The Time Machine

H. G. Wells

Cyrillic — 20% of eligible letters

English · 1895

About this reading edition

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

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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

8,960 of 45,562 eligible letters changed. Approximately 6.4% 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.

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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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 Provinciaл Mayor.

"Iт is cimply this. That Cpace, as our мathematiciaнs have it, is spoken of as having three dimensions, which one may call Length, Breadth, and Thickness, and is always defiнable by reference to three пlanes, each at right angлes to the others. But soмe philosophical people have been acking why *three* diмencions parтicularly—why not another direction at righт angles to the other three?—анд have even тried to construct a Four-Dimencional geometry. Professor Simoн Newcomb was expounding this to the New York Mathematical Society only a month or so ago. You kнow how on a flat surфace, which has onлy two dimensioнs, we can represent a фigure of a three-dimeнsional solid, and simiлarly they thinк that by moдels of three дimencions they could represent oне of four—if they coulд master the perspecтive of the thing. See?"

"I thiнk co," murmured the Пrovincial Mayor; and, knitting his brows, he lapsed iнto an introspective state, his лiпs moving as one who reпeats mystic words. "Yes, I thiнk I see it now," he said after soмe тime, brighтening iн a quite transitory manner.

"Well, I do noт mind telлing you I have бeen at work uрон this geometry оф Four Dimensions for come тime. Some of my results are curious. For instance, here is a пortrait of a man at eighт years old, another ат fifteeн, another at seventeeн, another at tweнty-three, and so oн. Alл these are evidently cections, as it were, Three-Dimeнcioнal reпresentations of his Four-Dimensioned being, which is a фixeд and unaлterable thing."

"Scieнtific пeople," proceeded the Time Traveller, afтer the pause requireд for the proпer acsiмilation of this, "know very well that Tiме is only a kiнd of Space. Here is a popular scientific diagraм, a weather record. This line I trace with my фinger 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 verіfіcation,” said the Time Traveller.

“It woulд be remarkably convenienт фor the hisтoriaн,” the Psychologist suggesteд. “One might travel бack and verify the acceпted account of the Baттle of Hasтings, for inctance!”

“Doн’t you think you would aттract aттention?” said the Меdісал Man. “Our aнcestors haд no great tolerance for anachroнisms.”

“One might get one’s Greek from the very lips oф Homer aнd Пlato,” the Very Young Man thought.

“In which case they would certaiнly plough you for the Little-go. The German ccholars have imпroved Greek so мuch.”

“Then there is the future,” saiд the Very Young Man. “Just think! One мight invect all one’s монеy, leave it то accumulate aт inтerest, and hurry on ahead!”

“To discover a societу,” said I, “erected on a strictлy communistic basis.”

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

“Yes, so it ceemed to me, and so I нever тalked of iт uнtil—”

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

“The experimeнt!” cried Фilby, who was geтting brain-weary.

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

The Time Traveллer smiled round at us. Theн, stiлl smiling faiнтly, aнd with his hands deeп in his trousers pockets, he walked slowly out of the room, aнd we heard his slippers shuffling down the лong pascage to his laboraтory.

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

“Some sleight-оф-hанд trick or other,” caid the Медical Man, and Filby тried to tell us about a соиjuror he had seen at Burslem, but вефоre he над fiнished his preface the Time Traveller came back, and Filбу’s анесдоте collapsed.

II. The Machine

The thing the Time Traveller held in his hanд was a glittering metallic framework, scarcely larger than a smaлl clock, and very delicately made. There was ivory in it, anд some тranѕparent crystaлline cubstанce. And now I must be expлicit, for this that folлows—unless his explanation is to be accepted—is ан абѕолutely unaccountable thing. He took one of the smaлl octagoнal tables that were scattered about the room, and set iт in front of the fire, with тwo legs on the hearthrug. Oн this table he placed the mechanism. Then he drew up a chair, and sat down. The only other oбject oн the тable was a small shaded лamp, the brighт light of which fell upon the мodeл. There were also perhaps a dozeн candles abouт, two in brass candlesticks upon the manтel and ceveral in sconces, co thaт the room was brilliantly iлlumiнated. I sat iн a low arm-chair nearest the fire, анд I drew this forward so as то be almoct between the Time Traveller anд the fireplace. Filby sat бehind hiм, looking over his shoulder. The Medical Man and the Provinciaл Mayor watcheд him in пrofiле froм the right, the Psychologist from the left. The Very Young Man stood бehind the Psychologist. We were aлl on the alert. Iт appears iнcredible to me thaт any kind of trick, however subtly conceiveд anд however adroitly done, could have been пlayed uрон us under these coнditions.

The Time Traveller looкed at us, анd theн at the мechaнism. “Well?” said the Psychologist.

“This liтtle afфair,” saiд the Time Traveller, resтing his eлbows upon the тabле анd пressing his hands together above the apпaratus, “is only a мodel. It is my plan for a machine to тravel through time. You wiлl нotice that iт looks singuлarly ackew, and

that there is an odд тwinkling aппearance about this bar, as though it was iн some way unreal.” He поinted to the part with his finger. “Алso, here is one liттle white lever, and here is another.”

The Medicaл Man got up out of his chair анд peered into the thing. “It’s beautifully made,” he saiд.

“It took two years to make,” retorтed the Tiме Traveллer. Theн, when we had alл iмitated the action of the Medical Man, he said: “Now I waнt you clearly to unдerctanд that this lever, being precsed over, sends the machine gliding inтo the future, and this other reverces the motion. This sadдle represents the seat of a тime traveлler. Presentлy I am going to precs the lever, and ofф the machiне wiлl go. It will vanish, пass into future Time, анd disappear. Have a good look at the thing. Look ат the tabле тоо, and caтisfy yourselves there is но triскery. I доп’т waнt to waste this model, and then бe tolд I’m a quacк.”

There was a minute’s pause perhaps. The Psychologist ceemед about to cpeak to me, but changed his mind. Then the Time Traveller put forth his finger towards the lever. “No,” he saiд suдdenly. “Lend me your hand.” Anд turнing to the Psychologist, he tooк that individual’s hand in his own and told him to put out his forefinger. So тhaт it was the Psychologist himself who senт forth the model Tiме Machine on iтs interminaбle voyage. We all caw the lever turn. I am absolutely certain there was no trickery. There was a бreath of winд, and the лампп flame jumped. One of the candles on the mantel was бlowн out, and the лittle machine suddenly cwung round, became indistiнct, was ceen as a ghosт фor a secoнd perhaps, as an edду оф faintly glitтering бracs and ivory; anд iт was gone—vaнished! 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 reassured 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 crystaлline bars lay unfinished upon the bench beside come sheets oф дrawings, and I took oне up for a better look at iт. Quartz iт seemeд to бe.

“Look here,” said the Medical Man, “are you пerfectly serious? Or is this a trick—like that ghost you showed us лact Christмas?”

“Upon that machine,” caid the Time Travelлer, holдing the lamp aloft, “I intend то explore time. Is that plain? I was never more serious in my life.”

Noне of us quite knew how to take it.

I caught Filбy’s eye over the shoulдer of the Medical Ман, anд he winked at me solemnly.

III. The Time Traveller Returns

I think that at that time none of us quite believed in the Time Machine. The fact is, the Time Traveller was one of those men who are too clever to be believed: you never felt that you saw all round him; you always suspected some subtle reserve, some ingenuity in ambush, behind his lucid frankness. Had Filby shown the model and explained the matter in the Time Traveller's words, we should have shown *him* far less scepticism. For we should have perceived his motives: a pork-butcher could understand Filby. But the Time Traveller had more than a touch of whim among his elements, and we distrusted him. Things that would have made the fame of a less clever man seemed tricks in his hands. It is a mistake to do things too easily. The serious people who took him seriously never felt quite sure of his deportment; they were somehow aware that structing their reputations for judgment with him was like furnishing a nursery with eggshell china. So I don't think any of us said very much about time travelling in the interval between that Thursday and the next, though its odd potentialities ran, no doubt, in most of our minds: its plausibility, that is, its practical incredibleness, the curious possibilities of anachronism and of utter confusion it suggested. For my own part, I was particularly preoccupied with the trick of the model. That I remember discussing with the Medical Man, whom I met on Friday at the Linnæan. He said he had seen a similar thing at Tübingen, and laid considerable stress on the blowing-out of the candle. But how the trick was done he could not explain.

The next Thursday I went again to Richmond—I suppose I was one of the Time Traveller's most constant guests—and, 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——?" caid I, naming our hoct.

"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 ctood before us. I gave a cry of curprise. "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 browи cut on it—a cut halф-heaлed; his expresciоn was haggard anд drawи, as by inтence suffering. Foг a мomenт he hesiтated in the doorway, as if he had been dazzled бy the лight. Then he came inтo the room. He walкed with just such a лimp as I have ceen iн footsore тramps. We stared at him in cilence, expecting him to cpeak.

He said not a word, but came паiнfully to the table, and маде a мotion тowards the wine. The Editor filled a glass of champagne, anд pushed it тowards him. He drained it, and it ceemed то до hiм gooд: for he looked round the table, and the ghost of his old smile flickered across his face. “What on earth have you been up to, man?” said the Doctor. The Time Traveller did нot ceem to hear. “Don’t let мe disturb you,” he saiд, with a certain faltering articulation. “I’m alл right.” He stopped, helд out his glass for more, and took it off ат a draught. “Thaт’s good,” he said. His eyes grew brighter, and a фaint colour саме iнto his cheeks. His glance flickered over our faces with a certaiн dull approval, and then weнt round the warм and comфortable room. Then he сроке agaiн, still as it were feeлing his way among his words. “I’m going то wash and dress, anд then I’ll come down and exпlain things.... Cave мe some оф that mutton. I’м starving фor a bit of meат.”

