

BODMER, FREDERICK, *The Loom of Language*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1944. Lancelot Hogben, Editor. Price, \$3.75.

HOGBEN, LANCELOT, *Interglossa*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1943. (Page references are to *The Loom of Language* unless *Interglossa (Int.)* is indicated.)

In his foreword to *The Loom of Language* the editor clearly divides responsibility between himself and the author; the erudition, he says, is the latter's; the "wisecracks" (to paraphrase in pure American what he chooses to call "Anglo-American") are his own. Whatever may be the truth of the first part of the statement, anyone acquainted with Hogben's previous work and having his *Interglossa* before him will be forced to suspect that a great deal more than "irresponsible or facetious remarks" represent his contribution to the joint work.

Take the philosophy of language-learning which pervades the first chapter of *The Loom* and runs parallel with statements on pp. 54-55 of *Interglossa*; it is undoubtedly Hogben who on p. 2 derides the old cultural plea for languages (there are excellent translations of literary masterpieces, he reminds us). It is he who tells us (5) that the greatest impediment to language-learning is "the dead hand of Plato . . . sacrificing realizable proficiency by encouraging the pursuit of unattainable perfection," and who flippantly but mercilessly lashes linguistic perfectionists, both of the old scholarly type ("the perfectionist school": languages for literary appreciation only), and of the new "science of language" variety ("the nudist school," p. 24: languages for speaking purposes only). "It is discouraging and wasteful to torture the meaning out of every word of a foreign novel page by page, and so destroy the enjoyment which the narrative supplies" says Hogben (16). The scholarly tradition, he adds (416), is "to make difficult what is easy." But he holds out just as little comfort to direct-method and native-informant exponents. "Very few adolescents can speak the home language with fluency before 18"; (Bloch and Trager's *Outline of Linguistic Analysis*, p. 7, states that "everyone who is not deaf or idiotic has fully mastered his native language by the end of his fifth year!"); "To be able to speak more than two new languages without trace of foreign accent or idiom is a lifework" (16); "Comprehension of the spoken language comes quickly when in the country to anyone who knows how to read and write it" (11-12); these and similar statements are very much at variance with the latest theories in some linguistic circles, particularly on this side of the Atlantic.

Hogben has little patience with direct- or child-methods, which, he says, (*Int.*, 55) "prohibit any sort of thinking whatsoever." He does not believe too much in the sanctity of phonograph records (15), and holds that a grown-up has acquired a stock of mental and linguistic aptitudes which he can capitalize on when he learns languages by a conscious process (24-5, 29). He also definitely believes in the co-importance of the written with the spoken language (33). As for concentration on the spoken or the written language at the outset, he holds that that depends on temperament and circumstances (15).

What new features does he advocate in the matter of language-learning? Simply this: for speaking purposes, all that is needed is a basic vocabulary of 1,500-2,000 words and a basic grammar, shorn of all complicated rules and exceptions (15); before starting to learn a language, one should gain a bird's-eye view of its grammatical peculiarities (117); this can be done in an hour's reading (214). That very similar views have been previously and independently advanced and put into practice on this side of the ocean, in the reviewer's writings and courses, does not make them any the less worthy of serious attention. Perfectionists of both the literary and the phonetic-phonemic schools, in their enthusiasm for a single language, whether for cultural or utilitarian purposes, have overlooked the possibility of many people becoming multilingual, even if not endowed with that perfection of literary-grammatical knowledge or of the native-speaker accent which are so very, very seldom achieved anyway.

