

words into arbitrarily-formed ones. The attempts of the first category were quickly seen to be too complicated for practical use, and so faded into oblivion; those of the second were, perhaps, entitled to the name of „languages“, but certainly not „international“ languages. The inventors called their tongues „universal“, I know not why, possibly, because no one in the whole world except themselves could understand a single word, written or spoken in any of them. If a language, in order to become universal, has but to be named so, then, forsooth, the wish of any single individual can frame out of any existing dialect a universal tongue. As these authors naïvely imagined that their essays would be enthusiastically welcomed and taken up by the whole world, and as this unanimous welcome is precisely what the cold and indifferent world declines to give, when there is no chance of realising any immediate benefit, it is not much to be marvelled at, if these brilliant attempts came to nothing. The greater part of the world was not in the slightest degree interested in the prospect of a new language, and the persons who really cared about the matter thought it scarcely worth while to learn a tongue which none but the inventor could understand. When the whole world, said they, has learnt this language, or at least several million people, we will do the same. And so a scheme, which had it but been able to number some thousands of adepts before its appearance in public, would have been enthusiastically hailed, came into the world an utter fiasco. If the „Volapük“, one