

A few introductory sentences precede the Stairs. Although most people do not pay attention to them, these ideas are of fundamental importance in the eyes of those who have good sense.

The introduction clarifies:

“He who wipeth not away the filth with which the parent’s body may have been defiled by an enemy, neither loves the parent nor honours himself. He who defendeth not the persecuted and the helpless, who giveth not of his food to the starving nor draweth water from his well for the thirsty, hath been born too soon in human shape. Behold the truth before you.”

Then the Golden Stairs say:

A clean life,
 an open mind,
 a pure heart,
 an eager intellect,
 an unveiled spiritual perception,
 a brotherliness for one’s co-disciple, [2]
 a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction,
 a loyal sense of duty to the teacher, [3]
 a willing obedience to the behests of truth, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that teacher to be in possession of it;
 a courageous endurance of personal injustice,
 a brave declaration of principles,
 a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, and
 a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the secret science (*Gupta-Vidya*) depicts -
 these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom. [4]

The exact sequence of the Golden Stairs is not necessarily rigid, in its application to the life of a student. Any specific stair can be seen as the first one. That will depend on the temperament of the pilgrim and the ethical challenges he faces at a given moment.

Every stair contains, in a way, all the others.

Such a *golden ladder* has been used since ancient time by students of the esoteric wisdom. It works as a powerful mantra, because it sums up the “path to heaven” which one must tread. Many an apprentice uses to repeat these axioms, slowly examining the practical implications of each one of them, in the present scenario of his life.

When looked at from the point of view of their essence, the Golden Stairs correspond to the ladder of Jacob, which combines the celestial and terrestrial levels of consciousness (Genesis, 28: 11-12). The Stairs also have much in common with the Golden Verses of Pythagoras. [5]

These various approaches to the inner awakening of one’s soul refer to Antahkarana, the “bridge” or ladder existing in each individual and whose function is to connect his lower self to his higher self, or the mortal mind to immortal spirit.

NOTES:

[1] “The Friendly Philosopher”, Robert Crosbie, Theosophy Company, Los Angeles, 416 pp., 1946, p. 37.

[2] Every living being is our co-disciple. All are companions in soul-learning.

[3] Who is the teacher? The work “Light on the Path”, which has essentially the same source as Golden Stairs, clarifies: “Intelligence is impartial: no man is your enemy: no man is your friend. All like are your teachers.” (“Light on the Path”, Theosophy Co., India, p. 24.) However, there are sacred and central sources of spiritual teaching, and one’s access to them must be obtained and preserved. The idea of this verse could also be expressed thus: “**a loyal sense of duty to the source of the teaching and inspiration**”. For the source is not personal, and it is not motionless. The source may be found in different places and forms. Yet it must be respected in one’s heart, for one to deserve and to preserve contact with it. It is the inner affinity that provides the magnetic conditions necessary to learn from an elevated source of wisdom.

[4] “Collected Writings”, H. P. Blavatsky, TPH, India/USA, volume XII, p. 503. The Golden Stairs have been divulged in various other publications.

[5] See the Golden Verses of Pythagoras [in our associated websites](#).

000

Click to read the article “[Commentaries to the Golden Stairs](#)”.

000

The Life of Boris de Zirkoff

The Editor Who Compiled the Writings of Helena Blavatsky Never Went to School and Never Had a Job

One of the leading theosophists in the 20th century, Boris de Zirkoff was the great-grandnephew of Helena P. Blavatsky and edited her “Collected Writings”.

Born in Russia on March 7, 1902, Boris felt an early inclination towards theosophy. He wrote about it in his Autobiographical notes:

“About nine years of age I distinctly saw my mother’s worried look when I told her that a little man about one foot tall in a multi-colored dress and night-cap was coming out of the fireplace and played with me. We talked about the fire and the twigs in the fireplace. I was interested in whether I could meet some other gnomes or salamanders, but he never brought any.”

During the first World War, Boris was 14 years old when the Karma of Russia accelerated in an unusual way. He writes:

“On the 16th of December, 1916, Rasputin was murdered, and this event seemed to precipitate all sorts of changes. Very soon afterwards the Revolutionary engaged in various violent actions (...). Eventually, the Czar had to abdicate to meet the demands for a constitutional change, and the power passed into the hands of a Provisional Government.”

In 1917, Boris and his family left Russia. In 1923 he lived in Stockholm when he first came in contact with Theosophy. After a meeting with Katherine Tingley, he transferred his residence to Point Loma, California. He joined the Point Loma Theosophical Society in January 1924 and in the same year, at 22, he saw what his lifetime task would be and began working on it.

