

WORKING FOR THE EMPIRE: PROFESSIONS OF MASCULINITY IN H. G. WELLS'S *THE TIME MACHINE* AND R. L. STEVENSON'S *THE STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE*

Theresa Jamieson
(University of Hull)

Abstract

This article situates the novellas of Stevenson and Wells within late nineteenth century discourses of degeneration and imperialism, establishing connections between fears of imperial decline and anxieties concerning the concept of masculinity at the *fin de siècle*. Identifying these works as examples of the late-Victorian romance revival, the piece considers the extent to which they advocate the regeneration of the empire through the revitalization of middle-class masculinity and its incumbent values: hard work, productivity, and self-discipline.

The Sphinx that watches by the Nile
Has seen great empires pass
The mightiest lasted but a while;
Yet ours shall not decay-¹

‘St George’s Day’ (1896) was a tribute to the imperial might of Great Britain. The poet, John Davidson, was a man for whom the ideology of imperialism and national progress had come to replace a more conventional form of religious faith. Davidson was just the latest addition to a cacophony of nineteenth century literary voices, valiantly singing the praises and lauding the eminence of the great British Empire. As the world’s greatest imperial power Victorian Britain was, ostensibly, a nation of confidence and security.

Such confidence, however, had not been easily won. The publication of Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* in 1859, for example, had not only consolidated and encouraged wide scale religious doubt, it had also challenged the fundamental concepts of human identity. Nevertheless, as the British Empire continued to extend its borders, and religious uncertainties were alleviated by the transference of fervour to imperial ideology and scientific materialism, national identity had become inextricably entwined with the health of the Empire.² However, for many late

¹ John Davidson, ‘St George’s Day’, in *The Poems of John Davidson*, ed. by Andrew Turnbull, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1973), ll. 215-18, I, p. 228.

² Victorian imperial ideology asserted the racial superiority and uniqueness of white Europeans, particularly the Anglo-Saxon race, and established a biological hierarchy, at the top of which was the white middle-class male. Because morality and intellectual capacity were, like physical traits, deemed to be biologically determined, it was not unusual for white women, ‘natives’, the working-class and children to be grouped together as inferior subjects. Scientific materialism is a denial of the possibility of metaphysical or supernatural explanations for phenomena, in favour of the belief that the world is governed entirely by natural or physical laws.

John Tosh has suggested that in this climate even personal relationships were perceived as

nineteenth century readers, 'St George's Day' would have seemed more like an elegy to rather than a celebration of the nation. The Empire continued to grow but cracks were beginning to show:

The decay of British global influence, the loss of overseas markets for British goods, the economic and political rise of Germany and the United States, the increasing unrest in the colonies and possessions, the growing domestic uneasiness over the morality of imperialism – all combined to erode Victorian confidence in the inevitability of British progress and hegemony.³

For earlier Victorians evolution had been synonymous with progress, but by the mid-1880s society lay in the shadow of its darker twin: devolution. This accorded with a time when theories of degeneration were abounding. Since the 1850s, the work of French psychiatrist, Benedict-Augustin Morel, had been gaining currency on the continent. Morel sought to develop criteria by which to identify the degenerate subject, and in so doing had located the causes and effects of individual degeneracy within a wider movement towards social decay. Following Morel, the degeneration debate, and the subject of atavism in particular, was taken up by Italian criminal anthropologist, Cesare Lombroso, and subsequently entered British culture through the writings the psychiatrist Henry Maudsley and respected zoologist Edwin Ray Lankester, culminating in 1895 with the English translation of Max Nordau's *Degeneration*.⁴

Although it had its origins in Europe, degeneration theory developed a singularly British form of expression once it had crossed the channel, as, according to Arata, the absence of a distinct school of thought ensured that in Britain 'degeneration "theory" [...] was less a coherent system than a form of common sense'.⁵ For the Victorians degeneration theory was, to a large extent, conveyed through the vernacular of the popular press, and, having thus installed itself as part of the national consciousness, proceeded to create what, for Nordau, was a veritable degenerationist 'hysteria'.⁶ The period 1885-89 produced ample evidence of the

having far reaching imperial significance, as the particular gender roles demarcated by the domestic ideology of the period were conceived as a 'central feature of the Victorians' supposed superiority over both their Georgian forbears and their contemporaries in other countries', John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 54. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text.

³ Stephen Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonisation', *Victorian Studies*, 33.4 (1990), 621-645 (p. 622).

⁴ Atavism is usually regarded as measure of evolutionary regression. However, a variety of traits or behaviours generally regarded as 'primitive' or 'savage' could be seen as evidence of possible atavism.

⁵ Stephen Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.3. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text.

⁶ Nordau writes: 'We stand now in the midst of a severe mental epidemic; a sort of black death of degeneration and hysteria', Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (London: William Heinemann, 1895),

degenerative scourge sweeping the nation. Journalistic exposés surrounding child prostitution and homosexual brothels, as well as the press coverage of the Whitechapel murders, publicly pathologised male sexuality, while ‘degenerationist scaremongers’ complained about the enervation of the national stock and its contamination by deviant ‘foreign bodies’.⁷ The principal casualty of this hysteria was the concept of masculinity, or, more to the point, middle-class masculinity.⁸ For what the examples above serve to demonstrate is that, increasingly, whether the issue was deviant sexuality or racial and national purity, the locus of degeneration was perceived as the bourgeois male body.

Several critics have identified the closing decades of the nineteenth century as a period which witnessed a crisis of masculinity.⁹ This ‘crisis,’ however, occurred at a time when male authored fictions, in particular those under the broad heading of Romance, were undergoing something of a revival.¹⁰ It is not possible within the scope of this essay to delve into the genesis of such a revival, though it has been variously suggested that the rise of the romance genre was a reaction against high Victorian Realism, a response to fears surrounding the ‘feminization’ of the literary market place, or distaste for an emerging modernist trend towards a literature characterised by introspective analysis.¹¹ What is important, however, is that Romance fiction became one of the primary vehicles for the expression of bourgeois

p.537.

