

MLG 25

GUTETO

Vol. 2 MAR 56EE No. 4

Nur rekte, kuraĝe
Kaj ne flankigante
Ni iru la vojon celitan:

Eĉ guto malgranda
Konstante frapante
Traboras la monton granitan.

Published
for
F A P A
by

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GUTTO

The last mailing seemed to be full of interesting things, but that which appealed to me most was the plans for slan shack. I think a better name would be "Slan Village" when it becomes a city block, but howsomever, I certainly intend to do whatever I can to advance the idea, whether I can join the gang in person.

--MoRoJo

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"BASIC FACTS"

In reply to Harry Warner, Jr.,
HORIZONS, June 43 FAPA, "Toward
Debabelization":

Altho I suspect this is an old article, the fact that it has been recently published by its author indicates his opinion is still the same as when the article was written.

Therefore, I say:

In addition to the publication of books "translated into Esperanto" there have been many books published which were written originally in Esperanto.

Esperanto "is simple to learn, if our mother tongue is Romantic or Teutonic, and especially if you know more than one language already," but is also simple to learn whatever is your mother tongue as there are only 16 grammar rules with no exceptions instead of dozens of rules with hundreds of exceptions.

"Must Esperanto be the only possible answer to a universal language?" Certainly not. Any well-planned, tried & tested synthetic language would be suitable. But a natural language - never! Any natural language to be suitable would have to be groomed to

the point of ugliness - such as Basic English.

I have no doubt that the study of Basic English is intensely interesting, especially translating English into Basic. It is interesting to note how many subtle ways we have of saying something in English. In Basic English any repetition becomes tremendously monotonous as there is no variety available. This fact was brought out in Guteto No.2 - Sep 56EE in a discussion concerning the translation of the Bible into Basic English.

You say authorities agree that English is the most flexible of languages. I agree that English is flexible compared to other natural languages. But Basic does not retain the flexibility of English whereas Esperanto is flexible to such an extent that any person may retain his own natural word-order in speaking Esperanto without impairing his meaning in the least. That is flexibility exceeding that of natural English.

Harry Warner states that Esperanto is the mother tongue of no one. That is not so. I know two persons whose mother tongue it is, and I

have no doubt there are many others in the world whose mothers & fathers met at Esperanto conventions & whose mother tongue is Esperanto since the mother & father have no other common language.

As for English being the accepted diplomatic language, I have been under the impression for years that it was French. Boaring out this impression is the use of French by the International Postal Union; i.e., French & the national language of the country in which the printed postal matter is intended for use.

I

have been interested in Basic English for some time - in noting the clumsy manner in which one is required to express oneself as compared to English or Esperanto - also, in noting that Esperanto has all the qualities claimed for Basic as an educator, plus the dramatic appeal that Basic lacks for English speaking peoples. Esperanto is beautiful; that is, the sounds required are acknowledged to be pleasant to the human ear, whereas English is recognized as one of the harsher, if not the most unpleasant sounding of all languages. Basic is even uglier than English due to the lavish use

of "get", "got", "go" & "give". I learned when very young that "got" & "get" were used very sparingly by cultured people. The manner of my learning was so impressive that I now instinctively avoid the use of these words & think up other ways to say what I mean, if possible. I have the same reason to dislike Basic English that I have for disliking "get" & "got" - because it is gutteral. However, this personal disliking of mine is no argument against Basic. I shall now tell a story which I have stolen from the official organ of SATEB, The Worker Esperantist, from which I also stole the caption of the story to start this article.

CHRIS PIENAAR lifted his eyes to the fast approaching shores of England and with a happy smile put his "Text Book of Basic English" back into his pocket. He knew it all, the 850 words of the vocabulary, the pronunciation and the method of forming sentences. Never before had he spoken any word but Dutch and now in a few minutes he would be landing at Hull, for a fortnight's cycling holiday.

The

boat glided to the quayside, and amid a surging crowd, Chris walked down the gangway. His first thought was to claim his bicycle and with that object he approached a deckhand, energetically unloading luggage.

Suddenly he halted. A horrible thought had struck him. There was no such word as "bicycle" in Basic English! Fortunately, a moment later he saw it, safely on the quay, but his tent which he had tied behind the saddle, had disappeared. Once more he thought to enquire and immediately remembered that Basic English contained no word for "tent". After diligent search he found it behind some luggage, and then wondered where the Customs House was. This also he had to find for himself; Basic knew no "Customs".

It was now mid-day, and Chris decided to have dinner. There was no such word as "restaurant" or "cafe" in Basic, but Chris hopefully asked a policeman for an "eating house". He was directed to a low-down dive near the docks, from which he recoiled with disgust and by guesswork made his way to the center of the town where he quickly found a restaurant. As he sat down at a table he decided to have mashed pota-

toes, lamb chop and peas, followed by rhubarb tart and custard. Yet again his face fell, as he thought that he could not say a single one of his wishes in Basic.

Falteringly he took out his vocabulary and read it through. Bread there was, and water, and even poison, but no simple, mid-day meal.

"Can I help you?" asked a voice at his side in his own language. Chris looked up and saw a young Dutchman, whom he recognized as a fellow-passenger. He wore a green star in his button-hole and was having dinner with an Englishman wearing a similar badge. Chris explained his difficulty, and his compatriot invited him to his own table, where he ordered a meal for him, thru' his English friend.

"You see," said the Dutchman, "My friend and I are Esperantists, so we can speak to each other without trouble.....There are five million Esperantists thru'out the world, and you can find them almost wherever you go."

"Oh," said Chris. "I must learn Esperanto. Many speak English but I can't say a single thing to them in "Basic English"! --E. Sugar.