He wrote:

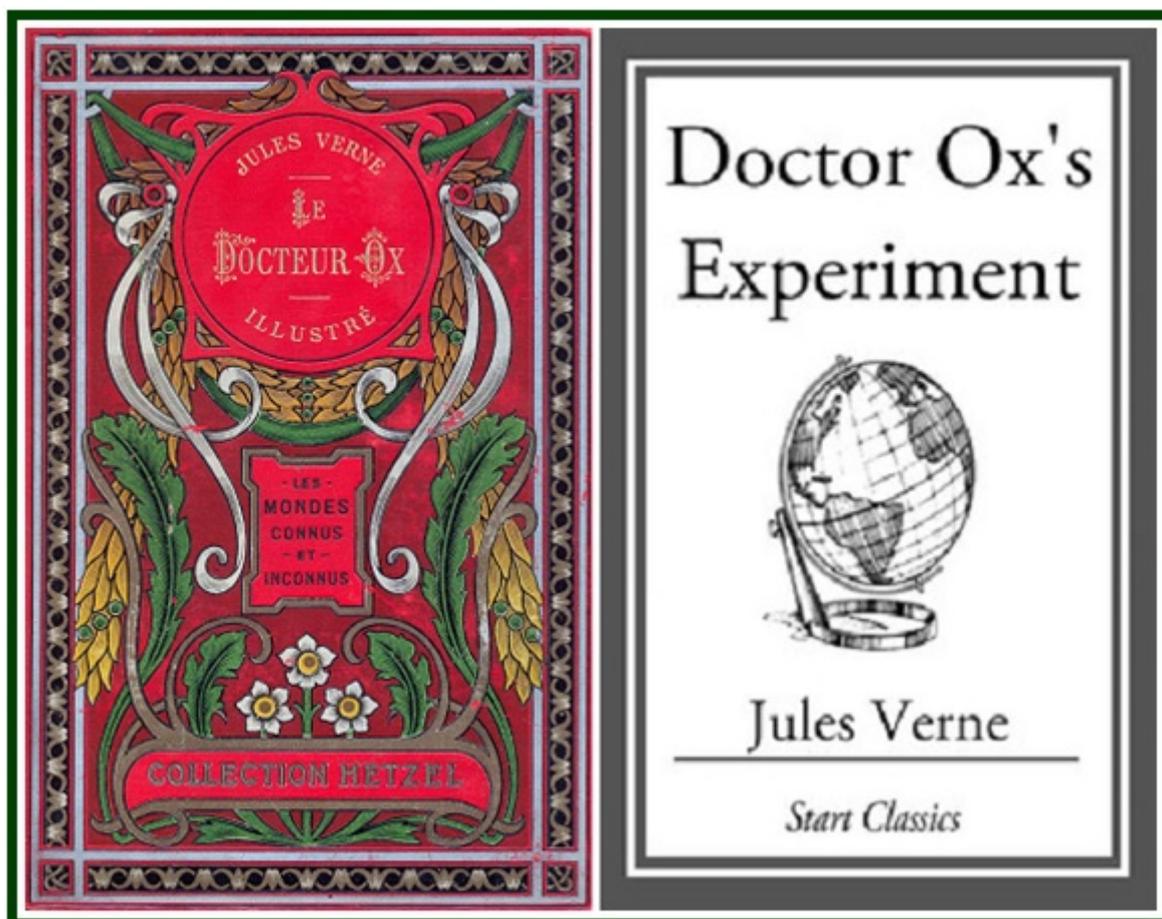
“... I took a resolution to compile H.P.B.’s works into one uniform edition ...

[See the entire article “The Life of Boris de Zirkoff”](#)

000

The Ethics of Modern Knowledge

Jules Verne and *Doctor Ox* in the 21st Century



Two of the editions of the story, one of them in French

The short story “Doctor Ox’s Experiment”, by Jules Verne, is one of the many stories written by the French writer which have a theosophical meaning and spiritual importance.

The small city of Quiquendone, in Flanders, exists “in spite of geographies”. No one will find it in any map, ancient or modern. Yet it is there, says Jules Verne. And time has no hurry to flow in Quiquendone.

Everyone leads a slow life and the people are happy because of this. There is but one policeman, who has nothing to do in such a role. The burgomaster spends long years making no administrative decision regarding the city, and all citizens live in peace.[1]

One day, however, someone arrives to Quiquendone who brings a great technological innovation. Progress and comfort are coming. The new technology is spectacular. The city changes. Everything becomes accelerated. The atmosphere gets tense, and hatred emerges. There is no calm or quietness any longer.

Born on the 8 of February, Jules Verne is a master in the literature of all time. With an ironical language, he makes an irreverent satire of the false technocratic progress, which destroys the basis of social harmony and makes it hard to preserve respectful cooperation among people.

The story “Doctor Ox’s Experiment” shows that there is a direct relation between the slow moderation in talking and acting and a deep, durable feeling of happiness.

A visionary prophet, a pioneer of science-fiction, Jules Verne (1828-1905) denounces that material progress - if seen as a goal in itself - is carried away by blind feelings like anxiety and personal ambition. Once this takes place, the fever of selfishness provokes unnecessary levels of conflict and fear and makes everyone unhappy.

The lesson of a simple life is taught by theosophy and the higher wisdom present in the different religions.

