



The First Men in the Moon - The Original Classic Edition

H G Wells



The First Men in the Moon, one of H.G.'s enduring classics, is a must read for all fans of classic sci-fi. It's a quick read so it makes a good travel book. It is an excellent starter story for younger readers, whereas War of the Worlds might be a little scary. You will find that the book is quite good in its own right and makes for an engaging and gripping read. Even though the Moon does not hold the same fascination in our mind as to this day Mars does, and many of the scientific ideas presented in the book nowadays seem downright silly, the narrative is still very compelling and makes for a fascinating read. H. G. Wells is very good at developing an action-packed plot, and if we can somehow suspend over hundred years of new knowledge, the events and premises in the novel become very plausible. Another fascinating aspect of Wells novels is the use of Sci-fi genre as a tool of social and political critique, and the last part of this book has a good dose of it as well. This book still entertains and provokes thought after all this time has passed. I would strongly recommend it to all the classic Sci-fi fans out there. Born in Victorian England, H.G. Wells had very strong ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of a society built on fixed social classes and endless imperialism--and these ideas would inform virtually everything he wrote over his long and distinguished career. Even in the handful of science fiction novels for which he is chiefly recalled today, Wells would return to these issues again, combining them with then-emerging scientific concepts to remarkably provocative effect. In some respects THE FIRST MEN ON THE MOON is likely his most accessible novel to modern readers, for it is lighter in tone than such Wells novels as THE TIME MACHINE and THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, and it reads like an exceptionally well-written pulp adventure of the era. But the underpinnings are the same: class, conquest, and--as in THE WAR OF THE WORLDS--Darwin's controversial theories on natural selection and evolution. In this novel Wells relies significantly on fantasy, presenting us with Professor Cavor, an eccentric (and quite comical) scientist determined to create a substance that is opaque to gravity, what we would today call an antigravity material. Cavor is interested in the work for the sake of knowledge pure and simple, but bankrupt businessman Bedford realizes the commercial implications and attaches himself to the project--and when the material is perfected the two men create a sphere that launches them to the moon! If this is clearly the stuff of fantasy (Jules Verne sneered at it), what the two men find on the moon is not, or at least was not considered so at the time. In 1901 little was known about the moon, and many notable scientists thought it might hold life. Upon their arrival, Cavor and Bedford find an atmosphere of sorts, a host of strange plants, and ultimately an insect-like race of beings that reside inside the moon itself, beings who practice forced evolution upon their own kind in order to create a rigid, hive-like social structure. THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON is a remarkably lively novel, a fast-paced quick read that will appeal greatly to most readers as it balances its philosophical questions with great chunks of pulse-pounding adventure. And even though we know that Wells was off the mark re lunar atmosphere, flora, and fauna, it is easy to suspend our disbelief to enjoy the ride. Recommended.

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