There is, of course, a reverse to the Hogben medal. Hogben's sweeping condemnation of all language-teaching methods but the one he favors is paralleled by an extremely long list of

subjective, personal statements on all sorts of matters, linguistic and otherwise. It is not merely linguists in general (490) and Indo-European linguists in particular (183-186) who come in for a sound drubbing. Roman Catholics will not care for his assertion (313) that "Latin is still the language in which the Pope invokes divine disapproval of birth control or socialism," and even less for the one on p. 344, to the effect that "many hundreds of Arabic words bear witness to what Spain owes to a civilization vastly superior to its Catholic successor." Jews may not approve of the charge (427) that "Zionists encourage the difficulties of existence for Jews by trying to revive Hebrew as a living tongue." Philosophers may be at variance with the statement (447) that "I think, therefore I am" is "Cartesian claptrap." Lovers of French will resent the remark (347) that their claims for French as a language of clarity or as an international tongue are "nonsense," and that though French "still has ostentation value as a female embellishment in well-to-do circles, unfamiliarity with French no longer stamps a person as an ignoramus among educated people." German grammarians will not like the labeling of the rules of German grammar as "representative exhibits of speech deformities or evolutionary relics" (306). Latin scholars will be angry at "the grammar of Latin is mainly concerned with social ritual. . . . The use of Latin case-forms is a social habit, like eating asparagus with the fingers" (196). Russian is not merely said to have "a large number of archaic and useless grammatical devices" (214), but to be "a tower of Babel" (420); the editor's sole advice to those wishing to learn Russian is "to take the precaution of being born and brought up in Russia" (419); even the Soviets, to whom he is quite partial in other respects, are severely taken to task for continuing to inflict on their citizenry "a hang-over from a church-ridden past," the Cyrillic alphabet (418), which is again described as "a cultural handicap" (420), despite its manifest phonetic advantages. Indeed, few tongues escape the editor's personal disapproval: the grammar of the Semitic languages is called "a load of grammatical ballast" (430), and Icelandic "a surviving fossil language, like the duckbill of Tasmania" (97).

The question therefore legitimately arises: what kind of a language does the editor like? In theory, he favors languages of the isolating, analytical type, like Chinese ("flexion is a waste of time," 96, and *Int.*, *passim*). In practice, he favors the Teutonic and Romance tongues, even where they diverge from the flexionless ideal (as a matter of fact, his defeatist attitude toward all tongues but these is clearly indicated by his lumping them, with the inclusion of isolating Chinese, into a chapter called "The Diseases of Language"). He also divides languages up, however, into two classes, based on contribution to human progress (409), with Indo-European, Semito-Hamitic, Chinese and Japanese in the more favored group, Bantu, Amerindian, Malayo-Polynesian and others in the less favored. This curious inconsistency, with three separate sets of standards (a. linguistic simplicity, or what he chooses to regard as simplicity; b. similarity to and connection with English; c. cultural achievement) places the editor at somewhat of a disadvantage in his forthcoming controversies with the professional linguists, who regard all languages, including the American Indian and African Negro, as worthy of equal attention, and with the cultural scholars, who will assert that the literary-cultural merits of tongues like French and German quite outweigh any structural advantages that may be possessed by the isolating languages.

It is the second standard, that of kinship with English, that leads Hogben to discuss exhaustively, through four of his twelve chapters and through a so-called "Language Museum" which is in reality a comparative 138-page nine-language vocabulary, the Teutonic and Romance languages, relegating all the rest of the world's spoken tongues to obscurity and "disease." We in the United States have lately been taking interest in many of the less familiar languages—Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, Arabic, Hindustani, Turkish. With the partial exception of Chinese, which comes in for a 14-page discussion, these "new" tongues receive short shrift at Hogben's hands. Americans will wonder why Swedish, Danish and Norwegian, the tongues of 15 million people at the most, are given so much space and attention, while tongues with hundreds of millions of speakers are neglected. But then Hogben is an Englishman, and the story is told of the English in Burma that they get along with the Chinese far

worse than do the Americans, because "Americans consider China a great power, while Englishmen do not." The editor's subjectivity, moreover, has drawbacks amounting practically to misinformation of his readers: he correctly gives us (410) up-to-date figures for English speakers of over 200 million, with some 120 million speaking cognate Teutonic languages (German, Dutch, Scandinavian); then, using 1926 population figures in 1944 (344, 346, 348), he sets Slavic speakers at a bare 190 million and Romance speakers at only 200 million, with 90 million for Spanish, 50 million for Portuguese, 41 million for Italian, and 45 million for French. Can it be that Hogben is trying to sell English to the world, even as his publishers are trying to sell Hogben?

