

volumes and the last two to the posthumously published works and the volumes of letters. Within each section the entries are arranged chronologically; the detailed and clearly printed list of contents should off-set any disadvantages which the classified arrangement may have for some users. For them, there is also a complete chronological list with item references in Appendix I.

The entry itself is the detailed bibliographical one which we are familiar with in Geoffrey Wells's bibliography, the title-page, full collation and imprint and a description of the cover, with the addition of the height in centimetres. The majority of the entries finish with very useful annotations such as the original periodical publication, earlier drafts, identification of fictional characters with real persons, clues to the slow sale of a book in the date on publishers' advertisements, significant later editions, e.g. Gordon Ray's edition of *Mr. Polly*. and the contents of composite books.

The index is an analytical one, i.e. it records the separate pieces which were collected into composite publications. It lists the titles of Wells's works only and gives but one reference for the majority of headings; there are very few exceptions. It therefore looks very simple but do not be deceived; a note at the head would have been helpful. This very useful index gives references to the first publication of a piece in book or pamphlet form, including the contributions to other men's books where the contribution has an individual title, whilst not indexing the book nor the books for which H.G. wrote prefaces. Most of the short story references are to the collection published by Benn, but if the title of a story is also the title of a previously published collection, then the reference is to that collection. John Hammond has been very thorough in his search for the smaller essays and stories, and he indexes a number of pieces which only achieved book publication in the Atlantic Edition.

If you gain amusement, as I do, from Wells's "picshuas", those sketches which he used when words failed him or perhaps when he needed to illuminate a point, you will be grateful for the list of books, with page references, where these are to be found. The list covers rather more than five pages, yet I hope there are more to come when still unpublished letters see the light of day. Another appendix provides a note on unreprinted writings, most of them from the nineteenth century, including his contributions to the *Science Schools Journal*. For researchers there is a brief description of the resources of the collections at Illinois and Bromley, and a comprehensive list of the studies of Wells and his works.

John Hammond has produced a bibliography of Wells's writings which fills a great need, a definitive work which will be a standard reference book for Wellsian students and collectors for generations to come. We have known him hitherto as founder of the H. G. Wells Society and as its Secretary. Now, at the stroke of a pen, our generation's indebtedness to him is increased a hundredfold.

A.H. WATKINS

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A DIALOGUE

*Philonous* Good morrow, *Hylas*: yet had I not thought to see you on the morrow, when we were to discuss Professor Suvin's collection?  
*Hyl.* Exactly so: at midday sharp you shall receive my manuscript. Yet 'tis the very need for this which brings me thus early to your chambers.

*Phil.* By which I gather there are matters in this book on which you seek my advice. Do you feel then that in this matter the servants have not done justice to the Master?

*Hyl.* Not so, good *Philonous*. — well, not exactly so. Though to be sure, 'The Folktale, Wells and Modern Science Fiction' presents but a weak analogy. When Tatyana Chernysheva states, "The folktale is an indispensable constructive element for creating new science fictional imagery," I confess that I feel myself constrained to laughter. David Hughes is in better case when he dwells on 'The Garden in Wells Early Science Fiction', since Wells, to be sure, was entrained by T.H. Huxley's biological imperatives. Mr. Hughes speaks truly of "Manichean forces", and quotes Huxley as referring privately to his Romanes lecture as "really an effort to put the Christian doctrine that Satan is the Prince of this world upon a scientific foundation". Is it really so surprising that Wells ended his writing career with "The Mind at the End of Its Tether?" Even so, I feel that this author also has stretched a conceit as far as were wise, if not further.

*Phil.* Yet I take it you must have better things to report?

*Hyl.* Aye, that I have. Now, taking Patrick Parrinders, 'Imagining The Future: Wells and Zamyatin'. It seems to me that here —

*Phil.* One moment, good *Hylas*, before we plunge further into these good things. It seemed to me you had some query as to the book as a whole? and if this were so, would we not do best to discuss this first?

