

NEW ADDRESS
'BLISS' INSTITUTE
2 Vicar St., Cooŕee
Sydney, N.S.W. Australia
Tel. FX 8140



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REVIEWS OF PUBLICATIONS
ON SEMANTOGRAPHY 1950 - 1960

The readers attention is directed towards the list of articles on my work which appeared in various papers and which are reprinted in the following issues, of the Semantography Series No. 7, 12, 49, 50, 61, 62, 63, 69, 78, 87, 102, 104, 105, 109, 142, 146, 159.

The first review by Professor Meredith of the University of Leeds is quoted and discussed in Semantography Series No. 49. (see also the correspondence, issue No. 117) He classed his review as "next to an unconditional eulogy". I was elated, but found soon that all the good words of Professor Meredith didn't help me a bit. Indeed, not one of the readers of the London Educational Periodical THE NEW ERA, in which the 2000 word review appeared (10,000 copies) approached me.

On the other hand, I found that reviewers must "slant both ways" as they say in America. They strike gently with one hand, and strike cruelly with the other. That is of course a metaphor only. They "strike" with words only. Those readers who are favourably inclined to a work are impressed by the praise, the others by the critique. I was at first bewildered about the phenomenon that a reviewer can say praise and condemnation within the same sentence. But later on I learned of many other tricks of reviewers and their variegated motives.

When I applied for entry forms in a manuscript contest of a reputable American publishing firm I was flabberghasted about one condition. The firm agreed to pay a considerable amount to a promising writer who had started an interesting manuscript and who needs time and money to finish it. The firm would accept the mss for publication and pay for it. But a condition the writer has to comply with is: that his scholarship money must not be used to pay professional reviewers.

Since then I have found that reviewers can be bribed one way or another. And they are bribed sometimes subtly. We must realise that every reviewer is himself a writer and sorely in need of a friendly publisher. If he condemns books by a publisher who engages him to write the reviews he will find himself soon out of a job, and out of a promising publisher. On the other hand if one of his reviews is printed in part on the "blurb" of a book, with or without his name underneath and this book becomes a best seller, then he thinks the publisher has some sort of grateful obligation towards him, and be it only in payments for coming new reviews.

Other reviewers will write glowing reviews if the publisher promises him that his name will appear on the blurb. This is a most valuable publicity for an up and coming reviewer. But there are worse forms of bribery. When the editor of THE NEW ERA heard that I have only 100 copies made up of my 3 volumes and that I hoped to give one set to Prof. Meredith on loan only (and another set as a gift, as soon as I have made another edition) she was flabberghasted. She informed me that it is the inalienable right of a reviewer to get a free copy. I understood this immediately when I realised that after all Prof. Meredith will spend considerable time on my books. I thought that most probably Prof. Meredith will get some fee for the review.

Only later did I get a clearer insight into this free copy business. However, we must make here a distinction between an academic reviewer, a professor or lecturer on some institute or university, and other classes of reviewers, the newspapermen and free lance writers, who have no academic post. Let us turn first to the latter class, and examine the free lance writers. They write a favourable review and get paid for it by a publisher. Or they are miserable enough to do it gratis, in return for their name being printed on the blurb. And the most miserable reviewers are those who write a review gratis and are paid with a gratis copy only - which they sell immediately to their bookseller, far below the price the bookseller has to buy it.

All these reviews have to be favourable of course, or that guy will never see another copy from a publisher.

