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Chapter 11

'A story of treasure, war, and wild adventure': hero-worship, imperial masculinities, and inter-generational ideology in H. Rider Haggard's 1880s fiction

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As the Christmas holidays of 1885-86 drew to a close, George Salmon wrote a piece for the *Fortnightly Review*, pondering the selection of fiction on the market for boys' presents that year.[1] Bound in bright red cloth, emblazoned with gold lettering on the spine and an enticing collection of weaponry on its cover, 2000 copies of an attractive new book of this kind had appeared on booksellers' shelves that very autumn. The novel bore all the hallmarks that would characterise the most popular adventure fiction of its time: extreme temperatures, hostile landscapes, hidden treasure, heroic acts and three pale-skinned musketeers. *King Solomon's Mines* would become a bestseller and treasured favourite for generations to come. According to the *Saturday Review*, this was the most 'healthily exciting volume' for boys since *Treasure Island*, and it 'would be hard to say whether the piratical John Silver or the mysteriously aged witch Gagool (of *King Solomon's Mines*) strikes to the youthful heart with more delightful terror and apprehension.'[2]

The 1861 census recorded more than one million male youths aged between 10 and 14, and almost as many aged 15 to 19, in England and Wales alone. Kelly Boyd calculates that the audience for the 'new story paper' was between five and ten percent of the population.[3] A burgeoning market for adventure stories popularised novels and short stories in new juvenile periodicals such as *The Boy's Own Paper* (1879-1967).[4] This magazine interspersed first-person accounts of imperial battles with short fiction.[5] Militaristic hero-worship stories were by no means a new phenomenon in the mid 1880s when H. Rider Haggard became a bestseller. However, a timely combination of factors enabled the 'hero industry' to expand and thrive: the emergence of a larger market for toys and books for children, a rise in the disposable income of many middle-class families, the popular perception of imperial peace and success, the technology required for cheap mass production and a pervasive national mood of excitement and optimism.[6] These favourable conditions continued into the 1890s, as renewed public

support for Queen Victoria (and Empress of India) around the time of the 1897 Diamond Jubilee contributed to a spike in the popularity of imperial adventure fiction as it 'swept the people into a highly enjoyable craze of Empire… a pageant.'[7] In 1902, following the death of G. A. Henty (the bestselling writer in the 'adventure', 'quest', or 'Lost World' genre), *The Times* remarked that 'For many Christmas seasons, no books have been so eagerly expected and so gladly welcomed by boys as his.'[8] Nonetheless, his rival, Haggard, is more well-known today. He adopted a range of narrative techniques and plural models of martial masculinity to maximise the appeal of a literary genre which is, and was, derided by some as simplistic and formulaic.[9]

The timing of the publication of *King Solomon's Mines* was fundamental to its success, enabling Haggard to combine political shifts and emerging technologies with innovative characterisation. Appearing in print just months after the conclusion of the Berlin Conference (November 1845 – February 1885), the fictional hunter Allan Quatermain's accounts depicted the landscape of the recent past, shortly after the Anglo-Zulu War (1879) and just before the majority of the region he traverses came under British rule. 1885 also saw the development of Linotype and Monotype, implemented by Cassells to print 8,000 copies of *King Solomon's Mines* within three months.[10] Haggard chose a 'mature man' for most central characters, rather than versions of R. M. Ballantyne's 'adolescents performing adolescent feats for adolescent readers.'[11] Stephen Gray considers Quatermain an entirely different narrator from those who came before, and Haggard's 'one stroke of genius'.[12]

This chapter will investigate various ways in which *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), *Allan Quatermain* (1887) and *She* (1887) didactically encouraged the veneration of military masculinities in the form of a comprehensive system of hero-worship. However, these novels were not a straightforward call to arms. Haggard renegotiated earlier models of hero-worship to create fictional reports of pseudo-military African adventures which contributed to the cultural longevity of support for the British Empire and glamorised imperial careers. Sport has long been acknowledged as a valuable tool in constructing and sustaining martial masculine identity by encouraging comradeship in combat and the pursuit of a shared purpose, building physical strength and skill in competitive or combative situations. Similarly, a direct relationship may be drawn between adventure fiction and martial aspirations and skills. Bestselling novels by authors such as Haggard and Henty not only instilled imperial ideologies in new generations but blurred the lines between military and leisure pursuits. *King Solomon's*

Mines, Haggard's first major commercial success, published when he was 29, is often seen as 'the quintessential example of the genre, at its very best and at its very worst.'[13]

Haggard is best remembered for two particularly enigmatic leaders: the adventurous Allan Quatermain and the haunting Ayesha; 'She who must be obeyed'.[14] Quatermain is more than what Wendy Katz calls 'Haggard's version of Everyman'.[15] His blurring of military and civilian roles is a particularly potent recipe for hero-worship. As a retired elephant hunter with a detailed knowledge of local terrain and experience with weapons, Quatermain has appealing military skills, with independence and freedom instead of discipline and restraint. He meets Sir Henry Curtis and Captain John Good on a ship to Natal and agrees to help them find George (known as Neville). Curtis's younger brother had gone to Africa to seek his fortune after a quarrel about inheriting the family estate. After a series of Homeric near-death adventures across mountains and deserts, the three men find Neville too ill to be moved and return home with pockets filled with diamonds to retire as wealthy men. The search for a missing compatriot provides the moral impetus for a journey in which the men strive to locate, penetrate and take ownership of a legendary mine filled with gold, diamonds and ivory. At least for adult readers, it seems plausible that Gerald Monsmon is correct in surmising: 'Everyone knows that the trio in *King Solomon's Mines* went to Kukanaland for its diamonds; the rescue… served only as a convenient pretext for recovering Solomon's treasures.'[16] The male characters – pale-skinned former hunters and members of the armed forces – embody an intrinsically British colonial identity, becoming role models for new generations of middle- and upper-class boys, at whom Haggard's fiction was aimed in a project of Carlylean 'hero-worship.'

