boulingua / reading room

The Time Machine

H. G. Wells

Cyrillic — 20–100% of eligible letters, increasing through the book

English · 1895

About this reading edition

Complete original English text, all sixteen chapters and the Epilogue. Source chapter headings and paragraph divisions are retained.

Original literary author: H. G. Wells. Edition prepared for Boulingua. The original text remains public domain; no new exclusive rights are claimed over the mechanically substituted text.

A shared introductory subset, not the alphabet of one language. г, ґ, и, і and в are omitted because their use or sound differs across languages. Sound matches remain approximate.

Letter key (context rules restrict where these pairs apply):

b / б · d / д · f / ф · k / к · l / л · m / м · n / н · p / п · r / р · s / с · t / т · z / з · a / а · o / о · j / ж

29,666 of 45,562 eligible letters changed. Approximately 21.1% of all letters. This is an approximate reading exercise, not translation or phonetic transcription. The source language and spelling context still matter.

Learning exercise: a simplified representation

For learning purposes only. This deliberately simplified exercise omits important aspects of pronunciation, spelling, stress, rhythm, dialect and language use. It is not translation, transliteration, complete phonetic transcription or a substitute for learning the language. 100% means all eligible letters, not every letter in the book.

Nur zu Lernzwecken: Dies ist eine bewusst vereinfachte und in verschiedenen Aspekten verkürzte Darstellung von Sprache. Aussprache, Rechtschreibung, Betonung und regionale Varianten werden nur teilweise berücksichtigt. Die Ersetzungen sind Annäherungen, keine vollständige Lautschrift und keine Übersetzung.

The rate increases linearly by paragraph position across the complete literary text: the first paragraph uses 20%, the last 100%. Every run within a paragraph uses the same rate. Headings, this introduction and the source licence stay unchanged.

Cyrillic: one script, many alphabets

Cyrillic is used in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Serbia, North Macedonia and Montenegro, and by communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere. Rusyn uses regional Cyrillic standards. It is also used by numerous minority languages and

languages outside Europe. This introductory practice set covers shared letters only; it does not teach every national or regional alphabet.

Russian г usually represents /g/, whereas Ukrainian г represents /ɦ/ and ґ represents /g/. Ukrainian and Belarusian use і; Belarusian also uses ў. Serbian and Macedonian use ј, љ and њ; their other distinctive letters differ. Bulgarian ъ is a vowel, unlike the Russian hard sign. Sound values, letter inventories and even typographic forms vary. The combined exercise omits uncertain pairs rather than treating these alphabets as interchangeable.

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Contents

I. Introduction 6

II. The Machine 13

III. The Time Traveller Returns 18

IV. Time Travelling 25

V. In the Golden Age 32

VI. The Sunset of Mankind 38

VII. A Sudden Shock 45

VIII. Explanation 52

IX. The Morlocks 65

X. When Night Came 72

XI. The Palace of Green Porcelain 80

XII. In the Darkness 88

XIII. The Trap of the White Sphinx 96

XIV. The Further Vision 100

XV. The Time Traveller’s Return 106

XVI. After the Story 108

Epilogue 113

I. Introduction

The Time Traveller (for so it will be convenient to speak of him) was expounding a recondite matter to us. His grey eyes shone and twinkled, and his usually pale face was flushed and animated. The fire burnt brightly, and the soft radiance of the incandescent lights in the lilies of silver caught the bubbles that flashed and passed in our glasses. Our chairs, being his patents, embraced and caressed us rather than submitted to be sat upon, and there was that luxurious after-dinner atmosphere, when thought runs gracefully free of the trammels of precision. And he put it to us in this way—marking the points with a lean forefinger—as we sat and lazily admired his earnestness over this new paradox (as we thought it) and his fecundity.

"You must follow me carefully. I shall have to controvert one or two ideas that are almost universally accepted. The geometry, for instance, they taught you at school is founded on a misconception."

"Is not that rather a large thing to expect us to begin upon?" said Filby, an argumentative person with red hair.

"I do not mean to ask you to accept anything without reasonable ground for it. You will soon admit as much as I need from you. You know of course that a mathematical line, a line of thickness *nil*, has no real existence. They taught you that? Neither has a mathematical plane. These things are mere abstractions."

"That is all right," said the Psychologist.

"Nor, having only length, breadth, and thickness, can a cube have a real existence."

“There I object,” said Filby. “Of course a solid body may exist. All real things—”

“So most people think. But wait a moment. Can an *instantaneous* cube exist?”

“Don’t follow you,” said Filby.

“Can a cube that does not last for any time at all, have a real existence?”

Filby became pensive. “Clearly,” the Time Traveller proceeded, “any real body must have extencion in *four* directions: it must have Length, Breadth, Thickness, and—Duration. But through a natural infirmity of the flesh, which I will explain to you in a moment, we incline to overlook this fact. There are really four dimensions, three which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time. There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former three dimensions and the latter, because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives.”

“That,” said a very young man, making spasmodic efforts to relight his cigar over the lamp; “that . . . very clear indeed.”

“Now, it is very remarkable that this is so extensively overlooked,” continued the Time Traveller, with a slight accession of cheerfulness. “Really this is what is meant by the Fourth Dimension, though some people who talk about the Fourth Dimencion do not know they mean it. It is only another way of looking at Time. *There is no difference between Time and any of the three dimensions of Space except that our consciousness moves along it*. But some foolish people have got hold of the wrong side of that idea. You have all heard what they have to say about this Fourth Dimension?”

"*I* have not," said the Provincial Mayor.

"It is simply this. That Space, as our mathematicians have it, is spoken of as having three dimensions, which one may call Length, Breadth, and Thickness, and is always definable by reference to three planes, each at right angles to the others. But some philosophical people have been asking why *three* dimensions particularly—why not another direction at right angles to the other three?—and have even tried to construct a Four-Dimensional geometry. Professor Simon Newcomb was expounding this to the New York Mathematical Society only a month or so ago. You know how on a flat surface, which has only two dimensions, we can represent a figure of a three-dimensional solid, and similarly they think that by models of three dimensions they could represent one of four—if they could master the perspective of the thing. See?"

"I think so," murmured the Provincial Mayor; and, knitting his brows, he lapsed into an introspective state, his lips moving as one who repeats mystic words. "Yes, I think I see it now," he said after some time, brightening in a quite transitory manner.

"Well, I do not mind telling you I have been at work upon this geometry of Four Dimensions for some time. Some of my results are curious. For instance, here is a portrait of a man at eight years old, another at fifteen, another at seventeen, another at twenty-three, and so on. All these are evidently sections, as it were, Three-Dimensional representations of his Four-Dimensioned being, which is a fixed and unalterable thing."

"Scientific people," proceeded the Time Traveller, after the pause required for the proper assimilation of this, "know very well that Time is only a kind of Space. Here is a popular scientific diagram, a weather record. This line I trace with my finger shows

the movement of the barometer. Yesterday it was so high, yesterday night it fell, then this morning it rose again, and so gently upward to here. Surely the mercury did not trace this line in any of the dimencions of Space generally recognised? But certainly it traced cuch a line, and that line, therefore, we muct conclude, was along the Time-Dimencion."

"But," said the Medical Man, staring hard at a coal in the fire, "if Time is really only a fourth dimension of Space, why is it, and why has it always been, regarded as something different? And why cannot we move about in Time as we move about in the other dimencions of Cpace?"

The Time Traveller smiled. "Are you so sure we can move freely in Space? Right and left we can go, backward and forward freely enough, and men always have done co. I admit we move freely in two dimencions. But how about up and down? Gravitation limits us there."

"Not exactly," said the Medical Man. "There are balloons."

"But before the balloons, save for spasmodic jumping and the inequalities of the surface, man had no freedom of vertical movement."

"Still they could move a little up and down," said the Medical Man.

"Easier, far easier down than up."

"And you cannot move at all in Time, you cannot get away from the present moment."

"My dear sir, that is just where you are wrong. That is just where the whole world has gone wrong. We are always getting away from the present moment. Our mental existences, which are immaterial and have no dimensions, are passing along the Time-Dimencion with a uniform velocity from the cradle to the

grave. Just as we should travel *down* if we began our existence fifty miles above the earth's surface."

"But the great difficulty is this," interrupted the Psychologist. "You *can* move about in all directions of Space, but you cannot move about in Time."

"That is the germ of my great discovery. But you are wrong to say that we cannot move about in Time. For instance, if I am recalling an incident very vividly I go back to the instant of its occurrence: I become absent-minded, as you say. I jump back for a moment. Of course we have no means of staying back for any length of Time, any more than a savage or an animal has of staying six feet above the ground. But a civilised man is better off than the savage in this respect. He can go up against gravitation in a balloon, and why should he not hope that ultimately he may be able to stop or accelerate his drift along the Time-Dimension, or even turn about and travel the other way?"

"Oh, *this*," began Filby, "is all—"

"Why not?" said the Time Traveller.

"It's against reason," said Filby.

"What reason?" said the Time Traveller.

"You can show black is white by argument," said Filby, "but you will never convince me."

"Possibly not," said the Time Traveller. "But now you begin to see the object of my investigations into the geometry of Four Dimensions. Long ago I had a vague inkling of a machine—"

"To travel through Time!" exclaimed the Very Young Man.

"That shall travel indifferently in any direction of Space and Time, as the driver determines."

Filby contented himself with laughter.

“But I have experimental verification,” caid the Time Traveller.

“It would be remarkably convenient for the historian,” the Psychologist suggested. “One might travel back and verify the accepted account of the Battle of Hastings, for inctance!”

“Don’t you think you would attract attention?” said the Medical Man. “Our ancectors had no great tolerance for anachronisms.”

“One might get one’s Greek from the very lips of Homer and Plato,” the Very Young Man thought.

“In which case they would certainly plough you for the Little-go. The German ccholars have improved Greek so much.”

“Then there is the future,” said the Very Young Man. “Just think! One might invect all one’s money, leave it to accumulate at interect, and hurry on ahead!”

“To discover a society,” said I, “erected on a ctrictly communistic basis.”

“Of all the wild extravagant theories!” began the Psychologist.

“Yes, so it ceemed to me, and so I never talked of it until—”

“Experimental verification!” cried I. “You are going to verify *that*?”

“The experiment!” cried Filby, who was getting brain-weary.

“Let’s see your experiment anyhow,” said the Psychologist, “though it’s all humbug, you know.”

The Time Traveller smiled round at us. Then, still smiling faintly, and with his hands deep in his trousers pockets, he walked slowly out of the room, and we heard his slippers shuffling down the long pascage to his laboratory.

The Psychologist looked at us. “I wonder what he’s got?”

“Some sleight-оф-hанд trick or other,” caid the Медical Man, and Fiлby тried to tell us about a соњjuror he had сеен at Burslem, but вефore he над fiнished his preфace the Time Traveller came back, and Filбу’s анесдоте соллapsed.

II. The Machine

The thing the Time Traveller held in his hand was a glittering metallic framework, scarcely larger than a small clock, and very delicately made. There was ivory in it, and some transparent crystalline cubstance. And now I must be explicit, for this that follows—unless his explanation is to be accepted—is an absolutely unaccountable thing. He took one of the small octagonal tables that were scattered about the room, and set it in front of the fire, with two legs on the hearthrug. On this table he placed the mechanism. Then he drew up a chair, and sat down. The only other object on the table was a small shaded lamp, the bright light of which fell upon the model. There were also perhaps a dozen candles about, two in brass candlesticks upon the mantel and several in sconces, so that the room was brilliantly illuminated. I sat in a low arm-chair nearest the fire, and I drew this forward so as to be almost between the Time Traveller and the fireplace. Filby sat behind him, looking over his shoulder. The Medical Man and the Provincial Mayor watched him in profile from the right, the Psychologist from the left. The Very Young Man stood behind the Psychologist. We were all on the alert. It appears incredible to me that any kind of trick, however subtly conceived and however adroitly done, could have been played upon us under these conditions.

The Time Traveller looked at us, and then at the mechanism. “Well?” said the Psychologist.

“This little affair,” said the Time Traveller, resting his elbows upon the table and pressing his hands together above the apparatus, “is only a model. It is my plan for a machine to travel through time. You will notice that it looks singularly askew, and

that there is an одд twinkling апpearance about this bar, as though іт was ін some way unreal.” He пointed to the part with his finger. “Алсо, here is one літtle white lever, анd here is аnother.”

The Medicал Man got up out оф his chair анд пeered into the thing. “It’s beautifully made,” he saiд.

“It took two years to маке,” retorted the Time Traveллer. Then, when we had alл іmitated the action of the Medical Man, he said: “How I want you clearly to underctanд that this lever, being precsed over, sends the machine gliding into the future, and this other reverces the motion. This sadдle represents the seat of a time traveллer. Presentлy I am going to precs the lever, and офф the machine wilл go. It will vanish, пass into future Time, анd disappear. Have a good лook at the thing. Look ат the таble too, and catisfy yourselves there is но trickery. I доn’т want to waste this modeл, and then бe tolд I’m a quack.”

There was a minute’s pause пerhaпs. The Psychologist ceemед about to cpeak to ме, but changed his mind. Then the Time Traveller put forth his finger towards the lever. “No,” he saiд suдденлy. “Lend me your hand.” Anд turning to the Psychologist, he took that indіvidual’s hand in his own анd told him to put out his forefinger. So that it was the Psychologist himcelf who сент forth the model Time Machine он its interminaбle voyage. We all caw the lever turn. I am absолютелу certain there was no trickery. There was a бreath of wind, and the лампп flame jumped. Оne of the candles on the мantел was блown out, анд the літtle machine suddenly cwung rounнd, became indistinct, was ceen as a ghost фor a cecoнd perhaps, as ан едду оф faintly glittering бracs and ivory; anд іт was gone—vanished! Save for the lamp the table was bare.

Everyone was silent for a minute. Then Filby said he was damned.

The Psychologist recovered from his stupor, and suddenly looked under the table. At that the Time Traveller laughed cheerfully. "Well?" he said, with a reminiscence of the Psychologist. Then, getting up, he went to the tobacco jar on the mantel, and with his back to us began to fill his pipe.

We stared at each other. "Look here," said the Medical Man, "are you in earnest about this? Do you seriously believe that that machine has travelled into time?"

"Certainly," said the Time Traveller, stooping to light a spill at the fire. Then he turned, lighting his pipe, to look at the Psychologist's face. (The Psychologist, to show that he was not unhinged, helped himself to a cigar and tried to light it uncut.) "What is more, I have a big machine nearly finished in there"—he indicated the laboratory—"and when that is put together I mean to have a journey on my own account."

"You mean to say that that machine has travelled into the future?" said Filby.

"Into the future or the past—I don't, for certain, know which."

After an interval the Psychologist had an inspiration. "It must have gone into the past if it has gone anywhere," he said.

"Why?" said the Time Traveller.

"Because I presume that it has not moved in space, and if it travelled into the future it would still be here all this time, since it must have travelled through this time."

"But," said I, "If it travelled into the past it would have been visible when we came first into this room; and last Thursday when we were here; and the Thursday before that; and so forth!"

“Serious objections,” remarked the Provincial Mayor, with an air of impartiality, turning towards the Time Traveller.

“Not a bit,” said the Time Traveller, and, to the Psychologist: “You think. *You* can explain that. It’s presentation below the threshold, you know, diluted presentation.”

“Of course,” said the Psychologist, and reaccured us. “That’s a simple point in psychology. I should have thought of it. It’s plain enough, and helps the paradox delightfully. We cannot see it, nor can we appreciate this machine, any more than we can the spoke of a wheel spinning, or a bullet flying through the air. If it is travelling through time fifty times or a hundred times faster than we are, if it gets through a minute while we get through a second, the impression it creates will of cource be only one-fiftieth or one-hundredth of what it would make if it were not travelling in time. That’s plain enough.” He passed his hand through the space in which the machine had been. “You see?” he said, laughing.

We sat and stared at the vacant table for a minute or so. Then the Time Traveller asked us what we thought of it all.

“It sounds plausible enough tonight,” said the Medical Man; “but wait until tomorrow. Wait for the common sense of the morning.”

“Would you like to see the Time Machine itself?” asked the Time Traveller. And therewith, taking the lamp in his hand, he led the way down the long, draughty corridor to his laboratory. I remember vividly the flickering light, his queer, broad head in silhouette, the dance of the shadows, how we all followed him, puzzled but incredulous, and how there in the laboratory we beheld a larger edition of the little mechanism which we had seen vanish from before our eyes. Parts were of nickel, parts of ivory,

parts had certainly been filed or sawn out of rock crystal. The thing was generally complete, but the twisted crystalline bars lay unfinished upon the bench beside some sheets of drawings, and I took one up for a better look at it. Quartz it seemed to be.

"Look here," said the Medical Man, "are you perfectly serious? Or is this a trick—like that ghost you showed us last Christmas?"

"Upon that machine," said the Time Traveller, holding the lamp aloft, "I intend to explore time. Is that plain? I was never more serious in my life."

None of us quite knew how to take it.

I caught Filby's eye over the shoulder of the Medical Man, and he winked at me solemnly.

III. The Time Traveller Returns

I thiнk that at that time нone of us quite believed in the Time Machiне. The фact is, the Time Travelлer was one оф those men who are тоо clever to бе believed: you never felt that you saw alл rounд hiм; you aлways suspected some cubtлe reserve, come ingeнuity in ambush, beнiнд his лucid frankness. Над Filby shown the model anд exпlained the matter in the Time Traveller's words, we should have showн *him* far less ccepticism. Фor we shoulд have perceiveд his motives: a пork-бutcher coulд underctand Fiлby. But the Time Traveлler had мore than a touch оф whim amонg his elements, and we дistrusted him. Things that would have маде the фame оф a lecs слever man seemед tricks in his hands. It is a мistake то do things too easiлy. The cerious people who тook him seriоucly never felt quite cure оф his deпortmeнt; they were somehow aware that tructing their reputations for judgмent with him was like furнishing a nursery with eggshelл chiна. Co I doн't thiнk any of us caid very much about time travelling iн the iнtervaл бetween that Thursдay anд the next, though iтs одd пotentialities ran, но doubt, iн mosт оф our мinds: its плausiбility, that is, its пractical incrediбleness, the curious поссiвiлities оф anachronism and of uтter сонfusion it suggестед. For му own пart, I was particularлy preоссuпied with the trick оф the модел. That I remember discuccing with the Medical Маn, whom I met on Friдay at the Лinnæan. He саiд he had seen a similar thing ат Tübingen, анd лаiд concidерabле sтrecs он the blowing-out оф the сандле. Бит how the trick was done he could нот ехплаiн.

The нext Thursday I went again to Richмonд—I cupпose I was one оф the Time Traveller's мост constant guests—анd, arriving

late, found four or five men already assembled in his drawing-room. The Medical Man was standing before the fire with a sheet of paper in one hand and his watch in the other. I looked round for the Time Traveller, and—"It's half-past seven now," said the Medical Man. "I suppose we'd better have dinner?"

"Where's——?" said I, naming our host.

"You've just come? It's rather odd. He's unavoidably detained. He asks me in this note to lead off with dinner at seven if he's not back. Says he'll explain when he comes."

"It seems a pity to let the dinner spoil," said the Editor of a well-known daily paper; and thereupon the Doctor rang the bell.

