



## Certain Personal Matters

*H.G. Wells*

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# Certain Personal Matters

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## **Certain Personal Matters** H.G. Wells

Certain Personal Matters is an 1897 collection of essays selected by H. G. Wells from among the many short essays and ephemeral pieces he had written since 1893. The book consists of thirty-nine pieces ranging from about eight hundred to two thousand words in length. A one-shilling reprint (two shillings in cloth) was issued in 1901 by T. Fisher Unwin. The essays in Certain Personal Matters are written from a consistent first-person perspective, but only one (ironically, given the title) describes an identifiable event in Wells's life—how he responded to being diagnosed with tuberculosis in the fall of 1887. The other essays adopt the playful persona of an aspiring young writer living in modest circumstances with a wife, Euphemia, who is only sketchily and obliquely described. Their tone reflects the demands of the market in London magazines for "short essays, or short stories, often with a twist, which can be read in half a dozen minutes, but which will pique a reader's attention and ultimately allow him to think, 'How true. I have done that myself', or to make some similar remark." More than half of the essays are humorous social satire; serious subjects are addressed only ironically. Politics, historical and economic topics, and identifiable portraiture are eschewed. Ten essays have literary themes, and in these, too, the point of view is humorous

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