

available material relating to the recent disastrous flood in the Mississippi Valley.

In this connection, I should appreciate it very much if you would be good enough to aid the Committee by furnishing me such material as you may have available on this subject.

Very truly yours,

FRANK R. REID,
Chairman.

METRIC STANDARDIZATION

At the new session of Congress advocates of decimal weights and measures for the United States will energetically back the liberal Metric Standards Bill that is being introduced in the House of Representatives by the Hon. Fred A. Britten of Illinois.

At its recent convention at Lake Placid, the Metric Association outlined plans for greatly increased activity. The All-American Standards Council is also urging prompt legislative action by Congress to establish the decimal metric units for general use in merchandising throughout the United States after 1935.

Instead of the present liquid quart, pound avoirdupois, and yard, it is proposed to substitute the liter, the 500 gram weight or world pound, and the yard respectively.

PREPARING FOR SNOW REMOVAL

In the northern half of the United States and in Canada the highway authorities are now busily preparing for the annual struggle with snow. The possibility of keeping country roads snow-free throughout the winter was hardly dreamed of ten years ago. In response to the demands of motor traffic this possibility has now become a reality on a gigantic scale. Last winter snow-removal operations in 36 states of the Union were conducted on 106,721 miles of rural highway, at an expense of \$4,641,037, according to admittedly incomplete figures gathered by the United States Bureau of Public Roads. During the coming winter an increase of about ten per cent is anticipated.

The development of snow removal in America within the last few years has been spectacular. Besides entailing the expenditure of much human energy and large sums of money, it has given rise to a remarkable technique and a variety of ingenious mechanical equipment. Part of the problem is to prevent drifts from forming on the roads. Methods of prevention include the removal of drift-forming obstacles from the borders of the roads and the erection of "snow fences," which cause drifts to form away from the highway instead of on it. Both permanent and portable fences are used for this purpose.

A large proportion of the snow-removal equipment is pushed in front of trucks or tractors. In areas where deep snowfall occurs, the snow plows employed on the highways rival those of the railroads in size and

efficiency. Most striking are the rotary plows, of which (again according to incomplete statistics) about 150 were in use last year.

In the cities the street-cleaning agencies are getting ready for a similar campaign. A generation ago a proposal to appropriate \$25,000 for a winter of snow-removal work in New York City was pronounced too extravagant for serious consideration. During the winter of 1925-26 the same city spent \$4,500,000 for such work.—*C. Fitzhugh Talman, in Why the Weather? a Science Service Feature.*

CLINE'S "TROPICAL CYCLONES"

"Dr. Cline states that the omission of Monthly Weather Review Supplement No. 24, containing Mr. Mitchell's contribution to tropical hurricanes from the Bibliography of his book, 'Tropical Cyclones,' was due to the fact that the matter for his book had been completed and submitted for publication before Supplement No. 24 appeared, otherwise it would have been in the Bibliography."

A FAMOUS STORM

The destructive gale in the British Isles, late in October, has brought out the following account of an earlier severe storm.—ED.

One of the most celebrated weather events in all history was the "Great Storm" of November, 1703, which raged over much of Europe, and was especially severe in and about the British Isles. Daniel Defoe wrote a book about it, and it is referred to in the well-known lines of Addison—

So, when an angel, by divine command,
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past.

Throughout the south and west of England the destructive effects of the wind were quite without precedent for that part of the world. Hundreds of buildings were ruined, and there was vast destruction of trees. Defoe places the loss of life on land at 123, while hundreds more were injured. The losses at sea were far greater. More than 8,000 seamen perished, including some 1,500 men of the Royal Navy. The first Eddy-stone lighthouse was destroyed in this storm. Its architect, Winstanley, had expressed the hope of being in the building during the worst gale it should ever experience, and his wish was tragically accomplished. He had gone to the lighthouse the day before to superintend some repairs, and he never returned.

Much information concerning the storm has been gleaned by an English meteorologist, Henry Harries, from an examination of contemporary log-books of British men-of-war. It appears to have been quite comparable in violence to the worst hurricanes of the tropics.—*C. Fitzhugh Talman, in Why the Weather? a Science Service feature.*

A CATERPILLAR WEATHER PROPHET(?)

One of the most familiar kinds of caterpillar is the larva of the moth *Isia isabella*. It is part black and part yellow. You will find a colored