If you consider how many free copies a publisher has^{to} send out in order to get some publicity, you will realise that hundreds of gratis copies are going this way, and another way - in to the newspaper offices. Here we find another sort of reviewer. Either he is a man with an academic background and gets paid for the reviews he writes, or he is just one of the staff, writing police reports, or society gossips, and occasionally a review. Hundreds of books are pouring into the newspapers offices in all countries. The professional reviewer simply cannot cope with them. So the editor takes a stack of books and distributes them haphazardly on the desks of the staff. Everyone of these reporters is only too eager to break into the review business, and everyone sits down at home to read the book and then to add his wisdom and insight to it. Of course, he must be careful not to offend the big advertiser, the big publishing house which pours thousands of pounds and dollars into the advertising department of his newspaper. But if the publisher is one who does not advertise in his paper, then our reviewer is free to whack the poor author right and left. He does it for two reasons mainly. Most of the men on the staff of a newspaper have been good essay writers at school. Most of them have written a novel hoping to see it as a best seller, and most of them have buried their hope. They had to eat, so they took a job in a newspaper office and they hate their job. They hate going out with the police squad, or interviewing stuffy people, or society women and all that sort of thing. All the time they long to write the GREAT NOVEL. All the time they hope to find a publisher. How can they be scrupulously fair to another guy who has got all this luck. They hate his book the moment it comes on their table, and they can't help expressing their animosity in harsh condemning words. Fortunately this has also its good side. Controversy is good for newspapers. And many people brought up on the daily feed of misfortunes of others, simply love to read how the author is being torn to pieces. This has another good side. Many society people don't read books. But they like to talk about new books which have appeared. So they read reviews. At a party just lauding a new book is boring. But lashing out into a tirade of attack gives the attacker an aura of a literate, an expert on literature. By creating controversy at a party the party becomes lively, and the hostess is most grateful for this. But the author suffers in sales and recognition.

Then there are ^{the} words the reviewer uses. I feel sure, once a system like my semantics and logic has been taught in the schools of the world, reviewers will have to look for other words. At present, they use a lot of mind words, (M) and evaluation words (V). They claim that the author has not made his hero and the people in the story convincing (M), alive (M), interesting (M), etc., etc.,. Instead he has created wooden (M), cardboard (M) figures, who talk too much (V) and who are extremely boring (M) and dreary (V), and unconvincing (M), etc., etc.

Now to the worst class, the academic reviewers. A Professor and a lecturer must (as one told me) "publish or perish". It is expected from every academic man to have a few articles printed in scientific journals every year. In addition he must come out with a book every third or fourth year. The result of this terrible race is that professors and lecturers are on their knees before the editors and publishers of scientific journals and books. Usually they don't get a penny for their article. They only get a few hundred copies of a reprint which is easy for the publisher, because the type is already set. These hundreds of copies the professor hands out to the president of his university, the chancellor, the vice presidents and the vice chancellors, and to any other men on the university boards who ~~has~~ influence and who can promote or demote him. In tendering the reprint he wants to say: Look how clever I am!

If they can not get an article printed in a journal, at least they can get a review in of another guy's book. And here again, it is important that the reviewer shall show how much more clever he is than the more fortunate author of the book. Hence, he will dissect mercilessly the book, the arguments, the theory everything and even the index, if it happens not to be extensive enough. And the academic reviewer who can't get an order for a review (and a free copy into the bargain) may simply grab any book which falls into his hands. He will write a clever and very critical review and send it to some of the scientific journals. Sometimes he is lucky and his name is printed. At last he sees his name and words in print. Now, one should think that he should be a little grateful to the author who (without knowing it) has made it possible for him to get it into print. One should think that simple decency should compel our academic reviewer to send a copy of his review to the author of the book. Sometimes he does this. Sometimes he doesn't care.

In the race for favourable reviews professors who have written a book are sending out dozens of copies to their personal friends in other universities urging them to write a review for this or that scientific journal. The friends oblige them with a favourable review, out of friendship and also out of consideration that next time when they want their own book well reviewed they will ask the same service from their colleague whose book they praise.

But the worst hacks in this story are the free lance hawks. They look through the newspapers and journals hoping that perhaps they can get hold of a story and write an article about it and sell it for a penny a line. As this is in many cases nothing but stealth, they make sure that the person about whom the article is written hears nothing of it. Similarly the academic reviewer, who writes a review which nobody asked him to write, and which is detrimental to the author, does not have the common decency, to send a copy to the author.

I learned by accident that an educator has written a review of my work for a journal in England and one in France. By some accident he got hold of my Synopsis. When I heard about it I wrote that I was happy knowing that he had studied my work. I begged him to send me a copy of his review, even if it is full of adverse criticism. He ignored my letter. Whereupon I wrote to him to return at once the book, which is not his anyway. If he ignores this letter I shall write to his superior at school. This threat had a miraculous effect on him and on other cowards on which I tested it too. He returned the book foaming at my "uncivil behaviour".

