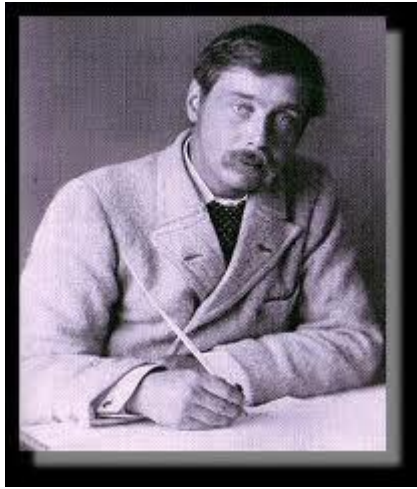


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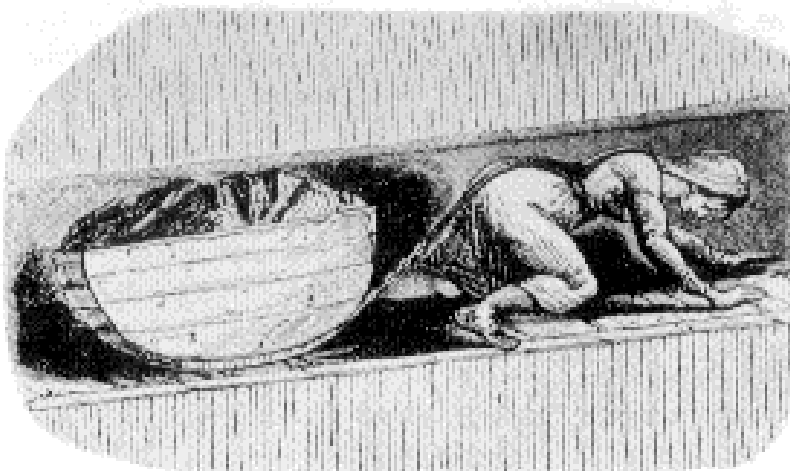
## *The Time Machine (1895)*



- H. G. Wells (1866-1946)
- “English Jules Verne” (1828-1905)
  - Novels of technological marvels, travel
- Wells: lower middle class family
- Draper, teacher, artist, science enthusiast, writer
- Student of T. H. Huxley
- Socialist -- “World state”
- 50 novels, about half sci-fi
- *Invisible Man, Island of*
- *Doctor Moreau, War of the Worlds, The War in the Air*
- Resented privilege of upper classes

## Victorian period (1837-1901)

- Height of British Empire
- Expansion of technology, economy
- Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition (1851)
- But class informs everything
- Hereditary title vs. professional, middle class
- Vast poverty & working poor
- Crime & child labour
- Pollution (The Great Stink 1858)
- Marx: bourgeoisie own production methods; proletariat sell their labour
- No social safety net or standards



# Fears

- Potential social unrest
- Disease
- Miscegenation
- Criminal “class”
- Phrenology: Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828)
- surface of skull indicates psychological/moral aptitudes
- Theory of evolution
  - Future of mankind?
  - March of progress??
  - Or Social Darwinism?
- Degeneration?
- Geological time: extinction
- Marxism
  - Predicts destruction of class system
  - Utopia? Loss of privilege?
- *TM* topical: evolution + class divide, science and social inequity

## The Title of novel:

- *The Time Machine: An Invention*
- not *voyage* or *traveller*
- Inventions:
  - Sewing machine, safety matches, pasteurization
  - Underground railway, bicycle, typewriter
  - Electric railway, gramophone, Kodak box camera
  - Moving pictures, x-rays, radio, flush toilet
- Pg. 1 Incandescent light (1880)
- Patented chairs
- Technology—invention, science
- Time traveller = scientist & inventor
- Audience = professional class:
  - Psychologist – brand new science
  - Provincial Mayor
  - Medical Man
  - Filby
  - Narrator (Hillyer)
- Household with servants
- Discussing physics

