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The Evolution of Luminous Technologies

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Evolution is a gift of wonder. Even though some do not believe in it, evolution really happens. In this world, humans are not the only ones that evolve; animals and other things do it too. In the past, we have lived in this planet surviving in many ways; at day we fought bravely, hunting animals and harvest, and at night it was all dark without protection or something to keep us warm. At the beginning, humans did not know anything about the existence of sources of light that could also keep them warm until a miracle came and they discovered fire.

Finding fire was limited to its natural way like obtaining it from a branch that started to burn because of a lightning bolt, but then as if it was destiny who decided it, humans learned to use and create fire. From that moment on, fire has indispensable for our lives. It had such importance because it helped us with almost everything we needed like making our labors easier. Fire was irreplaceable in a lot of tasks, like when we cooked food to avoid dangerous diseases or at night to illuminate in the dark and warm ourselves. Until then, we kept using fire, but then we realized that burning every piece of wood we found was not the only way to produce fire, so we decided to create fire with oil lamps. These lamps were made with something that would contain oil made of vegetable fiber and they used a wick that drew up fuel to the flame, but until the fifth century B.C. these lamps were of common use in domestic houses.

Mankind is very curious, so we discovered other ways to produce fire again. In the Middle Age, candles with tallow of animal origin were made in order to have another optional way to bright a place. Later, the tallow was replaced with bee wax, and as the years passed the oil lamp was remastered many times with different options of fuel or improvements. Around the eighteen hundreds, another fuel for lamps that became famous was gas. It was very common to walk through a street at night and find them illuminated by gas lamps. Even though man had progressed a lot, they were not satisfied; they wanted something new that could innovate the whole world's illumination.

Thomas Edison was one of those who was not satisfied. He was the one who had the little sparkle in his head to start with the invention of a practical long lasting light, the electric light bulb. This is an incandescent light bulb that works by heating up a wire filament to high temperatures. It is a revolutionary invention that would

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change our lives forever because until today it is one of the best inventions in the world.

As years passed, most men were satisfied, but there were some few who were still curious about what could happen if we do some modifications to the actual invention. This led to discover that we could make a fluorescent lamp that was energetically more efficient than the incandescent light bulb, and also the fluorescent lamp produces more light because they work with mercury vapor that starts to bright when they receive a gas discharge. There is another type of light source called LED. This source of light was discovered in 1907, but this source of light has a lot of color tones and until two thousand they produced a blue and white LED light and started using it as a light bulb because it has more advantages than incandescent and fluorescent light sources, such as lower energy consumption, longer lifetime and smaller size. Finally, what is wonderful about mankind is that we are always curious. It will never stop and this curiosity is what makes us keep improving and innovating; so who knows what kind of light sources will bright our path to greatness in the future? That is the magic of life, of mankind, of evolution and of technology.