

H. G. Wells---An Appreciation

Two hundred years from the present day the control of the civilizations of the world is centered in London under one powerful corporation with its board of directors. London itself is one vast hotel, of wonderful appliances and inventions with a common dining hall.

There are only two classes, the aristocracy and the laborers. The latter are unthinking, strange beings who do not even own the clothes upon their backs; the State furnishes a coarse blue suit. They are hardly slaves for they are not compelled to work at any time. They have the privilege of relinquishing their suit and wandering about the city, homeless and penniless.

Carrying this trend of civilization some thousands of years forward, we see a race of small, fair, childishly simple people, the descendants of the rich and, apparently, sole possessors of the earth. They have banished all signs of suffering and poverty, and live a life of idle pleasures. But they are intensely afraid of the dark. On investigation, another race of people is found; they are the Morlocks or the descendants of the poor. Their homes are underground, down long shafts from which one hears the great hum and thud of machinery. There is not a ray of light below and nothing can be seen but here and there two balls of shifting light like cat's eyes in the dark. These little, pale creatures can only see in the dark, when their eyes meet the sun, they stand blinking and dazzled.

Though superior to the Eloi, or the rich race, they slave for them thus from force of habit, but, in a desperate famine at one time, they seized some Eloi for food and ever since then they have stolen out at night to capture the helpless little inhabitants of the upper world.

Going again into the far future, all life is extinct except amphibians. The sun has drawn the earth so close to it that it hangs just in the horizon an immense, glowing ball.

The last stage sees a sand flea, the lone inhabitant of a dense, rarified atmosphere.

Thus has H. G. Wells interpreted our civilization and its out-