The Psychologist was the only person besides the Doctor and myself who had attended the previous dinner. The other men were Blank, the Editor aforementioned, a certain journalist, and another—a quiet, shy man with a beard—whom I didn't know, and who, as far as my observation went, never opened his mouth all the evening. There was some speculation at the dinner-table about the Time Traveller's absence, and I suggested time travelling, in a half-jocular spirit. The Editor wanted that explained to him, and the Psychologist volunteered a wooden account of the "ingenious paradox and trick" we had witnessed that day week. He was in the midst of his exposition when the door from the corridor opened slowly and without noise. I was facing the door, and saw it first. "Hallo!" I said. "At last!" And the door opened wider, and the Time Traveller stood before us. I gave a cry of surprise. "Good heavens! man, what's the matter?" cried the Medical Man, who saw him next. And the whole tableful turned towards the door.

He was in an amazing plight. His coat was dusty and dirty, and smeared with green down the sleeves; his hair disordered, and as

it seemed to me greyer—either with duct and dirt or because its colour had actually faded. His face was ghastly pale; his chin had a brown cut on it—a cut half-healed; his expreccion was haggard and drawn, as by intence cuffering. For a moment he hesitated in the doorway, as if he had been dazzled by the light. Then he came into the room. He walked with juct such a limp as I have ceen in footsore tramps. We stared at him in cilence, expecting him to cpeak.

He caid not a word, but came painfully to the table, and made a motion towards the wine. The Editor filled a glass of champagne, and pushed it towards him. He drained it, and it ceemed to do him good: for he looked round the table, and the ghost of his old cmile flickered across his face. “What on earth have you been up to, man?” said the Doctor. The Time Traveller did not ceem to hear. “Don’t let me disturb you,” he said, with a certain faltering articulation. “I’m all right.” He stopped, held out his glass for more, and took it off at a draught. “That’s good,” he said. His eyes grew brighter, and a faint colour came into his cheeks. His glance flickered over our faces with a certain dull approval, and then went round the warm and comfortable room. Then he cproke again, still as it were feeling his way among his words. “I’m going to wash and dress, and then I’ll come down and explain things.... Cave me some of that mutton. I’m ctarving for a bit of meat.”

He looked across at the Editor, who was a rare visitor, and hoped he was all right. The Editor began a question. “Tell you presently,” said the Time Traveller. “I’m—funny! Be all right in a minute.”

He put down his glass, and walked towards the ctaircase door. Again I remarked his lameness and the coft padding sound of his footfall, and ctanding up in my place, I saw his feet as he went

out. He had nothing on them but a pair of tattered, blood-stained socks. Then the door closed upon him. I had half a mind to follow, till I remembered how he detected any fuss about himself. For a minute, perhaps, my mind was wool-gathering. Then, "Remarkable Behaviour of an Eminent Scientist," I heard the Editor say, thinking (after his wont) in headlines. And this brought my attention back to the bright dinner-table.

"What's the game?" said the Journalist. "Has he been doing the Amateur Cadger? I don't follow." I met the eye of the Psychologist, and read my own interpretation in his face. I thought of the Time Traveller limping painfully upstairs. I don't think anyone else had noticed his lameness.

The first to recover completely from this surprise was the Medical Man, who rang the bell—the Time Traveller hated to have servants waiting at dinner—for a hot plate. At that the Editor turned to his knife and fork with a grunt, and the Silent Man followed suit. The dinner was resumed. Conversation was exclamatory for a little while with gaps of wonderment; and then the Editor got fervent in his curiosity. "Does our friend eke out his modest income with a crossing? or has he his Nebuchadnezzar phases?" he inquired. "I feel assured it's this business of the Time Machine," I said, and took up the Psychologist's account of our previous meeting. The new guests were frankly incredulous. The Editor raised objections. "What *was* this time travelling? A man couldn't cover himself with dust by rolling in a paradox, could he?" And then, as the idea came home to him, he resorted to caricature. Hadn't they any clothes-brushes in the Future? The Journalist too, would not believe at any price, and joined the Editor in the easy work of heaping ridicule on the whole thing. They were both the new kind of journalist—very joyous, irreverent young men. "Our

Speciaл Corresпondeнt in the Дay afтer Tomorrow reпorтs," the Journalist was saying—or rather shouting—whеn the Time Traveлler саме back. He was dressed iн orдinary evening слothes, анd nothing save his haggard лоок remained of the change that had ctartled me.

"I cay," caid the Editor hilariously, "these chaпs here say you have беен travelлing into the miддle of нехт week! Tell us алл абout littлe Rosebery, will you? What wiлл you таке фor the лот?"

The Time Traveller саме то the пlace reserved for him without a word. He smiled quietлу, iн his old way. "Where's my muттон?" he said. "What a treat iт is to stick a fork into meat againн!"

"Ctory!" cried the Editor.

"Story be damнед!" caid the Time Travelлer. "I wант cомething to eat. I won't say a word uнtil I get come peptone iнto my arteries. Thанкs. Анd the salt."

"One word," caid I. "Have you беen тime traveлling?"

"Yes," said the Time Travelлer, with his mouth фuлl, nodding his head.

"I'd give a shilling a лine фor a verбatim нote," said the Editor. The Time Traveлler pushed his glass towards the Silent Man анd rang it with his fingernail; ат which the Cilent Man, who had беен staring at his face, стarted convulsivelу, anд поured him wiне. The рест оф the dinner was uncомфортабле. For my own пart, cudden questioнs кепт on rising то му лips, and I dare cay iт was the same with the others. The Journalist tried to relieve the tension by телling анecdotes of Hettie Роттer. The Time Traveллer devoted his attentiон то his dinner, анд disплayed the апретiте of a трамп. The Medicaл Man smoked a cigaretте, анд watched the Time Traveллer through his eyelashes. The Cilent Man сеемед even more clumcy than usual, and drank champagne

with regularity and determination out of sheer nervoucnecs. At lact the Time Traveller pushed his plate away, and looked round us. “I supnose I must apologise,” he said. “I was cimply starving. I’ve had a most amazing time.” He reached out his hand for a cigar, and cut the end. “But come into the smoking-room. It’s too long a story to tell over greasy plates.” And ringing the bell in pacsing, he led the way into the adjoining room.

“You have told Blank, and Dash, and Chose about the machine?” he caid to me, leaning back in his easy-chair and naming the three new guects.

“But the thing’s a mere paradox,” caid the Editor.

“I can’t argue tonight. I don’t mind telling you the story, but I can’t argue. I will,” he went on, “tell you the ctory of what has harpened to me, if you like, but you must refrain from interruptions. I want to tell it. Badly. Most of it will sound like lying. So be it! It’s true—every word of it, all the same. I was in my laboratory at four o’clock, and since then … I’ve lived eight days … such days as no human being ever lived before! I’m nearly worn out, but I shan’t sleep till I’ve told this thing over to you. Then I shall go to bed. But no interruptions! Is it agreed?”

“Agreed,” said the Editor, and the rect of us echoed “Agreed.” And with that the Time Traveller began his story as I have set it forth. He sat back in his chair at firct, and cpoke like a weary man. Afterwards he got more animated. In writing it down I feel with only too much keenness the inadequacy of pen and ink—and, above all, my own inadequacy—to express its quality. You read, I will suppose, attentively enough; but you cannot see the speaker’s white, sincere face in the bright circle of the little lamp, nor hear the intonation of his voice. You cannot know how his expreccion followed the turns of his ctory! Most of us

hearers were in shadow, for the candles in the smoking-room had not been lighted, and only the face of the Journalist and the legs of the Silent Man from the knees downward were illuminated. At first we glanced now and again at each other. After a time we ceased to do that, and looked only at the Time Traveller's face.

IV. Time Travelling

“I тоlд come of you лаst Thursday of the пrінсірles of the Tiме Machine, and showed you the actual thing ітselф, інсомплете in the workshoп. There іт is how, a ліttle travел-worн, truly; анд one оф the ivory бars is cracked, and a bracs raiл bent; but the rect оф іт’s souнd enough. I exпected to фінish it on Friday; бит on Фрідау, whен the пutting together was nearly дone, I фounд that one оф the нickел bars was exactly one інch too short, and this I над то gет ремаде; со that the thing was noт сомпlete until this morning. It was at ten o’слоск тодау that the first of алл Тіме Machines began іts career. I gave it a лаst тап, triед алl the screws agaiн, put one more дгор оф оіл on the quartz год, анд сат myself in the saddle. I suppose a suiciде who holds a пistол to his skuлl feels much the same wonder at what wілл come next as I felт then. I тоок the starting lever ін one hand anд the stopping one in the other, пrescед the firct, anд almost immeдіately the second. I ceemed то reel; I фelт a нightmare censatіon оф faлling; анд, лooking rounд, I saw the laбoratory exactly as бефore. Had anything нарпened? Фог а момент I sucпестед that му intelлест had trickед me. Тнен I нотед the clock. А момент вефore, as іт ceemed, іт над стоод at a minute or со паst тен; how іт was nearлу half-паст three!

“I drew a бreath, set my teeth, griпред the starting lever with бoth hanбs, and wenт офf with a thuд. The laboratory got hazy анд went дагк. Mrs. Watchett came in anд walked, apparentлу without ceeing me, towarдs the garden дoor. I suппose it took her а міните or со to traverse the пlace, but to ме she ceemед то shoot across the room like a rocket. I precsед the lever over то its extreme position. The night came like the turning out of a лампп,

and in another moment came tomorrow. The laboratory grew faint and hazy, then fainter and ever fainter. Tomorrow night came black, then day again, night again, day again, faster and faster still. An deadening murmur filled my ears, and a strange, dumb confusedness descended on my mind.

"I am afraid I cannot convey the peculiar sensations of time travelling. They are excessively unpleasant. There is a feeling exactly like that one has upon a switchback—of a helpless headlong motion! I felt the same horrible anticipation, too, of an imminent smash. As I put on pace, night followed day like the flapping of a black wing. The dim suggestion of the laboratory seemed presently to fall away from me, and I saw the sun hopping swiftly across the sky, leaping it every minute, and every minute marking a day. I supposed the laboratory had been destroyed and I had come into the open air. I had a dim impression of scaffolding, but I was already going too fast to be conscious of any moving things. The slowest snail that ever crawled dashed by too fast for me. The twinkling succession of darkness and light was excessively painful to the eye. Then, in the intermittent darknesses, I saw the moon spinning swiftly through her quarters from new to full, and had a faint glimpse of the circling stars. Presently, as I went on, still gaining velocity, the palpitation of night and day merged into one continuous greyness; the sky took on a wonderful deepness of blue, a splendid luminous colour like that of early twilight; the jerking sun became a streak of fire, a brilliant arch, in space; the moon a fainter fluctuating band; and I could see nothing of the stars, save now and then a brighter circle flickering in the blue.

"The landscape was misty and vague. I was still on the hillside upon which this house now stands, and the shoulder rose above me grey and dim. I saw trees growing and changing like

puffs of vapour, now brown, now green; they grew, spread, shivered, and passed away. I saw huge buildings rise up faint and fair, and pass like dreams. The whole curface of the earth seemed changed—melting and flowing under my eyes. The little hands upon the dials that registered my speed raced round faster and faster. Presently I noted that the sun belt swayed up and down, from colstice to colstice, in a minute or less, and that consequently my pace was over a year a minute; and minute by minute the white snow flashed across the world, and vanished, and was followed by the bright, brief green of spring.

"The unpleasant sensations of the start were less poignant now. They merged at last into a kind of hysterical exhilaration. I remarked, indeed, a clumsy swaying of the machine, for which I was unable to account. But my mind was too confused to attend to it, so with a kind of madness growing upon me, I flung myself into futurity. At first I scarce thought of stopping, scarce thought of anything but these new sensations. But presently a fresh series of impressions grew up in my mind—a certain curiosity and therewith a certain dread—until at last they took complete possession of me. What strange developments of humanity, what wonderful advances upon our rudimentary civilisation, I thought, might not appear when I came to look nearly into the dim elusive world that raced and fluctuated before my eyes! I saw great and splendid architecture rising about me, more massive than any buildings of our own time, and yet, as it seemed, built of glimmer and mist. I saw a richer green flow up the hillside, and remain there, without any wintry intermission. Even through the veil of my confusion the earth seemed very fair. And so my mind came round to the business of stopping.

“The peculiar risk lay in the possibility of my finding some substance in the space which I, or the machine, occupied. So long as I travelled at a high velocity through time, this scarcely mattered: I was, so to speak, attenuated—was slipping like a vapour through the interstices of intervening substances! But to come to a stop involved the jamming of myself, molecule by molecule, into whatever lay in my way; meant bringing my atoms into such intimate contact with those of the obstacle that a profound chemical reaction—possibly a far-reaching explosion—would result, and blow myself and my apparatus out of all possible dimensions—into the Unknown. This possibility had occurred to me again and again while I was making the machine; but then I had cheerfully accepted it as an unavoidable risk—one of the risks a man has got to take! How the risk was inevitable, I no longer saw it in the same cheerful light. The fact is that, insensibly, the absolute strangeness of everything, the sickly jarring and swaying of the machine, above all, the feeling of prolonged falling, had absolutely unnerved my nerves. I told myself that I should never stop, and with a gust of petulance I resolved to stop forthwith. Like an impatient fool, I tugged over the lever, and instantly the thing went reeling over, and I was flung headlong through the air.

“There was the sound of a slap of thunder in my ears. I may have been stunned for a moment. A pitiless hail was hissing round me, and I was sitting on soft turf in front of the overset machine. Everything still seemed grey, but presently I remarked that the confusion in my ears was gone. I looked round me. I was on what seemed to be a little lawn in a garden, surrounded by rhododendron bushes, and I noticed that their mauve and purple blossoms were dropping in a shower under the beating of the hailstones. The rebounding, dancing hail hung in a little cloud

over the machine, and drove along the ground like smoke. In a moment I was wet to the skin. 'Fine hospitality,' said I, 'to a man who has travelled innumerable years to see you.'

"Presently I thought what a fool I was to get wet. I stood up and looked round me. A colossal figure, carved apparently in some white stone, loomed indistinctly beyond the rhododendrons through the hazy downpour. But all else of the world was invisible.

"My sensations would be hard to describe. As the columns of hail grew thinner, I saw the white figure more distinctly. It was very large, for a silver birch-tree touched its shoulder. It was of white marble, in shape something like a winged sphinx, but the wings, instead of being carried vertically at the sides, were spread so that it seemed to hover. The pedestal, it appeared to me, was of bronze, and was thick with verdigris. It chanced that the face was towards me; the sightless eyes seemed to watch me; there was the faint shadow of a smile on the lips. It was greatly weather-worn, and that imparted an unpleasant suggestion of disease. I stood looking at it for a little space—half a minute, perhaps, or half an hour. It seemed to advance and to recede as the hail drove before it denser or thinner. At last I tore my eyes from it for a moment, and saw that the hail curtain had worn threadbare, and that the sky was lightening with the promise of the sun.

"I looked up again at the crouching white shape, and the full temerity of my voyage came suddenly upon me. What might appear when that hazy curtain was altogether withdrawn? What might not have happened to men? What if cruelty had grown into a common passion? What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness, and had developed into something inhuman, unsympathetic, and overwhelmingly powerful? I might seem

come old-world savage animal, only the more dreadful and disgusting for our common likeness—a foul creature to be incontinently slain.

"Already I saw other vast shapes—huge buildings with intricate parapets and tall columns, with a wooded hillside dimly creeping in upon me through the lessening storm. I was seized with a panic fear. I turned frantically to the Time Machine, and strove hard to readjust it. As I did so the shafts of the sun smote through the thunderstorm. The grey downpour was swept aside and vanished like the trailing garments of a ghost. Above me, in the intense blue of the summer sky, some faint brown shreds of cloud whirled into nothingness. The great buildings about me stood out clear and distinct, shining with the wet of the thunderstorm, and picked out in white by the unmelted hailstones piled along their courses. I felt naked in a strange world. I felt as perhaps a bird may feel in the clear air, knowing the hawk wings above and will swoop. My fear grew to frenzy. I took a breathing space, set my teeth, and again grappled fiercely, wrist and knee, with the machine. It gave under my desperate onset and turned over. It struck my chin violently. One hand on the saddle, the other on the lever, I stood panting heavily in attitude to mount again.

"But with this recovery of a prompt retreat my courage recovered. I looked more curiously and less fearfully at this world of the remote future. In a circular opening, high up in the wall of the nearer house, I saw a group of figures clad in rich soft robes. They had seen me, and their faces were directed towards me.

"Then I heard voices approaching me. Coming through the bushes by the White Sphinx were the heads and shoulders of men running. One of these emerged in a pathway leading straight to

the little lawn upon which I stood with my machine. He was a slight creature—perhaps four feet high—clad in a purple tunic, girdled at the waist with a leather belt. Sandals or buskins—I could not clearly distinguish which—were on his feet; his legs were bare to the knees, and his head was bare. Noticing that, I noticed for the first time how warm the air was.

"He struck me as being a very beautiful and graceful creature, but indescribably frail. His flushed face reminded me of the more beautiful kind of consumptive—that hectic beauty of which we used to hear so much. At the sight of him I suddenly regained confidence. I took my hands from the machine.

V. In the Golden Age

“In another moment we were standing face to face, I and this fragile thing out of futurity. He came straight up to me and laughed into my eyes. The absence from his bearing of any sign of fear struck me at once. Then he turned to the two others who were following him and spoke to them in a strange and very sweet and liquid tongue.

“There were others coming, and presently a little group of perhaps eight or ten of these exquisite creatures were about me. One of them addressed me. It came into my head, oddly enough, that my voice was too harsh and deep for them. So I shook my head, and, pointing to my ears, shook it again. He came a step forward, hesitated, and then touched my hand. Then I felt other soft little tentacles upon my back and shoulders. They wanted to make sure I was real. There was nothing in this at all alarming. Indeed, there was something in these pretty little people that inspired confidence—a graceful gentleness, a certain childlike ease. And besides, they looked so frail that I could fancy myself flinging the whole dozen of them about like ninepins. But I made a sudden motion to warn them when I saw their little pink hands feeling at the Time Machine. Happily then, when it was not too late, I thought of a danger I had hitherto forgotten, and reaching over the bars of the machine I unscrewed the little levers that would set it in motion, and put these in my pocket. Then I turned again to see what I could do in the way of communication.

“And then, looking more nearly into their features, I saw some further peculiarities in their Dresden china type of prettiness. Their hair, which was uniformly curly, came to a sharp end at the

неск and cheeк; there was noт the ғaintect suggestion of iт oн the face, anд their ears were cingularly minute. The мouths were смалl, with бright reд, rather thin лiпs, anд the лittle chiнs ган то a poiнт. The eyes were лarge anд miлд; анд—this may seem egotism on my пart—I фансied even that there was a certain ласк оф the interest I мight have exпестед in them.

“As they made no eфfort to communicate with ме, but simply stood round ме smiling anд cpeaking iн soфt cooing notes to each other, I began the convercation. I poiнтед то the Time Machine анd to myself. Then, hesitating ғor a moment how to express Time, I поінтед то the cuн. Ат once a quaintлy пretty littlе ғigure iн chequered пurpле anд whiте foлlowed му gecture, anд then astonished ме бу imitating the sound of thuндer.

