

Imagining the Missionary Hero: Juvenile Missionary  
Biographies, c. 1870-1917

‘Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of  
the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in  
Philosophy by Julie Anne McColl.’

December 2017

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the fascinating and complex body of work surrounding the missionary hero as a product of late imperial ideas of the heroic produced in the form of biography. It will concentrate upon how the literature was appropriated, reproduced and disseminated via the Sunday school network to working-class children between 1870 and 1917. It will discuss how biographers through imaginative narrative strategies and the reframing of the biography as an adventure story, were able to offer children a physical exemplar and self-sacrificial hero who dispensed clear imperial ideas and moral values. This thesis will reflect upon how the narratives embedded in dominant discourses provided working-class children with imperial ideologies including ideas of citizenship and self-help which it will argue allowed groups of Sunday school readers to feel part of an imagined community. In doing so, the thesis sheds important new light on a central point of contention in the considerable and often heated discussion that has developed since the 1980s around the impact of empire on British people. Through an analysis of common themes it will also consider the depiction of women missionaries, asking whether biographical representation challenged or reinforced traditional gender ideologies.

To interrogate these components effectively this thesis is divided into two parts, Part One is divided into five chapters providing context, while Part Two will look in detail at the repetition and adaption of common themes. The first chapter will outline concerns surrounding working-class children and analyse the solutions suggested to provide children with ideas based upon self-improvement, character building and

patriotism. Chapter 2 examines the use of the missionary biography in the Sunday school while ideas surrounding the hero and hero-worship and literature incorporating British heroes will be studied in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 analyses the missionary biography and will discuss why the missionary, both male and female, was deemed an ideal candidate to provide examples of self-help and self-improvement. This chapter will conclude with a section introducing missionaries James Hannington and Mary Slessor. Chapters 5 will focus on the role of the publishers, biographers and illustrators. This will lead to Part Two of this thesis which comprises of four chapters investigating common features, motifs and codes within the biographies which highlight how children were inculcated in ideas of patriotism, gender and British superiority all inextricably linked to ideas of community. In conclusion, I consider how far and in what ways the thesis has advanced understanding of missionary biographies in this period, while sketching out some possibilities for further research.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Mark Towsey for his patience, enthusiasm and friendship. His expertise, detailed feedback and careful reading of this thesis has been invaluable. I would also like to thank my other supervisors Dr. Esme Cleall and Dr. Andy Davies who have provided constructive advice and guidance in bringing this thesis together. The resulting work reflects the consistent attention to detail and continual efforts to question and challenge me of all three supervisors. I would also like to thank the University of Liverpool for believing in my abilities and for awarding me the Joseph Rotblat Alumni Scholarship which has made this thesis possible. I would also like to acknowledge fellow PhD students and staff members from the History Department for their support, reassurance and friendship. I am extremely grateful to my work colleagues Hayley, Chris, Grace, Maeva and Tricia who have kept me sane and cheered each time a chapter has been submitted.

My children James, Heather and Katrina and my lovely grandson Lewis I thank you for your patience and understanding which also goes for my dogs who have missed out on many walks to the beach. I could not have done any of this without the love and support of my partner Ellis who has encouraged me from day one and who has always been there offering advice, cups of tea and many laughs.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this thesis to my late parents Violet and John who always believed in me and like the critics in this thesis strongly believed in the power of education (Dad even had my A level certificates framed). I wish they were here.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### Societies and Organisations

BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CMS	Church Missionary Society
LMS	London Missionary Society
NSSU	National Sunday School Union
RTS	Religious Tract Society
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
SSU	Sunday School Union
UCME	United Council for Missionary Education
USPG	United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

### Periodicals

<i>BOP</i>	<i>Boy's Own Paper</i>
<i>GOP</i>	<i>Girl's Own Paper</i>
<i>SSC</i>	<i>Sunday School Chronicle</i>

### General

<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
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## INTRODUCTION

The life of a missionary in the interior of Southern Africa is usually attended with stirring incident and adventure. Whilst pursuing his great work of evangelist he meets with game and wild beasts in the open country; with wild and degraded men in town and village. He uses waggons, guns, horses and oxen; he handles trowel, plumb-line, adze, saw, and spirit-level, as well as the usual implements of a minister's study.<sup>1</sup>

Here the Rev. John Mackenzie, a Scottish missionary to Southern Africa in the second half of the nineteenth century, provides children with an image of the missionary as strong, fearless and capable, and above all else, a very masculine Christian hero. This form of heroic manhood was found in many popular children's stories from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. Tom Brown, the hero of the popular *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), for example, was described by one critic as 'a thoroughly English boy. Full of kindness, courage, vigour and fun-no great adept of Greek or Latin, but a first rate cricketer, climber and swimmer, fearless and skilful at football and by no means adverse to a good fight in a good cause'.<sup>2</sup> Tom Brown epitomised the 'muscular Christian', a term that can be traced back to a review by T.C. Sandars of Charles Kingsley's *Two Years Ago* (1857), in which this new muscular image of Christianity was described as the 'ideal man who fears God and can walk thousands of miles in a

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. John Mackenzie, *Day-Dawn in Dark Places: A Story of Wanderings in Bechwanaland* (London, Cassell, 1883), Preface.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays: By an Old Boy* (Cambridge, Macmillan, 1857) cited in J.A. Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-Class Education in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', in J.A. Mangan & J. Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1987), p.137.

thousand hours...breathes God's free air on God's rich earth, and at the same time can hit a woodcock, doctor a horse, and twist a poker around his fingers'.<sup>3</sup> Like the 'thoroughly English boy' Tom Brown, narratives concerning the missionary also represented and embodied traits that symbolised the muscular Christian, while constructing a link between the hero as a masculine figure and as a very English one.<sup>4</sup>

In his article 'Popular Imperial Adventure Fiction and the Discourse of Missionary Texts', Gareth Griffiths argues that biographical accounts of missionaries' activities 'are often indistinguishable from those of the adventurer /explorer narratives except for the Christian moral tags that are simply added on'.<sup>5</sup> This thesis builds upon this interpretation by examining how the image of the missionary was constructed and promoted as a hero using the adventure story format. It is concerned with the fascinating and complex body of work surrounding the missionary hero produced in the form of biography. Through a close reading of textual sources, paying attention to the use of narrative, language and language practices, this study will concentrate upon how the literature was appropriated, reproduced and disseminated via the Sunday school network to working-class children between 1870 and 1917. Within this timeframe important changes relevant to this study took place, for example, from 1870 the Education Act created compulsory education in England and Wales for children aged between five and 13 and it was this Act that created 'the greatest fillip to the publishing industry' and

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<sup>3</sup> *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, 1857; Almost seventy years later *The Quiver* used a similar phrase to depict the missionary who they described as being 'as handy with the surgeon's knife as with a tennis-racket, a linguist, educationalist and industrial worker', and as being forever 'ready for service'; *The Quiver: An Illustrated Magazine for Sunday and General Readings*, 1924.

<sup>4</sup> Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* in Mangan, 'Social Darwinism and Upper-Class Education', p.137.

<sup>5</sup> Gareth Griffiths, 'Popular Imperial Adventure Fiction and the Discourse of Missionary Texts', in J.S. Scott & G. Griffiths, eds., *Mixed Messages: Materiality, Textuality, Missions* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.58.

creating as editor and journalist W.T. Stead announced, ‘a new reading public’.<sup>6</sup> This study finishes during the First World War in 1917, a period when children’s adventure stories were beginning to adjust from the ‘old world of imperial fiction to a more modern view of relations’ with the savage world and its inhabitants.<sup>7</sup> This is an interesting aspect of the juvenile missionary biography which did not change in format or content unlike their adventurous counterparts. This, however, is a topic beyond the scope of this project but, as will be discussed in the conclusion of this thesis, is ripe for further investigation. This thesis will concentrate upon biographies produced between 1870 and 1917; although occasional examples from the 1920s and 1930s will also be consulted as they offer evidence of embedded ways of thinking that had developed in the preceding decades.

To understand the importance placed upon the missionary biography and the missionary as a hero, it will also be essential to discuss debates and ideas concerning children’s reading habits, the importance placed upon the hero and the popularity of hero-worship which began from the mid-nineteenth century. Writing in 1994, missiologist Andrew Walls, suggested that ‘if any ‘man in the street’ - at least, in any British street - were asked at any time in the last century to name a Christian missionary, it is likely that he would name David Livingstone’.<sup>8</sup> This study aims to further Walls’s hypothesis by locating within this scenario, working-class children who would become

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<sup>6</sup> Patrick. k Dunae, ‘New Grub Street for Boys’ in Jeffrey Richards, ed., *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1989), p.14.

<sup>7</sup> Katheryn Castle ‘Imperial Legacies, New Frontier: Children’s Popular Literature and the Demise of Empire’, in, S. Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2001), pp.152-153.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew F. Walls, ‘David Livingstone, 1813-1873: Awakening the Western World to Africa’, in G. H. Anderson, R. T. Coote, N. A. Horner & J. M. Phillips, eds., *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (New Haven, Orbis, 1994), p.140.

familiar with the missionary hero through narratives supplied by their local Sunday school in the form of lessons, prizes and rewards. Through close textual analysis this study will illustrate the intricate struggle within the narratives to balance Christian beliefs, social expectations, and national responsibilities. This thesis aims to bring together these different strands by considering common themes that allow for an understanding of how through repetition and reinterpretation, exemplary role models were created offering working-class children ideas about gender, empire and citizenship.

This study is essentially a piece of intellectual history, concerned with biographies of missionary heroes produced and disseminated to children through the Sunday school network. This does, of course, raise class implications as Sunday schools were, by scholarly consensus, generally acknowledged as working-class institutions.<sup>9</sup> Through classroom reading and the reward system, working-class children were able to gain access to books that would otherwise be beyond their reach. This thesis also contends that the biographies were thought to be especially suited to meet the needs of working-class children, as the protagonist's childhood often resembled their own experiences and they were often written in the guise of the appealing adventure story to engage their imagination and emotion. It will be based on the assumptions and actions of missionary societies, Sunday school organisations, the Religious Tract Society and

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<sup>9</sup> For further reading on the widespread influence of the Sunday schools within working-class culture see: Thomas Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1976); David Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography* (London, Europa, 1981); Philip B. Cliff, *The Rise and Development of the Sunday School Movement in England, 1780-1980* (Redhill, NCEC., 1986); Keith D.M. Snell, 'The Sunday-school Movement in England and Wales: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working-Class Culture', *Past and Present*, 164.1 (1999), pp.122-168; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 2001); S. J. D. Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline: Organisation and Experience in Industrial* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2002), esp., Chapter 5, pp.211-255.

other supportive evangelical publishers, with the focus placed upon their distribution to working-class children via the Sunday school. The biographies selected were offered as suitable for Sunday school Libraries, suggested for reading within Sunday schools, or suitable for rewards and prizes, and produced by various publishers both religious and secular. To gain an understanding of how imperial and moral precepts were promoted to their intended audience, it will be necessary to analyse the production, distribution and reception of the biographies.

The thesis will examine how missionary biographies intervened in children's lives, particularly through their use by the Sunday schools, although we cannot usually know how these texts were actually received by specific child readers. Helen Rogers in her study based upon the reading experiences of five barely literate boys in an early Victorian prison has argued, that: 'We know little of the responses of working-class readers targeted by the Religious Tract Society and other evangelical publishers in their crusade to purify popular literature'.<sup>10</sup> Accepting that very little evidence exists that provides accounts of the impact of the biographies, this thesis will instead critique the narrative strategies adopted by authors, which drew heavily upon the popular adventure story structure, to show how children were inculcated with ideas and values about individual and national identity. These ideas were carefully allied to specific cultural and moral values characteristic of wider British youth culture at this time, such as citizenship and unselfish sacrifice.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Helen Rogers, "'Oh what beautiful books!'" Captivated Reading in an Early Victorian Prison', *Victorian Studies*, 55.1 (2012), p.57.

<sup>11</sup> Historian J.A. Froude suggested in one of his *Short Studies on Great Subjects* - that biographies should be presented with the following injunction: 'Read that: there is a man - such a man as you ought to be; read it, meditate on it; see what he was and how he made himself what he was, and try to be yourself like him'; James A. Froude, *Short Studies on Great Subjects* (London, Longmans Green, 1867), p.389.

Sunday schools distributed biographical works concerning popular missionaries produced for British children in the form of prizes, rewards and study books. Analysing prize labels and library records, Dorothy Entwistle provides valuable insight into how prize books were selected, detailing which authors were deemed ‘safe’ and which specific themes their books contained.<sup>12</sup> Through her examination of book reviews, Entwistle assesses why certain titles were considered appropriate, concluding that there was a ‘type of literature’ that was considered particularly suitable.<sup>13</sup> These approved books carried some common themes, including ‘trust in God’, ‘self-sacrifice’, ‘philanthropic work’, ‘good-temper’, ‘teetotalism’, ‘industriousness’, ‘studiousness’ and ‘the influence of mothers’.<sup>14</sup> Entwistle deals specifically with the common themes of prize books circulated by the English Sunday schools. This thesis, however, will demonstrate that while including many of the themes highlighted by Entwistle, the spiritually-infused biographies of Christian missionaries went further by incorporating and emphasising the uniqueness of the missionary hero giving imperial ideology a new and powerful twist. This thesis will recover and establish the place of religious material in scholars’ understanding of late Victorian and early Edwardian imperial print culture aimed specifically at children.

Missionary biographies merged the adventure story with the real-life experiences of missionaries such as John Williams, James Hannington, Mary Slessor and especially David Livingstone.<sup>15</sup> Their appropriation of the standard adventure story format, which

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<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Entwistle, ‘Embossed Gilt and Moral Tales: Reward Books in English Sunday Schools’, *Journal of Popular Culture*, 28.1 (1994), pp.81-96.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.86.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> As John M. Mackenzie has noted that: ‘Extraordinary numbers of popular biographies were devoted to Livingstone’ due in part to his representation as ‘a supreme example of self-help, it was a class myth [that

relied upon a predictable and familiar narrative trajectory, marked by specific kinds of behaviour and experience, was a strategic move to entertain and inspire working-class readership. Children were provided with imperial moral messages, while at the same time being transported into exciting worlds far removed from their own. This was particularly significant as popular adventure books, due to both price and accessibility, were beyond the reach of many working-class children.<sup>16</sup> The image presented of the missionary, however, was far from a mere adventurer, and contained dominant discourses that disseminated - if not contributed to - important messages integrating ideas of gender, imperialism and British superiority.<sup>17</sup> The biographies not only created a positive image of the missionary within the empire but also endorsed ideas of self-help, duty, obedience and conformity, messages which had traditionally been the preserve of middle-class children's reading. As will be discussed in Chapter One these were important components particularly at a time when contemporary social commentators and critics were raising concerns about issues of class, racial and social degeneration and gender inversion. The biographies, did, however, veer away from the expected patriarchal authority of the adventure story structure by including women as heroes. How committed they were in their portrayal of women as heroes, and how successful in convincing readers is one of the focal points of this study. In the rest of this

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provided] evidence of working-class advancement without recourse to political protest'; John M. Mackenzie, 'Heroic Myths of Empire', in J. M. Mackenzie, ed., *Popular Imperialism and the Military: 1850-1950* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1992), p.124.

<sup>16</sup> Middle-class children, especially boys, had access to adventure stories at home, whereas for working-class children this was limited to those provided through schools and public libraries, and as I will argue the Sunday school.

<sup>17</sup> Rose, *The Intellectual Life*, p.62.



Introduction, I want to explore some of these wider theoretical and conceptual issues, beginning with the role of missionaries in the wider imperial project.

