

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

May I draw the attention of your readers to a matter of mutual interest to teachers and training college lecturers?

The increase in the length of the course of training for non-graduate teachers from two to three years is necessitating an increase in staffs of training colleges and this is likely still further to denude secondary schools of their mathematics teachers and so aggravate an already serious situation. The committee of the Mathematics Section of the Association of Teachers in Colleges and Departments of Education has given some thought to the problem and some colleges have been able to solve their staffing difficulties by appointing retired teachers or lecturers on a part-time basis. It is felt that more use could be made of this potential source of supply if there existed some central coordinating body for the collecting and collating of information. The Mathematics Section is willing to act in this capacity for the time being and any teacher or lecturer who is contemplating retirement and who would be willing to undertake part time work in a training college is invited to communicate with the undersigned at Redland College, The Promenade, Bristol, 8.

Yours etc., KATHLEEN SOWDEN

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

May I add a note to the interesting article by Mr R. F. Wheeler on Force, Power and Gravitational Units printed in the December 1959 issue of the *Mathematical Gazette*. The title is

Pound Weight and Pound Mass

The confusion between these two terms arises partly from history and partly from the changes that have occurred in thought.

In Kaye and Laby's *Tables of Physical and Chemical Constants* (Longmans Green and Co. 1911) First edition under the heading of British Imperial Standards on p. 4 we find this statement "According to the Weights and Measures Act, 1878 the pound is the weight in vacuo of a platinum cylinder called the imperial standard pound." Note that the pound is a *weight* (or force) and *not a mass*.

The eleventh edition (1956) of the same tables on p. 3 changes the above to "The Imperial Standard Pound, defined by the Weights and Measures Act, 1878, is a cylinder of platinum of diameter slightly less than its height etc. The Standard Pound defines the avoirdupois pound" There is no mention here of weight or mass, the pound *is* the cylinder of platinum, although the related paragraphs are under a central heading MASS.

In 1928 the British National Physical Laboratory published a report on *The Units and Standards of Measurement* employed at the N.P.L. It quoted (p. 23) the same Act and says "The Imperial Standard Pound is defined as follows: The imperial standard for determining the weight