Wells saw Tono-Bungay, which was published in 1909, as the 'finest and most finished' of his novels 'upon the accepted lines'. Even here, however, in what is assuredly his most serious fictional writing of the period, he was also going his own separate way, veering away from 'an intensified rendering of feeling and characterisation', which was James's prescription for the novel, towards a treatment which was extensive rather than intensive.

Social Body: Fictional Writing
Final Defeat
Naive Belief
Diseased Life.

These keywords were added by machine and not by the authors. I have called it Tono-Bungay, but I had far better have called it Waste. I have told of childless Marion, of my childless aunt, of Beatrice wasted and wasteful and futile. What hope is there for a people whose women become fruitless? I think of all the energy I have given to vain things. I think of my industrious scheming with my uncle, of Crest Hill's vast cessation, of his resonant strenuous career. Ten thousand men have envied him and wished to live as he lived.

Through that central essential London reach I drove, and X2 bored her nose under the foam regardless of it all like a black hound going through reeds – on what trail even I who made her cannot tell. And in this reach, too, one first meets the seagulls and is reminded of the sea.

Tono-Bungay, by H.G Wells, is the story of George Ponderovo, which he narrates in the first person. The book uses literary devices that include comedy, science fiction, and social commentary to weave together an interesting narrative that is actually a semi-autobiographical account of Wells's life.