⁷ Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c.1848-c.1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.215. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text. W.T Stead’s series on the horrors of child prostitution, ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon’, appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* 6-10 July 1885. A ‘frank warning’ to readers was issued on 4 July 1885. For a discussion of this and the Whitechapel murders (particularly with relation to Stevenson’s *Jekyll and Hyde*) see Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992). For a detailed discussion of the exposé of the male brothel known as the Cleveland Street scandal see Colin Simpson, Lewis Chester and David Leitch, *The Cleveland Street Affair* (Boston: Little Brown, 1976).

⁸ Though the term ‘masculinity’ did not come into general use until the twentieth century, as the term is now accepted as being applicable to nineteenth century concepts of manliness and manhood I will be using it alongside and to refer to these more traditional concepts.

⁹ See especially Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *No Man’s Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century*, vol 2 ‘Sexchanges’ (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989).

¹⁰ The adventure novel (such as those by H. Rider Haggard), the Gothic novel, and Science Fiction were all sub-sets of the Romance genre. Many late-Victorian romances are now discussed under headings such as: Imperial Romance – often, but not exclusively, concerned with the revitalisation of masculinity in the imperial landscape. Imperial Gothic – Patrick Brantlinger defines the sub-genre as fiction which ‘combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical interest in the occult’, Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1988), p.227. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text.

¹¹ For an analysis of these arguments see Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (London: Virago, 1992), especially chapter 5 ‘King Romance’, pp.76-104; Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man’s World* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp.115-17, and Stephen Arata, ‘Men at Work’ in *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (1996), pp.79-104.

masculinity at the *fin de siècle*. As two of the genre's most famous proponents, H.G. Wells and R.L. Stevenson belong to a collection of late nineteenth century novelists, including Stoker, Haggard, Doyle, and Kipling, identified by Arata as writers who consistently 'situate questions of "degeneration" [...] within the context of *fin de siècle* imperial politics' (*Fictions*, p. 80).¹² Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of late Victorian male Romance is its dual engagement with imperial discourse and issues surrounding the redefinition of middle-class masculinity, for, as Andrew Smith has suggested, 'in order to revitalise the nation it [first] becomes necessary to revitalise masculinity'.¹³

Hard Work and the Professional

Just as degeneration theory found a distinct expression within Britain, so too it inspired a specifically British response, a response Smith identifies as arising out of 'a culmination of a peculiarly British tradition of self-help' (p. 17). The infamous stiff upper lip ensured the British attitude to the crisis was one of hope: if degeneration was possible then regeneration was the goal. It is this attitude, Smith writes, which helps 'to situate [...] concerns about masculinity within a specific national context' (p. 17). Perhaps the foremost article of self-help was hard work, that bastion of middle-class virtue.¹⁴ Indeed, Martin Danahay has noted that 'in the Victorian period [...] "men" and "work" were used as virtual synonyms', and for the advocates of self-help, hard work was the one sure way for a man to achieve physical, moral, social, and economic wellbeing, and, most importantly, contribute to the future success of

¹² Wells, who is often cited as the 'father' of Science Fiction, referred to his novels as scientific romances. Stevenson's work, on the other hand, has been identified under the headings of both imperial romance and the Gothic. While the British settings of *Jekyll and Hyde* (1886) and *The Time Machine* (1895) may not immediately reveal their engagement with issues of imperialism in the way that, for example, *Treasure Island* (1883) or *The War of the Worlds* (1898) do the protagonists' exploration of the 'other' worlds of the novellas - figured, respectively, as a descent into a primitive underworld or a movement forward in time which is actually a cyclical return to a primitive past - enables a consideration of the anxieties surrounding imperial decay and how this relates to the deterioration of the national stock.

¹³ Andrew Smith, *Victorian Demons: Medicine, Masculinity and the Gothic at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p.18. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text. Both Smith and Arata emphasise that male romance fiction of the *fin de siècle* was centrally concerned with notions of, and the relationship between, imperial and masculine renewal, with Arata declaring that 'imperialism as a conscious ideology was inseparable from anxiety over the decline of the British race figured in masculinist terms' (*Fictions*, p.94).

¹⁴ *Self-Help* was the title of the 1859 book by Samuel Smiles, the foremost proponent of the movement. Although, Thomas Carlyle is the author most commonly associated with the doctrine of self-discipline, Smiles is widely credited with spreading the message internationally. Indeed, according to Asa Briggs, Smiles' *Self-Help* was spread throughout the world 'as efficiently and fervently as any of the great nineteenth-century missionary enterprises, Asa Briggs, *Victorian People: A Reassessment of Persons and Themes* (London: Penguin, 1990), p.126. In this way it seems to have developed its very own brand of colonizing zeal.

the Empire.¹⁵ However, the process of self-help through labour promoted the need for balance in all things: hard-work, therefore, did not merely entail physical exertion, but intellectual and social development as well. Thus it is that we find the narratives of Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895) and Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) are driven by a collection of successful, professional men.

Wells's novella opens with a 'luxurious after-dinner' tableau.¹⁶ A company of gentlemen sit, glasses full, around a drawing room fire discussing the latest scientific debates, prior to the Time Traveller's revelation of his new invention. Present at this meeting, and at the dinner following the Time Traveller's return, are no less than six representatives of varying professions: the Time Traveller himself – an inventor, the Psychologist, the Medical Man, the Provincial Mayor, the Editor, and 'a certain journalist' (p.13). The Time Traveller has undoubtedly orchestrated a gathering of such respectable gentlemen in order that they might bear witness to his uncanny experiment. Similarly, *Jekyll and Hyde* has its cast of assiduous gentlemen, comprised of two Doctors and a Lawyer, or, technically, two Doctors, two lawyers, and a scientist: for, such is the dedication of 'Henry Jekyll, M.D., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S.' that he is in fact 'qualified as both medical doctor and lawyer, and has done sufficiently pioneering work in science to be elected Fellow of the most influential scientific society in London'.¹⁷ In both Stevenson's and Wells's texts the nature and purpose of work becomes a central theme, and the apparent diligence of the British middle-class is thrown into relief by the seeming lassitude encountered in the 'Other' realms of the novels.