In the 21st century, it will be necessary to reclaim the principle of slowness and the idea of long term in human affairs. To live slowly is the blessing. A calm voluntary simplicity stimulates one’s ability to understand life and allows us to see the fact that the main progress to be sought is the progress of the soul. (CCA)

NOTE:

[1] This is an important tenet of the Taoist tradition, as we can see in classical works like “Tao Teh Ching” and “Wen-Tzu”.

000

See in our websites the book “**Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories**”, by Jules Verne. It’s the classical 1875 edition published in Boston by James R. Osgood and Company, with 332 pages. [Click to read the book.](#)

000

[A One-Minute Contemplative Video:](#) **The Healing Power of Truthfulness**



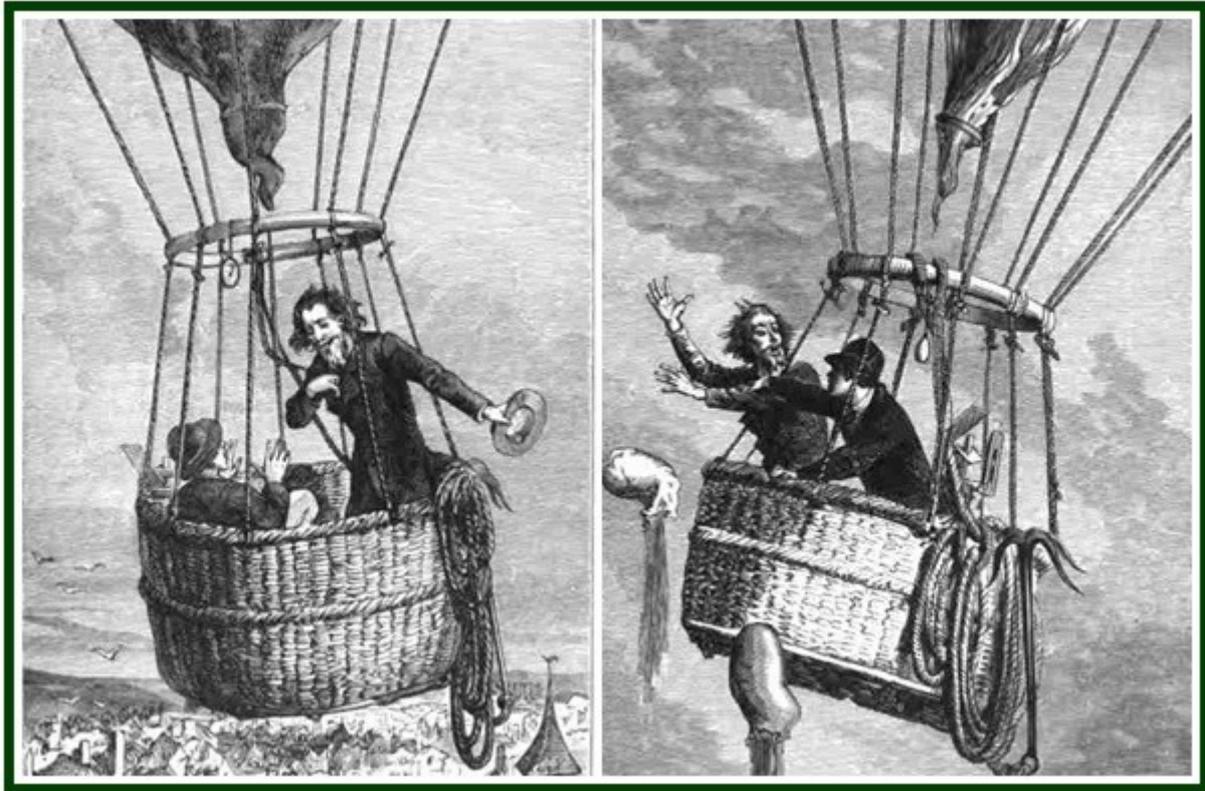
You don’t need a majority of people to change the world for the better.

[Click Here to Watch](#)

000

A Drama in the Air

Jules Verne and the Aim of Science



Two of the original illustrations of Jules Verne Story “A Drama in the Air”

Far from being an unconditional admirer of science, Jules Verne was well aware of the danger that occurs each time technological knowledge gets to the wrong hands.

Verne did not live to see humanity abandoning all common sense and making atomic bombs during the 1940s. He did not have to live under the nightmare of the Cold War. Yet he indirectly anticipated such a possibility and foresaw the global arms race.

The ethical debate about the healthy (or sickly) use of technical knowledge is present in many stories written by the Verne. In the narrative “A Drama in the Air”, a maddened scholar in the science of air navigation hijacks a balloon in the skies of Germany during the 1850s.

In the delirium of omnipotence experienced by a scientist who searches for power, we have a metaphor of the arms race in the 21st century. The technological knowledge is put at the service of the feeling of contempt for life. The illusion of grandeur replaces the humbleness of those balanced citizens who search for knowledge and have respect for their fellow-citizens.

