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A SERVICE JOURNAL IN PRINTING & PUBLISHING

Vol. VII

NOVEMBER 1959

No. 4

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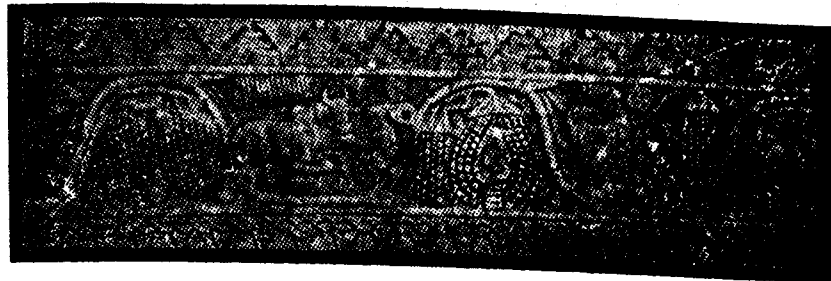


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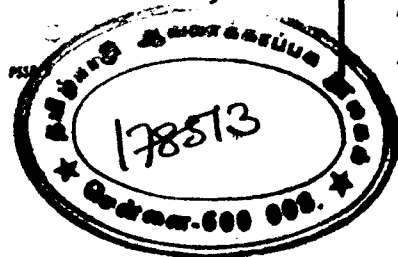
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NATIONAL SEMINAR For Printers, Publishers, & Booksellers.

The Government of India, organised a National Seminar for Printers, Publishers and Booksellers at Bombay in the first week of November 1959. Four Experts drawn from each of the wings of the Trade presented papers on different aspects of Book Production, Publication and Bookselling.



Kul Bhushan welcoming the delegates, Sri G. L. Mehta who inaugurated the Seminar is on his left.

Shri Kul Bhushan, Special Officer (Literature), Ministry of Education, in his introductory speech said that.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you today the idea of this Seminar—the Seminar for Printers, Publishers and Booksellers—a select gathering of experts.

The Ministry of Education has been concerned with the production of literature for the neo-literates since a long time. It is a part of its programme of literacy and of social education, and as such, it has resulted in many, if I may be permitted not to be modest for a change, quite successful schemes. It has helped production of small booklets for neo-literates by actual publications and by award of prizes. It has helped to orientate authors to the idea of writing for the masses by holding literary workshops (Sahitya

Rachanalayas) to train authors in various regions of the country. It has set up the National Book Trust to make available quality literature for the general public at low prices.

And now the Ministry of Education is bringing together the several arms of book trade to discuss problems common to all of them. The printers who carry out the technical process of book production, the publishers who bring the creative work of the authors and the technical work of the printers together—and lastly the booksellers who reach the books to the ultimate consumers. They are all here to discuss and thrash out the common problem—how to widen the appeal of the book, how to get prepared for the morrow when more and better books will be needed by our men, women and children, how to reach these books to the farthest corners of the

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country. These are questions for which answers are being sought by every conscious printer, publisher and bookseller. If this Seminar makes them think more deeply on the problems and make them put their heads together to find possible solutions with diligence, the purpose of this Seminar will be fulfilled.

For we shall not then be wanting in solutions—when as a result of our Five-Year Plans, we are suddenly face to face with more demand for books—better and cheaper and more widely available books.

On behalf of the Government of India and on my behalf, I thank Shri Mehta for having kindly consented to inaugurate this Seminar. I also thank all the participants who have responded so generously to the Government invitation.

Our National Independence has laid a firm foundation and paved the way for a new awakening in our people. We are forging ahead towards the creation of a new and greater India. Our success will depend entirely on how the people derive capacities to fit themselves into a new age and totally new environments.

We have worked and successfully completed the first "Five-Year Plan" and while we are now on the verge of the completion of the second, the preparation and the formulation of details for the third one is actively engaging the attention of our Government. Impelling as they are, these ideas have been exercising the mind and imagination of our masses. But unfortunately, most of them are either unable to understand the real significance of their implication or take the full measure of advantage of the new forces and opportunities due mainly to the inherent deficiencies of lack of extensive education.

The problem is one of great and immediate importance calling for an extreme urgency to find a solution. Being a national one in character and also stupendous in its proportions it needs an understanding wisdom and a deep insight in our approach.

The Government are of course aware of their responsibility and are at great pains to find a solution. Certainly they cannot compel the bulk of our population to go to school to get them educated. Roused by the aggressive rush of modern life and thought from other parts of the world, the Educational Ministry have come forward to find other solutions to meet the situation. This National Seminar is its direct outcome.

This Seminar has been sponsored with the specific aim to consider the instrumentality and the effectiveness of Books as a medium of educative communication to the masses. It is therefore a pressing call to awaken to this existing situation and to meet it with original thinking and a conscious action, wise and powerful in its insight and sure in its process. It is for us, who have assembled here, to discuss and decide how powerful and creative it could be for expanding the scope of mass education.

The books for the people in our country cannot be a duplicate edition, probably translated in Hindi or other languages of English, American, European, Japanese or Russian books. Such an attempt would impoverish our creative and assimilative ability and compel us to lose faith and self-confidence in ourselves as a nation. Our minds would then subscribe to intellectual slavery. Our national moorings would be lost and our masses would be drawn to owe allegiance to alien and imported ideologies.

This is not to be.

The creative and searching minds of our people have to be fed with constructive thoughts and educated to shape their own ideas. This calls for a selective acceptance and assimilation of the scientific and other factual ideas from other countries and reconcile them to the psychology of our national needs and restate them in a language our masses can understand clearly, yet firmly.

This aspect of National education is an enormous task of an unprecedented nature and the magnitude is so overwhelming. To

rebuild our nation equal to any other in the world, we too must concentrate on the advance of science and its application to the conquest of our environments—and formulate an immense apparatus of means; vast utilization of our national resources and man-power; an endless improvement of all conveniences to make life easy and happy; and an untiring exploitation of nature's forces to the best advantage of mankind.

The basic foundation to achieve this, we have to help our masses to understand the laws of physical nature. This is an important turn for our National advancement and progress. A concerted and purposive attempt at mass education with greater generalization of knowledge and a more thorough use of the intellectual powers of our people in all its activities in the multiple fields, is almost an urgent necessity.

There is lethargy and inert confusion among the village folk overpowered by mental inertia and poverty. Their immobility and static life must be fired by a new imagination. They must be helped to regain their faith in our nation and self-confidence in themselves. Our approach must be forceful enough to upheave their minds for rapid self-adaptation.

We are not a primitive people and when ideas are properly presented, their thoughts too can be galvanized to reason and approach life more robustly. Very soon their minds will admire the miraculous growth of science in our world and its giant discoveries—the abundant power, richness and minuteness of its instrumentation and the wonder working force of the inventive genius.

Intensive mass education can, if properly carried out, infuse a new life into our people. Enormous stir and pulsation of modern life will surge and the vitality of our people will increase.

Our feebleness would have become banished.

Our creative intuition will be inspired.

Our nation would have expressed powerfully her will to live and grow.

The light of mass education would have made the darkness of ignorance disappear.

New national potentialities would have become manifest.

Our people would be prepared to open in their minds to things that shall come, willing to seize on the future and what it offers.

If we are enlightened enough to put books to use, to guide the masses towards robust and creative activity, towards building up new significant national forms, we would have achieved almost the seeming impossible and the miraculous.

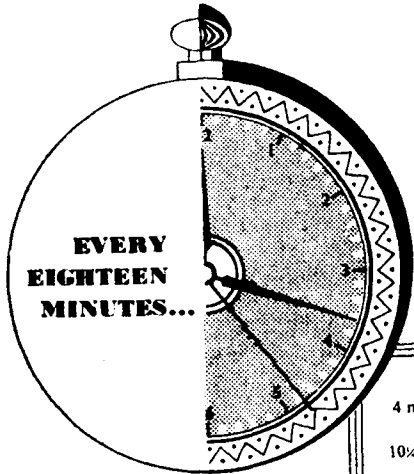
Our national strength and abiding potentialities are immense. Our dynamic impulses for self-renewal are perennial fountains of energy. Vital and fresher streams of the powers of life can be made to rush-forth. These forces are readily available for the production and distribution of Books for the mass, the intelligent and purposive use of which is packed with creative suggestions and possibilities. This work can easily be taken up and completely followed in detail and executed.

Having dealt at length with books as medium of communication to mass education and the part we as members of the Book Industry have been called upon to play, let us also refer briefly to the contribution we can make to certain other aspects of nation building activities.

History and posterity do not judge a nation by its success for material opulence or military strength to conquer and enslave others. For, economic capacity and prosperity, though necessary for the well-being of any nation, are by no means the most essential part of the total effort of human civilization. Material things are temporary and they perish in time.

A nation's accomplishments in Art, Literature and humanities alone portray its essential spirit and they alone survive.

A Leonardo Vinci, Michel Angelo, Sophocles, Dante or Shakespeare has his parallel in the



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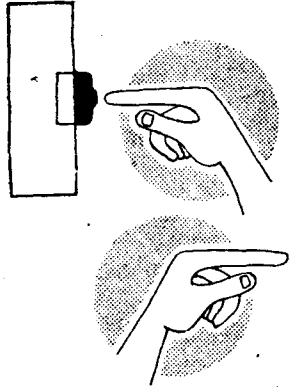
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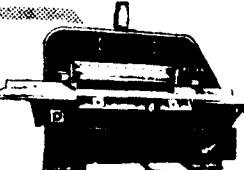
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artists who have carved the temple shrines of India and poets Valmiki and Kalidasa.

In our own contemporary lives, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Radhakrishnan have a status equal to that of any of the modern writers and thinkers of the west. As politicians they may be forgotten; but posterity will certainly remember them as authors and thinkers who have made valuable contribution to humanities. They are mortals as men but immortals as thinkers and writers.

In preserving such thought contents in books, the role of the publisher is no mean contribution to the nation.

Children are the real wealth of any nation. Their shaping into worthy citizens will be in proportion to the attention bestowed on their development. Parents in general do not seem to have given a serious thought to the significance of true education that is to be imparted to their children.

The type of education that is usually given at schools can, at its best, serve only as a gymnastic exercise to improve the suppleness of the brain. It generally leaves the mind of the child undeveloped.

Extra curricular interest on the part of the child to seek knowledge on its own initiative has therefore to be planned and encouraged. This is best accomplished by the use of books specially designed and produced as background reading material. They must be interesting enough to rouse the curiosity of the child to become actively interested in the life of every day, of every moment both at school, home and outside. It is the best of all schools, varied and rich in unforeseen experiences, in problems awaiting solutions, in clear and striking examples and in evident sequences.

It is common knowledge that an intelligent and clear answer to the numberless questions put by children arouses in them a healthy curiosity. One interesting reply brings in its train other questions and the children with their attention attracted and kept up, learn

without effort much more than what they usually do on the school desk.

Good, colourful books alone can do this work effectively and cultivate in the children a taste for healthy reading which is at once instructive and attractive. Here also the duty of the Book Industry towards the rising generation in this country is clear. It has to produce the right type of books that will make the children grow on ideal lines.

The books we nationally plan and prepare should help our people to take a forward look from our past and present, towards a goal which is our own, not a foreign ideal for the future. Our people should be helped to recognize the great gulf between what we are, what we may be and what we ought to strive to be. The books we plan for our people should have in them the fire and the force to help them conceive our national goals and give them the means and the power to work and execute them to victorious accomplishment. As responsible people engaged in Book Industry we are all aware of the valuable contribution we are already making towards nation building. Let me on your behalf assure the Ministry of Education, Government of India, of our unstinted and helpful cooperation and we would labour to make them accomplish our common task.

Mr. G. L. Mehta, Chairman of the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation, while inaugurating the National Seminar, called upon printers and publishers in the country to make all endeavours to produce books so as to make them available to the common man at prices within his reach.

Mr. Mehta was inaugurating a seminar for printers, publishers and book-sellers at the K. C. College, Bombay, on Tuesday, under the auspices of the Government of India in co-operation with UNESCO and the Union Ministry of Education.

He said that the cost of books in India was rising and publishers complained that the cost of paper played no small part in the mounting

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cost of book production. He observed that though the present rate of literacy in the country was low, it was steadily increasing and for speedier progress it was necessary that books should be made available to the people easily at low prices. India's paper industry should be expanded to make inexpensive and quality paper available for book production for the growing number of literate people in India, Mr. Mehta urged.

Government help urged

He appealed to the publishers and printers to conduct research in technical and financial aspects with a view to providing cheap books in various subjects. By their efforts they could make a vital contribution to the spread of literacy and the awakening of the people, Mr. Mehta told the seminar.

He hoped that the Union Government would give serious thought to the question of providing

cheap books and provide active assistance without which it would not be adequately solved.

Mr. Mehta pointed out that most of the middle-class families in the country found it costly to buy text-books for their children. They had to be contented with second-hand books. He wished that those attending the seminar would take special notice to this aspect.

Combined Approach

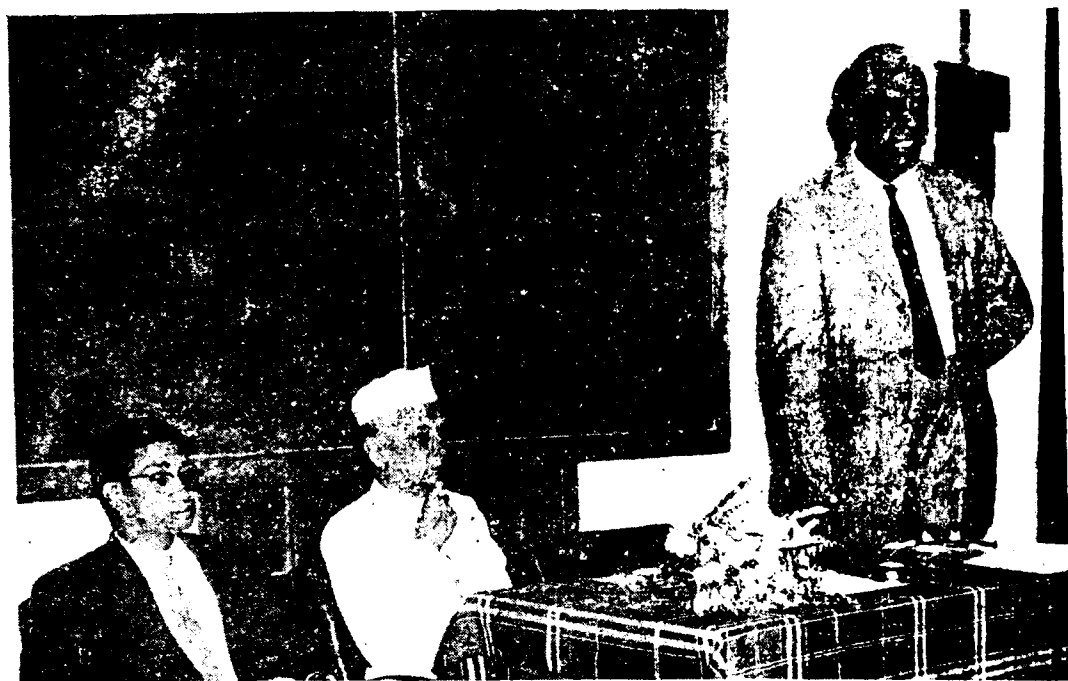
Mr. Mehta also called for the growth of libraries in this country which would considerably help the students, particularly those who find it hard to meet the cost of text-books, in making them book-conscious. The growth of libraries was also vital for the nation, he added.

Welcoming Mr. Mehta, Mr. Kul Bhushan, Special Officer (Literature), Union Ministry of Education, said that the seminar would provide



Sri G. L. Mehta inspecting an exhibition of Books published by the Govt. of India.

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Sri M. Sankaranarayanan, Director and General Manager, Messrs. Higginbothams, Madras, Director of the Seminar proposed vote of thanks.

a common platform to the people in the book trade to discuss the problems confronting them.

