



PROJECT MUSE®

---

Reconsidering the Emergence of the Gay Novel in English and  
German

Wilper, James

Published by Purdue University Press



Wilper, James.

Reconsidering the Emergence of the Gay Novel in English and German.

Purdue University Press, 2016.

Project MUSE.[muse.jhu.edu/book/47991](https://muse.jhu.edu/book/47991).

➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/47991>

## Chapter 5

### Health, Masculinity, and the Third Sex

Both Edward Prime-Stevenson's *Imre: A Memorandum* and E. M. Forster's *Maurice* are fiercely resistant to medical theories which identify same-sex sexuality as a marker of degeneration and mental illness; both emphasize the health and vitality of their central characters; and both are influenced by third-sex theories, which is explicit in *Imre* and implicit in *Maurice*. The greatest difference here is not in substance, but in stylistic concerns; whereas the treatment of these themes in *Imre* can often feel heavy handed, Forster executes his with more subtlety and lightness of touch. But behind the humor with which Forster depicts motifs representing aspects of medical discourse (i.e., the embodiments of "Science" in Dr. Barry and the hypnotist Lasker Jones) lies a seriousness which is parallel to the direct didacticism of *Imre*.

Havelock Ellis writes of *Imre* in the third edition of *Sexual Inversion* that "it embodies a notable narrative of homosexual development which is probably more or less real" (*Studies in the Psychology of Sex* 340). It would thus seem that Ellis did not primarily regard the novel as an imaginative work of fiction, but as "more or less" autobiographical. The text itself would lead a reader to believe this. *Imre* is influenced by the concepts, nomenclatures, and most importantly the sexological mode of narration, the medical case history. Harry Oosterhuis argues that the self-narration undertaken in the autobiographies which private patients penned for psychiatric studies are the forerunner of the "coming-out" narrative, the gay variation of the bildungsroman genre (Oosterhuis, "Richard von Krafft-Ebing's 'Step-Children of Nature'" 81). *Maurice* is without a doubt an artistically accomplished rendering of this genre, which would become the cornerstone of gay and lesbian literature, whereas Prime-Stevenson's novel is in form and content conceived as a literary sexological case history and, owing to the middle ground it inhabits, is like a "missing link" between the autobiographical medical case history and the fully formed "coming-out" novel. It includes most of the components that define the actual case histories, such as those which homosexual men and women contributed to researchers including Richard von Krafft-Ebing, the memoir Claude Hartland published "for the consideration of the medical fraternity" (Hartland, *The Story of A Life*), and those John

Addington Symonds and Edward Carpenter penned for *Sexual Inversion* (1897). In the novel, the affinity to the case history format is reinforced by its prefatory letter, in which Oswald addresses Xavier Mayne, offering this "episode" to him (32–33). This is a literary device that simulates the case history, as if this "autobiography" could be inserted into Mayne's study, *The Intersexes: A History of Similisexuality as a Problem in Social Life*. Although it was not an actual case history itself, *Imre* was inspired by one, found in Otto de Joux's *Die Enterbten des Liebesglücks; oder, das dritte Geschlecht: Ein Beitrag zur Seelenkunde* (The Disinherited of Love's Happiness; or, The Third Sex: A Contribution to the Study of the Mind, first edition 1893, expanded edition 1897). Prime-Stevenson selectively translates and reproduces this autobiography in *The Intersexes* (109–11) which is by "a young scion of a novel family of the Continent" narrating his love for a "German or Austrian army-officer" named Rudolph (110). "I have absolutely nothing feminine in me as to my looks; my bearing indeed is noted for its genuine masculinity. But, for all that, I have a soul like a woman's. I am a man; but I love another man, burningly, passionately, to death itself. I know too it is a mad hopeless struggle that I have kept up against my all too-tender nature, since my boyhood's years. So I have given up struggling against my fate" (*Intersexes* 110). The subject of this case history prefigures both Oswald and Imre. Prime-Stevenson's rendering of de Joux's case history is a text distinct from the original, adapting it, as Matthew Livesey demonstrates, to meet the liberationist needs of *The Intersexes* (see Livesey, "The Homosexual Origins of the Gay Novel" 103–18). This text, then, engenders another, the novel. This work of fiction, in turn, could lead readers back to the original sexological works. For Prime-Stevenson, writes Margaret Breen, "literature functioned as a mediating force, one that linked a general public with the world of scientific research" ("Homosexual Identity, Translation, and Prime-Stevenson's *Imre* and *The Intersexes*" 5). The novel could, writes Christopher Looby, "serve as a guide, for less well-educated readers, toward the burgeoning archive of sexually progressive literature" ("The Gay Novel in the United States" 422). The narrative conventions of sexology, the liberationist case history, direct the narrative, and, additionally, the theory of the female soul in the male body shapes the ways in which the characters arrive at an understanding of their sexual subjectivities. I argue elsewhere, though, against reading *Imre* as merely a literary mouthpiece for sexology, suggesting that while sexology is powerful in the novel, it is not the only or perhaps even the chief influence upon the text (see Wilper, "Sexology, Homosexual History, and Walt Whitman" 52–68). Nevertheless, sexology plays a crucial role in shaping the narrative structure, the identities of the protagonists, and their relations.

Similarly, Forster's *Maurice* advances the idea of homosexuality as an immutable biological component to the central characters' sexual constitutions. "It's not the least good—I've changed," declares Clive, to which Maurice responds: "Can the leopard change his spots?" (107). Prime-Stevenson employs the same metaphor for sexual identity in *The Intersexes*. When addressing whether homosexuality can be cured, Prime-Stevenson rhetorically asks: "Can we 'cure' Nature? Can we make