Upon hijacking the balloon, says the scientist who lost his good sense:

“Here we are, at eight hundred yards. Men are like insects. See! I think we should always contemplate them from this height, to judge correctly of their proportions. The *Place de la Comédie* is transformed into an immense ant-hill. Observe the crowd which is gathered on the quays; and the mountains also get smaller and smaller. We are over the Cathedral. The Main is only a line, cutting the city in two, and the bridge seems a thread thrown between the two banks of the river.”

A French citizen like Jules Verne, Jean-Jacques Rousseau had already made a severe warning in the 1750s about the danger of the selfish use of knowledge. And Rousseau did this while reclaiming the Socratic tradition: the discussion about the right use of knowledge is almost as old as our present humanity.

In the 21st century, we still see human beings considering each other as mere insects to be killed, or hated; or as unconscious beings which one can manipulate in various ways.

What ought one to do about that?

The solution to the problem of technocratic megalomania will not result from mere protests and denunciation. It will be the fruit of silent, constructive examples. It will be the effect of practical demonstrations showing that a balanced life is possible, and solidarity is the law of evolution.

The blind use of high technology must be avoided. Intelligent action is moderate action. It preserves both the citizens' autonomy and ability to think.

It is possible to rise in prudent ways. The destiny of mankind is to reach the highest forms of knowledge having as its method the balanced practice of humbleness, discernment and good will. (CCA)

000

Click to read “**A Drama in the Air**” in the book “**Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories**”, by Jules Verne. [See pages 161-192.](#)

000

Vivekananda, on Defeating Pain

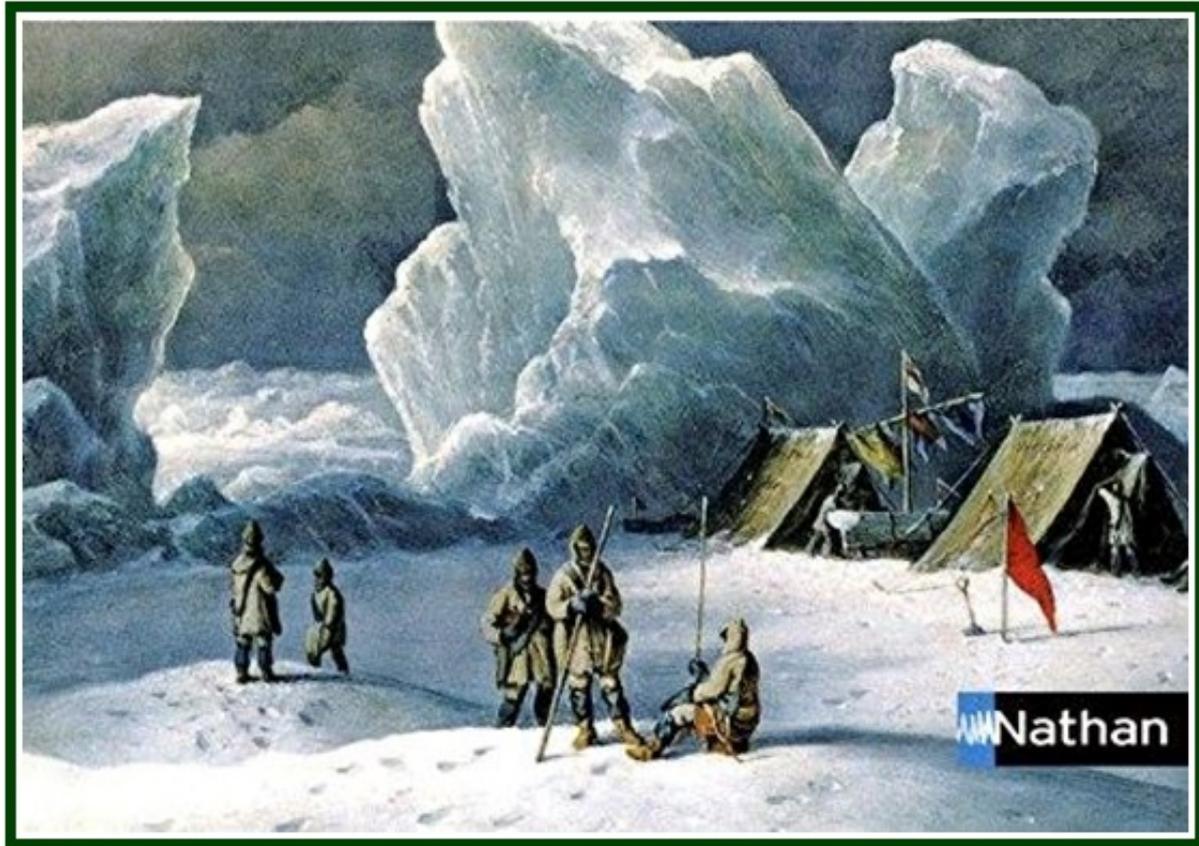
What is the use of such knowledge [*of Raja Yoga*]? In the first place, knowledge itself is the highest reward of knowledge, and secondly, there is also utility in it. It will take away all our misery. When by analysing his own mind, man comes face to face, as it were, with something which is never destroyed, something which is, by its own nature, eternally pure and perfect he will no more be miserable, no more unhappy.