In another case friends sent me cuts from a Parisian daily and from a Frankfurt daily. They contained a short article on me and my work and even a sample sentence in which my symbols were deliberately falsely interpreted. My symbol of the mouth o was used to mean kissing, instead of speaking. This made for a nice sexy sentence showing a man and a woman kissing each other. I found out that he is a free lance writer in Melbourne. I thought of writing to him, and giving him a piece of my mind. But then he made only a little money with this article and I forgot about him. Should I find those newspaper cuts in French and German I shall incorporate them in this issue.

The failure of Professor Meredith favourable review made me quite despondent, and I thought it a waste of time and a waste of my few books to send them to other scholars for reviews. I thought that the few words I collected from Bertrand Russell, and others are quite sufficient to attract those who felt attracted. But when I mimeographed the extended papers of Reiser ^{SUNIFIED SYMBOLISM FOR WORLD UNDERSTANDING IN SCIENCE} including CYBERNETICS, LOGIC, AND SEMANTICS, Prof. Reiser sent out a number of copies to some of his friends among the professors and to some scientific journals. One of his friends was Professor Raymond F. Piper of Syracuse University. He himself was working on a book about art, and as Prof. Reiser told him that I could be of help to Piper in Sydney, Piper wrote to me. I helped him indeed and in gratitude Prof. Piper wrote a review on Reiser's papers for the journal PHILOSOPHY AND PHENOMOLOGICAL RESEARCH. And here I had an opportunity to learn something now of the curious ways of friendship between scholars.

As explained before every professor has to publish or "perish". Today I know that the great majority of books published by professors are subsidized by the author. In other words, the author paid the publisher the cost of publication. We must realise that editions of scholarly works are small indeed, perhaps 1000 or 2000 copies all in all. To print them cost a lot of money - and the professors have to dig into their savings and earnings quite heavily in order to bring this prestige book to the knowledge of the learned world. In many cases they simply have not the money, and the result is that many treatises and papers are mimeographed only. And once a scientific paper is mimeographed the reviewer or scholar who mentions it in his own book or article trumpets it to the whole world that the article is mimeographed. Just a few days ago I looked through the bibliography of a book MACHINE TRANSLATION OF LANGUAGES and found a paper mentioned by an acquaintance of mine Prof. Reifler of the University of Washington, Seattle. Whereas the very same bibliography gives scant attention to details of some books mentioned, as for instance the failure to mention the publisher, the university press, etc., in the case of Reifler's paper the author almost triumphantly printed right after the title words Mimeographed. As if mimeo wouldn't be enough. Or as if no mention of the the way the article is printed would be better, as it is of no consequence whatever. But no! To tell the world that an article of a scholarly colleague is Mimeographed (written out in full) is to tell the world that no publisher found it worthwhile to publish in typeset, which means that the article is somewhat obscure, or just no good,

And so my good Professor Peiper found it right to ^hack his colleague Prof. Reiser right in the very first words by starting his review with

"This well mimeographed volume...."

Note the "praise" in the word "well" mimeographed! It is ^{be}a praise to ^{be} meant to be a whack! And realise when reading a review that this one is written by a friend.

REVIEW in Volume XVII, March 1957, No. 3 of the journal

PHILOSOPHY AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH

A quarterly journal

published for the International Phenomenological Society by the University of Buffalo, Buffalo, New York.

Unified Symbolism for World Understanding in Science. Oliver L. Reiser, Semantography Publishing Co., Pagewood, Sydney, N.S.W. Australia, 1955 Pp. 52.

This well mimeographed volume expands the authors eleventh and last work, A Philosophy for World Unification, by summarizing the need, principles, and forms of a proposed unified, universal symbolism. Such symbolism is necessary, the author believes, for world understanding and unbiased communication among all peoples so that war (due mainly to false or divisive symbols, and not to human nature) may eventually be eliminated and that a worldwide organism of peaceful human beings, may be gradually established. The inspiration and ideal of this symbolism is derived from the "Characteristica Universalis" of Leibniz, who pioneered a calculus and a machine for automatically solving certain thought problems. His system, however, was limited to deductive problems and a two-valued logic (true, false) and did not provide for other types of thinking.