From the protestant work ethic, through the writings of Carlyle, to the proponents of self help, in the nineteenth century 'work' was used not only to define national and masculine character but also racial identity. According to Anne McClintock, of all the stigmas invented by colonialists to differentiate themselves from a country's native inhabitants, 'the most tirelessly invoked was idleness':

It is scarcely possible to read any travel account, settler memoir or ethnographic document without coming across a chorus of complaints about the sloth, idleness, indolence or torpor of the natives, who the colonists claimed, preferred scheming and fighting, lazing and wanton lasciviousness to industry.¹⁸

In this sense, the Time Traveller's account of an England of the future hardly differs from the tradition of the imperial narrative. Arriving in the future, one of the first

¹⁵ Martin Danahay, *Gender at Work in Victorian Culture: Literature, Art and Masculinity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p.1. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text.

¹⁶ H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* [1895] (London: Penguin, 2005), p.3. Further references to the novella will appear after quotations in the text.

¹⁷ Roger Luckhurst, 'Introduction' in R.L.Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.11; p.185, n.11.

¹⁸ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.252.

questions it occurs to the Time Traveller to ask himself is: 'What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness?' (p. 22). Though such an anxiety proves to be valid, his initial fear is that mankind may have 'developed into something [...] unsympathetic, and overwhelmingly powerful', yet he is soon to find that the reality is rather the opposite (p. 22). The Eloi, the friendly inhabitants of this future land, are characterised by a particular 'consumptive' beauty and, regardless of gender, a 'girlish rotundity of limb' (p. 29). The marked effeminacy of his hosts begins to make sense to the Time Traveller, however, when he realises that so far he has 'found them engaged in no toil. There were no signs of struggle, neither social nor economic struggle' (p. 32). Although he makes a concerted effort to learn their language, the Eloi's lack of concentration ensures that these attempts produce nothing but frustration and leave him feeling 'like a schoolmaster amidst children [...] for I never met people more indolent or more easily fatigued' (p. 28). The effortlessness with which the Eloi accept a life which has declined into a state of inertia is both alarmingly effeminate and irritatingly childish, but decidedly not manly.

For the zoologist Edwin Ray Lankester effort, or work, was a necessary condition for the sort of progress of which Victorian Britain could proudly boast, which if absent would lead to certain decline: 'In Elaboration there is a new expression of form, corresponding to a new perfection of work in the animal machine. In Degeneration there is a suppression of form, corresponding to the cessation of work'.¹⁹ Is it the lack of gainful employment, then, which renders Edward Hyde so unspeakably degenerate in the eyes of all who encounter him? Each player in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is positioned with regard to his or her occupation: Utterson, the Lawyer; Dr Jekyll, of course; Sir Danvers Carew, the M.P.; Dr Lanyon; Mr. Guest, the Clerk; and Sawbones, the apothecary; even Mr. Enfield, though of no known profession, receives the appellation 'man about town' (p. 5).²⁰ On the other hand, marginal female characters such as Hyde's housekeeper and the maid who witnesses the Carew murder, not necessitating names, are characterised entirely by their occupations. Hyde, however, appears to do very little. His entry into the narrative is both violent and criminal: the reader is asked to envisage a scene in which he tramples a little girl to the ground. However, though the principal figure in this scene, Hyde's presence is nonetheless purposeless, for while we are told that the child was 'running as hard as she was able' to summon a doctor, we learn nothing more of Hyde's untimely excursion than that he 'was stumping along eastward at a good walk' (p.7). Furthermore, having been compelled by Enfield to compensate the family for the child's injuries, Hyde, quite shamelessly, presents a cheque made out in another man's [Jekyll's] name. Thus Enfield, and indeed Utterson, the recipient of his tale believe they have arrived at the crux of the case: blackmail. Hyde, therefore, could be involved in anything from extortion to prostitution but he is almost certainly

¹⁹ Edwin Ray Lankester, 'Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism (1880)', in *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History*, ed. by Sally Ledger & Roger Luckhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.3

²⁰ R.L. Stevenson, 'The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' [1886], *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.5. Further references to the novella will appear after quotations in the text.

not working.

Stevenson's narrative implies that Mr. Hyde is, in fact, engaged in all manner of unspeakable activities, but as the text never explicitly reveals the nature of these 'crimes,' numerous readings have been offered to account for the secret vices he enacts for Dr. Jekyll. Whether the secret is debauchery, homosexuality or addiction, what most critics agree on is the importance of the implication that Jekyll is leading a double life. Danahay, however, has suggested that 'since the text [...] take[s] place entirely in a world of male professionals, this aspect of the story is as important an element as that of repressed sexuality' (p.148). This reading posits *Jekyll and Hyde* as a story 'primarily [...] about the loss of class status', and thus potentially contradicts many other readings, as an analysis of class would appear to deny the centrality of the motif of psychic splitting in favour of a focus upon social inequality (Danahay, p.148). Nevertheless, Danahay's emphasis upon the professional status of Dr Jekyll raises interesting questions about the constitution of the professional male in an age which deemed domesticity, or the home, to be 'central to masculinity' and yet identified work or occupation as the 'main constituent of middle-class manhood' (Tosh, p. 2; p. 33).

This ambiguity is compounded by the concept of separate spheres, a division which, while by no means absolute, was firmly entrenched in nineteenth century ideology.²¹ Significantly, according to John Tosh, the separation of the public sphere of work from the private sphere of the home 'acquired psychological and emotional dimensions as well as a physical reality' as the middle class man began to develop 'two sets of consciences': one for work and one for home (p. 30). That such a division has occurred in the psyche of Dr Jekyll is indicated prior to his entrance into the narrative by the incongruous appearance of his house, the façade (symbolic of the personal life) of which appears to wear 'a great air of wealth and comfort', while the rear (the location of his laboratory) bears 'in every feature, the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence' (p. 16; p. 6).²² Subsequently, of course, Jekyll's desire to procure peace in the 'war among [his] members' propels him toward the experiment which will see the conflicting elements of his personality 'housed in separate identities' (pp. 52-3).