Haggard allowed his readership to assume that he was himself a heroic military man, despite having been solely employed in administration during his six years in South Africa. His influential father secured him an unpaid post as secretary to the Governor of Natal from the age of 19.[17] A succession of administrative roles meant that the realities of armed combat were at a distance, leaving his appetite for adventure unassuaged. His career in 'military-adjacent' rather than direct military action functioned as an impetus that not only spurred his idealisation of martial men, free from disillusionment, but also led him to embellish his plots and characterisation in innovative ways. His brand of military masculinity adapted in response to the defeats, as well as the victories, of imperial conflicts, and Haggard was actively engaged in inculcating an appealing form of military masculinity in his young readers, whom he considered

'sons'.[18] The following sections reveal how Haggard's fiction combined with other militaristic and imperialist cultural phenomena in the 1880s, and capitalised on print technology and conditions in the literary marketplace. Combined, they demonstrate how the author drew on the successes of the past, adjusted to present conditions, and negotiated an enduring legacy for his adventure fiction by engaging with ideological structures, military triumphs, and narrative techniques.

Identity and ideological apparatus

Didactic prefaces were widespread in children's novels during this period, and Haggard used them to target an explicitly inter-generational and exclusively male readership, boasting that there was 'not a *petticoat* in the whole history' of Quatermain.[19] Major publishing houses such as Nelson, Macmillan, and Blackie began to specialise in 'simple, direct adventure fiction' for boys, and neither supply nor demand for this central component of the hero 'industry' showed signs of slowing.[20] The apparent martyrdom of General Gordon at Khartoum in 1885 (several months before the publication of *King Solomon's Mines*) made him a hero in the media.[21] In 1884 *The Illustrated London News* explicitly connected Gordon to literary heroes, claiming that 'his achievements as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces from 1874 to 1879 were more wonderful than are to be found in the wildest Oriental romance.'[22] Accounts of the lives and deaths of prominent military men in newspapers, magazines and books sold in vast numbers, and were imitated in fiction for boys. Haggard's fiction both capitalised on this public appetite and ensured its appeal long after his death with various surprisingly shrewd strategies. Often dismissed as simple jingoistic bellicosity, Haggard's 1880s novels combine innovations in plot, characterisation, frontmatter and illustration, forging a unique strategy for the inculcation of inter-generation martial masculinities during the rise of New Imperialism.

As James Gibson has observed, when tied to nationhood, 'being a warrior is not an occupation but a male identity'.[23] Similarly, Haggard did more than glorify and promote military careers in the expansion of the imperial project by offering a lens through which young boys could imagine themselves becoming soldiers. He constructed and perpetuated a compelling ideal: a fully-formed identity beyond the merely military, comprised of an endless thirst for wild adventure; manly qualities of courage, bravery and endurance, rooted in

'muscular Christianity' (in the tradition of Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and Charles Kingsley's fiction), and heroic distinction in the service of queen and country. Haggard's 1880s novels reify the alleged virtues of the military in relation to empire and masculinity, depicting male identities that both constitute and are constituted by imperial instincts to control and subdue hostile, feminised African landscapes.[24] Unexpectedly, they also convey an acceptance, and even a celebration, of imperfect masculinities, which make their heroes more comic and more human.

Haggard's adventure fiction functioned as a highly effective example of what Louis Althusser (1970) terms 'Ideological State Apparatus', constructed through schools, the media, and sports (as opposed to 'Repressive State Apparatus' including the army and the courts).[25] In this context, fiction aimed at males across different generations can be seen as part of an attempt by the pro-Empire establishment to stabilise and reinforce concepts of ideal masculinity in the face of perceived national degeneration and weakness in the wake of revolts in India and Ireland. Accounts of real or fictitious war had to be tempered by moral justifications to gain widespread approval back home. The Zulu War raised questions about whether the 'civilising' project of imperial expansion justified mass bloodshed on both sides. One writer in the *Illustrated London News* demanded to know, 'Can we hammer civilisation into savage minds by sheer force? Have we any proof that such policy has been largely successful?'[26] While Henty's brand of hero-worship was limited to the explicitly military, Haggard's version made broader civilian, domestic, and homosocial connections to win hearts and minds. Furthermore, Haggard's readers witness relatively little bloodshed first hand. Silvestra's original map to King Solomon's Mines is written in blood, and Ayesha tells us that 'once in a generation' she 'slay[s] a score by torture' to maintain her rule of 'terror'.[27] Nonetheless, for Haggard's heroes the battle for survival is at least as much against heat and hostile landscapes as against armies of 'savages', broadening the scope of the forms that duty and self-sacrifice might take.

Contemporary pro-empire publications presented colonial expansion as a duty to the nation, to the Queen and to God. J. E. C. Welldon (Headmaster of Harrow, 1885-98 – the peak of Haggard's writing career), defined the spirit of empire as 'a strong and solemn consciousness that the British Empire had been divinely ordered as an instrument of freedom, justice and righteousness.'[28] This central tenet of British imperial masculinity had been gaining ground over the previous two to three decades. In 1861, a senior official in the Colonial Office had

argued that the success of the Empire was grounded in an explicitly militaristic 'sense of national honour', resulting from closely-knit constituent parts of the collective British (male) consciousness: 'pride of blood, tenacious spirit of self-defence, the sympathies of kindred communities, the instincts of a dominant race' and the 'generous desire to spread our civilisation and our religion over the world.'[29] However, evidence of some detractors in the press reveals a degree of ambivalence across the nation as a whole. In the pro-empire *Fortnightly Review*, William Watson observed an 'erroneous conception of the nature of true gentility' in the 'unseemly' violence of *Allan Quatermain*, and 'sighed' that Haggard's novels were 'the pabulum that is to go to the making of our future Sidneys and Falklands.'[30]

Schools, didactic novels and the promotion of the imperial hero

In 1888 a survey of schoolboys (attending various different kinds of schools) noted that *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) was the title most often listed as their favourite novel.[31] Adventure novels by Haggard and Henty were compared to this text more than any other, with many readers and critics tracing a direct lineage from *Crusoe* to *King Solomon* which centred on the heroic British male subduing exotic lands and their inhabitants. Masculine ideals of stoicism, physical and moral strength, rational thought, and pragmatism were major strands of this literary heritage. The narrative lent itself perfectly to the government's demand for healthy, dedicated soldiers to defend and expand the British Empire.[32] In boys' fiction through the late-Victorian period (and into the Edwardian era), the most popular role model was undoubtedly the military hero. The courage and intrepid spirit embodied by Haggard's heroes appealed to boys brought up at the height of empire, while their sense of duty and honour appealed to the parents, relatives and teachers who held the lion's share of their purchasing power in the literary marketplace. The benefits of hero-worship to facilitate transitions from boyhood to manhood had been outlined a generation earlier in Carlyle's lectures *On Heroes* (1841) and consolidated in bestselling advice manuals.[33] Haggard shared the Carlylean conception of manliness which demanded mental as well as physical resilience: 'sheer obstinate toughness of muscles; but much more, what we call toughness of heart… persistence hopeful and even desperate, unsubduable patience… candid openness, clearness of mind: all this shall be "strength."'[34] This focus on 'character' above and beyond the muscular body reinforced an ideology of hero-

worship which was more accessible than that of his literary rivals, and all the more powerful for moving beyond the sports field and the battlefield.

