

028

Book And Box

The world of books is the most remarkable creation of man. Nothing else that he builds lasts forever. Monuments crumble into dust, nations perish and even civilizations die out. But books live on, still fresh, still bringing the treasures of knowledge to the people of all ages and all climes.

But it is a matter of great regret that reading of books is not as popular as watching Television programmes today, however debased it may be. And the worst part of it is that the magic box has turned the viewers into passive beings. TV feeds them into instant judgement, bidding good-bye to a culture of contemplation and creative thinking. This can come by an assiduous study of books and other printed matter.

It is a matter of great pity that today by listening to a few minutes of news bulletins a man feels that he knows everything about the world, although short bulletins cannot become the frontiers of knowledge.

The first challenge to the printed word was posed by Radio. But Radio which invaded the bedroom, reached the breakfast table, a moving car, sea beaches, forests and hills, fishing trips and river cruising offered a choice to people. One could hear and still read. Besides, listening to Radio became an aid to a follow-up reading.

But with the invention of Television (sound and sight combined) there has been a sharp decline in the habit of reading books particularly by our children. This is for the fact that they are allowed to watch the Television. The parents do not read either. Neither do they induce their children to do so.

It is high time that the Ministry of Education made a sample survey by interviewing students in schools, to find out how many of them utilise their spare time in reading extra-curricular books. A statistics of this nature will speak volumes as to how our children are growing to become future leaders of our country, in a highly competitive world.