*Hyl.* You are as perceptive as ever, and I see I did well to parade these doubts of mine before you. Item: I dispute Darko Suvin's contention that Wells's "achievement in science fiction is central to this genre's further course". To be the master of a genre is one thing; to

be said to have directed its main course thereafter is another. Even a glance at a listing of such writings from the mid-nineteenth-century onward should demonstrate that Wells' triumph was to have developed this genre rather than to have originated it.

*Phil.* Yet surely the man was the greatest science fiction writer of his time, surely?

*Hyl.* Without a shadow of doubt. Yet does it still seem to me that had he not existed, the science fiction we read today would not differ from what it is in any major degree.

*Phil.* There's a thesis with but one true test. Alas! the Director of Arts hath artfully and craftily made free with my Time Machine, to test a thesis of his own regarding Stone Age Art: till he returns, we have no way to visit a Wells-less timeline, and establish the truth of the matter ... Meanwhile, you are surely not saying that Professor Suvin and his Associate Editor, Robert Philimus, have laboured in vain?

*Hyl.* By no means! Of eleven contributions here, most are freighted with information that will be new to many, or with new insights into familiar information, while at least four are models of manner. My strictures, you apprehend, relate to a fear of mismatch between matter and form. Robert Philimus' 'Borges and Wells and The Labyrinth of Time', for instance, does handsomely on Borges, yet recalls Wells himself only at the last minute. Howard Fink on Orwell and Patrick Parrinder on Zamyatin evoke much more genuine echoes, arrived at with no sense of strain, and noted with as much affection as zest.

*Phil.* Well: so your doubts were not that serious. But what was that you were saying about Parrinder?

*Hyl.* That he puts his finger on a key point in this matter of Wells as father-figure of science fiction when he says: "Zamyatin does not seem to have doubted that science fiction could be a major literary genre: Wells wrote his masterpieces in the conviction that it could not". Do you not feel that, as Verne rejected Wells, so might Wells well have rejected Heinlein — or at least, Heinlein in certain moods? And as for Barry Malzberg —

*Phil.* Marry, Sir — each man makes a book over in his own image. And I counsel you; think not of what would have been Heinlein's effect on Wells, but of Wells' true effect on Heinlein. Else will the true value of this work be wasted. But enough of this: I suspect that as yet you have said nothing as to the book's chief delights. Forget your scruples as to balance, but speak out as to excellence.

*Hyl.* Just so ... I perceive that your advice as even such as I merit, though perhaps better than I deserve, and that I do ill to dwell over-much on the weaknesses in this colloquium. To Darko Suvin, I know, goes a very large part of the credit for getting together the 1970 Symposium at McGill University from which it sprang — and 'twere ill to cavil at such industry. More; I must confess myself overwhelmed by Professor Suvin's own contribution: 'A Grammar of Form and a Criticism of Fact; THE TIME MACHINE as a structural Model for Science Fiction'. Here the good Professor compares the orthodox Darwinist and Huxleyan canon with that used in THE TIME MACHINE,

employing the skills of dialectic to produce a schematic analysis applicable to sf writers from Moore to Aldiss.

*Phil.* And sound, would you say?

*Hyl.* Most insightful. I wager many a reader will be lifting out these grids and trying them out for size and fit hither and yon in the literature, while no doubt trying to surpass them.

*Phil.* The sincerest form of flattery ... Yet you have not straightly answered my question.

*Hyl.* True. While I cannot refute the truth nor deny the skills which Professor Suvin has here deployed, yet must I say that something escapes, for me, between the lines of this grid, that something being the peculiar magic of Wells prose. 'Tis as though one would explain the ways of a man's mind through an examination of the hinges of his skeleton. The Pleiades remain yet unbound ...

*Phil.* Let us then agree to leave these things to the tastes of our student Wellsians, to lean which way they will. Speak on, meantime, as to the other good things in store.