It would discuss the most important questions concerning publishing and books selling in the present context of things in India, that is in a developing economy. The seminar will also discuss the various facets of these questions and arrive at conclusions which would form a combined approach for the delegation to the Regional UNESCO workshop on Book Distribution which is scheduled to be held at Madras from

November 30 to December 19. The seminar in this context would be an explanatory national seminar to debate the existing strong points and weaknesses of our book production and book distribution organization.

Mr. N. Sankaranarayanan, Director in charge of the Seminar, appointed by the Union Government, said that the seminar had been sponsored with the specific aim of considering the instrumentality and effectiveness of books as a medium of educative communication to the masses.

Introduction to Printing Trade in India

By M. SANKARANARAYANAN

I deem it a personal honour to be associated with you in this National Seminar which is a prelude to the forthcoming International U.N.E.S.C.O. Regional Seminar at Madras.

I also take it that this National Seminar is a symbol of recognition on the part of the Government of India the three integral limbs of the Book Fraternity—Printers, Publishers and Booksellers. It also means that our Government feels that our contribution and services are both useful and essential to the continued and progressive growth of our nation.

These facts are gratifying and our present meeting is a happy augury that books of our country's origin would play their destined role in spreading our traditional cultural heritage to other parts of the world; and in our own motherland books would contribute their share in education, culture and a more modern way of life for our people, affording unlimited opportunities for our own national advancement and progress.

The problems confronting the Book Industry in India are multi-dimensional and the brief span of our Seminar may not be able to bring within its orbit all the aspects. But we shall be grateful for the opportunity it affords us to collectively and co-operatively grapple atleast the major pressing issues.

On our part let us be conscious that we who have assembled here not only voice forth our individual views, but are also the spokesman of all those who are not present with us now—I mean all those individuals, firms and employees who are actively engaged in increasing the national output of books and other reading materials in our country.

In our deliberations and recommendations we must be primarily aware that the fast scientifically advancing modern world requires on our part an attitude for adaptations to new and changing and challenging circumstances.

We have before us four working papers from four experts and from the advance copy before me I find them to be very stimulating. I believe there will be enduring benefits for the members of our fraternity to study these reports more closely and at greater leisure.

I wish to suggest that instead of limiting the discussions to only the contents of these papers, you be free to take advantage of the presence of these experts in our midst for consultation on our other preoccupying thoughts related to the main subjects. Such a discussion would provide different view points and enrich the total integrated perspective.

For instance, let me state that I wish the panel discussing printing problems may kindly include in its coverage at least aspects of some of the following subjects:

(1) *Has any broad survey of the existing machinery and equipment available in our country at present at the service of the Book Industry been undertaken either by Government Agencies or by private initiative of the printers' associations? If so, let the other limbs of the Book Industry derive the benefit of their findings.*

(2) *Is the maximum use of the existing machinery and equipment being made now?*

Do we have sufficient number of qualified people to man these machines?

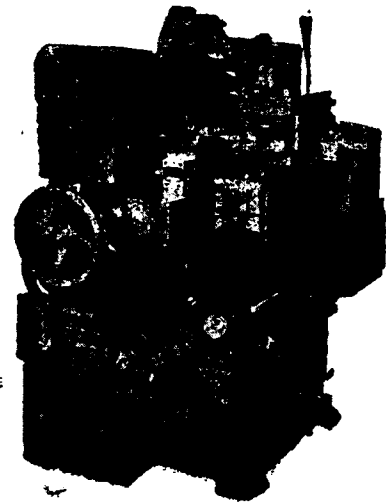
Is there scope to work double or triple shifts providing extra man-power resources with the adoption of wage incentives resulting in greater book productivity.

(3) *To what extent have we been affected by the restrictions to import new machinery from other countries? How do we propose to meet our increasing need for more modern machinery, particularly new unit type multi-colour litho machines and keep ourselves currently acquainted with the great pace of improvement in design of machines in foreign countries?*

(4) *Do we have sufficient number of well equipped training centres with capable of teaching staff? How*

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do these teachers keep abreast of the latest technical know-how of the subjects they teach?

Do the present polytechnic centres where Printing Technology is a special subject turn out to the nation sufficient number of trained personnel?

Or, is there a shortage of technicians? Does the situation warrant a freer intake of labour thereby increasing the number of apprentices in most of the craft sections of the Printing Industry.

Do these technical institutions provide opportunities for research and specialization for greater efficiency and work simplification and economy at each wing of a fullfledged printing unit? For example

At the composing room:

Design, copy preparation, mechanical type setting, checking on set matter, composition, tabular work, reading etc.

At the machine room:

Planning, maintenance, need for greater precision, the use of various devices, speed and economy of materials etc.,

At the Foundry:

Pre-foundry work, original engravings, mould packing, plate slabbing, duplicating, mounting materials etc.,

At Bindry and other departments:

Lay-out for smoother flow of work with contract piece time rate on work turned out etc., etc.,

Do these technical schools get the benefit of travelling exhibitions moving from schools to schools demonstrating samples of quality work done and if such a venture is undertaken, would it be popular?

(5) What is the climate in the present relationship between labour and management?

What are the prospects to weld their mutual interests for greater productivity and national advantage?

(6) Is there any existing organization sufficiently powerful and resourceful enough to stimulate and sustain continued interest in greater book production with higher and higher targets for our country?

Could the National Book Trust or such organization come forward to support research in simplification and specialization of work, both of the letter press and lithographic presses, and widely disseminate expert information and technical recommendations concerning machinery and methods?

Could it also provide opportunities for working teams to visit various parts of the country and participate in regional meetings and freely discuss with fellow members of the trade?

(7) The Indian Standard Institution has issued a pamphlet on a few features of Book Production. I believe many other suggestions concerning standardization relating to printing, like galleys, ink, paper, size of machines, type areas margin, etc., etc., could also be taken up for consideration.

(8) On the side of Lithographic printing, even as in the case of the letter press, numerous matters of detail can be gone into and recommendations about production control systems and wider use of precision control equipments and research in lithographic processes seems to be worthwhile.

(9) In foreign countries, printing presses are designed and set exclusively for producing books only. Will not such a venture in India, with or without Government help stimulate publishers?

The above are by no means exhaustive but I have dwelt on them casually to impress ourselves of the enormity of the work before us. I have therefore great pleasure to request Messrs. Ramu and Thamba to first read their reports and initiate the discussion among the panel interested in Printing Technology.

NOVEMBER 1959

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PRINTING TRADE IN INDIA

By S. RAMU

General Manager, Commercial Printing Press Ltd, Bombay

Considering the fact that the first printed book in Europe (not taking into account the earlier Chinese and Korean Printing) is mentioned in 1457 by Fust and Schoeffer, India did well in starting to print books from 1556. It may be noted that the first book printed in America is said to be in 1640. It was by accident that a printing press came to Goa, which was really meant for Abyssinia. Joao de Bustamanate, a Spaniard, was the pioneer of the art of printing in India, since he came with the first press. An Indian was sent by the King of Portugal to assist in setting up the Press. Unfortunately there is no record of his name.

The first Indian Script to be cut was Tamil and this was done by Joao Gonsalves, another Spaniard, who came with Bustamanate. He was soon followed by Faria. In 1576, a Brahmin convert, named Pero Luis, was sent for arranging the Tamil printing. Though the first batch of Tamil Script was cut in Goa, the subsequent batch was cut in Quilon in Kerala in 1578. The press which used these types in Quilon was later shifted to Cochin.



Sri S. Ramu presenting the paper

In subsequent years Devanagari, Telugu, Canarese and other scripts were cut. These pioneers deserve great admiration for their devotion to the art of printing and cutting the various scripts at that period, when no pantographs and machine tools were available.

The introduction of the printing press in India as in other middle east countries was purely for the purpose of porselytisation to the Christian faith. Whatever be the purpose of the original pioneers, no one can deny the fact that it was a great boon to the various peoples as it helped the dissemination of knowledge among them.

Even after several years of the spreading of the art of printng in India, the colonial Government did not give very great encouragement to the art except using it for governmental purposes.

Thus this important industry was introduced in India, without a properly planned approach. Though several men took to the profession of printing, cutting types etc., there was no regular apprenticeship system, which was one of the art of printing. Versatility and availability were found to be more expedient than quality. Thus printing had a chequered career in its early period in India.

In course of time, the art of printing spread throughout India, but private enterprise in this field was always lagging behind. Government Presses expanded and developed because of the multiplication of the activities of the State in various fields. To this day the Government presses, both Central and State, are the biggest in India. Though they are the biggest and have tremendous facilities, they cannot be said to be the best.

In the meanwhile, newspapers were started in different parts of India; and they also developed

commercial printing. The most outstanding of these was the Times of India, where they developed a very good standard of printing.

Most of the other presses are very small. Some of the presses owned by rich parties in different parts of the country imported foreign printers, English and German; these presses did very good work both in letterpress and lithography. Since the country was mostly agricultural and the profession mostly trading, private presses did not flourish very well. Most of the presses were ill-kept, badly managed and were suffering from want of finance.

Soon after Independence, the country started on plans of industrialization. Numerous manufacturing companies were started for which technical and advertising literature were required; packaging material had to be produced. Also the craving for "news" increased after the war. Education was given a new impetus. Thus the demand for printing increased by leaps and bounds after the attainment of freedom.

Thus when the demand came, the printers were not ready with skilled artisans, with trained supervisors, with management ability.

A few presses which had some good workers, or a good supervisor, managed to come up. The rest are jogging along; and a few under European management started deteriorating after the advent of independence.

To-day, the vast majority of presses in the country are small and their machines are old and outdated. Here and there one dares to import some new machines, but they have neither the skilled workers to produce quality work nor the technicians to maintain it in proper condition.

In England, printing industry was the first to introduce a uniform costing system; but in India the vast majority of printing presses have still no proper costing system. Without a proper costing system, estimating is a hit or miss method. Since there is not accurate estimating, profit is a matter of chance; and since there is no steady profit there is no progress worth men-

tion. Finances of most of the presses are, therefore, bad. Printers are ignorant of modern production techniques. They do not know what quality is and they do not see the need and advantage of standardization. If at least the Government Presses, with all the facilities at their disposal established standards of quality and production, strict methods of cost and control, the private sector in the printing industry would benefit. But this is not the case.

Added to these multifarious disadvantages, the raw material required for printing, paper, presents another problem. Before the war there was free import of paper. The then Government was not bothered about developing indigenous paper industry to a high level. There was little paper produced then in the country and it was of poor quality.

But the demand for paper has gone up tremendously. So some paper mills have been started. The estimated production of paper was in the order of 2.53 lakh tons in 1958. It is expected to be more this year. But the demand for paper is much more. Government alone takes away more than 40% of the production. Imports of paper are curtailed owing to non-availability of foreign exchange.

There is another side to the paper story. In spite of paying low wages and the availability of plenty of wood, bamboo and grass, the price of Indian paper is higher than imported paper.

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after paying freights, packing charges and import duty of 50%. And the quality is no where near that of the imported paper.

There is no exaggeration about the sordid and pathetic state of the printing industry in India. But then, is there no hope of putting this industry on its feet? Is there no chance of making this industry contribute towards the advancement of this country in the field of education, in industry and commerce?

There is every hope and every chance of making the printing industry one of the most important industries in this country, provided the Government and the private sector realises sufficiently its importance to the overall advancement of the country and plan properly for its development. Since we are considering the production of books in this seminar, we can only mention here that the Government should form a high power committee consisting of eminent men from the private and public sectors to go into the question of proper development of this vital industry.

Coming to Books, we need Children's books, Text-Books for schools, and Colleges, Technical Books and Reference books and many other varieties.

In the Second Five Year Plan, on the basis of the targets proposed by the planners, 63% of the children in the age group of 6 to 11 and 22.5% of the children in the age group of 11 to 14 would receive the benefit of free education. The number of pupils will increase by millions at the primary stage and 1.3 million at the secondary stage. Added to this, the social education and adult education schemes of the various State Governments aim at making literate the working class population of between the ages of 23 and 50 in the next ten years. Our Government is pledged to raise the level of literacy to 100% by the end of the Fourth Plan period from the present level of 18%.

Even by a simple arithmetical calculation, we can realise the volume of Children's Books and Text-Books that will be needed and will have to be produced? Are we equipped to

produce these books properly? Have we sufficient trained personnel to design these books?

We have already mentioned that the presses in India, the private ones, are ill-equipped for the production of this enormous quantity of children's books and text books necessary. Does not it mean then that there are no good presses existing in the country to produce good work of this type? There are but they are very few.

The vast majority of presses are small with outdated machines. This must be treated as a small-scale industry and the Government must help the small entrepreneurs with money, machines and materials. In return, it is essential to insist on very high quality of work, proper maintenance of accounts and introduction of accurate costing methods. In fact a simple accounting and costing procedure can be worked out for small and medium sized presses and the introduction of this must be insisted upon before advancing the money. Whichever department is doing the work must insist on quality. Certain standards in size, type, illustration and colour should be devised and insisted upon.

Just as it is important on the technical side to improve quality, set standards, insist on proper management and advance finance to small presses, it is also important to develop the aesthetic side. Teaching type design and improvement of vernacular type design is a vital necessity. Equally important is the teaching of designing of books, book covers, jackets etc. Most of all it is important to have knowledge of designing and advertisements.

It will not be out of place to mention here that for proper training in designing printing, printing production and printing management, it will be advisable to have 'model' printing presses in two or three centres in the country. They need not be unduly big. But they must have all the important machinery for production of quality work, to be produced economically in the most efficient manner. Each of these units must be manned by one or two experts

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Bagavad Gita (Translation by Bharathiyar)	...	...	1 25
Sugha Vazhvu (A. V. Raman)	...	...	1 00



THAMIZHAGAM

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MADRAS-1

drawn from outside India if necessary. Young men with proper background and good education, already having some experience in the industry, must be recruited for a three year period and given training by actually putting them in charge of various departments so that they will get proper practical knowledge in printing production, quality control, correct designing, maintaining costs and accounts, proper labour relations, press laws, and overall management. We have come across several youngmen who have been sent abroad for training in Printing Technology. Only very few come back properly equipped to run a press efficiently in all its aspects. The type of training suggested above will make them capable of running presses efficiently as against the present method of being trained abroad. These small model units will be made to pay their way and recover the capital invested in about then years' time. It will be possible to train men from all the various States. These people would be efficient enough to train men to start smaller units in the smaller towns of India and in due course this may spread to groups of villages. This method will not only spread printing industry all over the country but will help to produce quality printing at economical cost which is most essential.

As far as technical books and reference books are concerned, already there are enough good presses existing in the country and when other small presses are developed on the lines mentioned above, more of these specialised publications can be handled.

Now coming to the point of the most suitable process for the production of books in India, the vast majority of books are printed by letterpress at the moment. Naturally you have to look to the improvement and development of these units. They are all right for short runs.

But considering the varied scripts we have in the different States in India—why even within one State—and considering the number of characters in each alphabet which are more

than in the Roman, envisaging the huge volume of text books, children's books etc., I am convinced that the offset process will be the most useful one. It is already being used in some of the Indian plants for the above category of books. Now is the time to spread the know-how of offset printing and photo-composition, so that in due course the industry will be in a position to cope with the huge demand. Offset will also be advantageous for printing in Indian paper, since India has not yet been able to produce good quality coated paper. As for the costs, offset will be decidedly cheaper than letterpress.

There are a variety of photo-composing machines, ranging from gadgets costing a few dollars to the most complicated electronic photo-composing machines. I am of the opinion that we can make some of the simpler units here, and with the know-how gained in making these, later on build more of the complicated machines. For one thing the tricky business of outting punches and matrices for cold type will be eliminated.

India has already started manufacturing several types of machine tools, automobiles etc. I don't see any reason why we can't build some of the less complicated machinery needed for printing and binding. We are referring to this aspect of manufacturing machines here since getting machines for the book trade at a price suitable for the Indian printer is an important factor.