The author presents a valuable summary of the Semantography of C.K. Bliss of Sydney Australia, who has constructed a "symbolic logic and semantics for everyone" Bliss devised "one writing for one world," composed of one hundred simple geometrical forms, which can be built into a typewriter. His symbols are mainly derived from natural forms; for example, man looks like an inverted Y two legs and a body; a simple heart represents emotion; an arrow movement or progress; a square, matter and a semicircle, reason or ego; Bliss hopes that such a written language may be sufficient for the international communication of abstract scientific concepts. The reviewer believes that the inherent and irreducible difficulty with this set of symbols is its incapacity to express the endless world of particulars which characterise reality.

Another major conception carries forward another of the author's books, The World Sensorium. The goal of terrestrial mankind is a kind of "world brain" or "electromagnetic society", with a corresponding "social physics". In ordinary terminology, such a world brain represents, not a simple Cosmic immanent mind, but the universal condition of detailed, friendly interaction of millions of human beings on the earth, operating in peaceful pursuits of mutual benefits. The possibility of a such a world brain is suggested by analogy with "the scanning mechanisms of the brain as this process is recorded by the alpha rhythm, of the electroencephalograph". The author is working for a successful electronic "assault on the last citadel of dualistic teleology - the fortress of inductive reasoning and creative insight." His hope, vain I think, is based upon the "fact of levels of emergence and the transordinal laws of behaviour which are indicative of transitions of one level to the next." In spite of this criticism, the ^{book} represents a remarkable and fascinating combination of precise scientific knowledge, creative imagination, and basic benevolence.

Syracuse University.

RAYMOND F. PIPER.

I was unhappy that the reviewer and his printer and publisher did not go to the trouble to show a few of my symbols. When Prof. Piper said that "a semicircle" represents "reason or ego" without saying that this outline is simply the outline of a skull which protects the brain in man and in all higher animals, the reader must think that using a semicircle is nothing but another arbitrary symbol and we have enough of them already in symbolic and mathematical logic. The following reviewer makes the same mistake. In my opinion he does not bother to give a fair explanation of my work. What he wants to show is his own cleverness in criticising adversely my work.

Unified Symbolism for World Understanding in Science. By Oliver. L. Reiser. Semantography Publishing Co., Sydney, Australia. pp. 52.

The author of this curious little volume (he is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh) has become fascinated by the popularized accounts of semantics and cybernetics. He naively claims that most of the world's troubles are caused by peoples failure to communicate with one another; and as a remedy he proposes that everyone in the world should learn a picture language that has been invented by C.K. Bliss, an Australian industrial chemist. It is claimed that his language would be very easy to learn, that it would be adequate for every branch of science, and that it would be entirely free from hidden ambiguities; moreover since it contains different symbols for expressing approval and disapproval, learning to use this language would help us to outgrow the wicked habit of making derogatory moral judgements about other people, (a habit which the author regards as the cause of wars, massacres, and persecutions.) The three main symbols of this language, to represent the aspects of Nature, are a square for matter, an inverted V for energy, and a semicircle for life. But though he shows us those and other symbols, the author evidently has a very defective understanding of the nature of language, for he seems unaware that he has given us no clue as to what the syntax of this language would be - he has given us no general rules for constructing statements. Thus one cannot take very seriously the claims he makes on behalf of this ostensible language. (Bliss note: there are a number of sentences in Reiser's paper, and reference is many times made to the 3 volumes of my work)

In the final part of the book the author presents his doctrine of the pan-psychistic electromagnetic society. He holds that communication among the different cells of the brain yields consciousness; he argues by analogy that individuals in the world can function as cells of an emergent cosmic brain. When there gets to be enough communication among individuals (especially electric communication employing Bliss's symbols) then cosmic consciousness will arise, and with it Millenium.
S. F. Bker.
Spring 1956.

Another review which I received from Prof. Reiser appeared in a journal devoted to metaphysics and published by the publisher Lucis Press in England and Lucis Publishing Co., in America. Fortunately, this review served its purpose. Lucis Press and Publishing Co. were able to sell a number of copies which I gladly supplied to special trade discount.

Review in the Anglo American journal THE BEACON June-July 1956, Vol XXXV Number 3-4

A NEW LANGUAGE FOR MANKIND

Unified Symbolism for World Understanding, Including Bliss Symbols (semantography) and Logic, Cybernetics, and Semantics. By Oliver Reiser. Semantography Publishing Co., 5 Maroubra Bay Road, Pagewood, Sydney, N. S. W. Australia. \$1.50. Order through Lucis Publishing Co., 11 West 42nd Street, 32 nd Floor, 36 New York or Lucis Press Ltd., 38 Broadwater Down, Tunbridge Wells, Kent England.

