

The Shape of Wells to Come

Great Radical May Lecture
in New Zealand Round
About Election Time

Exclusive To The "Record"

by

A. D. M.

H. G. Wells, whose forthright pen smites hypocrites and creeds with equal vigour, who says, "All that is of value in religion to humanity could be written on a postcard," will probably visit New Zealand after he has seen Australia.

Wells, literary prophet and radical sociologist, recently wrote to Henry J. Hayward, Auckland, one of the best-known motion picture men in the Dominion, about his visit.



IN a communication to the New Zealand Rationalist Association a few months ago, H. G. Wells bewailed the fact that he had reached the allotted span of life, and feared that he would not live long enough to do all the work he wanted to.

As president of the New Zealand Rationalists, Mr. Hayward replied suggesting that, as Auckland's citizens were the longest-lived people in any town in the world, Mr. Wells should forthwith take up his abode in "the last, loveliest and loneliest city."

Said Mr. Hayward: "Whereas in London the expectation of life to the newly-born is 48 years—in Auckland it is 68 to a baby girl and 65 to a baby boy. In Auckland we have an annual bowling tournament for young-old men, and this year the average age of the contestants was 93.4 years. so now, Mr. Wells, if you come to live with us it will be twenty years before you will be eligible to play in this tournament."

And Then N.Z.?

ANSWERING what he described as "this charming letter," Mr. Wells wrote: "I have enough work in America and England to occupy me until the end of 1938—then, why not New Zealand?"

And now—comes a cable from London stating that Mr. Wells told the Australian Attorney-General and Minister of Industry, Mr. R. G. Menzies, that he was flying to Australia in the New Year. After remaining at Canberra for a week, he would attend the meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. And then, perhaps, go on to New Zealand.

So New Zealand may expect to listen to the voice and wisdom of a brilliant author and thinker, for it is suggested that he may be induced to lecture in the major cities of Australasia. Sir Benjamin Fuller has offered to pilot Mr. Wells upon such a tour, and the radio stations will welcome such a distinguished visitor. At about the time when New Zealand will be in the throes of a general election that promises to be the hottest in our history, we may find time to welcome the clarion voice of a great radical whose reputation is world-wide.

BORN at Bromley, Kent, in September, 1866, Herbert

George Wells was the son of a professional cricketer who kept a greengrocer's shop. His mother was the daughter of a Midhurst innkeeper. Wells' père was not the Bradman or Hobbs of his day, neither was he a good greengrocer, for this venture failed. Mrs. Wells got a position as a housekeeper, and H.G., at the age of twelve, was put into a draper's shop at Windsor. He didn't take kindly to this life, and was sent as a pupil-teacher to a schoolmaster relative of the family at Wookey. Then he was afterwards taken into a chemist's shop on trial, but did not stay there, so he started the life of a draper's apprentice again. Two years later he broke his indentures to continue his education as assistant master at Midhurst Grammar School. Winning a scholarship, he studied at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington, until 1886, when he went as a master to a school at Holt, near Wareham.

Injured at football, he was incapacitated for one year, and in 1887 he got an assistant mastership at Henley House School, and obtained his B.Sc. degree with first-class honours in zoology.

In Journalism

EDITING a school magazine was his first step in journalism. Again his health broke down and, during his convalescence, he read Barrie's "When A Man's Single." Aided by hints from it, he began to write humorous articles, which were accepted by the "Pall Mall Gazette." Wells's first works were in educational papers, but he had also written biological text-books. Some years later he deserted journalism for authorship, and wrote many scientific fantasies in which he gave rein to an exuberant but shrewd imagination.

This many-sided genius regarded his fellow creatures as raw material to work upon, and felt that his task was "to take some part in the establishment of a new order of things."

Essentially a propagandist, he has never curbed the urge to teach and preach. At the beginning of the century he experimented with the fantastic.

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