Having dealt with the production of books and training of men for running the presses, the next important point is the distribution and sale of the books all over the country.

Our printers understand mighty little about marketing and selling. You may have the best of things to sell. But unless you explain to the right public the importance and advantages of your product and induce them to buy, you can't sell very much. Even when they want to buy, if you don't make it available to them at the right place to buy, you can't sell

much. This aspect of the book industry is as important as book production.

Special training will have to be given to our young men in marketing, and selling advertising if we want mass sales.

Thus it will be seen that it is essential to build up the industry on proper lines to be able to meet the prospective huge demand. We have mentioned above that it will be possible to build up a good book trade.

The one method which will yield good results in a short time is the one suggested earlier of having 'model' presses in a few centres in India. It is out of my province to suggest from where the funds should come. But I am of the firm conviction that whatever capital is invested in this direction can be recovered within a period of about ten years by running these model presses properly.

The greatest advantage, of course, will be that our men who work in these model presses as executives will learn every phase of this industry properly. They will learn about design, both typographic and graphic, in all its forms and will actually design title pages, jackets, books etc., under expert guidance. They will learn the technique of production control. They will handle various methods of quality control. They will acquire a knowledge of handling labour and supervisory staff properly and maintain correct labour relations.

They will get used to assessing their markets, adjusting price levels and evolve a sales plan for maximum sale of the books. They will practice designing of advertising and using various forms of advertising to reach their markets.

Thus we will be developing batches of young men to develop the book trade, which will be a real boon to the country.

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Introduction to "Book Production Problems"

By N. Sankaranarayanan

This National Seminar has to define its attitude to Book Production. There is behind this idea the conception of a National Publishing outlook. To be truly National, it has to be dynamically creative and not degenerate to become a mere tool in the hands of unscrupulous and unethical vested interests that attempt to exploit a national situation.

It must be inspired by an enabling ideal of service to the country; but assured of honest rewards for active participation in a national adventure. There is ample scope for personal and private initiative, and the Government must come forward with active help to foster the growth of such genuine and voluntary co-operation.

Book production in proper hands, is a nation building activity. Proper engineering of Book Production can produce spectacular results in the life of a people—particularly when they are labouring to outgrow their incapacities and other shortcomings compelled by a historical necessity of universal circumstances.

In a National planning of any country we see primary attention is being given to the Productivity of Food, clothing, consumer goods, heavy and light industries.

While the physical needs of a people are being taken seriously, the psychological and intellectual hunger of the people is not being assigned its due importance.

To the national planners it is an intangible factor, and a material productivity of a product like a book, and its complex relationship between education, industry and the daily life of the people is not easily capable of interpretation, evaluation and assessment.

Let us compare the Book productivity of various countries of the world, the number of titles they produce per year, the number of copies they print, and relate it to the Population and Literacy of those countries.

Public awareness and interest in books as a tool for betterment of their life is still inchoate. The benefits of institutional education is of course recognised for its prestige, and job securing benefits it provides.

But a wider use of books in the daily life of the people is yet to be created. The aborigines of

Africa do not wear clothes. Their governments do not have serious problems about reaching targets of production of clothing for their people. Similarly, when the people of a country do not make an extensive use of books in their lives, Book Production is not taken seriously. As civilization calls for more use of cloth by a people, the cultural and intellectual advancement of a country calls for the need for higher and higher targets of Book Production.

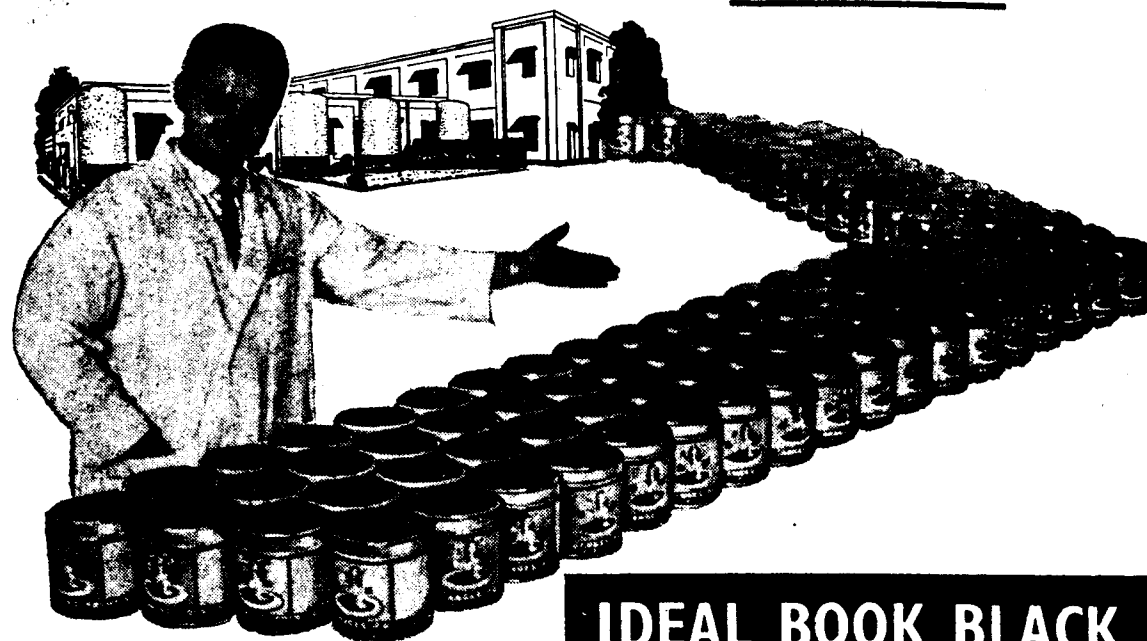
In our country, we should do our utmost to make good the deficiencies in our people by a wider spread of a broad education and encourage a scientific and technological aptitude of mind. We cannot continue to depend on other countries for the skilled personnel required by us. The industrial educational needs of our people have to be met and instructions in the mechanical details of the applied sciences should be given a broader conception in our school and college teachings. Even at the very early stages of schooling we must insist on the teaching of the basic principles of applied science and a scientific method of approach to the solution of life's problems.

The implication of the suggestion that as a national policy, we must evince a keen and wide-spread interest for the spread of applied scientific and technical knowledge for our people—will immediately mean, we must have a National planning for Book Production and a target which will symbolise a goal to strive for.

Then as a corollary, the attitude of National Planning for book productivity should take care to provide adequately the raw materials for higher targets for book production. Paper, ink, block screens, type faces, methods of working, etc., etc., have to be integrated in a total national Book Production planning. The present operating conditions and printing facilities should be adequately changed adopting new production techniques to suit the new demands. All these are prerequisites to bring about revolutionary changes in our methods of Book Production that will successfully face the challenge of the future.

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WHY NOT ASK FOR A SAMPLE



BOOK PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

By S. K. Thamba L.P.T., A.S.T.D., A.M.I. Ptg. M.

Associate Production Officer, Southern Languages Book Trust, Madras.

All the production problems discussed in this paper represent the nature and extent of the problems as they exist today in our publishing and printing trade in our country. The problems differ in complexity in other countries where advanced techniques of *Book Production* and modern equipment is used. The nature and extent of the problems is bound to increase greatly in our country as well in the future when advanced techniques of *Book Production* are introduced to meet the larger demands of mass markets for general trade books and increasing literacy. I propose, therefore, to confine myself to the technical aspects of *Book Production* which every book publisher must be most familiar.

Essentially a book is produced in the author's head, but it is the physical means of conveying that to other minds that we are concerned with in this paper. And that physical means is the form of a "Book" in which the literary and graphic forms combine to produce a result which neither could achieve alone. Then how is this produced? Who produce this? What are the problems involved in such production? How they could be overcome?

A sheaf of hand-written or typed pages otherwise called "Manuscript" arrives at the publisher's office which are to be transformed into a certain number of printed books ready to be sold to the public. This means a book has to be printed and published before it could reach the hands of the public. The combined operation of printing and publishing is what is known as *Book Production* even-though sometimes these two operations are done by a single individual or outfit. In most cases they are done separately by two different

individuals or outfits. As such the problems each one faces have to be understood separately.

Problems Facing A Publisher

Before a book is produced the publisher should consider the following questions:

1. How many copies can one sell reasonably and over what period?
2. How many pages should the book contain?
3. What should be the price?
4. What should be its format and size?
5. Does it require any illustration? If so, what type of illustrations?
6. Should the book be a hard-bound or should it be a paper back edition?

After having considered these questions, in his role as an entrepreneur, the publisher, when he works on production may find that some of his tentative decisions have to be changed in consonance with the prime consideration of giving the best possible value for the money. The wise publisher will consult his printer about his plans and costs at a very early stage. The perfect production of a book requires the collaboration and integrated co-operation of the publisher (sometime represented by his several agencies such as his editor, the author, the illustrator) with the printer.

The publisher will have to consider the following production problems in addition to that of printing.

1. Verifying and clearing copyright permission and formal agreements both for text and photographs, if any:

The publisher will have to check the manuscript from the point of view of copyrights,

whether formal agreements have been entered into with the author for remuneration, etc., whether permission has been obtained from other copyright holders for any text matter or photographs used and he should make sure that there is no infringement of copyright at any place.

2. Preparation of the manuscript and copy editing:

Manuscripts should be typewritten using only one side of the sheets of paper and there should be uniformity in the size of the sheets as well as in the number of lines to every sheet.

Then the manuscript should be edited for the press, if in regional languages, for spacing between words, etc. It should also be edited for correct grammar, consistency of spelling and punctuation and for deletion of textual contradictions. Discrepancies, if any, in the text will have to be verified with the author or with other responsible source of the book before proceeding further. If certain portions of the matter or some sentences have to be shown in different types such as bold or antique or italics, these should be marked in the manuscript with a different code and explained to the printer. If the manuscript is complicated, it is better to ask for a specimen page with different kinds of material set in different types. All this care is necessary as otherwise once the book is typeset alterations are expensive and wasteful of time as well.

3. Estimating the length of the book:

A fairly correct estimate of the length of the book is vitally necessary as otherwise the production cost estimate may be completely upset and may land the publisher in various difficulties such as the retail sales price, etc., which may be out of proportion. The paper he might have secured for this may prove to be inadequate. To avoid all such later difficulties a fairly accurate estimate of the length of the manuscript to the printed book is necessary. It is better that character count is employed for accuracy.

4. Obtaining accurate and complete information for the preliminary pages and estimating their number and also appendix pages, if any:

For a correct estimate of the length of the book, the prelims have to be taken into account and since the book is considered to be ready to be sent to the printer, complete information should be supplied. A suggested check list for this purpose is as follows:

- Correct title and sub-titles, if any, in the language of the book.
- Author's name—if the book is a translation, translator's name as well.
- Dedication if any.
- Introduction or preface and, if important, name of the persons writing the introduction.
- Artists name, if any, and if it merits inclusion.
- Copyright information and acknowledgments, if any.
- List of contents.
- Number of copies.
- Price.

5. Paper problems:

Before the book is entrusted to the printer, the publisher will have to consider the suitability of paper for the particular book on hand and procure it in advance. If necessary, he can consult the printer regarding the quality of paper. The paper will have to be selected considering the nature of the book and the printing process to be used—whether line or halftone blocks appear in the book and what weight and quality of paper should be used and the cost of paper should also be taken into account.

6. Format of the Book:

Depending on the size and quality of the paper, the format of the book has to be decided—whether quarto, octavo or others. The key factor will be the size of the page. This will be determined by the nature of the book and depend on whether it is a novel, a reference

work, a Children's book or a Text-book, and on the proposed price.

7. Estimating the production cost:

The publisher will probably ask his printer to compute how much a book of such and such a size and such and such a length would cost in an edition of so many copies. But normally any publisher with some experience will be able to roughly judge the costs of the most ordinary kinds of books although he would always do well to check these with the printer before printing actually starts. The publisher may even make his own calculations as to how much certain page sizes will cost for composition, etc. Whether he uses a regular chart or not, a publisher makes his own calculations. It would be advisable if a publisher has some sort of a check list which at the same time would serve as a cost of production estimate for any book that is produced.

The specimen form represents a method of making a production cost estimate. Following this, a publisher will make different cost estimates which will be checked with the printer before the actual printing starts. The publisher should always have an estimate in writing from his printer before the work is entrusted to the press. It may be that some of the big publishing firms use various estimate forms for arriving at the production cost estimate but normally an average publisher in our country does this roughly and approximately.

8. Production budget and its relation to retail sales price:

After having calculated the probable production cost for a particular title the publisher will have to consider it as related to the overall picture of the physical production cost (manufacturing cost), author's royalty, translation charges, if any, promotion and advertisement, trade discounts, overheads, etc. Only then he would be able to fix a reasonable retail sales price for the book which would be different for text-books from general trade books. Usually the production cost (manu-

turing cost) would vary from 25% to 30% of the retail sales price for general trade books. For text-books the cost of production may go even up to 40 to 45% but the retail sales price is governed by other factors such as the standard for which it is intended and the competition in the market. The publisher will have to figure out his production budget in relation to the retail sales price he may fix.

9. Choosing a printer:

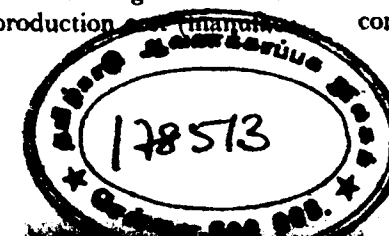
Choosing a printer for a book is sometimes a real problem. The printer should have suitable equipment for the particular book on hand. The printer should be familiar with the book printing. A job printer may do well with advertising matter, posters, visiting cards and the like and may not have the best facilities for Book work as much as the specialist in Book work might be equipped for this type of work. The reputation of the printer for keeping time schedule, for completing work at the promised date should also be considered.

After all these considerations, the book would have been entrusted to the printer. The printer has some production problems.

It may be noted at this juncture that the problems which a publisher has to consider and which have been detailed above are considered by a single individual if he happens to be the sole proprietor as well as the production man. He may not consider these in such a systematic manner. Nevertheless, they have to be considered and tackled at sometime or other. In the case of large publishing firms there is generally a qualified production Manager to consider these various questions in a systematic manner. Because of the complexities of the problems of production for a publisher, big publishing firms have separate production personnel to handle these problems, even though they may not do their own printing.

Problems Confronting the Printer

The problems which a printer has to consider in *Book Production* are more technical and they concern mostly the designing of a book.



The designing of a book is not always easy as the designer has to bear in mind the theme and thought of the author. This raises the question of "Who is a designer and what are his qualifications?" In our country in many of the printing and publishing houses we do not have as yet designers as such. But we do have, in a majority of the well established printing presses all over the country, a layout department which definitely deals with the planning of the book. So this layout man deals too with the designing of the book. This designer need not necessarily be an artist, but on the other hand, he should be one who is fairly conversant with various kinds of type faces and their arrangements and with the technicalities of the printing processes. He should possess the ability to visualise every stage involved in the production of a book. Whether it is a small printing house or a large one all these functions have to be done by some one or other. In the smaller establishment it may be the owner himself who bears this burden and so his work goes unnoticed whereas with large establishment a special department for layout work makes its presence conspicuous.

The following details have to be attended to in designing a printed page:

1. The total size in its relation to the size of paper. The margin will vary in the case of cheap and deluxe editions of books and also with the category. As a rule for deluxe editions the bottom margin will be the largest. Special case must be taken to see that margins do not vary when the sheet has to be folded several times, especially if the paper is thick.
2. The length of the line and the number of lines is the next important factor. This can be finally decided only in relation to the type used. Again, whether the types are Roman or otherwise also has to be considered. If the type is small, lines have to be

leaded out properly. No leading is necessary in the case of faces with long ascenders and descenders. In leading, special case has to be taken to see that uniformity is maintained between lines and paragraphs.

