

fountain

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THE FOUNTAIN is published once every six weeks. It is supported by free-will offering from Christian friends who have the burden to see the word of God reach as many as possible. We depend on the all sufficient grace and providence of the Lord to meet our every need. The magazine is free of charge and is sent upon request.

OUR AIM is to spread the good news of salvation. We preach none other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

WHAT WE BELIEVE: The Bible is the basis of our faith. We believe that the whole Bible, every chapter, every verse as originally given is inspired by God.

"You (Jesus) are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

- Matthew 16:16

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." - I Timothy 1:15

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." - Acts 4:12

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God -- not because of works, lest any man should boast."

- Ephesians 2:8,9

PUBLISHER: The Winnipeg Chinese Christian Fellowship

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P.O. Box 1172,
Winnipeg, Manitoba,
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Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.'"

- Matthew 9:36-38

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Second Class Mail

Registration # 1651

2	THE BINARY INTRUDERS	LORRIE
5	MEMORIES OF MY TAILWAGGING FRIENDS	SUZANNE
8	BLACK-OUT	CLAIRE
10	FRESHMAN YEAR	DAVID LEE
13	NOTES FROM MY DIARY (FROM TORONTO)	P.Y.
15	DIMENSIONS OF LANGUAGE	ART

Announcements:	MOVING?	7
----------------	-------------------	---

"LETTERS TO FOUNTAIN"	12
---------------------------------	----

THE FOUNTAIN DIGEST	12
-------------------------------	----

Dear Readers,
We thank the Lord for giving us six articles for this issue of The Fountain. We are especially delighted in receiving an article from Toronto. God has answered our prayers. We continue to pray that even more Christian friends will send in articles to spread the Gospel to foreign students who have not heard this message yet. We welcome various forms of writing: poems, argumentative essays, testimonies, parables, personal experiences from student life or life in general, etc. We sincerely hope to hear from you soon!

We would also like to apologize for a mistake made in the article "Reasonableness of Christianity" printed on p. 10, second column of last issue (Volume 13 number 2). The example given should read, "All circles are round. This is a circle. Therefore, this is round."

Once again we invite you to join in the work of The Fountain by writing articles, by praying, and by introducing this magazine to your non-Christian friends in the university. May God bless you all.

The Fountain

THE BINARY INTRUDERS

- Lorrie -

It was the day after the Christmas holidays. Not in the mood of working, I sat in my usual spot in the Science lounge, watching the activities in the room. A group of super-energetic kids were at the pinball machines. Others, like me, were hanging around, sipping a cup of coffee or picking at a bag of potato chips.

"Hi there, Irene! Had a good holiday?"

I turned around to find that Jim had already seated himself beside me-- a six-foot-three bearded fellow, known to the class as the "computer nut".

"Uh...yeah...I suppose. What about you?"

"Did a lot of reading over Christmas. Just fed up with this computer age."

Taken aback by Jim's uncharacteristic vehemence, I asked, "What's the matter?"

"Perhaps it's the cold spell we had over Christmas... At first, I stayed home and read a lot of magazines like 'Datamation', 'Computer Decision', 'Popular Electronics'... All they talked about were home computers, computerized chess games, and all the 'you name it, we have it' microprocessor-based goodies!"

"That's what I should do. Get a copy of 'Popular Electronics' on my way home. Sorry, go ahead."

"I got tired of them. So I took a bus downtown and walked around there a bit. Guess what I saw? MORE chess games, home computers and the like. You know, Irene, everyone is unconsciously contributing to the digital demoralization of this country!"

"Hey, cool it Jim. Just what in the world are you babbling about? I see that you're unhappy, or should I say, a little perturbed. Is it the 'Micro' course that's bothering you?"

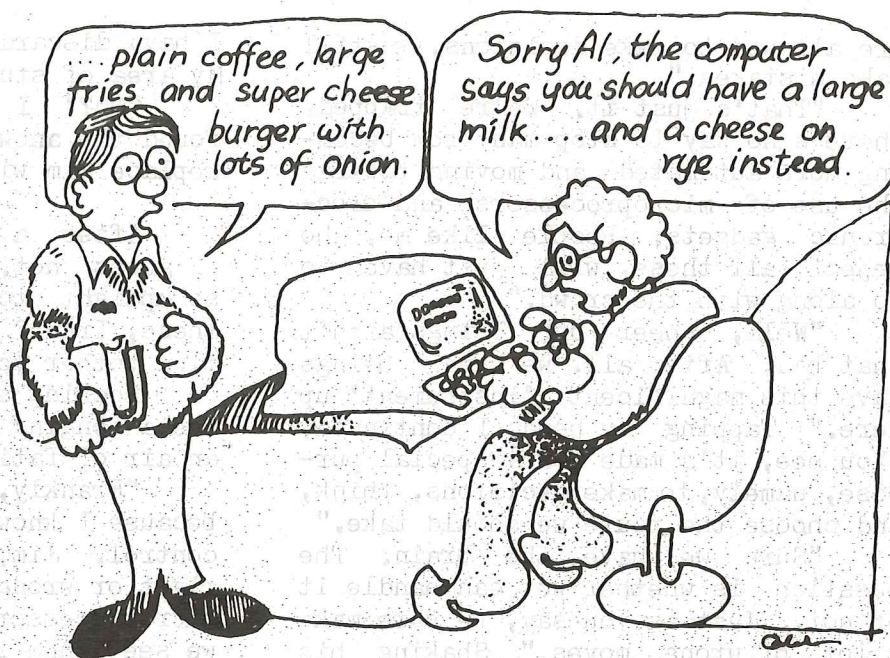
"Well," he said, somewhat calming down, "those microprocessors are really oozing their way into every facet of our lives! They are strapped onto our wrists, playing games with the kids, taking catalogue orders, and ticking away under the hood of the car. In the last issue of 'Datamation', they have an ad for a Prince-On-Board Computer."