the leopard change his spots?" (120). But Clive does fight his body to "change his spots," consequently crippling it in the process. In the writings of Symonds and Carpenter, sexual fulfillment is associated with health. Ellis narrates in his case history of Symonds, "Case XVIII," in the first edition of *Sexual Inversion* that "[Symonds] feels absolutely certain that in early life his health was ruined, and his moral repose destroyed, owing to the perpetual conflict with his own inborn nature, and that relief and strength came with indulgence. . . . He is convinced that his sexual dealings with men have been thoroughly wholesome to himself, largely increasing his physical, moral, and intellectual energy, and not injurious to others" (Ellis and Symonds 147). And Carpenter, in "Case VI," writes that, before finding sexual satisfaction "by embraces and emissions" with "special friends," "I was once or twice on the brink of despair and madness with repressed passion and torment" (132). While Carpenter's theories of comrade love are recognized as underlying the relationship between Maurice and Alec, most scholars agree that his sexological theories of the "homogenic love" of intermediate sexes are absent from the text. In his writings, Carpenter presents a romanticized and idealized conceptualization of Uranian men, believing that these individuals represent a vanguard of human sexual evolution. John Fletcher writes, "Carpenter wishes to see the 'healthy' Uranian male supplementing his masculine constitution with certain 'feminine virtues'—tenderness, sensuality, intuition, emotionality, altruism, and self-sacrifice" ("Forster's Self-Erasure" 73). It is in many of these same terms that Carpenter describes himself in the case study he provided for *Sexual Inversion* (Ellis and Symonds 132–33). Fletcher argues, though, that the intersex model is problematic in Carpenter's writings. The third-sex theory and Whitmanian comrade love are mutually exclusive, Fletcher suggests, thus a "contradiction between Ulrichs and Whitman marks the writings of both Symonds and Carpenter" (73). "The ideological danger in any crossing of genders is that the feminine will supplant or improperly dominate the masculine in the mixed type, that instead of an extension of the masculine beyond its traditional sphere a subversion of masculinity may result" (Fletcher 74). Fletcher concludes that "the absence of a theory of inversion, of intermediacy of cross-gendering" in *Maurice*, sets the novel apart from Carpenter's writings as well as from the writings of many of Forster's homosexual contemporaries (90). Howard Booth agrees that the sexological theories are excluded from *Maurice*, but he questions the assumptions that Fletcher and others reach about the motives underlying this absence. "There are surely dangers though to suggesting that the exclusion of inversion theory from the novel is simply the result of an accommodation for Forster's part between models of inversion and societal pressure to be manly" ("Maurice" 183). Booth suggests that Forster creates a novel which avoids sexological models, unlike Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, which draws overtly on Krafft-Ebing and inversion theory. Instead, Booth argues that "*Maurice* often 'inverts' what the reader expects to find," and thus "The novel's lack of interest in the inversion of the sexes is perhaps itself another of these inversions" (183). Yet I question in what follows whether the third-sex concept is truly absent from *Maurice*.

This chapter explores the influence of third- or intermediate-sex sexology in Prime-Stevenson's *Imre* and Forster's *Maurice*. It first considers the development of the third sex theory by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and Magnus Hirschfeld in the struggle for homosexual liberation, which directly influenced Prime-Stevenson's writings. Then the chapter considers the work of Symonds, Ellis, and Carpenter in bringing German third-sex sexology to Britain. Next, the two literary analyses follow: first an examination of the way in which *Imre* argues against the psycho-degenerative hypothesis, incorporates the third-sex theory, and simultaneously undermines the authority of scientific discourse, and second an exploration of *Maurice* and its responses to embodiments of scientific discourse and the novel's subtle incorporation of Symonds's, Ellis's, and Carpenter's intermediate- or third-sex ideas.

## Science and Homosexual Liberation: Theorizing the Third Sex

Homosexual individuals, as Harry Oosterhuis claims, were not merely the "passive victims of a medical juggernaut, with no other choice than to conform to medical stereotypes" (*Stepchildren of Nature* 11). Indeed, some of these individuals employed science in the aims of homosexual liberation. Not merely employing a "reverse discourse," as Michel Foucault argues (*The History of Sexuality* 101), with the third-sex theory, the homosexual individual, in the role of sexual theorist, would wield a great deal of influence upon sexological discourse. Preeminent among these figures in Germany are Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and Magnus Hirschfeld, who, in their politically motivated essays, treatises, and sexological studies, spoke on behalf of homosexual men and women and demanded an end to persecution, seeking above all the abolition or reform of laws criminalizing sex acts between men.

Writing under the pseudonym Numa Numantius in 1864–65, the Hanoverian civil servant Ulrichs published the first five essays of a twelve essay project collectively titled *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mann männlichen Liebe* (*Research into the Riddle of Man-Manly Love*, published between 1864 and 1880). The texts of the *Forschungen* series are bold legal polemics that deploy the authoritative language of science, drawing on recent research into embryology, to challenge moralistic and penal persecution of a sex of humans he terms *Urnings* or Uranians. "It is a fact that there are individuals among us whose body is built like a male, and, at the same time, whose sexual drive is directed toward men," Ulrichs begins his first essay, "Vindex: Social-juristische Studien über mann männliche Geschlechtsliebe" ("Vindex: Social and Legal Studies on Man-Manly Love," 1864), "I have termed these individuals *Urnings*" (*The Riddle of "Man-Manly" Love* 1: 34) ("Thatsache ist es, daß es unter den Menschen Individuen gibt, deren Körper männlich gebaut ist, welche gleichwohl aber geschlechtliche Liebe zu Männern [empfinden.] . . . Diese Individuen nenne ich nachstehend 'Urnings'"; *Forschungen* 1: 1). In Ulrichs's view, the "true" man, a *Dioning* or Dionian, possessed a man's body and a man's psyche, while the *Urning* possessed the body of a true man and the psyche or psychological elements of a true woman. He drew on the language of Hellenism to formulate his terms

for sexual orientations. The terms "Uranian" and "Dionian" derive from the speech of Pausanias in Plato's *Symposium* where he discusses two types of love: the Heavenly variety exclusively between men from Aphrodite Urania, and the Common type from Aphrodite Dione (Plato, *Symposium* 13–14). It is clear that Ulrichs took some interpretational liberties with his source, as those led by so-called "Common" love "are attracted to women as much as boys, and to bodies rather than minds" (Plato, *Symposium* 13). Uranians belong to a "third sex" ("ein[em] dritte[n] Geschlecht"), similar to but independent from the male and female sexes, "we are independent of the male or female sex, fully separate from both" (*The Riddle of "Man-Manly" Love* 1: 36) ("Selbstständig stehen wir da, neben Männern und neben Weibern, völlig abge sondert von beiden"; *Forschungen* 1: 5).

In his seventh text of the series, which was published (like all others after the sixth essay) under his own name, "Memnon: Die Geschlechtsnatur des mannliebenden Urnings" ("The Sexual Nature of the Man-Loving Uranian," 1868), Ulrichs elaborates upon his developmental hypothesis of homosexuality. Uranism is a form of "physio-psyche hermaphroditism" ("körperlich-seelische[m] Hermaphroditismus"), which Ulrichs expressed in the Latin phrase "anima muliebris virili corpora inclusa" (a female psyche confined in a male body). He stresses that in the case of Uranians this hermaphroditism was manifest only in terms of sexual attraction and gender—inversion was limited to the soul, not the body—and takes care to disassociate the third sex from any possible suggestion that it is a mistake or accident of nature. "In vain will you search for something pathological or deformed either emotionally or physically in male as well as female Urnings. Both are the fruit of a completely wholesome course of development of nature, even if it is an irregular one" (*The Riddle of "Man-Manly" Love* 1: 303) ("Etwas Krankhaftes oder Verkrüppeltes, geistig oder körperlich, wird man beim männlichen, wie beim weiblichen Urning vergeblich suchen. Beide sind die Frucht des wenn schon unregelmäßigen, so doch durchaus gesunden Entwicklungsganges der Natur"; *Forschungen* 2: 7). The text seems to anticipate the turn that the study of same-sex desire would take the following year starting with Westphal's "Conträre Sexualempfindung," that of viewing this mode of attraction as indicative of mental illness caused by hereditary degeneration.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century in Germany, Ulrichs's studies were rediscovered and reprinted and incorporated into the expanding body of scientific texts published with the intent of bringing about legal and social change (Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* 23–24). In 1896, the physician and sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld published a pamphlet titled *Sappho und Sokrates; oder, Wie erklärt sich die Liebe der Männer und der Frauen zu Personen des eigenen Geschlechts?* (*Sappho and Socrates; or, How Does One Explain the Love of Men and Women to Persons of Their Own Sex?*, 1896), in which he draws on historical and scientific sources to argue the case for homosexual rights. The following year he led the founding of the *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee*, an organization whose main objectives were securing the abolition of Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code, educating the public, and involving homosexuals in