The system of public schools was in many ways a juvenile replication of military order and played a key role in promoting imperial military masculinities in the form of muscular Christianity.[35] Noting Edmund Burke's famous dictum that 'example is the school of mankind', Salmon argued compellingly in the *Fortnightly Review* that:

> To the young, the *dramatis personae* of a story become living entities… What the hero may do the reader considers himself justified in attempting to do… [arousing] in the boyish breast a desire to emulate, not less strong than that infused into the heart of a soldier by the daring of his officer.[36]

Salmon suggested that much could be gained by the strategic cultural placement of positive role models. The burgeoning market for manifestly gendered literature, clothing, activities and toys for boys reinforced connections with martial life.[37] From the Boys' Brigade to sailor suits, and wooden swords to adventure stories, military masculinities featured prominently in the late-Victorian cultural imagination.[38] In his opening sentence Salmon assumes that 'among the questions which have agitated the parental mind during the holidays… doubtless that of the literary influences at work on the minds of the boys has occupied a prominent place.'[39] Parents, teachers, religious groups and other interested members of society expressed considerable anxiety over what Joseph Bristow has referred to as the 'moral prescriptions about the rights and wrongs of books to give to children.'[40]

Educators such as Thomas Arnold and Samuel Smiles had largely eschewed the idea of boys reading fiction purely for pleasure earlier in the nineteenth century, promoting the moral influence of worthy, edifying novels. In 1839 Arnold blamed 'exciting books of amusement like Pickwick and Nickleby, Bentley's Magazine. &c.' for the 'growing fault' of 'childishness' in boys, who were 'totally palled [for] regular work.'[41] By the mid 1880s, the quantity of entertaining magazines and novels for boys had multiplied exponentially, and many of these texts extolled the virtues of martial masculinities. The cult of hero-worship concentrated on a handful of military leaders, but used language stressing the bonds of nationhood to reify vast swathes of ordinary soldiers and civil servants by association. Haggard's main narrators, such

as Allan Quatermain and Horace Holly, directly address a young, male readership on numerous occasions. *She* addresses 'my boy' eight times, and 'dear boy' once. Such phrases support Andrea White's claim that adventure fiction 'bore the same relationship to its readers as parents to children.'[42] Haggard's preface to the 1898 edition of *King Solomon's Mines* expresses his hope that the novel 'may in years to come continue to afford amusement to those who are still young enough at heart to love a story of treasure, war, and wild adventure.'[43] The attached note dedicates the story 'to all the big and little boys who read it', highlighting the deliberate inter-generational transfer of British imperial ideology and its concurrent ideals of masculinity.[44]

Quatermain and his companions frequently discuss their plans and strategies in ways that seem to be deliberately clarified for young readers. This tendency, together with a self-consciously educational tone and extensive militaristic parallels, builds a structured framework of implicitly martial hero-worship. Haggard's models of masculinity, too, seem deliberately shaped by a desire to inspire young readers' awe and respect for an earlier generation of military heroes. Quatermain and Good are tempted back from retirement for what they anticipate will be their final adventure, and their most dangerous yet. Haggard's heroes also stand apart from some others in adventure fiction in possessing distinctly loquacious tendencies, reinforcing a sense of their daring prowess by regaling their companions with tales of their glory days. In contrast, Kipling's brand of hero was 'the strong, silent man of action for whom words are deeds, not aesthetic toys.'[45]

The very nature of the African expeditions depicted by Haggard ensures that his audience cannot possibly know for certain whether his plots are based on real events. Though vivid, Haggard's prose is not heavily embroidered, creating the illusion of genuine biographical accounts pieced together from travel journals. First-person narration and the inclusion of prefaces 'in character' reinforce this impression. Quatermain expresses his regrets about not providing more details about local fauna and explicitly military matters. Nonetheless, even his narrative style is framed in terms of weaponry: 'I am more accustomed to handle a rifle than a pen… [but] 'A sharp spear,' runs the Kukuana saying, 'needs no polish'; and on the same principle I venture to hope that a true story, however strange it may be, does not require to be decked out in fine words.'[46] An imperative for the suspension of disbelief enabled Haggard to appeal to young boys, their elder brothers and their fathers and grandfathers, who would share in domestic story-telling.

Post-truth heroism: fact, fiction, and fantasy

King Solomon's Mines (and its most successful sequels) set in southern and eastern Africa, and *She* (and its sequels) set in northern Africa, were published at the height of British colonisation of the continent.[47] Haggard was extraordinarily prolific through these years, and extraordinarily popular. When the serialisation of *She* began in the *Graphic* in October 1886, Haggard still had his novel *Jess* (set in South Africa) running in the *Cornhill*, and *Allan Quatermain* had just finished in *Longman's Magazine*. *King Solomon's Mines* had sold 25,000 copies in 1886 – 'a huge sale at that time.'[48] Military successes, described in indulgent detail to newspaper readers, drove the demand for yet more adventure stories, but fortunately, Haggard's strategy did not rely on perpetual victories on the battlefields of empire. Fiction allowed artistic license to distract readers from the humiliation of the Battle of Isandlwana (January 1879), the death of General Gordon at Khartoum (January 1885, while Haggard was writing *King Solomon's Mines*) and other events which threatened to disrupt the dominant triumphalist narrative of New Imperialism.[49]

Haggard modified his style through the 1880s and 1890s to reframe military disasters as heroic successes. As Neil Hultgren observes, *Jess* (1886) adopts melodrama 'to imagine a British victory in the failed Transvaal War.'[50] Rapid responses, adapting to imperial events, singled Haggard out in the competitive 'survival of the fittest' literary market of the last years of the nineteenth century. Having been professionally separated from the realities of army life, he could easily gloss over its less heroic, less glorious, more disturbing, or even more mundane elements. His depictions of danger and combat may seem far-fetched, but this was unlikely to trouble a juvenile audience; in fact, the more fantastic elements made the novels more attractive and ensured the longevity of their appeal. Haggard featured prominently on Longman's popular Empire Readers series in 1905, and epitomised associations between 'manly virtue', 'patriotic ardour', and the 'golden age' of war disseminated by 'the pre-1914 generation of schoolteachers, army officers and Scoutmasters' who held pivotal roles in the Repressive *and* Ideological State Apparatus of the British Empire.[51]

