

**FIRST AND LAST THINGS,
A CONFESSION OF FAITH
AND A RULE OF LIFE**

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First and last things, a confession of faith and a rule of life by H. G. Wells

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H. G. WELLS

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A CONFESSON OF FAITH
AND A RULE OF LIFE**

FIRST AND LAST THINGS

A CONFESSION OF FAITH
AND RULE OF LIFE

BY

Robert
H. G. WELLS

AUTHOR OF "THE STOLEN BACILLUS," "THE WAR OF THE WORLDS,"
"THE WAR IN THE AIR," "TOND-BUNGAY," ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

RECENTLY I set myself to put down what I believe. I did this with no idea of making a book, but at the suggestion of a friend and to interest a number of friends with whom I was associated. We were all, we found, extremely uncertain in our outlook upon life, about our religious feelings and in our ideas of right and wrong. And yet we reckoned ourselves people of the educated class and some of us talk and lecture and write with considerable confidence. We thought it would be of very great interest to ourselves and each other if we made some sort of frank mutual confession. We arranged to hold a series of meetings in which first one and then another explained the faith, so far as he understood it, that was in him. We astonished ourselves and our hearers by the irregular and fragmentary nature of the creeds we produced, clotted at one point, inconsecutive at another, inconsistent and unconvincing to a quite unexpected degree. It would not be difficult to caricature one of those meetings; the lecturer floundering about with an air of exquisite illumination, the

audience attentive with an expression of thwarted edification upon its various brows. For my own part I grew so interested in planning my lecture and in joining up point and point, that my notes soon outran the possibilities of the hour or so of meeting for which I was preparing them. The meeting got only a few fragments of what I had to say, and made what it could of them. And after that was over I let myself loose from limits of time and length altogether and have expanded these memoranda into a book.

It is as it stands now the frank confession of what one man of the early Twentieth Century has found in life and himself, a confession just as frank as the limitations of his character permit; it is his metaphysics, his religion, his moral standards, his uncertainties and the expedients with which he has met them. On every one of these departments and aspects I write—how shall I put it?—as an amateur. In every section of my subject there are men not only of far greater intellectual power and energy than I, but who have devoted their whole lives to the sustained analysis of this or that among the questions I discuss, and there is a literature so enormous in the aggregate that only a specialist scholar could hope to know it. I have not been unmindful of these professors and this literature; I have taken such opportunities as I have found, to test my propositions by them. But I feel that such apology as