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NOTES FROM THE DESK

IN MEMORIAM – Dr. David Gardner, March 22, 1941 – April 2, 2013

On April 2, 2013, Dr. David Garner, President of the Theosophical Society in Canada, made his transition. He had just turned 72 on March 22. David had been at The Grace Hospital Hospice in Toronto for eight days. His brother was there with him when he transitioned. David never married, but devoted his life to his spiritual pursuits. He was always curious, an avid reader, a music lover and a convincing writer. His lectures and presentations were always thought provoking, as David intended them to be.

A gentle soul, he appreciated nature and was a keen observer of animals and their habits. He could have written a definitive book on pigeons, had he lived long enough to do so. David was a loyal friend and valued each of his friendships. He maintained correspondence with many Theosophists, Martinists and Rosicrucians from various parts of the world and truly valued these contacts. They were all people like David himself, who preferred to correspond by personal letter. He was a man who lived without much interest in, or need for, technology. Possessing an active mental life, David always had opinions and comments to offer on any subject under discussion. His presence in the organizations he lived for will be greatly missed.

David was one of a kind. While driving him to and from various meetings over many years, I got to know him quite well. I heard many stories about his childhood and his pranks at school. He was undoubtedly a precocious lad – the type I would probably have enjoyed having in one of my classes when teaching. His sense of humour was unique and disarming at times.

Kenneth David Gardner was born in Hamilton, Ontario, on March 22, 1941. He has two younger siblings, a sister, Linda Kapoor, and a brother, Rev. Philip Gardner. A lifelong music

OBJECTIVES:

To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

To encourage the Study of Comparative religion, Philosophy and Science.

To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.



lover, David earned his ARCT at the age of 16. He retained perfect pitch throughout his life. He was an amazing leader when doing the Rosicrucian vowel sounds.

He graduated from McMaster University with an Honours degree in Mathematics and Theoretical Physics. He then attended University of Toronto where he earned a Masters Degree in Meteorology. He then studied Meteorology at MIT in Boston.

When he saw an ad in FATE magazine and investigated, he was introduced to Rosicrucians and Martinists. Many of them became his lifelong friends. David was attracted to the study of Rosicrucianism and became a member of AMORC in 1974. He attended many special session over the years at Rosicrucian Park in San Diego, California. He became a Martinist in 1979, and discovered the teachings of the International College of Esoteric Studies (ICES). These studies were originally called Martinist Studies through the International College of Martinist Studies (ICOMS). Through the ICES organization, David earned a doctorate in Esoteric Studies.

David became a member of the order Militia Crucifera Evangelisca (OMCE). He was an initiated Knights Templar.

David was the President of the Theosophical Society in Canada at the time of his transition. He first joined the Theosophical Society in 1991. He became Secretary Treasurer of the Toronto Theosophical Society in 1993, and then

President of the Canadian organization in 1995. He retained memberships in both organizations.

In all of the above societies and organizations, David was a very active member. He served on Initiation teams, took major roles in Rituals and Dramas, conducted workshops and delivered many lectures. He also contributed many articles to the theosophical magazine, *The Theosophist*.

David was cremated and laid to rest beside his parents in Burlington, ON. A Memorial service in the form of a Musical Tribute was held for him at his childhood church, Westdale United Church in Hamilton, on May 5. The service was conducted by Rev. Judith Johnson. David's brother Phillip was the organist and pianist, and his sister, Linda Kapoor, was the soloist. Lois Brisbois read Ecclesiastes, from Sacred writings: The Tanakh. Rev. Johnson read from the writings of Helena Blavatsky (*The Secret Doctrine*). A reception for family and friends was held after the service in the Hazel Broker Parlour. David would have been well pleased.

On June 23, David was also remembered at a special service at Grace Hospital Hospice for all those who transitioned there during the past three months.

Lois Brisbois, Theosophical Society in Canada.

BASIC THEOSOPHY

BY DR. DAVID GARDNER

Theosophy differs from religion in many important respects – it proposes no fixed dogma. This poses an interested question – if there is no dogma, how may one tell what is Theosophy and what is not? A comparative study of the writings of theosophical authors does reveal contradictions. This leads some students to set up one or two authors as their official authority and to condemn any who disagree with them. This is not the right attitude because it creates the very thing which a theosophist ought to eschew, namely dogma. Ultimately, we must recall that, at our current level of evolution, we are not omniscient and have the capacity to err.