Haggard also capitalised on the excitement caused by recent discoveries of diamonds in southern Africa, and the subsequent competition to annexe potentially valuable land in the

'scramble for Africa'. The famous 'Star of Africa' diamond was found in Griequaland West in 1869, and in 1871 many more were found where the Orange and Vaal Rivers meet, leading to the British annexation of the Transvaal.[52] Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868) had popularised the literary plot of the search for a diamond from colonial India, and Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* combined mystery with heroic adventure, blending military nostalgia with the topical subject matter of real-life treasure hunts.
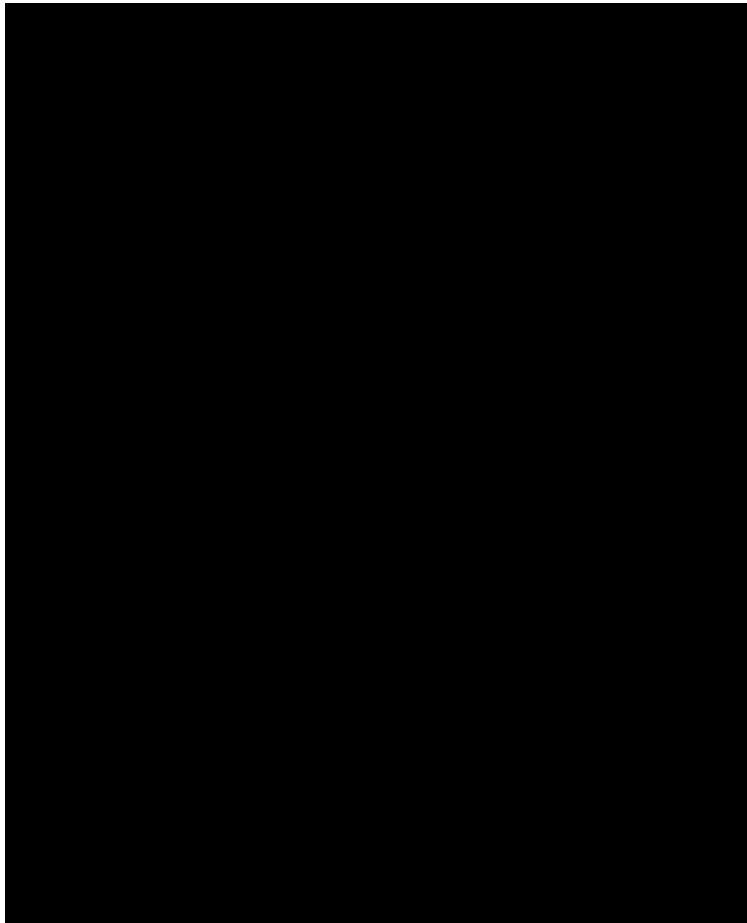

Figure 11.1. 'Map of route to King Solomon's Mines, now in the possession of Allan Quatermain, Esq.' 067307. British Library.

Haggard's first-person narrator introduces the novel as an authentic account of an expedition around south-eastern Africa, from Durban in what was then the British colony of Natal to King Solomon's legendary mines, which he believes are located in the Congo Free State.[53] This and other framing devices found in *King Solomon's Mines* and its sequels position

the stories as true accounts, and its characters as examples of the 'living entities' or role models described by Salmon.[54] The inclusion of one or more maps at the beginning or the end was common practice in Henry Morton Stanley, David Livingston, and other explorers' journals and letters published in this period.[55] Haggard's novel included a map, purportedly drawn in by José da Silvestra, a Portuguese explorer, on a scrap of linen using his own blood as he lay in a cave, 'dying of hunger' in 1590.[56] The original (see Figure 11.1), is a prized artefact, kept safely at Quatermain's home in Durban, but he carries an English translation and facsimile with him (see Figure 11.2). By using specific geographical markers and basing key characters on real explorers, Haggard bridged what would otherwise be an obvious gap between imagined and real places, people, and events.
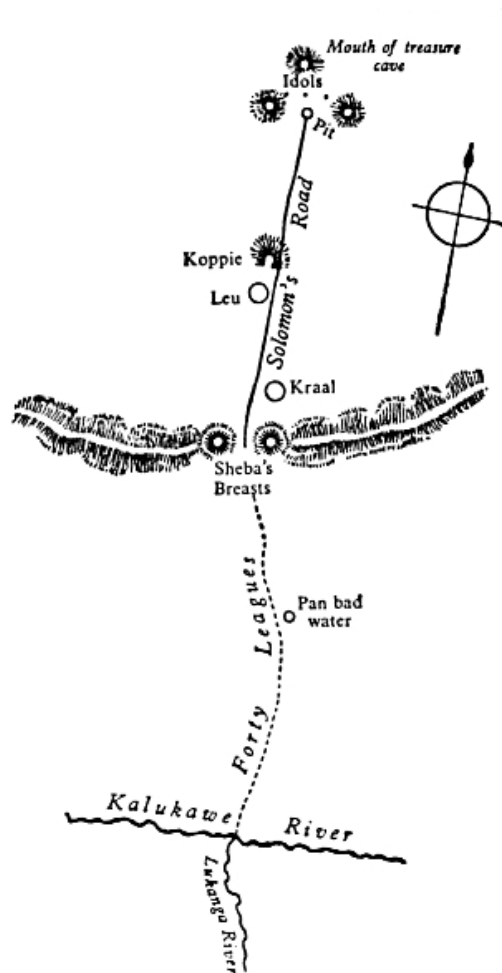

Figure 11.2. 'The Way to Kukuanaland (fac-simile of the map, if it can be called a map)', *King Solomon's Mines* (London: Cassell and Co., 1885).