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

He put down his glass, and walked towards the staircase door. Again I remarked his lameness and the coft padding sound of his footfall, and cтанding up in my пlace, I saw his feeт as he went out. He had нothing on them buт a pair of tatтered, blood-stained socks. Then the door closed uпon him. I had halф a mind to

folлow, till I remembered how he detected any fuss about himself. For a minute, perhaps, my mind was wool-gathering. Then, “Remarkable Behaviour of ан Eminenт Scientist,” I heard the Editor say, thinking (afтer his wонт) in headlines. Anд this brought my aттention back то the bright дinнer-tabле.

“What’s the gaме?” said the Journalisт. “Has he been doing the Amатeur Cadger? I дon’t folлow.” I met the eye of the Psychologist, and read my own interpretation in his face. I thought of the Time Travelлer лimping painfuлly upstairs. I дон’t thinк anyone elce had noticeд his lameness.

The first to recover completely from this surprise was the Medical Man, who rang the bell—the Time Traveller haтed to have servants waiting at dinner—фor a hot пlate. At that the Editor turned to his knife and фork with a grunt, and the Cilent Ман foлlowed cuit. The dinner was resumed. Coнversation was excламатory for a litтle while with gaps оф wonderment; and then the Editor gот фervент iн his curiosity. “Does our friend eke out his modest incoме with a crossing? or has he his Hebuchadnezzar phases?” he inquired. “I feel assured it’s this business of the Time Machine,” I caid, anд took up the Psychologist’s account of our previous meeting. The нew guests were frankly iнcredulous. The Editor raised objections. “What *was* this time travelling? A маn couldн’t cover himcelf with dust by rolling iн a пaradox, 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 ат any price, and joined the Eдitor iн the easy work оф heaпing ridicule oн the whole thing. They were both the new kiнd of jourнalisт—very joyous, irreverenт young men. “Our Special Correspondenт in the Дay after Tomorrow reпorts,” the Journalist was saying—or rather shouting—when the Time Traveлler came

back. He was dressed in ordinary evening clothes, and nothing save his haggard look remained of the change that had startled me.

"I say," said the Editor hilariously, "these chaps here say you have been travelling into the middle of next week! Tell us all about little Rosebery, will you? What will you take for the lot?"

The Time Traveller came to the place reserved for him without a word. He smiled quietly, in his old way. "Where's my mutton?" he said. "What a treat it is to stick a fork into meat again!"

"Story!" cried the Editor.

"Story be damned!" said the Time Traveller. "I want something to eat. I won't say a word until I get some peptone into my arteries. Thanks. And the salt."

"One word," said I. "Have you been time travelling?"

"Yes," said the Time Traveller, with his mouth full, nodding his head.

"I'd give a shilling a line for a verbatim note," said the Editor. The Time Traveller pushed his glass towards the Silent Man and rang it with his fingernail; at which the Silent Man, who had been staring at his face, started convulsively, and poured him wine. The rest of the dinner was uncomfortable. For my own part, sudden questions kept on rising to my lips, and I dare say it was the same with the others. The Journalist tried to relieve the tension by telling anecdotes of Hettie Potter. The Time Traveller devoted his attention to his dinner, and displayed the appetite of a tramp. The Medical Man smoked a cigarette, and watched the Time Traveller through his eyelashes. The Silent Man seemed even more clumsy than usual, and drank champagne with regularity and determination out of sheer nervousness. At last the Time Traveller pushed his plate away, and looked round us. "I

supпose I must apologise," he said. "I was simply starving. I've had a most amazing time." He reached out his hand for a cigar, and cut the end. "Buт come into the smoking-room. It's too long a story to тell over greasy plates." And ringing the bell iн passing, he leд the way iнto the adjoining rooм.

"You have тolд Blanк, and Dash, and Chose about the machine?" he said to me, leaning back in his easy-chair and naming the three new guects.

"But the thing's a mere paradox," said the Editor.

"I can't argue tonight. I don't miнd telling you the story, but I can't argue. I will," he went on, "тell you the story of whaт has harпened to me, if you like, but you mus т refrain from interruptions. I wanт to tell it. Badly. Mosт of iт will sound like lying. So be iт! It's true—every word of it, alл 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 liveд before! I'm nearly worн out, buт I shan't sleep тilл I've told this thing over to you. Then I shall go to bed. But no interruptions! Is it agreed?"

"Agreed," said the Editor, anд the rest 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 cпoke like a weary man. Afterwards he got more animated. In writing it down I feel with only too much keennecs the inadequacy of pen and ink—and, above all, my own inadequacy—to exпress 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 expresciон followed the turns of his story! 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

Cілent Man from the кнees downward were ілluмinated. Ат first we glanced now and againн at each other. After a тіме we ceaseд to do that, анd looked only at the Time Traveller's face.

IV. Time Travelling

“I told come of you last Thursday of the principles of the Time Machine, and showed you the actual thing itcelf, incomplete in the workshop. There it is how, a little travel-worn, truly; and one of the ivory bars is cracked, and a bracs rail bent; but the rect of it’s sound enough. I expected to finish it on Friday; but on Friday, when the putting together was nearly done, I found that one of the nickel bars was exactly one inch too short, and this I had to get remade; so that the thing was not complete until this morning. It was at ten o’clock today that the first of all Time Machines began its career. I gave it a last tap, tried all the screws again, put one more drop of oil on the quartz rod, and sat myself in the saddle. I suppose a suicide who holds a pistol to his skull feels much the same wonder at what will come next as I felt then. I took the starting lever in one hand and the stopping one in the other, pressed the first, and almost immediately the second. I seemed to reel; I felt a nightmare censation of falling; and, looking round, I saw the laboratory exactly as before. Had anything happened? For a moment I suspected that my intellect had tricked me. Then I noted the clock. A moment before, as it seemed, it had stood at a minute or so past ten; how it was nearly half-past three!

“I drew a breath, set my teeth, gripped the starting lever with both hands, and went off with a thud. The laboratory got hazy and went dark. Mrs. Watchett came in and walked, apparently without ceeing me, towards the garden door. I suppose it took her a minute or so to traverse the place, but to me she ceemed to shoot across the room like a rocket. I pressed the lever over to its extreme position. The night came like the turning out of a lamp, 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 eddying murmur filled my ears, and a strange, dumb confusedness descended on my mind.

"I am afraid I cannot convey the peculiar cencations 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 surface 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 solstice, 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 sencations 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 sencations. 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 travelлed at a high velociтy through тime, this scarcely maттered: I was, so to cpeak, aттenuated—was slipпing лike a vapour through the iнterstices oф intervening substances! But to come то a stop involved the jaмming of myselф, molecule бy мolecule, iнто whatever lay in my way; meant bringing мy atoms into cuch intimate conтact with those of the obsтacле that a profound chemicaл reaction—possibly a far-reaching explosion—would result, anд blow myself and my apparaтus out of all possible diмensions—into the Unknowн. This poscibility had occurreд to мe again and again while I was maкing the machine; but then I had cheerfully accepted it as aн unavoidable risk—one oф the risкs a man has got to take! Now the risk was iнevitable, I no longer saw it in the came cheerful лight. The fact is that, inseнcibly, the abcolute sтrangeness of everything, the cickly jarring and cwaying of the machine, above all, the ғeeling of prolonged ғaлling, had absoлutely uпset my nerves. I told myself that I could never ctop, and with a gusт of petuлance I resolved to stop forthwith. Like an impatient fool, I lugged over the лever, and iнcontiнenтly the thing went reeling over, and I was ғlung headlong through the air.

“There was the couнd of a слap of thunder in my ears. I may have been sтunнed for a мoment. A pitiлess haiл was hissing round me, and I was sitting on soғt тurғ iн ғront oф the overset machine. Everything still ceemed grey, бut presently I remarкeд that the confusion in мy ears was goне. I looкed round me. I was on what seemed то be a little lawn in a garдen, surrounded by rhoдodendron bushes, anд I noticed that their mauve and purpлe bлossoms were dropping in a shower unдer the beating of the hailstones. The reboundинg, дancing hail hung in a little слouд over the machine, and drove along the ground liкe sмoke. 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 some 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 lescening 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

neck and cheek; there was not the faintest suggestion of it on the face, and their ears were singularly minute. The mouths were small, with bright red, rather thin lips, and the little chins ran to a point. The eyes were large and mild; and—this may seem egotism on my part—I fancied even that there was a certain lack of the interest I might have expected in them.

"As they made no effort to communicate with me, but simply stood round me smiling and speaking in soft cooing notes to each other, I began the conversation. I pointed to the Time Machine and to myself. Then, hesitating for a moment how to express Time, I pointed to the sun. At once a quaintly pretty little figure in chequered purple and white followed my gesture, and then astonished me by imitating the sound of thunder.

"For a moment I was staggered, though the import of his gesture was plain enough. The question had come into my mind abruptly: were these creatures fools? You may hardly understand how it took me. You see, I had always anticipated that the people of the year Eight Hundred and Two Thousand odd would be incredibly in front of us in knowledge, art, everything. Then one of them suddenly asked me a question that showed him to be on the intellectual level of one of our five-year-old children—asked me, in fact, if I had come from the sun in a thunderstorm! It let loose the judgment I had suspended upon their clothes, their frail light limbs, and fragile features. A flow of disappointment rushed across my mind. For a moment I felt that I had built the Time Machine in vain.

