

machine tooling. In these, all dies, tools, machine parts and gauges would have to be changed to metric units. Millions of plans, diagrams and designs would have to be converted. In some cases adjustment of a present machine might be possible, while in others entirely new equipment would have to be designed and built.

In 1963 there were some three million machine tools in use in this country and all were geared to standard English measurements.

Although many of these industries claim that conversion to the metric system will be nigh onto impossible, one industry—the pharmaceutical industry—has found transition to the metric system “easy and valuable.”

“In recent years the major American pharmaceutical manufacturers have converted completely to the metric system,” reported Joseph V. Swintosky, president of the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences. “This has been done not only because of the greater assurance of safety to the human consumers of drugs, but it also has been done because it enables greater manufacturing efficiency,” he said.

None of the industries, and indeed nations, adopting the metric system over the past 150 years has regretted it. And chances are that when the U.S. adopts the system, no one will regret it either—not by a country kilometer.

• Science News Letter, 89:74 January 29, 1966

TECHNOLOGY

Strips Better Than Cells in Solar Panels

➤ SHINY BLACK RIBBONS of silicon crystal up to 18 feet long may save weight and improve reliability of solar panels powering future spacecraft.

At present, the individual cells that make up solar panels are made by cutting slices from a cylindrical crystal also of silicon. The round slices are then squared off, electrically connected to one another, and mounted on a backing material.

All these connections, however, are heavy and provide numerous places for something to go wrong. The new strips, developed by Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Youngwood, Pa., under a U.S. Air Force contract, are said not only to eliminate most of the connections, but to double the power output of solar panels.

• Science News Letter, 89:75 January 29, 1966

Do You Know?

One theory about *cancer* suggests that cancer virus is present in most animals and humans, being transmitted from generation to generation, and only causes disease occasionally.

Hearing acuity may be related to the adequacy of the blood supply to hearing mechanism in the inner ear.

• Science News Letter, 89:75 January 29, 1966

How to Get By in MEXICO

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—do it a dozen times or so
and then speak the 700 words that lift you over the language barrier in Mexico, Spain, and most of South America.

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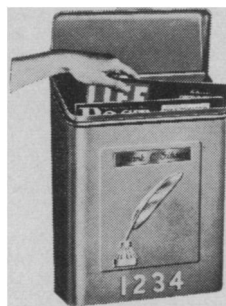
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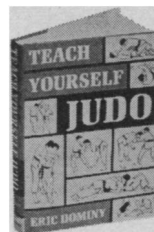
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By Eric Dominy

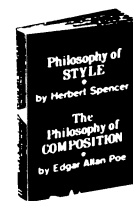


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