

ESPERANTO BULLETIN

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SOCIAL ASPECT OF ESPERANTO.

ARTHUR BAKER.

It is easy to acquire, through reading histories whose principal features are the spectacular exploits of military chieftains, the impression that revolutions are necessarily associated with violence and the shedding of much blood. Our minds automatically unite the word "revolution" with the mutiny of armed troops, the assassination of the shah or czar or king, with the hasty gathering of Minute-Men and the embroidering of banners of defiance by the daughters of the new regime. This sad confusion of the average mind with regard to the important facts of history must not be laid at the door of the historians. The burning of a wretched barn will attract an immense crowd in any city, where the building of a fine new school-house would pass unnoticed. A discovery in surgery or medicine, such as would save a million lives a year, would occupy, in the newspapers, a position secondary to the most commonplace murder of the day.

The average American, speaking tritely of "the liberties for which our fathers bled" would regard you as frankly insane if you should gently suggest to him that British editors who died peacefully of delirium tremens or gout had done infinitely more to secure those liberties for him than Molly Pitcher and General Washington. The revolutionary writers of France have accomplished far more than any of its republican presidents, and the Iron Chancellor of Germany, with a military organization which was the terror of Europe, could not for a moment stay the progress of the intellectual revolution in his own domains.

The actual freedom of the press in France, England and America, with its broad privileges in other countries, has placed the world in a state of continual, silent, intellectual revolution which outruns and anticipates at every point the slower-moving, but none the less certain changes in industry and state-craft. Rather we should say that it has developed in each field of thought a small party which thus precedes the general social growth.

A well-defined common interest is the strongest social bond. The contending forces of progress and conservatism in modern society operate to dissolve the common interests which formerly united the citizens of a single nation as against those of all "foreigners" and to substitute industrial, financial, educational or ecclesiastical interests which overreach national limits. For example, a French and a German member of the International Confederation of Rivet-holders are united by a strong mutual interest, while the manufacturers of a new automatic appliance for holding rivets are an object of anathema to them both. An American and a Frenchman, if both large holders of Russian bonds, would sympathize with each other and with the government of Russia as against their own governments if these latter should for any reason support the revolutionary party of Russia. National wars can repress only for the moment this growing international solidarity of business, professional, religious and class interests.

Thus we have the singular phenomenon of nations within nations, empires overlapping empires, and each of these super-nations is a cosmopolitan empire speaking fifty languages. We have International Physicians, International Teachers, International Temperance Workers, International Bricklayers, International Christian Endeavorers, International Missions. In the domain of International popular politics we have peace societies, anti-military societies, woman's suffrage societies, and an international political party (Social-Democratic) whose strength is variously estimated as from six to thirty millions!

This state of affairs has created an urgent need for an international language. It must not be imagined that this need has or can develop suddenly into a demand, since use of an international language can be made by any person only after study, and for the pioneers it must be largely a useless study. Only when millions have learned it will it appeal to the average man or woman as a necessary part of an elementary education. This was the condition met by Esperanto at its first presentation some twenty years ago. No highly-developed imagination is necessary to picture its reception by the world at large. Everybody could say: "What is the good of a language which is not in general use? When others have learned it, I will take it up." At this period the language needed not creative genius, but heroic devotion. This was given not alone by the author, but by a constantly increasing number of adepts who learned to speak and write Esperanto with fluency. Probably the success of Esperanto is due much more to these early devotees than to the language itself, as many imitations or plagiarisms of Esperanto developed, which, from the linguistic viewpoint of the average person, could hardly be pronounced inferior to Esperanto. The only explanation of their uniform failure is that they lacked the devoted champions and tireless propagandists which brought Esperanto out of the desert of dreams and fancy into the "promised land" of actual existence and practical, every-day use.

The utter failure of all competing systems (more than thirty of which had appeared since the birth of Esperanto) led in 1907 to a frank plagiarism, put forward under the auspices of a committee so ingeniously constituted as to nominally represent a large number of colleges and universities, while being actually under the control of two or three persons. The justification of the plagiarism was based upon certain alleged imperfections of Esperanto, but the critical attitude assumed by the plagiarist committee led to endless criticism and revision of their own work. The lack of harmony which doomed this movement to perish of its own accord was best shown in the fact that the language was variously known by twenty different names. Several propaganda periodicals have appeared in the new language, but at this date no literature has been printed, nor have any of the educational institutions named by the committee adopted or used the language. Indeed, the utter absence of literature of any kind lends color to the assertion frequently made that the prime object of the real head of the movement, which is endowed by certain moneyed interests, is not to promote even their own language, but to break up the entire international language movement on the ground that it is too radical, too anti-military for the safety of certain social elements of Europe.