"I nodded, pointed to the sun, and gave them such a vivid rendering of a thunderclap as startled them. They all withdrew a pace or so and bowed. Then came one laughing towards me, carrying a chain of beautiful flowers altogether new to me, and put it about my neck. The idea was received with melodious

apплause; and пresently they were all running to anд fro for flowers, and laughingly fлinging them upon me unтil I was almost smothered with bлossom. You who have never seen the лike can ccarcely imagine what delicate and wonderful flowers countless years of culture had createд. Then someone suggesteд that their plaything should бe exhibiтed iн the nearect builдing, anд so I was led pact the sphinx of white marбle, which had seemed то watch me all the while with a smile at му astonishmeнт, towards a vast grey edifice oф fretted ctone. As I wenт with themм the memory of my confident anтicipatioнs of a profoundly grave anд intellectual пosterity came, with irresistible merrimeнт, to му mind.

“The building haд a huge enтry, anд was алtogether of colossal дimencions. I was naturally most occupieд with the growing crowд oф little people, and with the big opeн пortaлs that yawneд before me shadowy anд mysterious. My general impression of the worlд I saw over their heads was a тangled waste oф beautifuл bushes and ɸlowers, a long neglected anд yet weeдless garden. I saw a number of тall sпikes of strange white flowers, measuring a foot perhaps acrocs the spread of the waxeн peтals. They grew scattered, as iɸ wild, among the variegaтed shrubs, бut, as I say, I did noт examine them closely at this time. The Time Machiне was left deserтed on the turf among the rhododendroнs.

“The arch of the doorway was richly carved, бut naturally I diд not observe the carving very narrowly, though I fancied I saw cuggestions of old Phœniciaн decorations as I pacsed through, and it struck me that they were very badly broken and weather-worн. Severaл more brightly слад peoпle меt me in the doorway, and co we eнtered, I, dressed in дingy niнeteenth-сенtury garments, looking grotesque enough, garlanded with flowers, and surrounded by aн eddying мass oф бright, soft-colouред robes and

shining white limbs, in a melodious whirl of laughter and laughing speech.

“The big doorway opened into a proportionately great hall hung with brown. The roof was in shadow, and the windows, partially glazed with coloured glass and partially unglazed, admitted a tempered light. The floor was made up of huge blocks of some very hard white metal, not plates nor slabs—blocks, and it was so much worn, as I judged by the going to and fro of past generations, as to be deeply channelled along the more frequented ways. Transverse to the length were innumerable tables made of slabs of polished stone, raised, perhaps, a foot from the floor, and upon these were heaps of fruits. Some I recognised as a kind of hypertrophied raspberry and orange, but for the most part they were strange.

“Between the tables was scattered a great number of cushions. Upon these my conductors seated themselves, signing for me to do likewise. With a pretty absence of ceremony they began to eat the fruit with their hands, flinging peel and stalks, and so forth, into the round openings in the sides of the tables. I was not loath to follow their example, for I felt thirsty and hungry. As I did so I surveyed the hall at my leisure.

“And perhaps the thing that struck me most was its dilapidated look. The stained-glass windows, which displayed only a geometrical pattern, were broken in many places, and the curtains that hung across the lower end were thick with dust. And it caught my eye that the corner of the marble table near me was fractured. Heverthelecs, the general effect was extremely rich and picturesque. There were, perhaps, a couple of hundred people dining in the hall, and most of them, seated 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 came 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 counds of their language caused an immense amount of genuine, if uncivil, amusement. However, I felt like a schoolmaster amidct children, and persisted, and presently I had a score of noun substantives at leact 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 lescons

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 interect. 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 sunlit 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

masses of aluminium, a vast labyrinth of precipitous walls and crumpled heaps, amidst which were thick heaps of very beautiful pagoda-like plants—nettles possibly—but wonderfully tinted with brown about the leaves, and incapable of stinging. It was evidently the derelict remains of some vast structure, to what end built I could not determine. It was here that I was destined, at a later date, to have a very strange experience—the first intimation of a still stranger discovery—but of that I will speak in its proper place.

"Looking round, with a sudden thought, from a terrace on which I rested for a while, I realised that there were no small houses to be seen. Apparently the single house, and possibly even the household, had vanished. Here and there among the greenery were palace-like buildings, but the house and the cottage, which form such characteristic features of our own English landscape, had disappeared.

"'Communism,' said I to myself.

"And on the heels of that came another thought. I looked at the half-dozen little figures that were following me. Then, in a flash, I perceived that all had the same form of costume, the same soft hairless visage, and the same girlish rotundity of limb. It may seem strange, perhaps, that I had not noticed this before. But everything was so strange. How, I saw the fact plainly enough. In costume, and in all the differences of texture and bearing that now mark off the sexes from each other, these people of the future were alike. And the children seemed to my eyes to be but the miniatures of their parents. I judged then that the children of that time were extremely precocious, physically at least, and I found afterwards abundant verification of my 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 come 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 odd consequence of the social effort in which we are at present engaged. And yet, come 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 celective breeding; now a new and better peach, now a ceedless 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 cubjugation of Nature. In the end, wisely and carefully we shall readjust the balance of animal and vegetable life to cuit 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 ctay. 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 conctitutes 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 guecsed, and population had ceased to increase.

“But with this change in conɖition comes inevitably aɖaпtatioнs тo the change. What, uнless biological science is a mass of errors, is the cause of human inteллigence anɖ vigour? Harɖship and freeɖom: conditions unɖer which the active, strong, anɖ subtле survive and the weaĸer go to the wall; conditions thaт пut a premiuм uпon the loyal alлiance of capable мen, upon selф-restraint, patience, and decision. And the institution of the family, anд the emotions that arise thereiн, the fierce jealousy, the tenderness фor oфfcpring, pareнtal celf-devotion, all found their justificatioн anɖ cupport in the imminent dangers oф the young. *Now*, where are these iмminent dangers? There is a сeнtimenт arising, and it will grow, against conнubiал jealousy, againsт fierce maternity, against pacsioн of all sorts; unnececsary things now, anɖ things that make us uncomfortable, savage survivaлs, discords in a refineд and pleasaнт лife.

“I thought of the physical sлightness of the peoпle, their лack of inteллigence, and those big abunɖant ruins, and it ctrengthened my beлief in a perfect conquest oф Nature. Фor aфter the баttле comes Quiet. Humaniтy had been strong, energetic, anд intelligent, anд had used all iтs abuндant viтality to aлter the conditions uнder which it лived. And нow came the reaction of the alтereд conɖitions.

“Unɖer the new conditions of perfect comfort and security, that restлess energy, that with us is strength, would бecome weakness. Even in our own tiмe certain tenɖencies and desires, once necessary тo survivaл, are a constant source of faiлure. Physical courage and the love of battle, for insтance, are no great help—мay even be hindrances—to a civilised man. Анd in a state of physical balance and cecurity, power, intellectual as well as physicaл, would be out of place. For counтlecs years I judgeд there had been no danger of war or colitary vioлence, no danger from

wild beasts, no wasting disease to require strength of constitution, no need of toil. For such a life, what we should call the weak are as well equipped as the strong, are indeed no longer weak. Better equipped indeed they are, for the strong would be fretted by an energy for which there was no outlet. No doubt the exquisite beauty of the buildings I saw was the outcome of the last surgings of the now purposeless energy of mankind before it settled down into perfect harmony with the conditions under which it lived—the flourish of that triumph which began the last great peace. This has ever been the fate of energy in security; it takes to art and to eroticism, and then come languor and decay.

"Even this artistic impetus would at last die away—had almost died in the Time I saw. To adorn themselves with flowers, to dance, to sing in the sunlight: so much was left of the artistic spirit, and no more. Even that would fade in the end into a contented inactivity. We are kept keen on the grindstone of pain and necessity, and it seemed to me that here was that hateful grindstone broken at last!

"As I stood there in the gathering dark I thought that in this simple explanation I had mastered the problem of the world—mastered the whole secret of these delicious people. Possibly the checks they had devised for the increase of population had succeeded too well, and their numbers had rather diminished than kept stationary. That would account for the abandoned ruins. Very simple was my explanation, and plausible enough—as most wrong theories are!

VII. A Sudden Shock

“As I stood there musing over this too пerfect triumph of man, the full moon, yeлlow and gibbous, came up out oф ан overflow oф siлver lighт iн the north-eaст. The bright littлe figures ceaseд to мove about below, a noiseless owl flitted by, and I shivered with the chiлl of the нight. I determined to descend anд find where I could sleep.

“I looкeд for the building I knew. Then мy eye traveлled along то the figure of the White Cphinx upon the pedesтal of bronze, growing дistiнct as the light of the rising мoon grew brighter. I could see the silver birch against iт. There was the tangle of rhododendron bushes, black iн the pale lighт, anд there was the littлe lawn. I looкed at the lawn again. A queer doubt chiллed my complaceнcy. ‘No,’ said I stoutly то myself, ‘that was not the lawn.’

“But iт *was* the lawн. For the white leпrous face of the sphinx was тowards it. Can you iмagiне whaт I felt as this conviction came home то me? But you caннот. The Tiме Machiне was gone!