The condition represented by Stevenson is reflected through the Time Traveller's observation 'that Man had not remained one species, but had differentiated into two distinct animals' (p. 46). Whereas Jekyll's transformation is both instant and miraculous, in *The Time Machine* the situation is presented to us as the result of the gradual evolution of thousands of years. In the characterisation of the

²¹ For a discussion of the ideology of separate spheres and the contention that it was, in many ways, more of a metaphorical device than an actual division see, for example, Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London: Routledge 2002).; John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (London: Yale University Press, 1999); Linda Kerber, 'Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History', *Journal of American History*, 75 (1988), 9-39.

²² There is also an indication that, as the area designated for work bears 'the marks of prolonged...negligence,' personal or leisure concerns are taking precedence.

toiling Morlocks and the domesticated Eloi, therefore, Wells presents us with a terrifying vision of the kind of absolute physical separation which could potentially evolve out of the psychological disassociation of the middle class male professional in the nineteenth century. Ultimately, then, the transformations of Jekyll/Hyde and the men of the future, though presented as the outcome of alchemic experiment or monstrous evolution, have more in common with the day-to-day conflict experienced by the professional male than may first appear. Danahay has identified William Hale White's autobiographical novel, *Mark Rutherford's Deliverance* (1885), as the work which 'registers most profoundly' the separation of work from the personal (p. 17). In the narrator's confession we can discern the germ of the predicament so startlingly represented by Stevenson and Wells: 'I cut off my office life [...] from my life at home so completely that I was two selves, and my true self was not stained by contact with my other self' (quoted in Tosh, p. 140). Nevertheless, according to Tosh, such splitting or 'layering' of identities was customary within professional circles, as men juggled the duties of their private and public lives, and, if managed correctly, this was certainly not perilous to a conception of self: 'the important thing [he writes] was to maintain a balance between them' (p. 140). In the tales of Stevenson and Wells, however, it is precisely this notion of balance which becomes distorted.

Consuming Passions

In The Three Piece Suit, David Kuchta notes that not only was the Victorian middle class 'ideal of masculinity [...] an explicitly political construct', designed to assert their superiority over the aristocratic and proletarian inhabitants of Britain, as well as their subjects in the colonies, it was also a 'hand-me-down' from an earlier (aristocratic) ideology.²³ However, as Tosh points out, during the nineteenth century this ideal was subject to a subtle but significant evolution as, increasingly, the concept of manliness became tied to that of character, with the result that, for the Victorians, masculinity acquired a distinctly moral element:

The traditional vocabulary of manliness [...] was redefined to include a moral as well as a physical dimension [...] Character was formed by two areas of experience, moralized work and moralized home. Work acquired almost hallowed authority. Manly energy was to be focussed not on anti-social self-assertion, but on occupation or "calling". The material reward for living by the work ethic was not only personal wealth, but true freedom from dependence or patronage (p. 112).

This idea of individual success and freedom as dependent upon moral vigour was one of the principal defining features of middle class masculinity, and thus finds

²³ David Kuchta, *The Three Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England 1550-1850* (Berkeley & London: University of California Press, 2002), pp.135 -6. Further references to this work will appear after quotations in the text.

expression in a variety of contemporary sources. For the eminent evolutionist T. H. Huxley, for example, social progress was synonymous with ethical process, ‘the end of which is not the survival of those who may happen to be the fittest [...] but of those who are ethically the best’.²⁴ Ensuring that one adhered to this ideal of moral masculinity, however, entailed not only hard work in the public sphere but also the private exercise of self-discipline, self-denial, and self-reliance.

In her introduction to *The Time Machine* Marina Warner identifies William Morris’s *News From Nowhere* (1890) as having a direct influence on Wells’s story.²⁵ One of the most significant differences between Morris’s utopian future and nineteenth century Britain is that the economic imperative to work has been completely replaced by a tradition of labour motivated by moral duty and creative joy, a circumstance which has, according to Danahay, ensured the tale’s status as ‘the most extreme [literary] example of the internalization of the work ethic’ (p. 9). Although Wells’s more pessimistic vision of the future identifies the cause of human and imperial degeneration in the decline of creative and physical labour, it nevertheless values the individual’s willingness to trade personal comfort and security for the advancement of mankind. At the beginning of his tale, the Time Traveller confesses to his audience that, during the construction of the machine, he had been repeatedly struck by the very real danger that time travel was likely to incur. Eventually, however, he reasons that mortal danger is simply ‘an unavoidable risk – one of the risks a man has got to take’ in the spirit of scientific discovery (p. 20). Similarly, it would seem that Dr Jekyll’s standing in society is predicated to a large extent upon his professional commitment to ‘the furtherance of knowledge [and] the relief of sorrow and suffering’, which suggests that his work is not only intellectually progressive and practically useful, but is also motivated by a sense of duty (p. 52). As these marks of altruism work to reinforce the ideological separation between the middle-class males and their degenerate counterparts, asserting the moral superiority of the industrious man, any cessation of work would, therefore, be indicative of a degradation of the moral sense and a consequent narrowing of the gap between the savage and the civilized.²⁶

Towards the end of Stevenson’s novella, Dr Jekyll, in his ‘statement of the case’, explains that he initially conceived of his transformative serum as a means to separate the good and evil elements of his moral constitution, thereby allowing Hyde to indulge his desires without restraint, while simultaneously enabling Jekyll to continue a life of propriety uncontaminated by the lower elements of his nature. However, for Mr Utterson, unaware of this very peculiar relationship at the novel’s opening, there is already a strong indication that his friend has in fact fallen prey to

²⁴ T.H. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics* [1893] (New Jersey & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), p.81.

²⁵ Marina Warner, ‘Introduction’ in H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine* [1895] (London: Penguin, 2005), p.xviii.

