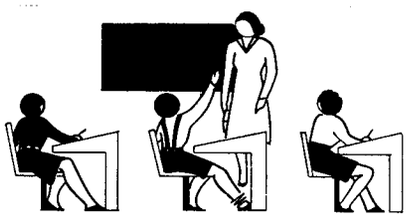
After saying that "Such plans offer far better prizes than taking away other peoples' provinces or land or grinding them down in exploitation," he exclaimed: "The empires of the future are the empires of the mind." True, we hope. Such empires of the mind will be fashioned in all the world's great living languages. For words are the tools with which the mind works. If the Republic of Plato can be rendered in Basic English, it presumably would be feasible to have it in Basic Russian. If an American and Russian wished to converse with each other, even on so high-falutin a subject as the Republic of Plato, they presumably could do it successfully if each knew and had mastered the Basic of the other. Even more important is the New Testament in Basic. If each man had mastered at least one other tongue in Basic besides his own, the foundation would be laid for world citizenship. For he would have emerged from the mental isolation of the mother tongue. He would enjoy the triumph of having achieved a basis for intercultural discourse and understanding.



And then—only then—shall we have a right to hope that perhaps Basic English may become the most universal medium of expression. There is a fair chance for it, but that may be lost by injecting political issues. Mr. Churchill's bold suggestion, if narrowly interpreted, may become the most decided setback Basic English has yet suffered. But if broadened into true international equality of all tongues, if treated as the pioneer of what all languages ought to achieve, it may provide the greatest push for a universal means of communication yet.

Carl J. Friedrich, Professor of History at Harvard University, is the author of the recently published "The New Belief in the Common Man."

B. E. — A Polished Instrument

IVY LITVINOFF

THOUGH I have no interest in the question of an "International Language," I am all for Basic English as a teaching system, because, after all, thousands are in need of learning English *now,* for one purpose or another, without waiting to see what the future of language will be.

As a lover of my mother-tongue, I am deeply conscious of the care which has been taken by the makers of Basic English to do no damage to the sound or forms of the English language. Most books for teaching languages, while they may have gone some way from "the pen of the gardener," are dry or unpleasing, or, still worse, "bright" in a way which gets on the learner's nerves. The examples of Basic English in C. K. Ogden's "Basic Step by Step" have rhythm and sense and a serious undercurrent which is something new in a book of this sort. Here are lines from the fourth division of the book, at a level of about 120 words:

> Rain and snow do not come from a clear sky. A sky with a cloud in it is not a clear sky. Rain and snow come from clouds.

By the fourteenth division the learner has a knowledge of about 550 words (there are thirty divisions in the book, with an increase of about thirty new words to every division), and more complex accounts of natural things may be put before him. These lines come from "Noise":

> In the country every sound is clearer than in the town, because the noise is less. The voice of a man, and even what is said, may come to your ears across a field. And the sound of a cow-bell, or of the feet of a horse on the road, may come from the other end of the farm.
>
> But that is only in quiet weather. The noise of thunder keeps you from hearing all other sounds. And sometimes, in a wind, even if a person is near you, not one word of what he says comes to your ears.

Writing like this gives learners a good example of simple English prose, and I have frequently had true pleasure from the writing of Russians who have been working at their English for a very short time. My memory will long keep a letter sent to me by a young Georgian girl:

> Here I was, waiting, waiting, and the long hand of the opposite clock going round its cold white face, and still my friend did not come. I was ready to say: "There is no more hope!" and go back to my father's house, when suddenly whom did I see but the kind good face of my friend, with a smile on itself for me. Then I said to myself: "There will always be hope!"

No system will make the first attempts at writing or talking in a strange language without error possible. It *is* hard to get across the idea that "opposite clock" and "a smile on itself" are not quite English—probably the only teacher able to get the "feeling" of any language across is experience. But errors of this sort are not the point—it is the grip on language structure, the sense of the direction of thought that are important. I have had numbers of letters from Russians learning English as good in their simple way as this one.

Some authorities have said that Basic English gives no help with the sounds of English, which are so hard to get right. In my experience, help is given by the very fact of limiting the word list.

I am hoping I have made it clear that I am not taking part in this discussion of an "International Language," but am happy for a chance of putting in my word for what are, in my opinion, the very important points of Basic English as the best possible instrument for learning English, when that is the end desired. The "International Language" will come when the nations are ready for it—not before. Man has been living a long time on the earth and his every word is the invention of his mind. Will he not be able to make the selection of the words needed for the one great language which the Russian linguist Marr says all our languages are moving to? Till then, let us do our best by learning and respecting the languages now in existence, as our need for them comes into existence. Some put the question: why does not every language have its Basic system? The answer is that every language will when and if its organization and rules are such that they may be formed into a simpler system which will be at the same time natural to the language and its forms. And when and if men with clear minds are able to do for another language what C. K. Ogden has done for English.

The foregoing contribution by Mme. Litvinoff is written in Basic English, except for the word "International." Mme. Litvinoff, wife of the former Soviet Ambassador to the United States, once taught Basic English in Moscow.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTICS (No. 496)

H. LORY:

JAPAN'S MILITARY MASTERS

Of all Japan's assets none is more important than this high morale of the Japanese army and people alike . . . drunk on their dreams of a white man's defeat, trained not to live for their country but to die for a greater Japan.

A "Neutral" Tongue

GEORGE A. CONNOR

THE *Saturday Review* properly reprints C. K. Ogden's article on Basic English, in view of Winston Churchill's tribute to that "carefully wrought plan for an international language." But to stop there would be to ignore that other "carefully wrought plan"—the only living, worldwide interlanguage today—Esperanto.

