

THE INSTITUTE FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY

A Non-Profit Institution for the Promotion of Semantics and Semantography

5 Maroubra Bay Road, Pagewood, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia



SEMANTOGRAPHY SERIES NO. 142

LOGIC WITHOUT TEARS

Note: Dr. Douglas N. Everingham, M.B., B.S., of Sydney was greatly attracted by Semantography because he himself has invented a system for simplified chemical formulas of organic compounds. These new symbols, the "Carbograms" (as he calls them) represent a great saving in space and time against the conventional, cumbersome and complicated organic formulas. He has given outlines of his Carbograms in a pamphlet which is incorporated in the Semantography Series (See No. 92).

Dr. Everingham has approached many important journals and newspapers on behalf of Semantography (see for instance Semantography Series No. 86 and 87). Herebelow is the text of an article which appeared in "The Rationalist", the organ of The Rationalist Association of Australia.

Charles Bliss, of Sydney has evolved a universal semantic symbolism or "world writing" which can be read (word for word in most cases) in any language, just as might be expected with a simplified Chinese script.

Humanists will be interested in this medium for world literacy. It avoids the laborious evolution of new alphabets, grammars, dictionaries and neologisms imported by foreigners; it avoids the costly setting up of type and printing press, for every one of the world's 2,000 or so independent dialects. The British and Foreign Bible Society, and certain missionaries pioneering literacy for isolated races, have all politely declined to test this medium.

Rationalists will be interested in the scientific basis of the Units of Meaning in Bliss's system ("Semantography"). There are 100 basic units as compared to the 850 words of Basic English. Abstractions are derived from more objective "material" concepts, not vice versa as in so many speech usages and philosophic meanderings. Terms like "spiritual," "supernatural," "God," "love," "evolution," "nature" are clarified, and their semantic portrayal evokes approval from believers and unbelievers. Bertrand Russell, who met Bliss in Sydney, finds Semantography ingenious, and any expense to publish it "an important service to mankind." Julian Huxley and de Madariaga have also met Bliss in Sydney and praised his work, overseas professors and libraries have acclaimed it; but still the pioneer fights a grim battle for recognition by UNESCO and most official bodies by reason of their exasperating inertia in following up new, "obscure" ideas.

To me, Bliss's big triumph is his debunking of the complex algebraic portrayal of logical formulae. With everyday terms he soon shatters the old paradoxes of Epimenides and Achilles, pinpoints the fallacies in Korzybski's "Whatever 'is', is not" (from the book, "Science and Sanity"), and gives the man—even the child in the street, a clearly graduated "yardstick" to test for legal loopholes, political shams, propaganda perils, false family feuds and so on.

This "Logic for the people" can be set down with a standard typewriter with 17 basic strokes (rather like those of a shorthand) replacing the redundant fractions, etc., on the keyboard, and two single spacing controls added. The symbols assembled from these are rarely more complex than alphabetic equivalents from natural (spoken) languages. For example (using my version of Bliss's symbols; not officially confirmed):

mouth ear ground bridge speech local tongue translation
(dialect)

All aspects of this work are published in brochures from the Institute for Semantography, 5 Maroubra Bay Road, Pagewood, N.S.W.; for the price of a few stamps anyone can get there something bearing on his special interests in any field of human thought and endeavour.

End of article

Note by Bliss: I have been greatly touched by Everingham's untiring efforts to get ^{my} system known and accepted. Surely he has spent considerable time on this article and especially on drawing the symbols so nicely. But ^{it} is exactly with the symbols he drew that I disagree. These symbols confirm a most dangerous trend in human minds, a trend which often defeats its purpose.

Dr. Everingham came to me, because he himself pondered about international symbols and played about by drawing such symbols. He did not get far though, and when he heard of my work, he came to me, and I explained the aspects of my work to him. He became convinced that I have done a good job, indeed that I have done more than any other inventor of an international language has done. My symbols can be used for a simple logic. This cannot be done with Esperanto. The best proof for the fact that Everingham likes my symbols is the present article which is nothing short of an eulogy.

But the symbols he drew, though they are mine, are differently drawn. And Everingham did so, knowing very well my stand in such alterations. In the years before, I have received many letters from Everingham with many proposals for alterations of my symbols. Some of them have been very good and I have accepted them, though I haven't had yet the time to put them down in a semantography issue. But I always said to him: 'One symbol used exclusively is better than 6 different though much better symbols. If we have adherents of Semantography everyone driven on by the creative urge to improve on symbols and to alter them - soon we shall have a Babel of symbols. Soon we shall have a breakaway group, or more. Even if a symbol is not so good; if it is the only one and generally understood in the world, let it stay. This is the reason why I have adopted all the known symbols in mathematics etc. which are already internationally known, though they could be improved.'

I was crestfallen when I saw the symbols drawn by Everingham in this article. The fact is that they are (with the exception of one) all my own symbols only they are drawn the other way round (wherever this is possible):

Bliss Everingham Bliss Everingham Bliss Everingham Everingham

ear ear speech speech translation translation local speech

When I asked him why he turned the ear symbol around, he said that it is easier to write his way (which is debatable, I find that his ear symbol is contrary to the usual writing of our alphabet.) Then he disconnected the mouth and ear symbol, which I have put together in order to form the meaning of language. There was no necessity to disconnect the symbols, except for a craving to do differently. Worst of all is the new composition of "local speech" by adding the symbol for earth to the symbol for language. This is in utter contradiction to my constant teaching that the distinctions between language and dialect are impossible to draw. They all belong to our earth and they all are but different manifestations of the working of mouth and ear together.

Everingham felt guilty in drawing the symbols contrary to mine shown in my books. He did not consult me, as he knew that I would heartily object, seeing that there is no advantage in his version. So, to overcome his guilty feeling he added a few words in the article saying "Using my version of Bliss's symbols; not officially confirmed." In reading this I have again thought of my particular situation. At present, I am alone and have no followers yet (in great numbers). If I get them during my life time soon there will be many different symbol systems. There are over 50 different Esperanto proposals.