Arbitrariness transpires in other fields, notably that of terminology. One draws a sigh of relief at finding no mention of phonemes or morphemes throughout either book, but this relief is dearly paid for in the copious neologisms which are Hogben's own ("helper" for "auxiliary"; "pointer" for "demonstrative"; "terminal" for "ending"; "battery" used on the slightest provocation; and, in the more technical *Interglossa*, such new inventions as "verboid," "amplifier," "place-marker" and "vector").

Hogben believes implicitly in the desirability of an international language; in *The Loom* (518) he admits that this by itself cannot prevent wars; in *Interglossa* (9) he practically reverses his position. He deplores the fact (488) that at international gatherings delegates either did not know one another's languages or, if they did, were seldom equipped with the best understanding of relevant issues. He wants a language (491) which embraces the needs of everyday life and those of technical discussion, and which is "easy to learn." Since he speaks with the greatest admiration of Ogden (17 *et passim*; *Int.* 55 *et pass.*) and Jespersen (476), we should expect his linguistic ideal to be a cross between Basic English and Novial. Not so. Hogben's basic phobia is inflexion, and his linguistic ideal is of the isolating type. Forgetting the lessons of linguistic history, and the swing of the pendulum from synthesis to analysis and back again (*amabo* > *amare habeo* > *aimerai*), he avers (493) that "there is a universal drift from inflexional luxuriance toward analytical simplicity." For what concerns vocabulary, he sees no point in trying to draw words from many sources, as Esperanto does (501). Latin and Greek roots, he says, are internationally current and familiar to all, and they are all we need to build an international vocabulary. Who does not know (506; *Int.*, 12-13) such words as *heterodyne*, *periscope*, *stratosphere*? *Phon-*, *graph-*, *micro-* are roots known to all, in all countries. The point could be made that even if all this were true, it is very doubtful that the radio man who is competent to repair our heterodyne set is also competent to break the word down into "other" and "power"; in fact, the use of such popular abbreviations as *phone* and *mike* is *prima facie* evidence of the lack of such etymological ability on the part of the masses. But Hogben shrugs his shoulders at this; let the people track down their roots; the hunt adds zest to life (*Int.*, 25-26). The reply might be made that a similar argument could be advanced for the roots of Esperanto, or of any foreign language, and that it is strange that one should be so concerned with the difficulties that the Japanese or Bantu speaker may encounter with Aryan grammatical structure (*Int.*, 15) and not at all concerned with the same individual's difficulties when faced with a pure Graeco-Latin vocabulary. And even Aryan speakers may be expected to have some trouble with roots that appear only in *cytology*, *stalagmometer*, *stereoisomerism* and *heterozygote* (*Int.*, 62).

Interglossa is a language in which familiar spellings are retained, even at the cost of phonological precision (*Int.*, 30: *c*, *ch*, *q*, *k* are all used with the same phonetic value, though we are not told why "meat" and "motion," both from the Greek, should be spelt respectively with *c* and *k*: *crea*, but *kine*); nor are we told what to do with the pronunciation of *cigara*, "cigar"; yet its inventor is concerned with phonetics to the extent of permitting the final consonant of *un*, *ad*, *non*, etc. to be dropped before another consonant (*Int.*, 39). Hogben laughs at the old grammatical concepts of subject and object (*Int.*, 43), but is careful to retain them in their accustomed word-order. He cares nothing for separate forms in the noun to indicate gender and number, but insists on making these distinctions in the pronouns (*an*, "he"; *fe*,

