

***H. G. WELLS***

***SELECT CONVERSATIONS  
WITH AN UNCLE (NOW  
EXTINCT) AND TWO  
OTHER REMINISCENCES***

***H. G. WELLS***



***SELECT CONVERSATIONS  
WITH AN UNCLE (NOW  
EXTINCT) AND TWO  
OTHER REMINISCENCES***

**H. G. Wells**

# **Select Conversations with an Uncle (Now Extinct) and Two Other Reminiscences**

EAN 8596547158622

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: [DigiCat@okpublishing.info](mailto:DigiCat@okpublishing.info)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SELECT CONVERSATIONS—

OF CONVERSATION AND THE ANATOMY OF FASHION

THE THEORY OF THE PERPETUAL DISCOMFORT OF  
HUMANITY

THE USE OF IDEALS

THE ART OF BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

BAGSHOT'S MURAL DECORATIONS

ON SOCIAL MUSIC

THE JOYS OF BEING ENGAGED

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

ON A TRICYCLE

AN UNSUSPECTED MASTERPIECE

THE GREAT CHANGE

THE PAINS OF MARRIAGE

A MISUNDERSTOOD ARTIST

THE MAN WITH A NOSE

# **SELECT CONVERSATIONS—**

Table of Contents

OF CONVERSATION AND THE ANATOMY OF FASHION  
THE THEORY OF THE PERPETUAL DISCOMFORT OF  
HUMANITY

THE USE OF IDEALS

THE ART OF BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

BAGSHOT'S MURAL DECORATIONS

ON SOCIAL MUSIC

THE JOYS OF BEING ENGAGED

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

ON A TRICYCLE

AN UNSUSPECTED MASTERPIECE

THE GREAT CHANGE

THE PAINS OF MARRIAGE

A MISUNDERSTOOD ARTIST

THE MAN WITH A NOSE

# **OF CONVERSATION AND THE ANATOMY OF FASHION**

Table of Contents

This uncle of mine, you must understand, having attained —by the purest accident—some trifles of distinction and a certain affluence in South Africa, came over at the earliest

opportunity to London to be photographed and lionised. He took to fame easily, as one who had long prepared in secret. He lurked in my chambers for a week while the new dress suit was a-making—his old one I really had to remonstrate against—and then we went out to be admired. During the week's retirement he secreted quite a wealth of things to say—appropriate remarks on edibles, on music, on popular books, on conversation, off-hand little things, jotting them down in a note-book as they came into his mind, for he had a high conception of social intercourse, and the public expectation. He was ever a methodical little gentleman, and all these accumulations that he could not get into his talk, he proposed to put away for the big volume of "Reminiscences" that was to round off his life. At last he was a mere conversational firework, crammed with latent wit and jollity, and ready to blaze and sparkle in fizzing style as soon as the light of social intercourse should touch him.

But after we had circulated for a week or so, my uncle began to manifest symptoms of distress. He had not had a chance. People did not seem to talk at all in his style. "Where do the literary people meet together, George? I am afraid you have chosen your friends ill. Surely those long-haired serious people who sat round my joke like old cats round a beetle—what is it?—were not the modern representatives of a *salon*. Those abominable wig-makers' eccentricities who talked journalistic 'shop,' and posed all over that preposterous room with the draperies! Those hectic young men who have done nothing except run down everybody! Don't tell me that is the literary society of London, George. Where do they let off wit now, George?

Where do they sparkle? I want to sparkle. Badly. I shall burst, George, if I don't."

Now really, you know, there are no salons now—I suppose we turn all our conversation into "copy"—or the higher education has eliminated the witty woman—and my uncle became more and more distressed. He said a lot of his good things to me, which was sheer waste. I became afraid. I got him all the introductions I could, pushed him into every lion's den I had access to. But there was no relief.

"I see what it is, George," said my uncle, "these literary people write themselves out. They say nothing for private use. Their brains are weary when they come into company. They get up in the morning fresh and bright, and write, write, write. Then, when they are jaded, they condescend to social intercourse. It is their way of resting. But why don't they go to bed? No more clever people for me, George. Let us try the smart. Perhaps among them we shall find smart talking still surviving. *Allons*, George!"

That is how my uncle came into collision with fashion, how I came to take him to the Fitz-Brilliantes.

Of course you have heard of the Fitz-Brilliantes? If you have not, it is not their fault. They are the smartest people in London. Always hard at work, keeping up to date, are the Fitz-Brilliantes. But my uncle did not appreciate them. Worse! They did not appreciate my uncle. He came to me again, more pent up than ever, and the thing I had feared happened. He began to discourse to me. It was about Fashion, with a decided reference to the Fitz-Brilliantes, and some reflections upon the alleys of literary ability and genius I had taken him through.