3. Special page alignment is necessary for poetry, drama, etc. In drama various types have to be used to such trying extent to bring harmony among set problems to the printer.
4. The location of the folio line or of running heads or of chapter headings, needs special care.
5. The sinkage of the chapters is possibly decided in relation to the total page. The use of ornamental headbands and initial letters needs special attention.
6. Footnotes, if any, have to be printed in type two points smaller than the body of the text type.
7. The quantity of ink that goes into a page must keep a certain relation with the texture of the paper. Again, in case there are black and white illustrations going into the body of the text, the type and the illustrations must be balanced in weight.

In all these cases, it would be wise to prepare a few sample pages before taking the final decision.

In case the publisher does not give special instructions, it is advisable to follow the style of the house.

The fundamental principle governing the designing of a book page is "*Most content consistent with clarity and beauty*". The ideal for publishers should be "*The most book for the price*". This will essentially mean that more matter has to go into the page. The type has to be selected or designed to prevent consequent overcrowding.

The designer has to treat each type of book separately and these may be classified as Children's books, General trade books, School and College text-books, Scientific and Technical books and Reference books, etc. Each type needs a different treatment and design.

The designer should visualise the book as a whole as well as its different parts like the prelims, the text and the appendix, before he gets down to the actual job of designing. The prelims contain the bastard title, list of other works by the same author or books in the same series, frontispiece, title page, imprint, dedication, preface or foreword, contents, list of illustrations, etc. All these may not be present in a book, but the order given is normally maintained. The text proper consists of chapter titles, the running heads and the folio lines. The appendix, if any, may contain the bibliography, notes, supplementary matter, index, colophon and advertisements. There are no hard and fast rules for the designing of the appendix. But it should be in conformity with the design for the rest of the book. And the choice of type size and face should be in proper relation to the text.

The designer will be confronted with many problems while designing the title page. Much depends on the title itself. But by a judicious selection of type faces for the component parts of the title page, such as title, name and designation of the author, publisher's name and address, the designer can produce a harmonious, well balanced, attractive title page which could be carried to the book cover also.

When the designer is faced with certain difficulties such as non-availability of a suitable type face for the design of the title page, he resorts to hand-lettering. The title and other parts should in such cases strictly conform to the theme of the book.

The style of the contents page, illustrations, etc., should be designed in keeping with the rest of the book. It is here that a correct understanding and visualising plays an

important part in relation to the chapter sinkage, etc. The appendix part of the book should be dealt with similarly. The designing of the index is an important feature and should be such that the reader is able to pick up references easily.

The designer thus prepares a dummy to the exact size and decides the style of binding to be adopted. The choice of materials for the book cover should be made with some care. Here the criterion should be attractiveness and appeal for greater attention of the prospective buyer who sees the book in the windows of shelves of the bookshops.

Publisher-Printer Co-ordination

It is at this stage, after all the above problems have been considered and the printer has properly designed the book with the help of his layout department, that great co-operation and understanding is necessary between the printer and publisher so that the book may be produced perfectly and according to the plan. The most important field where co-operation is necessary is in proof correction.

Galley Proofs

When the galley proofs arrive from the printer they should have been read by him with the original and so should be free of typographical errors. The publisher should check over the galleys to make sure that all the matter is there and in order. If the author is available, it is desirable to ask him to read proofs of his book; but he should be cautioned about making alterations in the text at this stage as these would be extremely expensive. It is here that the author should co-operate with the publisher and printer.

Before returning the galley proofs the number of pages which the book will make should be carefully recalculated and checked with the original estimate so that if necessary special instructions for page make-up either for adding or deleting lines on each page may be given to the printer. When returning the galleys instructions should be given regarding

the placing of the blocks, should the book contains any illustrations.

Page Proof

When the page proofs arrive from the printer, it is customary to check only the lines which were marked for correction in the galleys. If the galleys had a great number of corrections it may be necessary to read all the proofs again against the galleys. No changes should be made in the page proof unless really necessary as this involves lot of labour and inconvenience to the press. If the text contains illustrations, their position and captions should be checked. Page proofs should be passed when they are ready for press and initialled by a person approving them.

Once the corrections in the page proofs are carried out, the corrected pages are locked up in the chases and are ready for striking or machining. The quality of striking depends on the skill and experience of the printer and his equipment. If the publisher knows what he wants then he can look for a printer who can give that (and perhaps help him to improve his work by insisting on certain standards).

It is important to give the printer adequate time for printing a job and proper remuneration for careful make-ready and good ink. Climatic conditions, temperature changes with accompanying variations of humidity in paper may bring about certain problems in drying and these may be unavoidable but rushing due to bad planning and scheduling should be avoided. Naturally the printer cannot be expected to do good work when rushed. The greater the publisher's technical information regarding *Book Production* the greater will be the co-operation between the printer and publisher.

Binding

Binding is what makes a book something more than a collection of sheets. One has to see whether the sewing is secure and yet permits the book to open easily, whether the folding and trimming have been done properly and accurately so that the margins are uniform,

whether the end papers and cover papers have been pasted uniformly and neatly.

The nature of binding would have been decided upon when production cost estimate was made and the designer planned the book.

The Cover Design

The cover design is a special problem in itself. It is not only a production problem but something else and also more. And hence this is treated separately.

The cover means the printed wrapper covering the book. It may be a thick cover paper, art card or a dust jacket. Because of its great importance in the successful marketing of the book, the appearance of the cover should be carefully planned. It should attract attention of the passersby when displayed in a bookshop window, should convey visually, by word or by design, the feeling and character of a book which may run into several hundred pages sometimes. If this could be done successfully, then it can be said that a good book has been produced in the technical sense of the term or in the language of films "*A Box Office Hit*".

For a success of this type, great deal of team work is necessary among the various persons—the artist, the author, the publisher, the block maker and the printer.

Once the publisher has decided what type of cover is called for by a particular book, whether typographical or pictorial, factual or imaginative, he will select his artist and send to him the manuscript with specific instructions as to the number of colours to be used, the type of incident to be illustrated and the size of the wrapper. The artist will read the script, not only identifying himself with its spirit but drawing from it the essential quality of the author's creation, and then consider how best he can interpret it in his own medium taking into account the publisher's specific instructions, if any, so that the final product will truly represent the feeling and character of the book and its contents.

The most economical and by no means the least effective is the typographical cover. Printers will already have in their possession a variety of type faces, as well as decorative borders. A skilful use of these which can often be enhanced at a small additional expense with a single colour line block can be most expressive of the character of the book achieving effects as well which will be equally attractive at a distance through the shop window. Moreover a typographical cover has the additional advantage that it can be easily altered or improved when still in the proof stage.

The alternative to the typographical design is of course the illustrated cover and if a decision is made that this is the most appropriate style, the artist has to make up his mind whether the design is to be coloured or black and white, imaginative or illustrative of an incident or character in the book. He also should have a knowledge of the process of reproduction. This work has to be done in close co-operation with the printer—the artist must completely identify himself with the printer, finding out by experiment and failure.

The artist will keep before him, while reading the text, these various choices before him and contemplate on his cover design, for, it is probable that he will submit several alternative rough designs from which the publisher or on occasions even the author will make his final selections.

The artist must bear in mind that his work is to be reproduced and that this reproduced finished work of art will be not the drawings but a printed cover. Usually he will work in size $1\frac{1}{2}$ times larger than the final size so that any irregularities in the drawing are minimised when reduced. He should be able to do colour separations and provide the plate maker a copy for all colours in the design. If the cover is not of a routine nature the block maker should be called in for consultation.

The two most common methods of reproduction of art work are by relief engravings—

halftone or line blocks printed by letterpress and by litho offset process. The method to be used for a particular cover depends on the number to be printed, the cover stock and the nature of the design. It is advisable to consult the printer as to method and costs at the time when art work is commissioned in order to avert disappointments later on. When the artist delivers his finished drawings, they should be checked as to whether they will reduce to proper size and whether they will reproduce successfully in the number of colours on the paper and by the process intended. It is always advisable to send to the artist a dummy bound copy of the book for his aid in positioning the design on the spine and on the front and back covers.

Children's Books

The production of Children's books present special problems, though they are no different from other books in the process by which they are printed. They present the problems of illustrations in their greatest complexity. Because of the close inter-weaving of meaning and presentation of meaning, an even greater amount of forethought on the part of the publisher is necessary in making a book for children than in making a book for adults. Also more co-operation and team work of the author, artist and the printer, who must be consulted at all stages from the very beginning, is absolutely necessary.

The book should be made suitable to the child. The book for a child should be durable, the paper substantial, the binding strong enough to be equal to the strain of repeated handlings. The book should open out flat and stay open. There should be no pre-conceived notions about size. Small children like little books which fit in their hands and big ones to put on the floor. It may be noted that the older the child becomes the more he prefers his books to approximate the standard sizes of adult books. A book for a child should be legible, the type large and clean. Words ought not be crowded on to a page. There

should be short paragraphs, leading between lines, margins which give enough thumb room at the sides and which are deep enough at the bottom so that the type matter does not seem to be slipping off the page. At every point in the making of the book for a child the one question which everyone concerned with the production of the book should ask is "whether this part would contribute to the enjoyment and learning of the child?"

There would be special problems for the children's books for different age groups and each one has to be tackled when it crops up.

Conclusion

I would have very much desired to make recommendatory suggestions to this Seminar that would promote measures to increase the level of Book Productivity in India.

I strongly believe that only by increasing the overall rate of book productivity in our country can there be economic stability for Book Industry in India. Only then can a higher standard of book production can be achieved.

But this presupposes that there is a market that is capable of absorbing a larger volume of book productivity. Today's book market is very small and the print order ranges from thousand to a maximum of five thousand only.

It is a major national problem to promote reading habits, create a demand for books and make the people economically well off as to afford for books as a necessity in their life. Only a greater volume of output of books in our country can bring down the unit price of each book. Let me assure you when a large enough market is discovered we would be ready with our production techniques for lowering the cost and improve the quality of production.

So far I have been dealing with the general techniques of the production of books, but I desire to place before you a new real problems on book production with which a majority of us

are not familiar. Today, it is on account of these that the standards of the books are greatly affected which in turn is responsible for the Indian book manufacturers' product being less in demand. The very fact that imported books are more in demand not only in general fields but also particularly in the children's fields shows that there is a latent demand for books which Indian publishers are unable to meet. The criticism that the public, lacking in purchasing power, cannot afford to buy books is not tenable when we find that a large number of high priced books from abroad are actually purchased and consumed by the public today. Let us face the fact that Indian product is not good enough to draw a clientele to it.

Some may aver that a demand for books in English is coloured by prestige and a general favouritism for a book couched in a world-wide language, but that alone does not explain. The poor physical status of a book creates an unfavourable impression in the mind of the reader when he handles it for the first time in a stall and this prejudice gets deeply rooted. It will be difficult to get it erased later.

The defects in the production of books in India are to be studied so as to create a demand for them.

First and foremost is the selection of manuscripts. How many publishers in India can say with confidence that they select the manuscripts with all judicious care that it demands? As often as not a manuscript is accepted because an official somewhere has to be obliged. A manuscript is accepted because it may get a chance of being prescribed as a text book. A manuscript is accepted because a few more copies of several other books may be sold. In short, a manuscript is often accepted for ulterior motives and not for its own intrinsic merits. How many publishers in India have a regular editorial department which carefully reads the manuscripts and reports objectively upon them so far as its literary and saleable qualities are concerned? I have known publishers reject-

ing outright a manuscript just because the type of the manuscript is not the type that they think, can be sold. Let me raise a question, how can, publisher know beforehand that a book on astrology for example will sell just because it is the book on astrology. Our Indian publishers now get the habit of assuming the role of a seer who can with his eyes closed and his mind projected into the future see the possibilities of the success of the book or its failure. If the conscientious publishing houses were to undertake to publish only books which have merit and which in turn can cater to the tastes of the readers, the public will by and by develop confidence for such publications and will eagerly look forward to their arrivals. The confidence that the British public has in the products of Victor Gollancz or Heinemann or Penguin books is not a sentimental attachment to a trade mark, but a confidence created by a diligent and honest work done by the editorial department of these publishing houses. Why should we not emulate the example of these famous publishers?

Coming next to the question of book designing it is a concept unknown until recently in the Indian publishing field. What is book designing after all? Is it a job that an editor can easily fulfil? Is it the printer who does the work, or is it the artist who lays down the blueprint of the book as it will appear after the book is printed? In the West it is a specialised job requiring the services of an expert. The designer has to assess the quality of the manuscript in relationship to the budget set apart for the book and consult his printer about the type face for the subject in hand. There are quite a large number of founts available from which he can choose the one that suits the subject matter of the book.

In our country, the deplorable lack of a variety in type founts in our languages is a big handicap for varying the types for various kinds of books. A monotonous use of the same type of founts cannot claim to have the aesthetic charm which is very necessary for the books. Unless our

printers and publishers jointly venture to put forward a project for the designing of new type faces in languages, we shall perhaps continue to use the existing founts in the country with the consequent lack of variety in the final products of the publisher. Perhaps this is a project which requires high investment. The Government of India or the State Governments are to be requested to step in and finance the project which is vital in printing and publishing trades. But whatever has to be done must be done as early as possible and a step has to be taken forward and soon.

The placement of illustrations along with the text particularly in the children's books is a problem and a majority of publishers in India have not devoted their attention to study it. The text is leaded heavily on a few pages or packed light on others. The illustrations are crowded in some pages and completely omitted in certain other pages. In short there is no proper planning of fitting the copy and the text in a pleasing manner in the production of books. In order that we may have a rational way of doing this, the illustrator and the designer of the book should work together and co-ordinate every step in the production even before the manuscript is actually ready for the press.

Coming to binding, as you all know, we in India are not having machine binding available to every publisher. Even so, a good quality binding is necessary for every book just as perfect screws, nuts and bolts are necessary for a good machine. As often as not the publisher goes in for cheap binding which results in weaker binding. Whereas a book from abroad can withstand say at least 50 to 100 readings, Indian books are known to fall apart even in a single reading. The tendencies of the publisher to save on the binding cost shows how it counteracts in reducing the demand for his products.

Coming lastly to the question of book jackets, which ought to combine functional and decorative purposes. The jacket must be of a strong quality of paper able to withstand constant

handling. It must have an attractive design which may bring the reader to the book. Both these functions it must do with faithfulness if it has to fulfil its role. It is advisable to run extra copies of jackets for replacement in cases where the jackets are torn or soiled in shops. With this simple device, sales are assured even at a much later date or else the actual books may look shop-soiled.

Thus with our technically improved products in our hands and with an ever widening demand for books as a result of economic prosperity - which we all hope will usher in as a result of our Five Year Plans - we should look forward to the future prosperity of our book trade.



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INTRODUCTION TO

The General Book Publishing Industry in India

By

M. SANKARANARAYANAN

It has almost become a common feature that the visit of our Prime Minister to any educational institution is being celebrated with the distribution of books to all the school children. The days of sweets and toys have gone, giving place for books.

It is not without a meaning. It is born only out of deep realization of the role books play in shaping the life of a nation. Being a writer himself, books have begun to exercise a tremendous attraction on our Panditji. His colleagues who are contributing to the country's planning deliberations are fascinated at the prospect of the role of books in helping to achieve our national aspirations.

But they are simultaneously agitated over the problem of providing the millions of our countrymen with proper reading materials. A fraction of the English educated public in our country is of course reading imported books and magazines. But how about the vast millions who also would read and do want anxiously to read, if only they could get the books they want in their own regional languages?

The Government on their part have been for sometime exhorting authors towards the need for new writing, designed for our countrymen, where they would have something to say especially to the youth and say it with originality, imagination and strength.