²⁶ Both Hyde and the Eloi are notable for their blatant selfishness. While Hyde’s ‘every act’ is said to be ‘centred on self’ (p.57), the Time Traveller remarks on the ‘strange deficiency’ in the moral make-up of the Eloi after he is forced to rescue Weena from drowning because none of her compatriots are prepared to go to her aid (p.42).

the malign influence of the mysterious Mr Hyde. For Jekyll has for some time past relinquished any claims to 'practising' medicine, his sole occupation, his obsession, in fact, being the perfection of his elixir; and the lapse has occasioned a breach in the friendship with his colleague, Dr. Lanyon, for whom Jekyll's 'unscientific balderdash' is unworthy of the name of medicine (p. 12). In his fixation with the transformative serum, Jekyll has utterly abandoned his profession, his calling. His laboratory 'once crowded with eager students and now lying gaunt and silent, the tables laden with chemical apparatus, the floor strewn with crates and packing straw', is a poignant symbol of his fall into torpor (p. 24). In the eyes of the conscientious lawyer, Jekyll's dereliction of his professional duties is confirmation that his will is increasingly subject to the indolent Mr Hyde.

If, as Danahay suggests, '[t]o be a successful man is to be a productive man', then Jekyll's fall is twofold, both social and moral (p. 39). For not only does the cessation of his professional activities indicate his withdrawal from the bourgeoisie, that 'virtuous class of producers', his dependence upon the elixir aligns his behaviour with that which was popularly thought to be the preserve of an 'idle, parasitical class of consumers' (Kuchta, p. 136). Jekyll's compulsive consumption of the elixir, which is referred to alternatively as a 'medicine' and a 'drug', is presented as the antithesis of Mr Utterson's tendency to drink gin when alone 'to mortify a taste for vintages' (p.37).²⁷ For while Utterson's asceticism positions him (rather ironically in this case) as the epitome of 'middle-class men's sober relation to the means of consumption' (Kuchta, p. 142), Jekyll's reliance upon his alchemic concoction is viewed as utterly 'unmanning' (p. 30). Ultimately, then, Jekyll's association with a type of conspicuous consumerism not only occasions a change in his social and ethical status but also leads to a disturbing shift in his gender identity, which suggests that his distinctly 'flighty' nature is more in accord with the effeminate Eloi of the future than his professional colleagues (p. 47).

In *The Time Machine* Wells's characterisation of his protagonist has much in common with Stevenson's representation of the diligent Mr Utterson. Repeatedly the sterile frivolity of the Eloi and mindless toil of the Morlocks is thrown into relief by the intellectual and imaginative 'fecundity' of the Time Traveller, whose quest to achieve a 'wider view' of the alien environment is comparable to Utterson's determination to 'seek' out Mr Hyde (p. 3; p. 28).²⁸ Having arrived at the conclusion that the marked delicacy of his hosts' appearance is due to the complete absence of

²⁷ The references to 'medicine' and 'drug' contribute to the question of whether Jekyll's compulsion to consume the elixir is in fact figured as an illness or a moral failing, the result of physical or psychological incoherence. Utterson's reference to his friend's 'voluntary bondage' further clouds the issue (p.31).

²⁸ With reference to the labour of the Morlocks it is important to consider that in the nineteenth century ideological conceptions of the value of work differentiated between occupation and toil or drudgery, i.e. work which was conceived as a calling and that which was experienced as a chore. The morality of the Morlocks' employment is highly dubious, for while they are distinguished from the Eloi by their physical labour in the industrial underworld of the future, their notable physical resemblance to a species of 'sloth', together with their anthropophagous diet, identifies their apparent industry as being without any pecuniary or social reward, as one undertaken merely to ensure the maintenance of their food supply.

the necessity for labour, either industrial or agricultural, he continues to assert his comparative masculinity by declaring that they are 'so frail' he could quite easily imagine himself 'flinging [a] dozen of them about like ninepins' (p. 24). Fortunately, however, the Time Traveller resists the urge towards vigorous play, for the Eloi have evolved in an environment with such a surfeit of 'ease and security' that the need for any kind of physical resistance is a veritable obsolescence (p. 29). As a result, these people of the future have developed such a graceful appearance that the Time Traveller is inspired to portray it as a 'Dresden-china type of prettiness', a description which incorporates a sense of both their extreme physical fragility and almost total femininity (p. 24). For Michael Sayeau the constitutional daintiness of the Eloi only serves to exemplify the way in which 'limitless consumption...cancels out the necessity for aggression of any sort and [thus] the necessity of "masculinity" itself'.²⁹ Indeed, the comparison of the Eloi with the kind of commodity value represented by a product like Dresden china seems to suggest that amongst the Eloi the practice of consumerism has been internalised to such an extent that it has become an inherent part of their physical and social make-up. It is not until the discovery of the Morlocks, however, that the Eloi's dual status as, simultaneously, consumers and consumer items becomes horrifically apparent.

According to Kelly Hurley '[c]annibalism is the great "secret" of' *The Time Machine*.³⁰ Though Stevenson's Hyde is not actually a cannibal, there is certainly an element of vampirism in what Jekyll describes as his alter ego's practice of 'drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another' (p. 57). The 'strange preference[s]' which lead Jekyll to habitually imbibe his elixir and the Eloi to limit themselves to a strictly 'frugivorous' diet are presented by Stevenson and Wells as the 'preferences' of people who opt for the path of least resistance and are then compelled to remain upon it for good or ill (Stevenson, p. 13). The consequence of Eloi's inattention to the cultivation of their lands is that agricultural knowledge is lost and future generations must therefore limit their diet to what is readily available.³¹ For Jekyll, meanwhile, though the transformative serum initially promises to replace the moral struggle of the professional man, with the liberty which awaits him in the body of Edward Hyde, he is soon compelled to administer it in order to escape 'the horror of [that] other self' (p. 65). The loss of masculinity which such choices incur has been noted. However, that both the Morlocks and Hyde are not only denied a sense of masculinity, but are instead referred to in terms which deny their essential humanity, suggests that conscious desire rather than compulsion

²⁹ Michael Sayeau, 'H. G. Wells and the "Odd Consequence" of Progress', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 8.4 (2005), 431-445 (p.436).

³⁰ Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.86.