"she"; *mi*, "I"; *na*, "we"; *Int.*, 82). His nouns end in *-i* (*domi, equi, bibli, texti*); *-o* (*hydro, espero, forto, historo*); *-a* (*gyna, penta, hepta, ferra, gramma*), in accordance with complicated rules set forth on pp. 238-240 of *Int.*, which are, however, frequently violated by the author himself (*centi, chron, sex, President, lens, natio, homini*). The same word may be a verb, an adverb, an adjective or a noun; *debito*, for example, may mean, according to its position, "owe," "rightly," "proper" or "duty." *Gene sclero*, "to get hardened," and *gene victo anti Y*, "to overcome Y," remind us of Basic English with Graeco-Latin instead of Anglo-Saxon roots. *Mi no nun acte re* means "I am not doing it"; for the past, change *nun* to *pre*; for the future, to *post* (Esperanto does it by changing the vowel of the verb-ending, which is just as simple if not simpler). *Mi pre kine topo tendo un acte re* means "I went there in order to do it" (literally, "I past go place purpose a do thing"). In short, Hogben's reply to the world's need is definitely of the Chinese, isolating variety. But is an analytical, isolating language really the best? Is it really easier to think of "I" "shall" "love" rather than of "amabo," of "go down" rather than "descend," or "take off" rather than "remove"? "Simplification," of the Anglo-Saxon or Chinese type, often complicates things to an infinitely greater degree than it simplifies them, as evidenced by the foreigner who was told to "look out" when someone wanted him to take his head in out of the train window. The atrocities of English in newspaper headline form (which is pretty much the form advocated by Basic English and Interglossa syntax) are too well-known to need any refutation (RAID BILL POSTER; NIX RADIO POSTWAR AD GAB; ALGIERS HAS DRAFT CHECK). In conclusion, we fear that Hogben's "scientific" Graeco-Roman vocabulary and pidginized syntax will appeal neither to the isolating East nor to the inflecting West.

Coming back to *The Loom*, what of the matter of erudition, which Hogben dumps into Bodmer's lap? After careful search, we feel tempted to declare that "there ain't no such animal." Of the many languages treated, both historically and descriptively, there is not one that is not grievously mishandled. To begin with our own English, *oi* and *oy* are said (69) to be "sign-posts of Norman-French origin" (*soil, joy*; but what of *hoist, toil, boy, toy*?). "With the exception of a few words derived from Greek, English words containing *th* are Teutonic" (221); an actual count of the words in Webster's dictionary beginning with *th* shows Greek to have a slight edge over Teutonic. "The only outstanding Greek suffixes are *-ic* or *-ics*, with their derivatives *-ical* and *-ism*" (247); what of *-ist*? The verbal suffix which appears in German as *-ieren* and in Dutch as *-eeren* (269) has a cognate form in English, Bodmer notwithstanding (*-eer*, as in *domineer*). *The Loom* speaks of "a silent Anglo-American *r*, as in *more, soar*" (438); the author and editor should come out to our Middle West to find out just how silent that *r* is in the most typically American part of the Anglo-American domain. Reference is made to the "double declension of adjectives in the Old Teutonic languages and modern Icelandic" (103); we have vague memories of a weak and a strong declension of adjectives in very modern German, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish, with just a trace of double declension in Dutch. The manual of Dutch pronunciation (230-231) contains a mass of misstatements: "in the middle of a word, *z* is like *s*"; "the terminal *-EN* is pronounced like *-er* in *father*" (this is terribly misleading to a midwestern American who pronounces his final *-r*); "EI like German EI"; "IJ near to *i* in *file*"; "OU near to the *o* in *old*." The note to *mijn* (116) is incorrect. German slips through Bodmer's Dutch in the occasional capitalization of Dutch common nouns (230, 542); in the use of *snit* for *snee* (548), of *toename* for *toeneming* (550), of *ik heb* for *ik heb* (283), of *salade* for *sla* (535), while English influence may be responsible for *hoek* used to translate "bend" (544; *bocht* is the word he wants) and *gier* for "gear" (544; *koppeling*). *Dal, bijzonderheid, denkbeeld, namaak, peil, weelde* are far more authentic Dutch than the *vallei, detail, idee, imitatie, niveau, luxe* given in the "Museum" in the sense of "valley," "detail," "idea," "imitation," "level" and "luxury," respectively. Etruscan inscriptions are not quite the "sealed book" described on p. 63; they can be deciphered, though not translated. The Russian alphabet has more than the eight vowel symbols claimed on p. 68. If the Arabic dual disappeared in the 7th century A.D., as claimed on p. 429, it must have come back to life, for it is in common colloquial use today. Esperanto is said to have "accented vowels" (472), while