### Secondary literature

This study is concerned with how the missionary was promoted to British children as an imperial hero. Max Jones et al., have defined this term as denoting ‘those individuals endowed with heroic status for their actions in support of the expansion, promotion or defence of empire’.<sup>18</sup> Heroes, it is argued, ‘acted as bookmarks in the national story, generating continuity across problematic national narratives and performing the accumulation of national values over time’.<sup>19</sup> The imperial hero featured in school textbooks was ‘intended both to articulate the best of imperial values but also to encourage children to form an emotional attachment to these figures’; while plays and music-hall sketches retold stories of heroic action depicting subjects such as Havelock, Campbell, Gordon and Kitchener, who were promoted as possessing the ‘core values of the imperial hero: courage, endurance, calm under pressure and a commitment to monarch and homeland’.<sup>20</sup> Biographies depicting the missionary hero also articulated these core values, but also included was their devotion to Christianity.

In recent years, the missionary enterprise has come under increasing scholarly interest particularly regarding their role in national expansion and colonial contact. The focus of these studies is, however, slowly changing and underpinning many, is their impact on the British public. Susan Thorne, for example, suggests that ‘British

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<sup>18</sup> Max Jones, Berny Sèbe, John Strachan, Bertrand Taithe & Peter Yeandle, ‘Decolonising Imperial Heroes: Britain and France’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45.5 (2014), p.789.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.794.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.794 & p.796

historians and especially social historians, might go about rethinking our subject from the imperial bottom up'.<sup>21</sup> This thesis adds a further dimension to the recalibration of imperial studies that Thorne has called for, by considering missionary biographies distributed within the Sunday school network and the impacts they had - or at least, were intended to have - on working-class children. This thesis concentrates upon the Sunday school whose growth and influence David Hempton argues - and as we shall explore in more detail, was 'one of the most important themes not just of English educational history but of working-class culture in its widest sense'.<sup>22</sup> It will discuss how Sunday schools used the biographies to provide a culture of self-improvement and nationhood, or to use Benedict Anderson's terminology, a 'deep, horizontal comradeship'.<sup>23</sup> While acknowledging the intention of authors and publishers to promote Christianity and the missionary impulse, this thesis moves away from their religious aims concentrating instead upon processes of socialisation, moral training and character formation merging under the umbrella of popular imperialism found within the biographies.

By demonstrating the imperialist dimensions of missionary biographies given to working-class children in the form of prizes and rewards - and adopted as a central component of the Sunday school curriculum - this thesis develops further a central point of contention in the considerable and often heated discussion that has developed since the 1980s around the impact of empire on British people.<sup>24</sup> In his 1984 work

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<sup>21</sup> Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century England* (Stanford, Stanford U.P., 1999), p.7.

<sup>22</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society, 1750-1850* (London, Hutchinson, 1984), p.86.

<sup>23</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983, reissued in 1991), p.7; Anderson argues that despite actual inequalities and exploitation the nation always sees itself as part of a fraternity.

<sup>24</sup> Although different editions were often produced for different classes of readers the fundamental content and aims were very similar. As the 1910 World Missionary Conference reported, their aim was to

*Propaganda and Empire*, John Mackenzie, editor of the influential Manchester University Press *Studies in Imperialism* series, argues that national culture and identity were deeply influenced by the empire, largely due to the bombardment of imperialist propaganda 'embracing as it does everything from the music halls to children's literature'.<sup>25</sup> Within his analysis, Mackenzie discusses the growing book market which he suggests 'enshrined contemporary hero-worship, the cult of personality which was an inseparable part of imperialism'.<sup>26</sup> Stories of travel and exploration, missionary writings and biographies and the 'endless stream of popular lives of General Gordon and other heroes', Mackenzie suggests, became staples of birthday and Christmas presents and, he points out that they were 'above all' given as prize books for school and Sunday school attendance.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Mackenzie believes that 'in some working-class homes a little library of such books would be composed entirely of prizes' and that even if the books were not read, the owners would 'scarcely miss the stirring titles and equally exciting cover illustrations which depicted the heroic and expansionist age'.<sup>28</sup> This had also been the view of Brian Alderson writing ten years before, who suggested that 'if one considers the pricing and distribution of books during the 1860s and 1870s it quickly

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establish an *esprit de corps* appealing 'to the intelligent in all classes, looking for its Morrison and Careys amongst the poor, as well as the Keith-Falconers amongst the rich'; *Report of the Commission Section VI: The Home Base of Missions* (London, F. H. Revell, 1910), pp.65-66; Keith Falconer was the third son of the Earl of Kintore, William Carey the son of a weaver and Morrison the son of a farm labourer.

<sup>25</sup> John M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester, Manchester U. P., 1986), p.9; For further reading on the impact of empire see: W.J. Reader, *At Duty's Call: A Study in Obsolete Patriotism* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1988) and Robert MacDonald, *The Language of Empire: Myths and Metaphors of Popular Imperialism, 1880-1918* (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1994).

<sup>26</sup> Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.18.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*; The RTS, for example, advertised its list of 'Christmas Presents and School Prizes' in *The Spectator*, 1879.

<sup>28</sup> Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.18.

becomes clear that the exciting developments in children's literature were initially available to only a small proportion of the child population':

At a time when the average weekly wage of workmen was considerably less than a pound a week, the potential market for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* at six shillings a copy was scarcely universal, let alone the market for folios on fairy land at thirty-one and sixpence...it is not surprising to find that the only people with a conscience about the reading of 'the labouring poor' were the charitable organisations.<sup>29</sup>

In 2004 Bernard Porter vehemently attacked the conclusions of Mackenzie's study, pointing out that 'although there can be no disputing the fact that the imperialists were propagandizing' crucial questions remained unanswered about 'how effective their propaganda was'.<sup>30</sup> In discussing the working-classes, Porter contends that 'there is no direct evidence that this great majority of Britons supported the empire, took an interest in it, or were even aware of it for most of the century; whereas much circumstantial evidence points the other way'.<sup>31</sup> Bill Nasson concurs, arguing that it is important to distinguish between a mythologized national identity founded on empire and the actual political and imperial consciousness of the general public.<sup>32</sup> Porter makes passing reference to the impact of the Sunday school network but does so only to stress how

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<sup>29</sup> Brian Alderson, 'Tracts, Rewards and Fairies', in A. Briggs, ed., *Essays in the History of Publishing: In Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the House of Longman, 1724-1974* (London, Longmans, 1974), p.265.

<sup>30</sup> Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 1984), pp.174-5.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115.

<sup>32</sup> Bill Nasson, *Britannia's Empire: Making a British World* (Stroud, Tempus, 2004).

working-class parents were often influential in the choice of what was being taught in the schools. He does not, despite that, discuss the prolific act of providing books - many infused with imperial ideology - as rewards or prizes.<sup>33</sup> Although he accepts that missionary work encouraged by ‘images of benighted but improvable heathens’ exhorted readers to ‘capitalise upon their imperial heritage’, Porter claims that in a ‘strict and narrow sense’ the juvenile adventure stories were not an imperial literature.<sup>34</sup> This thesis picks up this debate, aiming first to provide empirical evidence to support the claim that missionary biographies were widely promoted by the Sunday school movement to working-class children, and secondly, to demonstrate through close textual analysis that they acted as vehicles for core facets of imperial ideology. Although as we have discussed earlier reception is much harder to prove empirically, the thesis will also offer evidence to suggest that the messages inscribed in these texts provided principles and values that could impact upon the imperialist horizons of some working-class children.

Historian Susan Thorne’s study *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in 19th-Century England* is amongst several works examining the impact and influence of the foreign missionary upon the British public. Thorne explains that missionaries became ‘an effective conduit of information about the empire’ and relevant to this study describes Sunday schools as the ‘primary site’ for promoting the missionary movement and as the ‘single most important institutional weapon’ for

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<sup>33</sup> Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p.122.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.155; The debate between Mackenzie and Porter is well documented and the following publications provide some insight into the nature and extent of their disagreements: J.M. Mackenzie, ‘Comfort and Conviction: A Response to Bernard Porter’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36.4 (2008), pp.659-68; Bernard Porter, ‘Further Thoughts on Imperial Absent-Mindedness’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36.1 (2008), pp.101-17.

bringing Britain's working classes into 'organised religion's fold'.<sup>35</sup> Thorne argues that the 'output of propaganda on its metropolitan home front exceeded that of any other lobby with colonial interests to promote'.<sup>36</sup> To authenticate this claim, she provides useful examples of how the missionary societies increasingly deployed ways of reaching 'working-class hearts and minds'.<sup>37</sup> The London Missionary Society (LMS), she explains, included literature relating to some of their missionaries such as 'Livingstone, Morrison etc. who had commenced life as an artisan'.<sup>38</sup> Given their centrality to such a foundational debate in imperial history, it is surprising how little attention has been paid to missionary biographies.

The biographies formed an important part of that propaganda and academically, except for studies based upon David Livingstone, the role of the missionary hero has been neglected.<sup>39</sup> This neglect has been highlighted by historian Andrew Thompson, who points to the fact that 'Many children in Britain would have become aware of their country's imperial role through the juvenile missionary movement, particularly missionary biographies and magazines. These await their historian, but they were a staple of children's reading'.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, Gareth Griffiths states that 'despite an increasing interest in the role of missions in imperialism', the biographies are 'still a neglected part of the larger story of imperial textual control'.<sup>41</sup> In their study *Of*

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<sup>35</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.16 & pp.114-115.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.114.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Through the phrase 'Dr. Livingstone I presume?' uttered by journalist Henry Morton Stanley in 1871 and the popularity and success of his book *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (New York, Harper, 1857) Livingstone became a cultural hero and consequently appropriated for many juvenile biographies and which are still being produced.

<sup>40</sup> Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from The Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh, Pearson Education, Ltd., 2005), p.110.

<sup>41</sup> Gareth Griffiths, 'Popular Imperial Adventure Fiction', p.51.

*Revelation and Revolution*, Jean and John Comaroff explain that titillating the western imagination, stories of missionary heroism, which they describe as the literature of the imperial frontier, became ‘the autobiography of heroism...told in the true spirit of Carlyle’.<sup>42</sup> Biographies celebrating the lives of British heroes who triumphed for Queen, Country and Empire were a popular medium to transmit messages to children. As John Mackenzie has argued, equally popular were biographies based on those heroes, who, in God’s service not only represented ‘a set of personal qualities and heroic characteristics’ but by striving out in heathen and hostile lands in the name of Christianity were also willing to sacrifice themselves for a greater cause.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, John Wolffe has argued that the Church’s appropriation of sacrificial heroes provide ‘a Christian concept of martyrdom with the cause of the nation and the Empire’.<sup>44</sup> While these studies provide a useful framework for this thesis they offer little focus or direct examination of missionary biographies written for children.

Dave Morley argues that at ‘the moment of a textual encounter’ other discourses are always evident.<sup>45</sup> Discourses he defines as those which ‘depend on other discursive formations, brought into play through “the subject’s” placing in other practices - cultural, educational, institutional. And these other discourses will set some of the terms in which any particular text is engaged and evaluated’.<sup>46</sup> Biographies, as the ‘particular text’ in this instance, were not, of course, the only source of information children

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<sup>42</sup> Jean & John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.172.

<sup>43</sup> Mackenzie, ‘Heroic Myths of Empire’, p.112.

<sup>44</sup> John Wolffe, *Great Deaths: Grieving, Religion and Nationhood in Victorian and Edwardian Britain* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2000), pp.150-152.

<sup>45</sup> Dave Morley, ‘Texts, Readers, Subjects’, in S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe & P. Willis, eds., *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79* (London, Hutchinson, 1980), p.154.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

received about the missionary. Visits from missionaries' home on 'furlough' - as we shall explore in more detail in Chapter Five - were also an important conduit for information about the missionary. Press reports, fictional representations in adventure stories, lessons and lectures, magic lantern slides, missionary exhibitions, open air meetings, advertisements, games such as 'Missionary Outposts' and 'Missionary Lotto' and later films also played a significant role in promoting the heroic image of the missionary.<sup>47</sup> The 1925 silent film *Livingstone*, purported to be 'shown in every city, town and village in Great Britain' (Figure 1), was supported by the LMS who gave a contribution of £200 towards its production. The film was publicised as an educational tool and permission was given by Leeds Education Committee for promotional posters to be displayed in every school, resulting in a reported 7000 children in the Leeds area seeing the film. One reviewer described it as 'an inspiration to self-sacrificing zeal for the good of others. To set that story before the eager, adventurous youth of the world will not only inform and interest them but must feed that natural ambition to be of use'.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Dean Rapp & Charles W. Weber, 'British Film, Empire and Society in the Twenties: The 'Livingstone' film, 1923-1925', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 9.1 (1989), p.13; See Appendix A for examples.

<sup>48</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, 27 September 1923.



THE MOUTH & MOUTH PICTURE HOUSE
Sept. 21, 1925.

# LIVINGSTONE,

## WILL BE SHOWN IN EVERY CITY, TOWN AND VILLAGE, IN GREAT BRITAIN!



**A DRAMA OF REALITY.  
ROMANCE—PATHOS—THRILLS.**

**PROVINCIAL TRADE SHOWS.**

MANCHESTER	THURSDAY OCTOBER 1.
	Theatre Royal, at 11 a.m.
BIRMINGHAM	SUNDAY OCTOBER 4.
	West End Cinema, at 7 p.m.
NEWCASTLE	TUESDAY OCTOBER 6.
	Regent Cinema, at 11.15 a.m.
NOTTINGHAM	SUNDAY OCTOBER 11.
	Grand Theatre, at 7 p.m.
BRISTOL	WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 14.
	Picture House, at 5.15 p.m.

**"A UNIQUE BRITISH PRODUCTION WHICH EVERYONE SHOULD SEE."**

Vide Press.

**"READ THE REPORTS."**



**A HERO FILMS PRODUCTION**

Directed by  
**M. A. WETHERELL**

**BUTCHER'S FILM SERVICE LIMITED.**  
175, Wardour Street, London, W. 1.

Figure1 Advertisement promoting *Livingstone* (1925) reproduced in Rapp & Weber, 'British Film, Empire and Society in the Twenties: The 'Livingstone' film, 1923–1925', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 9.1 (1989), p.13.

By the 1870s, religious publishers including the large missionary societies, the RTS and many mainstream publishers such as Cassell, Nisbet, John Snow, Seeley, Service and Co. (thereafter as Seeley), Routledge, Blackie and Nelson began tapping into the increasing and lucrative Sunday school market. Many biographers borrowed from or mentioned existing narratives based upon their subject(s), J.C. Lambert, for example, within his 'Prefatory Note' in *The Romance of Missionary Heroism* (1908) offered his 'obligations [to] missionary societies and firms of publishers, which have most courteously allowed him to make use of the books mentioned in their proper places at the end of each chapter, and in some cases of illustrations of which they hold the copyright'.<sup>49</sup> On the preceding page, readers are informed that this volume's title was part of 'The Library of Romance' series in which 'Each volume treats its allotted theme with accuracy, but at the same time with a charm that will commend itself to readers of all ages. The root idea is excellent, and it is excellently carried out, with full illustrations and very prettily designed covers'.<sup>50</sup> Titles within 'The Library of Romance' included among others Prof. G.F. Scott Elliot's *The Romance of Savage Life*, Edward Gilliat's, *The Romance of Modern Sieges* and G. Firth Scott's, *The Romance of Polar Exploration*.<sup>51</sup>

Designed to be attractive and more secular in content the biographies became a common feature of catalogues and sample copies produced by publishers which they

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<sup>49</sup> John Lambert, *The Romance of Missionary Heroism: True Stories of Intrepid Bravery and Stirring Adventures of Missionaries with Uncivilised Man, Wild Beasts and the Force of Nature in All Parts of the World* (London, Seeley, 1908), Prefatory Note; These included 'The South American Society; The Religious Tract Society; The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; Messrs. Macmillan & Co.; The Clarendon Press; Messrs. Opliant, Anderson, & Ferrier; The F. H. Revell Co.; Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton; Mr. T. Fisher Unwin; Messrs. S. W. Partridge & Co.; Messrs. Morgan & Scott; Messrs. Marshall Bros.; Messrs. Seeley & Co., Ltd.; The United Society of Christian Endeavour'; pp.5-6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

distributed to the Sunday school organisations. This study will consider strategies used by publishers to integrate their biographies within the Sunday school enterprise with focus given to the methods employed by the missionary societies which had a strong connection with the Sunday school network. The missionary hero was an important ideological tool and authors could create a powerful mythology around them. As John Mackenzie suggests in his discussion of David Livingstone, this was:

partially self-made through the genuine achievements of their lives but their usefulness in the practical world is developed by successors who create the heroic-afterlife by emphasising, even exaggerating, the personal qualities, the seemingly selfless endeavours and near-cosmic objectives of their subjects.<sup>52</sup>

Although the doctoring of the biographies by authors was a major factor and one which will be discussed in Chapter One, this study intends not to add to the process of mythologisation, but to concentrate instead upon modes of production.<sup>53</sup> This process will allow for an examination of how exemplary missionary figures represented British superiority, and how they reinforced the idea of community and a shared cultural heritage.