The important quality we need in this line of study is open-mindedness. This means that we must be prepared to examine ideas that are new to us and recognize when new evidence reveals that the previous concept was in error and needs revision. In science, the existence of multiple theories to explain the same phenomenon indicates an insufficiency of knowledge and a need for research. In theosophy, the same approach should be taken. The value of comparative study, which our Society encourages, is that the existence of contradictions and the consequent need for research will be discovered, whereas, if we limit ourselves to a single author, we may erroneously conclude that the truth, in regard to certain points, is settled, when, in fact, it is not. The mistake invariably made by dogmatist resides in the idea that certain author or book represents absolute authority and that it is not permissible to contradict that source or to dare to go beyond it. History

demonstrates the complete folly of such a viewpoint, for we are constantly making new discoveries and modifying or correcting former ideas.

This is most evident in the fields of science and technology. But, in religion, the resistance to novelty is often fierce. As recently noted by Tom Harpur, the people who are leaving the mainline churches are not migrating to the more conservative ones—they are eschewing religion altogether as an outmoded relic of primitive thought. As those who do so are the more intelligent ones, the result is a loss of vigor in the remnant left behind. Theosophy ought to learn from this and not make the same mistake. Vigorous debate is healthy and to be encouraged, but it must be conducted in a spirit of fairness and integrity. Much of the debate that has existed in theosophical circles has been more emotional than rational, just as it has likewise been in religion, but that merely reflects the general immaturity characteristic of humanity at the present time.

Objects Of The Theosophical Movement

By W. Q. Judge

To form the nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity,

1. Without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;
2. The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
3. The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Following is a brief excerpt from an article by William Q. Judge, first published in August, 1895. He died in April, 1896 at the age of 44. His comments are pertinent even to this day. Judge was co-founder of the Theosophical Society in 1875, with H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

There is a very great difference between the Theosophical Movement and any Theosophical Society. The Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible save in effect, and continuous. A Society formed for theosophical work is a visible organization, an effect, a machine for conserving energy and putting it to use; it is not nor can it be universal, nor is it continuous. Organized theosophical bodies are made by men for their better cooperation, but, mere outer shells, they must change from time to time as human defects come out, as the times change, and as the great underlying spiritual movement compels such alterations.

The Theosophical Movement being continuous, it is to be found in all times and in all nations, wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned. Jacob Boehme's work was a part of it, and so was the Theosophical Society of over one hundred years ago; Luther's reformation must be reckoned as part of it; and the great struggle between Science and Religion, clearly portrayed by Draper, was every bit

as much a motion of the Theosophical Movement as is the present society of that name—indeed that struggle, and the freedom thereby gained for science, were really as important in the advance of the world, as are our different organizations, and among the political examples of the movement is to be counted the independence of the American Colonies, ending in the formation of a great nation, theosophically based on Brotherhood. One can therefore see that to worship an organization, even though it be the beloved theosophical one, is to fall down before form, and to become the slave once more of that dogmatism which our portion of the Theosophical Movement was meant to overthrow.

Notes: the rest of this article can be found in The William Q. Judge Series, No. 3, available from The Theosophical Company. You can check on line.

THE FLY AND THE FOOL ON THE HILL

BY CARL LA FLAMME

There it stands, looming before me, it's white crown poking the clear blue heavens-Mount Shasta-a mighty fortress, rising proudly, majestically, from the lowly valley. It is the birthplace of legends, home to the mystical Lemurians, the world's oldest and wisest civilization, and keepers of the paranormal, the supernatural, the transcendental, the unfathomable, the miraculous, and any other big-syllable metaphysical word one can conjure up. I drive up 1-5, not in my wheezing Mazda pickup struggling to adjust to the new-found heights, but in a chariot driven by the horsepower of 150 white stallions. This will be my first spiritual hour. A significant marker on my road to enlightenment. How long have I traveled? How many books have I read? Seminars attended? Gurus followed? Crystals polished? Chakras opened? I have worked hard and long to achieve higher consciousness, and today, at the top of one of the highest spiritual points in the kingdom known as California, I will find my reward-no reward is too small a word-my anointment, my initiation, heck, my inauguration into the higher realms! To say I am emotionally primed for a transformative event is an understatement of cosmic proportions.