defending their own rights (see Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* 30; Stümke 34–35; Steakley, "Per Scientiam ad Justitiam" 139). One of the organs for achieving the committee's aims was the journal *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (Annual for Sexual Intermediaries), whose first issue appeared in 1899. Hirschfeld's activities were not limited to the German-speaking countries; he also founded the World League for Sexual Reform, which held congresses in Berlin in 1921, Copenhagen in 1928, and London in 1929 (Dose, "The World League for Sexual Reform" 242–43). The *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* (Institute for Sexual Research), which he founded in 1919 and later ran as director under the aegis of the German state, was world renowned (Wolff, *Magnus Hirschfeld* 174–75). The English-American novelist Christopher Isherwood, who lived at the institute in the early 1930s, describes it in his autobiography, *Christopher and His Kind* (1976). "It was a place of education for the public, its lawmakers, and its police. Hirschfeld could invite them to the sex museum and guide them through a succession of reactions—from incredulous disgust to understanding of the need for penal reform" (*Christopher and His Kind* 18–19). Isherwood recalls his first reaction to the ethnographic collections: "Christopher giggled because he was embarrassed. He was embarrassed because, at last, he was being brought face to face with his tribe. . . . He was forced to admit kinship with these freakish fellow tribesmen and their distasteful customs. And he didn't like it. His first reaction was to blame the Institute. He said to himself: How can they take this stuff so *seriously*?" (16–17).

The efforts of the WhK and other organizations with which Hirschfeld was involved were organized around his third- or intermediate-sex research. Hirschfeld's oeuvre is vast, comprising more than 2,000 works (Mancini, *Magnus Hirschfeld* ix). One of his principle studies is *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (*Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 1914) which is a multifaceted exploration of homosexuality in men and women, equally for the first time, as both a biological and a sociological phenomenon (see H. Bauer, *English Literary Sexology* 44). He theorizes that the third sex comprised "sexual intermediaries or sexual transitions" ("sexuell[e] Zwischenstufen oder Geschlechtsübergänge") existing between constructed polar opposites: the "absolute sex type" ("absolut[e] Geschlechtstypus") (*Homosexuality* 61; *Homosexualität* 30). Diagnosing "true" homosexuality, Hirschfeld writes, "is in no way easy in every case" (76) ("ist keinesweges in allen Fällen eine leichte [Aufgabe]"; 40); key to this, apart from the observable physical characteristics, is recognizing the homosexual "psyche." "Decisive for the diagnosis is proof of a homosexual psyche, of a homosexual drive that is distinguished from the emotional complex defined as love, which attracts men to women and women to men, in that they turn to persons who belong to their own sex" (76) ("Maßgebend für die Diagnose ist der Nachweis einer homosexuellen Psyche, einer seelischen Triebrichtung, die sich von dem als Liebe bezeichneten Gefühlskomplex, der den Mann zum Weibe und das Weib zum Manne zieht, nur dadurch unterscheidet, daß sie sich Personen zuwendet, die dem gleichen Geschlecht angehören"; 40). Elena Mancini explains that because Hirschfeld believed that "sexual differences were ex-

pressed in the variation of four different categories: the sex organs, other physical characteristics, the sexual drive, and psychological characteristics," homosexuality could not be traced to one factor, instead it "was the product of a composite of factors that could not be isolated" (*Magnus Hirschfeld* 63), and thus could not be singled out and "cured." Both Ulrichs and Hirschfeld believed in the liberating potential of science. For them, science proved that there was no fault to be assigned to the homosexual man or woman for his or her desires, and thus they did not deserve to be persecuted for them. Enlightened discourse and public education could bring about legal and social reform. In England, this belief also had followers.

## The Third Sex in England

Ulrichs's third-sex theory reached English readers through John Addington Symonds. Two months after meeting Ulrichs in Italy in 1891, he privately published the essay "A Problem in Modern Ethics," which, in dealing with homosexuality and its role in society, references Ulrichs and his *Forschungen* as well as critically assesses contemporary research being undertaken on the Continent in the field of sexual science. Symonds challenged degenerationist sexology through historical and cultural discourses, namely through Greek love. "The truth is that ancient Greece offers insuperable difficulties to theorists who treat sexual inversion exclusively from the points of view of neuropathy, tainted heredity, and masturbation" (*Symonds and Homosexuality* 147). He argues that "An Englishman or a Frenchman who loves the male sex must be diagnosed as tainted with disease; while Sophocles, Pindar, Pheidias, Epaminondas, Plato, are credited with yielding to an instinct which was healthy in their times because society accepted it. . . . The bare fact that ancient Greece tolerated, and that modern Europe refuses to tolerate sexual inversion, can have nothing to do with the etiology, the pathology, the psychological definition of the phenomenon in its essence" (146). Symonds felt that if he were to correct these "errors," he would "need somebody of medical importance to collaborate with" (*Letters* 3: 797). So he began work on a psychological study of "sexual inversion" with a young and then unknown physician named Henry Havelock Ellis (1859–1939). Sean Brady posits, however, that although Ellis was the medical authority on the project, "Sexual Inversion was Symonds' brainchild" (*Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain* 191). Joseph Bristow notes that "Given Symonds's extensive reservations about sexology" the collaboration with the young scientist was perhaps atypical for the poet and scholar ("Symonds's History, Ellis's Heredity: Sexual Inversion" 91). Although Symonds did not completely reject physiology playing a role, the "task of *A Problem in Modern Ethics* was to contest practically every major sexologist and scientific theorist who engaged with the vexed topic of homosexuality" (87). Heike Bauer explains that Symonds found sexology lacking because science did not historicize same-sex desire "in relation to its high status within Greek culture, and hence fails to see the social value of the phenomenon" (*English Literary Sexology* 61). Symonds did not live to witness the realization of this work which produced *Sexual*



*Inversion* (first published in Germany in 1896 and in England the following year), the first English medical textbook of homosexuality.