In one of the few monograph-length studies dedicated to the missionary biography, Terrence Craig focuses on Canadian missionaries while also acknowledging

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<sup>52</sup> John M. Mackenzie, 'David Livingstone and the Worldly After-Life: Imperialism and Nationalism in Africa', in J.M. Mackenzie, ed., *David Livingstone: And the Victorian Encounter with Africa* (London, National Portrait Gallery, 1996), p.206.

<sup>53</sup> For an interesting discussion see: David Lambert and Alan Lester's study *Colonial Lives* which focuses upon 'some of the ways that individual people made the British empire and some of the ways that the empire made them'; David Lambert & Alan Lester, 'Imperial Spaces, Imperial Subjects', in D. Lambert & A. Lester, eds., *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2006), p.1.

that many books were imported into Canada from England and the United States.<sup>54</sup>

Importantly for the arguments made in this thesis, Craig recognises that the patterns, form and content of the biographies transcend chronological and geographical facets.<sup>55</sup>

Craig argues that ‘this is a largely homogeneous body of literature which shares characteristics *in spite of time and place*, both factors having been considered irrelevant to the integrity of the crusade and its literary expansion’.<sup>56</sup> Because the missionary biographies thereby define themselves as a generic group drawing on similar narrative tropes, Craig argues that a ‘thematic approach’ is ‘not only valid but socially a more interesting approach, throwing up patterns instead of individuals’.<sup>57</sup> Following Craig, this study is the first to examine in detail how symbolic messages transmitted to working-class children, with an emphasis on imperial and moral concerns, were incorporated within British biographies of popular missionary heroes.

This thesis will consider the language and content within the biographies used to promote the symbolic missionary hero and examine how they employed a connective narrative strategy that allowed authors to create an idea of the common nature of the missionaries’ heroic role. It will also illustrate how the imperialistic theme particularly in relation to the male missionary hero remained constant over different time periods and places. This is particularly interesting considering the huge geopolitical changes taking place within the period under discussion, which included the Scramble for Africa, the British Raj and Britain’s changing role as a global power. More specifically, it will

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<sup>54</sup> Terrence Craig, *The Missionary Lives: A Study in Canadian Missionary Biography and Autobiography* (Leiden, Brill, 1997), p. xi.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xii.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

demonstrate the social and textual mechanisms used to construct the notion of the heroic missionary, and consider how the material acted as a critical link between society and its juvenile population. In this way, the thesis adds a detailed understanding of the missionary hero to various studies that have analysed the imperialist content and impact of children's literature and adventure stories more broadly.<sup>58</sup>

In this thesis missionary biographies will be examined for the cultural meanings conferred upon them and will explore their capacity to connect with and articulate certain ideological messages that empowered some values and ideas while actively dismissing or disguising others. The focus of this study is to advance our understandings of the historical role of the biographies in providing working-class children with imperial ideologies through wholesome yet exciting literature.<sup>59</sup> It will explore how images of the missionary hero seduced the imagination of children providing them with attractive national heroes, who stood alongside the celebrated military, sporting and fictional heroes and consequently occupied a prominent position in the imperial consciousness of British children.<sup>60</sup> The power of the literature to shape, maintain and transmit knowledge worked to develop a united voice, which, as Homi Bhabha suggests has constantly been used to 'produce the idea of nation as a continuous national narrative of national progress'.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> For further reading see: M. Daphne Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books* (New York & London, Garland, 2000); Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World* (London, Harper Collins, 1991); J.S. Bratton, 'Of England, Home and Duty: The Image of England in Victorian and Edwardian Fiction', in J.M. Mackenzie, ed., *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1986).

<sup>59</sup> Susan Thorne has argued that many missionary publications were supplied via the Sunday school for the benefit of working-class children and their parents'; Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.128.

<sup>60</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter Five the narratives were often produced in ways not necessarily approved by the missionaries in the field.

<sup>61</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, 'Introduction: Narrating the Nation', in H.K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (Abingdon, Routledge, 1990), p.1.

The linked ideas of nation and community play an important role within this thesis, and the representation of the missionary within the biographies I contend was part of the larger discourse of national culture. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* continues to provide an important framework for understanding how children were inculcated in ideas of nation, empire and self-improvement.<sup>62</sup> Anderson's central contention is that the development of a complex and multi-layer market for books - which he terms 'print capitalism' - made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways'.<sup>63</sup> Anderson argues that the growth of mass media played an important role in creating and sustaining imagined national communities. Through shared access to common printed material, people are able to imagine themselves as part of the same nation and ethnicity 'imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign...It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'.<sup>64</sup> Alternatively, as Stephanie Barczewski states 'fellow readers, visible and connected to each other by print, formed the embryo of the nationally imagined community'.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Also see: Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983) who highlights the importance of common discursive and cultural systems to the formation of a national identity.

<sup>63</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.37; Other scholars including Stuart Hall and Antonio Gramsci have also discussed how cultural texts perform an ideological function, for Hall by constructing a 'social knowledge' and for Gramsci the creation and maintenance of hegemony; Stuart Hall, 'Culture Media and the 'Ideological Effect'', in J. Curran, M. Gurevitch & J. Woollacott, eds., *Mass Communication and Society* (Newbury Park, Sage Publications, 1977), p.340; Antonio Gramsci, *Antonio Gramsci: Selections from Cultural Writings* edited by David Forgacs & Geoffrey Nowell-Smith; translated by William Boelhower (Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2012), pp.386-421.

<sup>64</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.6.

<sup>65</sup> Stephanie L. Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2000), p.52.

The biographies offered as Sunday school prizes to working-class readers identified a demographic readership which encouraged them to identify themselves within this broader ‘imagined community’ which was linked as Topham has argued to ‘the creation and maintenance of particular social groups and cultural practices...often associated with particular forms of sociability prevalent in Sunday schools, boarding schools, and middle-class evangelical families’.<sup>66</sup> Narratives in relation to imperial heroes were crucial to disseminate core values of patriotism, manliness and superiority and were inextricably linked to ideas of community. Indeed, as Ian Ousby has argued the term ‘heroism’ was used with an ‘almost obsessive frequency that no other age in English culture has ever come close to rivalling’ and regularly used to celebrate and define what it meant to be British.<sup>67</sup> Utilising literary theory, historical and cultural materialism and Kleinian psychoanalysis, Graham Dawson presents a picture of how the idealised masculine hero was instrumental in defining ideas of national identity.<sup>68</sup> Following Melanie Klein, Dawson suggests that the adventure hero offers a ‘psychic reassurance of triumph’ and through identification with these heroes ‘meets the wish to fix one’s own place within the social world’.<sup>69</sup> By providing examples of discourse of their public and private lives and the ‘hero-making and hagiography’ of Havelock of Lucknow and T.E. Lawrence, Dawson illustrates how this relationship was

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<sup>66</sup> Jonathan R. Topham, ‘Periodicals and the Making of Reading Audiences for Science in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain: The *Youth’s Magazine*, 1828-37’, in L. Henson et.al., eds., *Culture and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Media* (London, Routledge, 2016), p.67.

<sup>67</sup> Ian Ousby, ‘Carlyle, Thackeray, and Victorian Heroism’, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 12 (1982), pp.152-153.

<sup>68</sup> Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (Abingdon, Routledge, 1994).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.282.

communicated, arguing that they became ‘myths of nationhood’ providing a ‘cultural focus around which a national community could cohere’.<sup>70</sup>

### Methodology

This thesis uses Anderson’s argument that nations are conceived of and consolidated through reading to position the missionary biographies as central in creating a national identity. Through narratives based upon displays of characteristically British character and superiority in strange and often threatening situations overseas, working-class children could acknowledge, associate with and feel they belonged to an imagined community. Although emphasising print culture as a central factor Anderson’s model can I argue be extended to include oral and performative methods, for example, visits by serving missionaries, as discussed earlier. I do, however, accept that this is a simplistic term and would not apply to every working-class child that attended Sunday school. Many children would produce their own meanings through negotiated or even oppositional reading. After all, as Stanley Fish warned while identifying readers as belonging to interpretive communities, sharing assumptions and expectations about both the process of reading and the texts themselves, we must address the question of change, and acknowledge that readers are able to embrace variety and read outside their community.<sup>71</sup> Recounting his childhood memories, for example, journalist Filson Young states ‘As a child I contributed under compulsion, or in some momentary spirit of

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p.viii & p.1.

<sup>71</sup> Stanley Eugene Fish, *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies* (Durham, Duke U.P., 1999).



emulation (afterwards bitterly regretted), to missionary societies; but I never gave gladly, and I am afraid I regarded ever coin swallowed up by the narrow and papered maw of missionary box as utterly and irretrievably lost'.<sup>72</sup>

Similarly, reception of the biographies is a complex and capricious area to examine, as readers consciously or unconsciously incorporate into their understandings of the text their own value-judgements, knowledge, influences, experiences and perspectives described as 'unhitching the work from the situation which initially conditioned it-particularly its potential for drifting freely toward destinations unknown... and subjected to multifarious functional reassessments'.<sup>73</sup> As an example, Phyllis Willmott describing her working-class childhood in London's East End, explains how reading about missionaries in Africa in Sunday school states 'in contrast to the solid reality of our own circumscribed world these were to me as awesome and as unreal as a story from *Grimms' Fairy Tales*'.<sup>74</sup> Janusz Slawinski and Nina Taylor, contend that while 'the individual confirms his belonging to one or other sector of the public insofar as the game he undertakes each time with the text is an activity comprehensible in terms of prevailing reading procedures, comprehensibility does not mean conforming'.<sup>75</sup> By acknowledging Anderson's 'imagined community' only as a useful starting point, this study attempts to avoid one making overarching assumptions about reader response and accept the complex nature of the reception of the missionary biographies by working-class children.

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<sup>72</sup> *The Saturday Review*, 1912.

<sup>73</sup> Janusz Slawinski & Nina Taylor, 'Reading and Reader in the Literary Historical Process', *New Literary History*, 1.3 (1988), pp.526-527.

<sup>74</sup> Phyllis Willmott, *A Green Girl* (Halifax, Remploy Press, 1975), pp.3-4.

<sup>75</sup> Slawinski & Taylor, 'Reading and Reader', pp.533-534.

This thesis addresses from a variety of perspectives, the importance of the biographies in inculcating working-class children in explicit and implicit ideological messages of empire, Christian benevolence, patriotism and self-improvement. It seeks to contribute to the understanding of links between the missionary hero, imperialism, gender and citizenship with the focus being placed on their distribution to working-class children via the Sunday school. In taking this approach, this thesis builds on the ideas about youth engagement in empire elaborated by Stephen Humphries in *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939*.<sup>76</sup>

Humphries allows us to think about reception in an alternative way by revealing that ‘working-class children were much more responsive to lessons and activities that were inspired by imperialism’ as many he argues welcomed ‘games lessons, colourful stories of heroism and national glory and imperial celebrations’.<sup>77</sup> At the same time, however, their enthusiasm for such games and stories - amongst which might be included the missionary hero - did ‘not imply automatic development of the specific character traits intended by...authorities’, as individuals were both ‘selective and discriminating’.<sup>78</sup>

Humphries is clear to point out that many stories ‘made a direct appeal to working-class youth’ and many were viewed as a ‘relief from the monotony of school routine’.<sup>79</sup> This was, he claims because they reflected and reinforced a number of their cultural traditions, in particular the street gangs’ concern with territorial rivalry and the assertion of masculinity’.<sup>80</sup> Scott Bennett’s study of the production of books and their

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<sup>76</sup> Stephen Humphries, *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1981).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.41.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.42.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.41.

relationship to the audience adds a further dimension to this argument.<sup>81</sup> Bennett suggests that this relationship can only come about ‘where widely shared interests or values exist or can be created [and] require some common ground, some common feeling, however partial or fleeting it may be in the day-to-day lives of the individuals that make up the market’.<sup>82</sup>

Empire according to Clare Midgley was ‘an essentially masculine project’ and throughout the biographies certain themes appear which are all interconnected by gender and empire.<sup>83</sup> John Tosh argues that the 1870s saw the beginning of a transformation in masculinity which he calls ‘the flight from domesticity’ which resulted from a concern about the domestication of the male and emerging forms of women’s authority.<sup>84</sup> This is relevant when considering the narrative forms and textual practices that rejuvenated, encouraged and reinforced images of heroic masculinity in relation to the male missionary. This is particularly significant for this study which suggests that at a time when the hero was part of the currency of education, the missionary hero was viewed as an imperial archetype, personifying Christian manliness and gentlemanliness. This study, however, furthers research on empire and gender by offering examples of the missionary as an imperial hero, but one which includes the participation of women in the equation. As more women joined in missionary activities, and religion itself was ‘softening’ in the eyes of many religious commentators, the very masculine missionary

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<sup>81</sup> Scott Bennett, ‘Revolutions in Thought: Serial Publication and the Mass Market for Reading’, in J. Shaddock & M. Wolffe, eds., *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings* (Leicester, Leicester U.P., 1982).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.226.

<sup>83</sup> Clare Midgley, ‘Introduction’, in C. Midgley, ed., *Gender and Imperialism* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1998), p.14.

<sup>84</sup> John Tosh, *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven & London, Yale U.P., 1999), p.170.

hero became a useful tool to counteract these concerns and to respond to society's worries about the perceived social crisis facing working-class boys and the nation. The arguments within this thesis rest upon how appropriate gender divisions were transmitted to working-class children, and this was particularly relevant as increasing numbers of single independent women were employed in the missionary field. As this thesis will illustrate, many biographers continued to promote the missionary enterprise as a masculine endeavour, clearly demarcating roles and experiences of male and female missionaries. This was usually done by endorsing explicit and robust ideas of masculinity in contrast to female domesticity.

The so-called feminisation of the mission field that reflected the widening of opportunities for single women, however, forced many biographers not only to acknowledge their contributions but also to challenge and reformulate conventional definitions of femininity and heroism. This also meant that missionary masculinity was redefined, and as Norman Vance argues, one problem faced was how to keep manliness Christian and Christianity manly.<sup>85</sup> Careful attention will, therefore, be given to the various methods used to define and construct women missionaries as heroes. By examining the tensions underpinning the discursive construction of women missionaries we will turn in Part Two of this thesis to the question of just how successful biographers were in their portrayals of women missionaries within the adventure story format.<sup>86</sup> This study seeks, therefore, to go beyond simplified generalisations and probe these ambiguities identifying how the gendered rhetoric within the biographies operated. The

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<sup>85</sup> Norman Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1985), p.7.

<sup>86</sup> For further reading see: Kristine Moruzi, *Constructing Girlhood Through the Periodical Press, 1850–1915* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2012).

fundamental question when considering how gender was represented within the biographies will be to ask if gender roles are described as mutually distinct categories, or do the narratives do something different?