³¹ For Thomas Carlyle, the Eloi's dependence on fruit would present itself as a mark of their 'primitive' laziness. In 'Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question' (1830) he seems to suggest the necessity of imperial activities in the West Indies by reasoning that, otherwise, the easy availability of certain food sources would encourage the naturally lazy inhabitants to neglect the cultivation of the land: 'what say you to an idle Black gentleman [...] pumpkin at his discretion, and the fruitfulest region on earth going back to jungle around him?' (Quoted in Danahay, p.28).

motivates their consumer behaviour.³²

There is something distinctly savage in the kind of gratuitous violence which both the Morlocks and Hyde are accused of enacting. In particular, the Morlocks' merciless hunting and consumption of the Eloi makes them appear, in the eyes of the Time Traveller, more like 'human rats' than fellow men (p.74). Like Hyde, who 'with ape-like fury' bludgeons his victim, Sir Danvers Carew, until his 'bones were audibly shattered' (pp. 20-21), they can be viewed as examples of Lombroso's criminal atavist, as figures who feel 'the irresponsible craving of evil for its own sake, the desire not only to extinguish life in the victim, but to mutilate the corpse, tear its flesh and drink its blood' (quoted in Pick, p. 122). Such horrifying behaviour is grotesquely parasitic in nature, and associates Hyde and the Morlocks with other late nineteenth century literary embodiments of the criminal atavist such as H. Rider Haggard's anthropophagous Amahagger (*She*, 1887) and Bram Stoker's vampires (*Dracula*, 1897). However, unlike the generic parasite which, according to Lankester, is subject to a process of retrogressive metamorphosis, Hyde and the Morlocks gain in both strength and vitality. Consequently, the increasing vigour of Hyde is directly proportionate to a corresponding decline, not merely in the professional output of Dr Jekyll but also in his physical health. While the early narrative describes him as 'a large, well-made, smooth-faced man', after the Carew murder Utterson finds his old friend 'looking deadly sick', and soon enough Jekyll himself begins to feel like 'a creature eaten up and emptied by fever' (p. 20; p. 24; pp. 64-5).

Such a reversal represents for Rebecca Stott a terrifying 'version of the evolutionary maxim: the survival of the fittest – the victim of the struggle will be consumed by the evolutionary superior victor to increase its size and strength'.³³ A similar fate awaits the Eloi. While the upper world inhabitants have been subject to a 'general dwindling in size, strength and intelligence' and 'their numbers had rather diminished than kept stationary' (p. 33; p.49), the Morlocks are at once 'more abundant' and more cunning, as well as being 'dexterous [social?] climbers', and the Time Traveller makes it quite clear that as 'mere fatted cattle' the Eloi's colonisation of the upper world is tolerated 'on sufferance' (p. 51; p.58; p.62). Finally, then it is the threat of this monstrously inhuman appetite, and the corresponding absence of any hint of self-denial, through which the true horror of the novellas is conveyed.

As Jekyll finds it increasingly difficult to control the oscillation between his two identities, he acknowledges a fear that 'the balance of my nature might be permanently overthrown [...] and the character of Edward Hyde become irrevocably mine' (p. 59). Although Jekyll's predicament is persistently represented in language – 'slavery', 'bondage', which implies his powerlessness, the text nevertheless continues to indicate that he could still tip the balance in his own favour if he wished.³⁴ After all, 'energy of will' was, according to Smiles, 'the very central power of character in

³² The Time Traveller notes that there is something distinctly 'inhuman and malign' about the Morlocks (p.56), whereas For Dr Lanyon there is 'something abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence of' Hyde (p.48).

³³ Rebecca Stott, *The Fabrication of the Late Victorian Femme Fatale: The Kiss of Death* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), p.53.

³⁴ For example, he assures Utterson that 'the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr Hyde' (p.19).

man' (quoted in Smith, p. 18). As Smith highlights, Smiles's regime was really 'all a matter of balance', a fact which is best illustrated by the emphasis he placed on the 'relationship between work and leisure' (p. 18). The significance for the argument here lies in the implication that if Jekyll had continued to perform his customary tasks, to attend to his medical duties and thus maintain his professional identity following the creation of Hyde, he would have been in a much better position to curtail his vicarious pleasures. For as Joanna De Groot has written, to the nineteenth century mind '[h]ard work, (mental or physical), and self-discipline, involved a control of the self which in turn allowed men to control others (their women and children, their subjects, and their employees)', and, perhaps, even their alter egos.³⁵ The consequences of Jekyll's failure to maintain his medical practice and learning can be most clearly seen in his inability to replicate the transformative serum. His failure eventually leads him to conclude that there must have been an 'unknown impurity' in one of the ingredients from the original batch (p. 66). However, it is quite possible that, through inattention, his scientific knowledge has degenerated in a similar fashion to his written communications, which we learn from Utterson are often 'pathetically worded', making it nearly impossible for him to rekindle the spark of genius which produced the original draught (p. 29).

The loss of Jekyll's scientific verve is comparable with the loss of fire among the future races of Britain. The endurance of the myth of Prometheus has ensured that fire is a symbol for independence, creativity and risk. In Wells's novella the Eloi's ignorance of the properties of fire corresponds with the simplicity of their language, the absence of productivity and ingenuity, and a general lack of understanding of their own land and their position in it. Most significant, however, is that the loss of this knowledge has a direct bearing on their continued survival as throughout *The Time Machine*, fire is the only element that deters the onslaught of the Morlocks.