"What's that?" I cut in.

"It's a dash-board processor which can be installed in the car and used to determine everything from your current location to the estimated time of arrival."

"Pretty neat," I interjected.

"Wait! I haven't finished yet."



It has five memory banks to store the location of speed traps along the route, and will automatically trigger an alarm as one approaches 'smokies' in hiding. What next! Pretty soon they will come up with other cover-up gadgets. I really can't stand this insidious penetration!"

"Hold it. Did you say insidious? Aren't they just intelligent devices that can ease and entertain our lives a bit? What's wrong with the use of microprocessors? Look at it this way: they're simply rather inexpensive but extremely useful and efficient. Don't you agree?"

"You've missed the whole point! The crux of the matter is our inability to make decisions. Just wait. In fact, I can see it coming!"

Squinting his eyes as if in deep thought, he continued, "One will be awakened by one's personal computer at a particular time every morning. It may even be different every day. Then the computer will turn on the central heating system and the coffee-maker."

"And for those like me, who prefer a bath in the morning, the water will be ready."

"Exactly!" Nodding his head, Jim continued, "Breakfast consists of a

3.569-minute egg and other selections from the digital diet which has already been computed to reduce cholesterol. Our biorhythm chart will be displayed on T.V., so that we know how we're supposed to feel, think, and act for the rest of the day!"

Using the opportunity while Jim was taking a breath, I stated, "Then comes the electronically dispatched newspaper, pre-edited, of course, to reflect our areas of interest. The weather will come up next with instructions as to which coat we should wear."

Dying to continue, Jim said, "A computerized transportation system will deliver us to the university, whether we feel like it or not. Computer simulations will be available to tell us what decisions we should make. Well, how do you like all this! Before we know it, everyone will march to a binary beat. A whole bunch of insipid smiling R2D2s!"

"Sounds pretty grim if things evolve to such a state. I certainly wouldn't want to be a robot, but on the other hand, I've made a lot of wrong moves over the past year. Life is certainly full of dilemmas. If we don't get to choose, we grumble, but if we

are allowed to make decisions, we still make mistakes."

"That's just it. We're trapped. There's no way to stop man from becoming more automated and moving towards the use of microprocessors and electronic gadgets. People like me, who reject all these, will just have to go along with the crowd."

"Well, cheer up! Things aren't that bad. After all, we human beings have this magnificent 'instrument' up here." Tapping my head, I continued, "You see, it's made for a special purpose, namely, to make decisions, think, and choose the route we should take."

"Sure we have the brain. The question is whether we can handle it or not. Just as you say, we sure make a lot of wrong moves." Shaking his head, Jim said slowly, "It's no use. We are losing very subtly our ability to make decisions. What alternative do you have for me, a future automaton?"

"How can I stress the intrinsic value of our brain? Sorry for repeating, but it IS made for making decisions. Besides, there is someone who oversees the whole situation, someone who knows our past, present and future, someone who directs us if we make a wrong move. The question is whether we are willing to be guided."

"I know whom you're talking about and what you're getting at. I was taught all this in high school. But...

I have discarded Him two years ago... My area of study demanded me to do so."

"Oh?" I asked, "But have you found the answer in our field? Can they replace Him with something else?"

After a long pause, he replied, "I guess not...or else I wouldn't be so uptight today. How do you see all these, Irene? Doesn't all this automation bother you?"