Thus we find in Esperanto a new weapon in the hands of international revolution and progress. A new invention or a new idea of any kind no longer dies with its inventor, but can be instantly heralded throughout the world. Politically, industrially, professionally, Esperanto can weld more closely the ties of international solidarity and develop the economies of the super-nations, from which alone we can expect, eventually, the removal of the curse of militarism and the immense social waste of armies and navies.

Samideano, the Esperanto word for "fellow-thinker," touches the magic source of its power. Breaking down the barriers of language and giving to progressive thinkers and workers of all nations the power of instant comprehension and co-operation, Esperanto looms as an incalculable factor in rapid development of the great peaceful revolutions in science, industry, politics and religion which are today transpiring in every corner of the earth.

THE CASE OF VOLAPUK.

HERBERT M. SCOTT.

For the last two hundred and fifty years attempts have been making for the creation of an international language, and the desire for a common language for all men was expressed even two thousand years ago by the prophet Zephaniah. This desire has also a very important foundation; for always and everywhere the confusion of tongues has been a hindrance to the intellectual intercourse of nations. In our day, when intercourse of the peoples by means of telegraph, steam-ship, and railway has increased in a manner never dreamed of, also the acquirement of the languages of all these peoples has become a necessity of the well educated and particularly of commercial men. But this learning is so difficult and wasteful of time that it must for the most part be done with loss for the other realms of science, and so the demand for a single common language to be accepted by all educated persons, replacing all foreign languages, proves the more justified.

We shall not analyze here the various attempts that have been made for the purpose of creating an international language. We shall merely note that all these attempts either presented a system of signs for brief communication upon occasion of great need (the so-called "pasigraphies"), or else were content with a most natural simplification of grammar and replacement of the words existing in languages by other words, arbitrarily invented. The attempts of the first category were so complicated and so unpractical that each of them died as soon as born. The attempts of the second category now presented in themselves *languages*, but there was nothing *international* about them. The authors for some reason called their languages, "universal," possibly for the simple reason that there was no one in the wide world with whom one could communicate through these languages! If for the universality of a language it is enough that a person call it such, in such case each of the existing languages can become universal at the will of each individual. Since these projects were founded upon the naive hope that the world would greet them with joy and unanimously give them sanction, and this unanimous consent is just the most impossible part of the affair, on account of the world's natural indifference toward academic projects, which do not afford it unconditional utility, but count on its readiness to give up its time to pioneer work,—therefore it is but natural that these projects all met with a complete fiasco: for the great majority of the people took no interest whatever in these projects, and those that did take interest judged it not worth their while to learn a language in which no one could understand them but the author. "First of all let the world," they said, "or several millions of persons learn this language, then will I learn it also." And the affair which could confer utility upon each individual adept only in the event of there previously being a multitude of other adepts, found no acceptance and proved still-born. And if one of the last projects, Volapuk, acquired, as is true, a certain number of adepts, this is owing simply to the fact that the bare idea of "universal" language is so high and attractive that persons who are inclined to get enthusiastic and devote themselves to pioneer work, gave up their time in the hope that the affair *might* succeed. But the number of enthusiasts reached a certain figure and halted, and the cold, indifferent world was not willing to give up its time that it might be able to communicate with these few,—and this language, in common with previous projects, died, having accomplished absolutely nothing.

Such was the case of Volapuk.

What of Esperanto?

The question of an international language had already long occupied Dr. Zamenhof: but feeling himself neither more talented nor more energetic than the authors of all the projects that had perished without results, he limited himself for a long while to simple thought and

open meditation upon the matter. But several happy ideas which appeared as the fruit of this open meditation encouraged him to further labor and led him to see if he could not succeed in systematically overcoming all obstacles to the bringing into use of a rational international language.

If the entire essence of an artificial language consisted in its *grammar*, then from the moment Volapuk first appeared the question of an international language would have been solved and Volapuk could never have had any rivals; for despite various errors, the Volapuk grammar is so easy and simple, that to give anything much easier and much simpler would be simply impossible. A new language could differ from Volapuk only in a few *trifles*, and everyone understands that for the sake of *trifles* no one would undertake the creation of a new language, and for trifles the world would not refuse a language already established in practice. In extreme case the future academy or congress would make these unimportant changes in the Volapuk grammar which should prove useful, and the international language would without any doubt have remained Volapuk, and all rivalry would forever have been ruled out. But a language consists not only of grammar, but also of a *vocabulary*, and the acquirement of the vocabulary demands in an artificial language a hundredfold more time than the acquirement of the grammar. Meanwhile Volapuk solved *only* the question of the grammar, and the vocabulary it left quite without attention, offering simply a collection of various invented words, which every new author would have the right to invent for himself at will. This is why in the very beginning of the career of Volapuk even the most fervid Volapukists naturally feared that there would tomorrow appear a new language quite unlike Volapuk and between the two languages there would break out a struggle. It is quite another case with Esperanto: we know—and this is not for a moment denied by any investigator—that Esperanto has solved not only the question of grammar, but also the question of the *vocabulary*, hence not one *small part* of the problem, but the *whole* problem.

