

*the principle of the measure*"), and it may therefore be reasonably presumed that it will be brought forward again in the next session, in the same or a modified form. As the discussion it received in the House seemed to be in no respect commensurate with the immense importance and sweeping nature of the change proposed, and with the exception of one or two rather cursory notices in *The Times*, excited a marvellously small amount of public interest pending its progress; it will not be amiss if, being called upon by the committee of the Leeds Astronomical Society for an exposition of some point of general interest in the form of a Lecture or Essay, to be read at one of their Evening Meetings, I select this for its subject; and endeavour to place before you the several conditions which any standard or typical unit of length which shall be assumed as the basis of a system of measures and weights intended to be national, and which may justly claim to be universal, ought to fulfil; and to compare with these conditions, in order to see how far they are fulfilled in fact, both our actual standard, the French metre now in use, and the length of the pendulum, which has been more than once proposed as a natural unit of length. And this I will endeavour to do in as elementary and familiar a way as shall be consistent with perfect correctness. Those of the present audience who are not already familiar with the subject will thus be better enabled to form an opinion as to the desirableness of the change actually proposed, or of any legislative change in our existing standard, and in our system of measures,