*Hyl.* Some slight overlap, perhaps, on Darko Suvin's work is to be noted in J.P. Vernier's 'Evolution as a Literary Theme in H.G. Wells' Science Fiction', yet happily — for me, at least — the emphasis is here more on the literature than the evolution, so that we have some fire with our ice. Sakyo Komatsu in 'H.G. Wells and Japanese Science Fiction' gives us a fascinating account of the impact of Wells' vision on a culture at once like and unlike our own. Especially was I struck by the remark that "Wells ... presupposes more than an acquaintance with mere technology. Only when there is a conception of man as a species and of his place in universal space and time do Wells' speculations about the shape and destiny of man become intelligible". Well said!

*Phil.* I hope, good Hylas, you have had the wit to leave the best till last.

*Hyl.* You would scarce have forgiven me had I not. That best, I conceive, is to be found in R.D. Mullen's "I Told You So": Wells' Last Decade, 1936-45' and with his Annotated Survey of Books and Pamphlets by Wells. This last contains 113 items *not* counting the full details of the Atlantic Edition. Before the thought of these jewels lost in darkness, the mind falls away. Let me present you just one item: 'The Heritage of the Past. The Psychology of Cruelty. Considers, in fourteen sections, the possibility that man's addiction to cruelty may prove an insuperable barrier to the realization of a just world order and hence to his survival'.

*Phil.* 113 items, you say. I *must* get that Time Machine back. It is intolerable that that arrogant fool of an Art Director can pull status in order to take advantage of my — but forgive me; these are no worries of yours. Good Hylas, let me say at once that the price of your fine sensibilities is an over-scrupulous conscience in matters literary. 'Tis a good fault, and not one that I would chide. Do you go back now and work on your manuscript: I warrant when you bring it here at noon of the morrow you shall be as proud to present it as I shall be to read it. Speaking of reading: could you bring the actual book with you? The more you speak of 't the more the thought of it works upon my mind ...

Yet I perceive you frown? Come; the book is yours; I seek not even so much as to borrow it for a day, merely to gaze upon it. You need fear no designs of mine.

*Hyl.* Good master, you may borrow it and welcome. Who could the better deserve it? It is not that that worries me, but the thought of inflicting on you the photograph of Wells himself that adorns the jacket. Adorns, did I say? Disfigures were a better word: better the thing had been burned when 'twere taken.

*Phil.* Trouble yourself not. When you have seen as many summers as I, you will have seen as many spoiled bookjackets. The words are all: the appearance a detail: 'Tis but marginal. Till tomorrow,

George Hay  
25.8.1977

RECENT BOOKS ON WELLS

- D. Suvin and R. Philmus, ed. *H.G. Wells and Modern Science-Fiction*. Bucknell U.P., May 1977.
- R. Bloom. *Anatomies of Egotism*. A reading of Wells's last novels: *The Bulpington of Blup, Brynhild, Apropos of Dolores*.
- J.R. Hammond. *Herbert George Wells, An Annotated Bibliography of His Works*. New York, Garland, July 1977.

RECENT ARTICLES ON WELLS.

- Patrick Parrinder. "The 'English Jules Verne' ". *Science-Fiction Studies*, II:I (March 1975) 98.
- David Y. Hughes and R. Philmus. "The Early Science Journalism of H.G. Wells: Addenda." *Science-Fiction Studies*, II:I (March 1975) 98.
- Max A. Webb. "The Missing Father and the Theme of Alienation in H.G. Wells's *Tono-Bungay*." *English Literature in Transition*, XVIII:4 (1975) 243-247.
- Janice Neuleib. "Technology and Theocracy: the Cosmic Voyages of Wells and Lewis". *Extrapolation*, XVI:2 (May 1975) 130-136.
- Alex Eisenstein. "The Time Machine and the End of Man". *Science-Fiction Studies*, III:2 (July 1976) 161-165.
- David Y. Hughes. "Bergonzi and After in the Criticism of Wells's SF". *Science-Fiction Studies*, III:2 (July 1976) 165-174.
- Roger Bowen. "Science, Myth and Fiction in H.G. Wells's *Island of Dr. Moreau*". *Studies in the Novel* (Fall 1976) 318-335.
- Patrick Parrinder. "News from Nowhere, *The Time Machine* and the Break-Up of Classical Realism". *Science-Fiction Studies*. III:3 (Nov. 1976) 265-274.