All misery comes from fear, from unsatisfied desire. Man will find that he never dies, and then he will have no more fear of death. When he knows that he is perfect, he will have no more vain desires, and both these causes being absent, there will be no more misery - there will be perfect bliss, even while in this body.

(Swami Vivekananda)

[From the book “*Raja Yoga, Conquering the Internal Nature*”, Swami Vivekananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, India, 1996, 287 pp., see pp. 8-9.]

“A Winter Amid the Ice”, by Verne: **Living in Extreme Conditions**



Front cover image in one of the editions of the story by Verne

The story “A Winter Amid the Ice”, by Jules Verne, introduces the reader to the North Pole region in winter, and examines what happens to human psychology under extreme weather conditions and in the absence of stable routines.

A fascinating read, the short novel shows a basic fact.

Whenever environmental conditions are radically uncertain, human behaviour may get changed by chaotic patterns of vibration - unless there is a strong moral structure on the part of the persons involved.

Pitirim A. Sorokin examines this topic in this book “Man and Society in Calamity”.^[1] Irrational despair and animalistic cruelty during war and geological crises cause millions of deaths beyond that which would be objectively necessary in such catastrophes. As panic spreads, good sense becomes rare.

Spanish philosopher Mira y López wrote that natural phenomena like earthquakes, floods, volcanoes and avalanches, among others, cause subconscious fear and panic. The very possibility that they might occur can be enough to eliminate reason and balance from the

souls [2], unless there is a deep ethics and a social cohesion based on goodness and the habit of mutual help.

While traveling near the extreme North of the planet, the captain of a brig disappears as he tried to help another ship, which was in danger. An expedition is organized to try to locate and rescue the lost navigator. The travelers will have to spend the winter in the polar region, when the Sun never rises for months, and the Moon is the main source of light. What happens to human groups when extremely unstable conditions erode mutual confidence?

The polar region of our planet and the conflict between loyalty and selfishness in human heart are the two main topics in the masterly story by Verne.

“A Winter Amid the Ice” can be read as a study in selfish love and its consequences. It can be seen as a story of ethics and bravery. It certainly gets the reader acquainted with the danger of the glacial regions of the Earth.

And this is not all.

One should examine in what ways the socially chaotic behaviour which has been spreading throughout Western countries in recent decades - in politics, in the family, in the cultural life and other dimensions of coexistence - is connected to the geologic, climatic and environmental emergences which the planet is gradually starting to face, as duly pointed out by Al Gore and other honest thinkers.

It is not correct to pretend that one should do nothing about the cyclic change. This is also not the time to act in careless ways.

In any circumstances, each citizen must strengthen his good sense and commitment to life. It is a privilege of the well-informed to listen to the voice of their own conscience, in the first place. Instabilities come and go, while humanity remains.

Among the basic points which the works of Jules Verne have in common with classical theosophy we can see the principle of respect for life, the courage to deal with difficulties in open ways, a planetary consciousness, the nobility of attitude - and sincerity. These are assets of incalculable value and treasures which do not depend on the rate of the dollar. (CCA)

NOTES:

[1] “Man and Society in Calamity”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York, 1943, 352 pp.