Performing Tasks

In the nineteenth century the propagation and enactment of industrious middle-class masculinity was seen as essential to the health of the Empire. Indeed, as Tosh declares, '[i]mperial reputation was grounded in a small repertoire of masculine qualities: stoicism as in the death of General Gordon, steely self-control exemplified by Kitchener, self-reliance in the case of Baden-Powell' (p. 174). Nevertheless, as Kuchta stresses, it is important to understand that '[t]here was nothing "genuine" about middle-class masculinity' (p. 137). Rather, cultivating the standards of nineteenth century middle-class masculinity was seen by many as a process of suppressing one's baser instincts or, as Smith writes, 'quell[ing] the insistent...demands of the body's appetites' (p. 20). While the exercise of moral judgement, in terms of the aforementioned manly triptych - self-discipline, self-denial,

³⁵ Joanna De Groot, "'Sex" and "race": The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth-Century' in *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies in Gender in the nineteenth century*, ed. by Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall (London: Routledge, 1989), p.108.

and self-reliance – played a crucial part in the construction of manly character, men such as Smiles recognised that ‘the theatrical dimensions of gentlemanly behaviour’ were equally as important to the maintenance of a congruent masculine identity (Smith, p. 20). What these examples illustrate is that to a certain extent, Victorian middle-class masculinity was predicated on a fairly small set of performance requirements, consciously maintained. Patrick Brantlinger provides an illuminating example of how such a performance was believed to preserve a man’s sense of his standing in the world:

[T]he narrator of Erskine Childer’s Spy novel *Riddle of the Sands* (1903) starts his tale in this way: “I have read of men who, when forced by their calling to live for long periods in utter solitude – save for a few black faces – have made it a rule to dress regularly for dinner in order to [...] prevent a lapse into barbarism” (*Rule*, p. 227).

Good manners, it seems, can be a powerful tool for maintaining one’s dignity. However, in the future, dining in Britain has descended into something of a free-for-all. The Eloi, having dispensed with the formalities commonplace in the nineteenth century, tuck into their food ‘with their hands, flinging peel and stalks and so forth’ about them in the process (p. 27). The battle for control between Jekyll and Hyde follows a similar course which begins with a decline in Jekyll’s social obligations and nears its close with his refusal to venture outdoors to converse with Mr Utterson and his declaration that he is unable to invite him in because ‘the place is really not fit’ (p. 32). These descents into sloth or hysteria are contrasted with representations of healthy middle class masculinity, such as the gentlemanly dinner with which *The Time Machine* opens, or the convivial and civilized exchanges between Utterson and characters such as Lanyon, Guest and Enfield, in order to reinforce the notion that such a performance is ‘a component part in developing a strategy which guarantees the health of the nation’ (Smith, p. 18).

While the emphasis upon the performance of masculinity may superficially seem to be re-enacting the very repressions of which the Eloi and Jekyll are guilty, the texts go to some lengths to differentiate between the irresponsibility of the Eloi and Jekyll, and the challenges which are overcome by the Time Traveller and Utterson. Ruth Robbins has said that Jekyll’s ‘is a story of “going native” in the urban slums’, and this certainly seems to be the case.³⁶ From the moment Jekyll rejects the gentlemanly performance of self, his gradual descent into atavism in the body of the simian Hyde reads like a narrative of addiction: ‘my new power tempted me until I fell in slavery. I had but to drink the cup, to doff at once the body of the noted professor, and to assume, like a thick cloak, that of Edward Hyde’ (p. 56). That Jekyll’s intoxication by the lower elements of his character is thrown into relief by the ‘austere’ habits of the more cautious, gin drinking Mr Utterson suggests that, in the lawyer, Stevenson does not present us with a character who represses his desires but one who, recognising the dangers of over-indulgence, works to temper them.

³⁶ Ruth Robbins, *Literary Feminisms* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 225.

Similarly, the Time Traveller is not above temporary displays of effeminate emotion, or even hysterics, as having felt utter despair upon discovering the loss of his time machine, the Time Traveller admits to ‘bawling like an angry child’ (p. 36). However, in the cold light of day he resumes a more reasonable demeanour:

I saw the wild folly of my frenzy overnight, and I could reason with myself [...] I must be calm and patient, find its hiding-place, and recover it by force or cunning. And with that I scrambled to my feet and looked about me wondering where I could bathe (p.37).

Issues of personal appearance go hand in hand with those of personal responsibility in these tales, as the attention to detail and the habit of self reliance work to assert both the cultural and moral superiority of the protagonists over the more primitive elements of the texts.

The Work of the Writer

Although the proponents of self-help stressed the importance of middle-class masculinity being dependent upon a sense of balance, between the physical and the intellectual, work and leisure, contemporary culture continued to place ‘a premium on physical prowess and readiness for combat’ (Tosh, p. 111). This in turn placed the intellectual worker in a rather uneasy position, for as Danahay explains, ‘the “manliness of intellectual labour” was undercut by Victorian domestic ideology which implicitly feminized men’s work’ carried out in the home (p. 3). Even literary heavyweights like Thomas Carlyle were plagued by questions surrounding the manliness of the literary life. As a young man he coined the term ‘strenuous idleness’ to describe the peculiar mixture of grinding intellectual labour with almost complete physical inactivity which constituted his occupation.³⁷ Writers were not the only members of the intellectual community to express ambivalence about the manly nature of their work. Ford Madox Brown’s diaries are replete with ‘troubling questions’ surrounding the value of the artist’s work and peppered with expressions of ‘loathing’ for his calling (Danahay, p. 87). However, just as Brown’s paintings idealized physical labour ‘as compensation for the experience of working as an artist’, so Stevenson and Wells, in common with other Romance writers of the period, created fictional scenarios in which both writer and reader could engage in a vicarious experience of idealised masculinity (Danahay, p. 87).³⁸ For this reason their work can be considered in terms of its function as ‘an alternative means of reproducing English masculinity’ in the late nineteenth century.³⁹

³⁷ Norma Clarke, ‘Strenuous Idleness: Thomas Carlyle and the man of letters as hero’, in *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain Since 1800*, ed. by Michael Roper and Joseph Bristow (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 26.

³⁸ Brown’s famous painting *Work* (1852-63) is generally considered a testament to the Victorian concept of heroic labour.

