

## CHAPTER MA

### THREE PLANES OF WORK

#### 1 Idea Plane

The word 'Man' stems from the Sanskrit root 'man' (Short a) which means "to think". The organ of thinking is called 'Manas' which means "Mind". According to the *Upanishads*, the essence of man is mind. Mind is the place of origin of ideas. The creator of ideas needs self-communication within the mind in order to create more ideas. The destiny of any idea created by one mind is the minds of the others. The others too need the ideas to be communicated to them. Language is the medium for communication of ideas. "Idea first or Language first?" is an everlasting question. There is a Vedic episode, bearing on "Ideas and words run together in pursuit of the Absolute". Word came back first. "Where is the Idea?", it was asked, "I could not keep up. Therefore, I have returned. But the idea was going further ahead." At this moment, the idea comes back with a similar story, "I too could not keep up. The difficulty became unbearable after I got separated from the words". But the word said, "And yet you did go ahead of me. Unless I keep close to you, I become inert." We may, perhaps, apply the Wall-Picture Principle (See Chap RM) and say, "Idea first, word next".

#### 2 Verbal Plane

Along with the capacity to create ideas, came also the capacity to develop an articulate language as medium for communication. Language differentiates man from all the other creatures. Written language made communication even more widespread than mere spoken language. But, language is more lethargic than idea. Homonyms and Synonyms, therefore, grow like weeds. Undertones and overtones grow in abundance.

#### 3 Notational Plane

Therefore, attempts are continually in progress to make language precise—at least among those creating ideas in a specific discipline. It is so at least for newly created ideas. Further, words are often replaced by symbols pregnant with precise meaning. When arrangement is found necessary, ordinal numbers are used as helpful symbols. A distinctive contribution of the discipline of classification, as found and as being cultivated in the field of Library Science, is the Notational Plane. Uniqueness of the idea represented by an ordinal number and the total absence of homonyms and synonyms

are the distinctive features of the notational plane, when compared with the verbal plane.

#### **4 Mental Separability**

The work in the three planes is mentally separable. Such a separation facilitates the understanding and exploitation of each plane. No doubt, in the case of a good thinker, the work in the three planes gets unconsciously separated out up to a certain stage. But it is often a very early stage. After this stage, it is not separated out. It is now being increasingly realised that such involuntary separation is inadequate. For, the idea plane and notational plane soon begin to inhibit each other. Further, the verbal plane does not at all get developed. During the first two decades of my work as a classificationist, as a classifier, and as a teacher of classification, I did not think objectively of this problem of separating the work in three planes.

#### **5 Actual Separation**

It was only in 1944 that I got a faint glimpse of the desirability and possibility of separating the work in the three planes [137]. I got a better grasp of it in 1952 [132]. Since then, I am endeavouring to separate the work in the three planes at almost every turn. The political weapon of "Divide and Rule" has turned out to be effective in this area also. We are now in a position to solve independently, in the first instance, the problems arising in each of the three planes. This makes for considerable progress. At suitable stages, it is profitable to correlate the work in the idea plane and that in the notational plane. This gives full freedom for the idea plane to spread its wings, as it were, as much as necessary and possible. It also creates an incentive to cultivate the notational plane so as to implement all the findings of the idea plane.