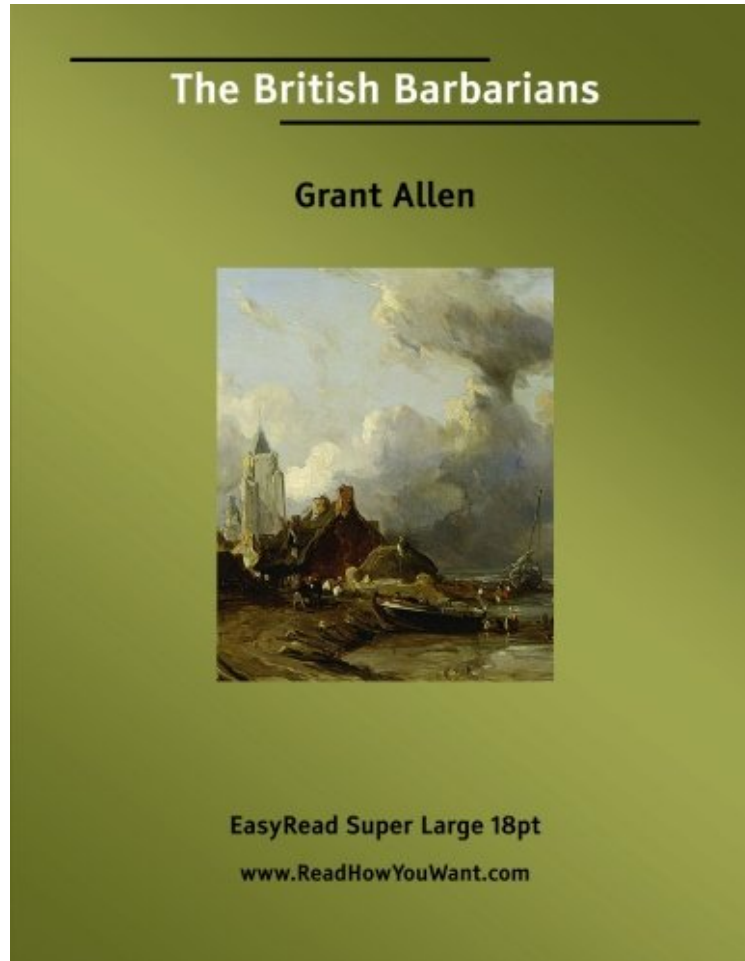


The British Barbarians

Grant Allen

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Grant Allen : The British Barbarians before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The British Barbarians:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Other Time Traveler Novel From 1895 By Dave_42 There is no doubt that Wells was first with "The Time Machine", but it is interesting that Grant Allen's "The British Barbarians" was published the same year, and also deals with time travel. Both novels make a comment on society, though Allen reverses the direction of the time travel, by having a man, Mr. Bertram Ingledew, visit modern (i.e. 1895) England from the 25th century. The two novels are not particularly similar, so the coincidence of time travel could easily be overlooked as significant, but the unusual relationship between Wells and Allen doesn't end there. Wells second novel, "The Wonderful Visit" is very similar in many ways to "The British Barbarians". Some have accused Wells of plagiarism, both here and in some other stories, but it seems far more likely that he and Allen shared ideas. What is certain is that they knew each other, as they were known to take cycling trips together a few years after these novels

were published. I prefer this work slightly to Wells "The Wonderful Visit", though neither one is a great book. Wells writing is better than Allen, but Allen does a better job of exploring the situations and creating a more reasonable story. Wells' story is more comic, but one can better imagine Allen's characters behaving the way they do. One key difference is that Wells reveals the nature of the visitor to the reader at the start of the story, while Allen keeps the origins of his visitor a mystery until near the end of the book. The climactic reveal works well, and better serves the story, though obviously such a device is less needed in a humorous story. Both stories deal with the class division in English society, and land ownership, both in very similar ways. It is largely due to these two sections that one finds it difficult, if not impossible, to believe that Wells and Allen didn't share ideas (or Wells plagiarize). An important difference though is that Mr. Bertram Ingledeew becomes romantically interested in Frida Monteith, and that this relationship is allowed to develop, and results in the climax of the story. Grant Allen delivers a much more complete story with "The British Barbarians" than Wells did with "The Wonderful Visit", but Wells writing is much preferred in my opinion. This results in my giving both stories the same rating of 2 stars. Neither of these stories is significant enough on their own to be remembered by the larger community of Speculative Fiction fans, but both are interesting footnotes in the history of the genre. "The British Barbarians" is interesting both because of its Time Travel element published in the same year as Wells seminal "The Time Machine", and also due to its similarity to Wells second, and often forgotten, novel, "The Wonderful Visit".

Depicting the very true sentiments of its author, this work is implanted in the mind and stimulates deep thought process. Allen has portrayed the British reigning in their colonial areas and has commented on their ruthless treatments and subjugation of the natives. With elucidated characters, this is a unique work by the author.

About the Author Grant Allen, an English writer, was an atheist and a socialist. He had expertise in different branches of science. He wrote articles on sociology and literature. Besides being an astonishingly expressive and prolific writer, he was also a talented journalist.