America to adopt metric commodity quantity standards, through Congressional enactment.

The importance of the Pan-American Standardization meeting is expected to direct the attention of our Congress to the necessity for considering world standards. In the meantime, metric advocates in the United States are active. The Metric Association holds its Convention in Washington, D. C., during December, and other organizations favoring the standardization move are coöperating.

Fred A. Britten, Congressman from Illinois and metric leader in the House of Representatives, declares: "I regard the adoption of the metric system of weights and measures by the United States of America as of great importance. Its universal adoption is inevitable."

INTERNATIONAL OPIUM CONFERENCE.

A number of the newspaper headings of articles bearing on the Conference at Geneva, read "War On Opium;" for some of the sessions "Opium War" might have been applicable. Charges and counter-charges embittered earlier sessions of the Conference on Far Eastern opium problems. China charged that if the great powers had not adopted effective measures to reduce opium-smoking in the Far East, such as rationing and the registration of smokers, it was because they did not wish to do so. England charged Japan with attacking the British Government during the discussion over the Japanese proposal that countries exporting opium should recognize the import certificates issued by other countries and furnish opium when the documents declared that the opium was for legitimate purposes.

November 25th there was another outbreak in the Conference, but after many accusations and words almost violent in nature between the Japanese, British and Indian delegates an agreement was reached in principle on the issue which caused the collapse of the first opium Conference. This question concerns the freedom of Japan to import opium and recognition of import certificates by British authorities when Japan transhipps her opium at Hongkong. Despite this accord, however, the first Conference is generally regarded, virtually, as a failure, because it provides no effective system for putting an end to opium-smoking in the Far East. The American plan proposes to accomplish complete suppression of opium-smoking within ten years—a ten per cent. cut each year.

The American proposal declares that to prevent the abuse of drugs "it is necessary to exercise the control of the production of raw opium in such a manner that there will be no surplus available for non-medicinal and non-scientific purposes." The nations therefore are asked to enact laws regulating the production of raw opium and coca leaves which shall prevent the existence of such a surplus.

BOOK NOTICES AND REVIEWS.

PUBLICATION OF BOOK REVIEWS DEFERRED.

On account of the annual index in this issue of the JOURNAL it is necessary to defer the printing of several book reviews, to a succeeding number. The two reviews following have been held over for some time.

Chemical Encyclopedia: A digest of chemistry and chemical industry by C. T. Kingzett, F. I. C., F. C. S., 3d edition. D. Van Nostrand Company, New York, 1924. 606 pp. $8.00.

This volume is larger and more comprehensive than its earlier editions which were originally published under the title, "The Popular Chemical Dictionary."

The aim of the author has been truly accomplished, in his desire to place before the reader an epitomized digest of chemistry, its industrial applications and miscellaneous information concerning principles of allied Technology and Interest.

The manner of treatment of the vast amount of material included renders the work exceptionally valuable to professional chemists, students and manufacturers. It further affords an educational treatise to all desiring information along the particular lines covered by the text.

We can find practically every common or specific chemical and technically related noun, ranging between Abietic Acid and Zymogens, alphabetically arranged.

Chemical Formulae are given where necessary, together with tabular references, and statistics are noted throughout the volume.

The composition of alloys, alcohol volume

and densities, relation of the primary and higher amines, typical analytical and physical constants of oils, fats, waxes, etc., were noted at random among the numerous data readily available.

The subject matter is entirely up-to-date including even technical terms only very recently introduced into scientific terminology such as Vitamines and Insulin.

Aspirin is quoted as an intestinal antiseptic, which therapeutic description does not correspond to prevailing American practice.

Numerous industrial proprietaries of American sources are listed.

Summarily considered, the intrinsic value of this *Encyclopedia* can best be ascertained by inspection or reference.

The book can be readily appreciated as a valuable supplementary reference work in any technical library. In itself, as a compact digest of voluminous technical material, it can very well supersede any number of descriptive texts relating to the various subjects that are treated.

SIMON MENDELSOHN.

Systematic Course in Qualitative Analysis of inorganic and organic substances: with explanatory notes. By Henry W. Schimpf, Ph.G., M.D. Fourth Edition. Revised by Alfred I. Cone, Ph.G., Phar.D. John Wiley & Sons Co., New York, 1924. IX + 201 pp. 6 x 9 Cloth $1.75.

This volume was originally devised and written to meet the initial requirements of the student of Pharmacy. The text represents those essentials of qualitative analytical procedure pertinent to the usual materials of pharmaceutical importance and interest.

Certain abbreviated or "short cut" analytical methods have been deleted from this revision in preference to the classic or theoretical procedures.

Considerable of the omitted data have been replaced by preliminary discussions including Ionization, Law of Mass Action, Bunsen flame reactions, etc.

A chapter is devoted to definitions and general considerations representing a brief review of fundamental principles directly concerned in the scope of the material involved. Group separations are presented in both tabular form and the usual step charts.

This feature is readily commendable for the facilities afforded for any desired reference to the properties of substances subject to separatory manipulations preceding their final separation and subsequent identification.

Occasional instances of reversed grammatical syntax are noted. On page 133, section 153 on citrates, this sentence occurs "Upon heating citrates char." The fact could be better expressed, in the form "citrates char on heating."

The chapter on mass action is briefly but well defined; while nevertheless inadequately demonstrated mathematically.

The equations as given are confusing since certain designated constants represented by K and K^I are simultaneously employed as variables.

For example two constants being K and K^I we find that the ratio of K/K^I is given to be K^I which should have been designated by K^C or any other sign to differentiate it as a third constant.

Physical constants such as the optical rotation or melting points are not included for the differentiation of certain of the carbohydrates or in connection with the identification of stereoptens respectively.

The omission of these factors may, however, be in conformity with the original intentions of the author to restrict the text to essentials only.

On page 149, under the caption "starches" we note the statement, ".....insoluble in cold water but on boiling form a mucilage, which gives a blue color with Iodine." This statement may be erroneously interpreted to indicate that the Iodine reaction is characteristic only to the mucilaginous form of starch.

Analytical schemes for the *identification of iron scale salts, detection of poisons* and *uranalysis* are included. The notes on microscopic examination of urinary sediments could be rendered more valuable by the addition of a few illustrations showing examples of epithelium, crystalline matter, blood discs, casts, etc.

The last chapter consists of numerous formulae for the preparation of reagents. The index is efficiently arranged.

The text is surrounded by liberal margins suggestive to the addition of supplementary notations by the student.

This volume, despite its limited scope, forms a valuable manual of analytical material and represents an excellent contribution to pharmaceutical literature; its characteristic features warrant it a place in every working technical library.

SIMON MENDELSOHN.