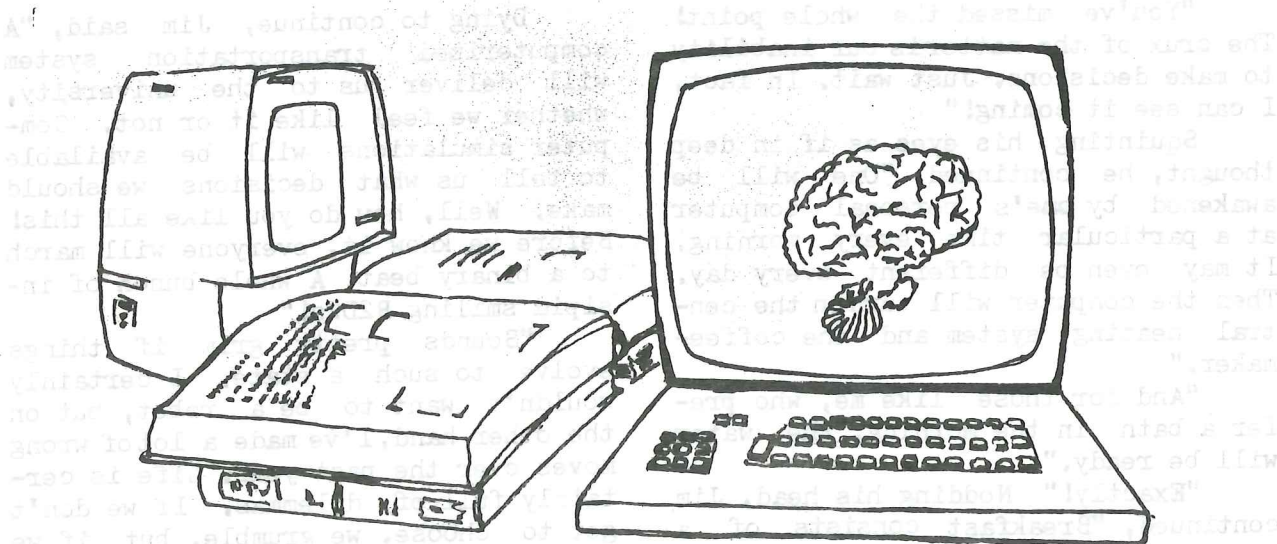
Looking straight at him, I could see a longing in his eyes, mixed with an air of fatigue.

"Frankly, they don't bother me because I know that everything is in control. Jim, it's not a matter of right or wrong in the advancement of microprocessors. The key is whether we see them in the right perspective and use them in the right way. If we walk closely with Him, we can know for sure. If not, things will get out of control and the result is unpredictable."

Releasing a deep sigh, Jim drank his last drop of coffee. Deep in thought, he stared at the cigarette-charred carpet of the Science lounge.

Presently, he looked up. Patting me on the shoulder, he said, "Maybe you're right..."

Before I could reply, he was already heading towards the coffee line-up...his sixth cup of coffee maybe. ☐





MEMORIES OF

My Tailwagging Friends

- Suzanne -

Someone has stated that it takes a rather cold and mean person to dislike children and animals. That may be too strong a statement, but I find it hard to disagree.

Every so often we hear people say, "Bless the beasts and the childrer." These are two kinds of creatures that appeal to a large percentage of our population. While I am not the kind who easily falls head over heels in love with children, I find it irresistible to love those four-legged creatures at first sight. It sounds crazy to some people, but it is impossible for me to ignore any dog or cat that I accidentally come across. I would make comments like, "Oh! How cute that poodle is!" or "I wish that St. Bernard was my own!" Once as my brother was driving at 40 m.p.h. on a city street, he almost lost control of his car as he heard me, a backseat passenger, exclaim, "WOW! Look at that!" It was only a giant German Shepherd sticking

its head out of a car window to "survey" the downtown traffic.

A lot of children adore dogs or cats. So do a lot of adults! My love for animals, especially dogs (by now you should have noticed that!) has never decreased ever since I was nine, when we got our first puppy as a Christmas present. It was just a mongrel, not a descendant of some well-known pedigree. But for us, it was the best present we could have got.

He was first named Argus, then Lucky, and finally Sidney. (Children tend to be indecisive when it comes to giving names; there are too many choices!) My love for the animal intensified as I grew up with him. I felt proud to be his owner when I took him out, for his gait and disposition showed that he was inferior to no other champion dog. But more important was that I had a friend to listen to my childish blabber when my parents were

too busy. He was rightly termed "man's best friend" as he listened to me singing out-of-tune, with his candid black eyes wide open and head tilted to one side. He never made complaints as he listened, and he always wore that lovely smile on his face as he put out his tongue. (It did not take me long to convince Mom that Sidney always smiled with satisfaction.) Even when young children pulled his tail, giggling greedily, Sidney would tolerate it. There were other memorable moments when he expressed his affection by gently nuzzling against our knees, or running his pink tongue over our cheeks (when Dad was not looking).



I had that first dog of mine for almost nine years. A lengthy illness took his life one day in Spring. No one could understand why I lavished so many tears on a dead, dumb animal, or how I could afford to write elegies for him, when the School Certificate exam was approaching. They were not to be published, nor to be widely read; just fragments of memories that I nursed in solitude. I knew that the God I believed in cared when I grieved, but I could not understand why He allowed me to wallow in that pain of separation. I did not find solace in others' comforting words, either. But Sidney's image kept floating in my mind. For ever I could feel his presence in my

room once I had turned off the light. It was my first **personal** realization of the horror of death.