The failure of Volapuk was simply the failure of an incorrect *form* of international language. This has been replaced by Esperanto. Can Esperanto now be ousted by any future language?

To answer this question let us actually imagine that now, in spite of the Esperanto language, already existent, excellent in all respects, established in every field, and with its multitude of adepts and a wide literature, there nevertheless appeared a man who decided to devote a whole series of years to the creation of a new language, that he has succeeded in bringing his work to completion and that the language he proposes proves actually better than Esperanto,—let us see what this language would be like.

If the Esperanto grammar, which gives us full ability to express in the most exact manner every shade of human thought, consists in full of sixteen (16) brief bits of rules and can be acquired in half an hour, what now could a new author give that would be better? In an extreme case he might give in place of sixteen rules fifteen, and instead of thirty minutes work he might require only twenty-five. Is it not so? But will any one create for this a new language, and will the world for such a trifle refuse that which already exists and is established in every field? Certainly not; in an extreme case the world will say: "If in your grammar there is any trifle which is better than in Esperanto, we will introduce this trifle into Esperanto and the matter will be settled."

What sort of vocabulary will this language have? At the present time no investigator longer doubts that the vocabulary of the international language cannot consist of words arbitrarily invented, but must inevitably consist of Aryan words in their most commonly accepted forms. This is not—as many think—that the learned linguists may be able to read text written in this language at sight (in such an affair as the international language the learned linguists play the *least* part, since

for them such a language is certainly *least* necessary), but for other weightier reasons. Thus, for example, there are an immense number of so-called "foreign" words, which are common to all languages and are known to all without study, and to omit which would be a positive absurdity. In unison with these must be also all other words of the vocabulary, for otherwise the language would be barbarous, there would be on every hand collision of elements, confusions, and the constant regular enrichment of the language would be impeded. There are yet other reasons why the vocabulary must be compounded of such words only and no others, but of these reasons, as too technical, we shall here not treat in detail. Suffice it to say that all the latest investigators accept this law for the vocabulary as no longer admitting doubt. And since Esperanto has been guided by this very law, and because in the face of this law great diversity in the choice of words cannot exist, the question remains what now could the author of a *new* language give us, if such were created? It is true that to this or that word one could give a more convenient form,—but such words are very few. The *actual* number of words to which, in place of the Esperanto form, one could give a more convenient form, amount to not more than some ten per cent.

But if in the Esperanto grammar almost no change can be made, and in the vocabulary one could change only some ten per cent. of the words, then the question comes up, what would a *new* language offer, if it were ever created, and it actually proved in practice a language suitable in all respects? This would be no new language, but merely a somewhat modified Esperanto!

Hence, summing up, we see that Esperanto necessarily replaced Volapuk, while it is itself practically irreplaceable. Even if the international language of future generations does not go by the name, Esperanto, it will, nevertheless, in essentials be Esperanto, and that is the important thing. No one claims that Esperanto is perfect, but it is at least a good approximation to the final solution of the question, and, unlike Volapuk, furnishes the indispensable foundation for all future structures.

ESPERANTO IN THE SCHOOLS.

During the past year, in Great Britain alone, the study of the international language Esperanto was introduced officially into forty public schools. This is conclusive proof that Esperanto has passed the stage of an experiment and is now beginning to be universally recognized as the actually existing language for international relations. Of course it is not in Great Britain alone that Esperanto is meeting with such success, in every part of the world Esperanto is triumphing and in spite of reports industriously put in circulation by disgruntled ex-Esperantists to the effect that the movement was losing ground, it is a fact that never before has progress been so rapid and eventual success so certain.

Laws are before the legislatures of several states providing for the instruction of Esperanto in high schools and the faculties of several prominent universities are contemplating the introduction of the study as a part of the regular curriculum. The Boston school board recently decided to teach Esperanto in the commercial high school, and it is already taught in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Clark University, Perkins Institute for the Blind, etc. The United States is not permitting itself to be left behind in this important movement.

The First European Congress of Stenography will meet at the historic French city Rouen in August. Circular letters are being sent all over the world urging the attendance of Esperantists. The international language will be especially welcomed in this congress, which has not yet established the routine system of using three main languages and as many assistant languages and dialects as possible in order to transact the affairs of an international convention.