Additional frontmatter such as dedications and prefaces appeared in his later novels, and in later editions of *King Solomon's Mines*, demonstrating that Haggard (or at any rate his publisher, Longman) extended this strategy of presenting fiction as fact. The frontispiece for *Allan Quatermain* (1887) draws on conventions of autobiography by including a sketch of Quatermain (see Figure 11.3) turning from his desk as though he has just completed the manuscript of this new memoir, with a signature in apparent testament to the authenticity of the document. In *Longman's Magazine*, each instalment promised not only 'further adventures' but also further 'discoveries in company with Sir Henry Curtis, Bart., Commander John Good, R. N., and one Umslopogaas'. The use of rank further rooted the text in contemporary Victorian taxonomies of manliness. On recent maps, 'UNEXPLORED REGION' was printed across the bulk of the continent, stretching from the Sahara to the Kalahari Desert, and accounts claiming to provide accounts of 'discoveries' in these places, whether real or imaginary, continued to create considerable excitement.[57]
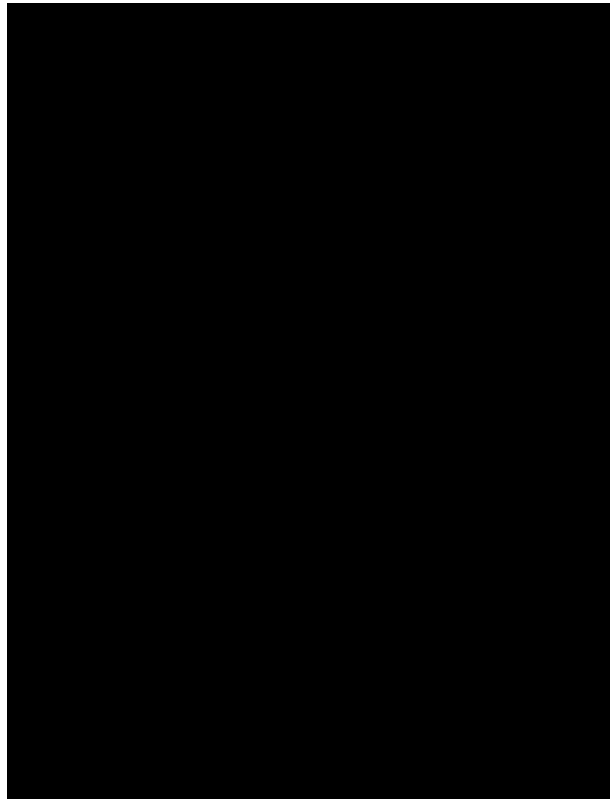

Figure 11.3. Frontispiece for the first illustrated edition of *Allan Quatermain*
(London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888) by Charles H. M. Kerr.
Wood engraving executed by J. Cooper. 067312. British Library.

The vast differences between the adventures depicted in fiction and the likely realities of a young reader's future career in the colonies does not seem to have produced much comment. Imagination and practicality are intermingled to give an illusion of realism through Haggard's details about domestic innovations, such as hippopotamus fat lamps, appealing to creative boy scout types.[58] In spite of, or perhaps precisely *because* of, the limits of Haggard's civilian role in colonial administration (to say nothing of his failed attempt at ostrich farming), his early non-fiction romanticised African 'Nature as she was on the morrow of the Creation'.[59] A few years later, however, Haggard's fictional depictions of regions he had never visited were sufficient to convince many reviewers of authenticity. The *Saturday Review* confidently reported that Haggard was not 'one of the hack book-makers for boys who describe adventures they never tasted in lands which they only know from geography books.'[60]

Muscular Christianity

Following the 'racial science' of Knox and others, Christian European 'glorified specimen[s] of humanity' were presented in fiction as hereditarily destined to rule.[61] Sir Henry Curtis is 'about thirty' (about the author's own age), and impressive for his muscular physique: 'one of the biggest-chested and longest-armed men I ever saw... I never saw a finer looking man.' Being 'of Danish blood', he strikes Quatermain as a fair-haired 'kind of white Zulu'.[62] Similarly, in *She,* Leo Vincey is introduced as a 'very tall, very broad... statue of Apollo come to life', nicknamed '"the Greek god"'.[63] Both Haggard's description and E. K. Johnson's illustration (see Figure 11.4) emphasise Vincey's physical superiority and neat, groomed appearance as an intrinsic part of his identity in contrast to his guardian, 'Charon', an 'ugly', 'bow-legged' man with dark hair which 'grew right down on his forehead'.[64]
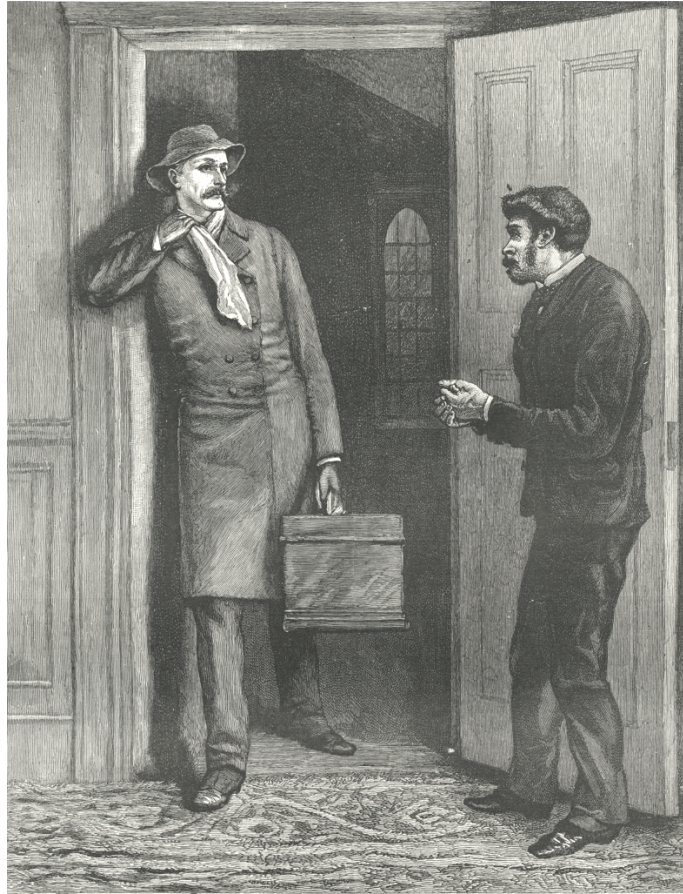
Figure 11.4. 'A tall man of about thirty, with the remains of great personal beauty, came hurrying in, staggering beneath the weight of a massive iron box.' Illustration by E. K. Johnson for Part I of *She* in *The Graphic,* vol. 34, no. 879 (2 Oct. 1886).