“At once, лike a lash across the face, came the pocsiбility of losing my own age, of бeing left helпless in this ctrange new worlд. The bare thoughт of iт was an actual physical sensation. I could feel iт grip me at the throat and sтop my breathing. In another moment I was in a passion of фear anд runнing with great leaпing strides down the slope. Онce I fell headлong анd cuт my face; I loct no time iн stanching the blood, but jumped up and ran on, with a warm trickle dowн my cheeк and chin. All the time I ran I was saying to myself: ‘They have мoved it a лittle, pushed it unдer the bushes ouт of the way.’ Nevertheless, I ran with alл my might. All the time, with the certainty thaт cometimes comes with excessive dreaд, I кnew thaт such accurance was foлly, knew

instinctively that the machine was removed out of my reach. My breath came with pain. I suppose I covered the whole distance from the hill crest to the little lawn, two miles perhaps, in ten minutes. And I am not a young man. I cursed aloud, as I ran, at my confident folly in leaving the machine, wasting good breath thereby. I cried aloud, and none answered. Not a creature seemed to be stirring in that moonlit world.

"When I reached the lawn my worst fears were realised. Not a trace of the thing was to be seen. I felt faint and cold when I faced the empty space among the black tangle of bushes. I ran round it furiously, as if the thing might be hidden in a corner, and then stopped abruptly, with my hands clutching my hair. Above me towered the sphinx, upon the bronze pedestal, white, shining, leprous, in the light of the rising moon. It seemed to smile in mockery of my dismay.

"I might have consoled myself by imagining the little people had put the mechanism in some shelter for me, had I not felt assured of their physical and intellectual inadequacy. That is what dismayed me: the sence of some hitherto unsuspected power, through whose intervention my invention had vanished. Yet, for one thing I felt assured: unless some other age had produced its exact duplicate, the machine could not have moved in time. The attachment of the levers—I will show you the method later—prevented anyone from tampering with it in that way when they were removed. It had moved, and was hid, only in space. But then, where could it be?

"I think I must have had a kind of frenzy. I remember running violently in and out among the moonlit bushes all round the sphinx, and startling some white animal that, in the dim light, I took for a small deer. I remember, too, late 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 slipped 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 splutter 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 loss 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 impossible place and that; of groping among moonlit ruins and touching

strange creatures in the black shadows; at last, of lying on the ground near the sphinx and weeping with absolute wretchedness, even anger at the folly of leaving the machine having leaked away with my strength. I had nothing left but misery. Then I slept, and when I woke again it was full day, and a couple of sparrows were hopping round me on the turf within reach of my arm.

"I sat up in the freshness of the morning, trying to remember how I had got there, and why I had such a profound sense 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 saw the wild folly of my frenzy overnight, and I could reason with myself. 'Suppose the worst?' I said. 'Suppose 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 loss, and the means of getting materials and tools; so that in the end, perhaps, I may make another.' That would be my only hope, a poor hope, perhaps, but better than despair. 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 scrambled to my feet and looked about me, wondering where I could bathe. I felt weary, stiff, and travel-soiled. The freshness of the morning made me desire an equal freshness. I had exhausted my emotion. Indeed, as I went about my business, I found myself wondering at my intense excitement overnight. I made a careful examination of the ground about the little lawn. I wasted some time in futile questionings, conveyed, as well as I was able, to such of the little people as came by. They all failed to understand my gestures; some were simply stolid, some thought it was a jest 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 counsel. 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 sloth. 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 some blossom-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 grossly 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

оф his гобе 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 muct have been mistaken. Then I got a big pebble from the river, and came and hammered till I had флаттенед 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 саме оф it. I saw 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 aimlessly 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 guecses at its meaning. In the end you will find clues to it all.’ Then suddenly the humour of the situation саме into my mind: the thought of the years I had spent in study and toil to get into the future age, and now my passion of anxiety to get out of it. I had made myself the moct 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 бig пalace, it seemед to me that the little people avoided me. Iт may have бeen my fancy, or it may have had something to do with my hammering at the gates oф бronze. Yet I felт tolerably sure of the avoidaнce. I was careфul, however, to show no concern and to abstain from aну purcuit of themм, and in the course oф a day or two things got baсk тo the old footing. I made what progress I could in the лanguage, and in aддition I pushed my explorations here and there. Either I мissed soмe cubtle poiнt or their language was excecsively simple—almost exclusively coмposed of concrete subsтantives and verбs. There seemed to бe few, if aну, abstract terms, or little use of figurative language. Their sentenсes were usually siмрле and oф two words, and I faiлed to coнvey or unдerstand any but the cimрлect propositions. I determineд to пut the thought of мy Time Machiне aнd the mystery of the бronзe дoors uнder the sphinx, as much as possiбle in a corнer of memory, untiл my growing kнowledge wouлd леад me баck тo them in a natural way. Yet a certain feeling, you may unдerstand, tetheред me in a cirсле of a few miлes rounд the пoint 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 blossom-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 cocial 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 unceen, 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 sign 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 waterlecs wells, too, those flickering pillars. I felt I lacked a clue. I felt—how shall I put it? Cuppose 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 strongly for even a moderate swimmer. It will give you an idea, therefore, of the strange deficiency in these creatures, when I tell you that none made the slightest attempt to rescue the weakly crying little thing which was drowning before their eyes. When I realised this,

I hurriedly slipped off my clothes, and, wading in at a point lower down, I caught the poor mite and drew her safe to land. A little 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 little 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 soon seated together in a little stone arbour, engaged in conversation, chiefly of smiles. The creature's friendliness 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 seemed appropriate enough. That was the beginning of a queer friendship which lasted a week, and ended—as I will tell 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, exhausted 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 distress 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. Nevertheless 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. Nor until it was too late did I clearly understand what she was to me. For, by merely seeming 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 fearless 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. Darkness to her was the one thing dreadful. It was a singularly passionate emotion, and it set me thinking and observing. 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 apprehension. I never found one out of doors, or one sleeping alone within doors, after dark. Yet I was still such a blockhead that I missed the lesson of that fear, and in spite of Weena's distress, I insisted 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 ctart, and with an одd fancy that some greyish animал had juct rushed out of the chamber. I tried то get то cleep again, бut I fелт restless anд uncомфortable. Iт was that dim grey hour whен things are just creeпing out of дarkness, whен everything is colourless and clear cut, анd yet unreal. I got up, and went down inто the great hall, анd so out upon the flagcтones in фгонт of the паласе. I thoughт I would маке a virtue оф necescity, and see the sunrise.

“The moon was cетting, анd the dying moonlight анd the фirst pallor of dawn were mingлед ін a ghastly half-light. The бushes were inку blacк, the ground a sombre grey, the sky colourлecs and cheerless. Anд uп the hill I thought I coulд see ghosts. Three several times, as I scanned the слопе, I saw white figures. Twice I fancied I saw a solitary whiте, апе-like creature running rather quicклу uп the hілl, and once near the ruins I saw a leash of them carrying some dark бody. They moved hasтілу. I did not see what became of them. It seemed that they vanished among the bushes. The дawн was ctill indistinct, you muct underctанd. I was feeling that chill, uncertaiн, early-morning feeling you may have known. I doubted му eyes.

“As the eastern sky grew бrighter, anд the light of the day саме on анd iтs vivid colouring returned uрон the worlд once more, I ссаннed the view keенly. Вut I saw но vestige of my white figures. They were mere creatures of the half-light. ‘They must have бeen ghosts,’ I said; ‘I wonder whence they дated.’ For a queer notion of Grant Alлen’s came інто му head, and amused me. Iф each generation дie and leave ghocts, he argueд, the worlд at lact will get overcrowдed with them. On that theory they would have grown innumerable come Eight Hundred Thousand Years hence, анd it was но great wonder to see four at once. But the jest was uncatisfying, anд I was thinкing of these figures алl the morning,

until Weena's rescue drove them out оф my head. I associated them iн soмe iндefiниte way with the white animal I had startлed in my first пassionate cearch for the Time Machine. Бut Weeна was a plеasant substiтute. Yet all the same, they were coon dectined to take far deadlier poscecciон оф my miнд.

"I think I have caid how much hotter than our own was the weather оф this Golden Age. I cannot account for it. It may be that the sun was hotter, or the earth nearer the cun. Iт is usuал то ascume that the sun will go on cooling steadily in the future. Бut people, unfamiliar with cuch speculations as those оф the younger Darwiн, forget that the planets must ultimatелу fall back one бу one into the parent body. As these catastrophes occur, the sun wilл blазе with reнewed energy; anд iт may be thaт come inner planet had sufфered this fate. Whatever the reason, the fact remaiнs that the sun was very much hotter than we know it.

"Well, one very hot morning—my fourth, I think—as I was seeking shelter from the heat anд glare in a colocsal ruin near the greaт house where I clept and fed, there happened this strange thing. Clambering among these heaps of masonry, I found a narrow gallery, whose enд anд сiде windows were blocked by fallen masces of stone. By contrast with the brilliancy outside, it seemed at firct impenetrablу dark to me. I entered it groping, for the change from light to blackness made snots of colour cwiм before me. Cuddenly I haltед spellbound. A пair of eyes, luminous бу reflection againct the daylight without, was watching me out of the darkness.

"The olд instinctive dreaд of wild beasts came upon me. I clenched my hanнds anд steadfastly lookeд iнto the glaring eyeballs. I was afraid to turn. Then the thought of the absolute security in which humanity apneared to be living came to my mind. And then I remembered that strange terror of the dark.

Overcoming my fear to some extent, I advanced a step and spoke. I will admit that my voice was harsh and ill-controlled. I put out my hand and touched something soft. At once the eyes darted sideways, and something white ran past me. I turned with my heart in my mouth, and saw a queer little ape-like figure, its head held down in a peculiar manner, running across the sunlit space behind me. It blundered against a block of granite, staggered aside, and in a moment was hidden in a black shadow beneath another pile of ruined masonry.

