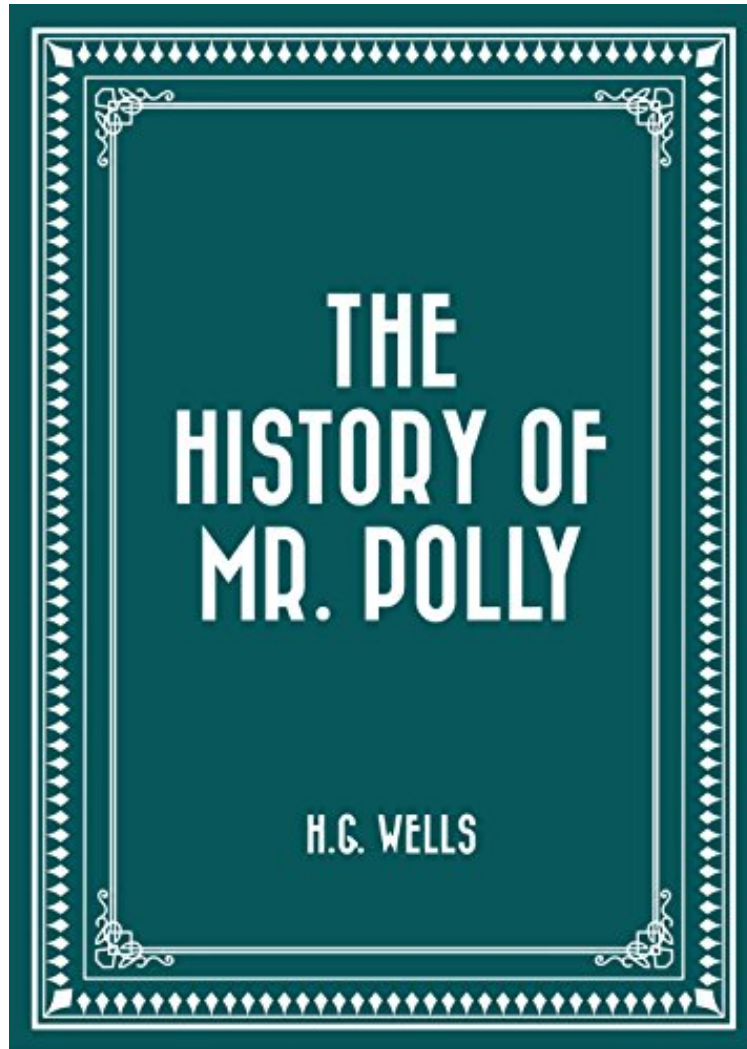


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Von H.G. Wells

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Von H.G. Wells : The History of Mr. Polly (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The History of Mr. Polly (English Edition):

KurzbeschreibungH.G. Wells was an English author best known as a sci-fi writer, though he was also a prolific writer in many other genres, including contemporary novels, history, politics and social commentary, and even writing text books and rules for war games. Together with Jules Verne and Hugo Gernsback, Wells has been referred to as The

Father of Science Fiction, and his best known works are *The Invisible Man*, *The Time Machine*, and *The War of the Worlds*. Fans of H.G. Wells's famous, genre-spawning science fiction novels may be startled to read his less-remembered but once bestselling *The History of Mr. Polly*. Its comically romping narrative voice is worlds away from the stern, melancholy tone of *The Time Machine*. Wells won fame for his apocalyptic, preachy books about the history of the future, but this history is strictly, as Mr. Polly would put it in his creatively cracked version of English, a series of "little accidentulous misadventures." Mr. Alfred Polly is a dyspeptic, miserably married shopkeeper in what he terms that "Beastly Silly Wheeze of a hole!"--Fishbourne, England. He is inclined to spark arguments and slapstick calamity wherever he goes. Education was lost on him: when he left school at 14, "his mind was in much the same state that you would be in, dear reader, if you were operated upon for appendicitis by a well-meaning, boldly enterprising, but rather overworked and underpaid butcher boy, who was superseded towards the climax of the operation by a left-handed clerk of high principles but intemperate habits the operators had left, so to speak, all their sponges and ligatures in the mangled confusion." Still, Polly's mind burns with eccentric genius, and his thwarted romantic heart beats him senseless. His despair results in the most amusing suicide attempt this side of Lisa Alther's novel *Kinflicks*. We won't spoil the surprise by saying precisely how his scheme misfires--and beware: the introduction gives it away. Note that you can't expect Polly to do anything right, and of course he'll become an inadvertent hero to the whole town. Then he promptly vanishes for further misadventure. Many critics compare Mr. Polly's broad social satire to Dickens, but it smacks of Mark Twain and the dialect humor of Finley Peter Dunne's *Mr. Dooley* too. "I think it is one of my good books," Wells opined. What makes it so is Polly's heroic incompetence, his subversion of Edwardian propriety, and his bewildered unawareness that he is a revolutionary. --Tim Appelo.com

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