—

"All these weights are entirely inconsistent with the conditions of the metrical system, and the pretended gold franc, represented by a non-decimal fraction of the gram, belongs not more to this system than the florin, the thaler, the ruble, or the dollar."

Mr. Kelley makes the following statement with respect to coins of various countries, which conform to the metric weight, with almost inappreciable difference; and it is of scientific interest, as the trifling difference—if his statement is correct—is within the ordinary and established tolerance of coinage:

"The gold crown and half-crown of the German States (North and South) and of Austria, is strictly metrical.

"The pistole (or Frederic d'or) of Prussia, and the pistole (August d'or) of Saxony, each coined prior to the Vienna monetary treaty of 1857, are in excess by about one-half of one per cent, (more exactly fifty-three hundredths of one per cent) of four dollars of the proposed metric standard.

"The pistole (Christian d'or) of Denmark, differs less than one per cent from the metric standard, being five-sixths of one per cent below four of the metric dollars.

"The half-imperial of Russia is only one-fiftieth of one per cent below four dollars of the metric standard, a difference scarcely appreciable.

"The doubloons of ten escudos of Spain, is about two-thirds of one per cent above five metric dollars. The doubloon de Isabel, of one hundred reals, issued prior to 1864, is in excess of five metric dollars by only three-hundredths of one per cent.

"The William d'or (gouden Willem) of Netherlands, is in excess of one metric dollar by nine-tenths of one per cent.

"The gold coinage of the United States, and of Canada, is in excess of the metric standard by about three-tenths of one per cent."

These coins, Mr. Kelley states, are used by more than 200,000,000; while the population of the countries which form the "Latin league," is not more than 80,000,000. He contends, in view of this fact, that it would be unreasonable to ask the United States, whose coins are now weighable, by a scientific standard, to reduce them 352-100, to conform to the French franc—that reduction being a departure from the metric system, which everybody admits it is of the highest importance to establish.

The chief obstruction to general reform would be to ask the nations to recoin a very great amount of money, and to make a great change in established values.

It is further urged on the part of the United States, that the coinage of France is not up to the standard fixed by law. The Directors of the Mint of the United States in 1867, officially reported:—

"I will here add the result of a recent assay of single gold pieces of France, of the dates 1863 and 1867, and mint marks of Paris and Strasbourg. This is important in its bearing upon the question of international coinage, for if such an interchange is to take place, the respective countries must keep good faith in regard to the fineness of their coins: otherwise the matter will soon come to an end. We find the fineness varying from 898.5 to 899.8, and averaging 899.2. This has generally been the result for many years, and is not what should be expected. The average ought to be 900, as required by law. The British coins are kept up to the mark."

Mr. Kelley quotes the following from the pamphlet of M. Mosle:—

"The gold pieces of France have never been coined 9-10ths fine, a fact not at all denied by French writers. Eminent French authorities on matters of coinage, Chevalier, Léon, Weltsky and De Parieu, consider their system defective and a failure."

"The Germans would not only share these losses, but would give to the French new and good coins for their poor and old ones, which never have been of full weight."

Baron Nothomb, quoted by Mr. Kelley, states that the Master of the Mint in England, reports that the depreciation of the coinage from abrasion in Great Britain, is £35,000 stg. per annum, and adds:—

"The French coin is in a worse condition. In a number of the *Revue Contemporaine* of January 31, 1863, we find:— We call attention to the fact that in all coinage operations, in consequence of tolerance, fineness is taken at only 899.1000, thus counting 1,000 francs in 5 franc silver pieces as 4,972 to 4,975 grams, instead of 5 kilograms. Then 1,000 new coined francs contained only 494.40 francs silver, a difference of 5.60 per mille. The French administration of finances makes no secret of this *faillage*, and every year the complete administration des finances, demonstrates the gain resulting to the State, which in 1853 was 164,389 from 210,000,000 coined." The French Government (see *Moniteur* of November 29, 1863,) excuses this by the impossibility of keeping the exact standard, but it is strange that they always remain below the normal standard. In England the deviation is only a two-millionth part; in Prussia all lately coined thalers contain 9001-10,000, and in 1857, when large sums were coined, the difference from the normal amount was only three and two thirds thalers in 31,500,000. There are no legal Napoleons of full weight in existence."

The United States, as reported by the Senate Committee, have passed an act to make the metric system permissive, and Congress, in 1866, ordered the Secretary of the Treasury to furnish each State one set of standard weights and measures of the metric system. There can be very little doubt that, in the course of a few years, it will supplant all others among civilized nations. It is much to say for France that she had the honour of introducing it, and it ought to be more desired by her that all nations should weigh their coins by this scientific standard than that they should adopt her franc system if it involves a departure from it.

We now come to notice some interesting and careful papers, prepared by Mr. E. B. Elliott, an officer of the U.S. Treasury Department, on the metrical system of international coinage.