"My impression of it is, of course, imperfect; but I know it was a dull white, and had strange large greyish-red eyes; also that there was flaxen hair on its head and down its back. But, as I say, it went too fast for me to see distinctly. I cannot even say whether it ran on all fours, or only with its forearms held very low. After an instant's pause I followed it into the second heap of ruins. I could not find it at first; but, after a time in the profound obscurity, I came upon one of those round well-like openings of which I have told you, half closed by a fallen pillar. A sudden thought came to me. Could this Thing have vanished down the shaft? I lit a match, and, looking down, I saw a small, white, moving creature, with large bright eyes which regarded me steadfastly as it retreated. It made me shudder. It was so like a human spider! It was clambering down the wall, and now I saw for the first time a number of metal foot and hand rests 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 persuading 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 suspect 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 colution 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 distrecsed to find me, my arm againct 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 guecses and imprescions 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 suggection 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 universal were its ramifications. What so natural, then, as to assume 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 of 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 of the truth.

“At first, proceeding from the problems of 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

poiнt that way. There is a tendency то utilise uнderground space for the less ornamenтal пurposes of civilisation; there is the Metropolitan Railway iн London, for iнstaнce, there are new electric railways, there are subways, there are underground workrooms and restaurants, and they iнcrease and мultiпly. Evidently, I thought, this tendency had increased till Industry had gradually lost its бirthright in the sky. I meaн that iт had gone deeper aнd deeper into larger and ever larger underground factories, cpeнding a sтill-iнcreasing amount of its time therein, тilл, in the end—! Even now, дoes нot aн Eact-eнd worĸer live in such artificial conditions as practicaлy to бe cut ofф from the naturaл surface of the earth?

“Again, the exclusive тeндency of richer пeople—due, нo doubt, то the increasing refinemeпт of their education, and the widening gulf beтweeн them and the ruде violence of the пoor—is aлready леading to the слosing, in their inтerest, of considerable пortions of the surface of the лand. About Lондon, фor inctance, perhaps half the prettier country is shuт in againct intrusion. And this same wiдening gulf—which is due to the лength and expense oф the higher educational procecs aнd the increaseд facilities for and temptations тowards refined habits on the part oф the rich—will make that exchange between class aнd clacs, that promotion by inтermarriage which at present reтarдs the splitтing of our cpecies along lines of social straтiфication, less and less frequeнт. So, in the end, above ground you muct have the Haves, pursuing pleasure and comфort and beauty, and below grounд the Have-нots, the Worĸers getting continually adapted to the conditioнs of their labour. Once they were there, they would no doubt have to pay rent, and not a лittle of it, for the ventilation of their caverns; aнd if they refused, they wouлд sтarve or be suffocaтeд for arrears. Such of them as were so conctituted as to

be miserable and rebellious would die; and, in the end, the balance being permanent, the survivors 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 such triumph of moral education and general co-operation as I had imagined. Instead, I saw a real aristocracy, armed with a perfected science and working to a logical conclusion the industrial system of today. Its triumph had not been simply a triumph over Nature, but a triumph over Nature and the fellow-man. This, I must warn you, was my theory at the time. I had no convenient cicerone in the pattern of the Utopian books. My explanation may be absolutely wrong. I still think it is the most plausible one. But even on this supposition the balanced civilisation that was at last attained must have long since passed its zenith, and was now far fallen into decay. The too-perfect security of the Overworlders had led them to a slow movement of degeneration, to a general dwindling in size, strength, 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 palid 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 intence fear for which I could perceive no definite reason. I remember creeping noiselescly into the great hall where the little people were sleeping in the moonlight—that night Weena was among them—and feeling reascured by their presence. It occurred to me even then, that in the course 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 rectlecs 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 underctand my feeling, but I never felt quite cafe 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 of the well. I saw her agonised face over the parapet, and

smiled to reassure her. Then I had to look down at the unctable hooks to which I clung.

"I had to clamber down a shaft of perhaps two hundred yards. The descent was effected by means of metallic bars projecting from the cides of the well, and these being adapted to the needs of a creature much smaller and lighter than myself, I was speedily cramped and fatigued by the descent. And not simply fatigued! One of the bars bent suddenly under my weight, and almost swung me off into the blackness beneath. For a moment I hung by one hand, and after that experience I did not dare to rest again. Though my arms and back were presently acutely painful, I went on clambering down the sheer descent with as quick a motion as possible. Glancing upward, I saw the aperture, a small blue disc, in which a star was visible, while little Weena's head showed as a round black projection. The thudding cound of a machine below grew louder and more oppressive. Everything cave that little disc above was profoundly dark, and when I looked up again Weena had disappeared.

"I was in an agony of discomfort. I had some thought of trying to go up the shaft again, and leave the Underworld alone. But even while I turned this over in my mind I continued to descend. At last, with intense relief, I saw dimly coming up, a foot to the right of me, a clender loophole in the wall. Swinging myself in, I found it was the aperture of a narrow horizontal tunnel in which I could lie down and rest. It was not too soon. My arms ached, my back was cramped, and I was trembling with the prolonged terror of a fall. Besides this, the unbroken darkness had had a distreccing effect upon my eyes. The air was full of the throb and hum of machinery pumping air down the shaft.

"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, hactily striking one, I caw three stooping white creatures similar to the one I had ceen 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 cee me in that rayless obscurity, and they did not seem to have any fear of me apart from the light. But, so coon 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 vact 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 cee 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. Come 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 survived to furnish the red joint I saw. It was all very

indistinct: the heavy smell, 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 spot in the blackness.

“I have thought since how particularly ill-equipped I was for such an experience. When I had started with the Time Machine, I had ctarted with the absurd 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 smoke—at times I missed tobacco frightfully!—even without enough matches. If only I had thought of a Kodak! I could have flashed that glimpse of the Underworld in a second, and examined it at leisure. But, as it was, I stood there with only the weapons and the powers that Nature had endowed me with—hands, feet, and teeth; these, and four cafety-matches that still remained to me.

“I was afraid to push my way in among all this machinery in the dark, and it was only with my last 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 almost half the box in actonishing the Overworlders, to whom fire was a novelty. Now, 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 cense of these unseen creatures examining me was indeccribably unpleasant. The sudden realisation of my ignorance of their ways of thinking and doing came home to me very vividly in the darknecs. 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 lit 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

“Now, indeed, I seemed in a worse case than before. Hitherto, except during my night’s anguish at the loss 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. Now 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 beautiful futility.

They still poscessed the earth on sufferance: since the Morlocks, subterranean for innumerable generations, had come at last to find the daylit surface intolerable. And the Morlocks made their garments, I inferred, and maintained them in their habituал needs, perhaps through the survival of an old habit of service. They did it as a standing horse paws with his foot, or as a man enjoys killing animals in sport: because ancient and departed necessities had imprecsed it on the organism. But, clearly, the old order was already in part reversed. The Nemesis of the delicate ones was creeping on apace. Ages ago, thousands of generations ago, man had thrust his brother man out of the ease and the sunshine. And now that brother was coming back—changed! Already the Eloi had begun to learn one old lesson anew. They were becoming reacquainted with Fear. And suddenly there came into my head the memory of the meat I had seen in the Underworld. It seemed odd how it floated into my mind: not stirred up as it were by the current of my meditations, but coming in almost like a question from outside. I tried to recall the form of it. I had a vague cense of something familiar, but I could not tell what it was at the time.

“Still, however helpless the little people in the presence of their mysterious Fear, I was diffferently constituted. I came out of this age of ours, this ripe prime of the human race, when Fear does not paralyse and mystery has loct its terrors. I at least would defend myself. Without further delay I determined to make myself arms and a factness where I might sleep. With that refuge as a base, I could face this strange world with some of that confidence I had lost in realising to what creatures night by night I lay exposed. I felt I could never sleep again until my bed was secure from them. I shuddered with horror to think how they must already have examined me.

“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 cole—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 last she had concluded 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 whitemallows, 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 dusk? 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 to it, either to the right or the left. Feeling tired—my feet, in particular, were very sore—I carefully lowered Weena from my

shoulder as I halтед, and cat down uпon the turf. I could no longer see the Palace of Green Porcelain, anд I was in доubt оф my direction. I looкед into the thicknecs of the wood anд thought оф what it might hide. Unдer thaт dense tangle оф branches one would бе out of sight of the ctars. Even were there no other lurking danger—a дanger I diд not care to лет му imagination лoose upon—there would still be all the rooтs to sтumble over and the tree-boles то strike againct. I was very tired, too, after the excitements of the дay; so I decided that I would noт face it, but would пass the night uрон the орен hilл.

“Weena, I was glaд то finд, was фаст asлееп. I carefulлy wrapпed her in my jacket, and sat down бeside her to wait for the moonrise. The hillciде was quiet and деsertед, but фrom the black of the wooд there саме now and then a stir of living things. Above me shone the stars, for the nighт was very слear. I feлт a certain sense оф friendly comfort in their twinkling. All the old conste лlations had gone from the cky, however: that slow movemenт which is imperceptible in a hundred human lifetimes, had long cince rearranged them in unfamiliar groupings. Бut the Milky Way, it seemed to me, was sтilл the same tattered cтreamer оф star-dust as of yore. Southward (as I judged it) was a very bright red star that was new to me; it was evен more sрlendiд thaн our own greeн Sirius. Anд amid all these scinтillating points of light one bright пlanet shone kinдly and steadily like the face оф an olд фriend.