the list of Greek words given on pp. 658–682 is offered without the customary accents. Compound words are said to be especially characteristic of the Teutonic languages, Greek and Chinese (80) while Sanskrit, the grand-daddy of all compounds, is forgotten. Latin conjugations are slightly confused (or perhaps the form cited is a deliberate imitation of a Vulgar Latin model: *homo debet considerare*, 378). *Buca* (for *bucca*, 342) is probably a misprint; so are Dutch *jouw* (116), *geeven* (185), *waaran* (271), *veele* (280), and Sanskrit *bharata* for *bharatha* (182). Nor is it fair for Bodmer to inflict upon his innocent readers two different dialects of ancient Greek for the present indicative of the same verb (86, 413).

Romance philology and the Romance languages seem to fare especially badly at Bodmer's hands (this impression is perhaps heightened by the fact that they constitute the reviewer's field of specialization). Here are a few characteristic instances: "Modern European grammar began about the time when the Protestant Reformation was in progress" (78); we always thought it began with Nebrija's grammar of Castilian in 1492. Scaliger gets credit (171) for being one of the first classifiers of languages; poor Dante and his "De Vulgari Eloquentia" are quite forgotten. The first literary monument of Spanish is said to be the *Cid* (312); the *Mystery of the Magian Kings* is generally conceded to have antedated it. "The first Romance language to have a considerable literature was a dialect of the Midi, Provençal" (346); the religious and epic output of northern France apparently does not rate as literature in Bodmer's concept. In the matter of derivation of the Romance tongues from Latin, Bodmer evidently shares many ideas with his fellow-countryman von Wartburg: "The flexional system of Latin began to wilt when Roman soldiers tried to converse with natives of Gaul; it withered after Germanic tribes invaded Italy, France" etc. (95); but did not the Gauls and the Germanic invaders possess flexional systems very similar to that of Latin, and use their flexional languages without benefit of literature or education? "The Latin of classical authors was always, as it is now, a dead language" (309); "for five centuries two languages, each called Latin, existed side by side in the Empire" (310); two gratuitous statements, that will be contradicted by most classical scholars. "In Latin, the prepositional construction was bound to bring about the elimination of case-marks" (318); "undoubtedly, it is nearer the truth to assert that fixed word order and the prepositional construction led to elimination of case marks than to say that slurring and decay of case marks which were not stressed brought in prepositions and fixed word-order" (324); here Bodmer simply displays his ignorance of the more recent findings of Romance philological research. The Romance languages are said to be mutually unintelligible when they arise out of the Dark Ages (311); since many of them are not mutually unintelligible today (a Portuguese and a Spaniard, and even a Spaniard and an Italian can converse with relative ease without knowing each other's language), how could they be mutually incomprehensible then? Such works of linguistic compromise as the Franco-Venetian and Franco-Italian epic poems indicate mutual comprehensibility at that period even for tongues that are mutually incomprehensible today.