There is epochal significance in Churchill's recognition of the need for an auxiliary tongue, to enable all "to move freely about the world and find everywhere a medium, *albeit primitive,* of intercourse and understanding." But in common with Ogden, his compatriot, Churchill "prefers to build on the old site" and "to preserve some of the old bricks," by promoting an admittedly primitive edition of his native English idiom *"for all nations."* He fails to grasp the logical, neutral, solution in the concept of interlanguage—Esperanto.

Churchill states frankly, "I do not see why we should not try to spread *our* common language even more widely throughout the globe." ". . . such plans offer far better prizes than taking away other people's provinces or land, . . ." *"The empires of the future are the empires of the mind."* This recalls various news items about competitors to Basic English—notably Basic Japanese for "The New Order in Asia," Simplified German for Hitler's "New Europe," and Basic Latin as proposed in Italy—all these presage linguistic and cultural warfare, unless we adopt the interlanguage Esperanto.

Dr. Mario Teixeira de Freitas, of the Brazilian Government, states the case for Latin-America when he says: "Only through Esperanto will we realize unity and confraternity under the very best spiritual conditions, because our endeavors in this respect will not bring about the subjection of any part of our populations to a biological and psychological creation of another group. Because of the use of its language among diverse peoples, such a group would have superiority and would occupy a privileged position. . . ." Many scholars, like Dr. Freitas, fear that Basic English would place the cultures of the world under a veritable empire of the English mind.

Conceivably, an organized Pidgin of any national group might partially remove the language barriers. But only Esperanto eliminates the *psychological barriers.* Any national tongue places men at disproportionate advantage—one is a native while the other is a foreigner, or both are foreigners speaking an alien tongue. The interlanguage Esperanto provides an absolutely neutral, linguistic foundation. Esperanto is composed of elements common to all, is mastered and used in the same way by all, and is entirely free from national pride and prejudice, or cultural encroachment. This elimination of the psychological barriers is the all-important requisite for the world auxiliary tongue.

Several million persons of the most diverse cultures, Occident and Orient, already use Esperanto. Attempts to create a rival composite interlanguage have failed, or remain mere projects in pamphlet form on library shelves, to be brought out occasionally as scarecrows to foster confusion and schism in the public mind, when this serves some rival purpose. Esperanto lives, and is applied in every field of endeavor. Many thousands of books and over one hundred journals were printed in Esperanto before the war. China, even today, sends out two vivid journals in Esperanto: "Vocoj el Oriento," and "Orienta Kuriero." Universal Congresses of Esperanto give living proof of the efficacy of the world tongue, with thousands of delegates from over forty nations participating. In Brazil, Esperanto is the official auxiliary language of a nation-wide governmental department.

Esperanto's basic vocabulary consists of about 1,000 root-words, but an infinite variety of new words can be built from this base because of a regularized system of affixes. There are no limitations, circumlocutions, or floundering among definitions, such as characterize Basic English. Esperanto has sixteen grammatical rules, no excep-

Esperanto at a Glance

The Alphabet of Esperanto

Aa	Bb	Cc	Ĉĉ	Dd
ah	*bo*	*tso*	*cho*	*do*
Ee	Ff	Gg	Ĝĝ	Hh
eh	*fo*	*go*	*Joe*	*ho*
Ĥĥ	Ii	Jj	Ĵĵ	Kk
hho	*ee*	*yo*	*zho*	*ko*
Ll	Mm	Nn	Oo	
lo	*mo*	*no*	*oh*	
Pp	Rr	Ss	Ŝŝ	Tt
po	*ro*	*so*	*sho*	*toe*
Uu	Ŭŭ	Vv	Zz	
oo	*woe*	*vo*	*zo*	

28 Letters. There is no Q, W, X, or Y.

A, E, I, O, U have approximately the vowel sounds heard in *bar, bear, beer, bore, boor.*

C is not sounded like S or K, but like *ts* in Tsar.

J has the sound of *y* in *yes.*

The sounds of ĉ, ĝ, ĥ, ĵ, ŝ, and ŭ are heard in *leech, liege, loch, leisure, leash,* and *leeway.*

ESPERANTO IS PHONETIC.

All letters sounded: one letter one sound.

ACCENT or STRESS falls on the last syllable but one.

No IRREGULARITIES. No EXCEPTIONS.

THE GRAMMAR is based upon SIXTEEN FUNDAMENTAL RULES, which have no exceptions

THE PARTS OF SPEECH are formed from Root-Words by the addition of appropriate Letters.

O is the ending of the NOUN: fakto, telefono, piano, gluo, fajro, tasko

ADJECTIVES end in **A**: evidenta, longa, granda, freŝa, furioza, simpla

NOUNS and ADJECTIVES form the PLURAL by adding **J** *aj, oj* sound as in *my boy*

evidentaj faktoj longaj telefonoj grandaj pianoj

THE SIMPLE VERB HAS ONLY SIX INFLECTIONS.

INFINITIVE	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE	CONDITIONAL	IMPERATIVE
I	AS	IS	OS	US	U
ESTI	estas	estis	estos	estus	estu
LERNI	lernas	lernis	lernos	lernus	lernu
HELPI	helpas	helpis	helpos	helpus	helpu

N marks the ACCUSATIVE (*direct object*)

Mi (*I*) helpas lin (*him*)
Li (*he*) helpas min (me)
Ŝi lernas Esperanton

ADVERBS end in **E**: energie, entuziasme, diligente