ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the seventeenth century Francis Bacon observed, "Reading maketh a full man"\(^1\); and since then the sentence has been often quoted as a maxim and has gone into the blood and bones of mankind. He enumerated many functions of reading, the chief of which is "to enlighten the mind". By this he meant full understanding or comprehension of what is read.

In the second quarter of the twentieth century, many investigators in foreign countries began to explore the field of reading. Their findings reveal that many a problem of students in school, whether academic or psychological, can be ascribed to their reading disability. Chandler\(^2\) observed that reading disability was frequently a first sign of delinquency. Looking to the gravity of situation caused by reading disability, the investigators further directed their efforts towards locating the causes of reading difficulties. One of the factors discovered was the readability of the reading material. This in turn, inspired a number of researches on readability of reading materials in foreign countries, some of which are cited in the present report. In this connection, however, it is

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sad to note that there is not even one research done in this area in India. This is clear from the fact that Dr. N.B. Buch's (Ed.) *A Survey of Research in Education*\(^3\) has not to mention a single research carried out on readability. Of course, sporadic attempts have been made on the problems of reading like "reading readiness", "reading comprehension", "vocabulary" etc. The phenomenon of reading disability, however, deserves greater attention because the problem of the readability of material is further accentuated by the fact that due to the nationalization of textbooks, only one textbook of a subject is available for use in our schools, leaving no scope for the teachers to select textbooks of appropriate readability level for their students. The area of readability of textbooks thus remains unexplored in India. It is submitted humbly that the present investigation in the area of reading may be the first of its kind in India. The findings of the investigation may be an eye-opener to the publishers as well as the authors of the textbooks, and they may have implications for teachers too.

As I took the 'untrodden path' and selected the problem of multi-dimensional nature, the study demanded not only a 'will to work' and ceaseless efforts on my part but also active co-operation of many others. I was fortunate

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