

**H. G. WELLS:
PERSONALITY,
CHARACTER,
TOPOGRAPHY**

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H. G. Wells: personality, character, topography by R. Thurston Hopkins

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By
R. THURSTON HOPKINS

AUTHOR OF
"THOMAS HARDY'S DORSET"
"KIPLING'S SUSSEX" ETC.

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PREFACE

THE present volume has, I am fully aware, no claim to be considered a complete study of all the writings of H. G. Wells, for the production of such a volume would demand far more time, detail, and learning than have been at my disposal. My object has simply been to present a portrait of Mr. H. G. Wells (it is because he is a man of such immense importance and not for want of courtesy that I have dropped the "Mr." throughout the book), and to present some of the main points of interest in his life and work in a form that will appeal to the "man in the street" who, like myself, may lay no claim to any specialised knowledge of the author, but who nevertheless is desirous of knowing something about a writer who looms so big and ubiquitous in the present day world of letters.

Such success as I may have achieved in this direction is due in no small measure to the kind assistance and advice which I have received from almost all whose help I have sought in collecting information for the following pages.

Mr. Geoffrey H. Wells has devoted an abundance of time and trouble to assisting

me, especially in connection with the chapter "Early Struggles," and my indebtedness to him is such as to call for the most unreserved acknowledgment. I must also thank Mr. Wells himself for his courtesy in kindly replying to some of my queries.

I wish to specially mention the invaluable information gathered from the biographical and critical article on Wells by Thomas Secombe in *The Bookman* (April, 1914); also "The Gay Defiance of H. G. Wells," by E. T. Raymond; "The Novelist as Prophet" (*Cassell's Saturday Journal*, April 26th, 1899); "If Sanity Returned" (C. F. G. Masterman, *Daily News*, September 14th, 1906); "H. G. Wells" (Francis Gribble), *Everyman*, June 19th, 1914; "Wells in Washington," *New York Times*, March 12th, 1922; "Utopia and a Comet," *Daily Chronicle* (Hubert Bland), September 14th, 1906; Ralph D. Blumenfeld's "London Letter" in *New York Town and Country*, February, 1921; "H. G. Wells and Julius Cæsar," *John O' London's Weekly*, May 29th, 1920; "Passionate Friends," by Ford Madox Hueffer, *Outlook*, September 27th, 1913; "Wells on Marriage," by Rebecca West, *Everyman*, November 8th, 1912; Richard Curl on Wells, *Everyman*, December 20th, 1912; G. B. Burgin's sketch of Wells in *The Weekly Sun*, June 3rd, 1899; "The War and Socialism," by H. G. Wells (Clarion Press); "Will Socialism Destroy the

Home ? ” by H. G. Wells (Independent Labour Party Pamphlet); “ A Reasonable Man’s Peace,” by Wells (*Daily News* Pamphlet, 1917); “ Letters of Henry James,” Macmillan, 1920; “ The Airship as a Destroyer,” by Oakley Williams, *Pall Mall Magazine*, January, 1908.

I have also been constantly guided by Mr. J. D. Beresford’s scholarly essay on H. G. Wells published by Nisbet and Co., 1915, Mr. Sidney Dark’s “ Outline of Wells ” (Parsons), and Mr. Holbrook Jackson’s study of Wells in his charming essays “ Romance and Reality ” (Grant Richards, 1911). I wish also to acknowledge the appropriation of a word coined by Mr. Jackson—Peterpantheism—and used as a heading for one of my chapters. To Mr. William Archer’s searching analysis of Wells’s New Religion in “ God and Mr. Wells ” (Watts and Co.), my thanks are due for the pleasure and suggestions I have drawn from it. Nor must I forget to thank Doctor John P. Atkinson and Rev. G. Montagu Benton, of Saffron Walden, for their assistance in the topographical notes, and Mr. E. Walter Jones for help in reference to Chapter X.