The abstruse formulas of mathematics and the hieroglyphics equations of chemistry or physics indicate the peculiar fascination that symbolism has for the scientist. Other symbolic systems have also become traditional. Musical notation for example; so are the non-alphabetic designations in astronomy, astrology, and meteorology. The signs and symbols that the modern automobile driver must observe are a demonstration of the importance that semantography (the language of signs) plays in modern life.

Can a form of symbolism be devised which will be a substitute for written language? Is this one of the basic innovations that will revolutionize communication? Are we on the eve of a epoch-making development which will nullify the long established barriers set up by separate languages? Is one language for one world feasible? These are some of the stirring considerations involved in Prof. Reiser's discussion of unified symbolism. He discusses a system devised by C.K. Bliss of Australia which substitutes picture symbols for words. That this mode of communication has proved practicable is indicated by the fact that books of various descriptions have been translated into this universal language.

The possibilities that arise before us considering this vision are breath-taking. The obstacles which have acted as barriers for thousands of years - time, space and language- are being steadily overcome. Compulsive forces in modern life are urging us to find solutions. The catastrophic powers of modern atomic warfare underline the imperative necessity of reaching a wider and more tolerant view of mankind.

The compulsion of fear and of the inspiration of vision, then, combine to impel us toward the objective of world understanding. Considered in this light, any attempt to remove these misunderstandings induced by language differences should be hailed as a creative advance into the future.

The nature of the Bliss symbols proposed is simplicity itself. Action is denoted by an upthrusting sign - an A without the middle bar. The mind is represented by a semi-circle. A positive mental attitude could be thus expressed by a semi-circle with a plus sign underneath it. A man is designated by a straight torso a vertical line, and two diverging lines as feet. The multiplication sign means many. When the symbol of a man is written preceded by the multiplication sign these hieroglyphics signify many men. The symbol for man followed by the semi-circle for mind means that man thinks. A limited number of such symbols can be used to convey elaborate meanings.

Should this new form of symbolism fulfill its purpose, and make it possible for people throughout the world to communicate with each other, a challenging problem would arise. Would human beings be able to think in terms of mankind instead of the fractional portion of it that they represent? It would seem that the eradication of language difficulties should go hand in hand with the development of that broad sense of inclusiveness that will ensure the human relations among those who have succeeded in communicating with each other.

Dr. Reiser's speculations in connection with this language project are novel and stimulating. "As the world becomes more tightly knit into the unity of inter-lacing networks of radio, television, and telephonic systems, we humans ^{cells} are actually in process of creating a world brain." Those individuals who are awakening, and respond to the collective impact of world thought will establish an electromagnetic network which will hasten the evolution of civilisation and culture. Which forces will awaken human beings - suffering, revolution, poverty or the intense desire to know, to understand - and the experiment, remains to be seen.

Francis Merchant.

All in all these are "good" reviews, friendly and benevolent, in spite of some phrases. There must be others too of which Prof. Reiser was not informed.

Here are a few lines in an article of Prof. C. Dodd of the University of Washington. He is the author of Model English, Tilp, and he is favourably inclined towards my work. And yet he cannot suppress the remark that my claim on the practicability of Semantography is "still undemonstrated". The very same can be said of Esperanto, of Dodd's Tilp, and Model English and of practically any other new language construction. None has been used by a whole nation, simply because the men who could introduce it into the schools and community refuse to do it, be it Esperanto or any other language. The few lines below are contained in

AN ALPHABET OF MEANINGS FOR THE ONCOMING REVOLUTION IN MAN'S THINKING.

By Stuart C. Dodd.

Reprinted from Educational Theory, Vol. IX, No. 3, July, 1959.

Dialects are receding around the world as newsprint and radio penetrate into jungle and desert and ocean islands. The growing international pressure for a common language has given birth to over three hundred artificial international languages such as Esperanto and Interlingua as proposed reforming of the language: symbols for the myriad meanings man wants to express. Thus "Semantology," invented by an Australian, offers a new semantic system in a typewritable set of some 200 international signs which are verbalized in anyone's own language. Intended for universal signs on highways at first, this analytic-synthetic visual symbolism compounded out of dots and straight and curved lines has expanded to claim potential but still undemonstrated, usefulness adequate for textbooks and other literature. The new discipline of semantics is beginning to get academic recognition in courses and professorships and its two professional journals.

