



The Progress of Esperanto since the World War

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THE PROGRESS OF ESPERANTO SINCE THE WORLD WAR

THE progress of this international auxiliary language since the end of the World War and the advent of radio has been so great, in practically all fields of activity of an international nature, that I shall attempt to point it out only in the service of radio, commerce, science, travel, international organizations, world congresses, and education. Moreover, this article is to a large extent a compilation of facts gathered from leading Esperanto magazines* and other sources, as well as on my three trips to Europe, where for obvious reasons the progress of Esperanto has been greatest. Although my main object in visiting Europe in 1922 and 1923 was to perfect myself in the practical use of French and Spanish, my attention was forcibly and repeatedly drawn to Esperanto, as for instance by the talk on Esperanto by the American delegate to the Esperanto Congress at Helsingfors, Finland, in 1922, and by a colleague in Cordova, Spain, who gave me the Manifest to the Teachers of the Whole World, which was issued at the General Session of the League of Nations in 1922, by educators from 28 countries with official delegation from 16 countries, and which recommends that Esperanto should be taught in all schools as the first foreign language for its practical, educational, and humanitarian value. This induced me to investigate the claims for Esperanto. Last summer I made another trip, but this time with and for Esperanto, as the official delegate of the Esperanto Association of North America to the 19th Universal Esperanto Congress at Danzig. This trip, with its third session of the Esperanto Summer University at Danzig, with its Esperantists' Convention at Berlin, with its Esperanto caravan from Berlin to Danzig, with its pilgrimage to Dr. Zamenhof's birthplace in Bialystok and to his tomb at Warsaw, Poland, and with its visits to Esperantists in numerous American and foreign cities, brought me in touch with over one thousand Esperantists from 34 countries and convinced me con-

* *International Language*, published monthly since 1923 at 142 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.—*Esperanto*, official organ of the Universal Esperanto Association, published monthly in Esperanto since 1905, at 12 Boulevard du Théâtre, Genève.—*Amerika Esperantisto*, official organ of the Esperanto Association of North America, published monthly in English and Esperanto at 1001 Commerce Building, St. Paul, Minn.—*Heroldo de Esperanto*, a weekly, published in Esperanto, at Horrem bei Köln, Germany.

clusively of the practical usefulness and success of Esperanto as the second language for all nations and as an ideal language for the traveler.

Therefore I hope to be of service to every friend of progress by submitting herewith the results of my investigations into the progress of Esperanto during recent years.

Esperanto in the Service of Radio.—From the time when Radio-Telephony became a factor in modern civilization, it has been increasingly evident that its marvelous potentialities can only be fully developed in an international sense if the language barrier is broken down. It was therefore quite natural that Esperanto, which had already become the leading international auxiliary language before the World War, should have invaded this new realm, because it facilitates direct international intercourse between nations.

The first talk in Esperanto was broadcast in June, 1922, from Station WJZ, Newark, New Jersey, by James Denson Sayers, one of the leading pioneers of the Esperanto movement in America. In 1923 there were about a dozen transmissions from stations in America, England, Scotland, Canada, and Russia, in which Esperanto showed itself suitable for broadcasting. Consequently, more stations followed in 1924, when the same Mr. Sayers broadcast a talk in Esperanto over WOR, which was understood by an Esperantist in Tokio, Japan, at a distance of 9,000 miles. In August, 1924, the American Radio Relay League, the largest Radio organization in the world, after a two-years' survey of the international language situation, adopted Esperanto as its international language. During the Wireless Telephone Conference at Geneva, speeches were broadcast from the Geneva Station in English, French, German, Italian, Czech, Polish, Chinese, and Esperanto, and the delegates who listened in at the Radio Club (the majority of whom had no knowledge of Esperanto) agreed that Esperanto was the clearest and most easily audible of all.