"Latin AU has become a simple vowel in all our four Romance languages. Its descendant is spelled OU or OI in Portuguese" (239); it is not, therefore, spelled as a simple vowel, nor, to our knowledge, is it pronounced as one. Prothetic *e* is claimed to have appeared in Latin inscriptions of the second century A.D. and to have dropped out in Italian (240); consulting even such old manuals as Meyer-Lübke or Grandgent will lead to the following discoveries: 1. that the original prothetic vowel was *i*, not *e*; 2. that it has not dropped out in Italian, but is euphonicly retained where needed (*in iscritto, per istrada*). "In open syllables, Latin stressed *a* (in French) became an *e* sound, spelt today E, Ê, É, AI or -ER" (242); the latter only when *r* followed in the original Latin. "Latin stressed *e* changed to the diphthong OI" (242); only when long; when short it became IE. "*Is* and *hic* completely disappeared" (332); but French *oui* (*hoc ille*) and *avec* (*ab hoc*); Italian and Spanish *però, pero* (*per hoc*); French *encore*, Italian *ancora*, Spanish *ahora*, Portuguese *agora*, all come from forms of *hic*. "Neither *inde* nor *ibi* has left descendants in Spanish" (368); Old Spanish *ende*, *y*, modern Spanish *all-ende*, *ha-y* seem to be descendants. "Except in Iberian, Latin *iste* disappeared" (332); Old French *ist*, Italian

colloquial *sto, sta* and literary forms like *stamane, stasera*, contradict this. "Latin had two possessive forms of the pronoun of the third person. One died intestate. Only the reflexive *suus* left descendants in the modern Romance dialects" (333); but it is *illorum* that gives us French *leur* and Italian *loro*. The derivation of French *quête* from *questione* (235); of Portuguese *cabeça*, Spanish *cabo*, Italian *capo*, French *chef* from *capite* (241); of *genou* and *ginocchio* from *geniculum* (342) present the most serious phonological difficulties. "The subject case of the Latin noun is the one that survived in both numbers in Italian" (350); this is a brand-new theory, and calls for fuller elaboration.

When we leave the historical field and come down to the present-day languages, the situation is as bad, if not worse. "In the modern Romance languages the article is used with names of countries" (361); yes, generally, in French and Italian; no, generally, in Spanish. "It is customary to write the Spanish and Italian imperative, infinitive and participle without a gap between the verb and the object" (366); but negative imperatives (in Italian polite imperatives as well) take their object before, while for the infinitive and participle it is equally common to have the object before the main verb. "In the modern Romance languages, the distinction between the indicative and the subjunctive is of little practical importance in conversation or informal writing" (322); true of French, to some degree; but not at all true of Spanish, Portuguese and Italian. According to Bodmer, all we have to do to translate "energetic" into French, Spanish, Italian or Portuguese is to change *-ic* to *-ique* or *-ico* (627).

Among the individual languages, French is said to have four *e*-sounds, *e, é, è, ê* (69); English forms like "tablet" are said to be identical in form with corresponding modern French (*tablette?*), while modern French is said to have discarded words which survive in English, among them "chattel," "nice," "revel" (*cheptel, niais, réveil?*) (234). Half-truths abound: "Though the symbol remains, there is no aspiration in a French word beginning with H" (251); "Common people use liaison more sparingly than those who affect culture" (253); "Double N does not cause nasalization of a preceding vowel" (253); "On must be used as subject of an active verb when there is no definite agent" (380; "*le beurre se vend très bon marché?*"); "By resorting to *être en train de* you get around the imperfect form of the verb"; the example given for this is *elle était en train de faire la cuisine* (395). *De bonne heure*, according to Bodmer, means "in good time" (124); *salut* means "health" (246); *je m'en doute* means "I think so" (368); *dont* can always replace "whose," "of which" (377; shades of *duquel!*); the relative pronoun "what" is *ce que*; the interrogative "what?" subject or object, is *que* (374, 376; *ce qui* and *qu'est-ce qui* apparently never came under the author's observation); *si* (emphatic "yes") is always spelt with an accent (403): "*sì* and *oui*, with *sì*, or stronger, *sì, sì*. *Tu ne m'aimes plus? Sì, sì!*" *Embrace-la, ne l'embrasse pas* (365); *j'y sera* (367); *la goût* (624); *fritte*, fem. of *frit* (628); *marrié* (630); *sanglotter* (646), *suffir* (647); *prèsque* (653) and many other such forms may be mere misprints. *Divertir*, "to amuse" (634) is somewhat old-fashioned for *amuser*.

