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GOD, HUXLEY, AND THE LEVEL CROSSING SMASH

A Children's Story for grown-up People

Year after year, month after month, week after week, day after day, and almost every hour round the clock, something terrible happens somewhere on this planet: a level crossing smash. People, young or old, some with children and babies with them, set out for a trip, gay and happy, innocent and good in their heart, people who have not harmed anyone. And then disaster strikes: a level crossing smash.

Here in Australia we have a level crossing smash almost every week. Two years ago seven young people were killed in Victoria, and many more injured in a level crossing smash. They were not under the influence of liquor. They did not come home from racing or gambling or dancing. They came home on a Sunday, the day of the Lord. They came home from an evening worship to the Lord. And the Lord let this happen. Why, why, why?

I read extracts of the sermons in the papers. Ministers of the various denominations tried to explain this terrible happening. They used lame words about God's unfathomable will and what not. But their lame explanations could not satisfy anyone. Indeed, any chance we have on making people believe in a power which strives for the good of mankind depends exactly on how we can explain such terrible happenings. They, more than anything else, point to a world in which chaos only reigns, in which prayer, belief and conscience are of no use whatever. In such a world of chaos the fittest only survives. The fittest is the one who happens to sit in a fitter vehicle, a heavy engine and carriage, a heavy truck, which smashes senselessly into a small car, a small motorbike, a small pushbike, a small pram, which is not fit to withstand the impact of the molecules of matter. Chaos triumphs, the world of dead matter.

But there is the world of living matter, the world of the mind. Huxley (as I have proved) admits now the strange phenomena of the mind which "orthodox and organised science" still refuse to examine. Huxley himself does not believe in a "supernatural" power, a Supreme Intelligence, a God who directs the destinies of man. What has Huxley to say about the terrible injustices which happen in this world? What has he to say that innocent people get killed, get afflicted with terrible diseases, get harmed and betrayed by rich people who rob them of their earnings and their toil? What is Huxley's answer to all this?

I searched his books until I found it. He admits the necessity of religion and religious thought in his book "Religion without Revelation" (The Thinker's Library No. 83, published by Watts & Co. London 1941). He starts with a quotation of Canon B.H. Streeter who said in his book "Reality"

"Science... makes impossible any religion but the highest."

"Why do the wicked prosper, wax fat and kick; why do misfortunes fall upon the innocent or those who have done their best to be upright?" asks Julian Huxley. And he refers to the book of Job where this difficult question is faced and the answer given. Huxley continues:

"Job poses the question as applied to his own plight. His three friends answer with the simple but crude faith which believes what it thinks ought to be so: 'because you have deserved it.' But Job knows that this is not true. He appeals to Jehovah himself. And he is answered by Jehovah himself. The answer is as simple as that of the three comforters; but it is sublime, instead of puerile, it symbolizes a true fact instead of a false hypothesis. The answer is 'Because I am the Lord; because my ways are not your ways; because you cannot understand the divine purpose, because ultimate reality is and always will

be a mystery, to be feared as well as loved."

At that moment it seemed to me as if the sky has suddenly darkened, as if a thundering rumble came from far-away. It seemed to me as if I heard the Lord himself speak in thunder.

The Lord: "Don't listen to him, Bliss me boy. Don't listen to Huxley. What he says is not a "true fact." My ways are your ways. I have given to men a piece of my mind in order to make you creators yourselves. My ways are your ways."

I: "O Lord ! I thank you that you came to speak to me."

"Don't call me Lord, Bliss me boy!"

"Why o Lord?"

"You ask this question? You with your Semantics? Don't you know that the word Lord conjures up various different meanings in the minds of my people? There is the real Lord, who owns the manor, and the meadows, and the tenements and the land, and not so long ago he owned the people as well. Then there is the Landlord, dreaded word for the whole of mankind (a few people excepted). Then there is the Taxation Lord..."

"The Taxation Lord ?