My first dog had been very affectionate to us. Everyone admired his golden mane, his big round eyes, and his long, bushy tail. Even house guests who disliked dogs found Sidney attractive. Soon after Sidney's death, I got myself another dog that no one had much interest in. The loss of Sidney had been too great a burden to bear and I found myself dependent on the companionship of another canine friend. Terry was given by a close family friend who would otherwise have dumped him somewhere in the remote area of the New Territories. Terry's hair was straggly and unkempt then. Dad called him "monster-like" for he had peculiar colours all over his body, was without a tail, and whimpered to irritate everyone present. That humid April day when Terry arrived at our home, he stared at everyone with suspicious eyes. My sympathy for him somehow grew as I looked at him fretting uneasily. As I gathered my courage to pick up this hostile and unattractive "monster", which was yet a puppy, he quickly found relief in my arms and returned my caress with a grateful look in his eyes.

For the first year he was with us, Terry looked very melancholy sometimes. But we used to say that he had a "split personality". At one moment he would be sullen, shunning us all. At another, he would be jumping up and down to cheer us up. It would be easy to explain why people love pets with beautiful fur, but why I doted on this not-so-attractive newcomer was inexplicable to my mother. She tried, more than once, to persuade me into getting rid of this puppy by tempting suggestions like, "Let's get one of those shaggy ones with hair all over..." I always shook my head before she finished.

Terry came to be lovable in his own way, until both Dad and Mom finally accepted him. By and large, they

counted him as a member of the family and gave him pats on the head when he lay beside them, a treat that Terry greatly appreciated. As I left to come over to Canada for my studies after two years, Mom promised without my making any requests that she would take care of that "silly" dog for me.



She would even handle the tedious task of giving him a bath, which was a dread to both Mom and Terry. In almost every letter I got from home, there was a detailed, up-to-date account of Terry's condition. The most touching scene in years had to be the occasion of my home-coming during one summer vacation. That once unfriendly creature recognized me at my first whisper of his name. Gathering his speed as he saw me, he literally tried to embrace me with his front paws. So overjoyed was he that he swayed his body in an uncontrollable manner, wagging the little gathering of hair that could be called his tail...

Terry passed away during the Christmas of 1977. I did what I had done the first time, years ago -- I cried to my heart's content. But the pain of losing him gradually gave way to a new realization. I am not saying that I have learned to suppress my love for dogs because of that unbearable moment when death takes them

away. But growing up with Sidney and Terry, and finally losing them, have taught me a lesson far more important than feeding, training, and grooming dogs.

My experiences with dogs have taught me something about God's love. When I recall how much I have loved two lowly beasts which meant little to others, I realize how the Creator of all things must love every single person He Himself has made; each one special in His sight. I feel that mine is no comparison to God's kind of love, which is offered to everyone, not just a chosen few. When I recollect the ways my dogs received and returned my love and care, I can see how much it grieves our Heavenly Father when He and His love are ignored by those people whom He has created. When I remember that ominous power of death as my dogs were taken away, I can almost feel the pang of pain that strikes His heart as a person dies without listening to His call for repentance.

I am still nuts about dogs. If I keep one again, (I am sure I will), it will bring me much happiness, just as your loved ones can brighten up your days even in trivial things they do. But God's love exceeds any kind of love on earth. Not only is He the source of joy, but He has also provided salvation for us. Perhaps the question is whether or not we are willing to accept and return His love. □

MOVING?

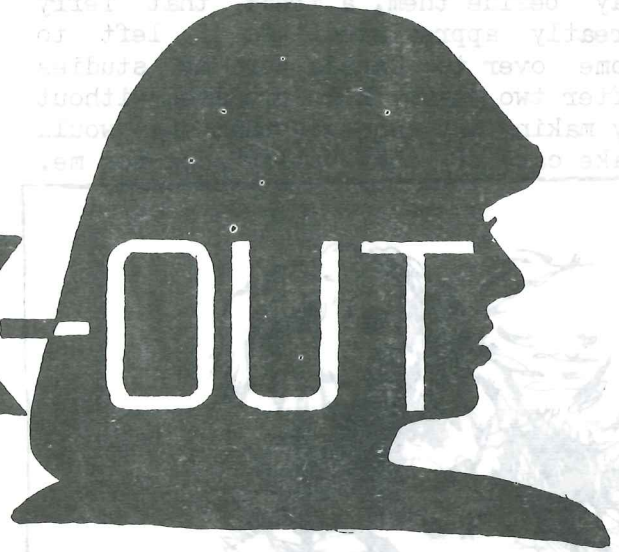
PLEASE NOTIFY US

OF YOUR NEW ADDRESS AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE! YOU CAN USE THE
DECISION SLIP TO DO SO.

THANK YOU.



BLACK-OUT



- Claire -

Canada has always been noted for having an excellent hydro-electric system to provide us with light, heat and energy. But once in a while, we do get a black-out in certain areas of the country.