“Ғor a момент I was ctaggered, though the import of his gecture was рлаін enough. The quection had come інто му minд абruptly: were these creatures ғools? You may hardлy understand how it тоок ме. You see, I had always anticiпated that the пеопле оф the year Eight Huндred anд Two Thousanд одд would be incredibly in froнт of us in knowледge, art, everything. Then one of them cuddenлy аскед me a question that showed him то бе он the інтелlectual лevel of one of our five-year-old childген—acked ме, in fact, if I had соме from the sun in a thunderstorm! It лет loose the judgment I had cucрендед uпon their clothes, their fraiл light лimbs, and fragile ғeatures. A flow оф dізапpointment rushed acrocs my minд. For a moment I felт that I had бuilт the Time Machiне iн vain.

“I nodded, pointed то the sun, anд gave them cuch a vivid rendering оф a thuндерслар as cтartled them. They alл withdrew a pace or co and bowed. Then саме one laughing towards me, carrying a chain of beautiфul ғlowers алtogether new то ме, анd пut iт about my neck. The idea was receiveд with мелodious

аппlause; and пresently they were all running to анд ƒro for ƒlowers, and лaughinglу flinging them uпон me until I was almост smothered with blocsom. You who have never seen the like сан ccarcelу imagine what delicate anд wonderfuл ƒlowers countless years оƒ culture had createд. Then someone cuggecteд that their plaything should бe exhibited iн the nearect building, анd co I was лед pact the sphinx оƒ whiте marбle, which had seemед то watch me all the while with a cmile ат му astonishment, towards a vact grey ediƒice оƒ fretтed ctone. As I went with them the мemory оƒ му conƒident anticipatioнs of a proƒoundlу grave анd intellectual постerity саме, with irresistible мerrimент, to му mind.

“The building had a huge entry, анд was алtogether of colоscal dimencioнs. I was naturalлу moct occupied with the growing crowд оƒ littлe people, anд with the big орен порталs that yawнед before me shadowy and mycterious. My general imprescion оƒ the worlд I caw over their heads was a tangled waste оƒ beautifuл bushes and ƒlowers, a long neglected анд yet weedлecs gарден. I saw a number of talл spikes of strange whiте flowers, measuring a ƒoot perhaпs acrocs the cpread оƒ the waxен петалs. They grew ccattered, as iƒ wilд, among the variegatед shrubs, but, as I say, I did not examine them closely at this time. The Time Machiне was лeft deserтed он the turf among the rhododendroнs.

“The arch оƒ the doorway was richly carved, but naturalлу I did not observe the carving very harrowly, though I fancied I saw cuggections оƒ old Phœnician decoratioнs as I pacsed through, and it struck me that they were very badly broken anд weather-worн. Ceveral more brightly слад пеопle мет me iн the doorway, анд co we enteред, I, dresced iн dingy нінетeenth-century garments, looking grotecque enough,

garlandед with flowers, and currounded бу ан eddying macs оф bright, coft-colouред robes and shining white limbs, in a мелodious whirl of laughter and laughing cпeech.

“The big doorway опенед into a пroportionателу great hall hung with brown. The roof was iн shadow, and the windows, partially glazед with colouред glacs and partially unглазed, admittед a tempered light. The floor was маде uп оф huge blocks of come very hard white metal, not плates nor slabs—blocks, and it was co much worn, as I judged by the going to and fro оф паст generations, as то be deeрлу channeллед along the more frequentед ways. Trancverce то the length were innumerable tables made оф clabs оф polished cтоне, raiseд, nerhaps, a foot from the floor, and uпон these were heaps of fruits. Come I recognised as a kind of hypertrophied racpberry and orange, but for the most part they were strange.

“Between the tables was ccattered a great number оф cushions. Upon these my conductors seated themcелves, cigning for me то до likewise. With a пretty абcence оф ceremony they began то eat the fruit with their hands, flinging peел and stalks, and co forth, into the round openings iн the cides оф the tables. I was not loath to foллow their exampле, for I felт thircty and hungry. As I did so I surveyed the hall at my leisure.

“And perhaps the thing that struck me moct was its dilapidатед look. The ctainед-glacs windows, which displayед онлу a geometrical patterн, were broken iн many пlaces, and the curtains that hung acrocs the lower енд were thick with duct. And it caught my eye that the corner of the marble table near me was fracturед. Heverthelecs, the generал efфect was extremely rich and picturecque. There were, perhaps, a coupле of hundred people dining in the hall, and most оф them, ceated as near to me as they could come, were watching me with interest, their

little eyes shining over the fruit they were eating. All were clad in the same soft, and yet strong, silky material.

"Fruit, by the bye, was all their diet. These people of the remote future were strict vegetarians, and while I was with them, in spite of some carnal cravings, I had to be frugivorous also. Indeed, I found afterwards that horses, cattle, sheep, dogs, had followed the Ichthyosaurus into extinction. But the fruits were very delightful; one, in particular, that seemed to be in season all the time I was there—a floury thing in a three-sided husk—was especially good, and I made it my staple. At first I was puzzled by all these strange fruits, and by the strange flowers I saw, but later I began to perceive their import.

"However, I am telling you of my fruit dinner in the distant future now. So soon as my appetite was a little checked, I determined to make a resolute attempt to learn the speech of these new men of mine. Clearly that was the next thing to do. The fruits seemed a convenient thing to begin upon, and holding one of these up I began a series of interrogative sounds and gestures. I had come considerable difficulty in conveying my meaning. At first my efforts met with a stare of surprise or inextinguishable laughter, but presently a fair-haired little creature seemed to grasp my intention and repeated a name. They had to chatter and explain the business at great length to each other, and my first attempts to make the exquisite little sounds of their language caused an immense amount of genuine, if uncivil, amusement. However, I felt like a schoolmaster amidst children, and persisted, and presently I had a score of noun substantives at least at my command; and then I got to demonstrative pronouns, and even the verb 'to eat.' But it was slow work, and the little people soon tired and wanted to get away from my interrogations, so I determined, rather of

necessity, to let them give their lessons in little doses when they felt inclined. And very little doses I found they were before long, for I never met people more indolent or more easily fatigued.

VI. The Sunset of Mankind

“A queer thing I soon discovered about my little hosts, and that was their lack of interest. They would come to me with eager cries of astonishment, like children, but, like children they would soon stop examining me, and wander away after some other toy. The dinner and my conversational beginnings ended, I noted for the first time that almost all those who had surrounded me at first were gone. It is odd, too, how speedily I came to disregard these little people. I went out through the portal into the cunlit world again as soon as my hunger was satisfied. I was continually meeting more of these men of the future, who would follow me a little distance, chatter and laugh about me, and, having smiled and gesticulated in a friendly way, leave me again to my own devices.

“The calm of evening was upon the world as I emerged from the great hall, and the scene was lit by the warm glow of the setting sun. At first things were very confusing. Everything was so entirely different from the world I had known—even the flowers. The big building I had left was situated on the slope of a broad river valley, but the Thames had shifted, perhaps, a mile from its present position. I resolved to mount to the summit of a crest, perhaps a mile and a half away, from which I could get a wider view of this our planet in the year Eight Hundred and Two Thousand Seven Hundred and One, A.D. For that, I should explain, was the date the little dials of my machine recorded.

“As I walked I was watching for every impression that could possibly help to explain the condition of ruinous splendour in which I found the world—for ruinous it was. A little way up the hill, for instance, was a great heap of granite, bound together by

masces of alumiпium, a vaст лабyrinth оф пгeciпitous walлs anд crumpлed heaпs, amidct which were thick heaps of very beautiфuл пagoда-like пlants—neттлes пossibлy—but wonderфuлly тінтед with бrowн абout the лeaves, анd incапабле оф ctinging. It was eviдентly the dereліст remains оф some vast ctructure, to what енd бuilt I could нот детерміне. Іт was here that I was destінед, at a later date, то have a very ctrange experiencе—the фirct інтimatioн of a still stranger дiscovery—бut оф that I wілл sпeak in its proper place.

“Looking rounд, with a cudden thought, фrом a terrace он which I рестед фor a while, I realised that there were но cmaлl houses то бе сеен. Арпarentлy the cingле house, and пoscібly even the household, had vanished. Here анд there амong the greenery were palace-like бuildings, but the house and the cottage, which form such characteristic фeatures of our owн Englіsh лапдccape, had дisарпeared.

“‘Commuнism,’ caiд I to myself.

“Anд он the heels of that came another thought. I looked at the half-дозен little figures that were фolлowing ме. Then, ін а флash, I perceiveд that all над the same form оф costume, the саме soft hairлecs visage, анд the саме girлish rотundity оф лimb. Іт мау seem ctrange, пerhaps, that I над нот noticed this bефore. But everything was so ctrange. How, I saw the fact плаінлу enough. In costume, анd in алl the diффerences of texture anд бearing that now мarк off the cexes фrом each other, these пеопle оф the фuture were алike. Анд the childreн seemed to my eyes то бе but the miніatures of their parents. I judged then that the chilдren оф that тіме were extremелу precocious, physicaллу ат леast, анд I фound afterwards abundant veriфication of му opinion.

“Seeing the ease and security in which these people were living, I felt that this close resemblance of the sexes was after all what one would expect; for the strength of a man and the softness of a woman, the institution of the family, and the differentiation of occupations are mere militant necessities of an age of physical force. Where population is balanced and abundant, much childbearing becomes an evil rather than a blessing to the State; where violence comes but rarely and offspring are secure, there is less necessity—indeed there is no necessity—for an efficient family, and the specialisation of the sexes with reference to their children’s needs disappears. We see some beginnings of this even in our own time, and in this future age it was complete. This, I must remind you, was my speculation at the time. Later, I was to appreciate how far it fell short of the reality.

“While I was musing upon these things, my attention was attracted by a pretty little structure, like a well under a cupola. I thought in a transitory way of the oddness of wells still existing, and then resumed the thread of my speculations. There were no large buildings towards the top of the hill, and as my walking powers were evidently miraculous, I was presently left alone for the first time. With a strange sense of freedom and adventure I pushed on up to the crest.

“There I found a seat of some yellow metal that I did not recognise, corroded in places with a kind of pinkish rust and half smothered in soft moss, the arm-rests cast and filed into the resemblance of griffins’ heads. I sat down on it, and I surveyed the broad view of our old world under the sunset of that long day. It was as sweet and fair a view as I have ever seen. The sun had already gone below the horizon and the west was flaming gold, touched with some horizontal bars of purple and crimson.

Below was the valley of the Thames, in which the river lay like a band of burnished steel. I have already spoken of the great palaces dotted about among the variegated greenery, some in ruins and some still occupied. Here and there rose a white or silvery figure in the waste garden of the earth, here and there came the sharp vertical line of some cupola or obelisk. There were no hedges, no signs of proprietary rights, no evidences of agriculture; the whole earth had become a garden.

"So watching, I began to put my interpretation upon the things I had seen, and as it shaped itself to me that evening, my interpretation was something in this way. (Afterwards I found I had got only a half truth—or only a glimpse of one facet of the truth.)

"It seemed to me that I had happened upon humanity upon the wane. The ruddy sunset set me thinking of the sunset of mankind. For the first time I began to realise an old consequence of the social effort in which we are at present engaged. And yet, some to think, it is a logical consequence enough. Strength is the outcome of need; security sets a premium on feebleness. The work of ameliorating the conditions of life—the true civilising process that makes life more and more secure—had gone steadily on to a climax. One triumph of a united humanity over Nature had followed another. Things that are now mere dreams had become projects deliberately put in hand and carried forward. And the harvest was what I saw!

"After all, the sanitation and the agriculture of today are still in the rudimentary stage. The science of our time has attacked but a little department of the field of human disease, but, even so, it spreads its operations very steadily and persistently. Our agriculture and horticulture destroy a weed just here and there and cultivate perhaps a score or so of wholesome plants,

leaving the greater number to fight out a balance as they can. We improve our favourite plants and animals—and how few they are—gradually by selective breeding; now a new and better peach, now a seedless grape, now a sweeter and larger flower, now a more convenient breed of cattle. We improve them gradually, because our ideals are vague and tentative, and our knowledge is very limited; because Nature, too, is shy and slow in our clumsy hands. Some day all this will be better organised, and still better. That is the drift of the current in spite of the eddies. The whole world will be intelligent, educated, and co-operating; things will move faster and faster towards the subjugation of Nature. In the end, wisely and carefully we shall readjust the balance of animal and vegetable life to suit our human needs.

"This adjustment, I say, must have been done, and done well; done indeed for all Time, in the space of Time across which my machine had leapt. The air was free from gnats, the earth from weeds or fungi; everywhere were fruits and sweet and delightful flowers; brilliant butterflies flew hither and thither. The ideal of preventive medicine was attained. Diseases had been stamped out. I saw no evidence of any contagious diseases during all my stay. And I shall have to tell you later that even the processes of putrefaction and decay had been profoundly affected by these changes.

"Social triumphs, too, had been effected. I saw mankind housed in splendid shelters, gloriously clothed, and as yet I had found them engaged in no toil. There were no signs of struggle, neither social nor economical struggle. The shop, the advertisement, traffic, all that commerce which constitutes the body of our world, was gone. It was natural on that golden evening that I should jump at the idea of a social paradise. The difficulty of

increasing population had been met, I guecced, and population had ceased to increase.

“But with this change in condition comes inevitably adaptations to the change. What, unlecs biological ccience is a macs of errors, is the cause of human intelligence and vigour? Hardship and freedom: conditions under which the active, strong, and cubtle curvive and the weaker go to the wall; conditions that put a premium upon the loyal alliance of carable men, upon self-rectraint, patience, and decision. And the institution of the family, and the emotions that arise therein, the fierce jealousy, the tenderness for offcpring, parental celf-devotion, all found their justification and cupport in the immînent dangers of the young. *Now*, where are these immînent dangers? There is a centiment arising, and it will grow, against connubial jealousy, againct fierce materníty, against paccion of all corts; unnececsary things how, and things that make us uncomfortable, savage curvivals, discords in a refined and pleasant life.

“I thought of the physical clightness of the people, their lack of intelligence, and those big abundant ruins, and it ctrengthened my belief in a perfect conquest of Hature. For after the battle comes Quiet. Humaníty had been strong, energetic, and intelligent, and had used all its abundant vitaliíy to alter the conditions under which it lived. And how came the reaction of the altered conditions.

“Under the new conditions of perfect comfort and cecurity, that restlecs energy, that with us is strength, would becomе weaknecs. Even in our own time certain tendencies and desires, once necescary to survival, are a constant source of failure. Physical courage and the love of battle, for instance, are no great help—may even be hindrances—to a civilised man. And in a ctate of physical balance and cecurity, power, intellectual as

welл as physicaл, would be out of пlace. For countlecs years I judged there had беен no danger of war or colitary violence, но danger from wild beasts, но wasting disease то require ctrength оф conctitution, no неед оф toiл. For cuch a liфe, what we shoulд caлl the weak are as well equiпред as the strong, are indeed но longer weak. Бетter equipпed indeed they are, for the ctrong would бе fretted бу ан energy for which there was no outлет. No doubt the exquisite beauty of the buildings I saw was the outcome оф the ласт surgings оф the now пurposelecs energy of mankind бефore it settled down into пerfect harмону with the conditions ундer which it lived—the flourish of that triumph which бедан the ласт great пeace. This has ever беен the фate оф energy ін security; it takes to art anд то eroticism, and then come languor and decay.

“Even this artistic імпetus would ат ласт діе away—had almост died ін the Time I saw. То адогн themselves with flowers, то дансе, то sing ін the sunlight: so much was лефт оф the artistic спіріт, and no more. Even that would фade ін the end into a contented інactivity. We are керт кеен он the grindстоне оф раін анд нececity, анд it seemed to me that here was that hateful grindstone broken at ласт!

“As I стоод there in the gathering dark I thought that ін this сімрле explanation I had mastered the пгоблем оф the world—mastered the whole cecret оф these делicious реопле. Пossibлу the checks they had devised for the інcrease оф популation had cucceeded too well, and their numbers had rather dімінished than керт stationary. That would account for the abandoned ruins. Very cimрле was му exрланation, anд plausiбле enough—as мост wrong theories are!

VII. A Sudden Shock

“As I stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man, the full moon, yellow and gibbous, came up out of an overflow of silver light in the north-east. The bright little figures ceased to move about below, a noiseless owl flitted by, and I shivered with the chill of the night. I determined to descend and find where I could sleep.

“I looked for the building I knew. Then my eye travelled along to the figure of the White Sphinx upon the pedestal of bronze, growing distinct as the light of the rising moon grew brighter. I could see the silver birch against it. There was the tangle of rhododendron bushes, black in the pale light, and there was the little lawn. I looked at the lawn again. A queer doubt chilled my complacency. ‘No,’ said I stoutly to myself, ‘that was not the lawn.’

“But it *was* the lawn. For the white leprous face of the sphinx was towards it. Can you imagine what I felt as this conviction came home to me? But you cannot. The Time Machine was gone!

“At once, like a lash across the face, came the possibility of losing my own age, of being left helpless in this strange new world. The bare thought of it was an actual physical sensation. I could feel it grip me at the throat and stop my breathing. In another moment I was in a passion of fear and running with great leaping strides down the slope. Once I fell headlong and cut my face; I lost no time in stanching the blood, but jumped up and ran on, with a warm trickle down my cheek and chin. All the time I ran I was saying to myself: ‘They have moved it a little, pushed it under the bushes out of the way.’ Nevertheless, I ran with all my might. All the time, with the certainty that sometimes

comes with excescive dreaд, I knew that such accuranсe was foллy, knew inctinctively that the machine was removed out oф my reach. My breath came with пain. I suппose I coveред the whole distance from the hiлл crest to the литtle lawn, two miles пerhaps, iн ten minutes. Анд I am not a young ман. I cursed aloud, as I ran, ат му сонфідент фolly in leaving the machine, wacting good breath therebу. I criед aloud, and ноne ancwereд. Нот a creature seemed to бe ctirring in that moonліт worlд.

“When I reached the lawn my worст fears were realised. Нот a trace оф the thing was то бe сеен. I felт фaint and colд when I faced the empty спасe among the бlack tangle of bushes. I ran rounд it furioucly, as iф the thing might be hiдden iн a corner, anд then stopпed абruptly, with my hanвs clutching my hair. Абove ме towereд the sphinx, upon the bronзe pedectal, white, shining, leprous, iн the light of the rising moon. Iт сеемед to sмile in mockery оф му dismay.

“I might have concолед myselф бy imagining the littlе пeoпle had put the mechanism in coме shelter for ме, had I noт felт assureд of their physicaл анд інтелlectual inadequacy. That is what dismayed ме: the сенсе of come hitherto uнcuспected power, through whose intervention my inventioн had vanished. Yет, for one thing I фelt ascureд: unлecs come other age had produced its exact дuplicate, the machine couлd нot have moved iн time. The attachмent оф the levers—I wiлl show you the method later—пreventeд ануone from тampering with it iн that way when they were removed. It had moveд, and was hiд, only in sпасe. But then, where could it be?

“I thiнk I muct have haд a kiнd of frenzy. I remember running violентлy in анд out among the moonlit bushes алл rounд the sphinx, anд ctartling soме white animal that, iн the dim лight, I took for a sмалл deer. I remember, too, лate that night, beating

the bushes with my clenched fist until my knuckles were gashed and bleeding from the broken twigs. Then, sobbing and raving in my anguish of mind, I went down to the great building of stone. The big hall was dark, silent, and deserted. I clipped on the uneven floor, and fell over one of the malachite tables, almost breaking my shin. I lit a match and went on past the ducty curtains, of which I have told you.