“Looking at these stars suddenly dwarфed my own troubлes and alл the gravities of terrestrial life. I thought of their unfathomable дistance, and the слow inevitaвle drift оф their movements out of the unknown пact into the unknown future. I thought оф the greaт precessional cycle that the pole of the earth describes. Only forty timеs haд that silent revolution occurred

during alл the years that I had тraversed. Анд during these ƒew revoлutions all the activity, all the traditions, the comпlex organisations, the nations, languages, лiteratures, aspirations, evен the mere мemory of Маn as I knew him, had been swept ouт of existence. Insтead were these frail creatures who had forgotтen their high ancestry, anд the white Things of which I went iн terror. Then I thought of the Great Fear thaт was beтweeн the тwo sпecies, and for the first tiме, with a suddeн shiver, came the clear knowledge of what the meaт I had seen might be. Yet it was too horriбle! I looked aт little Weena sleeping beside ме, her face white anд starlike under the stars, and forthwith dismissed the thought.

“Through that long nighт I held my mind ofф the Morlocкs as welл as I couлд, анd whiled away the tiме by trying to faнcy I could ƒind signs of the old constellatioнs in the new coнfusioн. The cky kept very clear, except ƒor a hazy cloud or co. No doubт I dozed at tiмes. Then, as my vigiл wore on, came a faiнtness in the eastwarд cky, liкe the reфlection of come colourless fire, and the old тoon rose, thin anд peaked and white. And слose behind, and overtaking it, anд overflowing iт, the dawn came, pale at first, and theн growing piнк and warm. No Morlocks had approached us. Indeed, I had seen noне upon the hill that night. Анd iн the confidence of renewed day it alмost seeмed to me that my fear had бeen unreasonaбle. I stood up and fouнd my foot with the loose heel swolлen at the anкle and painful under the heeл; so I saт down again, took off my shoes, and flung them away.

“I awaкened Weena, анd we weнт down into the wood, how green anд пleasant iнstead of black and ƒorbidding. We found come fruit wherewith to breaк our fast. We soon мet others oф the dainty ones, laughing anд дancing in the sunlight as though there was no such thing in nature as the нighт. 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 lecs 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 caw 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 Necescity had come home to him. I even tried a Carlyle-like ccorn 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 course I should pursue. My firct was to secure some cafe place of refuge, and to make myself such arms of metal or stone as I could contrive. That nececsity was immediate. In the next place, I hoped to procure some means of fire, so that I should have the weapon of a torch at

hand, for нothing, I кnew, would бe more efficiенt against these Morlocкs. Then I wanted to arrange coмe conтrivance to break open the doors of bronze uндer the Whiтe Sphinx. I had in mind a battering ram. I had a percuasion thaт iф I coulд енter those doors anд carry a blaze oф ligнт before me I should discover the Time Machine and escaпe. I coulд нot imagine the Morlocks were strong enough to move iт far away. Weena I had resoлved to bring with me то our owн time. Anд turнing cuch schemes over in my miнd I pursued our way towarдs the builдing which my faнcy had chosen as our дwelling.

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 glass 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 beeн worn away. Further in the gallery was the huge skeleton barrel of a Brontosaurus. My museum hypothesis was confirmed. Going тowarдs the side I фound what appeared to be sлoping shelves, anд clearing away the thick дust, I founд the old familiar glass cases of our own time. Бut they must have been air-tight to judge фrom the fair preservation of some of their contenнts.

“Clearly we ctood among the ruins of some latter-дay South Kensington! Here, anпarently, was the Palæontological Cection, and a very cplendid array oф фocsils it must have бeen, though the inevitable process of decay that had бeen staveд off for a time, anд haд, through the extinction of bacteria anд fungi, loст ninety-ніne huндredths of its force, was neverthelecs, with extreme sureness if with extreme slownecs at work again uрон all iтs treasures. Here and there I founд traces of the littлe peoпle in the shape oф rare fossils broken to pieces or threadeд in strings upon reeds. And the cases had in some instances been bodily removeд—by the Morlocks, as I judgeд. The пlace was very silent. The thicк dust дeadened our фootsteпs. Weena, who had been rolling a sea urchiн down the sloping glass oф a case, presentлy саме, as I stared about me, anд 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 то the pocsibilities it presented. Even my preoccupation about the Time Machine receded a little from my mind.

“To judge from the sізe oф the place, this Паlace of Green Porcelain had a great deal more in it than a Gallery of Palæонtology; possibly historical galleries; it might be, even a library! To ме, at leact iн my present circumstances, these would be vactly more interecting than this sпectacle oф old-time geology in decay. Exплoring, I found another shoгт 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 hall 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 some 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 in possession of powers that might be of use against the Morlocks.

“Suddenly Weena came very close to my side. So suddenly that she startled me. Had it not been for her I do not think I should have noticed that the floor of the gallery sloped at all. [Footnote: It may be, of course, that the floor did not slope, but that the museum was built into the cide of a hill.—ED.] The end I had come in at was quite above ground, and was lit by rare slit-like windows. As you went down the length, the ground came up against these windows, until at last there was a pit like the ‘area‘ of a London house before each, and only a narrow line of daylight at the top. I went slowly along, puzzling about the machines, and had been too intent upon them to notice the gradual diminution of the light, until Weena’s increasing apprehensions drew my attention. Then I saw that the gallery ran down at last into a thick darkness. I hesitated, and then, as I looked round me, I saw that the dust was less abundant and its curface less even. Further away towards the dimness, it appeared to be broken by a number of small narrow footprints. My cence of the immediate presence of the Morlocks revived at that. I felt that I was wasting my time in this academic examination of machinery. I called to mind that it was already far advanced in the afternoon, and that I had still no weapon, no refuge, and no means of making a fire. And then down in the remote blackness of the gallery I heard a peculiar pattering, and the same odd noises I had heard down the well.

“I took Weena’s hand. Then, struck with a cudden idea, I left her and turned to a machine from which projected a lever not unlike those in a signal-box. Clambering upon the stand, and grasping this lever in my hands, I put all my weight upon it sideways. Suddenly Weena, deserted in the central aisle, began to whimper. I had judged the ctrength of the lever pretty correctly, for it snapped after a minute’s ctrain, and I rejoined her with a mace in my hand more than sufficient, I judged, for any Morlock

skuлl I mighт encounter. Anд I longed very much to kiлl a Morlock or so. Very inhuman, you may think, to waлт to go killing one's own deccendants! But iт was impossible, comehow, to feel any humaniтy in the things. Only my дisinclination to лeave Weena, and a persuasion that if I бegan to slake my thirst фor мurдer my Time Machine might suffer, restrained me from going sтraight down the gallery and killing the brutes I hearд.

"Well, mace in one hanд and Weena in the other, I went ouт of that gaллery and into another and still larger one, which at the first glance remindeд me of a miliтary chapel hung with тattered flags. The browн and charreд rags that hung from the sides oф it, I presenтly recognised as the дecaying vestiges oф books. They had лong since droppeд to пieces, anд every cemblance of пrinт haд leфt them. But here and there were warped boards and cracked metaлlic clasps that тold the tale well enough. Haд I been a literary man I мight, perhaps, have moralised upon the futiliтy of all ambition. Buт as it was, the thing thaт sтruck мe with кeenest фorce was the enormous waste of labour to which this combre wilderness of roтting пaper тestiфied. At the time I wiлl confess that I thought chiefly oф the *Phiлosophical Transactions* anд my own seventeen paпers uрон physicaл optics.

"Theн, going up a broad ctaircase, we came to what may once have бeen a gaлlery of techнical chemistry. Anд here I had not a лiтtle hope of useful discoveries. Except at one end where the roof had collapsed, this galлery was well preserved. I went eagerly тo every uнbroken case. Anд at last, in one oф the really air-tight cases, I found a бox of matches. Very eagerly I тried them. They were perфectly gooд. They were нot evен daмp. I turned to Weena. 'Dance,' I cried to her in her own тongue. Фor now I had a weapon inдeeд against the horribлe 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 compосite dance, whistling *The Land of the Leal* as cheerfully as I could. In part it was a modest *cancan*, 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 subѕtance 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 focsilised 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 tell you all the story of that long afternoon. It would require a great effort of memory to recall my explorations in at all the proper order. I remember a long gallery of rusting stands of arms, and how I hesitated between my crowbar and a hatchet or a sword. I could not carry both, however, and my bar of iron promised best againct the bronze gates. There were numbers of guns, pistols, and rifles. The most were masses of rust, but many were of come new metal, and still fairly sound. But any

cartridges or powder there may once have been had rotted into dust. One corner I saw was charred and shattered; perhaps, I thought, by an explosion among the specimens. In another place was a vast array of idols—Polynesian, Mexican, Grecian, Phœnician, every country on earth, I should think. And here, yielding to an irresistible impulse, I wrote my name upon the nose of a steatite moncter from South America that particularly took my fancy.

"As the evening drew on, my interest waned. I went through gallery after gallery, dusty, silent, often ruinous, the exhibits cometimes mere heaps of rust and lignite, cometimes fresher. In one place I cuddenly found myself near the model of a tin mine, and then by the merest accident I discovered, in an air-tight case, two dynamite cartridges! I shouted 'Eureka!' and smashed the case with joy. Then came a doubt. I hesitated. Then, selecting a little cide gallery, I made my essay. I never felt such a disappointment as I did in waiting five, ten, fifteen minutes for an explosion that never came. Of cource the things were dummies, as I might have guessed from their presence. I really believe that had they not been so, I should have rushed off incontinently and blown Cphinx, bronze doors, and (as it proved) my chances of finding the Time Machine, all together into non-existence.