I have heard much about this New Age Mecca, frequently told to me in reverent whispers throughout numerous coffee houses, bookstores, and self-help workshops across the great divide. Those in the "know" say Lemurians, direct descendants of Adam and Eve, still live on the moun-

tain and if you are truly prepared they will make contact with you. I'm told many people experience prophetic visions, illumination and even ascension into the realms where Ascended Master's await! I'm ready! Boy am I ready! Sitting next to me, my wife takes a more down to earth approach, "oohing" and "ahhing" at the simple beauty of the mountain, and wondering aloud if there are any good places to eat. How she can even think of eating at a time like this is beyond me and my higher-than-thou revelry, but I say nothing, keeping my judgment to myself like any enlightened master. I take my ability to remain silent as yet another sign of my preparedness for higher realms and begin going over my speech to the Lemurians.

We stop for gas at a little town of Shasta. I keep my eyes glued for anyone with a protruding bump on their forehead-a supposed sign of being a direct Lemurian descendent, but alas, everyone here looks pretty much like anyone else-if not worse: the gas station attendant shuffles about looking horribly hungover and the cashier sits glassy-eyed behind the counter flipping through a wrestling magazine and puffing on a Kool. I quickly let my tinge of disappointment pass - the Lemurian must be waiting for me further up the mountain.

The ride up the mountain is filled with nervous anticipation as I strain every which way looking for something mystical to take place. My wife admonishes me to keep my eyes on the road ahead, but I pay little

Continued

heed. Who knows what phenomena the next turn will bring? However, the closest we come to the paranormal is a brush with death via a close call with the front end of a Winnebago.

The road to MT. Shasta ends in a parking lot at about 12'000 feet. Here hikers, bikers, and other vacationers stroll the grounds, camping and picnicking, just like at any other park. Yet, before disappointment can set in, I spot an old trail that ascends further up the mountain. It is overgrown with brush and obviously hasn't been used much these past few years. Eureka! I cry as I get an intuitive flash that this seldom used trail will take us to the promised land beyond the area designated for the commoners. A place where only the elected are allowed to enter!

I urge my wife along, and we climb the mountain to the snow line, following a trail away from the crowds and into the vestiges of vegetation. Finally, we reach "The Place" – a ridge high above the road offering a beautiful view of the Sierra mountain tops as far as the eye can see. It is nature at its most majestic and re-splendent. "This is the place!" I exclaim and my wife seems relieved that I have finally found whatever it is I'm looking for.

I sit down to enter into what I have already proclaimed as my "greatest meditation ever" while awaiting higher contact with my Lemurian hosts. However, no longer than a few seconds later the peace is inter-

rupted by a peculiarly familiar and annoying buzz. I open my eyes and come face to face with the biggest horsefly I've ever seen! Quicker than you can say OM, I leave my newfound peace and tranquility and sink into my familiar world of rage and aggravation.

"How can people be so inconsiderate as to defile these holy grounds with their garbage! Don't they have any respect for the sacred? No wonder the world is going to hell! I close my eyes and blindly swat the fly away, but it does not take the hint. In fact, it seems to become bolder with every swat of the hand, buzzing ever nearer to my nose, ear and mouth. After a few seconds, that seemed like an eternity, I jump up in a fury, swinging wildly at this annoying pest. "Get out of here before the Lemurian come! Can't you see I'm awaiting higher contact? Finally, after dodging several flying fists, my fly takes flight.

As I sit back down I see my wife several yards away meditating peacefully. Her face looks absolutely radiant as she seems to bask in the light of total peace, contentment and joy. I hate her for it, I close my eyes and restart my meditation, yet no sooner do I clear my mind, than my tranquility is once again violated by the annoying buzz of the fly. This time my intellect kicks into high gear as I plot its impending doom. I will get this fly if it's the last thing I do!

I don't move as it buzzes my ear like one

of those barnstorming biplanes at an air show. Instead I wait, like a cat perched on a windowsill, for the fly to land. Using every psychic mind trick in the book I order it to land where I can get a good look at it. Being a receptive fly it responds almost instantly, making itself at home on a patch of my arm hairs. Slowly, I bring my free hand up. One well-placed whack and my peace will be restored. The fly, oblivious to my presence, begins to clean itself of whatever debris a fly finds filthy. I slap my arm with deadly precision, yet upon lifting my hand to view the remains I am instead confronted with its miraculous getaway! The realization of the fly's great escape and the fact that it is once again barnstorming my ears, sends me into a rage not seen since the days of the Old Testament. I jump up with my arms flailing about as I chase the fly down my sacred trail. Now I am one with the thought of killing this fly! This maniacal insect has ruined my life and any chance I have of making contact with a Lemurian or an Ascended Master, or even one of those roly-poly Cherubim or Seribums for that matter!