In 1925 the First International Congress of Radio Amateurs in Paris studied the problem and adopted Esperanto as the auxiliary language of international radio-telephonic communications, of summaries or translations in periodicals and congresses, of radio-telegraphic communications, and as its own auxiliary language besides the national languages in use. The proceedings of this conference, however, were carried on in the old-fashioned polyglot way, while the

First Conference of the "Internacia Radio-Asocio," which took place at the same time, was carried on entirely in Esperanto.

In 1927, in Lausanne, the Conference of the International Radio-telephone Union, which represented all the important broadcasting stations of the world, unanimously accepted the resolution which "recommends Stations to endeavor to arrange regular transmissions in Esperanto once a week of from 10 to 15 minutes, in order to announce to listeners at a distance the chief points of their weekly program, and thus to make known events in the artistic, intellectual, or economic life of their nation, and to announce the name of their station in Esperanto once in each evening program." At the present time more than 40 stations of nearly 20 countries are broadcasting lessons or weekly talks in Esperanto, among them also station WLB under the auspices of the General Extension Division of the University of Minnesota.

Thus we see that Radio and Esperanto, ignoring all national frontiers, are rapidly turning our planet into one vast auditorium.

Esperanto in the Service of Science, Commerce, and Travel.—The progress of Esperanto in science, commerce, and travel is largely due to its support and promotion by the International Scientific Esperanto Association, by the French and Italian Associations for the Advancement of Science, by the French and Spanish Academies of Science, by the leading Chambers of Commerce, by more than 20 International Fairs, and by the International Conferences in Venice in 1923 and in Paris in 1925. In Venice over 200 commercial and touring organizations from 23 countries were represented, and the business was conducted throughout in Esperanto. At the World Congress of Chambers of Commerce, 226 chambers of commerce and commercial associations from 32 countries, and at the World Conference of Academies of Natural and Applied Sciences 112 scientific and technical societies were represented.

As early as 1921 the Paris Chamber of Commerce introduced Esperanto as an elective in its commercial schools, and at Dresden it was proclaimed as the international commercial language. The London Chamber of Commerce offers prizes to the value of £24/10 in connection with its Esperanto examinations.

Consequently, many firms, exporting houses, tourist organizations, and international fairs: Leipzig, Frankfurt, Lyons, Paris, Basle, Padua, Lisbon, Barcelona, Breslau, Bordeaux, Vienna, Budapest,

Reichenburg, Malmoe, Riga, Prague, Helsingfors, are using Esperanto, especially in advertising and correspondence. The Leipzig Fair, for instance, publishes elaborate illustrated catalogs and sent out recently also a list of goods represented at the Fair. The Frankfort authorities state that Esperanto already holds fifth place in their correspondence and that they will publish very soon a dictionary containing not less than 10,000 manufacturing terms in six languages and Esperanto.

Also scientific and technical magazines are being published in Esperanto, like *Scienca Revuo*, for scientists, *Medicina Revuo*, for doctors, and the International Scientific Esperanto Association issues Esperanto Bulletins and a series of technical vocabularies, of which those for chemistry, mechanics, pharmaceuticals, botany, navigation, and radio are already available.

From the constantly growing list of technical magazines which contain articles in Esperanto the following may be mentioned: *Experimental Wireless*, which has for some time regularly published summaries of its articles in Esperanto; *Das scharfe Auge*, devoted to the study of diseases of the eye, which gives a full summary immediately following each article; *El Maestro Español*, of Madrid, a review for schoolmasters; the *Polytechnisch Weekblad* of the Dutch engineers; *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung aller Laender*, of Berlin; *Engineering Progress*, the official organ of the German Union of Technico-Scientific Associations, etc.

In this connection it may also be stated that the number of travel organizations publishing folders and guide-books in Esperanto is rapidly growing. The January number of *Esperanto* contains a picture showing about 50 guide-books, in the center of which is *Japanlando*, published by the Japanese Ministry of State Railways, Tokio.