This study offers an interpretive contribution and new insights by considering how dominant ideologies during the period 1870-1917 in relation to imperialism and socialisation were conveyed to children. Although this study focuses on the missionary biography, the range of material covered represents many different types of literature including adventure stories, editorials, conference papers and memoirs. Consequently, the nature of this study is interdisciplinary and draws upon several disciplines including social and cultural history, art history and literary studies. Although reader-response theory will be useful to contextualise the material, this thesis will not focus directly upon how children received and understood the messages, however, some recollections are incorporated within this study when their content reinforces the impact of the narratives. It is concerned with the relationship between the text and contexts but importantly upon the intention of authors to convey important messages to children. The biographies, as one would expect, relied heavily upon the underlying framework of Christian civilisation. This study, however, while acknowledging the use of Christianity as a tool for relaying messages of British superiority, is interested in the circulation of cultural and social meanings through the use within the biographies of recurring themes and images. By considering this, it will also be important to reflect upon strategic silences and omissions, for example, very few biographies discuss the success rates of conversion within the native population and focus instead on one or two individual

stories. Before some of the elements within the biographies are discussed, it will be useful to define what they were.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a biography as ‘The process of recording the events and circumstances of another person’s life, esp. for publication (latterly in any of various written, recorded, or visual media); the documenting of individual life histories (and, later, other forms of thematic historical narrative), considered as a genre of writing or social history’.<sup>87</sup> As an important tool for instruction, the role of missionary biographers was to present role models that defined acceptable behaviours, social expectations and moral values. Biographies of the heroic missionary, unsurprisingly, offered exemplary heroes who embodied established cultural values and served as an inspiration for what Barbara Korte describes as the ‘non-heroic mass’.<sup>88</sup>

Most biographies told the same story, providing children with a complete picture of the missionary’s life. This typically included descriptions of a normal and often rebellious childhood, their call to missionary work, leaving home, and their journey to and experience within the mission field. Upon this basic structure, more interesting and personalised stories were created, designed to tempt, excite and instruct young British readers. This allowed authors to incorporate melodramatic narratives complete with vivid illustrations, particularly concerning danger and self-sacrifice. This was true of many missionary biographies as the lure of their protagonists’ often-untimely death

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<sup>87</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*.

<sup>88</sup> Barbara Korte & Stefanie Lethbridge, ‘Introduction: Heroes and Heroism in British Fiction. Concepts and Conjunctions’, in B. Korte & S. Lethbridge, eds., *Heroes and Heroism in British Fiction Since 1800: Case Studies* (Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p.3.

allowed authors to portray them as martyrs, adding to their marketing and instructive potential.<sup>89</sup>

### Primary sources

Due to a neglect of missionary biographies by historians, the research for this thesis has largely been conducted through a study of primary sources. Personal copies of missionary biographies, copies held by various libraries, archives and digitised versions have been examined and analysed allowing for a detailed analysis. Particularly useful were digitised copies when searching for keywords and for carrying out a comparative study of biographies of male and female missionaries. In total 152 biographies were consulted and were chosen because they were recommended and promoted as suitable for Sunday school prizes. The sheer abundance and variety of sources made it impossible to consider the whole range of material recommended for further reading via bibliographies, endorsed through catalogues or promoted in book reviews.<sup>90</sup>

In order to identify a relevant selection I took a flexible approach, concentrating upon the narratives (including single and collective biographies) which provided examples of the missionary as a hero and addressed the recurrent themes under investigation.

Biographies surrounding Hannington and Slessor were chosen as both missionaries were viewed as heroic and thus became exemplary texts for the Sunday school market. As a

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<sup>89</sup> Benedict Anderson and Zygmunt Bauman are amongst several scholars who have highlighted the link between national pride and the willingness to die for the good of the nation; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp.9-10; Zygmunt Bauman, *Morality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies* (Stanford, Stanford U.P., 1992), p.104-109.

<sup>90</sup> Robert Speers, for example, in his collective biography explains that 'if those who study these sketches wish to consult fuller biographies, they may turn to the following, from which the material has been drawn' and supplies a comprehensive list of relevant biographies; Robert E. Speers, *Servants of the King* (New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1914), p. viii.

consequence numerous publications were produced depicting the lives and heroism of Slessor and Hannington. Individually their biographies also provide exceptional examples mirroring the dominant ideologies of the period. What distinguished biographies of Hannington from the myriad of narratives based upon the heroic male missionary was that much of his story was written using his own words and illustrations. Slessor, however, was one of the few women missionaries to be singled out for individual and extensive treatment, as most writing of female missionaries during this period were subsumed within collective biographies or biographies of their husbands.

Many of the biographies I am looking at were produced by the main missionary societies the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the LMS, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Baptist Missionary Society.<sup>91</sup> While the latter produced a series based upon their own missionaries, the others crossed denominational lines and included not only missionaries but also ‘non-missionary heroes who, like missionaries were doing God’s work in the world’.<sup>92</sup> Subjects included heroines such as Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale. The large societies were not, however, the only ones to produce biographies of missionary heroes. The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), for example, generated a range of missionary biographies, as did the RTS. As the popularity of the biographies grew, secular publishers increasingly offered readers biographies based upon the missionary hero. The missionary societies themselves had little control over the content, although as they were often aimed at the

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<sup>91</sup> Some of the largest societies were associated with recognised denominations; The Church Missionary Society was evangelical Anglican, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society, and the London Missionary Society was mostly Congregationalist.

<sup>92</sup> Jeffrey Cox, ‘From the Empire of Christ to the Third World: Religion and the Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century’, in A. Thompson, ed., *Britain’s Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2012), pp.89-90.



Sunday school market, they seldom diverted from the formula or messages promoted within the missionary societies publications. The benefits of ‘Sunday schools studying the same lesson, at the same time’ under an international uniform lesson plan, were recognised by the Fourteenth International Sunday school Convention held in Chicago in 1914.<sup>93</sup> This explained how a ‘uniform system’ produced a ‘common bond of fellowship and co-operation among churches and Sunday schools throughout the land and the world’, and consequently made ‘it possible for publishing houses to issue large quantities of lesson helps...[which] ...became the source of great profit to the publishing houses, denominational and otherwise. Indeed, they declare that no other feature of their publishing business has ever been so profitable as that connected with the Uniform Lessons and the literature relating to them’.<sup>94</sup> My study incorporates biographies produced in both Britain and America, not least because from 1862 there was a concerted effort by the Sunday school Unions of Britain and America for the ‘regular and systematic exchange of publications’.<sup>95</sup> It is interesting that most of the biographies produced in America promoted a Eurocentric outlook. This, however, is not surprising as many biographers attest to using British publications for their information.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> J.C. Youker, *Organised Sunday School Work in America 1911-1914* (Chicago, International Sunday School Association, 1914), p.123.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Report of the Proceedings of the General Sunday School Convention* (London, Sunday School Union, 1862), p.243; The Sunday school Union was founded in 1803 and according to William Groser ‘it was Protestant, Evangelical, and inter-denominational in constitution, welcoming into association all schools with were in sympathy with its objects’; William H. Groser, *A Hundred Year’s Work for the Children: The Centenary Record of the Sunday school Union* (London, SSU, 1903), p.42.

<sup>96</sup> Within *In Land’s Afar*, E.E. Strong, for example, explained that he had used ‘Some extracts from Mr. Batchelor’s letters written at that time to *The Church Missionary Gleaner*’; E.E. Strong, *In Lands Afar: Mission Stories of Many Lands: A Book for Young People* (Boston, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1897), p.273.

The nature of the biographies chosen included individual and collective biographies, pamphlets and occasional articles within magazines and periodicals written as short biographical entries. Regardless of who published the biographies, all constructed the missionary hero for the Sunday school market as a true British hero. The biographies were, theoretically democratic, written for all children regardless of their age, gender and social class and unlike their fictional counterparts, the hero did not have to possess the often-implausible powers assigned to fictional characters. Some short biographies, usually those written in pamphlet form and intended to be used as study aids, were directed towards a specific social group. Basil Mathews's, *Yarns on African Pioneers* (1916), for example, was 'intended for the use of leaders and teachers of boys, especially those of the Brigade and Scout type'.<sup>97</sup> While Constance E. Padwick's *White Heroines in Africa* (1914), was proposed primarily for use by 'Leaders Amongst Working Girls'.<sup>98</sup> Although her concluding remarks suggested that the work would also be suitable for 'Girls' Clubs, Guides' Company, or Girls' Guildry', clubs that aimed to foster cross-class communication and understanding.<sup>99</sup> The other historical sources gathered for analysis are studied from different, yet complementary levels of investigation, and include accounts in contemporary newspaper and articles, social surveys, missionary and Sunday school records.

While the missionary experience varied a great deal in different parts of the world, this study will consider biographies given to children in the form of rewards or prizes, which were rarely selected by country. Although they were characterised by

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<sup>97</sup> Basil Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers: To be Told to Boys* (London, UCME, 1916).

<sup>98</sup> Constance E. Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa: A Book for Leaders Amongst Working Girls* (London, UCME, 1914).

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p.58.

varied and shifting patterns of adaptation and hostility, this study is more concerned with the symbolic representation of the missionary and importantly how authors wished to illustrate their champion. This study is interested in discourses reflecting prevailing and emerging ideas and values within all the biographies regardless of location, and will, therefore, not differentiate the literature by geographical location.<sup>100</sup> What is interesting, however, is the considerable role Africa plays within the biographies compared to the part played by other imperial sites such as India, China and Australia.<sup>101</sup> As will be illustrated in Chapter Four this was partly due to the popularity of biographies based upon David Livingstone's travel in South Africa, but also, as Patrick Brantlinger states the 'British tended to see Africa as a centre of evil, a part of the world possessed by a demonic 'darkness' or barbarism ... which it was their duty to exorcise'.<sup>102</sup> Africa was 'more mysterious, more dangerous, and altogether more frightening than India' and consequently became the focus of many adventure stories. Africa as an area of missionary enterprise provided an ideal opportunity for biographers

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<sup>100</sup> This view is discussed by Max Jones, et al., who argue that 'three geographical features appear particularly fertile in the British and French imagination: deserts, polar wastelands and tropical rainforests, each capable of representation as an untamed, and correspondingly attractive, world. Though each space possessed its own specific tropes, all three presented the challenges required for both a heroic quest and a redemptive journey into the self'; Max Jones, et al., 'Decolonising Imperial Heroes', p.801.

<sup>101</sup> The South Seas, as will be discussed, was given narrative space but this was due mainly to the nature and marketability of missionary John Williams who was reportedly killed and eaten by cannibals on the island of Erromanga. And biographies based upon women missionaries did include India and China due to their unique and very gendered relationships with the female population, for example, in the Indian Zenanas.

<sup>102</sup> Livingstone according to John Mackenzie was the subject of 'extraordinary numbers of popular biographies...many of them no more than summaries of each other or of the more major works, yet most of them remained in print for long periods, selling in large numbers'; Mackenzie, 'Heroic Myths of Empire', p.124; Patrick Brantlinger, 'Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent', *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1985), p.175; Emma Pitman writing in 1882 claimed that 'Africa is emphatically the 'Dark Continent'...the people are buried in the densest heathen darkness. Their heathenism is not like that of China or India; in as much as in many cases they are ignorant of the duty of worshipping, and destitute of the very idea'; Emma R. Pitman, *Central Africa, Japan and Fiji: A Story of Missionary Enterprise, Trials and Triumphs* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1882), p.3.

to promote the missionary hero in a similar light to the adventure story hero who was regularly battling wild animals, ferocious natives and inclement landscapes. A further consideration is the identity of the missionaries being discussed as many protagonists would consider themselves Scottish rather than British. Livingstone, for example, was often described as embodying an 'English' national character.<sup>103</sup> Although this is an important aspect of their life stories, within the juvenile works, they were represented as British allowing Sunday school scholars to engage with ideas of race, empire and nationhood.

To enable an understanding of the role of the biographies, this study assumes the importance of language and the metaphorical construction of ideas about the missionary as an imperial hero. It will examine how important messages were transmitted to children through a variety of rhetorical devices, including repeated plots and tropes which helped mediate the construction of imagined communities, maintain Christian privilege and reinforce the need for missionary intervention. Journeys by the missionary, for example, were used metaphorically to imaginatively 'map' ideal Englishness, civilisation and imperial fantasies upon undeveloped and uncivilised spaces. By absorbing these images, which were according to Edward Said 'sometimes allusively and sometimes carefully plotted', British children were given access to, and legitimacy for, participation within the framework of national beliefs, values and behaviours.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Justin D. Livingstone, *Livingstone's 'Lives': A Metabiography of a Victorian Icon* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2017), p.13.

<sup>104</sup> Edward Said, 'Secular Interpretation, the Geographical Element, and the Methodology of Imperialism', in G. Prakash, ed., *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements* (Princeton, Princeton U. P., 1995), p.30; For further reading see: Jake W. Spidle, 'Victorian Juvenilia and the Image of the Black African', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 9.1 (1973), pp.51-65.

This study will also consider paratextual material within the biographies such as illustrations, exercises and advertisements which were particularly effective as a means of condensing a message.<sup>105</sup> This introduction has positioned this thesis in relation to existing scholarly works, but also highlighted the significance of the missionary biography as an arena where important messages concerning education, socialisation and empire unite. The final part of this introduction will provide a brief outline of the ensuing chapters and their contribution to the overall discussion.

### Outline of thesis

The central argument of this thesis is that biographies of missionary heroes, offered as rewards and prizes to working-class children through the Sunday school system between 1870 and 1917, conveyed important messages about gender, empire and citizenship. To interrogate these components effectively this thesis is divided into two parts, the first part devoted to the context, and the second analysing the texts of the biographies. The first chapter will discuss perceived concerns regarding the moral welfare of working-class children and consider in detail concerns fuelled by an increase in literacy following the 1870 Education Act and the availability of cheap literature about what children were reading. It will also analyse ideas and practices put in place to promote the reading of healthy literature and attempts made by educationalists and moral reformers to provide children, via the newly formed youth organisations, the elementary school and Empire

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<sup>105</sup> Paratexts according to Gerard Genette is text presented in an ‘unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as the author’s name, a title, a preface, illustrations...although we do not always know whether these productions are to be regarded as belonging to the text, in any case they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it’; Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1997), p.1.

Day, with an education that incorporated ideas of imperialism, self-improvement and character building. Finally, it will discuss the role and influence of the Sunday school which Asa Briggs's has described as being the 'most powerful educational influence'.<sup>106</sup> Chapter Two expands upon the discussion of how working-class children were targeted for moral and social education by focusing on the role of the Sunday school and the importance placed upon the use of the missionary biography. Chapter Three will discuss the hero and hero worship and will examine in detail literature incorporating the hero from a more general perspective. The chapter will conclude by considering the boy reader and his books followed by the same analysis for the girl reader and hers. Chapter Four will provide a detailed analysis of the missionary biographies and will discuss why the missionary was deemed an ideal candidate to provide examples of self-help and self-improvement. It will examine how, through their use of the adventure story formula, male and female missionaries were represented and how biographers were able to dispense clear imperial ideas and moral values. This chapter will conclude with a section introducing missionaries James Hannington and Mary Slessor whose biographies were frequently used by the Sunday schools, and whose lives will provide a central lens in Part Two. The final chapter in Part One, Chapter Five, will focus on the role of the publishers, biographers and illustrators as mediators in their attempt to provide a positive image of the heroic missionary and prepare children to become imperial citizens through tales of bravery, adventure and self-sacrifice.

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<sup>106</sup> Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1990), p.255; Briggs's also describes the 'Sunday School Union one of the most carefully organized local voluntary bodies'.