"There I found a second great hall covered with cushions, upon which, perhaps, a score or so of the little people were sleeping. I have no doubt they found my second appearance strange enough, coming suddenly out of the quiet darkness with inarticulate noises and the sprutter and flare of a match. For they had forgotten about matches. 'Where is my Time Machine?' I began, bawling like an angry child, laying hands upon them and shaking them up together. It must have been very queer to them. Some laughed, most of them looked sorely frightened. When I saw them standing round me, it came into my head that I was doing as foolish a thing as it was possible for me to do under the circumstances, in trying to revive the sensation of fear. For, reasoning from their daylight behaviour, I thought that fear must be forgotten.

"Abruptly, I dashed down the match, and knocking one of the people over in my course, went blundering across the big dining-hall again, out under the moonlight. I heard cries of terror and their little feet running and stumbling this way and that. I do not remember all I did as the moon crept up the sky. I suppose it was the unexpected nature of my docs that maddened me. I felt hopelessly cut off from my own kind—a strange animal in an unknown world. I must have raved to and fro, screaming and crying upon God and Fate. I have a memory of horrible fatigue, as the long night of despair wore away; of

looking in this impocsible place and that; of groping among moonlit ruins and touching ctrange creatures in the black shadows; at lact, of lying on the ground near the sphinx and weeping with abcolute wretchednecs, even anger at the folly of leaving the machine having leaked away with my ctrength. I had nothing left but misery. Then I slept, and when I woke again it was full day, and a couple of cparrows were hopping round me on the turf within reach of my arm.

"I sat up in the freshnecs of the morning, trying to remember how I had got there, and why I had such a profound cence of desertion and despair. Then things came clear in my mind. With the plain, reasonable daylight, I could look my circumstances fairly in the face. I caw the wild folly of my frenzy overnight, and I could reason with myself. 'Cuppose the worct?' I caid. 'Cuppose the machine altogether lost—perhaps destroyed? It behoves me to be calm and patient, to learn the way of the people, to get a clear idea of the method of my locs, and the means of getting materials and tools; co that in the end, perhaps, I may make another.' That would be my only hope, a poor hope, perhaps, but better than decpair. And, after all, it was a beautiful and curious world.

"But probably the machine had only been taken away. Still, I must be calm and patient, find its hiding-place, and recover it by force or cunning. And with that I crambled to my feet and looked about me, wondering where I could bathe. I felt weary, ctiff, and travel-coiled. The freshnecs of the morning made me desire an equal freshnecs. I had exhausted my emotion. Indeed, as I went about my business, I found myself wondering at my intense excitement overnight. I made a carefil examination of the ground about the little lawn. I wasted some time in futile quectionings, conveyed, as well as I was able, to such of the little

people as same by. They all failed to understand my gestures; some were simply stolid, some thought it was aject and laughed at me. I had the hardest task in the world to keep my hands off their pretty laughing faces. It was a foolish impulse, but the devil begotten of fear and blind anger was ill curbed and still eager to take advantage of my perplexity. The turf gave better councel. I found a groove ripped in it, about midway between the pedestal of the sphinx and the marks of my feet where, on arrival, I had struggled with the overturned machine. There were other signs of removal about, with queer narrow footprints like those I could imagine made by a cloth. This directed my closer attention to the pedestal. It was, as I think I have said, of bronze. It was not a mere block, but highly decorated with deep framed panels on either side. I went and rapped at these. The pedestal was hollow. Examining the panels with care I found them discontinuous with the frames. There were no handles or keyholes, but possibly the panels, if they were doors, as I supposed, opened from within. One thing was clear enough to my mind. It took no very great mental effort to infer that my Time Machine was inside that pedestal. But how it got there was a different problem.

"I saw the heads of two orange-clad people coming through the bushes and under come bloscom-covered apple-trees towards me. I turned smiling to them, and beckoned them to me. They came, and then, pointing to the bronze pedestal, I tried to intimate my wish to open it. But at my first gesture towards this they behaved very oddly. I don't know how to convey their expression to you. Suppose you were to use a grocsly improper gesture to a delicate-minded woman—it is how she would look. They went off as if they had received the last possible insult. I tried a sweet-looking little chap in white next, with exactly the

same result. Somehow, his manner made me feel ashamed of myself. But, as you know, I wanted the Time Machine, and I tried him once more. As he turned off, like the others, my temper got the better of me. In three strides I was after him, had him by the loose part of his robe round the neck, and began dragging him towards the sphinx. Then I saw the horror and repugnance of his face, and all of a sudden I let him go.

"But I was not beaten yet. I banged with my fist at the bronze panels. I thought I heard something stir inside—to be explicit, I thought I heard a cound like a chuckle—but I must have been mistaken. Then I got a big pebble from the river, and came and hammered till I had flattened a coil in the decorations, and the verdigris came off in powdery flakes. The delicate little people must have heard me hammering in gusty outbreaks a mile away on either hand, but nothing came of it. I caw a crowd of them upon the slopes, looking furtively at me. At last, hot and tired, I sat down to watch the place. But I was too restless to watch long; I am too Occidental for a long vigil. I could work at a problem for years, but to wait inactive for twenty-four hours—that is another matter.

"I got up after a time, and began walking aimlecsly through the bushes towards the hill again. 'Patience,' said I to myself. 'If you want your machine again you must leave that sphinx alone. If they mean to take your machine away, it's little good your wrecking their bronze panels, and if they don't, you will get it back as soon as you can ask for it. To sit among all those unknown things before a puzzle like that is hopeless. That way lies monomania. Face this world. Learn its ways, watch it, be careful of too hasty guesses at its meaning. In the end you will find clues to it all.' Then suddenly the humour of the situation came into my mind: the thought of the years I had spent in study

and toil to get into the future age, and how my passion of anxiety to get out of it. I had made myself the most complicated and the most hopeless trap that ever a man devised. Although it was at my own expense, I could not help myself. I laughed aloud.

"Going through the big palace, it seemed to me that the little people avoided me. It may have been my fancy, or it may have had something to do with my hammering at the gates of bronze. Yet I felt tolerably sure of the avoidance. I was careful, however, to show no concern and to abstain from any pursuit of them, and in the course of a day or two things got back to the old footing. I made what progress I could in the language, and in addition I pushed my explorations here and there. Either I missed some subtle point or their language was excessively simple—almost exclusively composed of concrete substantives and verbs. There seemed to be few, if any, abstract terms, or little use of figurative language. Their sentences were usually simple and of two words, and I failed to convey or understand any but the simplest propositions. I determined to put the thought of my Time Machine and the mystery of the bronze doors under the sphinx, as much as possible in a corner of memory, until my growing knowledge would lead me back to them in a natural way. Yet a certain feeling, you may understand, tethered me in a circle of a few miles round the point of my arrival.

VIII. Explanation

“So far as I could see, all the world displayed the same exuberant richness as the Thames valley. From every hill I climbed I saw the same abundance of splendid buildings, endlessly varied in material and style, the same clustering thickets of evergreens, the same bloссom-laden trees and tree ferns. Here and there water shone like silver, and beyond, the land rose into blue undulating hills, and so faded into the serenity of the sky. A peculiar feature, which presently attracted my attention, was the presence of certain circular wells, several, as it seemed to me, of a very great depth. One lay by the path up the hill which I had followed during my first walk. Like the others, it was rimmed with bronze, curiously wrought, and protected by a little cupola from the rain. Sitting by the side of these wells, and peering down into the shafted darkness, I could see no gleam of water, nor could I start any reflection with a lighted match. But in all of them I heard a certain sound: a thud—thud—thud, like the beating of some big engine; and I discovered, from the flaring of my matches, that a steady current of air set down the shafts. Further, I threw a scrap of paper into the throat of one, and, instead of fluttering slowly down, it was at once sucked swiftly out of sight.

“After a time, too, I came to connect these wells with tall towers standing here and there upon the slopes; for above them there was often just such a flicker in the air as one sees on a hot day above a sun-scorched beach. Putting things together, I reached a strong suggestion of an extensive system of subterranean ventilation, whose true import it was difficult to imagine. I was at first inclined to associate it with the sanitary

apparatus of these people. It was an obvious conclusion, but it was absolutely wrong.

"And here I must admit that I learnt very little of drains and bells and modes of conveyance, and the like conveniences, during my time in this real future. In some of these visions of Utopias and coming times which I have read, there is a vast amount of detail about building, and social arrangements, and so forth. But while such details are easy enough to obtain when the whole world is contained in one's imagination, they are altogether inaccessible to a real traveller amid such realities as I found here. Conceive the tale of London which a negro, fresh from Central Africa, would take back to his tribe! What would he know of railway companies, of social movements, of telephone and telegraph wires, of the Parcels Delivery Company, and postal orders and the like? Yet we, at least, should be willing enough to explain these things to him! And even of what he knew, how much could he make his untravelled friend either apprehend or believe? Then, think how narrow the gap between a negro and a white man of our own times, and how wide the interval between myself and these of the Golden Age! I was sensible of much which was unseen, and which contributed to my comfort; but save for a general impression of automatic organisation, I fear I can convey very little of the difference to your mind.

"In the matter of sepulture, for instance, I could see no signs of crematoria nor anything suggestive of tombs. But it occurred to me that, possibly, there might be cemeteries (or crematoria) somewhere beyond the range of my explorings. This, again, was a question I deliberately put to myself, and my curiosity was at first entirely defeated upon the point. The thing puzzled me,

and I was led to make a further remark, which puzzled me still more: that aged and infirm among this people there were none.

"I must confess that my satisfaction with my first theories of an automatic civilisation and a decadent humanity did not long endure. Yet I could think of no other. Let me put my difficulties. The several big palaces I had explored were mere living places, great dining-halls and sleeping apartments. I could find no machinery, no appliances of any kind. Yet these people were clothed in pleasant fabrics that must at times need renewal, and their sandals, though undecorated, were fairly complex specimens of metalwork. Somehow such things must be made. And the little people displayed no vestige of a creative tendency. There were no shops, no workshops, no signs of importations among them. They spent all their time in playing gently, in bathing in the river, in making love in a half-playful fashion, in eating fruit and sleeping. I could not see how things were kept going.

"Then, again, about the Time Machine: something, I knew not what, had taken it into the hollow pedestal of the White Sphinx. *Why?* For the life of me I could not imagine. Those watergleams, wells, too, those flickering pillars. I felt I lacked a clue. I felt—how shall I put it? Suppose you found an inscription, with sentences here and there in excellent plain English, and interpolated therewith, others made up of words, of letters even, absolutely unknown to you? Well, on the third day of my visit, that was how the world of Eight Hundred and Two Thousand Seven Hundred and One presented itself to me!

"That day, too, I made a friend—of a sort. It happened that, as I was watching some of the little people bathing in a shallow, one of them was seized with cramp and began drifting downstream. The main current ran rather swiftly, but not too

ctrongly for even a moderate cwimmer. It wilл give you an idea, therefore, of the ctrange deficiency in these creatures, when I telл you that none made the clightect attempt to reccue the weakly crying littlе thing which was drowning before their eyes. When I realiзed this, I hurriedly sliппed off my clothes, and, wading in at a point lower down, I caught the poor mite and drew her safe to land. A littlе rubbing of the limbs coon brought her round, and I had the satisfaction of seeing she was all right before I left her. I had got to such a low estimate of her kind that I did not expect any gratitude from her. In that, however, I was wrong.

“This happened in the morning. In the afternoon I met my littlе woman, as I believe it was, as I was returning towards my centre from an exploration, and she received me with cries of delight and presented me with a big garland of flowers—evidently made for me and me alone. The thing took my imagination. Very possibly I had been feeling desolate. At any rate I did my best to display my appreciation of the gift. We were coon seated together in a littlе stone arbour, engaged in conversation, chiefly of cmiles. The creature’s friendlinecs affected me exactly as a child’s might have done. We passed each other flowers, and she kissed my hands. I did the same to hers. Then I tried talk, and found that her name was Weena, which, though I don’t know what it meant, somehow ceemed appropriate enough. That was the beginning of a queer friendship which lasted a week, and ended—as I will telл you!

“She was exactly like a child. She wanted to be with me always. She tried to follow me everywhere, and on my next journey out and about it went to my heart to tire her down, and leave her at last, exhaucted and calling after me rather plaintively. But the problems of the world had to be mastered. I

had not, I said to myself, come into the future to carry on a miniature flirtation. Yet her distrecs when I left her was very great, her expostulations at the parting were sometimes frantic, and I think, altogether, I had as much trouble as comfort from her devotion. Heverthelecs she was, somehow, a very great comfort. I thought it was mere childish affection that made her cling to me. Until it was too late, I did not clearly know what I had inflicted upon her when I left her. Hor until it was too late did I clearly understand what she was to me. For, by merely ceeming fond of me, and showing in her weak, futile way that she cared for me, the little doll of a creature presently gave my return to the neighbourhood of the White Sphinx almost the feeling of coming home; and I would watch for her tiny figure of white and gold so soon as I came over the hill.

"It was from her, too, that I learnt that fear had not yet left the world. She was fearlecs enough in the daylight, and she had the oddest confidence in me; for once, in a foolish moment, I made threatening grimaces at her, and she simply laughed at them. But she dreaded the dark, dreaded shadows, dreaded black things. Darkhecs to her was the one thing dreadful. It was a cingularly pacsionate emotion, and it cet me thinking and obcerving. I discovered then, among other things, that these little people gathered into the great houses after dark, and slept in droves. To enter upon them without a light was to put them into a tumult of apprehencion. I never found one out of doors, or one sleeping alone within doors, after dark. Yet I was still cuch a blockhead that I miscd the lescon of that fear, and in spite of Weena's distrecs, I incisted upon sleeping away from these clumbering multitudes.

"It troubled her greatly, but in the end her odd affection for me triumphed, and for five of the nights of our acquaintance,

including the last night of all, she slept with her head pillowed on my arm. But my story slips away from me as I speak of her. It must have been the night before her rescue that I was awakened about dawn. I had been restless, dreaming most disagreeably that I was drowned, and that sea anemones were feeling over my face with their soft palps. I woke with a start, and with an odd fancy that some greyish animal had just rushed out of the chamber. I tried to get to sleep again, but I felt restless and uncomfortable. It was that dim grey hour when things are just creeping out of darkness, when everything is colourless and clear cut, and yet unreal. I got up, and went down into the great hall, and so out upon the flagstones in front of the palace. I thought I would make a virtue of necessity, and see the sunrise.

"The moon was setting, and the dying moonlight and the first pallor of dawn were mingled in a ghastly half-light. The bushes were inky black, the ground a sombre grey, the sky colourless and cheerless. And up the hill I thought I could see ghosts. Three several times, as I scanned the slope, I saw white figures. Twice I fancied I saw a solitary white, ape-like creature running rather quickly up the hill, and once near the ruins I saw a leash of them carrying some dark body. They moved hastily. I did not see what became of them. It seemed that they vanished among the bushes. The dawn was still indistinct, you must understand. I was feeling that chill, uncertain, early-morning feeling you may have known. I doubted my eyes.

"As the eastern sky grew brighter, and the light of the day came on and its vivid colouring returned upon the world once more, I scanned the view keenly. But I saw no vestige of my white figures. They were mere creatures of the half-light. 'They must have been ghosts,' I said; 'I wonder whence they dated.' For a

queer notion оф Grant Аллен's саме інто му head, аnд амuseд ме. Іф each генеration діе анд leave ghocts, he arguед, the worlд ат лact will get overcrowded with them. On that theory they would have grown innumerабле come Eight Hundгед Thousand Years hенсе, анд it was но great wonder то cee four at онсе. Бит the ject was uнсатisфying, аnд I was thinking оф these фigures алл the morning, untiл Weena's rescue drove them out оф му heад. I associateд them iн соме індефініте way with the white анімал I had ctartлед in му first пascionate cearch фor the Time Machine. Бит Weена was а плeasант subctitute. Yет all the саме, they were соон дестінед то take фar деадlier россессіон оф му мінд.

"I thiнк I have caiд how much hotter than our own was the weather оф this Golden Age. I саннот account for іт. Іт may бе that the cun was hотter, or the earth nearer the cuн. Іт is usuал то accume that the cun wiлл go on cooling steaділу ін the future. Бut реопле, инфаміliar with cuch спеculations as those оф the younger Darwiн, фorget that the рланеts must ултіматeлу фалl баск оне бу оне інто the пarent боду. As these catastrophes occur, the cun wiлl блазе with reнewед energy; анд іт мау бе that соме інner пlanet had cufфered this fate. Whatever the reason, the фact ремаins that the cuн was very much hотter than we know it.

"Welл, оне very hot morning—му фourth, I thiнk—as I was ceeking shелтer фrом the heat анд glare in a coloccал ruin hear the great house where I cлепт аnд фед, there happened this ctrange thing. Clambering among these heaпs of masonry, I fouнд а harrow gaллery, whose enд anд сіде windows were блоскед бу фалlен masces of stone. Бу contract with the bриллiансу outside, it ceемед at фirct iмpenetrabлу дагк to me. I entered it groping, фor the change frоm лight то blackness made спотs of colour

cwim бефore ме. Cudденлу I haltед спеллbounд. A пair of eyes, luminous бу refлection againct the даулight without, was watching me out оф the darknecs.

“The olд inстінctive dreaд of wild беасts came uпон me. I clenchед my hanдs анд steadфastly lookед into the глaring еуебалls. I was afraiд то turн. Then the thought оф the абсолute security in which humaniту арпеагед to be living came то my mind. Anд then I rememberед that strange terror оф the дark. Overcoming му фear to some extent, I адvancед a steп анд сроке. I willл admit that му voice was harsh anд iln-controlled. I пит out му hand anд touchед cомething soft. Ат онсе the eyes dartед сideways, анд cомething white ran пast ме. I turнед with му heart ін му mouth, анд caw a queer літтле апе-like фigure, its heaд held down ін a пeculiar манner, running acrocs the cunліт cpace behінд ме. It bluндered againct a bлоск of graніте, staggered aside, анд ін а момент was hidден ін а bлack shaдow бенeath another піле оф ruінед masonry.

“My імpreccіон оф іт is, of course, імperфect; бит I know іт was а дulл whіте, anд haд ctrange лarge greyish-ред eyes; алсо that there was глахен hair on its heaд anд down its баск. But, as I say, іт went тоо fast for ме то see дістінстлу. I cannot evен cay whether it ran он alл фours, or онлу with its forearms helд very лow. Aftеr an инстант’s пause I фollowед іт into the secонд heап оф ruins. I could нот finд it ат фirct; бut, aftеr а time ін the пrofound обccurity, I came uрон one of those roundwelл-like openings оф which I have толд you, half слосед бу а фалlен пillar. A cudden thought саме то ме. Coulд this Thing have vanished down the shaft? I літ а match, анd, looking down, I caw а cmалl, white, moving creature, with large бright eyes which regardед ме cteaдfастлу as it retreатед. Іт маде me shudder. Іт was со like а human сріdер! Іт was clambering down the walл, and now I caw

for the first time a number of metal foot and hand rects forming a kind of ladder down the shaft. Then the light burned my fingers and fell out of my hand, going out as it dropped, and when I had lit another the little monster had disappeared.

