



Dear Friends,

The novel coronavirus pandemic urged us to take a closer look at our microscopic partners: bacteria, viruses and fungi. The total weight of our microbiota is comparable to such major organs as the brain or liver, however, its function in the body is understood very vaguely. The article “We and our microbes” by V. M. Govorun, a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, tells about how one can “get fat for no reason”, about the reasons and consequences of microbial imbalance in the intestines, and about the poorly known procedure of fecal microbiota transplantation.

We are seeing another non-infectious disease spreading like an epidemic – type 2 diabetes. V. V. Klimontov, a professor and clinical expert from Novosibirsk, believes that the reason of this phenomenon is that the human genome formed in conditions that were much less comfortable than today. Facing lack of food and high energy requirements, humans evolved the decrease of insulin resistance, typical for diabetes, as a protective mechanism that improved their chances of survival.

Those who love exotic travel will enjoy an amazing tour of the Japanese islands. The authors of this report, who are actively working historians, observed today’s Japan and saw traces of the past, concealed in the fog of centuries and even millennia. In sumo, the traditional Japanese wrestling, they saw ancient cultural traditions that arose in times when people faced the necessity to avoid massive casualties in their fight for a better place under the sun.

*Academician Nikolay L. Dobretsov,
Editor-in-Chief*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. L. Dobretsov'. The signature is stylized and written in a cursive, flowing manner.