"Don't you know? I saw you argueing with one madly. Those are the people who have made a great fortune. The taxation department claims the greater part of it so that it be redistributed to the people, to the old, and the poor, and the sick and to those in need. And what does he do? He forms a scientific Foundation with the money, beats the taxation commissioner and gets a Lordship in the bargain, and in many cases retains control of the money in the Foundation too. Others who have not so much money to offer, are satisfied with a baronetcy. All they want is to beat the taxation department and be called Sir and be mentioned in the papers and get free publicity for their products too. In America they have clamped down on scientific Foundations on account of the abuses. High time that they do something in the British Empire."

"O Lord - excuse me, I shall call you Father - you are touching a very sore spot in my memory. I have approached Lords and Sirs and those who want to become one. I have told them that Bertrand Russell said that financial support of my work means "performing an important service to mankind" - it was all in vain. Supporting a new idea which looks like a crackpot idea might endanger their whole endeavours to become a Sir."

"Don't give up the struggle, Bliss, me boy. You know the lost cases are the only ones worth fighting for. You have my blessings, Bliss, me boy."

"My boy, o Father, "my boy" is the correct expression as prescribed by the grammarians."

"I speak the language of the people. And the people don't bother about the grammarians. They say "me boy". The grammarians have not yet made up their mind whether it is "I" or "me". They should go to hell!"

"But Father, there cannot be any hell. There cannot be a spot in this Universe where your power is powerless."

"Of course, there isn't. That's why I am saying it. But look ! I have given you people a mind to evolve articulate language, to reason about my workings, to realize the purpose of this Universe. And what happened? Some people have found that they can make an easy living by imposing language, their language on suffering mankind. They have created senseless "laws of grammar" with many exceptions and ridiculous and irresponsible irregularities. And they go on pestering suffering children with all this. And they are the worst enemies of those men who try to use the mind I have given to them, to end the rule of those professors who have separated themselves from my people by their own invention: highbrow language. Then there are the others who make an easy living by threatening people with a hell - if they don't pay up. They too use language in vague ways. They have converted and perverted the meanings of the words of

the Bible, which is supposed to contain my words. They went even to war about these meanings. And they have divided themselves in hundreds of denominations - just because they interpret my words differently. And they use the very words to lull people into muddled thinking about such tragedies, as for instance a level crossing smash. That's all they can do - mumbling vague words with even vaguer meanings. If all the people who sleep or want to sleep in church would be laid end to end..."

"Would the line reach to the moon, Father?"

"May be. But one thing is sure. If they were laid end to end they would sleep much more comfortable, I should say."

"You refer to their" explanations "about the tragedies of the level crossing smash?"

"Yes. Now, Bliss me boy, you have learned physics and chemistry and engineering and a bit of biology too. You know my ways and my laws. Tell them with the insight I have given to you what you think about the level crossing smash. Who is to be blamed for this? They blame me and my "unfathomable will". Confound it! What do you think about level crossing smashes?"

"It's a story from my earliest youth, I think it was 1904. In the part of Europe, where I was born, there were no motorcars yet and there were no level crossing smashes either. I spent one of my first vacations in a country house near a railway line. And most of my time I spent sitting there and waiting and watching the trains pass by. The main road, where most of the traffic went, run parallel to the railway line. There were no important crossing therefore. Only small country roads which crossed the line. And these crossings were either guarded or there was an underpass, the road going below and under a bridge over which the railway run - or the road went over a bridge above the railway. In short - there were no unguarded level crossings. At every level crossing there was a system of barriers operated from a signal house. I loved to be in that signal house and to watch the signal man setting the signals and often I helped him turning the wheels which lowered the barriers and closed the road when a train was approaching. How I admired the ingenuity of the men who worked out all those electrical and mechanical blocking systems."

"You mean to say that even small country roads were guarded by barriers and signals, although there were no highspeed motorcars yet? This is amazing. Indeed, such an arrangement avoids completely the possibility of tragic suffering by innocent people. How did this come about?"

"Well, o Father, with the insight which your mind has given to me I would say this. You have given some of your bright boys a superior mind to invent ingenious machines which greatly helped mankind along. On the other hand, these machines contain some dangers to life and limb. Therefore you have given some of your bright boys, the poets and prophets, a deeper insight into the laws of Ethics which work in your Universe. These laws work in the higher creatures and make them care and protect their young and innocent ones against the dangers which are in nature. When that idea of a railway came up and a company was formed with the money of the shareholders for the construction and operation of that railway, the company directors went to the ministry of transport and applied for permission to build that line. And fortunately for the people, one of the men in that ministry was filled with your spirit, o Father. His mind understood your (- not unfathomable - but very easily to fathom) mind, according to which there shall not be any suffering to people. And this man, who was instrumental in the creation of that railway line, acted in your creative spirit and became a creator himself."

