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The Time Machine: A Brief Review

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The father of science fiction novel, H.G.Wells (1866-1946) wrote 'The Time Machine' in 1895. The Novel highlights the disillusionment and disappointment of modern science. The tall claims of science to improve life seem hollow as inequality and oppression aggrandized with the progress of science. The horror of progress is shown by the morlocks- Eloi division in future. Dreams of socialism and communism turned into nightmares. Time traveller although travelled ahead but he sees regression and capitalist dominated world. Morlocks (working class) feed Eloi (capitalist class). They live subterranean and nocturnal whereas Elio live upper ground superior and authoritarian.

Plot

The Novel commences with Time Traveller announcing to the group of people about the possibility of travelling in time due to the scientific advancement. He shows them the prototype of time machine and assures them that modern man could travel in time. Ultimately, Time Traveller prepared his project and enabled himself ready to step into time. Time Traveller sets levers into his machine and disappears in time. Next week guests arrive again at time traveller's home. Time traveller appears dusty and exhausted. He claims to have travelled in time. He starts narrating his time travel to the group. He sat in the machine and flew into time. He lands in an area seeming paradise. He travelled into 802-701AD. Time Traveller encounters Eloi but fails to comprehend their language. The place he landed appears peaceful. Equality, justice, prosperity and order seem prevalent in that society but later in the novel we are drawn to conclusion that all these things are mirage. In reality disparity, injustice, hunger and anarchy prevail everywhere. He saves Weena. She becomes his paramour. His Time Machine is stolen, While searching his stolen machine, he descended underground through well and saw new subterranean world

occupied by Morlocks. Morlocks have robbed his machine and hid it from him. He reaches to the hidden machine setting the levers into the machine and disappeared. The Time Traveller flies into the future with a greater velocity than before. Although he is travelling thousands of years per second, he begins to notice day and night again. The sun grows larger and redder. Finally, it seems that the earth has stopped rotating, and is circling the dying sun as the moon used to circle the earth. This place is horrible. The air is bitter cold, and the only sign of life is lichen on the beach. Small flakes of snow float in the air. A large disc begins to eclipse the sun; the Time Traveller suspects that some inner planet, perhaps Mercury, which is now much closer to Earth, is passing in front of the sun. An incredible darkness and blackness follows. Time Traveller stops the Time Machine. He observes the reddish landscape and the moss-like vegetation everywhere. There is no wind, the water of the sea barely moves, and the air is rarefied. He sees a huge, crab-like thing crawling toward him. The Time Traveller pulls his machine's lever and watches more of the giant crabs crawl along the beach as he shoots forward through time. The sun grows larger and duller. After thirty million years, all life save the green vegetation ceases to exist, and it starts to snow. The Time Traveller stops the machine. He feels sick and confused and 'incapable of facing the return journey'. He sees a black creature crawl out from the sea, and his fear of remaining in this environment compels him to climb back into the Time Machine. On the verge of fainting, he climbs back on the machine and returns to his home where guests are waiting for him. He narrated the events to the guests and showed them the flower given by Weena as a proof. Ultimately time traveller travels again in time and does not return soon.

Review

Novel juxtaposes both capitalism and socialism side by side. Time Traveller witnesses split of society into rich and poor. The capitalist class, Eloi supervise the working class, Morlocks. They don't toil for survival. Indolence became their identity. They have no work incentive. Morlocks bear all their expenses. Morlocks struggle day and night to sustain their masters. Eloi are idle and lazy. They are parasites on morlocks. Tyranny and dominance prevail in the society. Morlocks are subjugated. They are not allowed to live upper ground. They are subterranean. They suffer from scarcity of basic amenities. They work and produce much but that is engulfed by capitalists. They are naked, wretched and dirty pulling ahead the life cycle of capitalism. Morlocks as a working class are exploited. Their life is fated to serve Eloi.

Wells is a socialist novelist. Although he depicts the hollowness of socialism in the novel, he hopefully shows the possibility of revolution and the establishment of socialism and communism as well. Morlocks as underground dwellers are dreadful to Eloi. They are nocturnal beings. Eloi, the capitalists are afraid to come out during night. Morlocks hunt them. When Time Traveller sees Morlocks eating meat, he concludes it is the meat of some Eloi grabbed by Morlocks during night. Morlocks although subjugated class are more powerful than Eloi. They work hard. They believe on the survival of the fittest but Eloi are weak and idle. They are fed by Morlocks but they always sleep or wake up dreadful of revolution by Morlocks. They are certain their days are gone. Socialism is bound to reign the society soon. Morlocks stole the Time Machine. They are subterranean and suppressed but they do it neither where as Eloi neither steals the machine nor could they aid Time Traveller to get back his time machine. Wells seems to highlight communism immanent to come and end the draconian regime of capitalism. Though the division of Eloi and Morlocks shows the failure of utopian socialist and communist world but Capitalists have sown the seeds of revolution by their cruelty and discrimination. Morlocks abhor them. They are threat to them and they progress for their freedom quickly. Eventually the Eloi, having everything they need provided for, no longer had any wants. In consequence, their brains and physiques became stunted from lack of stimulation. They stopped eating meat, and the Morlocks, who still required the nutrients that only meat could provide, started taking care of the Eloi as if they were cattle.

Conclusion

Novel can be approached both ways, as a criticism of capitalism and probability of socialism and communism. Eloi, by their subjugation, provokes the social consciousness among morlocks. Morlocks now are great threat to the capitalist government. The machines are under morlocks and they prepare things for the revolution against capitalists. Wells highlights how capitalism will be followed by socialism after oppression of capitalists.