

New material in *Jules Verne: The Biography*

Given the dearth of accurate biographies of Verne, virtually all of the nearly 20,000 words of new material in *Jules Verne* is unpublished in English:

- Aspects of his life in Nantes and Paris, especially his schools, teachers, and friends, as well as his childhood reading, the reason for the “fugue”, his first love affair, and the Eleven without Women
- excerpts from “Joyous Miseries of Three Travellers in Scandinavia” and “Journey to Scandinavia”, which contain laconic literary manifestoes and form the missing link to the later breakthroughs, all ultimately due to family connections
- the deleted pages from the manuscript of *Hatteras*: the build-up of Anglo-American tension, the duel itself, fought on a sinking ice floe; the suicide in the volcanic crater; and the final vision of a tomb standing proudly at the North Pole
- in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, the cut steamy scenes in the bedroom of a “flower girl” (quasi-prostitute), focused on what nestles in her bosom, and which culminate in Axel as the “happiest of lovers”; and the publisher Hetzel’s contribution to the underground sea-monster battle and the primitive giant herding the mastodons
- the publisher’s heavy involvement in *Captain Grant’s Children*, especially its sentimental and melodramatic scenes
- Hetzel’s alteration, for the worse, of the endings of the Moon novels, and indeed of all the famous novels
- the dramatic differences in the manuscripts of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Seas*, where Aronnax continually talks about himself, Atlantis is a potpourri of ancient architectures, a Gallic Nemo is far from a villain, and two chapters are moved to place the blame for the attacks on the British
- citation of other unknown sections of the manuscripts: gruesome scenes of cannibalism on dead and living persons; the love scenes in the five deleted chapters set in Hong Kong, leading to a utilitarian marriage; the episodes from *The Mysterious Island* showing the return to sanity of a castaway and an improvised surgical intervention; the novel set in “Underland”, a parallel nation under Scotland; and an account of the Garden of Eden
- a new, extensive chapter 17, “Tarting up and Dumbing Down”, delineating the censorship of Verne’s best-known novels, essentially the deletion, dilution or distortion of the sex, politics and violence and a restructuring and simplification of the novels for a juvenile audience; but also the deletion of pro-British, anti-marriage, or realistic remarks, and the addition of praise of modern technology, domestic values, Catholicism, of wilting heroines, and of empty rhetoric; the asymmetrical dynamics of the author-publisher relationship; and the problems inherent to publishing the most authentic versions of Verne’s works, rarely the familiar ones.