We as publishers, besides being inspired to take up the national cause in a spirit of service to the country, should also have certain basic faiths. The importance of books and the significance of reading should be recognised and assigned their proper place in the life of individuals as well as that of nations. The source of knowledge lies only in the printed matter and more particularly in books which are but the physical manifestation of mature human thought expressed and recorded scientifically and rationally. It is the book and its reading that has made a unique contribution to the efforts of man-kind to attain wisdom, to appreciate beauty, to understand dignity and above all make life useful. It is therefore imperative that good books in sufficient quantities be made available and accessible to all people.

Books of Indian origin but in English language can have a world market. Our standards of book production should then considerably improve. Let us compare the books we have at present with those imported from foreign countries. Let us examine them from two angles: (1) Typography and Technical features and (2) Format and general design. Let us also compare the illustrations in particular which are an outstanding feature of any book—the high level of photography, engraving and printing.

The usefulness of this Seminar will not be served if we, as publishers, catalogue our grievances against the Government and ask for redress; or, we make it only a business session exploring possibilities of finding ways and means of making greater profit. It is not as though the Government is not aware of our difficulties. They are equally conscious that there is an acute shortage of paper in the market with consequent high price and black-marketing. Paper is an essential raw material for book production. To regulate the available supplies from the mills they have instituted a procedure based on 1957 purchases. In its working it is not effective as there is abuse of fictitious labels without reference to actual quality, thereby charging higher rates. Publishers are holding up production. Or they are purchasing in the black market with the enormous risk to their reputation and integrity. The prevailing abnormal state will not be permitted to continue long by the Government. They will either relax the present restrictions on import of paper or insist on regulating supplies more rationally to bonafide customers.

No problem is really insurmountable. Human progress can neither be arrested nor can it stand impeded for ever. The patriotic Indian publisher should feel that he is called upon to feed the growing intellect of the millions of the rising generation in the new India of tomorrow. Besides being an instrument for the infusion of important knowledge, he is in fact expected to give history a forward thrust and a sense of direction.

Many think it is easy to run the Government of a country, edit a newspaper or become a book publisher. Some of us atleast know the other side of the coin. Publishing in general is a risky

and speculative business. The grave difficulties we are facing, particularly in India, like mounting labour costs and the price of raw materials rocketing can be solved only by a co-operative effort, taking the Government as our partners in a National adventure. If we do not take up that revolutionary attitude of patriotism our economic problems will throw us in the orbit of a vicious circle which will inevitably result in putting up the prices of books to meet costs and profit and in that process we will be worried about the possibility of pricing the books out of the market.

Let us therefore rise above our present curbing limitations. As education is no longer considered a luxury, but a necessity to every man and woman, text-book publishing has to meet the challenge of the steady increase of students in new and established grade schools, high schools, private schools, pre-university and art colleges, universities, institutes of technology and polytechnics.

Let us also reckon with another vital movement in the history of India—the decision on the part of the Provincial Governments to establish thousands of libraries in all States, open to all, and supported by public funds. This movement is bound to take gigantic shapes. Money is being collected by way of cess and tax from the citizen. We are now faced with the problem of meeting their demands for books to suit rural taste.

The most significant movement of all is the imperative need to usher in an era of low cost, high quality, educative books for the masses. The intellectual emancipation of our people being

indispensable for the unity of the world, the spread of good books in large numbers has become a cultural, political and economic necessity.

Diligent publishing has much to contribute towards nation building. There is an acute shortage of good indigenous writing. Manuscript procurement and evaluation is becoming more and more a difficult job. The really successful books in the market are those that have been well conceived by the publishers and commissioned from an author whom he considers suitable. There must be a mechanism for pooling creative ideas in publishing. Mediocre books cannot serve our purpose. Books that are unrealistic, sensational, pointless, inaccurate and poorly written must be thoroughly eschewed.

If, however, we feel our stature to be puny and not equal to the mighty task ahead of us and we are obsessed with our limitations of our economics, or the prevailing difficulties and the impediments on the way, we cannot be the leaders of the new intellectual revolution the country very badly needs.

If we, as publishers, do not aspire for lofty ideals and if our purposes are frail and the value we attach to national progress is small, if our concern for the next generation is uninspiring, let us bow low before the difficulty, stay as we are and accept the consequences of the drift.

Let it not be said of us by posterity that we were called upon to take up a national cause and we were found wanting. Let us rise equal to the occasion.

THE GENERAL BOOK PUBLISHING INDUSTRY IN INDIA

By

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Publishing activity in India is of various different types. One can differentiate between the publishing of text-books which are prescribed in schools, colleges and other educational institutions and the publishing of general books which are of interest to the larger reading public. Books are published in India in more than a dozen languages. However the main languages in the country are English and Hindi and probably the largest number of books are published in these two languages. Although Hindi is expected to become the official language of the country after a few years English continues to dominate as the common language of the most literate in the country. This paper will outline a few of the characteristics and problems of publishing general books in the English language in India.

The Historical Background

The publishing of general books in English on a commercial and well-organised scale can be said to have started in India during the second world war (1939-1945). During the first four decades of the twentieth century a number of general books in English were printed and published in India. But these books were merely titles put out occasionally by a few booksellers-cum-publishers, some learned societies and institutions, some missions and by private individuals. Almost the entire Indian market was saturated with books in English published by British publishers and exported by them to India. Even well-known Indian authors like Mr. Rabindranath Tagore, Pandit Nehru and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had their books published in those days by British publishers.

The reasons which prevented the growth of the publishing industry for issuing general

books in the English language in India up to 1939 were many. The British publishing industry was already highly developed by the time the English language became popular in India and it was well equipped to export its books to India. It enjoyed the advantage of having a large well-developed market for its books in Great Britain which enabled it to print large editions of various titles thus lowering costs and prices per copy to levels which made it impossible for a new publisher in India having a narrow and limited home market to compete with the British publishers. The British publishing industry enjoyed having a completely free and open market for its products in India. In order to strengthen their hold on the Indian market many British publishers issued the so-called "colonial" editions which were sold in India at retail prices about 33½% lower than the retail prices of the same titles in Great Britain. A few of the larger British publishers established branches in India and set up their own distribution organisation to push the sales of their books in the country. These various factors combined with the lack of a sufficient number of good Indian authors, the lack of good printing and production facilities in India, the lack of any special encouragement from the British Government which ruled India then and the unfortunate preference of many Indians in those days for imported products including books prevented the rise of a well-organised commercial publishing industry for issuing general books in the English language in India upto 1939.

World War II gave an opportunity to Indian firms to enter the publishing field of general books in the English language in India. During the war there was an acute

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shortage of books imported from Britain because the publishing industry in the U.K. faced various difficulties which prevented it from producing sufficient quantities of books. On the other hand the demand for general books in English increased sharply in India because of the presence in the country of a large number of English-speaking foreign troops. It was under these abnormal conditions of a shortage in the supply of imported books in relation to the demand that the publishing of general books in English started in India after 1939. My own company was the pioneer amongst Indian firms in publishing general books in English in those days and we put out a large number of "staple", fast-selling titles during the war years. A number of firms entered the industry and many of them put on the market trashy titles which sold only because of the shortage conditions. The end of the war witnessed a severe shake-up in the publishing industry in India. The British publishers resumed their normal operations and began to flood the Indian markets with their books. American publishers entered the Indian market on an organised basis for the first time. Under these conditions most of the "mushroom" Indian publishing firms which had sprung up during the war and had issued largely worthless titles collapsed. Their books were sold after 1946 at remainder prices often below 5% of their original retail price levels. My own company and a few other smaller firms which had used the opportunity given by World War II to build up a sound publishing list continued to progress even in the post-war era but had to face fierce international competition within the Indian market.

Immediately after the war the future for publishing of general books in English appeared to be uncertain in India. The advent of independence raised serious doubts about the continuance of the English language as a medium of instruction and a popular language in India. But those doubts and fears of the immediate post-independence years have been proved false. The past ten years have witnessed a substantial increase in the total sales of general books in English within the country. The rapid economic development of the country has created many new demands for special types of books. The rise in the purchasing power of the people has created a much larger immediate and potential market for general

books in English than ever existed within the country in the years past. The establishment of new educational institutions, public libraries, research organisations and other specialised public and private bodies has created an institutional or library demand for books which offers fair support to the publishing industry. The Government has also encouraged the production and sale of books within the country. These conditions have given a substantial fillip to book publishing in India in the post-independence years. The book publishing industry in India can now look forward to the future with far more confidence than ever before.

Some special aspects of the publishing of general books in the English language in India can now be discussed.

The Choice of Titles

The problems of the supply side of the book publishing industry in India can first be outlined. The most important ingredient for success in publishing is the proper selection of manuscripts to be printed and published. In India the publishing industry has issued a great variety of titles on different topics. During World War II Indian publishers issued a substantial number of good, steady-selling titles which had permanent value and many of which have been reprinted often in the post-war era. But the larger proportion of titles issued in those years was in the field of cheap, trashy current fiction which was sold to the foreign troops in the country. It is small wonder then that the end of the war forced many publishing firms in India to remainder stocks of such titles and in the process resulted in the liquidation and bankruptcy of many such publishing firms. The post-independence years witnessed the free flow of British and American books into India which created extremely competitive conditions for the Indian publishing industry in its own home market. Nevertheless since 1947 a few Indian publishing houses have issued a steady flow of popular general titles in the English language which has successfully withstood the competition of British and American titles in the same fields. One or two of the larger Indian publishing firms have entered successfully the specialised field of publishing lavishly illustrated and beautifully produced art books. A number of good technical titles have also been issued in India during the past ten

years. Books of specialised interest like titles on particular aspects of subjects like economics, political science, sociology and other academic and research fields have been published in increasing numbers in India during the past few years.

An interesting recent development is the increasing number of special arrangements entered into between foreign and Indian publishers for issuing cheap editions printed and published in India for sale in the Asian countries of various foreign titles. These so called "Asian" editions are issued at prices which are between 40% and 60% below the prices of the original editions of the same titles. At these lower prices these editions often command sales many times the figures of sales of the original higher-priced foreign editions of the same titles in the Indian and Asian markets. Such arrangements offer substantial profit potential for the foreign publishers as well as for the Indian publishers who enter into them. In the past American publishers had shown greater willingness to allow their titles to be reprinted in cheaper editions by Indian publishers for sale in the Asian markets as compared with the members of the British publishing industry. During the years 1939-1945 my own company put on the market in India cheaper editions of many of the best-selling American titles and to this day we have the most cordial relations with American publishers most of whom very willingly allow us to reprint their titles here. The British publishers were more reticent about entering into such arrangements with Indian publishers. To a limited extent this can be attributed to the traditional conservatism of the British publishing industry. Also, the British publishers were well established in the Indian and Asian markets prior to 1946 unlike their American counterparts so that the issue of cheap edition of their titles did involve the British publishers in some measure of immediate short-run sacrifice in respect of the sales of the original editions of the same titles in the Indian and Asian markets—and a similar sacrifice in immediate sales did not exist to any important extent for the American publishers as they were selling very few of their titles and that too in very small quantities in these markets up to the end of the World War II. An important factor which in the past made some British and even American publishers reluctant to sell the

reprint rights of their books to the Indian publishers was the most unfortunate fact that they had had very bad and nasty experiences in respect of such arrangements because they had imprudently entered into such arrangements with small, unknown and dishonest Indian publishing firms which had swindled them out of their legitimate dues and payments on account of the royalties and other amounts in respect of the reprint rights. However during the past three years a number of leading British publishers and also many American publishers have realised the long-term profitability of entering into arrangements with well-known Indian publishers for reprinting their titles in cheaper Asian editions. The import licensing and quotas preventing the free imports of books into India and into some of the other Asian countries from Europe and America has to some extent acted as a strong inducement to foreign publishers to allow their titles to be reprinted in India in cheaper editions for the Asian markets. The future years should see a very substantial increase in this type of publishing activity which if properly, efficiently and honestly organised will rebound to the mutual profit of the foreign publishers and the Indian publishers participating in it.

The Problems of Book Printing, Binding and Production

India had a printing industry even before the dawn of the twentieth century. But upto 1947 the standard of printing of most presses was not good and the better presses often charged very high rates for book production. After 1947 the printing industry in India modernised and expanded very rapidly. During the past ten years Indian presses have been printing books the standard of printing of which is often comparable with the best in the world. Today the Indian printing industry is deficient only in few specialised areas like photogravure printing and certain types of high-quality colour printing.

A great problem in book publishing during World War II and again during the past four years has been the acute shortage of paper. The country produces internally excellent qualities of printing paper. Today only specialised types of art paper of very high quality are not produced in India and have to be imported. Unfortunately all

types of printing paper and also imported paper have been in very short supply during the past four years and their open market prices have risen to unconscionably high levels. Thus the publishing industry in general faces an acute shortage of its main raw material—paper. Only a few of the largest publishing firms, especially those concentrating largely on the production of text-books and not on general books, have direct contacts with the paper mills in India. They get their paper requirements specially manufactured to their specifications and get their supplies of paper at the mill rates or prices which are often far below the open market prices. Such publishing firms enjoy a substantial cost and price advantage over their smaller and newer rivals. The Government of India is actively encouraging the expansion of the paper industry and it is to be hoped that the shortage of paper for printing books will ease considerably after another year or so.

Binding facilities provide another bottleneck for the book publishing industry in India. There is an unfortunate lack of automatic binding machinery for book binding in India. Some of the book binding processes continue to be done by hand. This makes book binding costly and slow. It retards the growth of the book publishing industry at a more rapid rate. It is to be hoped that proper machine-binding facilities for book production will be set up soon in India.

Relations of Publishers with Authors

The relations between the well-known and reputable book publishers in India and their authors are most friendly and cordial. Publishers offer their authors the choice between accepting a lump sum for the copyright of their manuscripts or accepting a royalty calculated on the retail price of the copies actually sold of the particular book. The outright sale of copyright for a lump sum is used for very few specialised publications which have little commercial or profit potential but are issued for prestige considerations or in those few cases where the authors insist upon such an arrangement. On most titles the authors get royalties. The average or standard rate of royalties for reasonably profitable titles in India is probably around ten percent of the retail price of all copies sold of the particular title.

Some of the smaller publishing firms in India use the so-called profit-sharing arrangement with their authors who are made to pay initially for the production costs of their books. Such arrangements are often unsatisfactory for the authors as most titles issued under such terms fail to sell thus involving their authors in sizeable losses.

The Nature of Composition of Demand

The total demand for general books in India can be divided into two broad classifications : first, the institutional demand and second, the demand of individual book-buyers.

Institutional demand relates to books purchased by Universities, colleges, polytechnics, research organisations, public and private libraries, schools and other educational bodies and government departments. Before 1947 the institutional demand for books in India was very small. Indeed this was one of the major handicaps which Indian publishers faced in the past which put them at a disadvantage with their foreign rivals. In the U.K., U.S.A. and in European countries the institutional demand for books is, and has been over the past many years so substantial that publishers in those countries are more or less assured of recovering a very large part of their production costs immediately on publication of a title through its sales in this particular segment of the market. Upto 1947 the institutional demand in India for many good titles was limited often to a few dozen copies ! However in the post-independence era the institutional demand for general books has risen quite sharply on account of the rapid expansion of educational institutions, the establishment of many new institutions, the rise and growth of the public library movement throughout the country and the increased book-purchasing by government departments. The Government of India and the various state Governments undoubtedly deserve the thanks and gratitude of the book publishing industry for having expanded substantially the institutional demand for books in the post-independence years.

Second, there is the demand for books from individuals in the country. This constitutes the larger proportion of the total demand for general books in India today and especially for the general books of the more popular type. The demand for books

from individuals is growing rapidly in the country with the rise in the national income, the rapid spread of literacy and the increase in the standards of living of the people.

Mention may be made of the export potential for books published in India in the English language. There is an increasing interest in books on India in the U.K., U.S.A., Europe and other parts of the world. These markets require efficient distribution organisation in order to fully exploit their potential. Most of the Indian publishers have no regular arrangements for selling their books in foreign markets. Only two or three of the largest Indian publishing firms have set up regular distribution arrangements in various foreign countries. It is hoped that the book publishing industry in India will become more export minded and will actively strive to promote the sales of its books abroad.