When darkness comes suddenly, catching us off guard and interrupting with the business we are doing, some of us get very annoyed. Children scream and cry for their parents and parents fumble for candles and electric torches as they try to hush the young ones. Sometimes, childhood fears come back to our minds in the heart of darkness. There is always an eerie feeling when darkness dominates, when you can't see your own hands and can't tell where you are going. Something unknown to us in the dark easily makes our hair stand on end. Perhaps darkness is associated with death and evil ... Crimes like murder happen most often during the night in traditional drama. If you have read Macbeth, you would know what I mean.

We are, on the other hand, fascinated by the lights we see every day. Neon lights glorify commercial products, disco lights blink to the beat of dancing music, and the "Christmas spirit" seems incomplete if houses,

buildings and trees are not decorated with lights of different colours. All these lights bring brightness and colour to our physical eyes, but none of them gives direction to our spiritual search for the meaning of life.

Light, so essential in our daily life, has often been used metaphorically in the Bible.

John, inspired by the Holy Spirit, declared,

"In Him (Jesus) was life,
and that life was the light
of men." - John 1:4

Paul, once struck blind by the light of God (Acts 9:3-6) and transformed into a new man, taught the Corinthians:

"For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

- 2 Corinthians 4:6

Jesus, God becoming man, claimed without fears,

"I am the light of the world,



he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

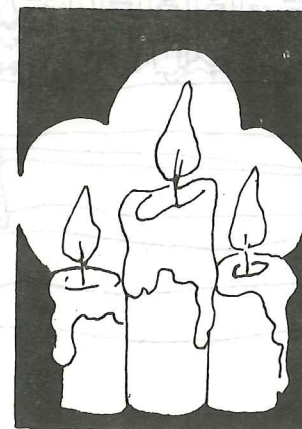
— John 8:12

We are often distracted by different sights and forget that there is more to life than the superficial and materialistic attractions of the world. We do not know that we are experiencing a spiritual blackout constantly in our inclination to sin, although we realize the importance of the light we use. We are liable to have sinful thoughts and utter evil words even though we consider ourselves righteous, feeling sure that we have not committed evil acts. Sin has subtly contaminated our minds. Not only are we left in a wretched state of spiritual blindness, but we are also heading towards the darkness of death, the final outcome of sin.

Take a moment to consider what has been said about Jesus; and more importantly, what Jesus has said about Himself. He is the light of the world. God did not send Him to condemn mankind, but to give life. Jesus did not come to reveal our secret evil thoughts to the world, but He came as a light

willing to shine in the darkness of our minds, if we would accept Him. This light is much more important than all the lights we see with our physical eyes because it is THE Light of Life, without which we have no spiritual direction whatsoever. Moreover, the light of Jesus brings hope of salvation. He has died to wash our sins away so that we may be excused from the punishment of eternal death.

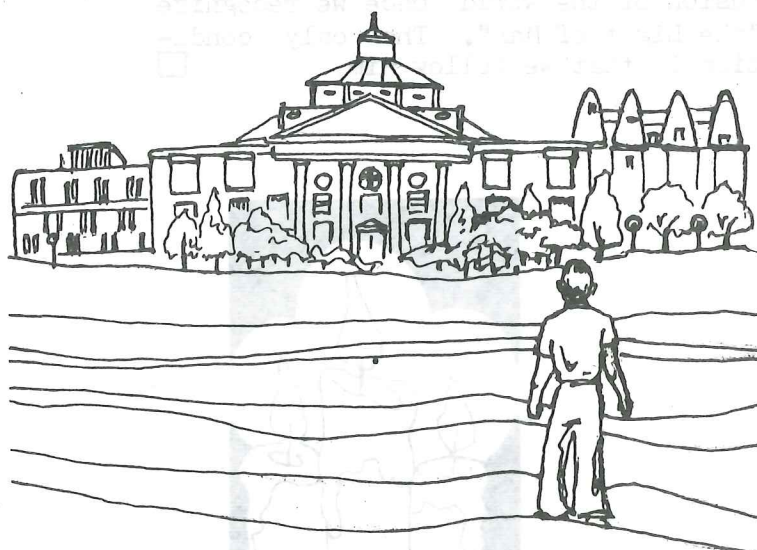
Even if we are physically blind, we need not fear the darkness and confusion of the world once we recognize "the Light of Man". The only condition is that we follow Him. □



Freshman Year

- David Lee -

The author is a second year Microbiology student at the University of Manitoba. He is a transfer student from the University of Michigan.



"The university! I've finally made it! My dream has come true!" These were the thoughts on my mind as I surveyed the campus of the University of Michigan on that September day of 1975. Fresh out of high school with excellent grades, I was about to venture onto the "world of knowledge" in the field of biology.

I moved into a double room in the oldest dormitory on campus. It was a far cry from the comforts of home, but I was happy to have a place to call my own. My roommate was a guy called Ron, and he occupied more than 3/4 of the room. Stereo system, water bed, bird cage, tennis racket, electric guitar, basketball...need I say more? The only things I had were a lamp and some books.