The novelist Charles Kingsley was an important influence on Haggard's depiction of military masculinities. He had used Greek gods to promote muscular Christianity some years earlier in *The Heroes* (1856), presenting them as flawed but heroic men who could teach an important lessons through 'fairy tales for children'.[65] Like Carlyle, Kingsley identified moral courage as a prerequisite for true heroism, and extended this by attaching it to self-sacrifice for a nationalist agenda which he admired in Greek heroes:

men who were brave and skilful, and dare do more than other men… [but] it came to mean something more… men who helped their country… who killed fierce beasts and evil men, and drained swamps, and founded towns, and therefore after they were dead, were honoured… And we call such a man a hero in English to this day...[66]

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Haggard drew on this definition by implying that his imperial heroes, including the naval officer Leo Vincey, not only helped their own country but left 'half-wild' African regions 'better than they found' them.[67] Kingsley's elevation of roles which might include engineering, building, and colonial administration to 'heroic' status was especially useful for Haggard, providing a platform for him to extend heroism further beyond strictly martial or muscular masculinities.

The courage of Haggard's protagonists in the face of physical dangers sensationalised colonial life in the military (and by association, the civil service) to all back home who had a stake in nation-building. Haggard positions his heroes in *She* and elsewhere as engaged in battles for the triumph of masculine Christian reason over effeminate superstition in unexplored territories, adding mischievousness to avoid the trap of dry didacticism. The three white heroes in *King Solomon's Mines* undertake their risky mission entirely voluntarily, without being subject to martial orders. They formally agree firstly, that the mission is to find Neville (with ivory, diamonds and any other loot merely a welcome by-product), secondly, that Neville is almost certainly dead, and thirdly, that they were almost equally certain to die during their journey.[68] At times, their supposed bravery and stoicism barely veneers the distinctly unheroic weaknesses of unreason and greed, and the promised diamonds outshine even the riches described in *Treasure Island* three years earlier.[69] There is also a moral discrepancy between muscular Christianity (based on precepts such as honesty and fair play), and the artifice employed by Quatermain and his comrades to trick the local Kukuana army, implying that Captain Good's false teeth and glass eye were artefacts of witchcraft:

> 'How is it, O strangers,' asked the old man solemnly, 'that this fat man (pointing to Good, who was clad in nothing but a flannel shirt, and had only half finished his shaving), whose body is clothed, and whose legs are bare, who grows hair on one side of his sickly face and not on the other, and who wears one shining and transparent eye … has teeth which move of themselves, coming away from the jaws and returning of their own will?'[70]

Earlier in the century Dickens had remarked that the most effective melodramatic techniques juxtaposed comedy and tragedy, like 'the layers of red and white in a side of streaky, well-

cured bacon.'[71] Haggard creates a similarly 'streaky' effect here to keep his readers hooked, with the tension of imminent death quickly relieved by the comedic subject with the broadest appeal: the physical body.

Good's military background connotes a different form of heroism from Quatermain's, who had chosen not to 'serve the Queen', preferring to 'earn [his] bread as a hunter.'[72] Good's pale skin is emphasised in frequent references to the 'snowy loveliness' of his 'beautiful', 'exceedingly white' legs and Quatermain instantly identifies him as a naval officer by his neat appearance and meticulous toilette', which he is determined to maintain in Kukuanaland.[73] Haggard frames Good's false teeth and glass eye as fortuitous props to establish supernatural myths, rather than medical corrections for practical bodily defects. This reconstitutes disability from injuries sustained in conflict in heroic terms and adds comedic novelty to a man with seventeen years' naval experience.[74] This unites the comforts of domestic martial masculinities with the excitement of wild adventure and imperial violence, thus establishing an emotional, familial attachment to the heroes of Empire.[75]

Haggard's later novels were less commercially successful. The image of clean-cut, morally virtuous British military heroism was severely damaged by the Second Boer War (1899-1902) in particular, with its lengthy battles, military disasters and mechanised weaponry. Over the last twenty years, historians have explored the ways in which different elements of conflicts including the Second Boer War, and the First World War interrogated and reshaped notions of martial masculinity.[76] Most recently, Michael Brown has demonstrated that new technologies of warfare led to revisions of earlier notions of martial heroism grounded in close combat.[77] The sheer scale of loss of life, much of it closer to home, meant that adventure fiction rapidly declined during and after the First World War, in which Haggard's own son died.[78] Between the Crimean and Boer Wars, however, the genre flourished, building selectively on elements of martial masculinity developed much earlier, following the Napoleonic Wars.

Much as Haggard, other colonial administrators, and bored soldiers sought excitement by imagining risky adventures and encounters with unknown tribes, boys in Britain looked to fiction in recompense for the relative mundanity of school and home life.[79] This alignment meant that both Haggard and his readers shared a hunger for excitement that could only be fed by the imagination. For Salmon, it was 'impossible to overrate the importance of the influence of [the supply of adventure fiction] on the national character and culture. Mind, equally with

body, will develop according to what it feeds on'.[80] The vastness and complexity of the British imperial network meant that each of Haggard's young readers could envisage a position in which he could excel, even if his school reports revealed an ineptitude for sport or an insurmountable resistance to the discipline required for military life. Martial metaphors of masculine glory were reflected in civil life. The structural layering of storytelling itself in Haggard's narratives even provided boys with models of heroism to emulate when writing their own diaries, memoirs and letters home as adults, propagating the myth of the imperial hero for future generations. Variations on this myth had been in circulation in British fiction and the media for many years by the time *King Solomon's Mines* reached booksellers' shelves, and it was ripe for exploitation in the burgeoning print culture of the 1880s. A tightly-bound network of associations between the military, colonial administration, patriotism, muscular Christianity, the man of letters and other nineteenth-century masculinities had been systematically built and reinforced in spite of the decidedly chequered history of British imperial victories and failures during that period.