Starting with Chapter Six, Part Two will focus on representations of male and female missionaries within the biographies concentrating upon common features, motifs and codes which highlight how children were inculcated in ideas of patriotism, gender and British superiority all inextricably linked to ideas of community. It will detail how themes of missionary childhoods, journeys and encounters common to both male and female missionaries were articulated within the biographies, and how biographers were able to use these motifs to reinforce ideas of masculinity and femininity. Each theme will be followed by a more detailed account of how various biographies based on Hannington and Slessor communicated values and ideas viewed by biographers as important. Chapter Seven will concentrate upon the male missionary and will consider themes of self-help, manliness and athleticism, chivalry and militarism and will again provide a detailed analysis of how these themes were represented within biographies based upon Hannington. Chapter Eight looks at the female missionary and considers themes of home-making, health and exercise and will discuss them in relation to how they were described in biographies of Mary Slessor. The final chapter, Chapter Nine will discuss the themes of self-sacrifice and martyrdom but will include Hannington and Slessor within the general discussion rather than treating them separately.

## CHAPTER ONE

‘It is important to turn the rising generation on the right road for good citizenship’ - The problems and suggested solutions.

Scholars have long been familiar with the idea of a crisis surrounding working-class youth. While this area is well documented, it is important to acknowledge the influence of Sunday schools as playing an important role within the intellectual dialogue, especially in regard to the literature they promoted, which included biographies of missionary heroes.<sup>1</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, working-class children (especially boys) were targeted by moral reformers including educationalists, religious groups and literary critics. Amid fears of degeneracy their aim was to educate children both formally and informally in lessons of socialisation and citizenship. Sydney Webb, a leading member of the Fabian Society, for example, linked the education of children with national efficiency.<sup>2</sup> Writing in the 1901 September issue of *Nineteenth Century*, he explained that: ‘It is in the class-rooms of these [elementary] schools that the future battles of the Empire for commercial prosperity are already being lost’.<sup>3</sup> Although Webb was concerned with the education of children and the commercial prosperity of empire,

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<sup>1</sup> For further reading see: Thomas E. Jordan, *The Degeneracy Crisis and Victorian Youth* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1993); M.J.D. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2004); Springhall, ‘Building Character in the British Boy: The Attempt to Extend Christian Manliness to Working-Class Adolescents’, in J.A. Mangan & J. Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality*, pp.66-67; Stephanie Olsen, *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880-1914* (London, Bloomsbury, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Sidney Webb, *Twentieth Century Politics: A Policy for National Efficiency* (London, Fabian Tract, 1901); Described as a term that ‘served as a convenient label under which a complex of beliefs, assumptions, and demands could be grouped’ National Efficiency was synonymous with improvement and progress; Geoffrey R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899-1914* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971), p.54.

<sup>3</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, 1901 as cited in Royden Harrison, *The Life and Times of Sidney and Beatrice Webb 1858-1905: The Formative Years* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000), p.326.



his belief in the importance of educating working-class children was also relevant to a number of debates and commentaries regarding their socialisation and training. Concerns about their education and moral training were not, however, restricted only to the elementary school.

This chapter opens with a discussion of the perceived problems associated with working-class youth and pays attention to concerns of hooliganism and crime which were accentuated when the influence of the type of material they were assumed to be reading was added to the equation. It will then consider the energetic attempts made by educationalists and moral reformers to provide constructive solutions which would promote appropriate forms of moral physical and cultural education for working-class children. Among these proposals were the formation of youth organisations, a more rigorous attempt to control what was being taught within the elementary school system with direct influence on school textbooks, the emergence of Empire Day and for the context of this study the important role played by the Sunday schools.

### The perceived moral and physical degeneration of Britain's youth

'Empire cannot be built on rickety and flat-chested citizens' was a statement made by Liberal MP., T.J. Macnamara in 1905 in response to evidence based upon the poor physical and moral condition of many working-class British children.<sup>4</sup> Fuelled by

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<sup>4</sup> T.J. Macnamara, 'In Corpore Sano', *Contemporary Review*, 87 (1905), p.238; Two influential studies which provided information on working-class youth were Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People of London* (London, Macmillan, 1902) and Seebohm Rowntree's study of poverty in York Seebohm Rowntree, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (London, Macmillan, 1908), Similarly, the growth of women's suffrage and the labour movement forced a reassessment of class and gender boundaries. The embarrassment of the British army during the Second South African War (1899-1902) also raised concerns about the health and stamina of the British male which also coincided with the rapidly changing social conditions.

anxieties surrounding increased overseas competition and concerns over national efficiency, the years between 1870 to 1917 witnessed many dramatic events and technological developments, but importantly it was a time of great socio-economic transformation. It also falls around the period 1880 and 1920 described by Stuart Hall as one of ‘deep structural change’.<sup>5</sup> As Hall explains ‘the more we look at it, the more convinced we become that somewhere in this period lies the matrix of factors and problems from which *our* history - and our peculiar dilemmas - arise’.<sup>6</sup> Hall also argues that:

the ‘magistrate and the evangelical police’ have, or ought to have, a more ‘honoured’ place in the history of popular culture [and that] ‘transformations’ are at the heart of any study of popular study [being] key to a long and protracted process of the moralisation of the labouring classes...and the re-education of the people.<sup>7</sup>

During this period, a series of measures designed to ‘impose social controls upon the lower classes’ were brought in with the intention of controlling ‘the behaviours of the lower classes towards the desired ends of self-discipline, industry, punctuality, thrift - in other words, towards what has come to be called middle-class morality’.<sup>8</sup> Debates and

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<sup>5</sup> Stuart Hall, ‘Notes on Deconstructing ‘the Popular’’, in R. Guins & O.Z. Cruz, eds., *Popular Culture: A Reader* (London, Sage, 2005), p.65; This led to a reassessment of the British working-class and drove many social commentators to highlight concerns over the failure of the working-class to respond to initiatives put in place to raise their social and moral wellbeing; Jonathan Rutherford, *Forever England: Reflections on Race, Masculinity and Empire* (London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1997), pp. 53-54.

<sup>6</sup> Hall, ‘Notes on Deconstructing’, p.65.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>8</sup> John A. Mayer, ‘Notes Towards a Working Definition of Social Control’ in S. Cohen & A. Scull, eds., *Social Control and the State: Historical and Comparative Essays* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1985), p.17; For further reading see: Deborah Dwork, *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: A History of the Infant and Child Welfare Movement in England, 1898-1918* (London, Tavistock, 1987).

legislation based upon the contribution the working-class could make to the nation identified children as a key factor. Interestingly, as discussed in the Introduction, in her study of Sunday school prize books Entwistle found similar themes which included ‘trust in God’, ‘self-sacrifice’, ‘philanthropic work’, ‘good-temper’, ‘teetotalism’, ‘industriousness’, ‘studiousness’ and ‘the influence of mothers’.<sup>9</sup>

Following the implementation of the 1870 Education Act, many working-class children were brought under public supervision for the first time instigating a determined effort to create norms of social and moral behaviour. Many commentators believed that the moral and physical welfare of working-class children could be improved, and their perceived involvement in crime, street gang violence and various vices could be eradicated by a determined effort to instil values of hard work and discipline. This was to be achieved by many different measures which will be discussed later, however, it is important at this juncture to consider in more detail how working-class children were defined, and what the moral concerns surrounding them were. Working-class children were party to new ideas surrounding the construction of childhood and adolescence. This represented a shift from the earlier nineteenth century idealised image of the ‘romantic child’ in need of protection and nurturing, to one in need, to use Hall’s terminology, of moral and social transformation. Troy Boone has argued that the ‘production of a new working-class youth identity’ was at the centre of attempts to unify the nation.<sup>10</sup> Nikolas Rose has also argued that the child became ‘an idea and a target’ and became inextricably connected to the aspirations of authorities’

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<sup>9</sup> Entwistle, ‘Embossed Gilt and Moral Tales’, p.86.

<sup>10</sup> Troy Boone, *Youth of Darkest England: Working-Class Children at the Heart of the Victorian Empire* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2005), p.1.

and thus the ‘health, welfare, and rearing of children [was] linked in thought and practice to the destiny of the nation and the responsibilities of the state’.<sup>11</sup>

The need for state intervention was made abundantly clear within a School Inspector’s report to the School Board for London in 1875: ‘in the very lowest districts, the Teachers’ work is rendered still more difficult by the presence of children who learn in the streets to swear, and lie, and pilfer, and in whom these habits seem to be fostered rather than checked by the example of the parents’.<sup>12</sup> Similar sentiments were again made in 1907 within a statement released at the opening of the Young People’s Institution in Glasgow:

Nothing strikes a visitor to our shores as much as the painful signs of physical degeneracy noticeable in many of young people of the working-class [sic] who live in our largest centres of population. The unhealthy environment of the factory and unhygienic conditions of so many homes invariably react upon the children, stunting the growth of the body and mind. There is another class who, while their surroundings are much better, are still subjected to special and subtle temptations, and who have no opportunity either for healthy recreation or mental culture. There is still a third class

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<sup>11</sup> Nikolas Rose, ‘The Young Citizen’, in C. Jenks, ed., *Childhood: Critical Concepts in Sociology* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2004), p.57; The ill-health of working-class children was often blamed on inadequate and unfit mothers rather than economic or environmental issues; For further reading see Anna Davin, *Growing up Poor: Home, School and Street in London 1870-1914* (London: River Oram Press, 1996); For further reading see: Philip Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of the Family* (New York, Vintage, 1962); Hugh Cunningham, *The Children of the Poor: Representations of Childhood since the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> School Board for London Minutes, 1875 as cited in Gretchen Galbraith, *Reading Lives: Reconstructing Childhood, Books, and Schools in Britain, 1870-1920* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1997), p.94.

that are neglected by their parents, and allowed to roam the streets, where they form habits that are ruinous to body and mind alike.<sup>13</sup>

This perceived behaviour among working-class children was often associated with hooliganism, criminality and deviance (which included smoking, drinking and street betting) and was seen as a direct threat to British morals, values and culture, and as a result, functioned as a crucial catalyst for moral and educational reform.<sup>14</sup> To achieve this various ideas and methods incorporating developments in pedagogical models were promoted which involved an understanding of both the physical and emotional development of children and resulted in many legislative and educational reforms which focused on character formation (or reformation).<sup>15</sup> Included in this endeavour were concerns regarding the impact and understanding of the British to their empire. In 1883 J.R. Seeley, Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, for example, claimed ‘we think of Great Britain too much and of Greater Britain too

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<sup>13</sup> The Salvation Army *Social Gazette* 11 May 1907 as cited in Ian Michael Livie, ‘Curing Hooliganism: Moral Panic, Juvenile Delinquency, and the Political Culture of Moral Reform in Britain, 1898-1908’, unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of Southern California, 2010, p.171.

<sup>14</sup> For further reading see Heather Shore, *Artful Dodgers: Youth and Crime in Early Nineteenth-Century London* (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 1999); Jeannie Duckworth, *Fagin’s Children: Criminal Children in Victorian England* (London, Hambledon, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Government legislation was brought in to tackle some of these concerns, for example, the Street Betting Act of 1906 and the Children’s Act of 1908; For further reading see: John Neubauer, *The Fin-de-Siècle Culture of Adolescence* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1992), p.6; Neubauer argues that ‘interlocking discourses about adolescence emerged in psychoanalysis, psychology, criminal justice, pedagogy, sociology, as well as literature’ at the turn of the century. Many studies were based upon German philosopher Friedrich Froebel who championed the kindergarten which was designed to improve the physical and intellectual well-being of children. Froebel stressed the importance of developing children’s imaginations and as one reviewer remarked ‘As regards the wisdom of placing the greatest achievements of mankind before the children, Froebel certainly taught that this should be done, and, in fact, stories of the deeds of heroes and great men of all time should hold an important place in the time-table’; *Journal of Education*, February 1901 as cited in Sandy Brewer, ‘The Hope of the World: The Story of Jesus and its Influence in the Formation of Identity in Working Class Girls in Britain 1900-1945’, unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of London, 1999, p.77.

little'.<sup>16</sup> Education and self-improvement became a much-discussed topic, and the development of the individual and character formation was viewed as an effective means of counteracting fears and uncertainties about the future generation. This also, in many ways, allowed children to feel part of what Anderson would later term the imagined community, and as Julia Bush argues in *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* imperialist education:

extended its range from university professors, archbishops and government ministers, throughout the formal education system, across into the worlds of literature, the press and entertainments, and thence down to the levels of popular consumption, packaging and advertising. Whether through textbooks, sermons, art exhibitions or the music-hall, Britons found themselves to be participants in a process of education and socialization which increasingly equated citizenship and self-worth with love of nation and empire.<sup>17</sup>

As part of this 'process of education and socialization' and relevant to this thesis, one of the primary targets for middle-class moralising about the potential degeneracy of working-class children was the influence and accessibility of cheap and sensational magazines known as 'Penny Dreadfuls'. Writing in the *Contemporary Review* in 1881 literary reviewer Thomas Wright, for example, argued that while 'our marvellously

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<sup>16</sup> John Robert Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London, Macmillan, 1883), p.43.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Expansionist policies, jubilee celebrations, the creation of societies such as the *League of the Empire* (1901) and the *Victoria League* (1901) all contributed to the sense of celebration. A souvenir publication by C.S. Dawe, *King Edward's Realm; The Story of Making of the Empire* (London, Educational Supply Association, 1902) that accompanied the coronation of Edward VII, for example, was produced for use in schools; Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (Leicester, Leicester U.P., 2000), p.126.

cheap literature includes a wide range of high-class reading...Never before did the ranker forms of reading flourish so abundantly'.<sup>18</sup> He continued by suggesting that 'Nor did they appeal so directly to boys as do the existing race of dreadfuls' and for full effect listed some of the more provocative titles '*The Boys Highwayman, The Boy Brigand, The Boy Pirate, The Boy King of the Outlaws &c.*, ...are modern invention'.<sup>19</sup> A similar article 'The Literature of the Streets' published in the *Edinburgh Review* worried that 'future fathers ... of the next generation would continue to turn to the penny dreadfuls; and the penny dreadfuls, in turn, would continue to poison the very "springs of the nation's life"'.<sup>20</sup> Historian Patrick Dunae argues that during the period between 1870 and 1900 it was believed that mainly working-class boys read this type of literature, and since they were also thought to be more likely to be involved in criminal activity, a causal link was drawn between the two.<sup>21</sup>

Duane notes that critics were not as worried about the impact Penny Dreadfuls had on middle-class boys because they were assumed to be less susceptible to their influence.<sup>22</sup> The corrosive effect of Penny Dreadfuls upon working-class youth was

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<sup>18</sup> Thomas Wright, 'On a Possible Popular Culture', *Contemporary Review*, 40 (1881), p.27.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> 'The Literature of the Streets' *Edinburgh Review*, 165 (1887), p.61; Amongst the 'Penny Dreadfuls' were titles such as *The Wild Boys of London*, (1866) and *The Bad Boy's Paper*, (1890); Other articles in this period included A. Strahan, 'Bad Literature for the Young', *Contemporary Review*, 26 (1875), pp. 981-999; J. Leigh Garrett 'What do the Masses Read?', *Economic Review*, 14.2 (1904), pp.166-177; J. Ackland, 'Elementary Education and the Decay of Literature', *The Nineteenth Century*, 35 (1894), pp.412-423.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick A. Dunae, 'Penny Dreadfuls: Late Nineteenth-Century Boys' Literature and Crime', *Victorian Studies*, 22.2 (1979), pp.133-150; For further reading see: Kevin Carpenter, *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics: English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to the Present Day* (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1983); Jonathan Rose, however, has argued that while many middle-class critics viewed the Penny Dreadful as 'dangerous trash', he found that the memoirs of working-class readers revealed that they thought of them as "'harmless trash"- knowing they were unedifying but still found them entertaining'; Jonathan Rose, 'Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 53.1 (1992), p.59.

