

O SON OF BEING! How couldst thou forget thine own faults and busy thyself with the faults of others? Whoso doeth this is accursed of Me.

--Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Arabic, No 26

The Art of Knowing

Once have I known a young secretary
Who sought ensuring all her tasks well done
Yet obstinate and very firm was she
To work well within her job description.
Soon did I see her unduly upset
And, eager in response to my concern,
With a voice far from proper nor correct,
Hands on hips, jaw set, began she to burn.
Enflamed was she at the turn of events,
When a colleague of hers had kindly said
'could you please start typing these documents,
Since this ain't my job, dear, but yours instead.'
Now against others I try not to talk
Out of fear they'll know all the faults I've got!

Lorraine Hétu Manifold
Brussels,
Apr 93

Each of us is responsible for one life only, and that is our own. Each of us is immeasurably far from being "perfect as our heavenly father is perfect" and the task of perfecting our own life and character is one that requires all our attention, our will-power and energy. If we allow our attention and energy to be taken up in efforts to keep others right and remedy their faults, we are wasting precious time. We are like ploughmen each of whom has his team to manage and his plough to direct, and in order to keep his furrow straight he must keep his eye on his goal and concentrate on his own task. If he looks to this side and that to see how Tom and Harry are getting on and to criticize their ploughing, then his own furrow will assuredly become crooked.

--Shoghi Effendi, published in *Living the Life*, p. 3