"What did he do?"

"The man said: "There shall not be any unguarded level crossings!" And there were no unguarded level crossings. And the man saw that it was good."

"You mean to say that he gave permission to build the railway only under the understanding that any road, crossing the line, shall go either under or over a bridge, or if this is not possible that a guard and barriers and signals be installed?"

"Precisely, o Father! To build a railway line with its miles and miles of rails, with its many engines, thousands of carriages and lorries, its stations, etc. etc., cost a lot of money. But to build underpasses or overhead bridges, or divert a country road, or guard a level crossing cost only a few percents of the whole outlay. Of course, some people want to save those few percents. But then there must be at least one man who is filled with your spirit and who can foresee the terrible tragedies which might happen to children and innocent men and women, and this man must say: "There shall not be any avoidable suffering!" Each time a great tragedy occurs here or in other countries, the commissioner for railways and the minister for transport and the ministers for the various churches start a lament, blame the people who were not careful enough and mostly, they blame you, saying that it was an act of God who did this in his unfathomable will."

"Yes. I have given them a piece of ^{my} mind and have made them creators themselves. But they have failed to realize my purpose. I have given them a piece of my mind so that they may work out their own salvation, so that they may be able to conquer the obstacles, overcome the dangers of life and create higher communities of higher co-operation. The professional men who care for the spiritual and physical well-being of my people are mostly concerned with their own well-being. The churchmen feed the people with ancient legends and vague words about vaguer meanings. The professors are doing even worse. They have denied my existence and have given the people the religion of the "Survival of the Fittest", the religion of physical force. And the men who govern the people are feeding them with promises of better things to come. Meanwhile the terrible sufferings of innocent people continue. Well, Bliss me boy, you have said that I am a great Engineer and you have described so nicely my inventions of the mother's milk producing plant in animals, the invention of the pouch, the invention of the nipple, of the heart, the eye and the other things which I have engineered in the higher creatures. You are an engineer me boy. Well, what do you propose to do with the ~~the~~unguarded level crossings which at present litter all countries and cause terrible suffering to innocent people. What are your suggestions?"

"Thank you Father for your confidence in the powers which you have given to me. Well, it is easy to develop in words a large plan for the elimination of all level crossings. But it would involve much money and the men in the governments would say "Very nice, very nice indeed, but we haven't the money!" The most important asset of an engineer is the ability to improvise, to make the best of the material and opportunities available without waiting until governments will - if ever - grant the sums to do the work "properly", which might be never."

"Right, me boy! Go ahead and improvise. What's your idea?"

"Well, who are the people mostly affected by a dangerous level crossing? They are firstly the people who live nearby. Their children cross daily that danger spot. They themselves pass every day with their cars there. And then there are the people who frequently use that road, the motorists from near and far-away. These are the people who want that dangerous level crossing removed. Usually, after a terrible smash-up with dead and wounded, there are outcries in the press, and sometimes a deputation to the heads of the government. The results are vague promises. No! The people who want that level crossing removed, must remove it themselves. The way to do it is the way of co-operation, and the units who do things in co-operation call themselves a co-operative. It is a simple realization of the way you, o Father, want us to act."

"A co-operative! Very good! Proceed, me boy!"

"There must, of course, be a man who takes the initiative, who brings the people together, who explains to them the idea and make them agree on co-operative action. This man could, of course, work in his evening hours, but after a heavy day's work, most people are dead tired. The leader must be a man who has enough time on his hand, and who has a duty to do just such things. Indeed, I would say that he is actually paid by the people to do just this kind of job."

"Who is that man?"

"It is that man, who is hired by the people and paid by them for nothing else but to explain your work and your ways and your will and your ideas, o Father!"

