

S E M A N T O G R A P H Y  
A N D T H E B O Y - S C O U T M O V E M E N T

A letter to

Eric E. Barker, Esq.,  
and the Boy Scouts  
of Gladstone District  
GLADSTONE, Queensland

Dear Friends,

The letter of your District Commissioner has been a pleasant surprise. Indeed I waited during my years of work on Semantography for a letter from a Boy Scout, and I was sure one day such a letter will come.

In order to answer fully his letter and also give you an opportunity to study my proposal, I type this letter on a wax stencil and shall send you 20 copies. There is another purpose in copying this letter. The Public Library of New South Wales and the National Library of Canberra have requested me to send them all items on Semantography to be bound into a file "The History of Semantography". Other libraries abroad will do the same. The historical aspect of my work is justified by the fact, that for nearly 300 years the idea of a logical and simple picture writing which could cover even scientific communication was considered an impossibility. The great mathematician and philosopher Leibnitz speculated about the great advantages of such a writing, and he wrote in 1679:

"I think these thoughts will some day be carried out, so agreeable and natural appears to me this writing."

But, as said before, the world thought this an utopic idea, impossible to realise. Indeed during the 7 years of work, many people considered me a crank, but I kept stubbornly at my work. In order to show the world that it is really possible to write in simplified pictures, which can be typed on an ordinary-sized typewriter, I wrote a huge book, containing over 500,000 words, over 20,000 drawings, etc. It took me 3 years. Realising that I will have difficulty to find a publisher, I typed it all on stencils, made myself all drawings, and printed it on a cyclograph. Now, this huge work, bound in 3 volumes is bought by great libraries in the United States, Great Britain, and elsewhere.


Why such a huge work? Well, I had to write large chapters for many human activities to prove the workability of Semantography. There is a large chapter on Road Symbols, on symbols for Railways, for Ships, for Communication of all sorts. There is a large chapter on Chemistry and Physics, on Medicine, on Agriculture, etc. etc. Professor G. Patrick Meredith wrote a very favourable review about my work in the British educational journal THE NEW ERA, and he said that I have written a "half a million word Bull dozer", and this is just what I wanted to do, because my huge work "shoves away" like a bulldozer any belief that this is an idea only, which is not yet worked out. My 3 volumes prove that it is worked out in detail. Now, I can go out into the world, and say that I am ready to teach it to other people. Now, and not before, can I write to Boy Scouts and say: "You can take it up and start communicating with boy scouts in other parts of the world!" And if you should have a little doubt, read the words of praise which Bertrand Russell, one of the greatest scholars of our time has written about Semantography. Read also the words of Professor Washburne of New York, Professor Hogben of Birmingham, and of other scientists (Brochure No. 6)


Now that this letter is going into important libraries to be preserved for future generations, your Commissioner goes down into history as the first boy scout who had the vision to realise the importance of a universal writing which people all over the world could read and understand in their many languages. And if you would decide to make the first start then the boy scouts of Gladstone in Queensland will be mentioned in future books as the first pioneers of a world-embracing universal writing. It is now up to you to decide.

Many great scholars throughout the centuries have realised that the Babel of languages is a major handicap to human and mutual understanding. Consequently, the idea of an international language was taken up and hundreds of different proposals were put forward. The most successful was Esperanto. But it all came to naught. Why?

Because the peoples of this planet have the irresistible urge to speak as their mothers spoke to them when they were children. The "mother-tongue" is so strong, that any attempt at an international language failed. Look at the most literate countries in the world, for instance the United States or Canada. There, millions of people speak almost exclusively French, or Italian or Swedish or other languages taken over from their great-great-grandparents, who came into the country centuries ago. Take Australia. In South Australia, there are towns in which German is the language of the people, who live there, although their ancestors came into the country more than 100 years ago. I am told that there are a few towns in Queensland, where Italian is the language spoken most. So you see, the mother-tongue is irresistible.

Yes, said the advocates of Esperanto, but if Esperanto would be taught in school, in all schools of the world, it would spread. Even this has proved a failure. Why? Because our minds resist the learning of foreign languages. All teachers of foreign languages admit that pupils may learn French for 7 years, and then may not be able to ask correctly for a glass of water in French. Again, it is the mother-tongue which is against it.