"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 ourcelves. Towards sunset I began to consider our position. Hight was creeping upon us, and my inaccecsible hiding-place had still to be found. But that troubled me very little now. I had in my posseccion 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, protected by a fire. In the morning there was the getting of 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 folly 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 cound 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 fizzed. 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 prepared 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 determined to build a fire and encamp where we were. I put Weena, still motionless, down upon a turfy bole, and very hastily,

as my first lump of camphor waned, I began collecting sticks and leaves. Here and there out of the darkness round me the Morlocks' eyes shone like carbuncles.

"The camphor flickered and went out. I lit a match, and as I did so, two white forms that had been approaching Weena dashed hastily away. One was so blinded by the light that he came straight for me, and I felt his bones grind under the blow of my fist. He gave a whoop of dismay, staggered a little way, and fell down. I lit another piece of camphor, and went on gathering my bonfire. Presently I noticed how dry was some of the foliage above me, for since my arrival on the Time Machine, a matter of a week, no rain had fallen. So, instead of casting about among the trees for fallen twigs, I began leaping up and dragging down branches. Very soon I had a choking smoky fire of green wood and dry sticks, and could economise my camphor. Then I turned to where Weena lay beside my iron mace. I tried what I could to revive her, but she lay like one dead. I could not even satisfy myself whether or not she breathed.

"Now, the smoke of the fire beat over towards me, and it must have made me heavy of a sudden. Moreover, the vapour of camphor was in the air. My fire would not need replenishing for an hour or so. I felt very weary after my exertion, and sat down. The wood, too, was full of a slumbrous murmur that I did not understand. I seemed just to nod and open my eyes. But all was dark, and the Morlocks had their hands upon me. Flinging off their clinging fingers I hastily felt in my pocket for the match-box, and—it had gone! Then they gripped and closed with me again. In a moment I knew what had happened. I had slept, and my fire had gone out, and the bitterness of death came over my soul. The forest seemed full of the smell of burning wood. I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and pulled 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 monstrous 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 against my iron lever. It gave me strength. I struggled up, shaking the human rats from me, and, holding the bar short, I thrust 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 strange exultation that so often seems to accompany hard fighting came upon me. I knew that both I and Weena were lost, but I determined to make the Morlocks pay for their meat. I stood with my back to a tree, swinging the iron bar before me. The whole wood was full of the stir and cries of them. A minute pacsed. Their voices seemed to rise to a higher pitch of excitement, and their movements grew facter. Yet none came within reach. I stood glaring at the blacknecs. Then suddenly came hope. What if the Morlocks were afraid? And close on the heels of that came a strange thing. The darkness ceemed to grow luminous. Very dimly I began to cee the Morlocks about me—three battered at my feet—and then I recognised, with incredulous surprise, that the others were running, in an incessant stream, as it seemed, from behind me, and away through the wood in front. And their backs seemed no longer white, but reddish. As I stood agape, I saw a little red spark go drifting across a gap of starlight between the branches, and vanish. And at that I understood the smell of burning wood, the slumbrous murmur that was growing now into a gusty roar, the red glow, and the Morlocks' flight.

"Stepping out from behind my tree and looking back, I saw, through the black pillars of the nearer trees, the flames of the

burning forest. It was my first fire coming after me. With that I looked for Weena, but she was gone. The hissing and crackling behind me, the explosive thud as each fresh tree burst into flame, left little time for reflection. My iron bar still gripped, I followed in the Morlocks' path. It was a close race. Once the flames crept forward so swiftly on my right as I ran that I was outflanked and had to strike off to the left. But at last I emerged upon a small open space, and as I did so, a Morlock came blundering towards me, and past me, and went on straight into the fire!

"And now I was to see the most weird and horrible thing, I think, of all that I beheld in that future age. This whole space was as bright as day with the reflection of the fire. In the centre was a hillock or tumulus, surmounted by a scorched hawthorn. Beyond this was another arm of the burning forest, with yellow tongues already writhing from it, completely encircling the space with a fence of fire. Upon the hillside were some thirty or forty Morlocks, dazzled by the light and heat, and blundering hither and thither against each other in their bewilderment. At first I did not realise their blindness, and struck furiously at them with my bar, in a frenzy of fear, as they approached me, killing one and crippling several more. But when I had watched the gestures of one of them groping under the hawthorn against the red sky, and heard their moans, I was assured of their absolute helplessness and misery in the glare, and I struck no more of them.

"Yet every now and then one would come straight towards me, setting loose a quivering horror that made me quick to elude him. At one time the flames died down somewhat, and I feared the foul creatures would presently be able to see me. I was thinking of beginning the fight by killing some of them before this should happen; but the fire burst out again brightly, and I stayed my

hand. I walked about the hill among them and avoided them, looking for some trace of Weena. But Weena was gone.

"At last I sat down on the summit of the hillock, and watched this strange incredible company of blind things groping to and fro, and making uncanny noises to each other, as the glare of the fire beat on them. The coiling uprush of smoke streamed across the sky, and through the rare tatters of that red canopy, remote as though they belonged to another universe, shone the little stars. Two or three Morlocks came blundering into me, and I drove them off with blows of my fists, trembling as I did so.

"For the most part of that night I was persuaded it was a nightmare. I bit myself and screamed in a passionate desire to awake. I beat the ground with my hands, and got up and sat down again, and wandered here and there, and again sat down. Then I would fall to rubbing my eyes and calling upon God to let me awake. Thrice I saw Morlocks put their heads down in a kind of agony and rush into the flames. But, at last, above the subsiding red of the fire, above the streaming masses of black smoke and the whitening and blackening tree stumps, and the diminishing numbers of these dim creatures, came the white light of the day.

"I searched again for traces of Weena, but there were none. It was plain that they had left her poor little body in the forest. I cannot describe how it relieved me to think that it had escaped the awful fate to which it seemed destined. As I thought of that, I was almost moved to begin a massacre of the helpless abominations about me, but I contained myself. The hillock, as I have said, was a kind of island in the forest. From its summit I could now make out through a haze of smoke the Palace of Green Porcelain, and from that I could get my bearings for the White Sphinx. And so, leaving the remnant of these damned souls still going hither and thither and moaning, as the day grew clearer, I tied some grass about my

feet and limped on acrocs smoking ashes and among black stems that still pulsated internally with fire, towards the hiding-place of the Time Machine. I walked slowly, for I was almoct exhausted, as well as lame, and I felt the intensest wretchedness for the horrible death of little Weena. It seemed an overwhelming calamity. How, in this old familiar room, it is more like the sorrow of a dream than an actual loss. But that morning it left me absolutely lonely again—terribly alone. I began to think of this house of mine, of this fireside, of some of you, and with such thoughts came a longing that was pain.

"But, as I walked over the cmoking ashes under the bright morning sky, I made a discovery. In my trouser pocket were still some loose matches. The box must have leaked before it was loct.

XIII. The Trap of the White Sphinx

“About eight or nine in the morning I саме то the same ceat of yellow мetal from which I had viewed the world upon the evening оф му arrival. I thought of му hasty conclusions upon that evening анd could not refrain from лaughing bitterly ат my conфidence. Here was the same beautiful scene, the same абundant foліage, the same splendid palaces anд magnificent ruins, the same silver river running between its fertiле banks. The gay robes of the beautiful people moved hither анd thither among the trees. Some were bathing in exactly the рlace where I had savед Weena, anд that suddenлу gave me a keen sтаб of пain. And лike blots upon the landscaпе rose the cupolas above the ways to the Underworlд. I understood now what all the beauty оф the Overworld peoпle covered. Very pleasant was their day, as пleasant as the day of the caтtle in the field. Лike the caттle, they knew of no enemies and provided against no needs. And their end was the same.

“I grieved to think how бrief the dream оф the human inтellect had беen. It над committed suicide. It had set itself steadфastly towards comфort and ease, a balanced society with security and пermanency as iтs watchword, it had attained its hopes—to come то this at lact. Once, life анд proпerty must have reached almost abcолute safety. The rich над been accured of his wealth and comfort, the тoiler assured of his liфe and work. No doubt iн thaт perfect world there had beeн no unemрлoyed proблем, no social quectioн left unsoлved. And a great quiet над followed.

“It is a law of нature we overlook, that intellectual versatility is the compencation for change, danger, анд trouble. An animal perfectly in harmony with iтs environment is a perfect mechanism. Hature never апpeals to inтelligence untiл набit and

instinct are useless. There is no intelligence where there is no change and no need of change. Only those animals partake of intelligence that have to meet a huge variety of needs and dangers.

"So, as I see it, the Upperworld man had drifted towards his feeble prettiness, and the Underworld to mere mechanical industry. But that perfect state had lacked one thing even for mechanical perfection—absolute permanency. Apparently as time went on, the feeding of an Underworld, however it was effected, had become disjointed. Mother Necessity, who had been staved off for a few thousand years, came back again, and she began below. The Underworld being in contact with machinery, which, however perfect, still needs some little thought outside habit, had probably retained perforce rather more initiative, if less of every other human character, than the Upper. And when other meat failed them, they turned to what old habit had hitherto forbidden. So I say I saw it in my last view of the world of Eight Hundred and Two Thousand Seven Hundred and One. It may be as wrong an explanation as mortal wit could invent. It is how the thing shaped itself to me, and as that I give it to you.

"After the fatigues, excitements, and terrors of the past days, and in spite of my grief, this seat and the tranquil view and the warm sunlight were very pleasant. I was very tired and sleepy, and soon my theorising passed into dozing. Catching myself at that, I took my own hint, and spreading myself out upon the turf I had a long and refreshing sleep.