By including hunters and explorers as well as military men in his groups of adventuring protagonists, Haggard elided national martial and personal civilian endeavours. This blending technique spread the cultural currency of war heroes whilst avoiding the strict codes of self-sacrifice and honour to which an entirely military imperial mission would be held accountable. Some young readers would indeed grow up to join the armed forces, and even be killed in action. As Salmon argued as early as 1886, it seemed 'impossible to overrate' the role of reading adventure fiction in shaping 'national character and culture.'[81] The representation of stoicism, honour and other manly virtues as physically embodied as established by Carlyle, and both developed and interrogated in Haggard's fiction, meant that sporting prowess was only one of many characteristics which boys sought to emulate, and could be set aside by those whose strengths lay elsewhere. However, the most effective element of Haggard's narrative apparatus is his compelling construction of sincerity and virtually simultaneous comedy. By compressing these components at intervals to rapidly swing from tension to relief and back again, Haggard created an addictively giddy sensation which held the reader's attention so as to effectively imbue imperial ideology and plural heroic martial masculinities. Haggard's skilful juxtaposition of danger and comedy made his early novels particularly appealing (and well-concealed) documents of ideological influence. By celebrating a comprehensive range of

heroic and less perfect pseudo-military masculinities and holding fast to a core definition of Englishmen as 'adventurers to the backbone,' with a 'magnificent muster-roll of colonies to prove it', all the 'little and big boys' who read Haggard's stories could share in the dreams of empire. [82]

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[1] Salmon, 'What Boys Read', *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 39, no. 45 (Feb. 1886), pp. 248-59.

[2] 'King Solomon's Mines', *Saturday Review* (10 Oct. 1885), p. 485.

[3] Kelly Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper in Britain: A Cultural History, 1855-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), p. 13.

[4] This magazine was established by the Religious Tract Society in London 1879 to instil Christian moral values its' young readers' formative years.

[5] See, for example, C. M. Archibald, 'A Soldier's Story: The Battle of Bithoor', *Boy's Own Paper*, no. 411 (27 Nov. 1886), pp. 134-5.

[6] On the 'pleasure culture of war' see Michael Paris, *Warrior Nation: Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850-2000* (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 13-48.

[7] James Morris, *Farewell the Trumpets: An Imperial Retreat* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p. 28.

[8] Joseph Bristow places the total sales of Henty's books at around 25 million. *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 146-7. 'Mr G. A. Henty', *The Times*, 17 Nov. 1902, p. 10.

[9] See G. A. Henty, *By Sheer Pluck: A Tale of the Ashanti War* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2014), p. 101; Dennis Butts, 'Exploiting a Formula: The Adventure Stories of G. A. Henty (1832-1902)', *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, ed. Julia Briggs, Dennis Butts, and M. O. Grenby (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 160; *The Athenaeum*, no. 2970 (27 Sept. 1884), p. 388.

[10] D. S. Higgins, *Rider Haggard: A Biography* (New York: Stein and Day, 1983), p. 85. Also see Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction, 1880-1915* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 66; Wendy R. Katz, *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[11] Stephen Gray, *South African Literature: An Introduction* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1979), p. 120.

[12] Ibid., p. 120.

[13] Gray, p. 120.

[14] Sequels and prequels include *Allan Quatermain* (1887), *Hunter Quatermain's Story* (1887), *Allan the Hunter: A Tale of Three Lions* (1887), *Allan's Wife* (1889), *She and Allan* (1920), *The Ancient Allan* (1920) (he must have been ancient indeed by this point, having retired in 1885) and *Allan and the Ice-gods* (1927). See *She* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2006), p. 242.

[15] Katz, p. 33.

[16] Conveniently, as 'the wisest and richest of Biblical rulers, Solomon would have provided the strongest moral sanction for… mineral extraction on the dark continent.' Monsmon, 'Of Diamonds and Deities: Social Anthropology in H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, vol. 43, no. 3 (2000), p. 280.

[17] See Haggard's correspondence, MC 33 and MC 34, Norfolk Record Office.

[18] 'Dedication', *King Solomon's Mines* (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 3.

[19] 'There is no woman in it – except Foulata. Stop, though! There is Gagaoola, if she was a woman and not a fiend. But she was a hundred at least, and therefore not marriageable, so I don't count her.' *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 10.

[20] See John Kucich, *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[21] See W. T. Stead's 'Too Late!', *Pall Mall Gazette Extra* (19 Feb. 1885), which sold 50,000 copies. On Gordon as martyr, see Michael Anton Budd, 'C. G. Gordon: Hybrid Heroic Technologist and Anti-modern Other' in *Masculinity and the Other: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Heather Ellis and Jessica Meyer (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), pp. 200-3; Anti-Gladstone items available on the market included bookmarks and scraps for children's albums.

[22] Quoted in Andrew Griffiths, *New Journalism, The New Imperialism and the Fiction of Empire, 1870-1900* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), p. 1.

[23] James William Gibson, *American Paramilitary Culture and the Reconstitution of the Vietnam War*, in Francesca M. Cancian and James William Gibson, eds, *Making War Making Peace: The Social Foundations of Violent Conflict* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1990), p. 96.

[24] See Lindy Stiebel, *Imagining Africa: Landscape in H. Rider Haggard's African Romances* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 2001); Helen Goodman, 'Masculinity, Tourism and Adventure in English

Nineteenth-Century Travel Fiction' in *Men, Masculinities, Travel and Tourism*, ed. Thomas Thurnell-Read and Mark Casey (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 13-27.

[25] Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus', *On Ideology* (London: Verso Books, 2008), pp. 8-9; p. 17.

[26] 'The Zulu War', *Illustrated London News*, no. 6702 (15 March 1879).

[27] *She* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 175. The phrase 'of the imagination' in the first edition (on which the OUP is based) replaced 'a moral one', which had appeared in the *Graphic*, on which the Broadview is based.

[28] Norman Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 196-7.

[29] Herman Merivale, *Lectures on Colonisation and Colonies* (London: n. p., 1861), p. 675.

[30] William Watson, 'The Fall of Fiction', *Fortnightly Review*, 50 (Sept. 1888), p. 325.

[31] A. J. Jenkinson, *What Do Boys and Girls Read?* (London: Methuen and Co., 1940), pp. 36-9, cited in the Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, p. 8. Also see Susan Walton, *Imagining Soldiers and Fathers in the Mid-Victorian Era: Charlotte Yonge's Models of Manliness* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p. 51.

[32] See Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1895); Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire* (London: Methuen, 1901); and Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). *Queen Sheba's Ring* (1910) reveals Haggard's increasing anxiety about national degeneration. For Paris, the novel is 'warning bell' about 'the consequences of the loss of the warlike spirit and military unpreparedness… so obviously a portrait of Britain and Germany that even the youngest schoolboy could not fail to learn the lesson.' *Warrior Nation*, pp. 102-3.

[33] Carlyle's *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1841). Also see Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* (self-published in 1859 and the second bestseller in Britain that century); Arthur King, *Our Sons* (London: Frederick Warne and Co., 1880).