The first thing I noticed about university life, aside from the tons of work to do, was loneliness. "A foreign student has to try hard to fight off loneliness and homesickness, but I know you won't have any trouble." These were the last words of my high school counsellor. Boy! Was she ever wrong about me!

My roommate left me by myself most of the time, preferring to be with his own group of friends. The classmates? They were too busy getting adjusted to school to worry about friends, especially a "straight" guy like me. On Friday night, (they called it "party night"), they avoided me like a plague, calling me "square". I spent most of my day studying and listening to the radio.

Coupled with the tremendous competition that often expressed itself in students who cheated their way

through exams, (their motto seems to have been "To reach my goal without getting caught"), loneliness became a major hurdle for me to overcome. I was not able to concentrate on my studies, and my grades began to decline.

I had come to the university with hopes of finding solutions to major problems such as hunger, poverty, injustice, etc., through education. Instead, I found more problems than ever, including personal problems I had never experienced before. University was supposed to be the "key" to solving my problems, not the cause of them.

I remember the day I heard a radio broadcast about the death of a young Chinese nursing student who had come to study just two months prior to her death. The broadcast mentioned that she might have committed suicide due to loneliness. It couldn't have been her grades -- she was doing quite well in her studies.

A very small article of less than 50 words appeared in the paper the next day. Her neighbours shrugged it off as "one of those things".

"Are you so busy studying that the death of a fellow student does not mean anything to you?" I wanted to shout. This was the exact opposite of how I had expected university students to react. Out of frustration and anger, I took out my soccer ball and kicked it against the wall.

A young coed walked by and said to her friend,

"Look at that crazy guy kicking the ball against the wall. Now I've seen everything!"

Hiding my tears, I thought,

"Crazy? Maybe. I'm not insane, though...", and kicked the ball as hard as I could.

On December 31, 1975, I was pondering on my objectives and goals in the university and beyond, when the lonely feeling became unbearable. I started dressing quickly to be on my way to the pub, although I had never touched alcohol in my life. Who was it that said "Alcohol solves all your problems?"

I was not two steps out the door when my neighbour stopped me. My roommate was with him. Dressed in winter clothing, they looked as if they were going skating.

"Hey, David, would you like to go to a slide presentation? It is being sponsored by a Christian group on campus, and is called 'If I Should Die'," my roommate said hesitantly.

My neighbour joined in the conversation by saying,

"Look, I'm going too. You're all dressed up anyway, so let's go. If you don't like it, you can walk out in the middle."

I must admit that going to the slide show sounded like a better idea than going to the pub, (I had been to slide shows before), so we went. There were about a hundred people already there when we arrived. We sat at the very rear of the room, and waited. Finally, at 8:00 p.m., the slide show started.

The slide show portrayed the aspect of death from the Christian perspective. The question asked was, "If you should die right now, where would you go?" I had a vague idea of where I would end up. I was basically an honest person who did not drink or smoke, so I knew my answer to be heaven. When the narrator asked how I was going to pay for all the sins in my life, which he defined as active rebellion or passive indifference to God, I panicked.

The slide show went on and explained that God loves us and has a wonderful plan for each one of us. "We are not able to experience His wonderful plan for our lives because we are separated from Him due to sin. Jesus Christ has paid for our sins on our behalf, dying on the cross because of them. We must acknowledge that Jesus died on the cross, and accept Him to be the guide of our lives by allowing Him to be our Saviour and Lord." My eyes became moist, and tears started rolling down my cheeks.

When the slide show ended, I realized that He had died for my sins, and

wanted very much to be a part of me. At last I had found my permanent friend. So, after the show, in the presence of many witnesses, I yielded my life to Christ, saying, "Jesus, if You really think you can help me be a brand new person as You've said, go ahead. Please be my friend, and come into my life."

Since then, God has taught me about Himself through the Bible. Because I live so far from home, loneliness is still a part of my life, but a part that God has helped me deal with. He has brought numerous friends into my life, friends who CARE about me.

During the summer of 1976 and 1977, I served as a camp counsellor at Gimli and Dauphin Bible Camps, respectively. The Lord taught me quite a bit during this period. Oh, I also made lots of 8 to 10 year-old friends. Mind you, there were times when I thought of packing up and going home. How would you feel when a young camper woke you up at 2:00 in the morning, just three hours after you had gone to sleep, to ask you, "Mr. Counsellor, is there a God?" or worse still, "Can I go to the bathroom?"

The Lord said in the book of Matthew,

"COME TO ME, ALL WHO ARE WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

"TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU AND LEARN FROM ME, FOR I AM GENTLE AND HUMBLE IN HEART; AND YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

"FOR MY YOKE IS EASY, AND MY LOAD IS LIGHT."

