

The time machine



Herbert George Wells was born in 1866 in Bromley, Kent, a few miles from London, the son of a house-maid and gardener. Wells died in 1946, a wealthy and famous author, having seen science fiction become a recognized literary form and having seen the world realize some of science fiction's fondest dreams and worst fears. Wells mother attempted to find him a safe occupation as a draper or chemist.

Wells had a quick mind and a good memory that enabled him to pass subjects by examination and win a scholarship to the Normal School of Science, where he stayed for three years and, most importantly, was exposed to biology under the famous Thomas H. Huxley. Wells went into teaching and writing text books and articles for the magazines that were of that time. In 1894 he began to write science-fiction stories. -James

Gunn

Wells vision of the future, with its troglodytic Morlocks descended from the working class of his day and the pretty but helpless Eloi devolved from the leisure class, may seem antiquated political theory. It emerged out of the concern for social justice that drew Wells to the Fabian

Society and inspired much of his later writing, but time has not dimmed the fascination of the situation and the horror of the imagery.

The Time Machine brought these concerns into his fiction. It, too, involved the future, but a future imagined with greater realism and in greater detail than earlier stories of the future. It also introduced, for the first time in fiction, the notion of a machine for traveling in time.

In this novel the Time Machine by H. G. Wells, starts with the time traveler trying to persuade his guest's the theory of the fourth dimension and even the invention. He tries to explain the fourth dimension before he shows them the time machine so they don't think of him as a magician. H. G. Wells uses details about the fourth dimension to teach the reader the theory about it to capture your attention. Also Wells character the time traveler says " Scientific people", " Know very well that time is only a kind of space". In this quote he is clearly using persuasion tactics. He tries to attack there consious by saying that, scientific people know that this is only a kind of space. He says

this in hopes that they will believe what he says just because other intelligent people believe the theory. This is a very primitive but still an effective way to try to persuade people. The idea is “ because many people believe it, so it must be true”. The people he is trying to persuade are of 19th century thinking and well to do people and they are competitive amongst other well to do people so if other rich and intelligent people believe this fourth dimension theory so the time traveler hopes this will motivate them to learn about it.

The Characters in the book Time Machine are The time traveler, Filby, the psychologist, and the provincial mayor. Later the silent man and the editor come in to play. Filby is described as “ an argumentative person with red hair”. He has another label that Wells puts on him; he call him the “ young man”. The psychologist also has another label; he is “ the medical man”. The time traveler is described briefly when the group of intellects head down the corridor to the laboratory. He uses “ his queer broad head in silhouette.” When the arrive at the machine’s location it is described as “ Parts were made of nickel, parts of ivory, parts had

certainly been filed or sawn out of rock crystal". He probably chose these characters as witnesses because they hold higher education and people would believe them from their reputations. The psychologist would be beneficiary in convincing the other that it's not a hoax because he is aware of human behavior. The provincial mayor is also an intelligent man and the people elected him so if he is to believe that this works then many people would follow him. Filby is another character but never talks about his standing in society it could be his friend because he did wink at the time traveler or maybe he is not because he disputed the time traveler's time machine in his face and behind his back. H. G. Wells uses two other characters that come to dinner to meet the time traveler. The main character comes back from the future. The medical doctor and the provincial mayor are accompanied by the editor or known as the journalist, and the silent man. The editor uses three names to describe his guests; "Blank, Dash, and Chose." These names are mentioned but they are never given a designation so there is no way to figure out which one is the mayor, psychologist, or the silent man. The editor

shows some disbelief but goes ahead listening to the story and is a little eager. He may just wanted to get a story to report in the newspaper that someone has claimed to have gone to the future and back.

They all agree that the time traveler can tell his story without interruption because he is wary with exhaustion and has no tolerance to answer questions or be accused as a liar or a quack.

He begins his story by telling that he has “ lived eight days...such days as no human has ever lived before!”. Next he is in his laboratory working on his time machine trying to complete it before Friday. He completes it that morning. He is delayed to the ivory rod that was an inch to long so he had to get it remade. The time traveler begins his journey to the future. At first he didn't know if anything was happening yet for this machine was untested. “ 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; now it was nearly half-past three!”. This part in the novel is his most detailed explanation to capture the readers imagination and to fully support the

illusion of time travel. He tells of many details such as his maid Mrs.