And then suddenly I stop running –to this day I'm not sure why. Maybe it was the beauty of the mountain tops before me, or the melting snow that had leaked into my sneakers, or maybe it was simply the utter futility of chasing a fly or the dreams of finding spiritual validity through someone or something outside myself. Whatever it is, it causes me to stop and stand in wonder and awe at the beauty around me. To marvel at the silence . To feel in the vast aloneness of this glorious mountain top a connection to the very Essence of my being. I go back to my spot and sit down. No sooner do I settle in than the fly

returns, but this time it's okay, everything is okay as it is, and I realize that if I just accept things as they come I will find what I am looking for.

The fly, seems my calmness, perches itself upon my shoulder and we sit there , the fly and I, for a long , long time, both of us just simply gazing at the wonder and beauty of life around us. There is no spectacular vision, buring bush, or Lemurians in white robes to initiate me. It is simply a peaceful moment. Yet in that moment I feel a calming presence that brings a sense of connection to the oneness of life, and for this fool on the hill that moment means everything.

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POETRY

THE SEEKER OF THE LIGHT

BY BOHDAN

The wind has brought dark clouds
From across the mountains
To settle in the valley
Where mankind did dwell
The fires alone could not lighten
The darkness that dwelled in man's ignorance
For man had groped through a forest so thick
That sunlight could not penetrate
In his despair man awoke to his heart
And a glimmer of light shone upon his being
For now he began to question his existence ,
His actions and thoughts
A love profound had awoke in man's mind
His desire to know
And the thirst to feel love
Because the turning point in man's hope
For the truth that was always there
A gentle breeze came out from the East
And it pushed the dark clouds away
And lo and behold
Man stood in a world
That lifted his spirits so high
The darkness had gone
The flame in man's heart
Had shone far and bright
For now his conscience
Had become the seeker of the light

THANKS
BY BOHDAN

Let us face the East
So we may greet the day
As the sun comes up to lift our spirits
Our hearts and soul rejoice
Once more we can thank our Loving God
Who has given us another day
To enjoy all of his creation
Oh what joy, our world might bring
And in the morning the birds will sing
Pristine waters and good clean air
Will vitalize our bodies
As we prepare for another day
And when night falls its not the end
For it is then when prayer is sent
Thanking God for a lovely day
And as we sleep throughout the night
The Lord does keep us in his fold
Preparing us for another
Glorious and beautiful day to behold
I thank you lord with all my heart
For letting me see another day

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

A publication of this kind cannot exist without your support, so we welcome all editorial suggestions and seek contributing editors for essays on a wide range of theosophical themes. And, in the true spirit of dialogue and debate we look forward to letters to the editor, comments, and suggestions for the content and themes of this journal.

Letters intended for publication should be restricted to no more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to shorten any letter unless the writer states that it must be published in full or not at all. The editor will contact the writer prior to publication date - please include a phone number and or email address with all correspondence.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The Library of the Toronto Theosophical Society is available to members of the Theosophical Society and it is a collection of books about Theosophy as well as many books from the world's numerous great religions, philosophies, and systems of thought. With books collected over the course of a century, our library is an excellent reference for those interested in studying these systems of thought.

The library is open to the general public for browsing during the following times:

LIBRARY HOURS:

Tuesdays 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Saturdays 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Book loans are free to members of the society. However, the general public is free to read and study within our library during library hours. Contact us to find out how to become a member and for location information.

LIBRARY BORROWING PROCEDURE:

To join the Library a subscription of \$15.00 is required and annually thereafter.

A maximum of 3 books may be borrowed for a period of 1 month.

Library Hours - Tuesday 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm and Saturday 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

For more details go to the website:
<http://toronto-theosophy.org/library.html>

SUGGESTED READING

Blavatsky's Secret Books
David Reigle & Nancy Reigle

The Lost Light
Alvin Boyd Kuhn

The Inner Reality
Paul Brunton