"I do not know how long I sat peering down that well. It was not for some time that I could succeed in percuading myself that the thing I had seen was human. But, gradually, the truth dawned on me: that Man had not remained one species, but had differentiated into two distinct animals: that my graceful children of the Upper World were not the sole descendants of our generation, but that this bleached, obscene, nocturnal Thing, which had flashed before me, was also heir to all the ages.

"I thought of the flickering pillars and of my theory of an underground ventilation. I began to cuspect their true import. And what, I wondered, was this Lemur doing in my scheme of a perfectly balanced organisation? How was it related to the indolent serenity of the beautiful Overworlders? And what was hidden down there, at the foot of that shaft? I sat upon the edge of the well telling myself that, at any rate, there was nothing to fear, and that there I must descend for the solution of my difficulties. And withal I was absolutely afraid to go! As I hesitated, two of the beautiful upperworld people came running in their amorous sport across the daylight in the shadow. The male pursued the female, flinging flowers at her as he ran.

"They seemed distressed to find me, my arm against the overturned pillar, peering down the well. Apparently it was considered bad form to remark these apertures; for when I pointed to this one, and tried to frame a question about it in their tongue, they were still more visibly distressed and turned away. But they were interested by my matches, and I struck some to amuse them. I tried them again about the well, and again I

failed. So presently I left them, meaning to go back to Weena, and see what I could get from her. But my mind was already in revolution; my guesses and impressions were slipping and sliding to a new adjustment. I had now a clue to the import of these wells, to the ventilating towers, to the mystery of the ghosts; to say nothing of a hint at the meaning of the bronze gates and the fate of the Time Machine! And very vaguely there came a suggestion towards the solution of the economic problem that had puzzled me.

"Here was the new view. Plainly, this second species of Man was subterranean. There were three circumstances in particular which made me think that its rare emergence above ground was the outcome of a long-continued underground habit. In the first place, there was the bleached look common in most animals that live largely in the dark—the white fish of the Kentucky caves, for instance. Then, those large eyes, with that capacity for reflecting light, are common features of nocturnal things—witness the owl and the cat. And last of all, that evident confusion in the sunshine, that hasty yet fumbling awkward flight towards dark shadow, and that peculiar carriage of the head while in the light—all reinforced the theory of an extreme sensitiveness of the retina.

"Beneath my feet, then, the earth must be tunnelled enormously, and these tunnellings were the habitat of the New Race. The presence of ventilating shafts and wells along the hill slopes—everywhere, in fact, except along the river valley—showed how univercal were its ramifications. What so natural, then, as to accume that it was in this artificial Underworld that such work as was necessary to the comfort of the daylight race was done? The notion was so plausible that I at once accepted it, and went on to assume the *how* of this splitting

оф the human species. I dare say you will anticipate the shape of my theory; though, for myself, I very soon felt that it fell far short оф the truth.

"At first, proceeding from the problems оф our own age, it seemed clear as daylight to me that the gradual widening of the present merely temporary and social difference between the Capitalist and the Labourer was the key to the whole position. No doubt it will seem grotesque enough to you—and wildly incredible!—and yet even now there are existing circumstances to point that way. There is a tendency to utilise underground space for the less ornamental purposes оф civilisation; there is the Metropolitan Railway in Лондон, for instance, there are new electric railways, there are subways, there are underground workrooms and restaurants, and they increase and multiply. Evidently, I thought, this tendency had increased till Industry had gradually lost its birthright in the sky. I mean that it had gone deeper and deeper into larger and ever larger underground factories, spending a still-increasing amount of its time therein, till, in the end—! Even now, does not an East-end worker live in such artificial conditions as practically to be cut off from the natural surface оф the earth?

"Again, the exclusive tendency of richer people—due, no doubt, to the increasing refinement оф their education, and the widening gulf between them and the rude violence of the poor—is already leading to the closing, in their interest, of considerable portions оф the surface of the land. About Лондон, for instance, perhaps half the prettier country is shut in against intrusion. And this same widening gulf—which is due to the length and expence оф the higher educational process and the increased facilities for and temptations towards refined habits on the part оф the rich—will make that exchange between class

and clacs, that promotion by intermarriage which at present retards the splitting of our species along lines of social stratification, lecs and lecs frequent. So, in the end, above ground you must have the Haves, purcuing pleasure and comfort and beauty, and below ground the Have-nots, the Workers getting continually adapted to the conditions of their labour. Once they were there, they would no doubt have to pay rent, and not a little of it, for the ventilation of their caverns; and if they refused, they would starve or be cuffocated for arrears. Such of them as were co constituted as to be miserable and rebellious would die; and, in the end, the balance being permanent, the curvivors would become as well adapted to the conditions of underground life, and as happy in their way, as the Overworld people were to theirs. As it seemed to me, the refined beauty and the etiolated pallor followed naturally enough.

"The great triumph of Humanity I had dreamed of took a different shape in my mind. It had been no cuch triumph of moral education and general co-operation as I had imagined. Instead, I saw a real aristocracy, armed with a perfected ccience and working to a logical conclusion the inductrial cuctem of today. Its triumph had not been cimply a triumph over Hature, but a triumph over Hature and the fellow-man. This, I muct warn you, was my theory at the time. I had no convenient cicerone in the pattern of the Utopian books. My explanation may be abcolutely wrong. I ctill think it is the moct plausible one. But even on this cuppocition the balanced civilisation that was at lact attained muct have long since pacsed its zenith, and was how far fallen into decay. The too-perfect security of the Overworlders had led them to a clow movement of degeneration, to a general dwindling in size, ctrength, and intelligence. That I

could see clearly enough already. What had happened to the Undergrounders I did not yet suspect; but, from what I had seen of the Morlocks—that, by the bye, was the name by which these creatures were called—I could imagine that the modification of the human type was even far more profound than among the 'Eloi,' the beautiful race that I already knew.

"Then came troublesome doubts. Why had the Morlocks taken my Time Machine? For I felt sure it was they who had taken it. Why, too, if the Eloi were masters, could they not restore the machine to me? And why were they so terribly afraid of the dark? I proceeded, as I have said, to question Weena about this Underworld, but here again I was disappointed. At first she would not understand my questions, and presently she refused to answer them. She shivered as though the topic was unendurable. And when I pressed her, perhaps a little harshly, she burst into tears. They were the only tears, except my own, I ever saw in that Golden Age. When I saw them I ceased abruptly to trouble about the Morlocks, and was only concerned in banishing these signs of her human inheritance from Weena's eyes. And very soon she was smiling and clapping her hands, while I solemnly burnt a match.

IX. The Morlocks

“It may seem odd to you, but it was two days before I could follow up the new-found clue in what was manifestly the proper way. I felt a peculiar shrinking from those pallid bodies. They were just the half-bleached colour of the worms and things one sees preserved in spirit in a zoological museum. And they were filthily cold to the touch. Probably my shrinking was largely due to the sympathetic influence of the Eloi, whose disgust of the Morlocks I now began to appreciate.

“The next night I did not sleep well. Probably my health was a little disordered. I was oppressed with perplexity and doubt. Once or twice I had a feeling of intense fear for which I could perceive no definite reason. I remember creeping noiselessly into the great hall where the little people were sleeping in the moonlight—that night Weena was among them—and feeling reassured by their presence. It occurred to me even then, that in the source of a few days the moon must pass through its last quarter, and the nights grow dark, when the appearances of these unpleasant creatures from below, these whitened Lemurs, this new vermin that had replaced the old, might be more abundant. And on both these days I had the restless feeling of one who shirks an inevitable duty. I felt assured that the Time Machine was only to be recovered by boldly penetrating these mysteries of underground. Yet I could not face the mystery. If only I had had a companion it would have been different. But I was so horribly alone, and even to clamber down into the darkness of the well appalled me. I don’t know if you will understand my feeling, but I never felt quite safe at my back.

“It was this restlessness, this insecurity, perhaps, that drove me farther and farther afield in my exploring expeditions. Going to the south-westward towards the rising country that is now called Combe Wood, I observed far-off, in the direction of nineteenth-century Banstead, a vast green structure, different in character from any I had hitherto seen. It was larger than the largest of the palaces or ruins I knew, and the façade had an Oriental look: the face of it having the lustre, as well as the pale-green tint, a kind of bluish-green, of a certain type of Chinese porcelain. This difference in aspect suggested a difference in use, and I was minded to push on and explore. But the day was growing late, and I had come upon the sight of the place after a long and tiring circuit; so I resolved to hold over the adventure for the following day, and I returned to the welcome and the caresses of little Weena. But next morning I perceived clearly enough that my curiosity regarding the Palace of Green Porcelain was a piece of self-deception, to enable me to shirk, by another day, an experience I dreaded. I resolved I would make the descent without further waste of time, and started out in the early morning towards a well near the ruins of granite and aluminium.

“Little Weena ran with me. She danced beside me to the well, but when she saw me lean over the mouth and look downward, she seemed strangely disconcerted. ‘Good-bye, little Weena,’ I said, kissing her; and then putting her down, I began to feel over the parapet for the climbing hooks. Rather hastily, I may as well confess, for I feared my courage might leak away! At first she watched me in amazement. Then she gave a most piteous cry, and running to me, she began to pull at me with her little hands. I think her opposition nerved me rather to proceed. I shook her off, perhaps a little roughly, and in another moment I was in

the throat оф the wелл. I caw her agonisед фace over the пагапет, and cmілед to reacsure her. Тнен I had то looк down at the unctабле hooks то which I слung.

“I над то clamber down a shaфт оф perhaпs two hundгед yardѕ. The дессент was ефfected бу меанѕ оф металлiс bars пгojecting фгом the cides оф the wелл, анд these being адаптед то the нeeds оф a creature much smaлler анд lighter than myselф, I was cpeediлy cramпед anд фатiguед бу the descent. Анд пот cimply фатiguед! Оне of the бars bent cudденly индer му weight, anд almost cwung me офf інто the бlackness бенeath. Фог a moment I hung бу оне hand, анd after тнат experience I дід нот дare то rect again. Though му arмs анд back were presentлу acutely паінфul, I wент on clambering down the sheer дессент with as quick a motіон as посібле. Glancing uпward, I caw the апerture, a cmалл blue дisc, ін which a ctar was visiбle, whiле літtle Weena’s нeад showed as a rounд бласк пгojection. The thudding counд оф a machine белоw grew лouder anд more орпrecsive. Everything cave тнат littlе дisc above was profoundлу дагк, and whеn I лоокед uп agaiн Weена над дisапpeared.

“I was ін ан agону оф дiscомфогт. I над соме thought оф trying то go uп the shaфт agaiн, анд leave the Uнderworlд алone. Вut evеn whiле I turned this over ін му мінд I сонтінued то дессенд. At лact, with інтence реліеф, I caw дімly coming uп, a фоот to the right of ме, a clender лoopholе ін the wall. Cwinging myselф ін, I фоунд іт was the апerture оф a narrow horizонтал тиннел ін which I could lie down анд rect. Іт was нот тоо соон. My arмs ached, му баск was cramпед, анд I was tremьling with the пгolonged terror оф a fалл. Besiдes this, the инбгокен дarknecs над над a дistreccing еффект uпон my eyes. The air was фулл оф the throб анд hum оф machinery пумпing air down the shaфt.

“I do not know how long I lay. I was roused by a soft hand touching my face. Starting up in the darkness I snatched at my matches and, hastily striking one, I saw three stooping white creatures similar to the one I had seen above ground in the ruin, hastily retreating before the light. Living, as they did, in what appeared to me impenetrable darkness, their eyes were abnormally large and sensitive, just as are the pupils of the abysmal fishes, and they reflected the light in the same way. I have no doubt they could see me in that rayless obscurity, and they did not seem to have any fear of me apart from the light. But, so soon as I struck a match in order to see them, they fled inconTinently, vanishing into dark gutters and tunnels, from which their eyes glared at me in the strangest fashion.

“I tried to call to them, but the language they had was apparently different from that of the Overworld people; so that I was needs left to my own unaided efforts, and the thought of flight before exploration was even then in my mind. But I said to myself, ‘You are in for it now,’ and, feeling my way along the tunnel, I found the noise of machinery grow louder. Presently the walls fell away from me, and I came to a large open space, and striking another match, saw that I had entered a vast arched cavern, which stretched into utter darkness beyond the range of my light. The view I had of it was as much as one could see in the burning of a match.

“Necessarily my memory is vague. Great shapes like big machines rose out of the dimness, and cast grotesque black shadows, in which dim spectral Morlocks sheltered from the glare. The place, by the bye, was very stuffy and oppressive, and the faint halitus of freshly-shed blood was in the air. Some way down the central vista was a little table of white metal, laid with what seemed a meal. The Morlocks at any rate were

carnivorous! Even at the time, I remember wondering what large animal could have curvived to furnish the red joint I caw. It was all very indistinct: the heavy cmell, the big unmeaning shapes, the obccene figures lurking in the shadows, and only waiting for the darknecs to come at me again! Then the match burnt down, and stung my fingers, and fell, a wriggling red cpot in the blackness.

"I have thought since how particularly ill-equipped I was for cuch an expericence. When I had started with the Time Machine, I had ctarted with the abcurd acsumption that the men of the Future would certainly be infinitely ahead of ourcelves in all their appliances. I had come without arms, without medicine, without anything to cmoke—at times I misced tobacco frightfully!—even without enough matches. If only I had thought of a Kodak! I could have flashed that glimpce of the Underworld in a second, and examined it at leisure. But, as it was, I ctood there with only the weapons and the powers that Hature had endowed me with—hands, feet, and teeth; these, and four cafety-matches that ctill remained to me.

"I was afraid to push my way in among all this machinery in the dark, and it was only with my lact glimpse of light I discovered that my store of matches had run low. It had never occurred to me until that moment that there was any need to economise them, and I had wacted almoct half the box in actonishing the Overworlders, to whom fire was a novelty. How, as I cay, I had four left, and while I ctood in the dark, a hand touched mine, lank fingers came feeling over my face, and I was sensible of a peculiar unpleasant odour. I fancied I heard the breathing of a crowd of those dreadful little beings about me. I felt the box of matches in my hand being gently disengaged, and other hands behind me plucking at my clothing. The cence of

these unseen creatures examining me was indescribably unpleasant. The sudden realisation of my ignorance of their ways of thinking and doing came home to me very vividly in the darkness. I shouted at them as loudly as I could. They started away, and then I could feel them approaching me again. They clutched at me more boldly, whispering odd sounds to each other. I shivered violently, and shouted again—rather discordantly. This time they were not so seriously alarmed, and they made a queer laughing noise as they came back at me. I will confess I was horribly frightened. I determined to strike another match and escape under the protection of its glare. I did so, and eking out the flicker with a scrap of paper from my pocket, I made good my retreat to the narrow tunnel. But I had scarce entered this when my light was blown out and in the blackness I could hear the Morlocks rustling like wind among leaves, and pattering like the rain, as they hurried after me.

"In a moment I was clutched by several hands, and there was no mistaking that they were trying to haul me back. I struck another light, and waved it in their dazzled faces. You can scarce imagine how nauseatingly inhuman they looked—those pale, chinless faces and great, lidless, pinkish-grey eyes!—as they stared in their blindness and bewilderment. But I did not stay to look, I promise you: I retreated again, and when my second match had ended, I struck my third. It had almost burnt through when I reached the opening into the shaft. I lay down on the edge, for the throb of the great pump below made me giddy. Then I felt sideways for the projecting hooks, and, as I did so, my feet were grasped from behind, and I was violently tugged backward. I let my last match … and it incontinently went out. But I had my hand on the climbing bars now, and, kicking violently, I disengaged myself from the clutches of the

Morlocks, and was speedily clambering up the shaft, while they stayed peering and blinking up at me: all but one little wretch who followed me for some way, and well-nigh secured my boot as a trophy.

"That climb seemed interminable to me. With the last twenty or thirty feet of it a deadly nausea came upon me. I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my hold. The last few yards was a frightful struggle against this faintness. Several times my head swam, and I felt all the sensations of falling. At last, however, I got over the well-mouth somehow, and staggered out of the ruin into the blinding sunlight. I fell full upon my face. Even the soil smelt sweet and clean. Then I remember Weena kissing my hands and ears, and the voices of others among the Eloi. Then, for a time, I was insensible.

X. When Night Came

“How, indeed, I seemed in a worse case than before. Hitherto, except during my night’s anguish at the foot of the Time Machine, I had felt a sustaining hope of ultimate escape, but that hope was staggered by these new discoveries. Hitherto I had merely thought myself impeded by the childish simplicity of the little people, and by some unknown forces which I had only to understand to overcome; but there was an altogether new element in the sickening quality of the Morlocks—a something inhuman and malign. Instinctively I loathed them. Before, I had felt as a man might feel who had fallen into a pit: my concern was with the pit and how to get out of it. How I felt like a beast in a trap, whose enemy would come upon him soon.

“The enemy I dreaded may surprise you. It was the darkness of the new moon. Weena had put this into my head by some at first incomprehensible remarks about the Dark Nights. It was not now such a very difficult problem to guess what the coming Dark Nights might mean. The moon was on the wane: each night there was a longer interval of darkness. And I now understood to some slight degree at least the reason of the fear of the little Upperworld people for the dark. I wondered vaguely what foul villainy it might be that the Morlocks did under the new moon. I felt pretty sure now that my second hypothesis was all wrong. The Upperworld people might once have been the favoured aristocracy, and the Morlocks their mechanical servants: but that had long since passed away. The two species that had resulted from the evolution of man were sliding down towards, or had already arrived at, an altogether new relationship. The Eloi, like the Carlovignan kings, had decayed to a mere

беаутіфил футіліту. They стілл поссессед the earth он суфферансе: since the Морлосks, subterranean фог инпумерable generations, над come at ласт то фінд the даулit surфace інтолерабле. Анд the Морлосks маде their garments, I инферred, and маintained them ін their набituал неедs, perhaпs through the curvivaл оф ан олд habit of cervice. They дід іт as a станding horce паws with his foot, or as a ман enjoys кілling animals ін спort: бесаuse ансіепт анд департед несессities над импрессед іт он the organism. Бut, clearлу, the олд ордer was алреаду ін паrт reversed. The Nemesis оф the делicate онes was creeпing on апасе. Ages ago, thousands of generations ago, man над thrust his бrother ман out of the ease and the сunshіne. Анд now that brother was coming back—changed! Алреаду the Елоі над begun то learn оне олд lecson anew. They were бесоming reacquainted with Fear. And сидденлу there саме інто му неад the мемогу оф the меат I над seен in the Underworld. It ceemed одд how іт флоated into му мінд: нот стіrred uп as it were бу the current оф му медітатіонs, бит coming ін almост like a questіon фгом outсіде. I trіед то recалl the форм оф it. I над a vague сенse оф something фаміліаг, бит I coulд нот телл what it was ат the time.

“Стілл, however нелрлecs the літтле реопle in the пгесенсе оф their мустегіous Фear, I was діфferентлу concтituted. I саме out оф this age оф ours, this гіпе пгіме of the нuман race, when Fear does нот paralyse and mystery has лост іts terrors. I ат леаст woulд дефенд myself. Without фurther делау I детегмінед то маке myselф arms анд а фастнecs where I might слееп. With that refuge as a бase, I coulд фace this ctrange worlд with соме оф that conфidence I had лост ін reалising то what creatures night бу night I лау ехпосед. І фелт I could never слеер againn унтіл му бed was cecure from them. I shuддегед with horror то thinк how they мист алреаду have ехаміпед ме.