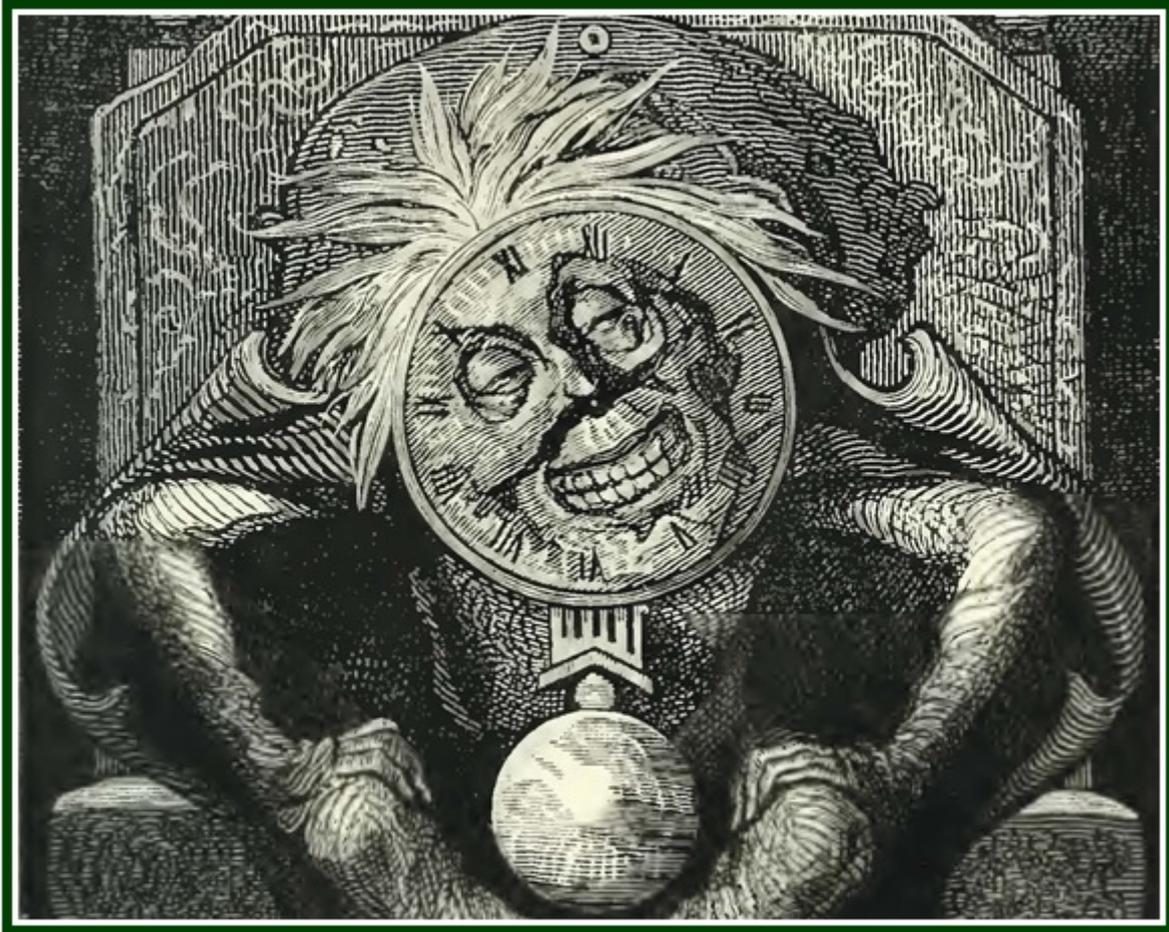
[2] “Quatro Gigantes da Alma”, Mira y López, Livraria José Olímpio, RJ, Brazil, 1980, 224 pages.

000

Click to read “A Winter Amid the Ice” in the book “**Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories**”, by Jules Verne. [See pages 193-294.](#)

000

‘Master Zacharius’, by Verne: Karma, Time and Wisdom



A human watch, in one of the original illustrations in the story by Verne.
A character who symbolizes a challenging Karma before Master Zacharius.

Humans place their souls, so to say, in whatever they do.

Everyone has in each incarnation a certain amount of time in which to perform the actions that are considered important. Meanwhile, Time will keep the record of everything for our debit and credit. All that we make is a projection and a reflection of our inner being. And the effects of our efforts will become our karmic heritage.

A selfish search for power or knowledge, for instance, will have its consequences. We can see that in the story “**Master Zacharius**”, by Jules Verne.

With 57 pages in its 1875 edition [1], the novel is about the mystery of time and the length of a human life.

It teaches a lesson about the use of knowledge. While reading it, one learns about the importance of being humble, so as to keep one's inner dignity in difficult circumstances. Verne makes one of his characters, a hermit, say:

“Pride has destroyed an angel created for good. It is the stumbling-block against which the destinies of man strike. You cannot reason with pride, the principal of all the vices, since, by its very nature, the proud man refuses to listen to it.” [2]

In the Jewish Torah and Christian Bible, the divine intelligence had planted “a Garden in the East”. (Genesis 2:8-10)

In the middle of the garden were the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The common ground between the two sacred trees means that Life and Ethics - or vitality and the knowledge of right and wrong - go together. To search for truth is to aim at the highest morality. If scientists search for Knowledge, they must know that there can be no real knowledge without the ethics of the heart.

Zacharius is the best and most admired watchmaker in Geneva. He infuses the watches he makes with his very soul. He seems to be the oldest man in town. No one remembers the time when he started working. “His age [*is*] past finding out” (p. 104). As he sees his strength beginning to fail, the watches he made start stopping all over the city. What will happen to his watches - and to himself - as his time becomes short?

This is a story about the individualistic search for power over Time. There is a great danger, Jules Verne writes, in “that vanity of science which connects everything with itself, without rising to the infinite source whence the first principles flow.” (p. 140)

If science becomes morally blind, disaster results. Altruism and happiness emerge from a universal view of things.

Eternal life will not be found in the physical world. True wisdom is beyond the chronological or linear time, symbolized by clocks. There is no true knowledge in the absence of selflessness. The two trees of the Paradise are inseparable, as far as humanity is concerned.

(CCA)

NOTES:

[1] “Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories”, by Jules Verne, Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1875, 332 pages. See the story “Master Zacharius”, pages 103-160.

[2] “Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories”, by Jules Verne, pp. 149-150.