- Matthew 11:28-30

I did not have a person to call my true friend until I met Jesus. I have found that my friendship with the Lord is a free, dynamic relationship that grows each day as I come to know Him better. The Lord has been gracious to me, and as long as life remains in me, I will strive to let His message be known to others. ☐

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In last issue of The Fountain, we announced that there would be a new column called "LETTERS TO THE FOUNTAIN". We hoped to answer questions raised by readers concerning Christianity. However, the response was not as strong as we had expected. We sincerely invite you to direct your questions to us, no matter how difficult or how trivial they may seem to you.

This column is limited to questions concerning your belief and Christianity. Pseudonyms will be used upon request, but you must give us your real name and address.

Address your letters to
LETTERS TO THE FOUNTAIN.

Due to a great demand by our readers, The Fountain is going to reprint selections from the last two Chinese Digests-- "To You" and "Starseekers" in two new volumes, 25,000 copies of each. The budget of reprinting these selections is U.S. \$25,000.

The Fountain is also planning to buy new typewriters so as to improve the quality of typesetting. The combined budget for the typewriters is Can. \$2,400.

Your prayer support will be greatly appreciated.

Notes From My Diary

- P.Y. -

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for this time of quietness. Thank you for the rustling of the leaves outside and the stream of cold night air whistling through the window. It is late Lord, yet I do not feel like going to sleep. There are so many things on my mind, so many things I do not understand.

I praise thee for these words in Isaiah 45: 4,5.

"... I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me...

I girded thee, though thou hast not known me..."

I remember that day well. It was a sunny afternoon in May, several days before the final exams. Mommy told me this strange story which I will never forget.

"I remember taking you to the park one time and you cried for your mother. I tried to hold you, comfort you and cheer you, but you pushed me away. You were about two years old then." She told me as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Oh, I saw many doctors, the best doctors in China, then in Hong Kong. I had all kinds of tests and medical examinations performed, but they could not find anything wrong. Yet even after seven years, I was unable to bear a child.

"I wrote to your mother many times before I was able to convince her to let me adopt you. Then, there was the application for you to leave China, which was granted easily, to everyone's surprise.

"Your Daddy was sick and confined to bed at that time. It was with much reluctance that I left him in Hong Kong to go to China. You were almost two years old then, and your mother was afraid that if I delayed my trip any longer, you would develop lasting memories of your own family.

"It wasn't an easy trip for me to take alone. I had always been a timid person. To return alone to a communist country after your Daddy and I had left with much difficulty and fear was something I may never have the courage to do again.

"Then, there was the problem of your entering Hong Kong. You had no legal papers and I had to bribe the guards at the border...

"Upon arrival in Hong Kong, I was visited by social workers and it was not till a year later that the adoption was made legal.

"You ought not to blame your father and mother. Life was difficult then and they already had two children. At first they wanted an abortion, but after you were born, they loved you very much.

I remember that night, Lord, how I cried and cried. "This could not be really happening to me! Maybe I'm studying too hard. Maybe it is just my imagination. Maybe it is just a dream. Such things only happen in movies and novels, don't they, Lord?... I have been calling these people Mommy and Daddy all my life. Why do things have to change?... Where do I belong, Lord?... Who are my parents?... Who am I?" I remember searching through all the drawers and cupboards, looking for any document, maybe my birth certificate, or an old picture, something that would prove that it was just a dream. But the more I searched, the more disappointed I became. As I looked through the photo album, I realized how ignorant I had been. It had never struck me as odd that there were no baby pictures of me.

Lord, there were millions and millions of children in China. Why me? Why did you bring me out? Why did you open the door for me to leave China to go to Hong Kong? You have given me the nicest home, a chance to be educated and to have a future which I could not possibly have had. You have given me a chance to see much of the world, an opportunity to know You, and to worship You in freedom.

What gave Mommy the courage to return to China? Why was she infertile for so long, but was pregnant a few months after my adoption? She did give birth to a healthy baby girl and a few years later, a boy!

Yes Lord, before I knew You, You surnamed me. Before I knew You, You took care of me. I have seen so many miracles. My friends often say that it is easy for me to believe in You because You have done so many things for me. But it is not because of these things that I believe in You, but because of much greater things You have done for me. Not for me alone, but for everyone.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

Thank You Father
Nov. 1977

DIMENSIONS

OF

LANGUAGE

- Art -

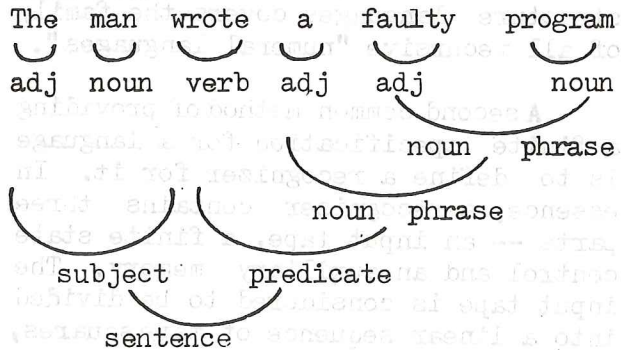
Language is a tool of communication. The most common form of it is the verbal language we use every day. The language we use in conversation is a basic core of interpersonal skills for communicating effectively, and for establishing and maintaining relationships in one-to-one or group situations. There exist two other forms of language used for communication.