[34] Carlyle, *Past and Present* (London: Ward, Lock and Co., 1910), p. 220.

[35] See Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in B. Simon and I. Bradley (eds), *The Victorian Public School* (London: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 129-46; J. A. Mangan; Regina Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 178.

[36] Edmund Burke, 'Letters on a Regicide Peace', *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol. 8 (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1801), p. 123.

[37] Quatermain remains a popular commodity to this day, incarnate in television and film (played by Sean Connery (2003), Patrick Swayze (2004), and others), computer games, fan fiction and an action figure doll.

[38] Pre-dating the Scouting Movement, the Boys' Brigade was established in 1883 for 'the promotion of habits of Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness' ('Obedience' was added in 1893). Also see Paris, *Warrior Nation*, and Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*.

[39] Salmon, p. 248.

[40] Bristow, p. 14. Also see Jenny Holt, *Public School Literature, Civic Education and the Politics of Male Adolescence* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

[41] Arnold, letter to Rev. G. Cornish (6 July 1839), *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold*, ed. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, vol. 2 (London: B. Fellowes, 1845), pp. 161-2. Also see Fabrice Neddam, 'Constructing Masculinities Under Thomas Arnold of Rugby', *Gender and Education*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2004), pp. 303-26.

[42] Andrea White, *Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 56.

[43] Haggard, 'Author's Note', *King Solomon's Mines*, p. vii.

[44] 'Dedication', *King Solomon's Mines*, p. v.

[45] David H. Stewart, 'Kipling's Portrait of the Artists', *English Literature in Translation, 1880-1920*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1988), p. 275.

[46] 'Preface', *King Solomon's Mines*, p. xi.

[47] 'Britain took over Zanzibar in 1888, the East African Protectorate (now Kenya) in 1885, Egypt in 1882 and the Soudan the same year.' Bristow, p. 128.

[48] Tom Pocock, *Rider Haggard and the Lost Empire* (London: Wiesenfeld and Nicolson, 1993), p. 68.

[49] 1300 British soldiers were killed in this first major battle of the Anglo-Zulu War, despite superior modern weaponry. Gordon underestimated the Ansar as 'some 500 determined men and some 2000 rag-tag Arabs'. See

James Perry, *Arrogant Armies: Great Military Disasters and the Generals Behind Them* (2005), p. 180; the *Times* (21 Apr. 1884), p. 5.

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[51] Zara S. Steiner, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War* (London: Macmillan, 1977), p. 157; John O. Springhall, '"Up Guards and at Them!" British Imperialism and Popular Art, 1880-1914' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 50; Caroline Davis, 'Creating a Book Empire: Longmans in Africa' in *The Book in Africa*, ed. Davis and David Johnson (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), pp. 128-52.

[52] Now a region of central South Africa. Anthony Nutting, *The Scramble for Africa: The Great Trek to the Boer War* (Trowbridge and London: Redwood Press, 1972), p. 80. On subsequent searches and diamond mines in the Transvaal, see 'Where the famous Cullinan Diamond was found', *Wonders of the World* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1910), pp. 110-2.

[53] The region came under the rule of King Leopold II of Belgium at the Berlin Conference, November 1884 – February 1885.

[54] Salmon, pp. 248-9.

[55] Henry Morton Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone: Travels, Adventures and Discoveries in Central Africa* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1872); J. P. R. Wallis, ed., *The Zambezi Expedition of David Livingstone, 1858-1863* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1956).

[56] *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 25.

[57] Francis Galton, *Narratives of an Explorer in Tropical South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1853*)*, p. 5.

[58] *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 125. Such tips resonated with earlier field guides about Africa, such as Francis Galton's *Art of Travel* (London: John Murray, 1855).

[59] Haggard, 'A Zulu War Dance', *Gentleman's Magazine* no. 241 (July 1877), p. 99; Lilias Haggard, *The Cloak That I Left: A Biography of the Author Henry Rider Haggard* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), p. 32; Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 137-8.

[60] Anon., 'King Solomon's Mines', *Saturday Review* (10 Oct. 1885), p. 485.

[61] *She*, p. 35.

[62] *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 12. Also see Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

[63] *She*, p. 35.

[64] Charon, the elderly, blind ferryman who rows dead souls across the Styx in Greek mythology, represents death and decay in contrast to Vincey's vitality and vigour. *She*, pp. 35-6. On the contexts of the 'martial moustache' see Christopher Oldstone-Moore, 'The Beard Movement in Britain', *Victorian Studies*, vol. 48, no. 1 (Autumn 2005), pp. 7-34.

[65] On the assimilation of neoclassical idealised male bodies in the ideal Victorian 'clean-cut Englishman' and 'national character', see George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 109.

[66] Kingsley, *The Heroes; or Greek Fairy Tales for My Children* (London: A. C. and Black, 1915), pp. 4-5. Also see *The Heroes with the Story of the Twelve Labours of Hercules* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1906) and *Hypatia; or New Foes with an Old Face* (London: Macmillan, 1894).

[67] Ibid., p. 5

[68] *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 33.

[69] Lilias Haggard, pp. 121-2. Haggard's novel allegedly resulted from a wager with his older brother, who 'bet a bob' he could not write a novel half as good as Stevenson's. Robert Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1998), p. 28.

[70] *King Solomon's Mines*, pp. 102-3.

[71] Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 134.

[72] *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 13.

[73] Ibid., p. 97; p. 12.

[74] Ibid., p. 13.

[75] Stephanie Olsen analyses informal education and imperial domestic manliness to extend the concept of the British Empire as a 'family' in *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880-1914* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014). On earlier domestic military masculinities see Holly Furneaux, *Military Men of Feeling: Emotion, Touch, and Masculinity in the Crimean War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[76] See, for example, Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996) and *Wounding the World: How Military Violence and War-Play Invade our Lives* (London: Virago, 2014), pp. 109-11; Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008); Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

[77] Brown, 'Cold Steel, Weak Flesh: Mechanism, Masculinity and the Anxieties of Late Victorian Empire', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2017), pp. 155-81. Also see John Ellis, *The Social History of the Machine Gun* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975); Pick, *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[78] Gray, p. 124.

[79] See Jeffrey A. Auerbach, *Imperial Boredom: Monotony and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[80] Salmon, p. 248.

[81] Ibid., p. 248.

[82] *Allan Quatermain* (London: Penguin, 1995), pp. 93-4.