The Selling of Books—Creation of Demand

The description of the process of selling books in the country can be given in two parts: the creation of demand and the channels of distribution used for selling books. Efficient book-publishers in India use the techniques of promoting the sales of their books which are used in most countries of the world. Thus they create a demand for their titles by getting them reviewed in newspapers and journals, by sending out circulars, catalogues and other publicity materials to booksellers, wholesalers, institutional and individual book-buyers, by advertising their titles through various publicity media etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in respect of most of these activities in the book-publishing industry in India today. Barring very few publishing firms which are run on western methods of organisation, most Indian publishers do not systematically promote their titles. A number of the smaller book-publishers are either ignorant of the latest techniques of promoting books and creating a demand for them or they just do not possess the organisation or the resources to execute the promotional functions properly.

The Channels of Distribution

The channels of distribution used by the book-publishing industry are many and varied. At the wholesale stage of book distribution publishers either have their own

offices carrying stocks of their titles for sale to the retail trade in the main metropolitan markets in the country or they use the services of independent wholesalers located in various parts of the country. In the latter case often there are special arrangements between particular publishers and wholesalers in respect of distribution within a market area or territory. Wholesalers who have such special arrangements for distributing the titles of particular publishers within a certain territory are known as publisher's agents.

At the retail stage there are probably more than 3,000 retail outlets of various sizes selling general books in India today. Most of these retailers are very small in size. There are a few large and efficient bookshops which do a sizeable turnover in general books in the important cities. There are also the so-called multiple or chain store organisations in the book trade in India. The most famous of these are A. H. Wheeler & Co. Prvt. Ltd. in North India and Higginbothams Prvt. Ltd. in South India. These companies operate a very large number of bookstalls and bookshops located mainly in the railway stations in various parts of the country. Their operations are organised on a large and efficient scale and they provide the Indian publishing industry with most valuable outlets for the sale of their books. The larger retailers buy direct from the publishers or their local wholesale agents. The smaller retailers draw their supplies from the local wholesalers.

Trade Discounts

Indian publishers give the retail trade discounts varying from 15% to 35% on their general books. Different publishers have different discount policies so that the general picture regarding trade discounts in India is quite chaotic (as it is in other parts of the world). Unfortunately there are many Indian publishers who give niggardly discounts to the retail trade of around 15% of the retail prices of their titles. Such publishers cannot expect the active support of the retail trade—they often try to sell most copies of their titles themselves. Considering the high costs of retailing and the huge losses incurred even by the most efficient booksellers on account of dead stocks, the minimum discount on small orders should be around 25% of the retail prices. On larger orders the retail trade

should be given higher discount going up to say 33% so as to be commensurate with the increased risks which result from carrying larger stocks. It is only at these levels of discounts and retail gross profit margins that the Indian publishing industry can expect the active co-operation and support of the retail trade. An efficient and well-organised retail trade can be built up and encouraged only by giving retailers a fair profit margin on their operations.

Wholesalers in India today get a discount of between 5% and 10% in addition to the average retail discounts allowed by publishers—this yields the wholesale trade an adequate margin of profit on their operations.

Relations between Publishers, Wholesalers and Retail Booksellers

The relations existing today between many Indian publishers, wholesalers and booksellers leave much to be desired and should be capable of very substantial improvement in the future. There is a most unfortunate tendency on the part of many publishers, wholesalers and publishers' agents to undercut the retail booksellers by offering libraries, institutions and other large book-buyers either the full trade discounts or an unduly high proportion thereof on books supplied direct to them. This makes it impossible for

the retail booksellers to secure such orders as they get in many cases the same discount from the publishers as is given by the publishers to the libraries and large purchasers of books. Such practices of many publishers, wholesalers and publishers' agents are completely unfair vis-a-vis the legitimate position and interests of the retail book trade. They take away a substantial volume of retail trade from the booksellers leaving them often with only the less profitable single copy sales. Such practices create a feeling of resentment, suspicion and hatred amongst booksellers towards the publishers. They also lead to instability in the retail trade. Many publishers in India have yet to realise that the retail book trade performs the most valuable distribution functions for their products. A strong, efficient and well developed retail trade is essential for the growth in the sales of general books in the long run. Publishers should actively support the retail book trade instead of competing with it in an unfair fashion by giving excessive discounts on large institutional orders supplied direct by them. It is not suggested here that publishers should never sell direct to the libraries and institutions. They should encourage even such business to flow through the normal retail channels as far as possible and if they do in some cases sell direct to such large purchasers of books they should allow them only reasonable discounts of say between 5% and 10% off the retail prices which concessions could also be allowed by the retail booksellers out of their trade discounts.

Conclusion

To sum up, the book publishing industry in India is still in its infancy. But it has been growing during the past few years at a phenomenal rate. During the next few decades the industry should witness a tremendous expansion in the demand for its products especially in the newly independent and fast-developing nations of Asia. It is confidently hoped that the Indian publishing industry will meet the challenge of the future by issuing a substantial volume of literature of good quality which is so essential for the progress and development of India and its neighbouring countries.



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Book Selling

By

N. SANKARANARAYANAN

The history of Bookselling in India has not been a happy one in the past and its contribution is neither encouraging nor worthy of a special mention. This is perhaps due to the difficult and complex nature of the trade calling for great knowledge and business efficiency far out of proportion to the benefits and profit derived therefrom. We have no evidence to show that it ever attracted that class of business community noted either for wealth or for intellectual acumen.

Times have changed and bookselling is a better proposition to-day as turn-over is more rapid and substantially increased. Many young and enthusiastic men are drawn towards it and it is a happy augury that our Government and other allied institutions are beginning to evince a living interest in its growth and progress. As a natural corollary, in the wake of a development, the trade is faced with new problems peculiar to itself which we shall presently discuss.

What is then the root of the problem ?

Let us start with a typical book buyer who desires to buy a book.

How does he get about the job ?

He has to find a bookshop—but unfortunately bookshops are not very many in number.

Again he has to find the particular book he wants in that shop. It is much more difficult.

It requires an enormous amount of patience, perseverance and determination on the part of the prospective book purchaser in his pursuit to secure the book he wants.

His efforts will be rewarded only if the book is in print. Books in English language of foreign origin are relatively easier to obtain atleast after some efforts. But books of Indian origin, more especially books in Indian languages, are far more difficult to locate and secure.

Booksellers in general are interested in trying to sell only what they happen to stock. They lack the initiative and enthusiasm to secure and supply what people want.

Our society is not static. Numerous changes have happened after our National Independence and the wants of the people are also changing. But the booksellers are not equipped with the proper organization to assess the changing demand of the public taste ; neither do they care to pass on to the publishers even the little information they might gather on the subject. It is a matter for regret that the publishers too, in their indifference to be guided by the frequent changes in public demands, have not taken the trouble of ascertaining otherwise the current trends.

When demand and supply are not co-ordinated, naturally there is frustration among the consumers. A national Government shall not permit such a thing to happen. If the quest for knowledge or intellectual pursuits are arrested, an inferiority complex will creep into the soul of the nation. While other nations of the world are advancing, culturally and scientifically, if we allow our nation to lapse into ignorance, the situation would become worse than abject slavery. You may starve the nation without food ; but it would rise as Germany and Japan did. You cannot starve the intellectual growth and the consciousness of a people.

What do the publishers have to say to such a situation ? They point out to the few good books published by them and we are tempted to appreciate the good get-up, fine printing and worthwhile editorial matter. We also find on the blurb of the books opinions from our President or Vice President, a few other eminent thinkers or those whose opinions count.

Yet the publisher says he is unable to sell the book fast. It is stuck in his godowns and in this circumstance how can he go on bringing out more and more books which the people would probably want ?

His is a legitimate problem. We visit several bookshops in his company. It is very hard to find a copy of his book in most of the bookshops. The booksellers have seen good reviews in the newspapers. Customers after seeing the reviews have been calling at their shops to look in for the book. It is not there. The booksellers

have not ordered it. They only offer to take special firm orders with advance from the customer. The customer is unwilling to decide till he sees the book first.

How to break this vicious circle? How to make the books become available at the bookshops? Only if books are in display can they be sold, is the simple truth in bookselling.

Situated as he is today and faced with the seriousness created by declining profits, the bookseller in India cannot be expected to take the full load of the national revolutionary movement to spread good books to the masses. The public and the Government must become alive to the new situation and think in terms of the need for a master plan to resuscitate the existing channels of book-selling in India. We must also conceive of a master plan to evolve an integrated system for mass market distribution for cheap, good quality, useful books in regional languages for our people.

Our immediate need is the creation of a machinery for the proper distribution of books. All decent good books can then have a fair chance of being made available to all the booksellers and through them can enjoy the maximum possible readership. This will serve as an eye-opener and the publishers and booksellers could then realize what a tremendous advantage it is when more and more of books reach the people.

If publishers and booksellers fail to adapt themselves and keep pace with the sweeping changes that are happening to our people in our country or at least take the trouble to understand them, the penalty for such a failure will be the complete extermination of the present species of publishers and booksellers. The Government or some national body who are alive to the disastrous implications of the failure of the publishers and booksellers will be compelled by the force of historical necessity to assume the control, direction and organization of proper distribution of books to the people. The demand for the needs of the nation will assume a greater importance than the petty economics of a few individuals, be they publishers or booksellers.

Having stated the problem how are we, to set about solving it?

Let us at the outset agree that the remedy to the malady is proper distribution efforts.

It means primarily we need to create a distribution organization on a national level. This organization should take off from the hands of the numerous publishers their overlapping efforts in reaching the books to the existing bookshops. In that process it would survey the sort of effort publishers are making at present and evolve a more efficient and economic formulae. Adequate information about the forthcoming publications would be reached to the bookshops. On the date of release physical availability of the books at the point of sale will be ensured. The counter salesmen at bookshops who are supposed to handle the terminal sales would be briefed with properly drawn out circulars, posters and streamers to make it easier for them to recommend the book to customers. Attention of the browsing customers would be drawn to the special salient features of the particular book. A device would be evolved to check that books that are supplied to bookshops are adequately displaced. Arrangements would also be made to replenish speedily sold out stock to prevent lost sales. The publicity wing of the distribution organization would select the most important effective media of mass communication like press, radio etc., and the efforts of a bookseller to promote the sale of books will be supplemented.

The prevailing state of affairs where the customer goes about hunting for a book he needs must give room for better methods of selling. It must further be clearly understood by all those engaged in this trade that distribution and bookselling is no longer a passive job but one that calls forth their active attention.

The intellectual aristocracy, which is but a small percentage of the people, alone has the means to be benefitted by the reading of imported foreign books while the vast millions of our countrymen who can read, write and think in their own regional languages are left to the tender mercies of local and regional publishers and booksellers. The production and the supply of books to these men and women has now assumed the dimensions of a national necessity. This reduces itself finally to the planned production followed by an intelligent distribution of good books in the several languages.

At the end of a survey conducted by me recently on behalf of the UNESCO to study how books get sold at present, I

realized that it was more profitable to study how to get books sold—not in small numbers at bookshops but in large quantities to the vast masses. Obviously this will mean a study of how to produce the books which the people are so badly in need of.

Each Indian publisher has problems peculiar to his own status in publishing field and the type of publishing he does.

We can almost unhesitatingly say that the majority of them are very small scale, one-man operations with very limited resources comparable only to a cottage industry.

There is a small minority of the slightly bigger units who have their own conditioning limitations and problems peculiar to the company's organization, size, location, the type of books they are publishing, present distribution pattern, and printing, binding and other book production arrangements they had already entered into. In most instances they lack the facilities normally required for efficient operations. Most of them are paying very heavily for their inadequacies partly by extra cost of operation and poor servicing to book-sellers and customers. All these factors affect the potentiality for improved sales. Most of the publishers do not reckon with the physical distribution costs and servicing. They either charge it directly to booksellers or make recoveries on them by reducing the legitimate booksellers' discounts.

We are however heartened to see some bright spots here and there. A few publishers, though small in number, are emerging into prominence with advanced methods of publishing and their production can stand shoulder to shoulder and compare favourably with any foreign publication. For example Messrs. Asia Publishing House and Messrs. D. B. Taraporewala Sons & Co., Ltd., though they are at present confining their activities to a limited intellectual and aristocratic market.

We need a cost analysis survey of the operational results of sample publishing houses and bookshops and while gathering data each individual firm must be made to evaluate its own performance. These data based on their own admission may eventually be used to formulate those facilities that would go to improve their efficiency and profits.

Many bookshops would realize what a

difference it would mean to them to overcome inventory shortage, shop-lifting etc., if they could have good accounting and additional knowledge of book retailing. The cost of stock to bookseller could be more rational if the rate of discount schedule is uniform and the average discount allowed is not a highly fluctuating variable.

The existing practice of a uniform discount for all booksellers, whether big or small, and the absence of a substantially varying quantity discount based on a graded slab system has been responsible for the anomaly of a small bookseller deriving a larger profit while a bigger shop loses on a higher operating cost. Discount being the same, the bigger units are faced with the problem of a considerably increased turn-over even to arrive at a break-even point. This is a matter worthy of a careful consideration by publishers.

The distribution organization that is admitted on all hands to be the imperative need of the hour to carry out this mass nation-wide programme is however bristling with its own difficulties and it should be remembered that its creation cannot be brought about overnight with a limited ambition to function.

As a preliminary, an attempt should be made to improve the prevailing conditions steadily and by co-operative efforts make the publishers and the booksellers come together in owning and controlling a distributive set up.

A phased programme will then have to be conceived at the initial instance, as a service-giving organization, order consolidation, parcel clearing etc. The need to raise and involve huge amounts of capital should be avoided in this first phase of the programme.

At this second phase of the operation, a chain-store organization should be conceived for areas where there are no bookshops at present or places where bookshops are not adequate. The chain-store management would necessarily call for provision for selecting important locations in different geographical areas for depositories of stock as operating centres for distribution. Setting up chain-stores in major cities may be relatively easy, but to penetrate into the interior would be very expensive and must not be attempted at all at this second phase state. Chain-store set up must be limited as

சிவமயம்
திருமண அழைப்பு இதழ்

திருவாளர் அவர்கட்கு

அன்புடையீர்,

நிகழும் விகாரிஸ்ர சித்திரைமீ 27-க்குச் சரியான
1959-ம் ஆண்டு மேமீ 10-உ ரூயிற்றுதிழமை காலு 10-45
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எனது திருமகன்
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நம்பிராஜன் திருமகன்
ஸ்ரீ வள்ளியம்மையாருக்கும்

சென்னை, சூனை, ரொட்டி கிடங்கு திருவேங்கட முதலி
தெருவு, 1-16-வது எண்ணுள்ள இல்லத்தில் நடக்கும்
திருமணத்திற்கும், அன்று மாலை நடைபெறும் திருவிதி
புறப்பாட்டிற்கும் தாங்களும் தங்கள் சுற்றமும் நட்பும்
சூழ வந்திருந்து உயரான காட்சியைக் கண்கூடாகக்
கண்டு இதம்பெற வேண்டுகின்றேன்.

இப்படிக்கு, தங்கள் அன்பன்
ஸ்ரீ சோமசுந்தரப் பெருமான்

தங்கள் வருகையை அன்புடன் எதிர்பார்க்கும் :

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சூனை, சென்னை 7

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an initial experiment to the easily accessible major cities only.

For an efficient working, the chain-shop operation under a distribution set up will have to address itself to the detailed study and thorough knowledge of :

(1) Assembling of books from different sources.

(2) Locating new publications produced on private initiative of publishers.

(3) Appraising the publishers of prevailing demand and helping them to create new productions that will have a large volume of ready and immediate sale.

(4) An intelligent approach to market research and sales planning which will include locating of new selling points in the unorganized areas and co-ordinating the existing ones.

