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TO THE SCIENTISTS, CONSULTANTS, WRITERS AND
EDITORS OF LIFE MAGAZINE WHO HAVE PRODUCED
THE NEW BOOK IN THE LIFE SCIENCE LIBRARY
"T H E C E L L"

December 1966.

Gentlemen,

Having studied my subscription copy of "The Cell" I congratulate you on your brilliant achievement, but I am flabbergasted to see that the central aspect of biological relevance has been completely overlooked or omitted. After this criticism - will you go on reading?

I am a research chemist. For many years I stood dumbfounded before the incredible chemistry performed by every living atom in every living cell. We don't know WHAT they are doing, and HOW they are doing it - and above all, WHY they are doing it!

It was that paramount WHY that baffled me, because there is only one "explanation" for that perpetual miracle of living atoms going on building the most complex organs and organisms, repairing them when damaged, and taking care of the next generation. That "explanation" indicates the existence of an ethical force that pervades living atoms and molecules and make them co-operate with each other, and unselfishly help each other.

I searched books on biology, but found that no researcher and no professor has pointed to this most important and central aspect of biology. None but one - and here my criticism against you begins, because that man is a biologist of world renown, was for many years a member of the Rockefeller Institute, and won the Nobel prize for his biological discoveries, AND YET, YOU HAVE COMPLETELY OMITTED HIS NAME AND HIS MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY!

His name is Alexis Carrel, and here is one relevant sentence from his writings:

"Cells act as though each of them understood mathematics, chemistry, and biology, and unselfishly act for the interest of the entire community."

Of course, in disturbed organisms death through cancer growth and other causes

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occurs, but in healthy organisms unselfish help and ethical co-operation is the rule for the survival of the single specimen and the whole species.

What a grandiose concept to emulate, what a revelation and what a hope for despairing mankind! This is more important to everyone than the most detailed explanations of biological details.

Why have you omitted Carrel? Why have you not said in simple words what I have tried to say in my own writings:

"Can we ever explain the fact that cells can manufacture strange chemicals which induce love and care, conscience and courage in parent birds and animals, making them feed and teach, protect and defend their helpless children so that they shall survive."

"Every intelligent boy and girl can see (once it has been pointed out to them) that within the molecules which build a budding flower, a busy bee, a baby bird, a baby animal, a human baby, A POWER OF MIRACULOUS CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE ATOMS AND THEIR CELLS IS AT WORK in which every cell "unselfishly acts for the interest of the entire community", as Alexis Carrel observed."

Who am I? You may have never heard of me, though my writings are in universities since 1950, but submerged in the mass of scientific "papers" which nobody reads and nobody needs. A day will come when my pioneering work will be recognised as more important than many other scientific disciplines at present treated and maltreated in treatises and trash in thousands of universities. Mankind will realise that my anthropological discovery in the caves of paleolithic man is more important than any other discovery of our time.

Why do I use such monstrous words of immodesty? I use them in exasperation after many years battling against prevailing theories, and now after reading of the latest biological advances as presented in your book, and also to see whether anyone of you will have the humility to think that perhaps that braggard Bliss may have something to say that we don't know. In this case, will you write to me?

Yours sincerely,

C.K. Bliss.