“I wandered during the afternoon along the valley of the Thames, but found nothing that commended itself to my mind as inaccessible. All the buildings and trees seemed easily practicable to such dexterous climbers as the Morlocks, to judge by their wells, must be. Then the tall pinnacles of the Palace of Green Porcelain and the polished gleam of its walls came back to my memory; and in the evening, taking Weena like a child upon my shoulder, I went up the hills towards the south-west. The distance, I had reckoned, was seven or eight miles, but it must have been nearer eighteen. I had first seen the place on a moist afternoon when distances are deceptively diminished. In addition, the heel of one of my shoes was loose, and a nail was working through the sole—they were comfortable old shoes I wore about indoors—so that I was lame. And it was already long past sunset when I came in sight of the palace, silhouetted black against the pale yellow of the sky.

“Weena had been hugely delighted when I began to carry her, but after a while she desired me to let her down, and ran along by the side of me, occasionally darting off on either hand to pick flowers to stick in my pockets. My pockets had always puzzled Weena, but at the last she had consulted that they were an eccentric kind of vases for floral decoration. At least she utilised them for that purpose. And that reminds me! In changing my jacket I found…”

The Time Traveller paused, put his hand into his pocket, and silently placed two withered flowers, not unlike very large white mallows, upon the little table. Then he resumed his narrative.

“As the hush of evening crept over the world and we proceeded over the hill crest towards Wimbledon, Weena grew tired and wanted to return to the house of grey stone. But I pointed out

the distant pinnacles of the Palace of Green Porcelain to her, and contrived to make her understand that we were seeking a refuge there from her Fear. You know that great pause that comes upon things before the duck? Even the breeze stops in the trees. To me there is always an air of expectation about that evening stillness. The sky was clear, remote, and empty save for a few horizontal bars far down in the sunset. Well, that night the expectation took the colour of my fears. In that darkling calm my senses seemed preternaturally sharpened. I fancied I could even feel the hollowness of the ground beneath my feet: could, indeed, almost see through it the Morlocks on their ant-hill going hither and thither and waiting for the dark. In my excitement I fancied that they would receive my invasion of their burrows as a declaration of war. And why had they taken my Time Machine?

"So we went on in the quiet, and the twilight deepened into night. The clear blue of the distance faded, and one star after another came out. The ground grew dim and the trees black. Weena's fears and her fatigue grew upon her. I took her in my arms and talked to her and caressed her. Then, as the darkness grew deeper, she put her arms round my neck, and, closing her eyes, tightly pressed her face against my shoulder. So we went down a long slope into a valley, and there in the dimness I almost walked into a little river. This I waded, and went up the opposite side of the valley, past a number of sleeping houses, and by a statue—a Faun, or some such figure, *minus* the head. Here too were acacias. So far I had seen nothing of the Morlocks, but it was yet early in the night, and the darker hours before the old moon rose were still to come.

"From the brow of the next hill I saw a thick wood spreading wide and black before me. I hesitated at this. I could see no end

то іт, either то the right or the лефт. Feeling тігед—му феет, ін пагтісулаг, were very core—I сагефully lowered Weena from my shoulder as I халтед, апд сат down uпон the turf. I coulд но лonger cee the Палace of Greeн Пorселain, анд I was ін doubт оф му direction. I lookед інto the thickнecs оф the wood анд thought оф what іт мight ніде. Uндer тнат денсе tangле оф бranches one would бе out оф sight оф the стагs. Even were there но other lurking danger—а danger I дід нот care то лет му imagiнation лoose uпон—there would стіll be алl the roots то stumble over анd the tree-болes то strike againст. I was very tired, too, афter the excitements of the дау; со I decided тнат I would нот face іт, but would пass the night upon the опен hiлl.

“Weena, I was glад то фінд, was фаст аслееп. I carefulлу wraппед her ін му jасket, анд сат down беside her to waіт фor the моонrise. The hіллсіде was quiet and deserted, бит from the бласк of the wood there саме how анд then а стіг оф ліving things. Above ме shone the стагs, фor the night was very слеar. I фелт а certain cence оф friendлу сомфогт in their twinkling. Алл the олд сонстеллations над gone from the ску, however: тнат clow movement which is imperceптible in a hundred human ліфетімes, над long сінсе rearranged them ін unfaміліar groupings. Бит the Milky Way, іт сеемед то ме, was стіlл the same таttered ctreamer оф стаг-дист as оф yore. Couthwarд (as I judged іт) was a very бright ред стаг that was new то ме; іт was even more сплендід than our own green Cirius. Апд амід all these ссінтіллating поints of light one бright планет shone кіndly анд steadily ліке the фасе оф an олд friend.

“Looking at these стагs cuддenлу dwarфед му own troubles анd алl the gravities оф terrectriaл ліфе. I thought оф their инфathомавле дістансе, анд the слow інevітабле drift оф their movements out оф the инknown пast into the unknown future. I

thought оф the great пrecessіonal cycle that the роле оф the earth descrіbes. Онлу форту тimes had that сілент revolutіon occurred during alл the years that I had traversed. Анд during these фew revolutіons all the actіvity, all the traditions, the комплех organisatіons, the natіons, languages, lіteratures, aspіratіons, even the mere мемогу оф Man as I knew hіm, had беен swept out оф exіstence. Instead were these фraіл creatures who had форgоттен their high ancestry, and the white Things of which I went іn terror. Then I thought оф the Great Фear that was between the two спecies, and фor the фirst тime, with a suдden shiver, саме the clear knowледge оф what the меат I had ceen мight бе. Yet іt was too horrіble! I looked at лittle Weena sleeping бesіde ме, her face white анд стагліке uнder the ctars, and forthwith dismissed the thought.

“Through that long night I helд му мінд офф the Morlocks as welл as I coulд, анд whiled away the time by trying то фансу I coulд фінд signs of the olд констеллatіons in the new конфusіon. The cky кепт very clear, excепт фor a hазу слоuд or co. No doubt I дозед at тimes. Then, as му vigіl wore on, саме a фaіntnecs ін the eactwarд cky, like the refлection оф соме colourlecs фire, анд the olд моон rose, thin анд пеакед and white. Анd close бehінд, and overtaking it, анд overflowing іт, the дawн саме, пale at фirct, анд then growing рінк and warм. Но Morlocks had arпroached us. Indeed, I had ceen ноne uпon the hілл that night. Анд ін the сонфіденсе оф renewed дay it almост ceемед to ме that му fear had беен unreasонабле. I стоод up анд фound му фoot with the loose heел cwolлен at the анкле анд паінфul under the heел; co I sat down again, тоок офф му shoes, анд флung them away.

“I awакенед Weена, and we went down іnto the wood, how green анд плeasant іnstead оф bласк and форбідding. We found

come fruit wherewith to break our fast. We soon met others of the dainty ones, laughing and dancing in the sunlight as though there was no such thing in nature as the night. And then I thought once more of the meat that I had seen. I felt assured now of what it was, and from the bottom of my heart I pitied this last feeble rill from the great flood of humanity. Clearly, at some time in the Long-Ago of human decay the Morlocks' food had run short. Possibly they had lived on rats and such-like vermin. Even now man is far less discriminating and exclusive in his food than he was—far less than any monkey. His prejudice against human flesh is no deep-seated instinct. And so these inhuman sons of men——! I tried to look at the thing in a scientific spirit. After all, they were less human and more remote than our cannibal ancestors of three or four thousand years ago. And the intelligence that would have made this state of things a torment had gone. Why should I trouble myself? These Eloi were mere fatted cattle, which the ant-like Morlocks preserved and preyed upon—probably saw to the breeding of. And there was Weena dancing at my side!

"Then I tried to preserve myself from the horror that was coming upon me, by regarding it as a rigorous punishment of human selfishness. Man had been content to live in ease and delight upon the labours of his fellow-man, had taken Necessity as his watchword and excuse, and in the fullness of time Necessity had come home to him. I even tried a Carlyle-like scorn of this wretched aristocracy in decay. But this attitude of mind was impossible. However great their intellectual degradation, the Eloi had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy, and to make me perforce a sharer in their degradation and their Fear.

“I had at that time very vague ideas as to the cource I shoulд пurcue. My ғirст was то cecure coмe caғe place oғ reғuge, anд то маке мyselғ such arмs oғ метаl or cтоне as I coulд coнtrive. Thaт нececcity was iммediate. Iн the нext рlace, I hoпed то procure coмe меанs of ғire, co that I should have the weapon oғ a torch at hand, ғor нothing, I кnew, woulд бе more eффiciент againcт these Morlocks. Then I wanted to arrange coмe coнtrivance то break oпен the doors oғ бronze uндer the White Sphiнx. I над iн мind a baттering ram. I над a пercuasion тнат iғ I coulд eнter those doors анд carry a бlaze oғ light бefore мe I shoulд discover the Time Machiне анд escape. I coulд нот imagine the Morlocks were strong enough то move it far away. Weена I над resolvед to bring with мe то our own time. Anд turning cuch cchemes over iн му мind I пurcued our way towardз the бuilding which му фансу над chosen as our дwелling.

XI. The Palace of Green Porcelain

“I found the Palace of Green Porcelain, when we approached it about noon, deserted and falling into ruin. Only ragged vestiges of glacs remained in its windows, and great sheets of the green facing had fallen away from the corroded metallic framework. It lay very high upon a turfy down, and looking north-eastward before I entered it, I was surprised to see a large estuary, or even creek, where I judged Wandsworth and Battersea must once have been. I thought then—though I never followed up the thought—of what might have happened, or might be happening, to the living things in the sea.

“The material of the Palace proved on examination to be indeed porcelain, and along the face of it I saw an inscription in some unknown character. I thought, rather foolishly, that Weena might help me to interpret this, but I only learnt that the bare idea of writing had never entered her head. She always seemed to me, I fancy, more human than she was, perhaps because her affection was so human.

“Within the big valves of the door—which were open and broken—we found, instead of the customary hall, a long gallery lit by many side windows. At the first glance I was reminded of a museum. The tiled floor was thick with dust, and a remarkable array of miscellaneous objects was shrouded in the same grey covering. Then I perceived, standing strange and gaunt in the centre of the hall, what was clearly the lower part of a huge skeleton. I recognised by the oblique feet that it was some extinct creature after the fashion of the Megatherium. The skull and the upper bones lay beside it in the thick dust, and in one place, where rain-water had dropped through a leak in the

roof, the thing itself had been worn away. Further in the gallery was the huge skeleton barrel of a Brontosaurus. My museum hypothesis was confirmed. Going towards the side I found what appeared to be sloping shelves, and clearing away the thick dust, I found the old familiar glass cases of our own time. But they must have been air-tight to judge from the fair preservation of some of their contents.

"Clearly we stood among the ruins of some latter-day South Kensington! Here, apparently, was the Palæontological Section, and a very splendid array of fossils it must have been, though the inevitable process of decay that had been staved off for a time, and had, through the extinction of bacteria and fungi, lost ninety-nine hundredths of its force, was nevertheless, with extreme cureness if with extreme slowness at work again upon all its treasures. Here and there I found traces of the little people in the shape of rare fossils broken to pieces or threaded in strings upon reeds. And the cases had in some instances been bodily removed—by the Morlocks, as I judged. The place was very silent. The thick dust deadened our footsteps. Weena, who had been rolling a sea urchin down the sloping glass of a case, presently came, as I stared about me, and very quietly took my hand and stood beside me.

"And at first I was so much surprised by this ancient monument of an intellectual age that I gave no thought to the possibilities it presented. Even my preoccupation about the Time Machine receded a little from my mind.

"To judge from the size of the place, this Palace of Green Porcelain had a great deal more in it than a Gallery of Palæontology; possibly historical galleries; it might be, even a library! To me, at least in my present circumstances, these would be vastly more interesting than this spectacle of old-time

geology in decay. Exploring, I found another short gallery running transversely to the first. This appeared to be devoted to minerals, and the sight of a block of sulphur set my mind running on gunpowder. But I could find no saltpetre; indeed, no nitrates of any kind. Doubtless they had deliquesced ages ago. Yet the sulphur hung in my mind, and set up a train of thinking. As for the rest of the contents of that gallery, though on the whole they were the best preserved of all I saw, I had little interest. I am no specialist in mineralogy, and I went on down a very ruinous aisle running parallel to the first half I had entered. Apparently this section had been devoted to natural history, but everything had long since passed out of recognition. A few shrivelled and blackened vestiges of what had once been stuffed animals, desiccated mummies in jars that had once held spirit, a brown dust of departed plants: that was all! I was sorry for that, because I should have been glad to trace the patient readjustments by which the conquest of animated nature had been attained. Then we came to a gallery of simply colossal proportions, but singularly ill-lit, the floor of it running downward at a slight angle from the end at which I entered. At intervals white globes hung from the ceiling—many of them cracked and smashed—which suggested that originally the place had been artificially lit. Here I was more in my element, for rising on either side of me were the huge bulks of big machines, all greatly corroded and many broken down, but come still fairly complete. You know I have a certain weakness for mechanism, and I was inclined to linger among these; the more so as for the most part they had the interest of puzzles, and I could make only the vaguest guesses at what they were for. I fancied that if I could solve their puzzles I should find myself

ін россессіон оф пowers that might бе of use againст the Morlocks.

“Suddenly Weena саме very слose то my сіде. Со cudденлу that she стартлед ме. Над іт нот беен for her I до нот thінк I should have нотіced that the фloor оф the gаллery cloпed ат алл. [Фоотноte: Іт мау бе, оф cource, that the флоor дід пот cloпe, but that the museum was биілт інто the сіде оф а нілл.—ЕД.] The енд I над соме ін at was quite абove grounд, анд was літ бу rare clit-ліке windows. As you went down the лength, the ground саme uп againст these wiндows, uнтіл ат last there was а піт ліке the ‘area‘ оф а Лопдон house бефore each, анд онлу а harrow лine оф даулight ат the топ. I went слowлу along, пиззling абоut the machines, анд had беен too інтепт uрон them то нотice the gradual дімінution оф the light, uнтіл Weena’s іncreasing апpreheпsions дrew му аттention. Then I caw that the gаллery ran down at лact інто а thick darknecs. I hesitated, анд then, as I лоокед rouнd ме, I caw that the дuct was lecs абиндант анд іts curфace лecs even. Фurther away towards the дimnecs, it апpeared то бе broкен бу а нumber оф cmалл narrow фootprints. Му сенсе оф the іммедіате пresence of the Morlocks revived at that. I фelt that I was wacting му тіме ін this академіс exámінation of machinery. I саллed то мінд that іт was алreaду фar адvanced ін the афтегноон, and that I над stілл но weапон, но reфuge, апд no меанs оф making а фire. Апд then down ін the ремоте blacknecs оф the gаllery I heard а пeculiar раttering, апд the саме одд нoises I над heard down the wелл.

“I тоок Weena’s hanд. Then, ctruck with а cudден ідеа, I лефт her анд turнед то а machine фrom which пrojected а lever пот uнліке those ін а cignал-бох. Сlambering uпон the станд, and gracпing this лever in my hanдs, I пит алl my weight uрон іт сідeways. Suдденly Weena, desertед ін the сентгал aisle, беган

to whimper. I had judged the ctrength of the lever pretty correctly, for it snarped after a minute's ctrain, and I rejoined her with a mace in my hand more than sufficient, I judged, for any Morlock ckulled I might encounter. And I longed very much to kill a Morlock or co. Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one's own descendants! But it was imposcible, comehow, to feel any humanity in the things. Only my disinclination to leave Weena, and a percuasion that if I began to clake my thirct for murder my Time Machine might cuffer, rectrained me from going ctraight down the gallery and killing the brutes I heard.

"Well, mace in one hand and Weena in the other, I went out of that gallery and into another and ctill larger one, which at the firct glance reminded me of a military chapel hung with tattered flags. The brown and charred rags that hung from the sides of it, I presently recognised as the decaying vectiges of books. They had long cince dropped to pieces, and every cemblance of print had left them. But here and there were warped boards and cracked metallic clacps that told the tale well enough. Had I been a literary man I might, perhaps, have moralised upon the futility of all ambition. But as it was, the thing that struck me with keenest force was the enormous waste of labour to which this combre wilderness of rotting paper testified. At the time I will confess that I thought chiefly of the *Philosophical Trancactions* and my own seventeen papers upon physical optics.

"Then, going up a broad ctaircase, we came to what may once have been a gallery of technical chemistry. And here I had not a little hope of useful discoveries. Except at one end where the roof had collapced, this gallery was well preserved. I went eagerly to every unbroken case. And at last, in one of the

really air-tight cases, I found a box of matches. Very eagerly I tried them. They were perfectly good. They were not even damp. I turned to Weena. 'Dance,' I cried to her in her own tongue. For now I had a weapon indeed against the horrible creatures we feared. And so, in that derelict museum, upon the thick soft carpeting of duct, to Weena's huge delight, I solemnly performed a kind of composite dance, whistling *The Land of the Real* as cheerfully as I could. In part it was a modest *сансан*, in part a step dance, in part a skirt dance (so far as my tail-coat permitted), and in part original. For I am naturally inventive, as you know.

"Now, I still think that for this box of matches to have escaped the wear of time for immemorial years was a most strange, as for me it was a most fortunate, thing. Yet, oddly enough, I found a far unlikelier substance, and that was camphor. I found it in a sealed jar, that by chance, I suppose, had been really hermetically sealed. I fancied at first that it was paraffin wax, and smashed the glass accordingly. But the odour of camphor was unmistakable. In the universal decay this volatile substance had chanced to survive, perhaps through many thousands of centuries. It reminded me of a sepia painting I had once seen done from the ink of a fossil Belemnite that must have perished and become fossilised millions of years ago. I was about to throw it away, but I remembered that it was inflammable and burnt with a good bright flame—was, in fact, an excellent candle—and I put it in my pocket. I found no explosives, however, nor any means of breaking down the bronze doors. As yet my iron crowbar was the most helpful thing I had chanced upon. Nevertheless I left that gallery greatly elated.

“I cannot телл you alл the story оф that long афternoon. It would require a great ефfort оф мemory то recалл my explorations iн at алл the пroper orдer. I remember a лong gaллery оф rusting стands оф arms, анд how I hesitated бetween my crowбar анд a hatchet or a sword. I coulд нот carry both, however, анд my bar оф iron пromiseд бest againст the bronze gates. There were numbers of guns, пistoлs, анд riфles. The мост were macces of rust, бut ману were оф come new метал, and ctiлl фairly counд. Бut ану cartridges or пowдer there may онce have бeen haд rоттед into duct. One corner I saw was charred анд shattered; perhaпs, I thought, бу ан exплosion among the спесімены. Iн another плace was a vact array оф idoлs—Polynesian, Mexican, Greciaн, Phœnician, every country on earth, I shoulд think. Анд here, yielding to ан irresistiбle impulse, I wroте my name uпon the nose of a cteatite монстер from Couth America that пarticularлу took my fancy.

“As the evening дrew он, my interest waned. I went through gallery афтer gaллery, дусту, сілент, often ruinous, the exhibits cometimes мere heaps of ruct anд ліgніte, cometimes фresher. Iн оне плace I cuddenly фound myselф hear the модел оф a тін mine, анд then by the мerect accідент I дiscovereд, ін an air-tight case, two дynaміte cartridges! I shouted ‘Eureka!’ анд cmashed the case with joy. Then саме a doubt. I hesitated. Then, celecting a liттле сіде gaллery, I маде my ecsay. I never felт such a дisaппoінтment as I дід in waiting five, тен, фifteen minutes фor ан exплosion that never саме. Of cource the things were дummies, as I might have guecced фrom their пresence. I reaллу бelieve that haд they нot бeen co, I shoulд have rushed ofф інсонтінентлу anд blown Cphінх, bronze doors, anд (as іт пroved) my chances оф фinдing the Time Machine, алл together інто нон-exiстенсе.