In *Sexual Inversion*, Ellis posits that "true homosexuality"—as opposed to situational perversion which might occur in prison or other places where usual sexual outlets were unavailable—was simply a harmless sexual abnormality resultant from a congenital predisposition toward inversion. Symonds compared homosexuality to color-blindness, whereas Ellis preferred an analogy to color-hearing "in which there is not so much defect, as an abnormality of nervous tracks producing new and involuntary combinations. Just as the colour-hearer instinctively associates colours with sounds, . . . so the invert has his sexual sensations brought into relationship with objects that are normally without sexual appeal" (Ellis and Symonds 204). For Ellis, inverted sexual instinct is a manifestation of abnormality, meaning deviation from norms of a given social situation; he distinguishes between abnormality and disease and adopts the term "anomaly" in order to better emphasize that "the study of the abnormal is perfectly distinct from the study of the morbid" (205). Both "A Problem in Modern Ethics" and *Sexual Inversion*, writes Ivan Crozier, were written with the intent to advance legal views of same-sex relations ("The Medical Construction of Homosexuality" 79). The latter study concludes with a solid appeal for legal reform in which Ellis argues that laws forbidding sex acts between males do nothing to curb these practices, but instead persecute individuals whose sexual nature is no fault of their own. "I am of the opinion that neither 'sodomy' . . . nor 'gross indecency' ought to be penal offences, except under certain special circumstances. . . . It should be the function of the law in this matter to prevent violence, to protect the young, and to preserve public order and decency" (Ellis and Symonds 220). This appeal itself may seem to the modern reader tentative, but to assume this position two years after the Wilde trials was certainly daring, hence incurring the wrath of Scotland Yard, and even more so considering that not even this modest aim would be achieved for another seventy years. Banned in Britain upon its publication, the second edition was released through an American publishing house in 1901, becoming the second volume of Ellis's long-term project *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. From this edition onwards, *Sexual Inversion* did not carry Symonds's name at his family's request (Crozier, "Introduction" 65–67).

Edward Carpenter's vision of the Uranian love of comrades (discussed in chapter 3) is a key aspect of a wider platform of "sexual Utopianism" and social reform. He clearly saw himself as carrying on Symonds's work, posits Brady. Carpenter takes steps to combine the cultural-historical approach of Symonds with the biomedical framework of Ellis. But he does so in a way which allowed him to develop "his ideas on the subject in a direction that was a distinct departure from either Ellis' or Symonds'" (Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain* 204). What resulted was an ennoblement of the third sex by means of invocations of Greek love, Hellenic ideals, and an interpretation of the homoerotic aesthetic of Whitman's verse, through which Carpenter fashions a powerfully affirmative homosexual identity. In one of his most circulated texts, *The Intermediate Sex*, he expounds a theory

of homosexuality—in which he refers to Ulrichs's scientific underpinnings and employs the German theorist's terms—that insists upon the health and normality of Uranians. Although extreme cases of inversion do occur, he writes, these are rare; sexual intermediates are mostly "quite normal and unsensational" physically (*The Intermediate Sex* 31). "In fact, while these extreme cases are of the greatest value from a scientific point of view as marking tendencies and limits of development in certain directions, it would be a serious mistake to look upon them as representative cases of the whole phases of human evolution concerned" (32). Carpenter does not only assert the health, sanity, and vitality of Uranians against prevailing discourses of pathology or vice and sexual license; he also insists upon the superiority of intersexed individuals, arguing that intersexuality is a sign of evolutionary progress. In the future, they will be instrumental in bridging rifts between the sexes and between the classes. "It is probable that the superior Urnings will become, in affairs of the heart, to a large extent the teachers of future society." Their intermediary qualities, the blending of male and female characteristics, place them in a unique position: "it is not difficult to see that these people have a special work to do as reconcilers and interpreters of the two sexes to each other" (*The Intermediate Sex* 14). Furthermore, the intermediate sex holds the key to lasting social reform as "Eros is a great leveler. Perhaps true Democracy rests, more firmly than anywhere else, on a sentiment which easily passes the bounds of class and caste, and unites in closest affection the most estranged ranks of society" (114–15). The relationship between Carpenter, an upper-middle class social-sexual activist, and Merrill, a working class man, attempts to enact this belief. With his novel, *Maurice*, Forster fictionalizes this relationship as well as the intermediate or third-sex theories that accompany it.

### "Those cold psychic-sexual terms"

Prime-Stevenson had read Symonds and Ellis's *Sexual Inversion*, but it appears as if he was not terribly impressed with it. "There is nothing of the sort in English," he writes of his own study, *The Intersexes*, "in spite of numerous contributions toward this or that aspect, by English-writing psychiatrists of more or less weight. For, such larger things as those by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds . . . are far from adequate; dealing with pathologic conditions, with only limited 'typic' aspects, and are too much from and for exclusively a professional-psychiatric standpoint" ("Letter to Paul Elmer More" 135). The liberationist intent of *Sexual Inversion* was overlooked by one of the very individuals it hoped to assist. It was the German sexologists, the works of both Ulrichs and Hirschfeld, as well as that of Krafft-Ebing, which enabled Prime-Stevenson to formulate his own vision of a "Uranian" identity. The debt he owes to German sexology is evident in his defense of homosexuality *The Intersexes*, which was published two years after the novel, but, as the author explains in the study's preface, was prepared around 1900 (x). Prime-Stevenson explains that the primary intent of his study was to summarize current research and trends in the science of sexuality in order to make them accessible to an English-speaking reader-

ship. He describes *The Intersexes* as offering the reader, particularly "the individual layman, intelligently inclined to social sciences," a condensed survey of the field of sexological inquiry into homosexuality as these studies "are not primarily in English." He writes that his study is not intended for "active professional psychiatrists, of any nationality," but he notes also that as "British and American physicians are not well-informed on such lines," they too "may find the present survey of service" (x). The main way he achieves his aim with this study is through translation. In addition to printing original case histories of homosexual individuals, *The Intersexes* translates cases and extracts from Ulrichs, Hirschfeld, Krafft-Ebing, and others. His presentation of a third-sex conception, with homosexual men (Uranians) and women (Uranians) forming "intersexes" between the male and the female (16), indicates his primary theoretical debt to the writings of Ulrichs and the studies of Hirschfeld. The aim of his study is first to offer homosexual men and women positive images of themselves and their "race" and a self-concept liberated from societal opprobrium through the means of science, and second to educate the heterosexual reader in order to earn tolerance, understanding, and respect from the majority for this minority. In the same vein as his contemporaries in Britain, Symonds, Carpenter, and Ellis, Prime-Stevenson employs sexology in his writings as a tool in the effort toward homosexual liberation. *Imre: A Memorandum* is the other essential component in Prime-Stevenson's writing campaign. The novel and the study work in different, but nevertheless complementary, ways toward achieving his goal.