So, the case seems hopeless. But bridging the language barriers between peoples is today a matter of life and death. And a solution has been found in a field where mutual understanding is indeed a matter of life and death: on the highways of the world. There motorists are racing along who understand different languages. The warning signs must be written in such a way, that they could be understood in all languages. And so, the picture of a curve  has replaced the word CURVE in many countries.

So you see, a picture writing has already proved its worth, and Semantography is nothing else than the continuation of the work started on the motor roads of the world. Take for instance the picture of an arrow:  This is recognised all over the world as meaning a direction sign. Now look at my leaflet No. 7 in which you will see only a few examples of what can be expressed with an arrow.

I myself have been a boy scout in my youth, and all the time throughout my work on Semantography I thought that the scouts will spread this. There are scout movements in all the countries of the world, and if they would all have a common medium of writing, which they all could read in all their different languages then the bond of friendship would be strong.

Moreover, one of the finest hobbies in the world is stamp-collecting. But it must be done, not by spending your little money at the stamp-shop, but by writing to stamp-collectors in other countries, and by exchanging stamps with them. For instance, you can easily amass a few thousand Australian stamps, but you have great difficulties to get stamps from Europe or Africa, or South America or elsewhere. Now, if you would find a penfriend say in Sweden, who has a few thousand of Swedish stamps, and who will gladly exchange say 50 Swedish stamps for an appropriate number of Australian stamps, then you would thus easily get a nice collection of Swedish stamps. In much the same way you could correspond with boy scouts in other countries and exchange stamps with them.

But there are even nicer things to exchange - picture post-cards. Every country has interesting sights, landscapes, towns, buildings, pieces of art, etc. and these are portrayed in picture post-cards. I have always consid-

considered the collecting of picture post-cards as much more rewarding than stamps. If anyone of you would visit me in Sydney, I would show him my fairly large collection of picture post-cards. And among them are reproductions of the finest pieces of art. Every town has a picture gallery of famous paintings, and post-cards are available of them. I have a number of wonderful reproductions of Rembrandt's, Michelangelo's, Leonardo da Vinci's and other paintings of famous old masters. But I have also collected pictures of modern artists.

In exchanging picture post-cards with scouts in other parts of the world, you could thus collect a wonderful collection of art, and you can enjoy them much more than in a gallery, where you get easily tired from walking. And there are galleries where you and I might never come, because they are in other parts of the world. But you can get the pictures by writing to scouts in those parts of the world. There are not many art-galleries in Queensland, but there are postcards of wonderful Queensland sceneries, painted by Australian artists, or photographed.

These paragraphs might convince you, that taking up this universal writing would be more than fun. It would give your life a fine purpose, and make it richer. By corresponding with people of other countries your outlook would be broadened, and you would collect, not only stamps, not only pictures, but the most valuable collection a human being can have: friends. Furthermore, your example would induce other scouts to write, and thus you would contribute to mutual understanding among the nations.

But there is more in Semantography than just a mere medium of correspondence. The word Semantography is composed from the Greek words semantikos, which means "significant meaning" and graphein which means "to write". In a number of Universities a new science has been taken up, the science of the meaning of words, and this science is called Semantics. Scholars have realised that words play a terrific part in our life, but we human beings seem not to realise that many words have a very vague meaning, are ambiguous in their meaning, that means that they may have different meanings for different persons, and there are words which are fallacious, which means that they are false, deceptive, misleading. They cause terrible worry and unhappiness.

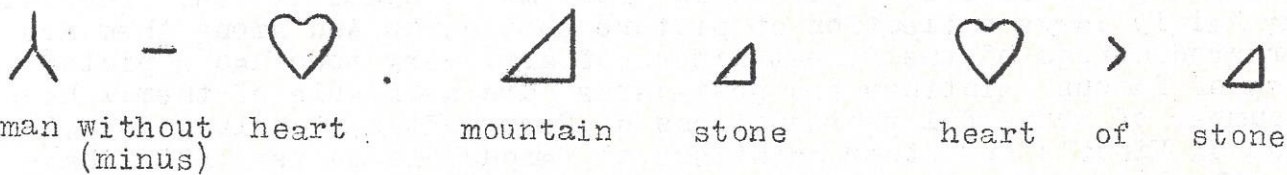
Take for instance the meaning of "heart". This word refers to something real, something which exists, something which every human being has, and even every animal. There could not be any heated debate, any controversy between people, whether something is a heart or not, whether someone has a heart or not. Only a corpse, from whom the heart has been removed has no heart.