Footnote

²Bliss, C. K., International Semantography, Vols. I-III (Sydney, Australia: 1948) Semantography Publishing Co.,

It is remarkable how Dodd manages to write of "Semantology" in the text, and "Semantography" in the footnote. Other scholars have also miswritten the word and this fact has prompted me to abandon the word Semantography. Prof. Reiser uses the word already in a general sense, meaning any symbol system (of which many others beside mine might come) which will be adopted by mankind in the future.

I have said time and again that hundreds of years will have to pass until a kind of Semantography by somebody will be finally adopted. In the meantime there will be a Russian Semantography, A German Semantography, A French one, and some hundred more. For this reason I play with the idea to call my idea simply 'Bliss' just like Ford, Chrysler, Morris, called their contraptions; a Ford, a Chrysler, A Morris. Or we may call it Blissemantography, being the common name for the three aspects Blissymbolics, Blissemantics, and Blisslogic. The first attempt in this direction I made in the Reiser Brochure where I printed the words Bliss Symbols (Semantography).

I have somewhere in my papers other reviews, but I can't find them at present. I shall perhaps add them later on. But they are not essential. They resemble very much the reviews printed here. The reader is urged to read the extensive review of Professor Meredith as printed and discussed in Semantography Series No. 49.

May I end this issue with a remarkable review by a Sydney Journalist Sydney J. Baker. He is the author of "The Australian Language", and he tries very hard to be the same linguistic watchdog in Australia as H.L. Mencken was in America, as Partridge and Brown are in England. Needless to say that he refused to write an article on my work for the Sydney Morning Herald where he works. Another man did this (see S.S. No. 62) But Baker wrote an "appreciation" of my work in his book "Australia Speaks", for the printing of which he received a grant from the Australian Government. He didn't bother to look up the article, the report from New York, and Letters to the Editors, though he works in the Sydney Morning Herald, and the library is at his disposal. Neither did he bother to ask me certain aspects of my work. Consequently he speaks of "Semantology" instead of "Semantography", which is an indication that he did not take the proper time to study anything about my work of which he is so critical. Neither did he ask me to supply him with blocks of my symbols. Instead he described them in much the same manner as the other reviewers, which made it impossible for any other reader to get a clear understanding of them.

Here is his review from page 229 of AUSTRALIA SPEAKS.

"Another and perhaps more promising experiment on an international scale has been launched by Mr. Charles K. Bliss, of Sydney. Like Dr. Gassner, Mr. Bliss is a New Australian. He is also an industrial chemist. He has invented a system of picture-writing which he calls "Semantology", designed to break down language barriers. He tells me that he has spent 8 years formulating his ideographic system and has issued it in a three volume study called "100 Symbol Elements to Overcome Babel". There is a good deal in common between Mr. Bliss's symbols and the original bases of contemporary Chinese ideographs. For instance his picture symbol for "man" is a vertical line with two more lines (legs) branching from it below. "Earth" is one horizontal stroke. "Fire" is an up-and-down wavy line. "House" is three sides of a square with two lines at an angle above to represent the roof. "Mind" is the top half of a circle; "emotion" is the conventional outline of the heart. It is not without interest that "Presenting China" (a journal of the Chinese Ministry of Information in Australia, March 1945) had this view to offer: "Enthusiasts for an international language based upon the 'basic' idea should certainly choose Chinese rather than English for the Universal Medium." I have little doubt that Mr. Bliss's ideographs might well serve a useful purpose for interlingual communication of simple concrete ideas, but I foresee great difficulty in his attempts to conquer abstractions."

Wouldn't it have been the easiest thing for Baker to call me up and let me show him how I have conquered abstractions? Did he not remember that I left the three books on Semantography for weeks with him. These three volumes show on many pages how I conquered abstractions. But, as shown with previous reviewers, what they want is to criticise adversely. They don't want to be enlightened, that is shown that they have only scant knowledge of what they write about and pronounce judgement.