In *Imre*, the pathological hypothesis, whose "narrow psychologic conventions" (32) characterize same-sex desire as a "diseased, leprous, [and] gangrened" hereditary taint (89), forms a chief moralistic censure of same-sex sexuality from which the characters struggle to liberate themselves. When Oswald is confronted directly by a character personifying conventional morality, this attack is loaded not in terms of the Sin of Sodom—as it is when Maurice confesses he is an "unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort"—but rather is phrased in terms of disease and crime. "Society needs more policemen than it has," declares a character to whom Oswald makes a confession of his sexuality, "to protect itself from such lepers as you!" (99). Before Oswald can free himself of this opprobrium and arrive at an understanding of his Uranian sexual and gender identity as the "supreme phase" of masculinity, he first conceptualizes his desire in terms of pathology. Degenerationist sexological thought is channeled most insidiously through the American physician whose pronouncements initially seem to offer hope to the protagonist. Oswald recounts to Imre that he read "a serious work, on abnormalisms in mankind; a book partly psychologic, partly medico-psychiatric" (90–91) by "a specialistic physician in nervous diseases [and] abnormal conditions of the mind" (91). Akin to Fenny Skaller's reading of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Oswald discovers himself in the study. "It described myself, my secret, unrestful self, with an unsparing exactness" (91). He learns "that responsible physicians, great psychologists . . . knew of men like myself and took them as serious problems for study" (91). At this point in his personal trajectory toward self-awareness, he is desperate for answers; the fact that the text speaks of homosexual desire as pathological

and "Curable, absolutely 'curable'" (91) does not cause him alarm. When the author of this treatise visits London, Oswald arranges a consultation, but the diagnosis he receives only serves to complicate his quest for self-knowledge. "Your case, my dear sir, is the easier [to cure]," the physician informs him, "because you suffer in a sentimental and sexual way from what we call the obsession of a set, distinct Type, you see; instead of a general—h'm, how shall I style it—morbidity of your inclinations. It is largely mere imagination! You say you have never really 'realized' this haunting masculine Type which has given you such trouble? My dear sir, don't think any more about such nonsense! You never will 'realize' it in any way. . . . Too much *thought* of it all, my dear friend! Too much introspection, idealism, sedentary life, dear sir! Yes, yes, you must *marry*" (91–92). Thus, unlike most of this specialist's patients who suffer from a "morbid state of certain sexual-sensory nerve-centers," Oswald is not diseased at all; rather his homosexual desire is "nonsense," "mere imagination," a fixation which has been exacerbated by an intellectual, leisure-class life. Initially, this figure seems to represent advanced and enlightened views, but he merely regurgitates old prejudices disguised as cutting-edge diagnoses and treatments. This issue was obviously a pressing one for Prime-Stevenson, who devotes a chapter to marriage as a false "cure" for homosexuality in *The Intersexes* (530–54). Despite the seeming setback for Oswald, this episode is of importance as it helps Oswald realize that, contradictory to the physician's pronouncement, his passion is neither a mental "abnormalism" nor a product of his imagination. This medical diagnosis empowers him to formulate a very different self-diagnosis.

The theme of the Uranian as the extreme on the spectrum of manhood is recurrent in *Imre*. This is a key defense against not merely cultural discourses that associated same-sex desire with effeminacy and decadence (see chapter 6), but also related medical theories that placed same-sex desire in the realm of pathology and nervous disorder. Oswald discourses to Imre that Uranians are men who "have not in body, in mind, nor in all the sum of our virility, in all the detail of our outward selves, any womanish trait! Not one! It is only the ignoramus and the vulgar who nowadays think or talk of the homosexual as if he were a—hermaphrodite. In every feature and line and sinew and muscle, in every movement and accent and capability, we walk the world's ways as men" (85). It is not surprising, given the prevailing attitudes of the era, that Oswald conflates biological sex with gender, the latter of which has come to be recognized as more largely a matter of culture than the former. On the one hand, Oswald asserts that physically the Uranian is indistinguishable from a Dionian, a "normal" man. On the other hand, he speaks of the homosexual as manly in terms of "accent and capability," in "traits," and "outward selves." Thus, in other words, the homosexual fulfills the masculine gender role as well as (if not better than) any heterosexual man. In the author's study *The Intersexes*, Prime-Stevenson stresses that in most cases the Uranian or Uraniad (homosexual man and woman, respectively) are not physically distinguishable from ordinary men and women. "Nothing in the Uranistic physique necessarily differs in the least from the normal man. What is more, a magnificently masculine physique often conceals the sex—the

intersex from observation" (78). Differing to Hirschfeld, who sought indications of intermediate sexuality in the "homosexual psyche" as well as in physical attributes, the crossing of genders and sexes in the novel is limited to the soul, and does not extend to the body (see also Fone, *Homophobia* 361). Masculinity, manliness, and health are tightly bound together in this literary text. It is intimated that femininity or "womanishness" in the male is indicative of degeneration. The crossing of sexes/genders is radically restricted, manifest exclusively in terms of sexual attraction.

This theme is communicated not only in Oswald's confession to Imre, but also by his characterization of the beloved, which fills much of "Masks," part one of the novel (35–69). It is an exposition which is overtly geared to support his claims about the Uranian. Imre is described as follows: "Of middle height, he possessed a slender figure, faultless in proportions, lightness, and elegance. His athletic powers were renowned in his regiment. He was among the crack gymnasts, vaulters, and swimmers . . . Yet all this force, this muscular address, was concealed by the symmetry of his graceful, elastic frame. Not till he was nude, and one could trace the ripple of muscle and sinew under the fine hairless skin, did one realize the machinery of such strength" (51–52). This rendering of the character's athleticism and physique no doubt serves an aesthetic function in the narrative: it is homoerotic titillation. Gifford writes that Imre is a "masturbatory figure, a hyper-masculine ideal" epitomizing "the apotheosis of a gay man's desire" (Introduction 20). But its central purpose is to support the didactic and reform aims of the novel. Imre symbolizes the "high-grade Uranian" as the physical apex of manhood. Prime-Stevenson draws on Greek sculptural imagery (as Aschenbach does with Tadzio): Imre possesses a "Hellenic exterior," his body is hairless (unlike Maurice's), a trait which reinforces the affinity to Hellenic representations of ideal male beauty. These images of manly vitality and male beauty, writes George Mosse, derived from classical sources which, in addition to being essential reference points for the depiction of homoeroticism and male-male desire, were central to society's construction of masculine gender discourses. In the eighteenth century, "As the male body assumed ever-more importance as symbolic of true masculinity, greater attention had to be paid to its development, as well as to setting a specific standard of masculine beauty" which "took its inspiration from Greece" (Mosse, *The Image of Man* 28). The homosexual or sodomite, writes Mosse, was thought to represent a "countertype" to normative masculinity, threatening to the masculine role in his ability to cross gender barriers (66–67). Furthermore, the wide ranging economic, social, and cultural changes of the second half of the nineteenth century contributed to anxiety about "degeneration" reaching fever pitch, fuelled by writings such as Max Nordau's *Entartung* (English translation published in 1895). Manliness and physical fitness were regarded as the means to avoid national crises (see Greenslade, "Fitness and the Fin de Siècle" 45–49). Prime-Stevenson subverts these discourses in order to prove that an assumed "countertype" of masculinity in actuality embodies these ideals better than most "normal" men. Imre's physical prowess asserts the health and virility of the homosexual man, refuting conceptualizations that presuppose same-sex desire as a "diseased, leprous, gangrened" sexual impulse (89).