"Goodness, you don't mean the men of the church? They are - with some notable exceptions - the men with the easiest job on hand. They mumble some words on a

Sunday, give a sermon which makes people sleepy in mind and in body, collect money for the church, that means first for themselves (they must eat, mustn't they) but otherwise they enjoy their days in perfect and absolute security."

"Yes, Father. Here is one obstacle which faces any engineer who has to handle men and material. Give a man absolute security and he slows down in work, be it in the government offices, in the church offices, in the educational offices and even in those offices which must show a profit or go out of business, the factory offices and the business offices. I have seen young men who were the sons or the nephews of the boss. They were assured of absolute security and went slow. It's human nature and it happens anywhere. I have seen employees and a kind of churchmen, and professors and a type of officials - they talked about the factors involved, the difficulties to be faced, the impossibilities of certain actions, the necessity to defer action until - until - never mind until - most important thing is that we have successfully warded off the idea of action today - and by the way, it's time for lunch, or for going home, or for anything but doing something now. To-morrow is another day!"

"Boy, you said it! I think, ministers of the church should be hired on a weekly basis by the community. If they don't work their head off for that community, they should be fired with one week's payment. The money they collect should not be used for the upkeep of bishops and cloisters and what not - but for the need of the community. Now, boy, suppose there is such a minister in a community who is not afraid to incur the bishop's displeasure when he starts to ask for action from the government or from the church or from anyone else. What should he do in your opinion about that level crossing?"

"Firstly, he has got the community to realize that they must work ^{out} their own salvation with regard to that dangerous crossing. Secondly, that they must work for it, real work, not just talk. Thirdly, after a survey of the resources available, work must be started in stages. And the first stage is to erect huge warning signs, not just one, but a series in succession so that even an intoxicated driver cannot overlook them and cannot help knowing that he has to slow down and look to the right and to the left. These warning signs must be a community affair. The local timber merchant will have to forgo his profit on the planks, the local carrier will have to carry them to the spot, the local hardware shop would have to supply the paint and local people will have to paint them and to erect them in their spare time. Believe me Father, it can be done. It can be done, but there must be a man who is filled with your spirit and your engineering ideas of co-operation for a happier and better community."

"Boy, I know what you are talking about. I have seen you suffering throughout the last five years. I have seen you writing many letters to the people who are paid the people's money for just this kind of job. I have watched you in the nights when you could not find sleep and when you came out and looked up to the stars in desperation. Tell anyone who read this a little of your story. Go ahead me boy!"

"Thank you Father! I shall try to say here in a few words what I have said in many words with many examples in my books, brochures and pamphlets. It concerns the first and most important application of my Semantography, and it contains also the proof that Semantography is a practical idea - because it is already in practice in a field where mutual understanding across all languages, across all countries and all people, is a matter of life and death. There is a field of human activity where more lives are lost than in any war. Here in Australia with a small population of only 9 million people, more people get killed than in any war in which Australia has fought, in which Australian people got killed. This terrible slaughter occurs on the highways of Australia, on the highways of the whole world. There, the officials have already realized that warnings written in the native language are not good. They are difficult to discern in rain, mist, fog and darkness. Their meaning must be translated quickly into action, and this translation of alphabetical symbols takes a bit of time, too much for a racing motorist, too much for a motorist who had a couple of whisky. And therefore, everywhere in the whole world, traffic officials (no matter how slowly they act) have begun to take down warning signs written in the native languages and have started to replace them with simple pictographs, which are indeed the basis of my Semantography. This bent arrow  means a CURVE TO THE RIGHT in all languages of the world. It is simple. It  can be recognized at a glance, even in fog and rain. It guides the mind to direct action into 

into the right direction. Almost subconsciously he will turn the wheel as the arrow shows him to turn it . The present method of alphabetical symbols shows us a jumble of lines CURVE which the racing motorist has to translate first into a sound C-U-R-V-E, then into a meaning "a bent in the road ahead". When he has grasped the meaning, he still does not know which way the bend will go and - until he has grasped all this, it might be just too late and too bad. Worse even, if the motorist is a traveller from another country, or a newcomer to the country and he still thinks in his mother tongue, he would have to translate CURVE first into KROMME or BIEGUNG or into whatever his mother tongue is. Indeed, foreign motorists in Great Britain faced in the traffic court with a serious charge have given this as an explanation of how the accident occurred."