To give you the true picture of Baker and his stand on my work we must see how he treats the work of another Australian, a teacher, who serves a life sentence in a Sydney gaol, and who has perfected a dictionary on prison slang, all in all about 900 words. I have read an article on this man by Baker in the Sunday Herald. In this article he waxes lyrical about this linguistic pioneer. He implores Australian publishers to publish that prison dictionary. In his book AUSTRALIA SPEAKS he devoted to my work less than one page, whereas the prisoner gets seven pages. And here is an extract from Baker's enthusiastic review:

At this stage it gives me much pleasure to draw the Australian public's attention to a remarkable piece of linguistic study undertaken by a life-sentence prisoner in one of New South Wales gaols. This man, formerly a school teacher, has spent more than a decade behind bars, and a sizeable part of this time he has devoted to recording and annotating the slang used among gaol mates.

The result is an extraordinary¹¹ interesting glossary of terms, which he has called "The Argot".

Such notice as I have space to give here cannot do adequate justice to the patient and fine instinct of philological enterprise which the author of "The Argot" - who calls himself "Thirty Five" - has devoted to his task. In my view "The Argot" is one of the finest pieces of linguistic research to have come out of any gaol in any part of the world, including America, where sundry enterprises of this nature have been encouraged by gaol authorities.

"Because society imposes sanctions for violations of its rules, criminals, to protest whatever vestiges of self-respect remain to them, must perforce hold civilised standards up to ridicule, and postulate, by implication, the moral superiority of their own immorality...The thorough-paced criminal is half-aware, at any rate, that society holds him in contempt ^{which} he heartily reciprocates. He is convinced that society has conspired to put him behind bars, and that, to this end, police, magistrates, judges, juries, and even solicitors, have combined to convict him, innocent or guilty, and to give him the harshest possible sentence. The question of why he should be singled out for this persecution he answers to himself by aligning himself with the martyrs of the ages. The way he thinks of authority is shown by his use of the words; cold, demon, dock, defence, gig, give up, shrewdy, smarty, mug and use."

"Thirty-five" obviously possesses a rare talent for understanding the linguistic habits of his fellow men, and even a rarer ear for catching the nuances of meaning they give to words. Such defects as his work suffers from^{are} the inevitable limitations imposed on him by the loss of his freedom, chiefly in his lack of adequate reference for works for comparative notes.

Here now is a selection of examples from his glossary - less than 10% of them. They should do much to convince readers that "Thirty-five" is a lexicographer to great sensitivity and skill (the definitions as given by him):

ace, on one's. - on one's own
bludger - The criminals commonest term for a policeman.
brat - A seventh class pioneer, i.e. one under 24-26 years.
bridge - A plausible tale or excuse
bro kie - A person completely out of funds. See pursie.
buckle - To arrest.

And so on, page after page. Apparently it did not occur to Baker that most words prisoners use are unprintable. But as he is engrossed so much with the linguistic achievement of a prisoner, let me end this issue with a few lines from a letter which I wrote to Prof. Kluckhohn of Harvard, when he informed me that Harvard has no use for me.

"If a man commits a hideous crime he is given a fair trial, a judge, a counsel for the defence, and even a lay jury. He can appeal to a higher court. But if a man commits the crime of evolving a new and unorthodox idea, he has no court where his doings can be tried and judged, no counsel for the defence, no lay jury. He is condemned without a hearing, without a trial. He has to go the bitter road into oblivion and desperation. But what could he have done in this field if he could^{have} got a little encouragement, a little help?

If I am allowed to sink into deeper and deeper bitterness and desolation I shall have no other recourse to keep alive mentally and physically, than to devote all my energy to a book in which I am going to show that, with few exceptions, mankind's best sons are condemned without a hearing, and without a trial - a virtual death sentence.

What do I ask for the inventor, the pioneer of a new idea. I ask for him the very same thing that a criminal gets: for a number of years the worry about the next meal, the next rent, the next pair of shoes are taken off his mind. He is given a cell, he is given seclusion, is given a free mind to think about what he cares to think. If he wants to write, he is given paper to write on, free of charge. Indeed many a great work has been brought to paper in the seclusion of a prison cell. The lunatics are even better off. They are housed, fed, cared for in the best of hospitals, set in the best of parks. But the geniuses, the pioneers of new ideas are allowed to die in poverty. What should be instituted is a Trial for the Pioneer, a Jury for the Genius!!"

The End.