Oswald recounts to Imre that after his consultation with the American specialist he intends to follow his recommendation and marry (93). These plans, though, are derailed when Oswald meets a man who "quickened within me the same unspeakable sense of a mysterious bond of soul and of body—the Man-Type which owned me and ever must own me, soul and body together" (93–94). Oswald discovers that the intensity of such emotion could not be written off as "mere imagination." He confesses himself and his love to this man; however, this disclosure reaps scorn rather than understanding (99). His life is shattered, and he becomes estranged from his previous existence. Painful though the experience is, it allows Oswald to begin to gain more understanding of himself and his sexual subjectivity. He describes to Imre that he realizes that "I had no disease. I was simply what I was born!—a complete human being, of firm, perfect physical and mental health; outwardly in full key with all the man's world: but in spite of that, a being who from birth was of a vague, special sex; a member of a sex *within* the most obvious sexes; or apart from them. I was created as a man perfectly male, save in one thing which keeps such a 'man' back from [the] possibility of ever becoming integrally male—this terrible, instinctive demand for a psychic and physical union with a man—not with a woman" (95–96). After he arrives at this plainly third-sex understanding of himself and his love for other men, Oswald accidentally encounters "a mass of serious studies, German, Italian, French, English, from the chief European specialists and theorists on the similisexual topic" (96), through which he learns of "the theories and facts of homosexuality, of the Uranian Love, of the Uranian Race," and that "secondary sexes" exist between the male and female sexes (96). This is an overt incorporation into the text of this liberationist school of sexological thought. In this way it is as if the novel were an essay in the form of a work of fiction. The author writes of it in *The Intersexes* as being penned "with more serious purpose than entertainment" (369). That Oswald deduces the existence of an intermediate, third sex before encountering sexological treatises, which deal with same-sex sexuality in these terms, indicates the understanding that the author seeks to put forward, that this conception reflects the actuality of homosexual experience and thus the truth of the homosexual disposition, rather than him being merely influenced by these works.

The reader might expect Oswald's confession to impart knowledge or even awakening to Imre, but this is not the case as the latter is also well acquainted with the psychiatric study of homosexuality. He has consulted a "great Viennese psychiatrist" who diagnoses his "inborn homosexuality" (118). This is Prime-Stevenson's tribute to Krafft-Ebing, whom he describes as the inspiration behind his study, *The Intersexes*, and to whom he dedicated that work. Prime-Stevenson writes in a letter to Paul Elmer More that Krafft-Ebing "himself urged me to write this book: went (years ago) over every detail of its plan with me, chapter by chapter; and gave what he saw of it before his sudden death in Vienna, his fullest approval" ("Letter to Paul Elmer More" 136). It seems a contradiction that the psychiatrist most responsible for the conception of same-sex desire as a morbid phenomenon, a sign of hereditary degeneration, should receive a positive mention in this novel which actively resists

this manner of characterization of homosexuality. Krafft-Ebing's work, despite assigning pathology to homosexual desire, was an important resource for homosexual men and women. Oosterhuis and Heike Bauer describe how increased contact with homosexuals caused Krafft-Ebing to readdress his theories (Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature* 211–71; H. Bauer, *English Literary Sexology* 32–33). Oosterhuis characterizes the contact as a dialogue between physician and patient in which the latter "began to influence the production of medical knowledge." He posits that the "case histories and autobiographical accounts of Krafft-Ebing's patients demonstrate that perverts did not always passively accept external conditions of action; they rather responded to social constraints in different ways, reflected upon them, and reconstituted them in the light of their particular circumstances" (12). These homosexual readers were able to cause the psychiatrist to change his attitude toward their sexuality. Heinrich Ammerer explains: "Krafft-Ebing's relationship with homosexuality transformed between his first treatise in 1877 and his death. From an interested, but clinically neutral, observer, he became an advocate for homosexuals who campaigned with a great deal of empathy for their exemption from punishment" ("Krafft-Ebings Verhältnis zur Homosexualität wandelte sich zwischen seiner ersten Abhandlung 1877 und seinem Tod. Aus einem interessierten, aber nüchternen Beobachter wurde ein Fürsprecher der Homosexuellen, der sich mit großer Empathie für deren Straffreiheit einsetzte"; *Am Anfang war die Perversion* 283). Oosterhuis argues that the case histories of a study like Krafft-Ebing's offered homosexuals a resource for forging identities and created a space for self-expression (229–30). This must have been how the author of *Imre* viewed it. The Viennese specialist whom Imre consults stands in contrast to the "well-meaning but far too conclusive Yankee doctor" (96): the former offers consolation, advising Imre not to marry (118). "The Austrian doctor had not a little comforted and strengthened Imre morally; warning him away from despising himself: from thinking himself alone, and a sexual pariah; from over-morbid sufferings" (118).

The taxonomy, thought structures, not to mention methods of liberationist sexology (i.e., the use of the case history with its emphasis placed upon confession) leave an indelible imprint upon the text; but this novel is more than just a fictionalization of a medical case history. There are two elements which enact a criticism of the field of sexological inquiry. First, the text indicates that its coalescence with this discourse is not entirely harmonious: the recurrent motif of the "mystery of love" provides a certain degree of resistance to the methods of sexual science. At one point in the narrative, Imre rails against the assumptions and methods of sexology: "thou [Oswald] art made in thy nature as God makes mankind, as each and all. . . . We are what we are! This terrible life of ours . . . this existence that men insist on believing is almost all to be understood nowadays—probed through and through—decided! . . . but that ever was and will be just *mystery*" (104; emphasis added). Oswald too doubts that the riddles of the human heart can be dissected and systematized by medicine. Even as he assigns, or at least attempts to assign, sexological labels to his friend. "Uranian? Similosexual? Homosexual? Dionian? Profound and often all too

oppressive, even terrible, can be the significance of those cold psychic-sexual terms to the man who—'knows'! *To the man who 'knows'!* Even more terrible to those who understand them not" (64). The "mystery of love" motif recurs in the text, allowing it to access literary discourses beyond the rational and empirical, thus representing a source of resistance to the novel's immersion in sexological thought.

Second, shortcomings in the third-sex theory platform become evident when contrasting Imre's sense of his sexual identity with that of Oswald. As noted above, both characters have had access to progressive sexology. Imre's consultation with the "great Viennese psychiatrist" brings him little consolation; from this humane platform he merely gains some respite from societal contempt and learns to accept "himself as an excusable bit of creation" (120). Science and sympathy prove simply not to be enough. Imre twice contemplates suicide, sensing "how widely despised, mocked, and loathed is the Uranian Race" and "how sordid and debasing are the average associations of the homosexual kind" (120). He does not view his intermediacy in terms of gender and sexuality as an advantage, primarily because he has not had access to the cultural and historical discourses which empower Oswald to speak of Uranism in terms of vitality, creativity, and superiority. Imre lacks the discourses of Greek love that form the core of Oswald's identity.