"And you believed therefore that your Semantography will be gladly taken up by the highway officials?"

"Yes, indeed. There are many warning signs which defy easy writing into a simple picture like PEDESTRIAN CROSSING, SCHOOL CHILDREN AHEAD, QUIET-HOSPITAL MEN AT WORK, DETOUR, SOFT SHOULDERS DRIVE SLOWLY, etc.etc. I believed therefore that traffic officials here in Australia and in other countries will be happy that a man has evolved simple picturegraphs for every meaning needed. I therefore approached the traffic officials of the United Nations, and the traffic officials of other countries and, of course, the traffic officials here in the State of New South Wales. The secretary of the N.R.M.A. the National Road and Motorist Association of New South Wales gave me an official statement saying that

"I would advise that this Association is of the opinion that the adoption of your system of symbol writing throughout the world would contribute towards much safer traffic conditions in international motoring."

I was jubilant when I got this statement. It did not occur to me that the N.R.M.A. is a private organisation concerned with the well-being of their members, whereas the officials have other ideas - their own ideas, and they do not give a thought of what an outsider, a crank with a crackpot idea, has to offer to them. It is unbelievable, but true, that most of my letters were not answered, that every plea to give a demonstration of my work was turned down, that all approaches of the last 4 years ended dismally in failure. One should believe that the simplest thing to do would be to invite me to a demonstration here in Sydney, to ask me how I would symbolize this or that meaning. But no! I was not invited. I was not asked anything. My letters and my symbols and my chapter from the second book on Semantography which I sent around were not taken into account at all. When I remonstrated, I was given excuses, subterfuges and assertions which were obviously incorrect, in short the official handling of my approach was done as many official handlings are done where an intrusion of a non-official is to be warded-off, put-off, written-off - off you go, and please do not come back, because we must go to lunch, to the library, to the other guys in the other departments - we are busy, busy, busy. I accuse here-with all the officials abroad and the road officials here who ever heard of my work, who ever saw my pleading letters, who ever read about my symbols in the papers, who ever had an opportunity to speak with me - I accuse them all of neglect of their duties, a neglect of disastrous consequences, because hundreds of Australians are dying on the roads of Australia every year, many more, in fact, thousands of Australians are injured every year on the roads of Australia and they, the officials do as little as they possibly can do."

"Tell your readers about Professor Elkin."

"O Father, you are touching one of the sorest spots of my memory. But it should be a sore spot to you too."

"Yes, I know, Professor Elkin is a clergyman, but I have told you already what I think about many clergymen, a few blessed ones excepted. Go ahead, me boy!"

"One of my greatest hopes was Professor Adolphus Peter Elkin of Sydney University - just because he is a clergyman. I hoped that he will take a greater interest in my work for this very reason. Moreover, he was and still is engaged in activities which should make this duty to take an interest in my work, to have it examined and to have it tested. These activities are threefold. Firstly, he is Professor of Anthropology. He is primarily concerned with the study of man. In view of the fact that two great anthropologists, Professor

Ashley Montagu of Rutgers University and Professor Clyde Kluckhohn of Harvard University have taken a favourable attitude towards my interpretation of paleolithic cave paintings (that human warfare was absent then), I thought that Prof. Elkin should be interested to have a short talk with me, if nothing more. The second aspect is his duty with regard to the aborigines in Australia and the Pacific Islands, notably Papua New Guinea. These territories do not belong to Australia. They are given us in trust only by the United Nations. And not a year passes without a commission from the Trusteeship Council visiting the territories and accusing Australia of neglecting the education of the natives. Not a year passes without an attack on Australia in the United Nations. Any day a surprise vote staged by Russia and supported by the former "colonial" powers could take away these territories from Australia. They are vital for the defence of this country. We would lose the moral and legal right to hold them.

To these attacks, the Australian delegates declare that the educational difficulties are tremendous, as hundred and more different languages are spoken in the territory, some by a few hundred souls only. Printing hundreds of different primers in hundred of different languages is out of the question, but one primer printed in the picture writing of Semantography can be read and understood in all languages of the territories and also in English, French, German, Dutch, etc. This is Professor Elkin's primary concern. It's his duty to investigate any idea which could help the aborigines along."