And now take the word "heartless". This word is used millions of time right now in millions of homes all over the world. People accuse each other in anger: "You are heartless" - "You are a heartless person" "You have no heart" - "You have a heart of stone", etc. All these words are meaningless, they are false, they are misleading. And they cause terrible hardship, terrible sorrow, tears, and worries. They break up marriages, loves, friendships and even lives. Children will cry their eyes out, when accused that they are heartless, and they will say, that this is not true. Yet the wound will be there, will smart, will not heal, and the psychologists tell us, that many adults become unhappy throughout their whole life, because they have suffered in their childhood.

It seems therefore that the science of Semantics should be taught in all schools of the world. But this has not been done. Why? Simply because there was not yet a simple method to teach Semantics to children. The Semantics taught at the University is too high for children. But now, here is my Semantography. It is a picture writing. Therefore it can only "picture" the realities of this world. As soon as you would write down in Semantography "Heart of stone", you must realise that this is contrary to nature, as you will see on the next page. Similarly the picture of "heartless" would immediately make you aware that it is meaningless when referred to a living being.

In showing you now a few symbols of Semantography, you must realise that some meanings have no picture in nature. For instance, the words "and, with" and "without". But we have the mathematical symbols for

plus (+) and minus (-). Now let us write down in Semantography:



Now, once you have a little practice in Semantography, you will immediately discover such false words and meanings. No human being can be without a heart. It's senseless. It's meaningless. And when you have realised this, you will never hurt another person with such a word. The symbol for stone shows that it is a small part of a mountain. And the word combination: heart of stone is meaningless again. Never can a heart be formed from a part of a mountain. <sup>would</sup> Never can a human being have a heart of stone. <sup>would</sup> Imagine that all human beings have learned Semantography and have learned not to use such words which hurt only, then the world might be a better place to live in.

Then there is another science, called Logic, the science of true thought. You have heard that we must think logically, must make logical conclusions and decisions. Yet, again the science of Logic is not taught in the children's schools, but only at the University. Again because there was not yet a simple method which children can understand. Now we have Semantography. And here is one example.

You have heard of Cause and Effect. Logic deals very much with these meanings. If you find that your bicycle has a flat tyre, the cause must be a hole. Therefore Cause: hole. Effect: flat tyre. It's logical.

But let us suppose your uncle says to you: "You won't get the present, because your welcome to Auntie has not been hearty." So, we have the Cause: no hearty welcome, and the Effect: no present.

But what means a "hearty" welcome? Some children are easily excitable, may dance around, may shout in joy. Some other children are of a still and silent disposition. They may be equally happy, but they don't show it outwardly. How then can that old uncle judge that such a child has not given a "hearty" welcome? He hasn't learned Semantics, and therefore he does not know that "hearty" is a vague, and ambiguous word, and he has not learned Logic. Yet, he believes that your punishment is logical. BECAUSE of your not "hearty" welcome, the EFFECT must be a punishment, no present. And all the time you might think that your welcome to Auntie was "hearty", and that Uncle is wrong, and Uncle might think all the time that he is right.

Now, here is your first lesson of the Writing, of the Semantics and of the Logic of Semantography, and if you let it sink in, and think about it, then you will never in your life use such meaningless expressions as mentioned above. You will never hurt other people with such words, and if other people will use such words against you, they will not hurt you, because you have now learned that their meaning is false and misleading.

I have written to you this long letter in the hope that it will convince you to take up the study of Semantography. But it cannot be learned from a book only, without a teacher. It is like the learning of a language or of mathematics, geometry. Nobody can learn these items without a teacher. There must be lessons with exercises, and there must be a correction of your exercises by a teacher, who would point out your errors. Only when you have mastered completely the first lesson will you be allowed to go to the next lesson. In short, Semantography can only be taught by a Correspondence Course. I would send you the first lesson with exercises, and you would send back your written exercises for correction. I would correct them, and add a personal letter, in case some point needs more explanation. With this answer you would get your second lesson. I believe that we can learn Semantography for correspondence in 10 lessons. Then we may think of a higher course, for advanced students.

And with this I close this letter, and I attach a few leaflets, brochure etc. Hoping to hear from you, I remain

Yours Sincerely

C. K. Bliss