The Swiss Federation of Railwaymen recommends Esperanto to its members, and the Directorate of Italian State Railways offers classes in it for railwaymen. Special privileges are granted to railway and postal officials in Czecho-Slovakia who know Esperanto, and a bonus of 25 florins is offered by the Hague Tramway Company to its officials for the acquisition of the Esperanto Diploma.

The use of Esperanto for placards and announcements to passengers on international trains in Czecho-Slovakia was ordered by a decree of March 21, 1927, and signs like "Oni parolas Esperanton" are beginning to appear on Dutch trains.

In Budapest, Bukharest, Lisbon, Madrid, Riga, Vienna, and other cities special classes for policemen are conducted, and those who speak Esperanto wear an Esperanto badge on the uniform.

But the greatest help to the traveling Esperantist comes through the free services of over 1500 Delegates of the Universal Esperanto Association, as well as through the friendship and hospitality of thousands of Esperantists and hundreds of Esperanto groups, which may be found already in all large cities and many towns all over the civilized world, and which make traveling a real pleasure. The enthusiastic account of trips through the Esperanto-World, like the one by Prof. Hazime Asada of the University of Nagasaki, Japan, who made a trip around the world with and for Esperanto in 1927, as well as my own article in Esperanto in *Amerika Esperantisto*, October, 1927, pp. 9-11, will prove this assertion.

Esperanto in the Service of International Organizations and World Conferences.—The increasing encouragement, support, and adoption of Esperanto by international organizations and world conferences can be easily accounted for by the growing need of such a language, since the national units are coming more and more into closer contact with one another through improved methods of communication and travel and in consequence of the giant strides that are being made in the conquest of the air by airship and plane, as well as by radio. Also the League of Nations has contributed a great deal to the progress of Esperanto. Thus, on September 21, 1922, the Third Assembly of the League of Nations unanimously accepted a report which showed conclusively that neither Latin nor a modern national language would be suitable as an international language and which recognized the superiority of the claims of Esperanto over all other projects. On September 20, 1924, the Fifth Assembly recommended Esperanto as a "clear language" in telegraphic and radio-telegraphic communications. As a result of this recommendation, as well as of a similar proposal by the French Government, the International Telegraphic Union added Esperanto to the list of "plain languages" for international telegraphy. This decision, which is in force since November 1, 1926, raises Esperanto from a mere code to the rank of a language, thus making Esperanto the only artificial language that has been recognized by the League of Nations and the Governments of the World.

The following international organizations are also promoting the

Esperanto movement: The World Union of International Associations, the International Young Men's Christian Association, the Catholic International League of Youth, the International Red Cross Society, the Bahai International Assemblies of the World, the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, the International Labor Office, the International Peace Bureau, and others.

The number of international Esperanto organizations using Esperanto in their correspondence and at their meetings is likewise steadily growing. Among them are those of aviators, bankers, blind people, boy scouts, Catholics, doctors, engineers, Freemasons, free-thinkers, lawyers, pacifists, philatelists, policemen, postal servants, railwaymen, stenographers, scientists, teachers, vegetarians, etc.

Since 1920, when the first post-war Universal Esperanto Congress took place at The Hague, the Universal Esperanto Association has held a world congress every year, as it did before the War from 1905 to 1914. As many as 3000 Delegates and Esperantists from over 40 countries have gathered at such a congress for a week of business and festivities, at which the general meetings, a score of sectional meetings, church services, and entertainments are held in Esperanto. The Twentieth Universal Esperanto Congress will meet this year in Antwerp, August 3-11. In addition, every national Esperanto association has its annual "Esperanto Kongreso" and hundreds of Esperanto clubs have their Esperanto meetings and programs.

However, other organizations are also beginning to use Esperanto in their international conferences. For instance, in the spring of 1927 the "Peace through the Schools" Congress in Prague was attended by 400 teachers and educators from 19 countries. Reports and speeches were at once verbally translated into Esperanto or made in Esperanto. This experiment was such a success that the thousand educators at the International Congress of Education at Lausanne, in 1927, decided to follow the example of the Prague Conference by using Esperanto at their next congress in Copenhagen in 1929. This year four such congresses, in which Esperanto will be the only language used for translation, are scheduled to be held, namely, the World Interreligious Congress for Peace, in The Hague, the International Catholic Congress, the World Youth Peace Conference in Holland, and an international anti-war congress in Le Locle.