"And now comes the third activity of Professor Elkin."

"Yes. He is Chairman of the Road Signs and Traffic Signals Committee of the Standards Association of Australia, and he was Chairman of this Committee more than 4 years ago when I started to bother this Committee. Whatever the other activities are in importance may be debatable. But this activity is directly related to the life and death of many Australians. Every neglect is...well, you may find your own word.

"Could you get a hearing from Prof. Elkin?"

"No. A member of that Committee promised to speak with Elkin. He did so too. But time and again I was told that Professor Elkin cannot see me. Then I wrote a letter to him at the University. I referred to Bertrand Russell's opinion and those of other scholars. Surely nobody could take me for a crank. And I closed my letter with the plea to answer it and not to hurt me even more."

"And..."

"He hurt me even more. He simply ignored my letter, and my plea, and, I should say, his duty as Chairman of the Road Signs Committee. When I saw his picture in the paper after preaching in St. Andrew's Cathedral, and when I read the nice words he said in the sermon, I could not help reflecting on his words and on his actions."

"And then the top blew off?"

"Yes. The Herald of July 6/¹⁹⁵³brought an article on the work of that Committee. It said that the Chairman Professor Elkin saw a sign in Ceylon and recommended it for Australia. This is a sign which I had designed 5 years ago, but nobody asked me about it, in spite of my pleas for a demonstration. It concerns a road hazard which has already caused the death of many Australians, notably old people.

"Go ahead and tell us about it."

"We have here a number of signs which are a long jumble of letters, too long for a racing motorist or a motorist under the influence. Some of these signs are studded with glass reflectors for lighting up at night, but as there are so many letters and so many reflectors, it is difficult to read, being just one long glare. These warning signs read

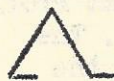
PEDESTRIANS CROSSING

or

WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS

Instead of these long and illegible words a "circular sign emblazoned with a pair of trousered legs" will be tested, said the article and continues "The symbolic legs, studded with reflector buttons, resemble a similar sign observed

in Ceylon by the chairman of the committee Professor A.P. Elkin who is Professor of Anthropology at Sydney University." When I read this, I went stark raving mad. My symbol as shown below is the schematized outline of two legs and is used in Semantography to express not only legs, but also the action of them, going, walking, etc. as referring to pedestrians. Prof. Elkin could have had this leg symbol 4 years ago and earlier, if only he would have acceded to my plea and let me give a demonstration of my symbols for any meaning needed in road warning signs. The Director of the Standards Association also refused to see me.



"What happened then, Bliss me boy?"

"That article writer forgot to explain what those legs are for. There was no mention that they should replace the unwieldy long PEDESTRIANS CROSSING. Consequently many a reader must have been puzzled about the purpose of these legs. And one of them wrote next day to the Herald denouncing the thing as an "ugly sounding novelty." Whereupon the Minister of Transport himself wrote a letter to the Editor, explaining the purpose of the leg symbol and ending with these words

"I do not know of any amount of money which may properly purchase a human life, and similarly the small amount of trouble involved in an experiment which may lessen human suffering is surely justified."

Whereupon I wrote a long letter to the Transport Minister. This is not the first time that I have bothered a Minister of Transport. And I had no illusions as to the outcome. Nevertheless I was wondering whether he will take "the small amount of trouble involved in studying this letter and act upon it," as I wrote to him. I told him of the many futile approaches and said:

"In all my approaches to the above mentioned official bodies I asked only to be allowed to demonstrate my symbols. I regret to inform you that I have not received any invitation. None have taken "the small amount of trouble involved" which (to use your own words) "may lessen human suffering" and "which may properly purchase a human life."

You will readily imagine my feelings when I read that a symbol will be copied from Ceylon, which I have offered years ago together with a complete system for any other traffic needs. Why cannot an Australian be heard on a matter which yearly costs hundreds of lives and thousands of injuries?"

"I beg you therefore to realize the significance of my approach to you after years of frustration and ... to give me the opportunity to demonstrate the symbols of Semantography not before one man of your department, but before a selected group..."

"What happened then?"

