

অবিধি... 15 SEP 1989  
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## On Text-books

Sir,

Your editorial of September 6, 1989 on the matter of "The Question of Text-books" again focuses on the inferior quality of the books both in presentation and content. It is a matter of concern to all responsible citizens.

As the responsibility for compiling the requisite text-books for different classes falls squarely on the shoulders of the National Text-book Board, it is not too much to assume that the responsibility for editing and presentation is also laid at their door. The fault, however, lies further back than this at the selection level, which, I believe is undertaken by a committee for the purpose. Lack of care at this stage resulted in the debacle you have mentioned in your editorial comments which led to the withdrawal of the English text-book in question.

Inferior quality of paper may perhaps be excused for paucity of funds but inferior content cannot be explained away so lightly which is due to incompetent authorship. The publishers' claim to insufficient time may be correct but nevertheless printing errors are the fault of inefficient proof-reading is the sole responsibility of the publishers. Editing and proof-reading have been found to be the weakest links in the chain of many a newspaper, writer and publisher resulting in typographical errors.

Although it may be necessary to adopt new publications on those subjects changing rapidly with each new advancement, to the lay-man at least it seems incomprehensible that the same argument applies to those subjects such as elementary English and Bengali. Surely frequent changes result in unnecessary additional expenditure when our spending in this sector is so minimal.

To refer to your last paragraph, although it is true that quality books prepared by experts in their field are attractively produced in countries like Britain. However, these are not always suitable for small children whose mother tongue is not English and are unfamiliar with the sounds which go with the words. Today experts in this field are aware of the problems related to the teaching of English as a foreign language and it is to them we should turn in our efforts to produce properly evaluated text-books in English.

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