

TWILIGHT MEN

In Kenilworth Bruce's 1933 novel, *Goldie*, the hero joins a prototypical (and fictional) gay rights organization, The Twilight League. This reflects the title of André Tellier's popular homosexual novel, *Twilight Men* (1931). It is doubtful whether the term enjoyed much real currency, but images of shadows and of darkness were common in the fiction of the period—and, given the obligatory tragic ending, all too appropriate.

In the nineteenth century the adjective "crepuscular" enjoyed some vogue to designate a declining civilization, because of the allegory of civilization following a quasi-solar course of ascent, zenith, afternoon fullness, and then descent into twilight; hence crepuscular trenches with *fin-de-siècle* and **decadent**. Richard Wagner's 1874 opera, *Die Got-*

terdämmerung (The Twilight of the Gods), was very popular in this period.

Recently, the term "midnight cowboy," from James Leo Herlihy's 1965 book and the subsequent film, has had some currency. (For reasons not altogether clear, much homosexual social life begins only after ten or eleven in the evening.) Presumably real cowboys have to be up too early in the morning to be out until midnight.