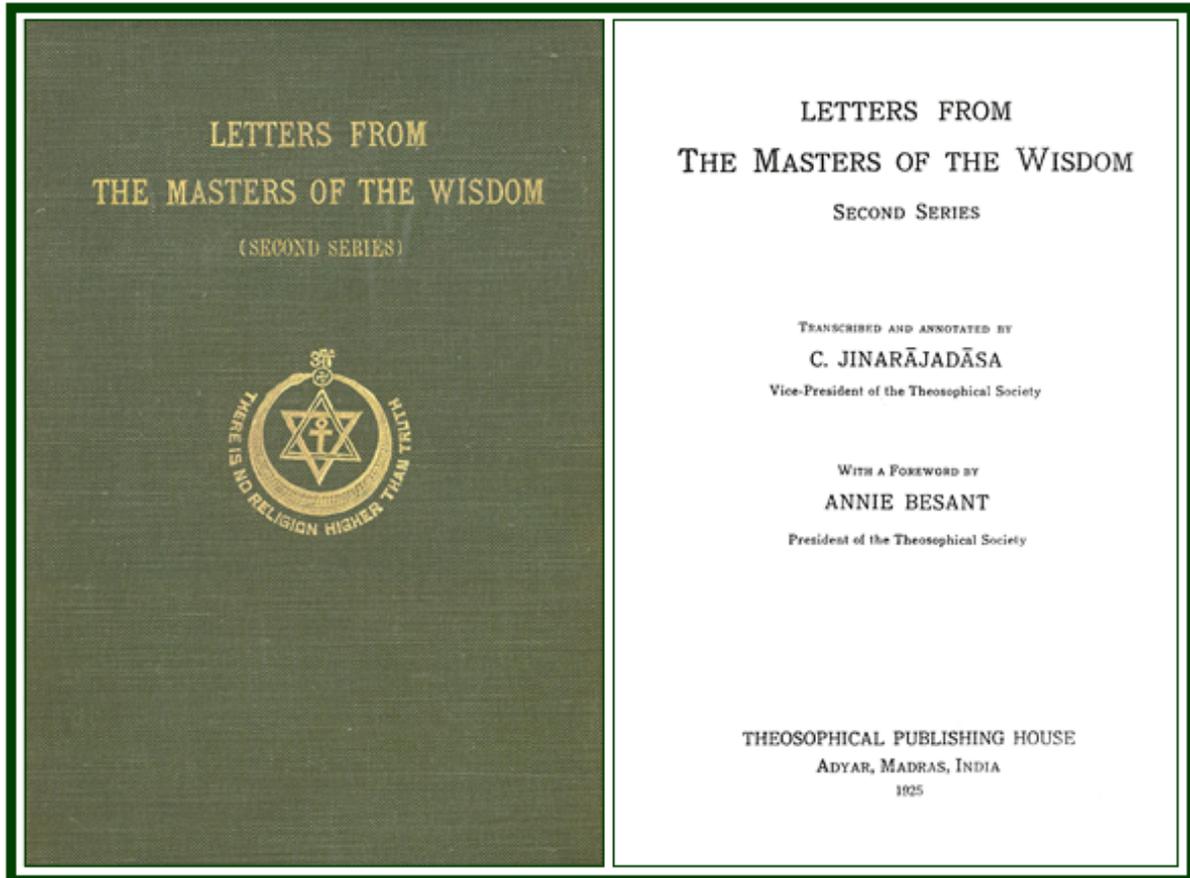
000

Click to read “**A Winter Amid the Ice**” in the book “**Dr. Ox’s Experiment, and Other Stories**”, by Jules Verne. [See pages 193-294.](#)

000

The Writings of an Eastern Master - 24

‘Blind Are They Who See And Perceive Not’



Editorial Note:

Number twenty-four of the series of articles reproducing letters written by the master of Helena Blavatsky consists of letter 26 in the volume “Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - Second Series”. The four footnotes were written by the editor, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa.

The letter shows that by helping others one can help his own karma. The first step is to *deserve* progress. The master makes “a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked”, by defending Henry Olcott, and makes a revealing examination of the use of subtle calumny among disciples and lay disciples, indicating to whom it serves.

(CCA)

Letter 26 [1]

At Upasika’s prayer, I hereby state the following facts: No letter blaming Henry Olcott, accusing him of incompetency, or entrusting the management of the T.S.’s affairs to Mr.

S.G.L. Fox [2], has ever been sent by me, or received by him, whether in London or elsewhere.

The last page of a long business letter written in Oct. 1884 and addressed by me to Upasika - a woman who served me faithfully - contained a para (2-3rd of a page) concerning Mr. L. Fox; and agreeably with her instructions, she sent it to the latter asking for it back and burning it. The rest of my letter was not shown nor has he been allowed to either see or touch it. Therefore he knows nothing of it. In the aforesaid para he was told of the advisability to return forthwith to India for purposes of influencing in the right direction the disturbed minds of the Anglo-Indian *bara-sahabs* [3] and thereby helping his own (L. Fox's) karma. It is for this purpose - no other - that he was asked to go. Any other construction made upon what was written (by Mr. L. Fox or any one else) is false.

It is my desire that any one, who heard Mr. L. Fox blame the "founder" Olcott, those who have listened to the cruel words of censure directed again at Henry Olcott by Mr. L. Fox, should now hear too what I have to say of him.

If Henry has erred, it is because he is human, and being human, often believed in false and foolish advisers more "incompetent" than he whom they so blamed.