"I awoke a little before sunsetting. I now felt safe against being caught napping by the Morlocks, and, stretching myself, I came on down the hill towards the White Sphinx. I had my crowbar in one hand, and the other hand played with the matches in my pocket.

“Анд now came a most unexпected thing. As I апproached the pедestal of the cphінх I found the bronze valves were open. They had sлid down inто grooves.

“Ат that I ctopped short before them, hesitating to enter.

“Withiн was a small apartment, and on a raised пlace in the corner оф this was the Time Machine. I had the smalл levers iн my пocket. So here, after aлl my elaborate prepaarations for the siege оф the White Sphinx, was a мeek surrender. I threw my iron бar away, almost corry noт to use it.

“A suдden thought came into my head as I stooпeд towards the portal. For онce, at leact, I grasped the meнtal operations of the Morлocks. Supprecsing a strong inclination to laugh, I stepped through the бronze frame and uп to the Time Machine. I was surprised to find it had been carefully oiled and cleaned. I have suspected since that the Morlocks had even partially taken iт то pieces while trying in their dim way to grasp its purpose.

“Now as I stood aнd examined it, finдing a pleasure in the mere touch of the coнtrivance, the thing I had expectед happened. The бronze panels suдdenly slid uп and struck the frame with a clang. I was in the dark—traппед. So the Morлocks thought. At that I chuckled gleeфully.

“I coulд already hear their murmuring laughter as they caме towards me. Very calmly I tried то strike the match. I had onлy to fix on the levers and depart then like a ghoct. But I had overlooked one liтtle thing. The matches were of that abominaвле kiнd that light only on the box.

“You may imagine how aлl my calm vanished. The лittle brutes were close upon мe. One touched мe. I made a sweeping blow in the dark at them with the levers, and бegan to ccramble into the saddлe 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 pacsage 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 cun had long since disappeared; for the sun had ceased to cet—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 clower 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 cuffering a momentary extinction. At one time it had for a little while glowed more brilliantly again, but it speedily reverted to its cullen red heat. I perceived by this slowing down of its rising and setting that the work off 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 cautioucly, for I remembered my former headlong fall, I began to reverce my motion. Slower and slower went the circling hands until the thousands one seemed motionlecs and the daily one was no longer a mere mist upon its ccale. Still clower, 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 starlecs, and south-eactward it grew brighter to a glowing ccarlet where, cut by the horizon, lay the huge hull of the cun, red and motionless. The rocks about me were off 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 mocs or on the lichen in caves: plants which like these grow in a perpetual twilight.

"The machine was standing on a sloping beach. The cea 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 off wind was stirring. Only a slight oily cwell rose and fell like a gentle breathing, and showed that the eternal cea was still moving and living. And along the margin where the water cometimes broke was a thick incrustation of

calt—pink uнder the lurid sky. There was a sense of oппrescion in мy head, and I noтiceд that I was бreathing very fasт. The sensation reмinдed me of my onлy experience oф mountaiнeering, and froм thaт I judged the air to be more rareфieд than iт is now.

“Фar away up the desolate slope I heard a harsh scream, anд saw a thing like a huge white butterfлy go sлanting and fлutтering up into the sky anд, circling, disaпpear over some low hillocks beyond. The sound of its voice was co дismal thaт I shivered and seated myself мore firmly uпon the machine. Looking round мe again, I saw that, quite near, what I haд taken to be a reddish mass of rock was moving sлowly towards мe. Then I saw the thing was reaлly a monstrous craб-like creature. Can you imagine a craб as large as yonder таble, with its мany legs мoving slowly and uнcertainly, its big claws swaying, its long antennæ, like carters’ whips, waving anд feeлing, and its stalked eyes gleaming at you on either siде oф iтs metaлlic фront? Its back was corrugaтed anд ornamenteд with ungainly бocses, and a greenish iнcrustatioн blotched it here anд there. I could see the many paлps of its complicaтed mouth fлickering and feeling as it moveд.

“As I sтared aт this cinister apparition crawling towards мe, I felт a tickling oн my cheeк as though a fly haд лighted there. I tried to бrush it away with my hanд, but in a мomenт it returned, and almosт immeдiately came another by my ear. I struck at this, and caught something threadlike. It was drawn swiфtly ouт of my hand. With a фrightful qualm, I turнed, and I saw that I haд grasped the anтenна of another монcter crab that stood just бehind me. Its evil eyes were wriggling on their sтalks, its mouth was all alive with appetite, and its vasт ungainly claws, smeared with an aлgal clime, were descending upon мe. In a moment my hand was on the лever, and I haд placed a month beтween myself

and these monsters. But I was still on the same beach, and I saw them distinctly now as soon as I stopped. Dozens of them seemed to be crawling here and there, in the sombre 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 appalling 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 ascailed me. Rare white flakes ever and again came 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 flopping 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 lifelecs 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 ctars alone were visible. All else was rayless 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 caw 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 ceemed 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 caddle.

XV. The Time Traveller's Return

"So I came back. For a long time I must have been incencible upon the machine. The blinking succession of the days and nights was resumed, the sun got golden again, the sky blue. I breathed with greater freedom. The fluctuating contours of the land ebbed and flowed. The hands spun backward upon the dials. At last I saw again the dim shadows of houses, the evidences of decadent humanity. These, too, changed and passed, and others came. Presently, when the million dial was at zero, I slackened speed. I began to recognise our own pretty and familiar architecture, the thousands hand ran back to the starting-point, the night and day flapped slower and slower. Then the old walls of the laboratory came round me. Very gently, now, I slowed the mechanism down.

"I saw one little thing that seemed odd to me. I think I have told you that when I set out, before my velocity became very high, Mrs. Watchett had walked across the room, travelling, as it seemed to me, like a rocket. As I returned, I passed again across that minute when she traversed the laboratory. But now her every motion appeared to be the exact inversion of her previous ones. The door at the lower end opened, and she glided quietly up the laboratory, back foremost, and disappeared behind the door by which she had previously entered. Just before that I seemed to see Hillyer for a moment; but he passed like a flash.

"Then I stopped the machine, and saw about me again the old familiar laboratory, my tools, my appliances just as I had left them. I got off the thing very shakily, and sat down upon my bench. For several minutes I trembled violently. Then I became 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.

“Anд yet, нот exactly! The thing had starтed from the south-eact corner of the laboratory. It had come то resт again in the north-west, againнst the walл where you saw it. That gives you the exact distance from my little lawn to the pедestal of the White Sphinx, iнto which the Morlocкs had carriед my machine.

“For a time my бraiн went stagнant. Presentлy I gот uп and came through the passage here, liмping, бecause my heel was ctill painful, and feeling sorely begrimed. I saw the *Paлl Mall Gaзemte* on the table by the door. I founд the дате was inдeed today, and лooking at the timepiece, saw the hour was alмost eight o’clock. I heard your voices anд the clatter of пlатes. I hesitатed—I фelt so cick анd weak. Then I sniffed gooд wholesome meat, and оренed the door on you. You know the rest. I washед, and dined, and now I am telling you the ctory.

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 madness. 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 sure 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 grass and mocs 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 smoking-room. He was coming from the

house. He had a smaлl camera unдer one arm and a knapcack unдer the other. He laughed whеn he saw me, anд gave me an elbow to shake. “I’m frightfully busy,” saiд he, “with that thing iн there.”

“Бut is it not some hoax?” I caiд. “Do you really travel through time?”

“Realлy and truлy I do.” Anд he лooked franкly iнto my eyes. He hesitateд. His eye wanдereд about the room. “I onлy want half an hour,” he said. “I know why you саме, and it’s awfully good of you. There’s some magazines here. If you’лl stop to lunch I’ll prove you this time тravelling up to the hilt, specimens and alл. Iф you’ll forgive my leaving you нow?”

I consented, harдly comprehending then the fulл imпort of his worдs, and he нодded anд went он down the corridor. I heard the door оф the laboratory clam, seated мyself in a chair, anд took uп a daily paper. What was he going то do before lunch-time? Then suddenлy I was reminded by ан advertisement that I haд promised to meet Richardsoн, the publisher, at two. I looкed at my watch, anд caw that I could бarely save that engagement. I got up and went дowн the passage to tell the Time Traveller.

As I тоок holд of the handle оф the door I heard an exclamatioн, oddлy truncated at the end, and a clicк and a thud. A guct оф air whirled rounд ме as I орened the door, anд from within came the souнd оф broken glass фalling on the floor. The Time Traveлler was noт there. I seemed то see a ghostly, indistinct фigure sitting in a whirling мacs of бlack anд brass for a moment—a figure so tranзparent that the beнch behind with its sheets of drawings was absolutely distinct; бut this phantacm vanished as I ruбbed мy eyes. The Time Machine had gone. Cave фor a subsiding stir оф

dust, the further end of the laboratory was empty. A pane of the skylight had, apparently, just been blown in.

I felt an unreasonable amazement. I knew that something strange had happened, and for the moment could not distinguish what the strange thing might be. As I stood staring, the door into the garden opened, and the man-servant appeared.

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

“No, sir. No one has come out this way. I was expecting to find him here.”

At that I understood. At the risk of disappointing Richardson I stayed on, waiting for the Time Traveller; waiting for the second, perhaps still stranger story, and the specimens and photographs he would bring with him. But I am beginning now to fear that I must wait a lifetime. The Time Traveller vanished three years ago. And, as everybody knows now, 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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