For Spanish, we have *el bote al faro*, "the boat at the light-house" (360); *no me acuerdo de éso* (368); the relative pronoun "what" translated by *que* instead of *lo que* (374); *si habría tenido dinero lo habría comprado* (401); "the literal equivalent of 'to be warm, hot' is 'to have warm, hot'" (143); *tiene el tren un sleeper?* (403; *vagón cama?*); and such misprints as *caritad* (241); *hava* (244); *tu* for *tú* (371); *tomalo* (402); *si* for "yes" (403); *floricita* and *Carlito* (405); *cigarillo* (599); *un aleman* (607); *apropriado* (632); *transprar* (647), with ten words out of place on 609. Bodmer has evidently never come across the Spanish rule of orthography that requires an inverted question mark at the beginning of an interrogative sentence, since none of his Spanish questions have it (there are three on 371, three on 378, and two on 403).

For Italian, we are told that "modern Italian, for what concerns endings, has assumed a regularity reminiscent of Finnish," whatever this may mean in connection with either language (197). Bodmer prefers the language of Dante's time to that of today; he gives us *l'* as an article for feminine plural nouns beginning with a vowel (359); *meco, teco, seco* (366); *cantava* in the first person singular (384); *offerire* for "to offer" (642). He also gives us the following gems: *sono venuto senza ella* (365); *non ti lo darò* (366; the rule for the change of pronouns in *-i* to

forms in *-e* when another pronoun follows is quite forgotten); *diceva che venirebbe* (400); *uova sode* for "soft-boiled eggs" (603); *corda* for "cord" (604); *l'ufficiale* for "official" (606); *il Tedesco* for "a German" (607); *un'ora e mezzo* for "an hour and a half" (614); *il crescimento* for "growth" (620); *la minorità* for "minority" (622); *lo scroccone* for "swindle" (624); *domandare* for "to ask a question," vs. *chiedere* for "to ask for" (634); *bagnarsi* for "to bathe" (634); *guardare* for "to keep" (641); *toccare* for "to knock at the door" (641); *guadagnare* for "to win" (649). Misprints include the omission of *era* (176); *amarò, amarai* (177); *si* for "to them" (332); *aqua* (355); *cavaletta* (593); *la carne de vitello* (604); *ricchiesta* (623); *proprio* (630); *ommettere* (642); *affondersi* (646); *collà* (650); *così* (653); we hope that *divergere (di)* (638) and *separare (di)* (645) may also be misprints. A full set of alternatives is given for the article compounded with *per* (361), but none for *con*.

The Portuguese contractions for *a* with the feminine articles are given as *á, ás*, instead of the modern *à, às* (345), while the nasalization in the ending *-ão* is rejected for the plural *-ões* ("*ão* > *oes*; *nação* > *nações*"; 352).

In spite of all this, and a good deal more, *The Loom* fulfills a useful double function. In the first place, this is the first time that a book on languages has received such widespread publicity. America is steadily becoming more language-conscious; "The Loom's" aggressive advertising campaign validly contributes to this movement away from isolationism and in the direction of multilingualism. Secondly, Hogben's philosophy of language-teaching and language-learning is refreshing and vivifying; it marks a step in the right direction, away from the narrow, stifling views of literary scholars who consciously or unconsciously believe that the language in which they have specialized is the ONLY language really worth studying, and of our intensive-language analysts who believe in the spoken tongue alone.

The Loom regularly ranges all the languages of one group side by side, in connection with each grammatical feature, and compares them. Whether this parallel or comparative way of imparting a basic knowledge of several tongues is superior to the "successive" presentation of each language throughout all its features, which has been tried on this side of the ocean, is something for time and experience to determine. It is the reviewer's belief that the first method works out better in historical courses in philology, the second in practical courses designed to impart languages to people lacking a philological background.

As for *Interglossa*, its primary merit is to call attention once more to the ever more imperative need for a vehicle of international communication, and that, despite all his subjectivisms, is the spirit in which Hogben offers it. In both books, despite their shortcomings, he has rendered a signal service to the cause of international understanding.

MARIO A. PEI

Columbia University
New York, N.Y.

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