# The Fourth Dimension

- Popular scientific speculation in 1880s
- Pg. 3 Simon Newcombe
- Traveller = time, duration
- Nb. Objections pg. 5
- 6 potentials
- The demonstration
- Chapter 2: class bias--
- pg. 12 pork butcher
- pg. 13 “rang the bell”
- pg. 17 “greasy plates”
- Vs “the Linnaean, ” “Richmond,” pg. 13
- TT’s appearance: 14 – “tramp”
- Reaction: 15 -16 – “Amateur Cadger,”  
Nebuchadnezzar, clothes brushes
- Chap. 3ff, the story-within-a-story
- Novel = TT’s *narrative* of adventure
- Therefore subjective, distanced
- Dependent on TT’s personality: 12

# The Time Traveller

- Rich scientist, inventor
- Should be detached, logical
- Instead:
  - Jumps to incorrect conclusions
  - Hysterical in crisis
  - Panic-stricken
  - Negligent
- “Romantic” hero: emotional, melodramatic, self-centered
- How reliable??
- Trip through time (20ff)
  - “switchback” = rollercoaster
- Scale of time passage:
  - biological
  - astronomical
  - civilization

# The Arrival

- Rain – obscures vision
- Lawn & garden
- Sphinx
- symbol of antiquity
- human/animal blend
- keeper of riddle



# The Eloi

- 24 fear of future humans
- Appearance of Eloi
- degeneration?
- 27 prettiness, lack of interest
- Stupidity?
- 29 lack of social class
- 30 vegetarians
- Vegetarian Society 1847
- 32 communal living
- 33 lack of gender distinction
- The “New Woman”
- 37 end of art
- 48 failure of empathy
- 49 Weena
- Traveller’s theory: triumph of modernity (35-6) = lack of adversity
- = dulling of human
- = “langour and decay” (37)

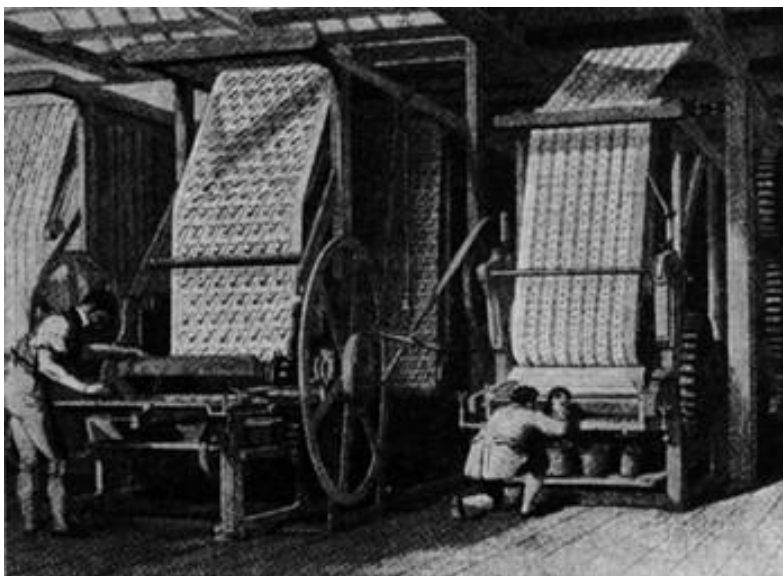


## Modernity self-defeating

- Civilization in decline, or . . .
- “Golden Age” (47)
- A type of Eden
- *Time Machine* as pastoral
- Pastoral literature / vision
- Virgil’s (70 BC- 19 BC) *Eclogues*
- Problems with TT’s theory
- 36 population control
- 47 lack of cemeteries & aged
- 48 manufacturing of clothes
- ventilation “wells”
- 39 time machine gone
- 43 footstep and sphinx
- *Time Machine* as mystery novel
- a riddle or crime to be solved
- Wells attack on other Utopian novels (47)
- *Time Machine* as anthropology --  
ethnocentrism

# The Morlocks

- First hints: 43
- 51 white figures
- 52-2 contact
- 54-5 revelation and theory
- evolutionary proof
- Reflection of Victorian reality 56
- 61 descent
- Tradition of myth, epic poetry: katabasis
- journey to underworld / hell
- hero seeking knowledge
- Upper-class Victorian into the mines / factories