<sup>22</sup> Duane, 'Penny Dreadfuls', p.135.

discussed by Edward Salmon, in his influential 1886 article ‘What Boys Read’.<sup>23</sup> This argued that ‘a child accustomed to read of nothing but burglaries, and bushranging, and murder, cannot fail to develop many ferocious traits’ suggesting that the corruption of working-class youth was a ‘matter of such vital moment in the social economy of the masses as to justify highhanded action on the part of the state’.<sup>24</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by literary critic Frances Hitchman in the *Quarterly Review*, who suggested that ‘it is not surprising that the authorities have to lament the prevalence of juvenile crime...when it is remembered that this foul and filthy trash circulates by thousands and tens of thousands week by week amongst lads who are at the most impressionable period of their lives’.<sup>25</sup> William Groser, the author of Sunday school teachers’ manuals, also warned that “‘dreadfuls” diffuse subtle poison among tens of thousands of youthful readers [bringing] wreckage, and havoc... and ruination to hundreds of our brightest and best lads and lasses’.<sup>26</sup> Such arguments caused ‘apprehension to those concerned for social and national morality’ and only strengthened their determination to examine and monitor the literature children were reading.<sup>27</sup> As Joseph Bristow effectively summarises:

Given the extension of the franchise in 1867 and the marked rise in the working-class population, the boy was now identified as a political danger to the nation. He had to be trained not only to read the right things, to turn his mind away from the debasing effects of penny fiction, but he had also to meet the demands of becoming

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<sup>23</sup> Edward Salmon, ‘What Boys Read’, *Fortnightly Review*, 39.2 (1886).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.258 & p.257.

<sup>25</sup> *Quarterly Review*, 1890 as cited in P. Gilbert, *Disease, Desire, and the Body in Victorian Women’s Popular Novels* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1997), p.37.

<sup>26</sup> Groser, *The Opening Life*, pp.30-31.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*



a responsible citizen. Imperialism made the boy into an aggrandized subject - British born and bred - with the future of the world lying upon his shoulders.<sup>28</sup>

To 'meet the demands of becoming a responsible citizen' a number of solutions to the problems outlined above were suggested.<sup>29</sup> The promotion of healthy literature as an uplifting counterweight to the Penny Dreadfuls will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. For the time being, the rest of this chapter outlines the significant role in the moral instruction of children that were played by social institutions – including the newly formed youth organisations, the elementary schools (and the textbooks promoted within formal school environments), Empire Day, and - of central importance to the current PhD - the Sunday school.

### Youth Organisations

'It is important to turn the rising generation in the right road for good citizenship'.<sup>30</sup> The words of Baden-Powell highlight the ethos within many of the newly formed youth organisations which catered specifically for working-class boys. In common with many recent scholars, Mackenzie, suggests that these groups had a central role in addressing juvenile degeneracy, arguing that they were 'consciously founded as agents of class conciliation, designed to inculcate evangelical values of temperance, self-discipline, obedience and piety'.<sup>31</sup> The strong moral influence of the Church Lads' Brigade, for example, was discussed in the 1908 report *Moral Instruction and Education*, which

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<sup>28</sup> Bristow, *Empire Boys*, p.19.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, p.363.

<sup>31</sup> Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.243.

explained how: 'Many testify to its physical exercise, the self-control which it demands, its corporate life, accompanying instruction, its strong stand for a religious life have caused it to be the making of many a lad, and its ranks are supplied from the Church Sunday school.'<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the Boy Scout Movement, formed by Baden-Powell the hero of Mafeking in 1908, attempted to create a cross-class male community solidly based on middle-class standards of conformity and compliance, intended to impress upon boys how 'the chivalry of the knights; these attributes, both moral and physical, are held up to the boys, in a practicable form for imitation and daily practice'.<sup>33</sup> Baden-Powell explained how Boy Scouts were taught 'resourcefulness, chivalry, thrift, responsibility, citizenship, or patriotism - all that goes to make a practical Christian', and how 'Scoutcraft' provided 'the qualities of the frontier colonists'.<sup>34</sup> C.V. Butler in her 1912 social survey *Social Conditions in Oxford* discussed the alleged usefulness of such organisations and believed they could turn 'boys from poor homes' into 'good unskilled labourers by inculcating industriousness and discipline'.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Sadler, *Moral Instruction and Training*, p.371; The Boys' Brigades were organised primarily in Sunday schools. Founder of the Boys' Brigade, William Smith described how its aim was 'to devise something that would appeal to a boy on the heroic side of his nature - something that would let him see that in the service of God there is as much scope for all that is brave and true and manly, as in the service of King and Country' and become 'to tens of thousands of working-class boys much what public-school life, with all its interests and associations, is to boys of a different social group'; Sir W.A. Smith, 'Boys' Brigade (Great Britain), in J. Williams Butcher, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education, Vol.1* (London, Thomas Nelson, 1915), pp.169-170.

<sup>33</sup> Sir Robert Baden-Powell, 'Boy Scouts of England' in Butcher, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools*, pp.165-166. Other organisations which combined social and moral reform, imperialism and character training included the *Boys' Brigade* (1883), *Band of Hope* (1855), *Empire Day Movement* (first mooted in 1896) the *Jewish Lads and Girls' Brigade* (1895 and 1903) and *The League of Empire* (1901) whose organisation was designed to impress on youth of the Empire the duty of loyalty and patriotism; *The Manchester Guardian* in 1905, for example, explained that the 'promoters claim as their object the introduction into all schools of a moral form of training which shall have for its aim the inclusion of the virtues which conduce to the creation of good citizens'; *Manchester Guardian*, 1905.

<sup>34</sup> Baden-Powell, 'Boy Scouts of England', pp.165-166.

<sup>35</sup> C. Violet Butler, *Social Conditions in Oxford* (London, Sedgwick and Jackson, 1912), pp.53-54; It was not until 1912 that the Girl Guide Movement was founded, although girls had been participants in clubs established for both boys and girls, for example, Juvenile Missionary Bands which had recognised from early in the nineteenth century the potential of children for support and fund missionary causes; Juvenile

Girls were not excluded from such discussions, and in particular, adolescent working-class girls became the subject of several studies resulting in the establishment of organisations expressly concerned with their moral welfare. Writing in the 1890s on the need for clubs for working girls, Maude Stanley argued that the ‘welfare of the “work-girl” was exercising the minds and thoughts of some of the best of our generation’.<sup>36</sup> Stanley did, however, admit that ‘we have not wished to take our girls out of their class, but we have wished to see them ennoble the class to which they belong’.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, ‘The Girl in the Background’, a chapter produced by Lily Montagu for the Toynbee Trust’s *Studies of Boy Life in our Cities* (1904), stated that ‘We want to see in girls the finest perceptions of truth, beauty, and purity, the greatest capacity for self-restraint and for the highest joys of self-sacrifice...It is education, physical, mental, and religious education, that ultimately be the chief factor in influencing the lives of working girls’.<sup>38</sup> Montagu concluded her chapter by arguing that ‘They will find that working girls respond readily to these suggestions when inspired by love and sympathy; that they are loyal and steadfast in their behaviour to those whom they respect. The very hardness of the girls’ lives gives them some moral strength; it rests with their leaders to see that this strength is directed to the realisation of the high destiny to which the human race aspires’.<sup>39</sup> By 1909 a number of girls had joined the ranks of the Scouting movement, and by 1910 plans were put in place to establish a separate Girl Guide Movement. The

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Missionary Bands were created by the four principal missionary societies in England: CMS; LMS; Baptist Missionary Society and Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

<sup>36</sup> Maude Stanley, *Clubs for Working Girls* (London, Macmillan, 1890), p.4.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48.

<sup>38</sup> Lily H. Montagu, ‘The Girl in the Background’, in E.J. Urwick, ed., *Studies of Boy Life in our Cities* (London, J.M. Dent, 1904); p.235.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p.254.

reason for this was clearly explained by Baden-Powell 'Girls ... need character training quite as much as the boys ...if an attractive way were shown, their enthusiasm would at once lead them to take up useful woman's work with zeal'.<sup>40</sup> In 1912 the Girl Guide Movement was established and its *Handbook for Girl Guides* specifically asked girls to: 'Be Womanly / Be Handy / Be Strong / Be Good Mothers'.<sup>41</sup> The youth organisations were, however, voluntary, and to inculcate children in imperial, moral and social ideals the classroom was seen as an ideal setting. The following section will, therefore, consider the education of working-class children, and the significance of the school textbook.

### Education

At a Parliamentary debate in 1898, Liberal MP. Mr W. Jones highlighted the importance placed upon the education of children by stating 'Train up the children to be capable citizens, upon whose intelligence and character will depend the future of our Empire'.<sup>42</sup> The traditional elite public-school method of education based on character building and patriotism was viewed by many as an excellent model to educate the masses.<sup>43</sup> Writing seven years earlier, J.E.C. Welldon, Headmaster at Harrow School, for example, combined Britain superior position with the importance of military training for the defence of the empire:

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<sup>40</sup> As cited in Tammy Proctor, *On My Honour: Guides and Scouts in Interwar Britain* (Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 2002), p.23.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24; Agnes Baden-Powell, *The Handbook for Girl Guides, or How Girls Can Help Build the Empire* (London, Thomas Nelson, 1912).

<sup>42</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, Authorised Edition, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, Vol.59*, 17 June 1898, p.666.

<sup>43</sup> As one journalist in 1900 suggested the public-school system produced 'that almost indefinable mixture of pluck, knowledge, good humour, self-reliance, self-restraint loyalty to institutions and readiness to 'play the game according to the rules' as cited in Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School', in B. Simon & I. Bradley, eds., *The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution* (Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 1975), p.130.

Is not England, too, a nation, an elect nation of God? Has she not a proud imperial duty and destiny?... There is a duty, then, which lies upon England. It is a high, a terrible duty. It is to set forth, before the eyes of men and nations, an example of elevated morality in life.<sup>44</sup>

Included in this were ideologies that reinforced existing gender norms and instilled a strong sense of national identity with a Christian moral code. *The Report of the Committee of Council on Education* in 1899, for example, described the system of state education as ‘one of the best forms of national investment. In commercial and industrial efficiency, in a higher level of civic duty, and, above all, in the wider diffusion of moral culture and religious feeling, the nation is amply repaid for what it spends’.<sup>45</sup>

A letter published in *The Times* also argued that: ‘If the Englishman is to be a sound practical patriot still more if he is to be a worthy inheritor of the greater Empire his childish feet need guidance down the difficult paths of elementary Imperial knowledge which under existing systems he is left to find and traverse for himself - if he does not, as generally happens, miss them altogether’.<sup>46</sup> By accepting that this guidance was commonplace for the ‘public school boy’, the author also insisted that it was necessary for the working-class boy ‘the lad whose “leaving age” is 14’, to also be immersed in this ideology and who will, as a consequence, be ‘better equipped to make his way at home ...and cannot fail to become a more useful citizen’.<sup>47</sup> What is striking

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<sup>44</sup> J.E.C. Welldon, *The Fire Upon the Altar: Sermons Preached to the Harrow Boys: 1887-1890* (London, Percival, 1891), p.230 & p.238.

<sup>45</sup> *Last Report of the Committee of Council on Education*, 1899.

<sup>46</sup> *The Times*, 28 December 1903.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

from this letter is the unquestioned belief in Britain's superiority on the world stage, but also, how boys, rather than boys and girls, are expected to be the inheritors of 'the greater Empire'.<sup>48</sup> In many ways, the focus upon the male reflected the fears and anxieties prompted by the demands of women and the position and role of the British male in society.<sup>49</sup> The exclusion of girls could also be attributed to a belief that if boys were to grow up into the 'right sort' it was imperative that they were immersed in the ideology of courage, duty and service to others, which included bravery, loyalty, diligence, application and manners.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, as Stefan Collini argues, by the end of the century, the values of 'teamwork, self-reliance, of concentration and courage, of obedience and initiative, were presented as unproblematically compatible'.<sup>51</sup>

Girls, however, were integral to the process of nation-building and encouraged to develop to fulfil their roles as future wives and mothers of the empire. Class became the subject of many debates, particularly about working-class children and national efficiency. To achieve a 'higher self', it was, however, generally agreed that children were to be immersed in values and principles including militaristic discipline, the rigorous promotion of athleticism and a nationalistic curriculum which included an appreciation of their role and place in the world.<sup>52</sup> This was certainly the view of

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> For further reading see: Susan Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640-1990* (London, Routledge, 1999); Angus McLaren, *The Trials of Masculinity: Policing Sexual Boundaries, 1870-1930* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997); Paul R. Deslandes, *Oxbridge Men: British Masculinity and the Undergraduate Experience, 1850-1920* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2005).

<sup>50</sup> Joan Scott has stressed the importance in any study to reflect upon how 'social institutions incorporated gender into their assumptions and organizations'; Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1999), p.50.

<sup>51</sup> Stefan Collini, 'The Idea of 'Character' in Victorian Political Thought', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 35 (1985), p.49.

<sup>52</sup> Public schools in England were viewed by many as 'the powerhouse of the nation'; Richards, *Happiest Days: The Public Schools in English Fiction* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1988), p.212.

Michael Sadler, member of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education who argued ‘as the power of individual initiative in danger or difficulty is one of the chief assets of empire, it is essential that while encouraging the corporate influences of school life, we should develop through our education individuality of character combined with self-control’.<sup>53</sup> Again this was the topic in 1914 of a Bill presented to Parliament which stressed the relationship between education and the nation stressing that ‘a well organised system of education is the most powerful means we have of developing the social life of the nation’.<sup>54</sup>

To achieve this, schools were given the task of providing narratives and activities enshrined in aspects of socialisation, character building and moral training, which included ideas of patriotism and examples of British superiority. The teaching of moral education became a crusade, and an appeal by educational and church leaders, including William Booth, General of the Salvation Army and F.F. Belsey, J.P. and Chairman of the London Sunday schools, was sent to educational authorities in England and Wales.<sup>55</sup> Their aim was to suggest schools provide children ‘on whose moral fibre and character the welfare of the Empire will depend’ an education based upon a ‘Christian basis and inspired by Christian motives’:

Our anxiety on this matter is all the greater when we contemplate the special dangers to which the young in our own day are exposed; these are well known to

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<sup>53</sup> *Educational Times*, 1905; M.E. Sadler writing in 1908, for example, stressed that the ‘purpose of the public elementary school’ was ‘to form and strengthen characters’; M.E. Sadler, *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools: Report of an International Enquiry* (London, Longmans, 1908), p.254.

<sup>54</sup> *Pamphlets and Leaflets for 1914: Being the Publications for the Year of the Liberal Publication Department* (London, Liberal Publication Department, 1914), p.5.

<sup>55</sup> Their appeal was reproduced in an article ‘Education and the Formation of Character’ sent to *The Times*, 21 January 1905.

you, and we need not recall the changes in national conditions which have multiplied these perils...Moral, and to a large extent also, physical deterioration is the result, and the savage hooliganism of which we have heard so much is not unlikely to follow.<sup>56</sup>

As Julia Bush argues, to promote a sense of national pride and belonging, and to inspire children of all classes to acknowledge and uphold their imperial citizenship, educationalists increasingly turned towards patriotic songs, history lessons and maps linked to tropes of obedience, responsibility and self-sacrifice to promote British imperialism. This 'imperialist evangelizing' included, for example, Colonel Sir C.E. Vincent's 1902 wall map, described by Ashley Jackson as 'an object lesson in imperial patriotism, power and pride', which was widely distributed to Board Schools throughout Britain.<sup>57</sup> The 1906 'Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools' responsible for introducing 'moral instruction' into the curriculum also stressed the need to teach such qualities as courage, self-denial and a 'love of one's own country'.<sup>58</sup> However, Bernard Porter argues that due to the level of instruction and availability of textbooks, we should not 'expect the Victorians to have been made aware of empire...in their

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Rose, *The Intellectual Life*, p.335; Ashley Jackson, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen: A Grand Tour of the British Empire at its Height* (London, Quercus, 2009), p.13.