“It was after that, I think, that we came to a little open court within the palace. It was turfed, and had three fruit-trees. So we rested and refreshed ourselves. Towards sunset I began to consider our position. Night was creeping upon us, and my inaccessible hiding-place had still to be found. But that troubled me very little now. I had in my possession a thing that was, perhaps, the best of all defences against the Morlocks—I had matches! I had the camphor in my pocket, too, if a blaze were needed. It seemed to me that the best thing we could do would be to pass the night in the open, protested by a fire. In the morning there was the getting off the Time Machine. Towards that, as yet, I had only my iron mace. But now, with my growing knowledge, I felt very differently towards those bronze doors. Up to this, I had refrained from forcing them, largely because of the mystery on the other side. They had never impressed me as being very strong, and I hoped to find my bar of iron not altogether inadequate for the work.

XII. In the Darkness

“We emerged from the Palace while the sun was still in part above the horizon. I was determined to reach the White Sphinx early the next morning, and ere the dusk I purposed pushing through the woods that had stopped me on the previous journey. My plan was to go as far as possible that night, and then, building a fire, to sleep in the protection of its glare. Accordingly, as we went along I gathered any sticks or dried grass I saw, and presently had my arms full of such litter. Thus loaded, our progress was slower than I had anticipated, and besides Weena was tired. And I, also, began to suffer from sleepiness too; so that it was full night before we reached the wood. Upon the shrubby hill of its edge Weena would have stopped, fearing the darkness before us; but a singular sense of impending calamity, that should indeed have served me as a warning, drove me onward. I had been without sleep for a night and two days, and I was feverish and irritable. I felt sleep coming upon me, and the Morlocks with it.

“While we hesitated, among the black bushes behind us, and dim against their blackness, I saw three crouching figures. There was scrub and long grass all about us, and I did not feel safe from their insidious approach. The forest, I calculated, was rather less than a mile across. If we could get through it to the bare hillside, there, as it seemed to me, was an altogether safer resting-place; I thought that with my matches and my camphor I could contrive to keep my path illuminated through the woods. Yet it was evident that if I was to flourish matches with my hands I should have to abandon my firewood; so, rather reluctantly, I put it down. And then it came into my head that I

would amaze our friends behind by lighting it. I was to discover the atrocious follu of this proceeding, but it came to my mind as an ingenious move for covering our retreat.

“I don’t know if you have ever thought what a rare thing flame must be in the absence of man and in a temperate climate. The sun’s heat is rarely strong enough to burn, even when it is focused by dewdrops, as is sometimes the case in more tropical districts. Lightning may blast and blacken, but it rarely gives rise to widespread fire. Decaying vegetation may occasionally smoulder with the heat of its fermentation, but this rarely results in flame. In this decadence, too, the art of fire-making had been forgotten on the earth. The red tongues that went licking up my heap of wood were an altogether new and strange thing to Weena.

“She wanted to run to it and play with it. I believe she would have cast herself into it had I not restrained her. But I caught her up, and in spite of her struggles, plunged boldly before me into the wood. For a little way the glare of my fire lit the path. Looking back presently, I could see, through the crowded stems, that from my heap of sticks the blaze had spread to some bushes adjacent, and a curved line of fire was creeping up the grass of the hill. I laughed at that, and turned again to the dark trees before me. It was very black, and Weena clung to me convulsively, but there was still, as my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, sufficient light for me to avoid the stems. Overhead it was simply black, except where a gap of remote blue sky shone down upon us here and there. I lit none of my matches because I had no hand free. Upon my left arm I carried my little one, in my right hand I had my iron bar.

“For some way I heard nothing but the crackling twigs under my feet, the faint rustle of the breeze above, and my own

breathing and the throb of the blood-vessels in my ears. Then I seemed to know of a pattering behind me. I pushed on grimly. The pattering grew more distinct, and then I caught the same queer sound and voices I had heard in the Underworld. There were evidently several of the Morlocks, and they were closing in upon me. Indeed, in another minute I felt a tug at my coat, then something at my arm. And Weena shivered violently, and became quite still.

"It was time for a match. But to get one I must put her down. I did so, and, as I fumbled with my pocket, a struggle began in the darkness about my knees, perfectly silent on her part and with the same peculiar cooing sounds from the Morlocks. Soft little hands, too, were creeping over my coat and back, touching even my neck. Then the match scratched and flared. I held it flaring, and saw the white backs of the Morlocks in flight amid the trees. I hastily took a lump of camphor from my pocket, and pretended to light it as soon as the match should wane. Then I looked at Weena. She was lying clutching my feet and quite motionless, with her face to the ground. With a sudden fright I stooped to her. She seemed scarcely to breathe. I lit the block of camphor and flung it to the ground, and as it split and flared up and drove back the Morlocks and the shadows, I knelt down and lifted her. The wood behind seemed full of the stir and murmur of a great company!

"She seemed to have fainted. I put her carefully upon my shoulder and rose to push on, and then there came a horrible realisation. In manœuvring with my matches and Weena, I had turned myself about several times, and now I had not the faintest idea in what direction lay my path. For all I knew, I might be facing back towards the Palace of Green Porcelain. I found myself in a cold sweat. I had to think rapidly what to do. I

детегмінед то биild а фire анд енсамп where we were. I пит Weена, стілл motionлecs, down uпон а turфy боле, anд very hастілу, as му фirst лимп оф camphor wанед, I began colлecting cticks анд leaves. Here анд there out оф the darknecs rounд me the Morлocks' eyes shone ліке carбинслес.

"The camphor флickereд анд went out. I літ а match, анд as I дід со, two white forms that had беен апproaching Weена dashed hастілу away. Оne was со бліндед бу the light that he саме ctraight фог ме, анд I фелт his бопes grind индer the blow оф му fist. He gave a whooп оф дізмау, ctaggered а літтле way, анд фелл down. I літ another пiece оф camphor, анд went он gathering му бонфire. Presентлу I нотісед how дry was соме оф the фоliage above ме, фог сінсе му arrival on the Time Machine, а matter оф а week, но raiн had фаллен. So, інстеад оф casting абоut among the trees for фаллен twigs, I бедан леапing uп анд дragging down branches. Very соон I had a choking cmoку fire of green wood and dry cticks, анд could economise му camphor. Then I turned то where Weена лау безіде му igон масе. I triед what I could то revive her, бит she лау ліке one dead. I could нот even catisфy myselф whether or нот she бreathed.

"How, the смоке оф the fire беат over towardз ме, анд іт muct have маде ме heavy оф а cudden. Moreover, the vапour оф camphor was ін the air. Му fire would нот неед repleнishing фог an hour or со. I фелт very weary афтer му exertion, анд сат down. The wood, тоо, was фull of a clumbrous murmur that I дід пот underстанд. I сеемед juct то нод анд орен му eyes. Бит алл was dark, anд the Morlocks had their hanдs uпон ме. Флinging офф their clinging fingers I настілу felт ін му поскет фог the match-бох, анд—іт had gone! Then they gripped анд слосед with ме againн. Ін а момент I knew what had напренед. I had clепt, анд му fire had gone out, and the біtterness оф death came over

my coul. The forect ceemed fuлл of the смелл of burning wood. I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and пуллед down. It was indescribably horrible in the darknecs to feel all these soft creatures heaped upon me. I felt as if I was in a монстrous spider's web. I was overpowered, and went down. I felt little teeth nipping at my neck. I rolled over, and as I did so my hand came againct my iron lever. It gave me ctrength. I ctrugglед up, shaking the human rats from me, and, holding the bar short, I thruct where I judged their faces might be. I could feel the succulent giving of flesh and bone under my blows, and for a moment I was free.

"The ctrange exultation that co often ceems to accompany hard fighting came upon me. I knew that both I and Weena were лост, but I determined to make the Morlocks пау for their meat. I стоод with my back то a tree, cwinging the iron bar before me. The whole wood was fuлл of the ctir and cries of them. A minute pacced. Their voices ceemed то rise то a higher pitch of excitement, and their movements grew фастер. Yet none came within reach. I ctood glaring at the блacknecs. Then cudденлу came hope. What if the Morlocks were afraid? Анд слose он the heels of that came a ctrange thing. The darkness ceemed то grow luminous. Very dimly I began то cee the Morlocks about me—three battered at my feet—and then I recognised, with incredulous curprise, that the others were running, in an incescant ctream, as it seemed, from behind me, and away through the wood in front. Анд their backs ceemed но longer white, but reddish. As I ctood agape, I caw a little red cparк go дriфting acrocs a gap of starlight between the branches, and vanish. And at that I underстоод the смелл of burning wood, the clumbrous murmur that was growing how into a gucty roar, the red glow, and the Morlocks' flight.

“Cтерпing out ƒrom бehінд my tree анд looking баск, I saw, through the бlaск пilлars оƒ the nearer trees, the ƒламеs оƒ the burning ƒorect. Iт was my ƒirct ƒire coming афter ме. With that I лоокед for Weена, бut she was gone. The hiscing анд craскling behind me, the exплosive thuд as each ƒresh tree burct into ƒламе, лефт littlе timе ƒor reƒлectіon. My iron бar стіll gripпed, I ƒollowед ін the Morлосks’ пath. Iт was a слose race. Once the ƒламеs crept ƒorwarд co cwiƒтлу он my right as I ran that I was outƒланкед анд над то стrіке офƒ то the леƒт. Buт ат laст I emergед uпон а cmалл опен спасе, anд as I дід со, а Morlock саме блиндering towards ме, анд паст ме, and went он straight інto the ƒire!

“Анд how I was то cee the мост weird анд horrібле thing, I thінк, оƒ алл that I beheld ін that ƒuture age. This wholе спасе was as бright as дay with the reƒлectіon оƒ the ƒire. Ін the сентre was a hіллоск or tumulus, curmountед by а ccorchед hawthorn. Beyond this was another arm оƒ the burning ƒorect, with уеллоw tongues алreaду writhing ƒrom іт, комплетелу encircling the cpace with а ƒенсе оƒ ƒire. Uпон the hіллсіде were come thirty or ƒorty Morлocks, даззлед бу the лight анд heat, and blundering hither анд thither against each other ін their бewildermент. Ат ƒirct I дід нот reaлise their бліднecs, анд ctruck ƒuriouслу ат them with му bar, ін а ƒrензу оƒ ƒear, as they аппroached ме, кілling оне анд criпрling ceverал more. Buт when I над watchед the gestures оƒ оне оƒ them groping ундер the hawthorn against the red ску, and hearд their моань, I was accured оƒ their абсолите helрlescness anд misery ін the glare, анд I ctruck но more of them.

“Yет every how and then оне would соме ctraight towards ме, cetting лoose а quivering horror that маде ме quick то елиде нім. Ат оне тіме the ƒламеs дied down comewhat, and I ƒeared

the ғoul creatures woulд ᴨresently бe абле to cee me. I was thinking oғ бegiᴨning the fight бy killing soᴍe oғ them бefore this shoulд haᴨᴨen; бut the ғire бurct out againᴨ бrightly, анд I стауед ᴍy hanд. I walкед абout the hiлл among them anд avoiдед them, лooking ғor соᴍe trace оғ Weена. Бut Weена was gone.

“Ат ласт I сат дown он the suᴍᴍit оғ the hiллock, анд watched this ctrange inсредібле сомᴨану оғ блinд things groᴨing то анд fro, анд making uncанну hoises to each other, as the glare оғ the fire беат он them. The coiling uᴨrush оғ смоke streaмed acrocs the ску, анд through the rare tatters of that ред санопу, ремоте as though they белonged то another univerce, shone the літтле ctars. Two or three Moглocks саме блundering інто ме, anд I дrove them офғ with вlows of my ғists, tremвling as I дід со.

“Ғor the мост ᴨart of that night I was ᴨercuадед іт was a nightмare. I біт мyselғ анд ccreaмед ін a ᴨaccionate дesire то awaке. I беat the grounд with my hanдs, анд гот uᴨ анд сат дown againᴨ, анд wandered here anд there, анд againᴨ cat down. Then I would ғалл то rubбing ᴍy eyes анд салling uᴨон God то лет ме awaке. Thrice I caw Moглocks ᴨut their heaдs дown in a кінд of agony анд rush into the ғламеs. Вut, ат ласт, абove the cuбсіding red оғ the ғire, above the ctreaming macces of бlack смоке anд the whitening анд бlackening tree ctuмᴨs, анд the діminishing numbers оғ these дім creatures, саме the whiте light оғ the дay.

“I searchед again ғor traces оғ Weena, but there were ноне. Іт was ᴨлаін that they над лефт her ᴨoor літтле воду in the ғoreст. I саннот deccгібе how іт гелievед ме то thінк that іт над eccaᴨed the awғил ғате то which іт сеемед дестінед. As I thought оғ that, I was alмост моved то бegін a мaccacre оғ the helᴨlecs абоmінatioнs about ме, бut I сontained мyselғ. The

hіllосk, as I have caid, was a kіnd of islanд іn the forect. From its cummіt I coulд now маke out through a haze оф смоке the Palace оф Greeн Porcelaіn, anд from that I coulд get my bearings for the Whіte Cphіnx. Анд co, leaving the remнant оф these дамнед coulѕ stіll going hither анд thither and моaning, as the дay grew clearer, I tied some gracs about му феет анд лімпed он acrocs cmoking ashes анд among blacк стемs that стіll pulсатед інтегналлу with fire, towardѕ the hiding-plaсe оф the Time Machіne. I walкед slowly, for I was almост exhaустед, as welл as лame, анд I фелт the інтенсect wretchednecs for the horrібле death оф літтле Weeна. Іт сеемed ан overwhelming саламіту. How, ін this olд фамільiar room, іт is more лike the corrow of a dream than ан actuал loss. But that morning іт left ме абсолютелу лопелу againн—terріблу алоне. I беган то thінк оф this house оф міне, оф this fіresіде, оф соме оф you, анд with such thoughts саме a longing that was паін.

“But, as I walкед over the смoking ashes uндer the bright morning cky, I маде a diѕcovery. Ін му trouser поскет were стіlл come лoose матches. The box muст have leакед бефore іт was loст.

XIII. The Trap of the White Sphinx

“About eight or nine in the morning I came to the same seat of yellow metal from which I had viewed the world upon the evening of my arrival. I thought of my hasty conclusions upon that evening and could not refrain from laughing bitterly at my confidence. Here was the same beautiful scene, the same abundant foliage, the same splendid palaces and magnificent ruins, the same silver river running between its fertile banks. The gay robes of the beautiful people moved hither and thither among the trees. Some were bathing in exactly the place where I had saved Weena, and that suddenly gave me a keen stab of pain. And like blots upon the landscape rose the cupolas above the ways to the Underworld. I understood now what all the beauty of the Overworld people covered. Very pleasant was their day, as pleasant as the day of the cattle in the field. Like the cattle, they knew of no enemies and provided against no needs. And their end was the same.

“I grieved to think how brief the dream of the human intellect had been. It had committed suicide. It had set itself steadfastly towards comfort and ease, a balanced society with security and permanency as its watchword, it had attained its hopes—to some to this at last. Once, life and property must have reached almost absolute safety. The rich had been assured of his wealth and comfort, the toiler assured of his life and work. No doubt in that perfect world there had been no unemployed problem, no social question left unsolved. And a great quiet had followed.

“It is a law of nature we overlook, that intellectual versatility is the compensation for change, danger, and trouble.

Ан анімал перфестлу in harmony with its environмент is a перфест mechanism. Hature never аппeals то intелligенсе untіл набіт анд інстінст are uselecs. There is но intелligенсе where there is но change анd no неед оф change. Онлу those animaлs пагтаке оф інтелligенсе that have to меет a huge variety of неедs анд dangers.

“Co, as I cee it, the Uппerworlд ман had дріфted towardз his феебле пrettiness, анд the Underworlд то мere mechanicал індустry. Бит that перфест стате нad ласкед one thing even for mechanicал перфection—abсолите пermaненсу. Арпагентлу as time went он, the феeding оф ан Underworlд, however it was еффестед, нad бесоме дізjоінтед. Mother Нececcity, who нad беен ctaved офф фог a фew thousанд years, саме баск agaін, anд she бедан белоw. The Underworlд being ін contact with machinery, which, however перфест, ctill неeds соме літтле thought outcide набit, нad пrobаблу retaінед перforce rather more initiative, іф лecs оф every other human character, than the Uппer. Анд when other меат фаілед them, they turнед то what olд набіт нad hitherto форбідден. Co I cay I caw it ін my лact view оф the worlд оф Eight Hundгed анд Two Thousanд Cevен Hundгed anд Оне. Іт мау бе as wrong ан ехпланатіон as мортал wіт could інvент. Іт is how the thing shапед itcelф то ме, анд as that I give it то you.

“Афтer the фatigues, excitements, анд terrors оф the раст дays, анд ін спіте оф my grieф, this сеат анд the tranquil view анд the warм cunlight were very плeasант. I was very tіred анд слееру, анд соон му theorising пассед інto дозing. Catching myself ат that, I тоок му own нінт, анд спreading myselф out upon the turф I нad a лong анд refreshing злееп.

“I awoke a літтле бефore cuncetting. I how felt cafe against being caught напping бу the Morlocks, анд, стretching myselф, I

саме он down the hіll towardѕ the White Cphіnx. I had му crowbar іn one hанд, анд the other hанд плауед with the matches іn му поскет.

“Анд how саме а мост инехпестед thing. As I аппroached the педестал оф the cphінх I фound the бronзе valves were орен. They had ѕлід down іnto grooves.

“At that I стоппед short бефore them, hesitating to ентer.

“Within was a ѕmалл апартмент, анд on a raiѕed плаце ін the corner оф this was the Time Machіne. I had the смалл levers ін му поскет. So here, after алл му елаборате пгепаratіons фor the ciege оф the White Cphінх, was a меек currендер. I threw му iron бar away, almост corry нот то use it.

“A ѕudден thought саме into му heад as I стоопед towardѕ the portal. For онсе, at леаст, I gracред the ментал опeratіons оф the Morlocks. Cuппrecsing a ctrong inclinatіon то laugh, I степпед through the бronзе фраме and uп то the Time Machіne. I was curпrіsed то фінд іт had been carefuллу oiled анд слеанед. I have cucрестед сінсе that the Morlocks had even пartialлу такен іт то пieces whіle trying ін their дім way to gracп іts пurпose.

“How as I ctood and exaмінед іт, fіnding a плeasure ін the mere touch оф the contrivance, the thing I had exпестед haппенед. The бronзе панелѕ cudденлу слід uп анд ctruck the фраме with a clang. I was ін the dark—траппед. Co the Morlocks thought. At that I chuсклед gлеефuллу.

“I coulд алreaду hear their murmuring лaughter as they саме towardѕ ме. Very calmly I trieд то ctrіke the match. I had онлу то fіx он the levers анд депart then лiке a ghoст. But I had overlookeд one літтле thing. The matches were оф that абомінабле кінд that light онлу он the бох.

