

The Great Romance: A Rediscovered Utopian Adventure (Bison Frontiers of Imagination)

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The Great Romance: A Rediscovered Utopian Adventure (Bison Frontiers of Imagination) Inhabitant *The Great Romance*, a two-volume novella published under the pseudonym "The Inhabitant," was one of the outstanding late nineteenth-century works of utopian science fiction. Volume 1 was a possible model for Edward Bellamy's phenomenally successful *Looking Backward*, while volume 2 was assumed lost for over a century until uncovered in the Hocken Library in Dunedin, New Zealand. Together these volumes represent a remarkable piece of science fiction writing as they proffer one of the first serious considerations of the colonization of other planets and the impact of human beings on an alien culture. Here, for the first time, readers encounter descriptions of spacesuits and airlocks, space shuttles and planetary rovers, interplanetary colonization and cross-species miscegenation.

Behind these genre-defining elements is the story of John Hope, who, by means of a sleeping elixir, awakes to a utopian community in a distant future—a "kingdom of thought" where the struggle for existence has been eliminated and humanity operates under an unwritten law of civility and harmony, aided by telekinesis that inerrantly reveals all wrong-doers. Since only two of the probably three volumes are extant, the tale ends with a chilling cliffhanger. In his introduction Dominic Alessio discusses the cutting-edge aspects of this work and its significance in both the realm of science fiction and the history and culture of its day.



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