Esperanto in the Service of Education.—As a result of the worldwide adoption of Esperanto and on account of its practical, educa-

tional, and humanitarian value, Esperanto is being studied and taught more and more. In Europe it is now taught extensively as an elective in hundreds of schools, from the elementary school to the University. In the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland, it is compulsory in the final year of the primary schools. Also on other continents it is steadily gaining ground. In the Orient, especially in Japan and China, Esperanto is taken up in a serious and business-like way. In Japan it is already a part of the official curriculum in about 40 towns as well as in the University of Tokio, and in China in the University of Peking and in the Peking Esperanto College, as well as in more than twenty universities all over the world. According to a recent report from Japan, the Esperanto course from the Tokio Broadcasting Station (JOAK) has been so popular that the textbook specially printed for the course (15,000 copies) is already sold out.

In the United States we have also made a start in the teaching of Esperanto, for courses in Esperanto have already been given in the following institutions: Columbia University, Boston University, Stanford University, Universities of Minnesota, Michigan, and Texas, Antioch College, Vassar College, Wellesley College, Cleveland College of the Western Reserve University, Montezuma Mountain High School, and many others. Last fall the first endowed Esperanto school was opened in Lithopolis, Ohio, by Mrs. Mabel Wagnalls-Jones.

The largest number of Esperanto students in America, however, learn the language in study groups under the guidance of some enthusiastic Esperantist or in classes under the auspices of an Esperanto club. Furthermore, it is now possible to study Esperanto by means of gramophone records, as well as by radio and through correspondence courses, like those offered by the General Extension Division of the University of Minnesota.

Esperanto teachers examinations are given by the Esperanto Institute of Germany under ministerial guidance, by the School Board of Vienna and of other cities, by government examiners in Czechoslovakia and other countries, as well as by Esperanto organizations. The Minister of Education of Finland has already granted a subsidy of 6000 marks for the formation of an Esperanto vacation course for teachers.

The newest departure in international education was inaugurated in 1925, when the first session of the Esperanto Summer University

was conducted in Geneva, Switzerland. The second session was held in Edinburgh in 1926, and the third in Danzig in 1927. At these sessions all lectures are delivered in Esperanto by professors from various universities of the world. For instance, in Geneva, Professor Pierre Bovet gave a course of lectures on new pedagogical methods and psycho-analysis, Dr. C. Baudouin lectured on Psychagogy, i.e., the art of self discipline, Dr. J. C. Flugel, of London University, on education, Dr. J. Dietterle on general linguistic science. In Danzig I heard lectures on long distance cables, magnetism, standardization of monetary systems, and Spanish folklore.

Since 1887, when Dr. Zamenhof published his *Lingvo Internacia* under the pseudonym Dr. Esperanto (meaning "one who is hoping"), an Esperanto literature of about 5000 works has developed including the translation of the entire Bible, which was dedicated in the Cathedral of Edinburgh in 1926, and of many Classics, as well as original works in Esperanto and a rapidly growing list of textbooks for the study and teaching of Esperanto. Every teacher will be interested to know that D. C. Heath and Company has already published a *Complete Grammar of Esperanto* and the writer of this article a "*Guide to Esperanto*," of which the revised second edition has just appeared and which is a short grammar and reader combined.

In addition, the number of magazines in Esperanto has increased to about 100, including the *Internacia Pedagogia Revuo*, which is the official organ of the World Association of Esperanto Teachers.

From the progress that Esperanto has made so far we may draw the conclusion that the day is coming when Esperanto will be taught in every secondary or higher school of every country as the first foreign language, and will become the second language for all the civilized nations.

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