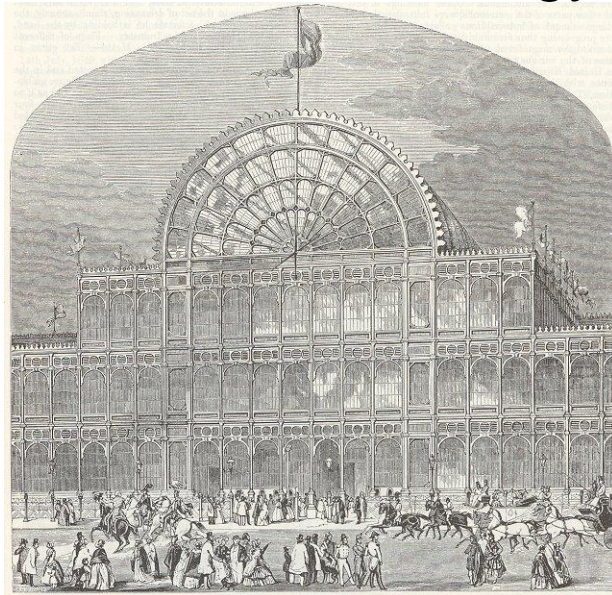
# Degeneration

- Lower class
- Criminal class
- Athleticism
- Mechanical aptitude
- Nauseating 64
- beast as opposed to Eloi
- Cannibalism 67, 71, 72
- ultimate taboo?
- ultimate class rebellion?
- Time Traveller as mythic hero
- Prometheus, “forethought,” titan
- stole fire from Zeus, gives to mankind
- Punished with eternal torment
- TT = giant, arrives in thunder
- Brings fire
- Disappears at end: eternal time travel?

# OFFICE HOUR TOMORROW: 1:30-2:30

## The Palace of Green Porcelain

- The Crystal Palace & the Great Exhibition (1851)
- Symbol of British technology and industry



## Vanity of knowledge

- Palace = museum
- Repository of human achievement
- 75 historical organization: dinosaurs
- 76 geology, natural history
- 77 machines = industrial revolution
- 78 weapon vs. books
- The escape:
  - TT fails as hero
  - Burns the forest
  - 88 violence
- *Mystery solved* 90ff
- Metal seat 90 (34)
  - throne / superiority / overview
  - same landscape – different view
  - lack of need = failure of intelligence
- Push towards taming of nature self-defeating?
- Modernity doomed?

## The end of the world

- TT almost trapped
- Distant future: sun flaring out
- Humankind extinct
- Crustaceans & insects
- Logical extension of evolution, geological time
- Humans as a historical blip
- Ultimate fear: extinction
- Victorian phobias about
  - evolution
  - astronomical time
- Before expanse of time – Victorian self-confidence and industry meaningless
- End(s) of novel
- End of TT's story
  - evidence? Flowers
- Dismissed 104
- Hillyer's last vision: 105

## Epilogue

- Narrator believes, but no proof
- 108 two flowers
- Symbol of affection: TT and Weena
- Love endures the end of the world

The Time Machine is a science fiction novella by H. G. Wells, published in 1895 and written as a frame narrative. The work is generally credited with the popularization of the concept of time travel by using a vehicle or device to travel purposely and selectively forward or backward through time. The term "time machine", coined by Wells, is now almost universally used to refer to such a vehicle or device. H G Wells, *The Time Machine*. 1895. Explore this item in our Flash timeline. Share. Wells's first book in the genre, *The Time Machine*, is a critique of utopian ideas, set in the year 802701, in which the human race is divided into two groups, the subterranean workers, the Morlocks, and the decadent Eloi. It sets a pattern for science-fiction to critique extreme developments of class, seen later in works from Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis* (1927) to Orwell's *1984* (1949), though arguably Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) had established the idea with the yahoos and the houyhnhnms. In the time-traveller's encounters with future people Wells speculates that technology would produce The Time Traveller is not named by the author for reasons I shall discuss later. As he climbs down from his machine, towering above him, anachronistically, is the White Sphinx. This is at the very opening of the narrative and must be seen as highly significant. Moreover, when the Time Traveller is in the presence of the Sphinx throughout the book his psychic state changes from awe through dread and despair to a final resolve to overcome his anxiety through reason alone, much like Oedipus in his encounter with the Greek monster. First, he meets the Sphinx, and solves her riddle: "What is that w