"What could happen? Nothing, except a few letters. My plea for a demonstration not before one man, but before a group, a committee, was of course not heeded. I was told to get in touch with a Mr. Peach. I could never get hold of him. He was out, or away or on vacation. I gave up. The Police Traffic Branch was more energetic. They asked me to come to them. I did and showed the official my books and again asked for a demonstration and a cross-examination in order to prove that I have a symbol for every meaning. But nothing came of it. Most maddening was a letter from the secretary of the Transport Ministry in which he told me that the matter is closed because I failed to contact Mr. Peach. I should say that they should run after me, not I after them. I have said it time and again that I do not want any monetary gain, not a single penny. I want to give my symbols free to Australia and the whole world to use."

"That's the spirit! Go on fighting me boy, and all good men and women will be on your side. This senseless killing on the road is intolerable. It is against all sense. It is against all reason and all ethics. It is against all my laws. By the way, have you a symbol for my own work in your road symbols?"

"Yes, I have o Father. It may seem a strange coincidence. But it does not seem strange to me, rather a "natural" happening. As you know from my previous writings, this symbol here, the equal-sided triangle is my symbol for your work, Nature, Creation. It is the symbol chosen by the Greek of old as direct proof of divine harmony and simplicity in the Universe. It struck me like a revelation when I realized that this very symbol has been adopted as a warning sign on the motor roads of the whole world. The beautiful symbol rising to a perfect peak has been translated as to



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mean SAFETY FIRST. But these words contain a deeper meaning which becomes apparent if we assume that this symbol means Creation. Then it warns us not to destroy your Creation, anything which is and has been created by you, a human being an animal, a tree, a rosebush. Furthermore, whatever we human beings do create by the powers of our minds which you have ^{given} to us, is included in this symbol for Creation. A motor car itself is like a living organism, and wonderfully constructed. This symbol shall mean "Safety for a piece of Creation, you yourself and the people in your car and the other fellow's car, and your car itself and anything in your path. Be careful!"

"Well, thank you me boy. You have given that safety sign quite a fine meaning. Now, what sign have you for the level crossing?"

oo  "Here again, the engineer will use existing signs which are quite good. Twenty years ago, or earlier, the Transport Division of the League of Nations devised a few symbols and one is the outline of a locomotive to be used for an unguarded level crossing. As this sign is already in existence in a number of countries, I have adopted it too. But as it is designed by the League of Nation people, it is rather a black patch not easily recognizable in bad weather. I prefer therefore my outline symbol for a locomotive as shown here, which is also easy to studd with reflectors."

"And what more should be done about the level crossing?"

"Erecting a number of signs in succession before a crossing is, of course, only the first step. The next is the installation of a automatic signal, released by the oncoming train. Or a guarded crossing, mounted by volunteers first, or the elimination of the level crossing altogether. The local clergyman must raise heaven and earth and hell too. He must storm the government, the railway department, must organise working gangs who are ready to dig and provide an underpass, provided the railway department provides her share of the undertaking. Once one community only has thus by its own action removed a dangerous level crossing it will be an inspiration to many other communities. And if the local people provide the labour force and thus reduce greatly the cost, the government would have to provide the rest. I can even imagine a temporary toll where the motorists, whose safety has been assured, give their pennies too. It can be done. Many things have been done in this world which have been declared impossible. By the determination of a group of people the impossible has been made possible."

"Yes, me boy. The shame of the level crossing must not be allowed to continue. Enough of the senseless slaughter of innocent people. Enough of the vague promises of the men of the government, enough of the lament of the men of the church. People must rise and with the minds and voices I have given to them, must cry out: "There shall not be any more level crossings!" And if they are determined enough and willing enough to work for it, there will not be any level crossing. Now, is there anything else on your mind with regard to the avoidance of these dangers?"

"Yes, Father, but it is a long story and I must at last finish this publication. I shall tell it in another publication."

"Can you give us a hint what you have in mind."

"Yes. It concerns in particular the disastrous working of the minds of some engineers in the factories. And it concerns in general the disastrous working of the minds of most people on this planet."

"Goodness, as I have given them a piece of my mind, it seems you are blaming me?"