<sup>58</sup> As quoted in Pamela Horn, 'English Elementary Education and the Growth of the Imperial Ideal: 1880-1914', in J.A. Mangan, ed., *Benefits Bestowed? Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1988), pp.42-43; By 1907 plans were put in place for a more systematic provision of moral education. E.R. Bernard's influential scheme was designed to 'meet the dangers to both morals and religious belief, it is necessary that the managers and teachers of schools should be able to show that in their schools there is systematic moral teaching which meets all the requirements, and is based on the essentials of the Christian Creed'; E.R. Bernard, *A Scheme for Moral Instruction* (London: John Davis, 1908), p.5.



schools'.<sup>59</sup> In his autobiography Robert Roberts born in the slums of Salford, remembered when writing an essay in school based upon 'Our Empire' that it was only when he included 'a string of Indian Seaman' that he discovered 'that they ranked as fellow patriots of Empire'.<sup>60</sup> Farm-hand Fred Broughton born in 1897, also remembered how the Head Teacher at his school would tell stories of 'the British Empire on which the sun never sets, all about...General Gordon, the relief of Lucknow, the Zulu War and the Boer War...we would sing from our hearts because we were full of pride and joy... "Rule Britannia" [and] sometimes we would recite "The Charge of the Light Brigade"'.<sup>61</sup> Benedict Anderson's influential *Imagined Communities* describes this sense of national unity as an ideology which unites members of an otherwise disparate group through a shared sense of self and an exclusion of other such groups.<sup>62</sup> This can also be linked to Stuart Hall's earlier argument in respect of 'the moralisation of the labouring classes...and the re-education of the people' as many working-class children were subject to transformation by educationalists and concerned parties through the imperial and self-improving organisations and narratives.<sup>63</sup>

Before examining the role and usefulness of the elementary school textbook, it is important to consider the significance of Empire Day which clearly incorporated the sentiments of concerned parties and allowed educationalists to inculcate working-class children in ideas of nationalism and imperialism on an unprecedented scale.<sup>64</sup> Empire

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<sup>59</sup> Porter, *Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p.117.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Roberts, *A Ragged Schooling: Growing Up in the Classic Slum* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1976), p.202 & p.126.

<sup>61</sup> John Burnett, ed., *Destiny Obscure: Autobiographies of Childhood, Education, and Family from the 1820s to the 1920s* (London, Routledge, 1982), p.313.

<sup>62</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>64</sup> John O. Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society: British Youth Movements* (London, Croom Helm, 1977), p.54; The values according to its founder Lord Meath were 'loyalty, patriotism courage, endurance,

Day, although not officially recognised until 1916 was, however, according to the Board of Education, celebrated in a number of schools by 1904.<sup>65</sup> In his 1905 Empire Day speech, Lord Meath stressed that ‘the only hope is in the education of the young’, and through Empire Day, wished to nurture a sense of collective identity and imperial responsibility.<sup>66</sup> Apart from ‘patriotic songs and recitations, followed by the ritual of marching past and saluting the flag’ children would be given lessons and lectures based upon ‘the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and its civilising mission, the empire story (replete with myths and heroes)’.<sup>67</sup> The rituals and symbolism of Empire Day it can be argued helped to create a sense of belonging to an imagined community, as Molly Keen born in 1903 indicated ‘it was a red letter day...we all felt proud of being British and thought that England was the best country in the world’.<sup>68</sup> Just as Empire Day exposed children to the myths and heroes of empire so too did school textbooks.

### The textbook in the elementary school

As discussed earlier the elementary school system was identified as an important conduit for promoting and disseminating important ideas and values. Thomas Wright in his 1881 article discussed earlier, commented upon the type of books used within the education system and explained that:

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respect for and obedience to lawful authority, and to encourage self-sacrifice for the public good; to teach all and especially the young the sacredness of the Trust committed to them; and to inspire them with a determination to do their duty’ as reported in *The Times*, 24 May 1924.

<sup>65</sup> In 1908, 1,036 schools in London alone celebrated Empire Day; *The Times* 23 May 1908.

<sup>66</sup> Lord R.B. Meath, *Memories of the Twentieth Century* (London, Murray, 1924), p.77.

<sup>67</sup> Jim English, ‘Empire Day in Britain’ *The Historical Journal*, 49.1 (2006), p.253 & p.249.

<sup>68</sup> Molly Keen, *Childhood Memories 1903-1921* as cited in English, ‘Empire Day’, p.250.

Happily inspired publishers have issued in the school-book form 'Robinson Crusoe', Southey's 'Life of Nelson' and one or two other works of an interesting character. The leading school-boards have been wise enough to place these volumes on their Requisition Lists; and as they are found by experience to give schoolchildren a much greater interest in their work...they are being freely requisitioned by teachers...We think we may confidently assert that a geography lesson could be made much more interesting, and therefore much more effective, if given an illustration of the voyages of Robinson Crusoe or the navel exploits of Lord Nelson.<sup>69</sup>

School text books had long been an obvious source for the propagation of imperial ideas and one potential remedy - linking many of the ideas and practices of the educationalists with the practical ambitions of the founders of youth organisations and the Sunday schools - was the power of narratives about the British hero. This was recognised by a number of influential figures, including those involved with youth associations, for example, Lord Meath (founder of the Lad's Drill Association and Empire Day) and William Booth of the Salvation Army saw the hero as an effective means to counter fears and doubts about the future generation.<sup>70</sup> In an appeal to local authorities, they suggested a number of objectives including 'reading books...of a kind which hold up high ideals of conduct; they should contain stories of heroism self-denial

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<sup>69</sup> Wright, 'On a Possible Popular Culture', pp.40-41.

<sup>70</sup> The signatories also included The Earl of Rosebery (former Liberal Prime Minister 1894-1895), Charles Ritchie (the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1902-1903), several university and clerical figures, General F. D. Maurice (the former Inspector-General of Recruiting) and William Booth (of the Salvation Army) as quoted in Linda M. Simpson, 'Education, Imperialism, and National Efficiency in England 1895-1905', unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of Glasgow, 1979, p.232.

and integrity, and thus give the teacher the opportunity of teaching the value of character' and recommended that 'Pictures which illustrate heroic deeds might be placed on the walls'.<sup>71</sup> As a consequence many elementary school manuals and journals began to promote empire and the hero through the reading of history and geography, for example, *The Practical Teacher* in 1910 within an article 'Training the Citizen' suggested 'for a special course in Empire history and citizenship...among the most suitable books are ...*Highroads of History*'.<sup>72</sup> Section IV of the publication 'Empire - Making in the Nineteenth Century' included chapters based upon 'Mungo Park and David Livingstone', and "'Chinese Gordon" in the Sudan' and concluded: 'That Empire is no mean heritage; but it is not a heritage that can only be enjoyed: it must be maintained, and it can only be maintained by the same qualities that created it - by courage, by discipline, by patience, by determination, and by a reverence for public law and respect for national rights'.<sup>73</sup> One Birmingham teacher in 1910, for example, when describing a lesson explained how 'the main part of the story-emphasising British heroism and devotion to duty...was intensely interesting to them (the class) and proved all too short. Many thoughtful answers given'.<sup>74</sup> And Robert Roberts clearly remembered how his teachers 'Fed on Seeley's imperialistic work, *The Expansion of*

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1910 ; Other titles included Albert Pollard, *The British Empire: Its Past and Its Present* (London, John Murray, 1909); Edward Hawke, *The British Empire and Its History* (London, John Murray, 1911); For a more detailed discussion see Peter Yandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire: The Politics of History Teaching in England* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2015); Teresa Ploszajska, *Geographical Education, Empire and Citizenship: Geographical Teaching and Learning in English Schools, 1870-1944* (England, Historical Geography Research Group, 1999).

<sup>73</sup> E.M. Wilmot-Buxton, *Highroads of History, Book VIII: Highroads of Empire History* (London, Thomas Nelson, 1915), p.255.

<sup>74</sup> L.A. Strudwick, 'Students Record of Notes of Lessons', 1910/11 as cited in Michael Blanch, 'Nation, Empire and the Birmingham Working-class 1899-1914', unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of Birmingham, 1975, p.75.

*England* 'and often great readers of Kipling, spelled out patriotism amongst us with a fervour that with some edged-on religion'.<sup>75</sup> Concepts of national identity, imperial belonging and citizenship were all packaged and 'told and retold in national histories, literatures, the media and popular culture' providing a set of 'stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals' which symbolically linked children within an imagined community which often included the moral and cultural duty to Christianise and civilise perceived inferior races.<sup>76</sup>

This approach echoed the thoughts of Lord Meath founder of the popular Empire Day which again addressed concerns about working-class youth. Meath believed that 'in youth, the mind is more open to receive the impression either of noble and elevating ideas and sentiments or of the reverse' and as Pamela Horn has discussed, believed that even the 'humblest child' would be required to 'fulfil his or her duty to the empire'.<sup>77</sup> Empire day and imperial education, was not, however, solely an attempt to make empire 'part of the educational consciousness of the state-educated' it was also to act as what Margaret May has termed a 'moral hospital' used to inculcate children in values of patriotism and good citizenship'.<sup>78</sup> Although youth organisations, the elementary school system and Empire Day supported and addressed concerns surrounding the moral education of working-class youth, the Sunday school - described by Asa Briggs as the 'most powerful educational influence' - was particularly effective when it came to

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<sup>75</sup> Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum: Salford life in the First Quarter of the Century* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1971), p.112.

<sup>76</sup> Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in J. Rutherford, ed., *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), p.293.

<sup>77</sup> *The Spectator*, 1905; Pamela Horn, 'English Elementary Education', p.40.

<sup>78</sup> Margaret May, 'Innocence and Experience: The Evolution of the Concept of Juvenile Delinquency in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Victorian Studies*, 17.1 (1973), p.28.

guiding young people in ideas nation, empire and self-improvement.<sup>79</sup> The following chapter will discuss the importance of the literature used within the Sunday school, however, it is useful at this stage to look at its history and organisation to gain some understanding of its influence, and its setting in the same cultural and social milieu as the youth organisations, the elementary school and the invention of Empire Day.

### The Sunday schools

Sunday schools according to Frank Smith are a phenomenon in the history of education which is without a parallel performing the ‘the gigantic task of assembling together, under some sort of discipline, the majority of the children of the poor, and of giving to them some notions of behaviour and some ideas of religion’.<sup>80</sup> As the Table below illustrates at the peak of their influence the Sunday schools were attracting a large percentage of young people, and as the President of the NSSU, R.F. Horton argued in 1910 had transformed the ‘tone and temper, the habits and possibilities of our country’.<sup>81</sup> The strength of the Sunday school according to Christie Davies in *The Strange Death of Moral Britain* lay in their ‘popular character’ as they were to a large

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<sup>79</sup> Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1990), p.255; Brigg’s also describes the ‘Sunday School Union one of the most carefully organized local voluntary bodies’.

<sup>80</sup> Frank Smith, *A History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902* (London, University of London Press, 1931), p.65; This had also been acknowledged by the Census of 1851 which stated that while the amount of instruction varied considerably in different parts of the country, scholars were mainly though ‘not exclusively composed of the working-class’ *Census of Great Britain: 1851: Education in Great Britain* (London, Routledge, 1854), pp.68-72; Although Sunday school attendance by working-class children dropped slightly after the 1870 Education Act, there was still a significant number of children in attendance. Figures published in the *SSC and Christian Outlook*, 1910, for example, showed a total of almost seven million regular attendees; As cited in Sandy Brewer, ‘Protestant Pedagogy and the Visual Culture of the London Missionary Society’, in Jan de Meyer, ed., *Religion, Children’s Literature, and Modernity in Western Europe, 1750-2000* (Leuven, Leuven U.P., 2005), p.265; The population for the United Kingdom in the 1911 Census was given as 45 million.

<sup>81</sup> R.F. Horton, ‘Methods to be Employed by the Church to Retain Young People when they Reach the Ages 14 to 17’, as quoted in C. Davies, *The Strange Death of Moral Britain* (New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2007), p.45.

extent created and taught by ordinary people drawn from the respectable working and lower middle classes.<sup>82</sup> Charged with the socialisation of children through Christian morals and values the Sunday schools were integral to ideas that the moral well-being of working-class children was essential to Britain's future.

Table 1. Percentage of Population under Age 15 Enrolled in Sunday school in England and Wales.<sup>83</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1851	38%
1891	52%
1901	53%
1911	51%
1931	46%

Due to their long history and organisation, Sunday schools were able to actively reinvent themselves by adopting innovative ideas long before new pedagogical ideas could be integrated within the state education system. The Sunday school's role in spreading religious values was unmistakeable, however, increasingly secular ideas of socialisation and citizenship were included within the curriculum. De Montmorency, for example, writing in 1906 highlighted the fact that 'had it not been for the Sunday

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<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, p.46.

<sup>83</sup> Figures from R. Gill, 'Secularization and Census Data' in S. Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization; Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 96-97 reproduced in Davies, *The Strange Death*, p.44 Enrolled Sunday scholars according to Jeffrey Cox in the 'two established churches counted a million and a half in 1911, while the principal Nonconformist denominations of England counted over 3 million, with the Wesleyan Methodists alone accounting for nearly a million children. The Free Church of Scotland added another quarter of a million, and the Presbyterian Church of Wales nearly 200,000 more; Cox, 'From the Empire of Christ', p.82.

schools and their vastly important secular work' then 'it is difficult to see how the gap between the new education and the old could have been bridged'.<sup>84</sup> As one of the first institutions to use the classroom and extracurricular activities to teach British children more than just Christian doctrine many books and guides were published. for example, *The New Century Sunday School* (1907) provided an account of discussions held in London between the British and American members of the International Lessons Committee which included topics based upon the training of teachers, lesson plans and the promotion of values of character formation, obedience and self-discipline and explained that 'All teaching is easier, pleasanter, and more effective that obeys the laws which govern the child mind...This truth has been a joyful discovery to Primary workers who have reorganised their departments on modern lines'.<sup>85</sup>

This was particularly notable through the type of reading material offered to Sunday scholars, which included the missionary biography, and clearly the view of the *Sunday School Chronicle* (SSC) who had argued: 'place in the children's hands good books ...we promise that if the School Board teachers do their duty on weekdays, the Sunday School teachers ... will do their duty equally on Sundays'.<sup>86</sup> As this quote suggests, throughout this period the British Sunday School did not develop in a vacuum; instead, it was closely connected with the teaching in elementary schools, voluntary organisations, particularly the Boys' Brigade and Sunday School organisations

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<sup>84</sup> J. E. G. de Montmorency, *Education and National Life* (London, Swan Sonnenschein, 1906), p.205.

<sup>85</sup> Frank Johnson, *The New Century Sunday School* (London, SSU, 1907), pp.3-4.

<sup>86</sup> SSC, 1877 as cited in Dorothy Entwistle, 'Children's Reward Books in Nonconformist Sunday Schools, 1870-1914: Occurrence, Nature and Purpose', unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of Lancaster, 1990, p.41.



elsewhere, especially in America.<sup>87</sup> Although as we can see from the following message printed in the *SSC* it was not always in full agreement of all their methods: ‘The pity is that our [day] school instruction does not furnish [children] with more heroes to worship... beyond a few military [men], Shakespeare, Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling. We want a more generous education ... one that cultivates the disposition and feelings as well as trains the understanding’.<sup>88</sup>

International uniform lesson plans which incorporated ideas from the American and British Sunday school unions by the first decade of the twentieth century had developed into a well-established ‘transatlantic enterprise’, sharing ideas and promoting a unified front.<sup>89</sup> The connection was sustained through regular face-to-face conferences and discussions in the World Sunday School Conventions. The World’s Sixth Sunday School Convention held in Washington in 1910, featuring delegates from North America, Great Britain, Europe, Africa and Asia, was heralded as ‘an emblem of the spirit of world-conquest for Christ’ and represented Sunday school scholars as ‘crusaders’; a term that we will return to in Chapter Seven that evokes images of honourable knights fighting a spiritual war (Figure 2).<sup>90</sup> The Seventh Convention

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<sup>87</sup> The benefits of a reciprocal relationship between Sunday Schools in Britain and America was recognised as early as 1830 when an American periodical proposed that ‘the effect of such interchanges of fellowship and communion would be...to cement a bond of union between the two nations...If any two countries on the face of the earth that ought to be bound together by the bonds of fraternal affection, they were the United States of America and Great Britain’; *The American Sunday-School Teachers’ Magazine*, 1830.