Watched came in the laboratory and moved like a rocket around it. He

explains the time traveling experience as a since of falling and the

speed is so great that it feels like any minute you will smash into

another object. All these details suggest that its not a comfortable

ride especially when he said " I remarked indeed a clumsy swaying of the

machine, for which I was unable to account." There is evidence that the

laboratory and the time traveler's house was torn down when he saw the

brief picture of scaffolding. A snail went across the room at a speed

that his eyes could not keep up with. After his house was gone he was in

the open air and saw huge buildings erect themselves all around him.

Wells was right in his assumption about these buildings because

skyscrapers do exist in our time. He saw all the vegetation grow and

die. The moon ran its cycles and the sun shot across the sky so fast

that it was hurting the time traveler's eyes. The time traveler witness

the season's changing from snow to spring in a continuos cycle. He

thought of stopping but he was afraid of jamming his molecules and the

object's molecules that occupied that space at that particular time.

Here he goes back to science and with some added element of chemistry.

The main character explains that if his time machine occupied the same space at the same time as another object then the molecules would fuse together causing a chemical reaction and the ending result would be an explosion. Even with this threat he takes the risk out of curiosity

building some suspense in the book. He stops and is flung from his machine and is met by a thunderstorm. This is realistic in this book

because in the UK it rains a lot so there is a good chance that he would encounter rain. After the Thunder storm is gone he hears voices in the

bushes. A person emerges from the brush and is described as “ 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.” He was under the impression that there will frail

creature and not very intelligent and he was correct. His assumption of

intelligence was proven when one of the human looking creatures asked

him is he had come from the sun riding on a thunderstorm. Also when he gave them a threatening motion towards them when they got around the machine they retreated immediately. His assumption of frailty was proven after this fact. He noticed that a lot of them looked alike which he thought was odd. They probably looked like this because they have been bred and raised like cattle for many years so they are all probably sharing a lot of the same genes. The thing Wells did not know is that you can not do that to mammals especially humans; breeding so closely using the same genes it causes mammals to become sterile and extinct. He only had 19th century knowledge so he was probably not aware of this or he didn't care because most people were probably not aware of the study of genetics. They didn't show much interest in learning they would run around and play with toys and lose interest in a never ending cycle like a child. He didn't know their language but it was obviously derived from the English because one of the Eli's asked him if he had come from the sun and he understood but some of the other things that the Eli were saying didn't make sense to the time traveler. He saw the white sphinx

and describe it as having a silver tree at its shoulder and the sphinx was made of marble and the wings of it were spread out. A pedestal that the time traveler described was made of bronze and “ was thick with verdigris.” The building that the Eloi resided at had according to the time traveler had huge doors “ and was all together colossal dimensions”. The entrance had carvings of Phoenicians. After seeing a sphinx and Phoenician carvings and how primitive the people were he had doubts that he was in the future. This proved by when the time traveler is remembering the date on his dials that read 802, 701 A. D. He noticed the Eloi diet as been composed of mainly fruit and vegetables. He noticed there was no signs of economic or cultural struggle in the surroundings so the time traveler has some knowledge of archeology and maybe a bit of a historian, he even said that he would like to witness the accepted account of the battle of Hastings. Also when the time traveler looks at the countryside he says to himself “ Communism, I said to myself”. This shows that H. G. Wells know of Marxism Communism but it does not show if he is a supporter or against it. At first he thought this society was

man's triumph that they live in peace but he learns later that the Eloi are being bred fattened up and eaten by the ant like people the Morlocks.

Later the main character returned to check on his time machine and to his surprise it was gone. He began to panic, even when he fell down and hit his face which produced a trickling of blood didn't even pause. At this point the time traveler is over stressed and bent on getting his time machine back. He no longer cares to learn about the Eloi; his priority has changed. H. G. Wells uses realistic thought process of people when they are faced with problems. The time traveler is pacing and his conscious is talking to itself trying to calm down and come up with solutions and answers.

After this event he sees Weena an adult Eloi girl swimming in a stream. She gets a cramp and begins to drown and the other Eloi didn't even make an effort to save her. The time traveler saves her life and they become very close. The sleep outside and she shows an uncomfortable behavior as well as the other Eloi about the dark. The Eloi wouldn't sleep alone or

go out at dark.