Third-sex sexology impacts the text greatly. It provides a framework for conceptualizing love and desire between men, a nomenclature for naming this sexuality and the men who experience it, and it shapes the narrative form, but sexology is not the sole discourse to direct the text. Cultural-historical models and romantic literary topoi are key determining elements of this "autobiography," this "mysterious and profoundly personal incident" from Oswald's and Imre's lives (32).

### "'Rubbish, rubbish!' was his natural reply"

In *Maurice*, medical discourse does not encroach on the narrative until after the protagonist has passed from under the sway of Clive's Hellenism. For Maurice, his same-sex desire becomes an affliction after an encounter in a commuter train compartment with a "stout and greasy-faced" elderly man, who propositions him with "a lascivious sign." This incident is a warning for Maurice because he "saw in this disgusting and dishonourable old age his own" (131). He attempts to avoid this fate by turning to the medical community for help. Maurice "loathed the idea of a doctor," but he invites the idea of punishment for his sexual desire and "he assumed a doctor would punish him": "He could undergo any course of treatment on the chance of being cured, and even if he wasn't he would be occupied and have fewer minutes for brooding" over how "he had failed to kill [his] lust singlehanded" (131). His consultations with two doctors demonstrate a generational gap in the medical community concerning sex psychology and how to classify homosexuality. First, Maurice casually asks a younger doctor, Jowitt, about "unspeakables of the Oscar Wilde sort." Dr. Jowitt associates homosexuality with psychological illness, but claims no knowledge of the field, "that's asylum work, thank God" (131). Although disappoint-



ed by the doctor's disavowal, Maurice adopts medical nomenclature. He considers consulting a "specialist, but did not know whether there were any for his *disease*" (132; emphasis added). Later, he admits to "trustworthy" Dr. Barry that he belongs to this unspeakable sort. However, the older and more conservative Dr. Barry views sex psychology as "suspect" because of the recentness of the studies and the fact that they are published in German (136)—presumably either Barry cannot read German or the fact that they are published in German necessarily entails suspicion, or both.

Both doctors in *Maurice* demonstrate what Brady describes as a "deliberate 'unknowing'" of homosexuality (*Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain* 212), and in particular they highlight resistance among British medical professionals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries "to regard homosexuality as a subject fit for scientific enquiry" (10). Thus, for Barry, Maurice's condition is neither a medical nor a psychological issue: it is an "evil hallucination," a "temptation from the devil" (134). Dr. Barry "held that only the most depraved could glance at Sodom, and so, when a man of good antecedents and physique confessed the tendency, 'Rubbish, rubbish!' was his natural reply" (136). However, a contradiction exists in Dr. Barry's opinion. First, same-sex desire is a "temptation from the devil" that conceivably anyone, even Maurice or he himself, could fall under. Second, the sodomite is a type of person, "the most depraved," someone from poor antecedents and of weak physical condition who has a "tendency" toward this behavior. Although he rejects homosexuality as a medical condition, he echoes the views held by the psycho-degenerative theorists. Maurice cannot be "an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort" (134), so Dr. Barry reasons, his health, heredity, and sanity contradict the possibility. Maurice begs Dr. Barry for help, "What is it? Am I diseased? If I am, I want to be cured" (134), but he gains nothing from his encounter with medical science "except the belief that doctors are fools" (138). This is a difficult lesson for Maurice, but a valuable one nonetheless. As with Oswald, Maurice learns that his desire is neither a form of mental illness, nor "imagination," nor an "evil hallucination." Both characters' encounters with the medical profession enable them to be critical of the purported authority of so-called science.

Maurice's attempt to seek a cure for his sexuality does not stop here though. Risley offers him the name of a hypnotist, to whom Maurice turns in the hope of re-orientating his sexual desire. Nevertheless, he mistrusts this "science"; he feels that he "was putting himself into the hands of a quack" and associates "hypnotism with séances and blackmail" (155). Maurice's opinion changes somewhat when he meets Jones who is "what an advanced scientific man ought to be," namely, he is "sallow and expressionless" and offers Maurice a "bloodless hand" (155). The session is marked by detachment. "It was as if they met to discuss a third party." Jones "neither praised nor blamed nor pitied" (155). During the first session, though, "Maurice yearned for sympathy" (156); however, later he readjusts his expectations and, in the second session, delights in the scientific dispassionateness. "What a comfort the man was! Science is better than sympathy, if only it is science" (183). Maurice still questions whether hypnotism really is science, and thus his skepticism never

completely leaves him. From the case history Maurice provides, Jones diagnoses "congenital homosexuality." Maurice asks, "Congenital how much? Well, can anything be done?" (158). This is the first time this term is used in the narrative. Jones provides the label, "homosexual," an interpellation which Maurice never uses to identify himself. Jones then employs hypnosis to test how deeply the "tendency" is rooted (156). This is no doubt an intentional mixing of terminology. That Maurice's homosexuality is "congenital," or inborn, but the hypnotist tests how deeply it is rooted, highlights the flaws in this "science." The novel is primarily taking aim at the belief that sexual orientation can or ought to be cured. The portrayal in *Maurice* is an amalgamation of elements of sex psychology, popular pseudoscience, and psychoanalysis (then in its infancy in Britain), which are mixed in order to highlight the absurdity, not to mention the error, of attempting to realign natural sexual constitutions to conform to arbitrary cultural norms. Jones seems to run a good business treating deviant desire; he admits to Maurice upfront that three fourths of his patients approach him for this treatment—while only fifty per cent of these are successfully re-orientated toward women. What happens to this other half? For Maurice, who is counted among the unsuccessful cases, exile is proffered as the only option: "I'm afraid I can only advise you to live in some country that has adopted the Code Napoleon" (183). A key difference to the earlier encounters with embodiments of medical science is that neither hypnosis nor the sessions with Jones are rejected outright by the novel. They do have their use as a plot device: initiating Maurice's estrangement from his position in society, triggering the dream that brings Alec to his room (165–66), and allowing Maurice to form his own vision of love between men. The second session with Jones opens Maurice to the possibility of reaching his own conclusions. Maurice acquires the knowledge he needs to build a sexual identity apart from Clive's romanticized Hellenism and Dr. Barry's demonized "evil hallucination." "It comes to this then: there always have been people like me and always will be, and generally they have been persecuted." But they need not necessarily be. "Men of my sort could take to the greenwood" (183). Hypnosis and the sessions with Jones are no "cure" for homosexuality; they are however a plot device that catalyzes important events. Hypnosis and the field of knowledge Jones represents are foreign, cold, and impersonal, but allow Maurice to conceptualize an "English" greenwood relationship with Alec.