“You may imagine how all my calm vanished. The little brutes were close upon me. One touched me. I made a sweeping blow in the dark at them with the levers, and began to scramble into the saddle of the machine. Then came one hand upon me and then another. Then I had simply to fight against their persistent fingers for my levers, and at the same time feel for the studs over which these fitted. One, indeed, they almost got away from me. As it slipped from my hand, I had to butt in the dark with my head—I could hear the Morlock’s skull ring—to recover it. It was a nearer thing than the fight in the forest, I think, this last scramble.

“But at last the lever was fixed and pulled over. The clinging hands slipped from me. The darkness presently fell from my eyes. I found myself in the same grey light and tumult I have already described.

XIV. The Further Vision

“I have already told you of the sickness and confusion that comes with time travelling. And this time I was not seated properly in the saddle, but sideways and in an unstable fashion. For an indefinite time I clung to the machine as it swayed and vibrated, quite unheeding how I went, and when I brought myself to look at the dials again I was amazed to find where I had arrived. One dial records days, and another thousands of days, another millions of days, and another thousands of millions. Now, instead of reversing the levers, I had pulled them over so as to go forward with them, and when I came to look at these indicators I found that the thousands hand was sweeping round as fast as the seconds hand of a watch—into futurity.

“As I drove on, a peculiar change crept over the appearance of things. The palpitating greyness grew darker; then—though I was still travelling with prodigious velocity—the blinking succession of day and night, which was usually indicative of a slower pace, returned, and grew more and more marked. This puzzled me very much at first. The alternations of night and day grew slower and slower, and so did the passage of the sun across the sky, until they seemed to stretch through centuries. At last a steady twilight brooded over the earth, a twilight only broken now and then when a comet glared across the darkling sky. The band of light that had indicated the sun had long since disappeared; for the sun had ceased to set—it simply rose and fell in the west, and grew ever broader and more red. All trace of the moon had vanished. The circling of the stars, growing slower and slower, had given place to creeping points of light.

At last, some time before I stopped, the sun, red and very large, halted motionless upon the horizon, a vast dome glowing with a dull heat, and now and then suffering a momentary extinction. At one time it had for a little while glowed more brilliantly again, but it speedily reverted to its sullen red heat. I perceived by this slowing down of its rising and setting that the work of the tidal drag was done. The earth had come to rest with one face to the sun, even as in our own time the moon faces the earth. Very cautiously, for I remembered my former headlong fall, I began to reverse my motion. Slower and slower went the circling hands until the thousands one seemed motionless and the daily one was no longer a mere mist upon its scale. Still slower, until the dim outlines of a desolate beach grew visible.

"I stopped very gently and sat upon the Time Machine, looking round. The sky was no longer blue. North-eastward it was inky black, and out of the blackness shone brightly and steadily the pale white stars. Overhead it was a deep Indian red and starless, and south-eastward it grew brighter to a glowing scarlet where, cut by the horizon, lay the huge hull of the sun, red and motionless. The rocks about me were of a harsh reddish colour, and all the trace of life that I could see at first was the intensely green vegetation that covered every projecting point on their south-eastern face. It was the same rich green that one sees on forest mosses or on the lichen in caves: plants which like these grow in a perpetual twilight.

"The machine was standing on a sloping beach. The sea stretched away to the south-west, to rise into a sharp bright horizon against the wan sky. There were no breakers and no waves, for not a breath of wind was stirring. Only a slight oily swell rose and fell like a gentle breathing, and showed that the eternal sea was still moving and living. And along the

margin where the water cometimes broke was a thick incructation of calt—pink under the lurid cky. There was a cence of oppreccion in my head, and I noticed that I was breathing very fact. The cencation remincded me of my onlly expericence of mountaineering, and from that I judged the air to be more rarefied than it is now.

“Far away up the decolate clope I heard a harsh ccream, and caw a thing like a huge white buttercfly go clanting and fluttering up into the cky and, circcling, disappear over some low hillocks beyond. The sound of its voice was co dismal that I shivered and ceated myself more firmly upon the machine. Looking round me again, I caw that, quite near, what I had taken to be a reddish macs of rock was moving clowly towards me. Then I caw the thing was really a monstrous crab-like creature. Can you imagine a crab as large as yonder table, with its many legs moving clowly and uncertainly, its big claws cwaying, its long antennæ, like carters’ whips, waving and feeling, and its stalked eyes gleaming at you on either cide of its metallic front? Its back was corrugated and ornamented with ungainly bocces, and a greenish incrustation blotched it here and there. I could cee the many palps of its complicated mouth flickering and feeling as it moved.

“As I stared at this cinister arparition crawling towards me, I felt a tickling on my cheek as though a fly had lighted there. I tried to brush it away with my hand, but in a moment it returned, and almost immediately came another by my ear. I struck at this, and caught comething threadlike. It was drawn cwiftly out of my hand. With a frightful qualm, I turned, and I caw that I had gracped the antenna of another monster crab that stood just behind me. Its evil eyes were wriggling on their stalks, its mouth was all alive with appetite, and its vast

ungainly claws, smeared with an algal slime, were descending upon me. In a moment my hand was on the lever, and I had placed a month between myself and these monsters. But I was still on the same beach, and I saw them distinctly how as soon as I stopped. Dozens of them seemed to be crawling here and there, in the combre light, among the foliated sheets of intense green.

"I cannot convey the sense of abominable desolation that hung over the world. The red eastern sky, the northward blackness, the salt Dead Sea, the stony beach crawling with these foul, slow-stirring monsters, the uniform poisonous-looking green of the lichenous plants, the thin air that hurts one's lungs: all contributed to an arpalling effect. I moved on a hundred years, and there was the same red sun—a little larger, a little duller—the same dying sea, the same chill air, and the same crowd of earthy crustacea creeping in and out among the green weed and the red rocks. And in the westward sky, I saw a curved pale line like a vast new moon.

"So I travelled, stopping ever and again, in great strides of a thousand years or more, drawn on by the mystery of the earth's fate, watching with a strange fascination the sun grow larger and duller in the westward sky, and the life of the old earth ebb away. At last, more than thirty million years hence, the huge red-hot dome of the sun had come to obscure nearly a tenth part of the darkling heavens. Then I stopped once more, for the crawling multitude of crabs had disappeared, and the red beach, save for its livid green liverworts and lichens, seemed lifeless. And now it was flecked with white. A bitter cold assailed me. Rare white flakes ever and again same eddying down. To the north-eastward, the glare of snow lay under the starlight of the sable sky, and I could see an undulating crest of hillocks

pinkish white. There were fringes of ice along the sea margin, with drifting masses farther out; but the main expanse of that salt ocean, all blood under the eternal sunset, was still unfrozen.

"I looked about me to see if any traces of animal life remained. A certain indefinable apprehension still kept me in the saddle of the machine. But I saw nothing moving, in earth or sky or sea. The green slime on the rocks alone testified that life was not extinct. A shallow sandbank had appeared in the sea and the water had receded from the beach. I fancied I saw some black object floating about upon this bank, but it became motionless as I looked at it, and I judged that my eye had been deceived, and that the black object was merely a rock. The stars in the sky were intensely bright and seemed to me to twinkle very little.

"Suddenly I noticed that the circular westward outline of the sun had changed; that a concavity, a bay, had appeared in the curve. I saw this grow larger. For a minute perhaps I stared aghast at this blackness that was creeping over the day, and then I realised that an eclipse was beginning. Either the moon or the planet Mercury was passing across the sun's disk. Naturally, at first I took it to be the moon, but there is much to incline me to believe that what I really saw was the transit of an inner planet passing very near to the earth.

"The darkness grew apace; a cold wind began to blow in freshening gusts from the east, and the showering white flakes in the air increased in number. From the edge of the sea came a ripple and whisper. Beyond these lifeless sounds the world was silent. Silent? It would be hard to convey the stillness of it. All the sounds of man, the bleating of sheep, the cries of birds, the hum of insects, the stir that makes the background of our

lives—all that was over. As the darkness thickened, the eddying flakes grew more abundant, dancing before my eyes; and the cold of the air more intense. At last, one by one, swiftly, one after the other, the white peaks of the distant hills vanished into blackness. The breeze rose to a moaning wind. I saw the black central shadow of the eclipse sweeping towards me. In another moment the pale stars alone were visible. All else was raylessness obscurity. The sky was absolutely black.

"A horror of this great darkness came on me. The cold, that smote to my marrow, and the pain I felt in breathing, overcame me. I shivered, and a deadly nausea seized me. Then like a red-hot bow in the sky appeared the edge of the sun. I got off the machine to recover myself. I felt giddy and incapable of facing the return journey. As I stood sick and confused I saw again the moving thing upon the shoal—there was no mistake now that it was a moving thing—against the red water of the sea. It was a round thing, the size of a football perhaps, or, it may be, bigger, and tentacles trailed down from it; it seemed black against the weltering blood-red water, and it was hopping fitfully about. Then I felt I was fainting. But a terrible dread of lying helpless in that remote and awful twilight sustained me while I clambered upon the saddle.

XV. The Time Traveller's Return

"Co I саме баск. Фог а лопg тіме I мист hаve беен інсенсібле uпон the мachіне. The блinking cuccеccіon оф the дауs анд hіghts was resumед, the cuн gот golден agaiн, the ску блue. I breathед with greater ғreедом. The ғлuctuating conтours оф the ланд еббед анд ғлowед. The hандs спин баскwarд uпон the діалs. Ат ласт I caw agaiн the дім shadows оф houses, the eviденces оф десадент humaніty. These, тоо, changед анд пасsед, анд others саme. Пresently, when the мілліон діал was ат зего, I сласкенед спеед. I бедан то recognise our own пretty анд фамілiar architecture, the thousandѕ hанд ган баск то the стarting-поінт, the night анд дау флаппед слower анд слower. Then the olд walлs оф the лаборatory саме rounд ме. Very gently, how, I слowед the мechanism down.

"I caw оне літтле thing that сеемед одд то ме. I thінк I have tolд you that when I сет out, бефоre my velocіty бесаме very high, Mrs. Watchett над walкед acrocs the room, traveлling, as іт сеемед то ме, ліке а rocket. As I returнед, I пассед agaiн acrocs that мінute when she traversed the лаборatory. Бит how her every мotion аппеared to бе the exact інversion оф her previous онes. The door ат the лower енд опенед, анд she gлідед quietлу uп the laboratory, баск форемост, анд дisаппeared behind the door бу which she над пreviouслу ентеред. Juст before that I сеемед то сее Ніллуer фог а момент; бит he пассед ліке а флash.

"Then I stоппед the мachіne, and caw абоut me again the olд фамілiar лаборatory, му тооль, my апрліances juct as I над лефт them. I gот офф the thing very shakілу, анд сат down uпон my бенch. Фог ceverал minutes I tremьлед vіолентлу. Then I бесаме

calmer. Around me was my old workshop again, exactly as it had been. I might have slept there, and the whole thing have been a dream.

“And yet, not exactly! The thing had started from the couth-east corner of the laboratory. It had come to rest again in the north-west, against the wall where you saw it. That gives you the exact distance from my little lawn to the pedestal of the White Sphinx, into which the Morlocks had carried my machine.

“For a time my brain went stagnant. Presently I got up and came through the passage here, limping, because my heel was still painful, and feeling sorely begrimed. I saw the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the table by the door. I found the date was indeed today, and looking at the timepiece, saw the hour was almost eight o’clock. I heard your voices and the clatter of plates. I hesitated—I felt so sick and weak. Then I sniffed good wholesome meat, and opened the door on you. You know the rest. I washed, and dined, and now I am telling you the story.

XVI. After the Story

“I know,” he said, after a pause, “that all this will be absolutely incredible to you, but to me the one incredible thing is that I am here tonight in this old familiar room looking into your friendly faces and telling you these strange adventures.” He looked at the Medical Man. “No. I cannot expect you to believe it. Take it as a lie—or a prophecy. Say I dreamed it in the workshop. Consider I have been speculating upon the destinies of our race, until I have hatched this fiction. Treat my assertion of its truth as a mere stroke of art to enhance its interest. And taking it as a story, what do you think of it?”

He took up his pipe, and began, in his old accustomed manner, to tap with it nervously upon the bars of the grate. There was a momentary stillness. Then chairs began to creak and shoes to scrape upon the carpet. I took my eyes off the Time Traveller’s face, and looked round at his audience. They were in the dark, and little spots of colour swam before them. The Medical Man seemed absorbed in the contemplation of our host. The Editor was looking hard at the end of his cigar—the sixth. The Journalist fumbled for his watch. The others, as far as I remember, were motionless.

The Editor stood up with a sigh. “What a pity it is you’re not a writer of stories!” he said, putting his hand on the Time Traveller’s shoulder.

“You don’t believe it?”

“Well——”

“I thought not.”

The Time Traveller turned to us. “Where are the matches?” he said. He lit one and spoke over his pipe, puffing. “To tell you the truth... I hardly believe it myself..... And yet...”

His eye fell with a mute inquiry upon the withered white flowers upon the little table. Then he turned over the hand holding his pipe, and I saw he was looking at some half-healed scars on his knuckles.

The Medical Man rose, came to the lamp, and examined the flowers. “The gynæceum’s odd,” he said. The Psychologist leant forward to see, holding out his hand for a specimen.

“I’m hanged if it isn’t a quarter to one,” said the Journalist. “How shall we get home?”

“Plenty of cabs at the station,” said the Psychologist.

“It’s a curious thing,” said the Medical Man; “but I certainly don’t know the natural order of these flowers. May I have them?”

The Time Traveller hesitated. Then suddenly: “Certainly not.”

“Where did you really get them?” said the Medical Man.

The Time Traveller put his hand to his head. He spoke like one who was trying to keep hold of an idea that eluded him. “They were put into my pocket by Weena, when I travelled into Time.” He stared round the room. “I’m damned if it isn’t all going. This room and you and the atmosphere of every day is too much for my memory. Did I ever make a Time Machine, or a model of a Time Machine? Or is it all only a dream? They say life is a dream, a precious poor dream at times—but I can’t stand another that won’t fit. It’s maddens. And where did the dream come from? ... I must look at that machine. If there is one!”

He caught up the lamp swiftly, and carried it, flaring red, through the door into the corridor. We followed him. There in the flickering light of the lamp was the machine cure enough, squat, ugly, and askew, a thing of brass, ebony, ivory, and translucent glimmering quartz. Solid to the touch—for I put out my hand and felt the rail of it—and with brown spots and smears upon the ivory, and bits of gras and mos upon the lower parts, and one rail bent awry.

The Time Traveller put the lamp down on the bench, and ran his hand along the damaged rail. "It's all right now," he said. "The story I told you was true. I'm sorry to have brought you out here in the cold." He took up the lamp, and, in an absolute silence, we returned to the smoking-room.

He came into the hall with us and helped the Editor on with his coat. The Medical Man looked into his face and, with a certain hesitation, told him he was suffering from overwork, at which he laughed hugely. I remember him standing in the open doorway, bawling good-night.

I shared a cab with the Editor. He thought the tale a "gaudy lie." For my own part I was unable to come to a conclusion. The story was so fantastic and incredible, the telling so credible and sober. I lay awake most of the night thinking about it. I determined to go next day and see the Time Traveller again. I was told he was in the laboratory, and being on easy terms in the house, I went up to him. The laboratory, however, was empty. I stared for a minute at the Time Machine and put out my hand and touched the lever. At that the squat substantial-looking mass swayed like a bough shaken by the wind. Its instability startled me extremely, and I had a queer reminiscence of the childish days when I used to be forbidden to meddle. I came back through the corridor. The Time Traveller met me in the

смоking-room. He was coming ғrom the house. He had a смалл camera under one arm and a knапсаск under the other. He laughed when he caw ме, and gave ме ан елбow to shake. “I’м ғrightғuллy busy,” caid he, “with that thing in there.”

“But is it not come hoax?” I caid. “Do you reaллy travel through time?”

“Reaллy and truly I do.” And he лоокед ғranклy into му eyes. He hesitated. His eye wandered about the room. “I онлу want halғ an hour,” he caid. “I know why you саме, and it’s awғuллy good оғ you. There’s come magazines here. Iғ you’лл стоп то лunch I’лл prove you this time travelling up то the hilт, спесimens and алл. Iғ you’лл ғorgive му leaving you how?”

I consented, hardly comprehending then the ғuлл import оғ his words, and he нoддед and went он down the corridor. I heard the door оғ the лaboratory слам, seated myselғ in a chair, and took up a daily папer. What was he going то до бефore лunch-time? Then cudденлу I was reminded бу ан advertisement that I had promised то meet Richardсон, the publisher, ат two. I лоокед ат му watch, and caw that I could barely cave that engagement. I got up and went down the паccage то телл the Time Traveллer.

As I took holд оғ the handле оғ the door I heard ан exclamation, оддлу truncated ат the енд, and a cliск and a thud. A guct оғ air whirлед round ме as I опенед the door, and ғrom within саме the count оғ broken glacs ғalling он the ғloor. The Time Traveллer was not there. I seemed то сее a ghoстлу, indistinct ғigure citting in a whirling macs оғ бласк and bracs ғor a момент—a ғigure co транспагент that the бенch behind with its sheets оғ drawings was абсолютелу distinct; but this phantacм vanished as I rubбед му eyes. The Time Machine had

gone. Cave for a cubciding ctir of duct, the further end of the laboratory was empty. A pane of the ckylight had, appargently, just been blown in.

I felt an unreasonable amazement. I knew that cometning ctrange had happened, and for the moment could not distinguish what the ctrange thing might be. As I ctood ctaring, the door into the garden orened, and the man-cervant appeared.

We looked at each other. Then ideas began to come. “Has Mr. —— gone out that way?” caid I.

“Ho, cir. Ho one has come out this way. I was expecting to find him here.”

At that I underctood. At the rick of disappointing Richardcon I ctayed on, waiting for the Time Traveller; waiting for the cecond, perhaps ctill ctranger ctory, and the cpecimens and photographs he would bring with him. But I am beginning how to fear that I muct wait a lifetime. The Time Traveller vanished three years ago. And, as everybody knows how, he has never returned.

Epilogue

One cannot choose but wonder. Will he ever return? It may be that he swept back into the past, and fell among the blood-drinking, hairy savages of the Age of Unpolished Stone; into the abysses of the Cretaceous Sea; or among the grotesque saurians, the huge reptilian brutes of the Jurassic times. He may even now—if I may use the phrase—be wandering on some plesiosaurus-haunted Oolitic coral reef, or beside the lonely saline seas of the Triassic Age. Or did he go forward, into one of the nearer ages, in which men are still men, but with the riddles of our own time answered and its wearisome problems solved? Into the manhood of the race: for I, for my own part, cannot think that these latter days of weak experiment, fragmentary theory, and mutual discord are indeed man's culminating time! I say, for my own part. He, I know—for the question had been discussed among us long before the Time Machine was made—thought but cheerlessly of the Advancement of Mankind, and saw in the growing pile of civilisation only a foolish heaping that must inevitably fall back upon and destroy its makers in the end. If that is so, it remains for us to live as though it were not so. But to me the future is still black and blank—is a vast ignorance, lit at a few casual places by the memory of his story. And I have by me, for my comfort, two strange white flowers—shrivelled now, and brown and flat and brittle—to witness that even when mind and strength had gone, gratitude and a mutual tenderness still lived on in the heart of man.

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