To watch the new bookshops that have emerged in certain localities which are having good sales without any apparent effect on the sales of other booksellers in the locality.

(5) Study of area structure according to language zones

Local	Sectional	Provincial	National
In and around a city	Each district	Each language territory	Comprehending the entire States

(6) Type of goods to be handled

Durable	Non-durable	Side-lines
Books	Dailies, magazines and dated publications	Stationery and other sundry items

(7) Terms of Sale : (1) Open account, (2) Security—could one rely on the reputation and ability of the retailer as a guarantee of payment ?

How to retain title to the value of the books after they have come into the possession of the bookseller ?

Can a consignment formulae be evolved without any serious risk by which the small bookseller will be able to carry full lines without a large investment or borrowed

capital and have the privilege of returning what he does not sell ?

(8) Storage and warehousing.

(9) Transport.

(10) Organizing as an auxiliary to one of the selling points—house to house selling—peddlers, direct sales—public markets—general book stores—taking into consideration every aspect of local factors.

(11) Risks—imperfect organization of transportation or communication—inability to forecast the happenings of future events particularly in a pioneering experimental venture.

(12) Chain-bookshop operation. This would be a spectacular institutional development. A corporate chain selling essentially the same books achieves a high degree of uniformity of standards in selection of titles. Central buying, with books supplied to each store from central warehouses, centralised control over advertising—as well as top management policies have enormous practical advantages. Responsibility for the operation for each chain-bookshop will however rest with a hired manager who is never granted the degree of authority exercised by the owner-manager of independent bookshops. It is only the selling function that is done at the retail chain-bookshop.

To arrive at the minimum number of good new titles every month and the volume of turn-over necessary to make the chain-bookshop operation effective and economical from a central operational centre.

Location Factors.

Defects to be cautious about and overcome :

Personal administration.

Wage payment policy.

Cost of living index different in towns and villages—signed contract service.

Conformity to prevailing labour legislation and Shops and Establishments Acts.

Training and selling ability of the staff who will man the operations.

A chain-bookshop cannot grow unless it is basically sound, internally as well as in its relationship with other units in its economic chain.

The shop must be made to attract all age groups of men, women and children and of all income groups and its location

நீங்கள் படிக்க வேண்டியவை

மெய்யடியார்கள்

ரூ. 1/40

சென்னைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத் தத்துவப் பேராசிரியர் டாக்டர் T. M. P. மகாதேவன் எழுதியது. சம்பந்தர், நாவுக்கரசர், சுந்தரர், வாசகர், ஆழ்வார், ஆண்டாள், சங்கரர், இராமானுஜர், இராமகிருஷ்ணர், இரமணமகரிஷி ஆகியோரின் வரலாறும், அவர்கள் நமக்களித்த அழியாச் செல்வங்களாகிய அறிவுரைகளும் அடங்கிய இலக்கிய கருவூலம்! வாழத் துடிக்கும் மனித வாக்கத்துக்கு வழிகாட்டும் பொன்னேடு.

ஜனத்தொகையும் குடும்பக் கட்டுப்பாடும்

ரூ. 1/95

ஆசிரியர் டாக்டர் S. சந்திரசேகர்

தமிழாக்கம்: எம். ஏ. அப்பாஸ்

“காதலுக்கு வழிவகுத்துக் கருப்பாதை சாத்துக் கதவொன்று கண்டறிவோம் இதிலென்ன குற்றம்?”

—கவிஞர் பாரதிதாசன்.

ஆம், பல பெற்று பரிதவிக்க விடுவதைவிட அளவாகப் பெற்று ஆளாக்கிவிடுவது மேலல்லவா? இதற்கு வழி என்ன? வெற்றிகரமான கர்ப்பத் தடை எது? கர்ப்பத் தடையை இந்து சமயம், இஸ்லாம், கிறிஸ்தவம் ஆகியவை ஆதரிக்கின்றனவா? இத்தனையும் இன்னும் எத்தனையோ விஷயங்களையும் பாமர மக்களுக்கும் புரியும்படி விளக்குகிறார் இணையற்ற குடும்பக் கட்டுப்பாட்டு நிபுணர் Dr. S. சந்திரசேகர்.

காதல் வாழ்க!

ரூ. 2/40

ஆசிரியர்: டேவிட் கார்னட்

தமிழாக்கம்: எம். ஏ. அப்பாஸ்

காதலிலே தோல்வியுற்றான் காளை ஒருவன். ஆனால், அந்தத் தோல்வியைச் சுமந்து கொண்டு சோம்பிக்கிடந்தானா? இல்லை. அதை வெற்றியாக மாற்ற அவன் செய்த மகத்தான தியாகம்.....அப்பப்பா, மனித வாக்கமே மலைத்துவிட்டது!

கட்டிய மனைவி எழில் கொஞ்சம் இளம் பெண்ணாக இருந்தபோது மட்டுமல்ல. இழி குணம் படைத்த நரியாக மாறிய போதும் கூட தனது தூய காதலைத் துளியளவும் மாற்றவில்லை அந்த இலட்சியக் கணவன்!

சாகாத காதலுக்கு வாழும் இலக்கியம் சமைத்துவிட்ட இந்த அமர காதலர்களின் கதையை ஒவ்வொரு கணவனும், மனைவியும் படிக்க வேண்டும், படிப்பினை பெறவேண்டும்.

பாகிஸ்தான் கதைகள்

ரூ. 2/50

தமிழாக்கம்: எம். ஏ. அப்பாஸ்

பாகிஸ்தானின் சிறு கதைகள் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியும், மக்களின் மனோதர்மத்தையும் பிரதிபலிக்கும் முதலாவது தமிழ் நூல்! பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான கதைகளிலிருந்து தெரிந்தெடுக்கப் பட்ட முததுப்போன்ற பத்துக் கதைகள்! பிரபல முன்னணி எழுத்தாளர்களின் கதைகளே இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன.

வெளியிடுவோர்:

ஜெ மி நி பிர சு ர ம்

3/18, எல்லையம்மன் காலனி, சென்னை-6.

and set up should be such that visit to such a bookshop will not reflect any social inhibitions.

To re-evaluate the traditional forms of book retailing now—and enlighten the people in the book trade that it is too much dominated by old fashioned methods and conceptions.

In the process of working out the new distribution formulae the vital force of the new idea must be vibrant enough to change the existing systems with its impact and bookshops should transform themselves into dynamic cultural centres with a new look.

Administrative apparatus should be efficient and not cumbersome.

Statistics and study of sales per point of sale.

Gross margin per title at the end of the year after stock-taking.

Cost of distribution index to be watched.

Let us also clearly bear in our minds that the creation of such a distribution organization is unwarranted for the existing quantum of book publishing in our country and will be only justified when the national publishing programme is brought into full swing. By the same token, a large scale launching of publishing with large print orders for numerous books would be unjustified. The printed books would stay in the publisher's godowns unmoved and unsold if the distribution organization is not ready to absorb the book production output.

These pose a very ticklish problem, which is to be first—the seed or the tree. If you have the seed you can have the tree. Unless you have the tree you cannot get the seed.

Assuming for a while we have both the full scale national publishing programme as well as an efficient marketing distributing organization, even then the problem is not fully solved.

Distribution does not necessarily mean sales. The public might have ready access to displayed books. How to make them buy and read. Some may advocate vigorous campaign to focus public attention on books, adopt all publicity methods to stimulate the sale of books in general, including reading promotion campaigns in schools and colleges etc. But with all these boost, we may succeed or fail in our total attempt. The lock is there. The key is there. There is

still a missing link—a gadget that will tick and open the lock.

The secret, as indicated earlier, is to discover what people want and give it to them. Give it to them in much easier, efficient, pleasing and effective way. The product should still sell on its own merits. There will be a tremendous boost in sales if only publishers could supply the very things people need.

Some leading American publishers, who are catering to the needs of their mass market, pose us the oft-repeated question “while their publications sell in large numbers in their country, the sale in India is proportionately very small.” I have frequently heard many easily answering this question, attributing it immediately to the low purchasing power in India. While I do not refute the statement in its entirety, I feel a partial answer would be a reference to the language problem and a sympathetic appreciation of the relation that currently exists between the bookseller and the publisher will go to make the answer complete. In America, when they think of the literate mass they have to consider only one language—English; but the literate mass in India is composed of sections drawn from not less than a dozen linguistic areas each speaking its own regional language.

There are other factors too worthy of examination by experts. The American publisher has recognized the prospective reader or the consumer to be an important integral factor to reckon with in his enterprise. The reader's taste is properly assessed with the help of booksellers who alone have the greatest opportunities of contact with the consumers, and also through field survey and market research conducted elaborately to ascertain public taste and demand. Further, improved methods of publicity, the effective use of the distributing agencies and above all the employment of trained staff for retailing are a few other means handled by them with great advantage. A similar scientific and rational approach to book industry problem is our present basic need.

An experiment on these lines was conducted recently in South India and the result was amazingly spectacular. A few adventurous publishers took one or two leading booksellers into their confidence to make a preliminary market survey and assessed the requirements of the literate masses and the

publications thus brought out in the several regional languages enjoyed record sales of ten to twenty thousands in the course of a few weeks. It might interest you to know that these books sold themselves only through the existing imperfect channels. If opportunities could be created to make use of the foreign technique of publicity, distribution and selling by trained staff, the outcome could have been incredulously encouraging.

Here is evidently an experience worth trying all over India. The tripartite co-ordination of the publishers choosing his editorial content based on a market research; the printer making use of the modern technique to produce books attractive but cheap enough to suit the purse of the masses; and the bookseller thinking in terms of distribution agencies and retailselling through trained salesmen must therefore engage our immediate attention.

The problem that will naturally confront the booksellers is how many of them in India are competent for this co-operation and help



Sri N. Sankaranarayanan presenting the Paper.

to publishers. Unless bookshops have sales staff specially trained for the work, anything emanating from them either by way of advice or suggestion is not valuable and worthwhile. Here bookshops have to unhesitatingly confess and own their inadequacy of trained staff. While in all other trades great insistence is laid on trained personnel and special courses are run for their proper training as a prerequisite of employment, bookshops alone have no such provision and to that extent we suffer. The Ministry of Education, recognizing the usefulness of such a training, have now made a beginning by instituting Diploma Courses for librarians and we appeal to them to follow it up with similar diploma courses in book selling also. Publishers and booksellers association can take an initiative in this direction to conduct a training course either under their auspices or even through some private agency.

The lethargy of the bookseller in not being interested to sell anything other than what he has in stock is comparable only to the lethargy of the publisher in not caring to know what the public need but only produce what he fancies would sell and accuse the bookseller and the public of lack of appreciation and response if it does not sell out.

In our country, just at the moment it is not very difficult to assess what is most needed by the people. The juvenile and adolescent interest can be broad-based to take care of adult requirements of semi-literates and women. They form the bulwark of our populace. Any planning to publish for that market is bound to succeed—and it would warrant the setting up of the distributing machinery we conceived earlier. Our labours would be rewarded and in the process, a well-knit integrated, broad-based book industry would have emerged in our country.

DIRECTOR'S SUMMING UP OF THE SEMINAR'S PROCEEDINGS

This is the concluding phase of the Seminar. Before coming over to the Seminar, you were very much enthused at the idea. By your participation you have made very rich contributions.

What has been achieved in this Seminar must be consolidated, given a form and shape. We must take the initiative to formulate a constructive idea and give a lead so that the sponsors of this Seminar can implement the constructive suggestions we put forward now.

I have followed very closely what every one of you spoke and as a summing up of this Seminar let me on your behalf pose once again the concluding idea of the paper read before you on "Bookselling."

"The juvenile and adolescent interests of our masses can be broad-based to take care of adult requirements of the semi-literates."

Why then should we not call upon the Educational Ministry of the Government of India to come forward with a bold programme "A National Plan to integrate the use of Books for mass education." Only by giving such a concrete proposal this Seminar would have achieved something most useful.

On your behalf let me dilate on that idea which will be a fitting summing up of this Seminar.

Our nation must meet the challenge of the modern world.

We the people must understand more urgently than ever that our strength as a nation, our wealth, our welfare, our love of our country, all depend on how soon and how effectively we are able to spread education to the masses and how our population become more literate.

Books can make the greatest contribution to the re-making of our people. Books have their use from kindergarten to colleges. Books are indispensable from primary to professional schools. You cannot underestimate the role of books in to-day's society where the root of all social and economic changes lies in accelerated pace of scientific progress and technical advancement.

The challenge of the modern world compels our people to continue to progress. Our people must learn to master their environments. Our masses must develop the fullest possibilities in them as human beings. As we feed our people with good food, we must feed their minds and thoughts with good books so that they may be well disciplined in thought, enlightened in vision and nature in their appreciation of the great traditions we have inherited from the past—the great spiritual and cultural heritage of our motherland.

Properly conceived and utilised, like radio or oratory, books can prove to be most powerful instrument to inculcate courage and bold imagination in the mind and heart of our people to meet the challenge of the future.

Let us then make a massive and a wide expansive use of books directed towards the special audience of adult and neoliterates. The women of India too will make long strides of progress with the help of books. Let us then foster in our people the habit of purposive reading of good books and a more intelligent use of books in daily life. Let us not under-estimate the fact that educated man-power is a source of enormous strength and a necessity for our national progress.

We all know that the concept of mass marketing of books and all related activities to be integrated under the supervision of a single national executive body has been looming large before the minds of our national planners at the level of the Education Ministry of the Government of India.

It has involved an enormous study and research on their part and the very magnitude of the problem has been defying any immediate solution. They have collected data about adult reading, adult reading abilities, why people read, what type of information they seek while they read, how reading helps to increase their sense of security in life, how reading helps psychologically the people to derive prestige and identify themselves with those who have it, etc.

எமது புதிய வெளியீடுகள்

கல்வி	டாக்டர் மு. வரதராசன்	விலை	2 00
புலவர் கண்ணீர்			1 50
பெண்மை வாழ்க!			1 25
கை விளக்கு	ராஜாஜி		2 50
சுதந்திரமும் முன்னேற்றமும்	முதலமைச்சர் காமராஜ்		1 50
தமிழ் இலக்கிய வரலாறு	சி. பாலசுப்ரமணியம்		3 00
தொல்காப்பிய காலத்தமிழர்	புலவர் குழந்தை		5 00
யாப்பதிகாரம்			3 00
நீங்களும் தூதுவராகலாம்	சோமலே		3 00
தமிழ் நாட்டு வரலாறு	டாக்டர் மு. ஆரோக்கியசாமி		1 50
அணைகடந்த வெள்ளம்	கு. ராஜவேலு		2 50
தங்கச் சுரங்கம்			4 50
சாசனச் செய்யுள் மஞ்சரி	மயிலை சீனி வேங்கடசாமி		3 00
மறைந்துபோன தமிழ்நூல்கள்			6 00
வாச் ரிப்பேர் செய்தல்	சூசை ராஜா		5 00
டைம்பீஸ் ரிப்பேர் செய்தல்			2 00
குறிஞ்சித்திட்டு	புரட்சிக்கவிஞர் பாரதிதாசன்		5 00
பாரதிதாசன் நாடகங்கள்			3 00
நமது உடல்	கேப்டன் சேஷாத்திரிநாதன்		0 95
பத்திரிகையின் கதை	தம்பி சீனிவாசன்		0 75
தங்கக் குழந்தைகள்			0 75

பாரி நிலையம்,

59, பிராட்வே, சென்னை-1.

An analysis of the circulation of leading newspapers and magazines has indicated another motive behind peoples' reading viz., to diminish boredom and anxiety.

A study must also have been made why people in general avoid certain type of reading.

All these related researches by the Ministry of Education of our Government have made them come to the conclusion that the most important factor is the influence of availability of good books. People can only tend to read what is physically and economically made available to them.

So they investigated the conditions prevailing with the publishers—who are the manufacturers of books, the booksellers—who are the purveyors of the written word, and the libraries where good books are supposed to be made available to meet the full requirements of the people.