SYNOPSIS OF ESPERANTO GRAMMAR

THE ALPHABET consists of twenty-eight letters: a b c ĉ d e f g ĝ h ĥ i j k l m n o p r s ŝ t u ŭ v z. The *sounds* are as follows:
 a is like *a* in father.
 c is like *s* in hats.
 ĉ is like *ch* in church.
 e is like *a* in fate, but not so long.
 g is like *g* in get.
 ĝ is like *g* in gem.
 ĥ is like *ch* in loch.
 i is like *ee* in see.
 j is like *y* in yet, boy.
 ŝ is like *s* in seizure.
 o is like *o* in roll.
 s is like *s* in so.
 ŝ is like *sh* in show.

u is like *oo* in soon.
 ŭ is like *w* in how.
 z is like *z* in zone, seize.
 r is slightly rolled or trilled.
 The remaining letters are pronounced exactly as in English: b d f h k l m n p t v.

PRONUNCIATION
 Every word is pronounced exactly as spelled, and no letter is ever *silent*.

The **Accent**, stress or emphasis is placed on the syllable next to the last: BA-lo; ne-HE-la; di-li-GEN-ta.

Every vowel (a, e, i, o, u) adds a syllable: zo-o-lo-gi-o; tre-eg-e.

GRAMMATICAL SIGNS

- O the sign of the noun . . . amo=*love*
- A sign of the adjective . . . ama=*affectionate*
- E adverb . . . ame=*affectionately*
- I verb infinitive . . . skribi=*to write*
- AS verb present indicative skribas=*writes*
- IS verb past . . . skribis=*wrote*
- OS verb future . . . skribos=*will write*
- U verb imperative . . . skribu=*write*
- US verb conditional . . . skribus=*might write*
- ANT participle, present act. skribanta=*writing*
- INT participle past active skribinta=*having written*
- ONT participle future active skribonta=*about to write*
- AT participle present passive skribata=*being written*
- IT participle past passive skribita=*been written*
- OT participle future passive skribota=*about to be written*
- J, final, indicates plural in nouns and adjectives
- N, objective case

PREFIXES

ESPERANTO is equipped with a system of prefixes and suffixes, giving a wide range of expression to a very small vocabulary. Taking a root for the central thought, these are used to express the variations of the central idea. In EXERCISE 42, AMERICAN ESPERANTO BOOK, there are shown 53 words thus formed from one root. The only limit to such combinations is clearness.

- BO relationship by marriage; bopatro=*father-in-law*
- ĈEF chief or principal; ĉefkuiristo=*head cook*
- DE means *from*; depreni=*to take from*
- DIS dismemberment or separation; disŝiri=*to tear apart*
- EK to begin suddenly; ekkrii=*to cry out*
- EKS same as English *ex*; eksprezidanto=*ex-president*
- EL out; ellabori=*to work out*; elpensi=*to think out*
- FOR away; foriri=*to go away*
- GE both sexes; gepatroj=*parents*
- MAL the direct opposite; bona=*good*; malbona=*bad*
- NE not, neutral; nebela=*not beautiful, plain*
- RE to repeat or reverse; reiri=*to go back*; rediri=*repeat*
- SEN without, *-less*; senhara= *bald*

SUFFIXES

- AD continued action; kanto=*a song*; kantado=*singing*
- Aĵ the concrete; bela=*beautiful*; belaĵo=*a beautiful thing*
- AR collection or group; vortaro=*a dictionary*
- ĈJ diminutive for masculine names; Vilĉjo=*Willie*
- AN inhabitant, partisan; kristano=*a Christian*
- EBL possibility; vidi=*to see*; videbla=*visible*
- EC abstract quality; bela=*beautiful*; beleco=*beauty*
- EG increased degree or size; grandega=*immense*
- EJ place of action; lerni=*to learn*; lernejo=*school*
- EM tendency, inclination; laborema=*industrious*
- ER a unit of a collection; mono=*money*; monero=*a coin*
- ESTR a leader or head; urbo=*city*; urbestro=*mayor*
- ET diminution of size or degree; vireto=*a tiny man*
- ID offspring; kato=*a cat*, katido=*a kitten*
- IG to cause to become; riĉa=*rich*; riĉigi=*to enrich*
- Iĝ to become; riĉigi=*to "get rich"*
- IL tool, means, instrument; kudri=*sew*; kudrilo=*a needle*
- IN the feminine; frato=*brother*; fratino=*sister*
- IND denotes worthiness; kredinda=*worthy of belief*
- ING holder for single article; cigaringo=*cigar-holder*
- IST a person occupied with; kantisto=*a singer*
- NJ diminutive for feminine names; panjo=*mamma*
- UJ that which contains; kremujo=*a cream pitcher*
- UL one having the quality of; grandulo=*a large person*