"Not so. You have given us a mind to evolve articulate language and abstract meanings, but so far, the keepers of the languages of mankind have failed to realize your laws, the laws of language which are the laws of nature. What they have given us are grammatical laws, non-sensical irregularities and worse. Before I go into this, I shall refer to one disastrous working of our limbs. When a motorcar just passes a level crossing, and suddenly a train approaches, often the car stalls and get crushed. I had one such experience when crossing the line of a tram. I could have easily crossed the line, but somehow I was stricken with sudden fright - my car stopped altogether right in the tram tracks. Fortunately, the tram could stop safely. When I drove away, still shaken, I asked

myself why my car stopped. What happened to me, my mind and my limbs? Then I found the cause. It was my sudden intention, when the tram rushed at me, to press the accelerator and depart from the line. Instead, in my sudden fright, I stepped on the clutch pedal, or perhaps on the brakes. In short, I pressed the wrong pedal. Here in Australia's Eastern coastline with its many cliff drives, many a car has plunged over the cliff and into the sea. From the descriptions in the press it appeared to me that the driver in sudden fright, and wanting to step on the brakes, stepped on the accelerator instead. The car shot into the void and to its doom, taking all passengers with it."

"And what are your conclusions?"

"When the motorcar was designed, it was a rickety affair and its speed was very slow. All those pedals were designed not for the high speed dangers of the next century, but for the simplest construction possibilities of the day. I have no hesitation to say that many thousands of lives have been lost in the world because of the fact that in our outmoded car construction "a pressing down" of some pedal means stopping or accelerating. In sudden fright, as it occurs on a level crossing, the driver steps on the wrong pedal. Instead of accelerating the car, he stops it and is killed by the train. I have devised a simple construction in which every "stepping down" means a stop, either the clutch out or the brakes in. Acceleration is done by a light upward (not downward as it is now) tipping of the top of the foot against a suitably designed pedal. But from my experiences in patent research I feel sure that thousands of other people have devised similar safeguards."

"Why then were they not adopted or at least tried out?"

"This I can explain with my symbols and based on a lifelong experience in engineering. It has to do with the meanings of "good" and "bad", and "good enough." I have seen hundreds of times how an engineer (more than often a young engineer, and often it was me) proposed a "better" idea. But the old engineer turned me down. He would not admit that my idea is "better" and least of all would he go to the trouble of redesigning a model - his model. And so, by the disastrous use of the words "it's good enough as it is", long overdue improvements have been postponed, delayed and outright sabotaged by the authorities in the factory, in the industry, in the community, in the governments, in the churches. It seems to be a lost cause to fight for, but as you said, these are the only causes worth fighting for."

"Right, me boy. Now what can I do for you?"

"Give me a few more years to live, give health to my wife whose illness worries my mind. Give me a few friends who stand by me, and give me the possibility to explain to mankind in print the great benefits which this simple mind mathematics which I call Semantography can bring. I thank you for having chosen my mind to fulfil the prophecy of the great mathematician Leibnitz who wrote 300 years ago about this idea of a Universal Symbolism:

"This true method of a Universal Symbolism would...guide the mind as do the lines drawn in geometry and the formulas in arithmetic. This Symbolism, very popular, might be introduced if small figures were employed in the place of words, which would represent visible things by their lines and the invisible, by the visible which accompany them."

"This would be of service at first for easy communication with distant nations; but if introduced also among us, without however, renouncing ordinary writing...would be useful in giving thoughts less surd and verbal than we now have. This would be very agreeable to the people..."

"I think these thoughts will some day be carried out, so agreeable and natural appears to me this writing...for rendering our conceptions more real."

The End

Dear Reader. I have just received a detailed letter from Dr. Julian Huxley in which he says that "I agree that your Semantography method provides something of real importance. I think that a full account of it ought certainly to be published." He makes a number of comments and criticises strongly Dr. Brock Chisholm's theory on the cause of human warfare. I shall soon answer in detail to his comments and shall inform you when this additional publication will be published - provided I have your address. If I have it not, write to me The Institute for Semantography 5 Maroubra Bay Road, Pagewood N.S.W. Australia (please include a stamp)

Yours sincerely C.K.Bliss, B.Sc.