The time traveler resorts back to more theories about the hotter climate of the region. He thinks that the planets are closer to the sun now or that a planet has smashed into the sun and given it renewed energy. He was hiding from the heat in a building when he found a gallery of history. It contained fossils, machines, weapons, chemicals, and idles from every culture Greek, Phoenician and even English ones.

He found the tunnels that looked like half pillars kind of like ant holes. The time traveler saw one of the Morlocks and described it as having “ a dull white, and had strange large greyish-red eyes; also that there was flaxen hair on its head and down its back”. He later described them as “ mechanical servants for the Eli” and he hated them and wanted to murder them even though they were the descendants of the human race. They were carnivorous and preyed upon the Eloi. He goes back to the gallery and Weena accompanies him everywhere he goes. He finds some matches and he breaks a lever off an ancient machine serving as a mace to smash the Morlocks soft bodies. He found some camphor which is like a

candle wax. He left the gallery at night fall and started fires on purpose to blind the creatures but he had difficulties starting vegetation on fire. The Morlocks were extremely sensitive to the light. The attacked him and he beat them with his mace. They were very weak individually but strong in numbers. The fires calm down and became dark again then they grabbed him and were biting at his neck. He jumped up and did some real strenuous fighting that occurs when people are in the middle of combat and they experience a rush of anger. The fires started back up and the Morlocks swayed to and fro in agony. They were making moaning sounds to each other. He chose not to kill any of them while they were at his mercy. He sleeps awhile and in the morning he heads down to the white sphinx. To his surprise he sees that the doors are open and the time machine is visible. Obviously it is a trap for the time traveler. He proceeds in the doors even though he suspects a trap. As soon as he gets on the time machine the doors closed. The Morlocks laugh out loud thinking that he is trapped. The time traveler makes an attempt to lite the match but it only lites on the match box. He defeats

one of the Morlocks and gets on his time machine and pushes the lever forward in a panic. Then he goes hurling forward in time. He is on the time machine in an awkward position. He stops and when he does he is on a beach and two large crustaceans try to eat him so he accelerates into the future 30 million years or more and the sun grows bigger and more dull. Then the world becomes dark and the air is difficult to breathe.

When he thought life was extinct he sees a life form swimming in the water “ the size of a football”. He then returns to his laboratory but in a different location because of the Morlocks tampering with its location in the future.

The editor and the medical doctor don't believe his fantastic story even for an instant. The medical doctor can't recognize the species of flower that the time traveler had in his pockets but that didn't change his mind at one bit. The narrator even said that “ The serious people who took him seriously never felt quite sure of his deportment; they were somehow aware that trusting their reputations for judgment with him was like furnishing a nursery with egg-shell china. The editor called his

story a “ gaudy story”. The narrator comes back to find the time traveler and sees him carrying a camera to his laboratory. He heads to the laboratory as a result of clinking and thud sounds. He enters the lab and witnesses just a flash of the time machine and the time traveler. Then with a whirl of wind and dust the time traveler disappeared.

I enjoyed this book but I can't believe how the time traveler acted being a logical and scientific man. Like when he went the future he encountered a new kind of people and they led him to a building where they reside. He just left his time machine behind; he could have had those people help him take it back to where they were staying. Also he should have put some wheels on it so it could be transported easier and also a floatation device encase he ended up in water. Also he should of had Weena stay with the others, Im sure she was hampering his attempts in combat with the Morlocks. Also instead of causing terrible useless damage to the environment he should have laid siege to the pillars that the Morlocks used to exit out of. He should have set heavy objects on top of them and started fires around them at night time. They would die

of lack of oxygen or hunger and the hunger would force them out of the holes into the fire or they would eat each other. This would result in diminishing their numbers and making them too weak to resist a confrontation.

This book had a lot of science elements to it such as the climate change, fourth dimension, chemical reaction, and some of Darwin's theories. There are some things that are not true about this story that I want to point out. When the time traveler goes 30 million years in the future from his beach location he describes after the Morlock scene. He would not end up on the beach because of continental drifting when the earth rotates. The continents move an inch a year that 30 million inches! He would be in the ocean and sinking fast so if he did but the lever back the ocean would change the space he was occupying and he would be stuck in the ground when he came back probably resulting in an explosion. Also when the earth became darker only after 30 million years. The sun has approximately 5.5 billion years left before it goes super nova. Then it will become a red giant and be extremely big as

wells described in the book. So Wells was not informed of all the facts but still, this book was interesting and entertaining.