The novel portrays Maurice as a "healthy normal Englishman" (58). The pairing of health and manliness in a homosexual character is Forster's greatest challenge to many of the prevailing medical discourses; but unlike *Imre*, *Maurice* does not overplay these attributes of the central character. The way in which the author accomplishes this is by fashioning "a character who was completely unlike myself or what I supposed myself to be," as he writes in the novel's terminal note. Maurice is "handsome, healthy, bodily attractive, mentally torpid, not a bad business man and rather a snob" (216). Above all he appears to be a "normal" Englishman, read "heterosexual." For instance, Clive's impression of Maurice is that "Hall was a man who only liked women—one could tell that at a glance"

(57). Forster realizes that an effete or artistic homosexual would not challenge prevailing stereotypes in the way he intended with this text. His character must be radically different. For defying psychopathological discourses, the constellation of the attributes "handsome, healthy, [and] bodily attractive" is key. As a boy, Maurice is no bookish weakling; instead "He was a plump, pretty lad, not in any way remarkable" (2). Upon reaching manhood he is a perfect specimen of health and virility. Looking in the mirror, Maurice "thought, 'A mercy I'm fit.' He saw a well-trained serviceable body and a face that contradicted it no longer. Virility had harmonized them and shaded either with dark hair" (95). And in the epilogue to the novel, which the author cut from the final version, Maurice's health reaches its climax. "Beneath the exterior a new man throbbed—tougher, more centralized, in as good form as ever, but formed in a fresh mould, where muscles and sunburn proceed from an inward health" (222). Like Imre, Maurice is not only a desiring subject, but also an object of desire. These two characters contrast with the evocations of male beauty in the two German texts that rhapsodize adolescent, ephebic beauty which is associated with immaturity or often with feminine ideals. Whereas Aschenbach compares Tadzio to "Boy with Thorn," Imre is an Adonis or Antinous; *Maurice*, though, breaks away from this recourse to the Greeks. That his face and body are "shaded" with dark hair and his skin is "sunburned" emphasize that Maurice is a living specimen, in contrast to the sculptural imagery applied to the other objects of desire. This juxtaposition is made explicit when Maurice and Alec are in the British Museum. Maurice's "colour stood out against the heroes," they are "perfect but bloodless" (194). Maurice's beauty is not idealized; the character is constructed in terms of his typicality, Englishness, Imperial prowess: he is a pillar of British society. "What a solid young citizen he looked—quiet, honourable, prosperous without vulgarity. On such does England rely" (130). This is where the attributes "mentally torpid, not a bad business man and rather a snob" come into play. Maurice is not an exceptional figure, but an ordinary one. And herein is invested *Maurice's* subversiveness. In the way that Imre embodies a transnational discourse of masculinity based upon Greco-Roman ideals which were circulated, according to Mosse's research, throughout Western Europe since the eighteenth century (Mosse, *The Image of Man* 17–39), Maurice epitomizes a nineteenth- and early twentieth-century image of English Imperial masculinity, whereby the novel asserts the normality, health, and above all the Englishness of this homosexual figure.

The third-sex theory, I argue, is a powerful force behind the narrative action of *Maurice*. While Hirschfeld charted feminization of the body of the homosexual male in his research into sexual intermediaries, for Ulrichs, Carpenter, and Prime-Stevenson, physique was not an indicator of sex: the third-sex body was a "true" man's body. Ulrichs writes, in "Memnon," only the soul, not the body, belongs to the other sex. "The actual physical build of an Urning, when naked, never shows any femininity" (*The Riddle of "Man-Manly" Love* 1: 305, note 88) ("Der eigentliche bloße Körperbau eines Urnings, Construction und Form, zeigt

wohl nie etwas weibliches"; *Forschungen 2*: 9, note 6). Carpenter reiterates this belief in *The Intermediate Sex*: "in bodily structure there is, as a rule, nothing to distinguish the subjects of our discussion from ordinary men and women" (27). For Symonds and Carpenter, the feminine soul does not manifest itself overtly in the subject, who is able to pass in every respect as "normal" in society, except through his sexual preference. Indeed, as in the way that Forster portrays Maurice, many Uranians are the epitome of physical masculinity: "many are fine, healthy specimens of their sex, muscular and well-developed in body . . . with nothing abnormal or morbid of any kind observable in their physical structure or constitution" (*The Intermediate Sex* 23). Thus the contradiction between the work of Ulrichs and Whitman that allegedly marks the work of Symonds and Carpenter is perhaps overestimated in Fletcher's essay. In the Uranian, writes Carpenter, "we find a man who, while possessing thoroughly masculine powers of mind and body, combines with them the tenderer and more emotional soul-nature of the woman" (32). Forster's novel hints at this "soul-nature" through the protagonist's inner sensitivity. "A slow nature such as Maurice's appears insensitive, for it needs time even to feel. . . . Once gripped, it feels acutely, and its sensations in love are particularly profound. Given time, it can know and impart ecstasy; given time, it can sink to the heart of Hell" (45). Although Maurice conforms outwardly to ideals of masculinity at school, such notions run counter to his temperament. "He did not enjoy being cruel and rude. It was against his nature. But it was necessary at school, or he might have gone under" (19). Living up to what society expects of the young man is a struggle. He passes as "normal," but not without a degree of anguish. The capacity for self-sacrifice is in the novel the most prominent indicator of the "gentle, emotional disposition" of the Uranian (*The Intermediate Sex* 27). It takes the form of the willingness to sacrifice for one's "friend." Maurice dreams of this friend as a boy: "He could die for such a friend, he would allow such a friend to die for him; they would make any sacrifice for each other, and count the world nothing, neither death nor distance nor crossness could part them" (12). In Alec he discovers this "friend," and they willingly relinquish society to take to the greenwood as outlaws.

The third-sex theory is not overt in *Maurice*, and sexological language does not play a key narrative function as it does in *Imre*. Physicians are not the champions of enlightenment that they are in Prime-Stevenson's text, and Maurice and Alec do not employ the taxonomical structures of sexology to understand and discuss their sexual drives toward other men as Oswald and Imre do. Nonetheless, the intermediate sex interpretation of homosexual desire is present in the text. Maurice and Alec illustrate the type of homosexual man described by Symonds and Carpenter. From the beginning, critics have recognized the underlying debt Forster owed to Carpenter in his portrayal of comrade love. One of the earliest of these readers was Lytton Strachey, who criticized the love relationship as "shades of Edward Carpenter" (*Maurice* 219). However, supporting this comrade love are Carpenter's interpretations of scientific theories of the intermediate sex.

## Conclusion

Although the four literary texts that are analyzed here and in previous chapter assume different and divergent approaches to fictionalizing contemporary sexological thought, all four are united in that they bring sexology further into the literary sphere. The third-sex theories of Ulrichs and Hirschfeld were an indispensable point of reference for Prime-Stevenson both in his own engagement with sexology, *The Intersexes*, and in his novel. The third sex reached Forster by way of Symonds's and Carpenter's efforts at sexual reform. *Imre* and *Maurice* novelize the third sex, the former overtly and the latter subtly, while at the same time emphasizing the health of the homosexual man which empowered them to reject medical and cultural discourses which characterize him as degenerate and mentally ill. Both texts, in their own distinct way, draw upon and concomitantly reach beyond sexological conceptions and the limits of sexological typification, thereby opening up the discourse for further-reaching depictions and discussions of same-sex desire.