The concrete shape of such a research relating to the libraries is contained in a Report—Publication No. 411 of 1959—Report of the Advisory Committee for Libraries.

I would personally request all those interested in Book Industry to secure a copy and read it. We are thankful to Mr. Sohan Singh, as the Secretary of the Advisory Committee, to have striven to make possible that report.

For the present I would like to confine myself to only one aspect of a recommendation in the Report. Let us for a while dwell on this new concept Mr. Sohan Singh has propounded to rationalise supplies to libraries.

With the introduction of this new concept the existing situation transforms itself and a new pattern results. This would no doubt require new adjustments from publishers, booksellers, librarians and educational institutions. Probably the idea might generate a good deal of controversy, but still compels our emulation and fosters further innovation.

Mr. Sohan Singh's concept's inherent power lies in its capacity to command the entire funds of the library grants. This by itself is no mean achievement.

We will have to explore possibilities of how to expand on the concept to serve other interests of the Book Industry thereby enhancing its utility value.

If text-book publishers could co-operate to centralize their warehousing operations in a

Book Depository as an auxiliary to the Book Bureaux, then the present buying practices of schools will become channelled through this outfit. All orders are received at this one control point. The Book Depository performs all the functions of a wholesaler or the branch operation of a publisher except owning and selling the merchandise. It receives and stores books, controls the inventory, receives and processes orders, packs, rails and despatches by road, invoices and collects.

Many publishers whose individual volume is not sufficient to warrant a branch warehousing operation can participate in the Book Depository idea. The obvious economics in paper work is supplemented by economies in warehousing and handling.

Booksellers can make use of this outfit as an order clearing, and freight consolidation centre. In due course, as the volume of business with booksellers increases, the stock inventories of the Book Depositories can include general books as well, other than text-books.

If at a later date, in a total plan for national distribution of books, the idea is mooted of creating chain-shops in areas where there are no book shops, then the Book Depository Centre could be made to serve the chains as a central feeding point.

More important than any of the utilities mentioned above is its inherent power to command the resources of the total grant and subsidies of the Government for buying books for libraries, schools and educational institutions.

Let us look at the problem of providing books to the people from another angle.

There is a vast majority of adult men and women in our country whose reading abilities compare to a certain age group of school going children. There is another large segment of adult masses whose interests are identical with juvenile and adolescent psychological needs. These two sections form a substantial bulk of our population and are far large in number than the educated minority.

Publishers and booksellers are at present preoccupied in catering only to the small percentage of educated minority. Schools absorb the present output of text-book publishers. Public libraries do not buy school text-books. The adult who has a mind similar to a school-going child has

therefore no use of the library. Text-books are produced to meet the limited requirements of a curriculum and text-book publishers are not interested in producing books which will enlarge the orbit beyond the syllabus. The schools are closed to the wage earning adult. Libraries do not have the type of books that will attract him. Publishers do not produce them to-day. The booksellers therefore cannot sell them because those type of books do not exist.

Whose then is the duty to produce the type of books the majority of our people are likely to want? How is to be made available to them easily and how could they get into the schools as additional reading material for school children and also get into the libraries so as to attract those who are unable to make use of the libraries at present? Providing books to the people is a national task.

These books must be of a general reading level for adults—to be read without effort. Words alone will not compete with reader attention. There must be illustrations that can capture attention and facilitate interpretation. Well selected photographs can convey facts and feelings. Each book must be designed purposefully to support a theme and the main points of the publication. Illustrations must be effective when they clarify, highlight and reinforce a theme or an idea. Photographs can be used successfully to transmit realism. Photographs are interpreted with less effort and more accurately than words. Photographs speak much more directly. They are honestly representative, more nearly approximate to direct experience. Ideas depicting action are always interesting, meaningful and affirmative. Immobility in graphic representation is relatively dull and insipid.

Laymen are not familiar with specialized vocabulary or technical aspects of science. They cannot easily understand technical messages or conventional jargon. Written clearly, concisely with select words which will get the adult neoliterates' attention and interest, these books must reflect brevity, directness and simple clarified ideas. Professional advice from an experienced editor must be sought. Sufficient thought must also go into typographical design—copy illustrations, headings, captions, margins, space between paragraphs, style and size of type. All these and other factors contribute to sustain reader interest and comprehension.

Every publication must be thoughtful and reflect abilities of judgment and skill of the script writer appealing to both emotion and intellect of the reader.

By the very magnitude of these operational details and planning it cannot and must not be left to languish under the hands of individual enterpreneurs like publishers or booksellers. However, the available talent in the country for publishing and bookselling should be harnessed and integrated to suit the economy and needs of the national requirements.

Often it is said the masses are poor, functionally illiterate and therefore it is very difficult to produce the type of books that may be of interest to them. They require colourful graphic illustrations, editorial content prepared with psychological expertness and the touch of the adopt professional advertiser in its layout and production. All these mean heavy costs. The best results are obtained when such works are done in offset. This requires a minimum run of 50 to 100 thousand copies. Immediately the question arises; where is the market? Who will come forward to take this enormous risk to invest, publish and also organize a distributing and marketing organization?

It would be a miracle if even the small publishers could be brought into a plan where their present trading results can be improved with larger turn-over and the books better produced and the ultimate consumer pays far less.

The answer to this lies in the concept of a National Plan to integrate the publishing industry and specially gearing it for production and distribution of cheap, good books in all regional languages aimed at the mass market.

People are markets—if they have willingness and ability to pay. What is the marketing implication of this concept? It will change the method of our book publishing, production and distribution. In its very origin this programme is dynamic. It is truly national in character. It has an enormous economic importance to the book industry. It is a pivot on which the book marketing in India will turn. Largest segment of the people—the adult masses will participate. It can make vast strides in the future. Posterity will be grateful to this generation for taking this bold step towards mass education under an atmo-

sphere of freedom and individual choice and initiative. It is not a coerced or compelled system of education.

Books on a very wide number of important subjects have not well been produced in many of the major languages of the country and the obstacles on the way of this publishing happen to be common—the absence of a big enough market to be economically suitable for publishing books which require a great deal of outlay, designing, block-making or plate-making and for the offset process. This particularly relates to pictorial books, more suited for children or neoliterate adults. For example there are no good books perhaps in any language of the country on geography or science readers or even a book introducing their own country with all its panorama of colour and pageantry.

To do this work a co-operative concern of publishers in about 8 languages might have to be formed with a very minor capital. The idea would not be for this co-operative concern to make out any profit on its own but perhaps a margin of 5% or so may be added to the total cost to run a small office for correspondence, exchanging ideas about the subject matter of books to be planned and produced. Whatever the profit, it will be made by the publishers who are co-operatively producing such books.

By pre-determining the rate of production, by helping to finance the cost of drawings, plates, etc., for photo offset work and even making the services of a big powerful press, by profit assurance to the participating publisher, by keeping the publishers informed of the normal price at which the market would accept books, as a guide to production scheduling and pre-production planning, the Book Co-operative helps immensely to produce the publisher's unit cost.

The publishers should be grateful to the co-operative not only in helping to reduce the designing cost but also help it to reduce production cost. The procurement and warehousing of paper is a great task. After the book is published there are other incidentals like storage, packing and despatch of the printed materials to participating publishers.

In a multi-lingual country like India there is a sure way out of the difficulties of smaller circulation presently encountered by publishers in every part of the country.

Substantial print order upto a number of even 100,000 copies could be given for such books and the publishers in different languages could decide to take a minimum of 5,000 of such books. In some languages the offtake could be bigger. For example, in Hindi the publishers might be interested in taking 10,000 or 20,000 copies. The Book Bureaux conceived by Mr. Sohan Singh could come forward to guarantee to absorb in each language one copy required for each library.

Greatest economies in publishing and distribution are made when risks are reduced by giving the publisher a guaranteed sale and a non-cancellable order. It is the most economical. Such a procedure has a grip not only on the aggregate cost of producing but also on the cost of components item by item.

Designing and even the text-matter would be co-operatively planned. That means that publishers could entrust to themselves different parts of the text which they can get written from authors of their languages and even the art work. Only the books have then to be printed in the different scripts. For this, the concerned publishers could get the matter composed in their languages according to the lay-out, send the art plates to the common production centre and the books then could be commonly bound and despatched to the interested parties.

By this we would have achieved in producing uniformly good picture pages common for the entire country; or regional language publishers buy these picture pages, get the editorial matter translated and adopted to their own language requirements and have them overprinted and the book becomes published in the regional language. The cost of production would be negligibly small. Each publisher would print the language edition just enough to meet his own requirements.

We must be always prepared to make the best use of professional advice to always improve the quality of publishing.

One picture is worth a thousand words.

A judicious combination of words and illustrations with proper design and composition are the most effective form of communication of ideas to mass audience. Books for the masses must comply with the principles of readability, length, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structure, illustra-

FOR BOOKS

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tion and format. Books for the masses should at once be interesting. At the same time they must be purposive enough to broaden the concept of life's values. Each book must have a purpose and aimed at the appropriate audience. Such books would not only have an immediate but also an abiding influence.

The title must attract the attention and generate interest and focus interest into the contents.

The cover must have a "Pick-me-up" pull.

It must compete with the flashy magazines on the news-stand counter.

The Book Bureaux of Mr. Sohan Singh's conception would have then contributed enormously to underwrite a substantial portion of the cost of production. Its auxiliary, the Book Depository, would take over the bulk of the publisher's stock and arrange for distribution and marketing. Booksellers and public would equally benefit from the set up of this organization. A very large number of books can be produced and sold and almost all publishers can participate in the scheme.

The Book Bureaux is equally useful to the booksellers. All along the booksellers have been looking backward and preserving policies and procedures adequate to the past. It cannot stand against the creative unknown of the future.

To-day booksellers and publishers regard themselves separate and their economic interests unrelated to each other. They are too self-conscious of their individual functions.

In a National planning imaginative reshuffling of functions and their costs between publisher and bookseller, between the bookseller and the ultimate consumer, can lead to substantially greater profits for every one involved.

The Book Bureaux and its auxiliary—the

Book Depository Centre—would be in due course of time assuming more and more importance. All known sources for books would be in touch with them. The convergence of demand and the co-ordination of supply would encourage and even compel continuous research for new publications and new areas of distribution.

Of course the concept of the Book Bureaux and Depository is a dynamic one which threatens the status quo and puts all known methods of book distribution to an expanding mass market out of date. Probably it might affect the entire philosophy of book distribution as is commonly assumed now. Spontaneous growth of voluntary chains of bookshops and compelling necessity to co-operate on the part of booksellers would be inevitable.

In a National planning when the magnitude of the total distribution is taken into account, the Book Depositories' services can be made to accomplish astounding improvements in the general standards of book distribution.

Of course the whole plan has to be worked out as a phased programme. A re-examination of the process from time to time eliminating superfluous operations and by inventing organizational machinery to meet specific needs, we can achieve our objectives. The pressure to meet consumer requirements of good quality books at low price will invite constant attention and innovation.

Let us harness technological advance in the production of good books, match it with advance in distribution patterns and then the cost of distribution will be reduced to the minimum with the greatest efficiency.

Mass market awaits those who would adapt themselves to it.

It is not non-existent for all those who would simply hold the consumer to what they want to sell him.

DIRECTOR'S CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Permit me to share with you the sense of satisfaction of a good work done by a small earnest group of about 25 participants collectively grappling common problems, not from our personal angles, but from a national view point, as it relates to our work and the opportunity we are offered to actively co-operate with the Government in the third five year plan.

You will certainly agree with me that as we look back on the thoughts that preoccupied our minds during the last seven days, this collective approach to common problems, has helped to integrate our ideas and we get a total perspective of the present situation. We must express our thanks to the Ministry of Education, Government of India, for having brought us together and made us think together, and project an idea of mutual co-operation and co-ordination for the future.

Certainly, the Ministry of Education, Government of India, could look to us to continue to engage in our minds the thoughts that preoccupied us during the last seven days when opportunities present themselves to actively co-operate with the Government in the production of cheap good books for the masses suited to the needs of the several linguistic areas, and have them properly distributed to reach the neoliterates and the new reading public. The participants of this seminar will certainly rise to the occasion and their contribution to the national efforts will be assured.

When you go back to your native towns please do discuss with our other friends in the trade, so that a more concrete shape can be given to the ideas we discussed here. As individual member participants of this seminar, we should continue to keep ourselves in touch with each other exchanging ideas and views, from time to time so that, there may be greater cohesion among Printers, Publishers and Booksellers.

I would personally be gratified if this seminar is the starting point initiating intensive voluntary national movement by

the Book Industry to harness all constructive forces for revolutionary movement for effective mass education by the spread of good cheap books. This national perspective to our trade has assigned a historical role to us and let me thank the Ministry of Education on your behalf for spotlighting this national view point before us.

In my individual capacity as the Director of the Seminar I must express my grateful acknowledgment of your very active and kind co-operation in making our deliberations assume their relatively serious importance in the context of Third National Five Year Plan. Your earnestness and the keen interest you all evinced has amply justified the confidence, reposed in you by the Educational Department of the Government of India in requesting you to kindly participate in this Seminar. Many of you, I know, have sacrificed your valuable time, and other professional conveniences to make it possible to be available in this Seminar. The formality of thanks is not adequate recompense to your contributions. The sense of satisfaction you have derived is alone the reward.

I must also thank the non-participating observers who gave the pleasure of their company during the session and the benefit of their valuable advices when consulted outside on those problems discussed. They so much identified themselves with our labour that the booksellers association of Bombay gave us an evening party. Other associations of writers took note of the proceedings and featured them prominently in all the dailies and weeklies in the several regional languages.

I am also placing on record the co-operation extended to us by institutions, like Times of India, Taraporewala Sons & Co., Ltd., and the Commercial Press, Ltd., for having shown us round to study their operational details which served both as an exciting experience and an instructive lesson. Gentlemen, let me thank you once again before I conclude.



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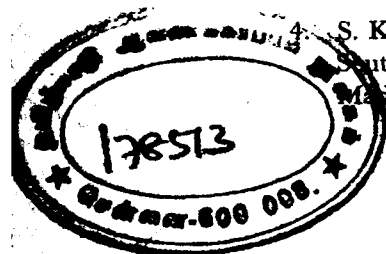
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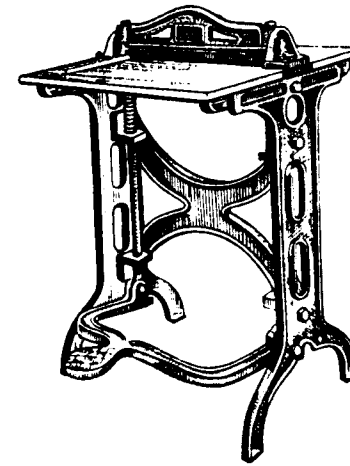


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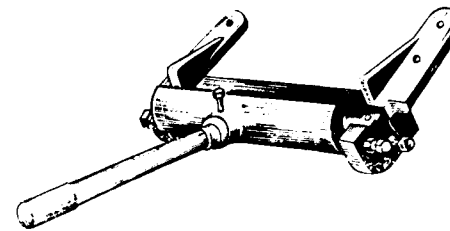


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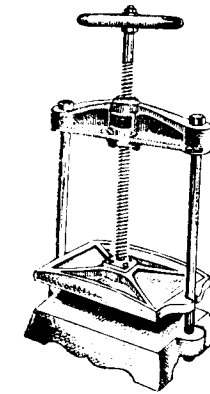
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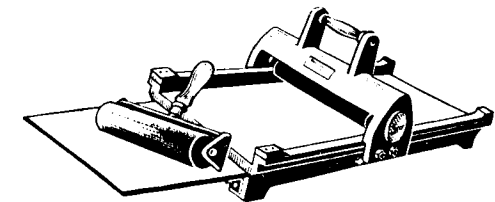
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