³⁹ Angelia Poon, *Enacting Englishness in the Victorian Period: Colonialism and the Politics of*

It has been widely noted that fictions belonging to the Romance genre often plunge their male protagonists into a colonial landscape in which the enactment of the kind of manly heroics no longer necessary in nineteenth century Britain becomes a necessity, thus working to revitalise and redefine a beleaguered masculinity.⁴⁰ The more pedestrian settings of *The Time Machine* and *Jekyll and Hyde*, however, would seem to suggest that they are less concerned with these kinds of theatrics. To a certain extent this is the case. By training their focus upon the professional or intellectual community within Britain these novellas attempt to negotiate an appropriate balance between manly force and civilized restraint. For though there is an implicit admiration and respect for man's innate primitive tendencies, this is tempered with the acknowledgement that the kind of 'physical prowess and readiness for combat' which have been historically associated with masculinity may 'be hindrances – to a civilized man,' and may even be 'out of place' in nineteenth century society (Wells, p. 33). As such the blood-thirsty cannibalism of the Morlocks and the gratuitous violence of Hyde are balanced out by the more appropriate displays of masculine power exhibited by the Time Traveller and Mr Utterson.⁴¹ The enduring popularity of the works indicates that tales such as these responded (and may respond still) to an abiding need in the modern man for just such an appropriately vicarious experience.

The *fin de siècle* witnessed something of a revolution in the literary market place as the traditional three volume novel of the high Victorian period was seemingly superseded by the vastly less expensive and prolifically produced one volume offerings of the late-Victorian romancers. At the same time the market was flooded with new journals, new technology (in the form of the typewriter) and a new sense of competition, all of which contributed to 'the wholesale redefinition of writing as commodified labour in the period' (Danahay, p. 144). The increasing industrialisation of writing, however, was not without its attendant anxieties. As masculinity and pecuniary success were so closely related, writers now had to negotiate the shifting identification of literature as both art and business. An element of this ambivalence can be seen in R. L. Stevenson's response to the success of *Jekyll and Hyde*, for though the text's reception consolidated his reputation as a writer, he was motivated to consider whether its popular appeal was in fact rather damning evidence of the level of its intellectual depth or artistic merit.⁴² Nevertheless, Stevenson was a writer for whom financial success was essential. Writing in *Empire Boys*, Joseph Bristow remarks on the speed at which *Treasure Island* was produced (in fifteen days) as Stevenson, over thirty and still financially dependent on his father,

Performance (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p.138.

⁴⁰ The novels of H. Rider Haggard are good examples of this type of fiction.

⁴¹ In *Jekyll and Hyde* for example Utterson's decision to break into Jekyll's laboratory to perform his feat of 'vengeance' upon Hyde for the suspected murder of Jekyll, is accompanied by a declaration that should he be mistaken in his suspicions then his 'shoulders are broad enough to bear the blame' (p.39). Utterson's willingness to take responsibility for his actions reaffirms the role of morality in the constitution of the masculine character.

⁴² Patrick Brantlinger, *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), p.167. Interestingly, Brantlinger notes that *Jekyll and Hyde* was, like Haggard's *She*, written with 'white-hot haste'.

was under pressure to make his name as an author. This practice mirrors that of Haggard who, as one of the most famous romancers of the period, seems to have been intent on injecting some of his characters' virility into his own writing process. *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) is believed to have been produced in just six weeks, and Haggard claimed to have written *She* in a similar timeframe, 'at white heat, almost without rest'.⁴³ What these anecdotes suggest is that while the nineteenth century novel continued to oscillate between contradictory definitions as first art, then commodity, it was in no way immune to the language of capitalism in which the masculine 'ideal of "productivity" was seen in opposition to the feminine and "useless" consumption' (Danahay, p. 43).

According to Arata, fictions of the late-Victorian male romance genre reveal 'an array of anxieties', anxieties surrounding the definition of masculinity, the threat of degeneration and impending imperial decline; while discernible alongside such anxieties is a corresponding fear of the potential 'decline of the great tradition of English letters' (*Fictions*, p.89). Significantly, in a move which apes the development of the literary market place, both *The Time Machine* and *Jekyll and Hyde* represent this fear as the seeming triumph of consumerism over productivity, of the fanciful over the real, of femininity over masculinity, of the future over the past. Perhaps the most powerful image Wells offers of the consequences of this loss of familiar values is the Palace of Green Porcelain which, like a museum of his own time, houses the remnants of history. Inside, the sight which strikes him most forcibly is that of the 'decaying vestiges of books [...] long since dropped to pieces [...] every semblance of print [having] left them' (p. 67). Not being literary minded, the Time Traveller is able to refrain from moralizing 'on the futility of ambition' but is nevertheless moved to comment on 'the enormous waste of labour to which this sombre wilderness of rotting paper testified' (pp. 67-8). Interestingly, the Time Traveller's comments are in some way reminiscent of contemporary debates concerning the decline of realism, and the subsequent rise of the Romance, which many believed signalled a decline of the British novel. In *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* Arata provides a useful summary of some of the main arguments: indicating that, while proponents of romance, men such as Andrew Lang, believed the genre's value to lie in its expression of the innate passions of mankind, many others were of the opinion that it was an adulterated or diluted form of literature from which English literature would never recover.⁴⁴

However, while Arata characterises the *fin de siècle* as a period burdened by a sense of cultural loss, the tales of Stevenson and Wells conjure the prospect of hope through the revitalisation of literature, masculinity, and, ultimately, the empire. For, while they stand as fantastic tales about supernatural feats and 'flighty' characters, each tale carries a serious meaning: hard work or struggle is an indispensable aspect of life which brings its own rewards. Both writers issue an attack on complacency,

⁴³ H. Rider Haggard, *The Days of My Life*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1926), I, p. 245.

⁴⁴ Andrew Lang, literary critic and anthropologist, was an outspoken proponent of romance fiction and great supporter of both Stevenson and Haggard. However, he acknowledged, as did Stevenson, that much modern literature was inferior to the classic Victorian novel.

figured as the inattention to professional duties and personal standards, that spells disaster for the individual, for masculinity and thus for the empire. Each text displays its comfort in its identification as fantasy, for if Jekyll's 'unscientific balderdash' can bring forth Hyde, what might their fictions reveal? Wells provides the answer when the Time Traveller discovers a box of matches, for the discovery restores to the world 'the [lost] art of fire-making' (p. 72). The match, then, represents the revitalising, creative spark embedded within the text. However, it comes with a final warning, as the conflagration it leads to, like the violent rampage of Hyde, is a testament to the kind of chaos that can ensue in the absence of responsible production when 'the savage instincts of adventure finally spin out of control'.⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys*, p. 122.

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