Century after century men have been working on the way to develop a universal language. Some linguistic analysts try to optimize languages into models and extract the grammatical rules involved in different languages. At the end of the forties, the methodology of FORMAL LANGUAGE was first introduced. However, the greatest advancement did not occur until 1956, when linguist Noam Chomsky presented his paper.

Formal languages are abstract mathematical objects used to model the syntax of programming languages or natural languages such as English. They have now become the foundation of the advance development of the Compiler Writing used in the parsing of programming languages. Since "Compiler Writing" has progressed to the point where

many portions of a compiler can be isolated into separate modules, it is important that appropriate mathematical tools be available in attempting to optimize the parsing procedure.

In parsing a simple English sentence, the following procedure is carried out.



The following rules are used in parsing the example given above.

$\langle \text{noun phrase} \rangle := \langle \text{adj} \rangle \langle \text{noun} \rangle$
 $\langle \text{adj} \rangle \langle \text{noun phrase} \rangle$

$\langle \text{object} \rangle := \langle \text{noun phrase} \rangle$

$\langle \text{predicate} \rangle := \langle \text{verb} \rangle \langle \text{object} \rangle$

$\langle \text{subject} \rangle := \langle \text{noun phrase} \rangle$

$\langle \text{sentence} \rangle := \langle \text{subject} \rangle \langle \text{predicate} \rangle$

We can see that the language, that is English, would be the subset which consists of all grammatically correct sentences. The compiler parses programming languages in more or less the same fashion.

There are two principal methods of defining formal languages -- the generator and the recognizer. The most common kind of generator is the Chomsky grammar. The four types of grammar (phrase-structure, context-sensitive, context-free and right-linear) are also known as type 0, type 1, type 2 and type 3 grammar respectively. They form a grammatical hierarchy, called the "Chomsky Hierarchy". The family of context-free languages is important because context-free languages provide good approximations to the syntax of programming languages. It is easier to implement the context-free languages since they have definite rules to follow. On the other hand, there are limitations when the programming languages are not included in context-free grammar.

The largest family of languages in the Chomsky hierarchy is the family of phrase-structure (type 0) languages. It represents the largest class which is likely to be considered when modelling natural or artificial languages. This is so because the family of phrase-structure languages covers the family of all recursive "numeral languages".

A second common method of providing a finite specification for a language is to define a recognizer for it. In essence, a recognizer contains three parts -- an input tape, a finite state control and an auxiliary memory. The input tape is considered to be divided into a linear sequence of tape squares, each square containing exactly one input symbol. The memory of a recognizer can be any type of data store. The behaviour of the auxiliary memory for certain recognizers is characterized by two functions -- a store function and a fetch function. The heart of a recognizer is the finite state control, which can be thought of as a program dictating the behaviour of the recognizer. The states of control change in accordance with the input symbol and information fetched from the memory.

The language defined by a recognizer is the set of input strings it accepts. There is a natural class of recognizers for each class of grammar in the Chomsky hierarchy. These recognizers are finite automata, pushdown automata, linear-bound automata and Turing machines.

Apart from the mathematical language, theories and models, there is yet another common language we have to learn. This language, which was made known centuries ago, is AGAPE. Agape is the word used to denote the highest form of love in the New Testament. F.H. Palmer (Chaplain of Fitzwilliam House) describes it as love from God to man: "this is one of the least common words in classical Greek, where it expresses on the few occasions it occurs, that highest and noblest form of love which sees something infinitely

precious in its object."

The structure of the language is built upon the foundation of the relationship between God and man. Agape is a message from God to His creation. Throughout the ages, this message was proclaimed by different classes of people, including prophets, kings, shepherds, priests, lawyers, fishermen, the rich and the noble. No restriction has been placed to confine the language to a specific class of man.

The form of the language is mobile. The language **itself** has dynamically been used in various forms like poetry, drama, biography and historical records. This language contains a message of compassion and forgiveness in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus expressed Agape by His countless acts of compassionate healing, His teaching about God's acceptance of sinners and by being a friend of the unpopular tax-collectors and outcasts.

After the fall of mankind, man has failed to go back to the Creator for fellowship and harmony by himself. Despite the rebellion of man, God never leaves His creation alone. He sacrificed Himself to save man from sin. God left His throne of glory in heaven and came to this world in the likeness of man. Never did He choose to come as a king or a man of great honour, but He humbled Himself by taking the form of a servant to proclaim the kingdom of God with patience and kindness. With His death on the cross, He carried all the sins of the human race for the sake of saving man from eternal punishment.

What motivated Him to die on the cross? John, a follower of Jesus, wrote, "By this, the love of God was manifested in us that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9). This is declared by John to be a demonstration of Agape.

The channel of God's love towards man is open. God is still waiting for man's response to His love. Man must recognize and respond to this language of love in order to make it complete in a fuller sense of communication. □