If he is "ignorant" of many things, so are his accusers, and because he remains still *uninitiated* the reason for which is very plain: to this day he has *preferred* the *good* of the many to *his own personal benefit*. Having given up the advantages derived from steady, serious chelaship by those who devote themselves to it, for his work for other people - *these are those who now turn against him*.

Let Mr. S.G.L. Fox know what I now say: whatever Henry Olcott's shortcomings we are well pleased with, and *thank him*. Let it be known to *all* what I think, and now state [under] my own signature. Henry Olcott has served and followed his Master "to the last gasp with truth and loyalty". As another great but as erratic English genius truly puts it, "Fools are they who believe in every lying report and have not the energy to admit it; fools they who *disbelieve* in such and have not the courage to proclaim it. Shy and cowardly, vicious and hypocritical those whom calumny can alarm or who will lend a willing ear to it. 'Looks like truth' - they say; does it? Do they forget that 'a lie is never more successful than when she baits her hook with truth'?" Fools! Fools! Who do not see that all Asura-dugpas are at work for the destruction of the Society [4], their only, their last enemy of Salvation on the present troubled waters of Kali-Yug! Blind are they who see and perceive not. Their karma is spun; but what Masters can or *shall* help those who refuse to help themselves.

M .:

NOTES BY C.J.:

[1] I have not been able to see the original of this letter, which is now in North India. A friend has procured for me a copy. In several places I feel sure the transcription is inaccurate.

[2] In the transcription, the name appears as Mr. S.Y.L. Luf, which I take to be a misreading of Mr. S.G.L. Fox - Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, who was in India when the Coulomb attack was started, and who returned to India in 1885. He was a member of the Board of Control of the T.S. when both the Founders left for Europe in 1884. He testified to the genuineness of the phenomena which he witnessed, and is still loyal to the memory of H.P.B.

[3] Hindustani for "big folk".

[4] The attack of the Christian Missionaries using the Coulombs, with the subsequent denunciation of H.P.B. as a fraud by the Society for Psychological Research.

000

The above text transcribes Letter 26 in “**Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - Second Series**”, TPH, Adyar, fourth edition, 1925, pp. 62-65.

Click to see the whole book “[Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - Second Series](#)”.

000

The New Texts in Our Websites

On 6 March, we had 2416 texts in our websites. [1] Of these 5 items were in French, 121 in Spanish, 1133 in English and 1157 in Portuguese. [2]

The following items were published in English between 13 February and 6 March:

(The more recent titles above)

1. **Dr. Ox's Experiment, and Other Stories** - *Jules Verne* [book]
2. **Video: The Mystery of Neptune** - *Independent Lodge of Theosophists*
3. **The Emergence of Responsibility** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
4. **Video: ¿En Dónde Vivimos Nosotros?** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
5. **Cómo Obtener el Autoconocimiento** - *Helena P. Blavatsky*
6. **Video: Where Do We Live?** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
7. **Reuchlin, the Father of Reformation** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
8. **Wen-Tzu, the Philosophy of Taoism** - *Thomas Cleary (Tr.)*
9. **La Transmisión de la Teosofía** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
10. **Kohlberg and the Stages of Moral Development** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
11. **Leadbeater Describe la Vida Política en Marte** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
12. **The Aquarian Theosophist, February 2019**

NOTES:

[1] These are some of our associated websites: www.HelenaBlavatsky.org, www.TheosophyOnline.com, www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com, www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com, www.AmazoniaTeosofica.com.br, www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com.

[2] On 6 March the total number of texts, audios and videos by C. C. Aveline was 1006, in various languages.

000

One Thought Along the Road

The theosophist is open to the suffering of the world, and yet he preserves his peace within, and irradiates harmony to others.

Raja Yoga: **On Happiness and Desire**



So long as there is desire, no real happiness can come. It is only the contemplative, witness-like study of objects that brings to us real enjoyment and happiness.

The animal has its happiness in the senses, the man in his intellect, and the god in spiritual contemplation. It is only to the soul that has attained to this contemplative state that the world really becomes beautiful. To him who desires nothing, and does not mix himself up with them, the manifold changes of nature are one panorama of beauty and sublimity. These ideas have to be understood in Dhyana or meditation.

(Swami Vivekananda)

[Reproduced from the book “Raja Yoga, Conquering the Internal Nature”, by Swami Vivekananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, India, 1996, 287 pp., see pp. 92-93.]

000

The Illusion of Outward Change

Any attempt to transform society, without self-transformation, is like pouring old wine into new bottles. The very defects of human nature will work from within the new system and re-establish injustice and exploitation. The world is an enigmatic mirror of human heart, a faithful reflection of our cherished ideas and ideals. Issues of the world flow from the human heart. It is there that real reform, the “silent revolution”, has to begin. True reform educates the mind and ennobles the heart.

[From the article “The Question of Social Justice”, in **The Theosophical Movement** magazine, Mumbai, India, December 2018 edition, page 16. [Click to see the magazine.](#)]

000