<sup>88</sup> *SSC*, 1900 as cited in Entwistle, ‘Children’s Reward Books’, p.133.

<sup>89</sup> Daniel W. Howe, ‘The Victorian Period of American History’, in M. Hewitt, ed., *The Victorian World* (London, Routledge, 2012), p.716; In a description of the ‘Opening Session’ of the Fourteenth International Convention held in Chicago in 1914 the relationship between the two countries was again highlighted ‘dropping from the ceiling almost to the floor when it was lowered, was an immense Old Glory...At the north of the platform was the flag of Great Britain’; J. Clayton Youker, ed., *Organised Sunday School Work in America 1911-1914* (Chicago, International Sunday School Association, 1914), p.17

<sup>90</sup> Postcard from World Sunday School Convention, 1910 ‘The Twentieth Century Sunday School Crusaders’, 1910 reproduced at <https://www.cardcow.com/490695/twentieth-century-sunday-school->

held in Zurich in 1913 also highlighted the importance placed upon its internationalism as it reported ‘Cablegrams and Messages’ had been received from King George of England, the President of the United States of America and the Viceroy of India (whom it testified ‘has shown much interest in our work’).<sup>91</sup>



Figure 2 ‘The Twentieth Century Sunday School Crusaders’ reproduced at [https://www.cardcow.com/490695/twentieth-century-sunday-school-crusaders-religious/](https://www.cardcow.com/490695/twentieth-century-sunday-school-crusaders-religious/crusaders-religious/)

[crusaders-religious/](https://www.cardcow.com/490695/twentieth-century-sunday-school-crusaders-religious/crusaders-religious/) accessed 12 December 2015; A list of conventions was supplied within the *Report of the World's Seventh Sunday-school Convention* ‘The first in London, England, 1889; the second in St. Louis, U. S. A., 1893; the third in London, England, 1898; the fourth in Jerusalem, Palestine, 1904; the fifth in Rome, Italy, 1907; and the sixth in Washington, U. S. A., in 1910’; Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, ed., *World-Wide Sunday-School Work; The Official Report of the World's Seventh Sunday-school Convention, held in Zurich, Switzerland, July 8-15, 1913* (London & New York, The World's Sunday School Association, 1913), p.37.

<sup>91</sup> Trumbull, *World-Wide Sunday-School*, p.616; The scale of the organisation was also revealed in a brochure produced after the Zurich convention for Sunday school workers in the foreign field which explained that: ‘At the last convention, 2,609 official delegates, representing fifty-eight countries and seventy-five denominations’ were in attendance.

Important to the continuing success of the Sunday school movement was, of course, the teachers.<sup>92</sup>

As discussed earlier Sunday school teachers were historically drawn from the respectable working or lower middle classes and were often ex-scholars. As early as 1841, the *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* explained that teachers:

must have a more than ordinary share of piety, energy, and intelligence...They must be able to read and write well, and express themselves correctly, and know something of arithmetic...They must not be under twenty years of age, and must have been, for not less than a year, consistent members of churches...They must retail missionary anecdotes, and strive to make all the instruction they impart bear on the missionary enterprise.<sup>93</sup>

This according to Thomas Laqueur ‘made it easier to develop a Sunday school subculture, an admixture of Smilesian self-help and self-improvement’.<sup>94</sup> By the end of the century as we have examined their roles were being reassessed, and consequently, many guides and handbooks were produced based on methods of teaching and ideas surrounding child study.<sup>95</sup> This was highlighted in the 1887 publication *The Modern Sunday school* produced by the SSU which stated that:

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<sup>92</sup> Many Sunday school teachers were involved in the international discussions discussed above, *The Official Report of The World’s Seventh Sunday-School Convention* in 1913, for example, informed readers that: ‘When almost a thousand Sunday-school teachers come from near and far to confer together for eight days, with the goal before them of drawing closer to the Model Teacher, then we know that they are going back into their respective fields of labor better equipped to win souls for the kingdom’; Trumbell, *World-Wide Sunday-School*, p.633.

<sup>93</sup> *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, 1841.

<sup>94</sup> Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*, p.93.

<sup>95</sup> Titles included William Groser, *The Young Teacher: An Elementary Handbook of Sunday School Instruction* (London, SSU, 1885); Frank Langford, *Tested Methods for Teachers of Juniors* (London, F. H. Revell, n.d.); William Groser, *The Opening Life: Studies of Childhood and Youth for Sunday School*

One of the suggestions resulting from the Centenary Celebration of Sunday schools in 1880...was that there were thousands of teachers anxious to attain fitness for their work, who had no opportunity of attending normal classes, but who would be glad to be aided and directed in their study, if suitable handbooks were placed within their reach, and if a simple scheme of examination, by correspondence or otherwise, were prepared.<sup>96</sup>

### Conclusion

It obvious from the discussions surrounding the training of Sunday school teachers that the Sunday school was considered a great influence upon children from the working-classes. As this chapter has demonstrated, the moral and physical well-being of working-class children at the end of the nineteenth century was considered by many contemporary observers to be of great concern. Of most acute relevance to this study, it has highlighted that particular concern centred on the type of literature literate working-class children were reading, generated by the availability and popularity of the unregulated and sensational Penny Dreadfuls. Although the options suggested for promoting healthy literature as an antidote to the Penny Dreadfuls will be discussed in the following chapters, it was important to consider solutions linked to general concerns which included an understanding of the methods used by the newly formed youth organisations and clubs, the elementary school, Empire Day and importance of school

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*Teachers* (London, SSU, 1911); A.S. Peake, *Reform in Sunday School Teaching* (London, Clark, 1906); John L. Alexander, *The Boy and the Sunday School* (New York & London, Association Press, 1913); Mabel Crews Ringland, *Tested Methods for Teachers of Juniors* (New York & London, F. H. Revell, n.d.).

<sup>96</sup> *The Modern Sunday-school by Various Writers* (London, SSU, 1887), Frontispiece.

textbooks to inculcate children in moral and cultural values. Importantly, it has looked at the role of the Sunday school movement which contributes to the scholarly debate based upon their significance as ‘indigenous working-class self-help institutions’.<sup>97</sup> The main thread of this study is based upon the content of biographies disseminated to children through the Sunday school, and the next chapter will reflect upon literature used within the Sunday schools and examine in detail the importance placed upon the use of the missionary biography. It will consider how, by weaving together education and empire through the format of the adventure story, the biographies offered important moral and social messages and were consequently viewed as ‘the “right kind” of material interesting to children’.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Rose, *The Intellectual Life*, p. 62; This view is endorsed by J.S. Bratton who describes the Sunday-school as the ‘focus of the powerful Victorian drive for self-improvement and self-help’; J.S. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children’s Fiction* (London, Croon Helm, 1981), p.15.

<sup>98</sup> S. Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography in the Sunday school’, *The Biblical World*, 27.5 (1906), p.366.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ‘for imitate they will...those they constantly read about’ - Wholesome Literature in the Sunday school

As the previous chapter has argued Sundays Schools were ideally positioned to complement and offer modern educational practices and were instrumental in attempting to exert a strong positive influence upon the lives of working-class children. Coupled with new ideas in respect of the education of children and changing perceptions of childhood emphasis was placed on the type of literature used within the Sunday schools both in Britain and through the international Sunday school partnership. With a focus on character formation, citizenship and Christian values, Sunday schools aimed to ‘benefit mankind, to instruct the ignorant, to raise the fallen [and] to impart that knowledge which will make better children, better citizens, better men’.<sup>1</sup> This quote which was taken from the 1862 *Proceedings of the General Sunday School Convention* highlights the importance placed upon the Sunday school as a provider of traditional character building values.

As part of this process the type of literature offered to children within the Sunday school was particularly relevant. This was confirmed within an article appearing in the 1906 periodical, *The Review of Reviews* which hoped that it would be read by ‘those interested in the education of young men, especially those of the industrial classes’ which included Sunday school teachers.<sup>2</sup> The article, ‘Character Sketches’ provided a response from 45 Labour Members of Parliament based upon books they found most

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<sup>1</sup> S. Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography in the Sunday school’, *The Biblical World*, 27.5 (1906), pp. 88-89.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Character Sketches’, *The Review of Reviews*, 33 (1906), p.568; To facilitate this, the editor states that the article would be reprinted and copies sent ‘for 6s. per 100, post free’.

useful.<sup>3</sup> One example, George Nicholls, born in 1864 who worked as a farm labourer from the age of nine, explained how he had ‘never possessed more books than the ordinary small story books generally given as Sunday school prizes’ and ‘the short biographical sketches’ within the weekly church publications. Nicholls continued to explain how the books inspired him with ‘the desire to do good’ and how ‘the lives of men, more than books written by men, were most useful to me in the early days when my battle was beginning’.<sup>4</sup> A chapter ‘A road to ruin often trodden by boys’ within *The Sunday School Teachers Magazine* (1869), for example, also described the ‘vast importance’ of placing ‘before the minds of boys really true, noble characters - persons admirable in a variety of ways for their imitation, for imitate they will more or less those they constantly read about’ and argued that ‘it may be doubted whether there is any other department of literature that is exerting as much influence on the destinies of mankind’.<sup>5</sup>

Ideally situated to offer children ‘persons admirable in a variety of ways for their imitation’ were the biographical works on missionary heroes. This chapter will incorporate and extend discussions from the previous chapter and consider the importance placed upon the use of the missionary biography within the Sunday school. As we will discover, while remaining didactic the biographies embraced more secular

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.577; Within this article C. Fenwick, for example, states ‘the story of Mungo Park and the travels of Dr. Livingstone’ as ‘most helpful to me in fighting my way up from my humble beginnings’, p.574.

<sup>5</sup> *The Sunday School Teachers Magazine and Journal of Education*, 1869; As early as 1832 *The Child’s Magazine* was describing how ‘good books’ in Sunday schools are the ‘...handmaids of virtue and religion. They quicken our sense of duty, strengthen our principles, confirm our habits, inspire in us love of what is right and useful, and teach us to look with disgust upon what is low, and grovelling, and vicious’; *The Child’s Magazine*, 1832 as quoted in Linda Connors & Mary Lu MacDonald, *National Identity in Great Britain and British North America, 1815-1851* (Farnham & Burlington, VT., Ashgate, 2011), p.91.

ideals incorporating the style and format of contemporary books and magazines and importantly included ideas linked to self-improvement, character building and imperialism, which were all deemed important by the Sunday school network.

### Using the missionary biography in the Sunday school

Viewed as ‘tasteful and healthy’ the missionary biography became an important feature within the Sunday schools. Recognising ‘as a scientific fact that the future depends upon the education of the childhood of the race, in missionary matters as in all others’, the 1910 *Report of the Commission Section VI: The Home Base of Missions*, for example, found that ‘the greatest contribution’ had been the ‘preparation and publication of a high-grade literature for the use of the local Sunday School’ where ‘Libraries, study books, pictures, maps, charts, and programmes are provided for any and every use’.<sup>6</sup> The promotion of missionary literature within the Sunday schools it was felt would serve as a powerful antidote to the Penny Dreadful, and as Thorne suggests ‘the lure of the exotic and of the heroic was the foreign missionary sugar pill’.<sup>7</sup> The National Sunday School Union also published a number of missionary biographies, for example, their ‘Splendid Lives’ Series included biographies on Alexander Mackay, James Gilmour, John Horden and David Livingstone.<sup>8</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter for the biographies to resonate with children other methods of promoting the missionary were often incorporated into the Sunday school curriculum. Lessons, visits from missionaries, exhibitions, games, magic lantern shows and literature became an integral

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<sup>6</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, p.20 & p.23.

<sup>7</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.116.

<sup>8</sup> The 1s., ‘Splendid Lives’ Series was advertised within the ‘Sunday School Union’s Reward Books’ with ‘Portraits and Illustrations’; *The Practical Teacher*, 1898.



part of the activities. The LMS Loan Department, for example, reported that it had sent out costumes, curios, diagrams, lantern lectures, etc., on 1,170 occasions' during 1915.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Lyndhurst Road Sunday school in London provided their scholars with free copies of the *Juvenile Missionary Magazine* and the LMS's 'self-denial week' was an annual event.<sup>10</sup> Missionary James Hannington reportedly supplied several 'curiosities' for the CMS exhibition held at Blackheath in 1884 which included 'a spear given to him by the African chief Mirambo, and the kettle, coffee pot, and pans used by the Bishop on his travels'.<sup>11</sup> Items and curios surrounding Hannington were also detailed in an article produced in *The Quiver* in 1905 which explained that within the Head office of the CMS there was:

a museum containing a great collection of idols, charms, weapons, and other curios relating to foreign missionary work, and among these we find a few objects which are specially interesting as mementoes of noble Christian lives. Perhaps the most interesting, certainly the most pathetic of these is a bamboo rod from which hangs a flag bearing the mournful legend, 'Ichabod'. This was carried on the caravan of the faithful native followers of Bishop Hannington, when they learned that their beloved leader had been murdered on the borders of Uganda.<sup>12</sup>

Missionary John Williams became a popular subject for biographers and was frequently the topic of reward books and Sunday school lessons. Moreover, he was promoted as the

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<sup>9</sup> *The Hundred and Twentieth Report of the London Missionary Society* (London, LMS, 1915), p.34.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Cashdollar, *A Spiritual Home: Life in British and American Reformed Congregations, 1830-1915* (University Park, Pennsylvania State U. P., 2000), p.131 & p.62.

<sup>11</sup> *The Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record*, 1884.

<sup>12</sup> *The Quiver* 1905: For a detailed account of the CMS museum see Irene H. Barnes, *In Salisbury Square* (London, C.M.S., 1906), pp.204-215.

ideal masculine hero as the introduction in James Ellis's biography attests: 'John Williams must ever occupy a prominent and unique position among missionary heroes. His remarkable mechanical genius, his romantic adventures, and, above all, his tragical death, continue to invest his name with a peculiar charm'.<sup>13</sup>

Sunday school teachers as discussed in Chapter One were increasingly offered suggestions about effective teaching methods. Joseph Hassell's, *From Pole to Pole* (1872) informed 'Ministers and Teachers of England' about how to instruct children in the many different aspects of Williams life.<sup>14</sup> Within the Preface, it is suggested that 'There are several ways in which this book may be used. First, it may serve as a text-book for reference; the teacher drawing from it matter for lessons, the minister materials for missionary lectures or addresses. Then, again, parts of it might be read to the elder children in a school at special seasons'.<sup>15</sup> Importantly, this message remained consistent across our period. Thus in 1902, we find the same approach in J. J. Findlay's, *Principles of Class Teaching* which like Hassell also used a series of lesson notes based upon *Robinson Crusoe* in which pupils are asked to consider topics based on the story which reinforced British virtues 'such as patriotism, self-reliance, courage, paternalism, and, above all, attentiveness to duty'.<sup>16</sup> The topics to be studied included 'Robinson's First Journey, Travels, and Discoveries. Robinson as Artisan' and 'Teaching a Savage' incorporated the '...the study of life under primitive conditions.'<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> James Ellis, *John Williams: The Martyr Missionary of Polynesia* (London, Partridge, 1890), p. ix.

<sup>14</sup> Hassell, *From Pole to Pole*, p.440.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. iv.

<sup>16</sup> J.C., Findlay *Principles of Class Teaching* (London, Macmillan, 1902), pp.413-416.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

Famously known for his artisan background, shipbuilding skills and being killed on the island of Erromanga in 1839, John Williams was an ideal candidate to use as a model for the 'reading-lesson'.<sup>18</sup> Hassell suggested that the time and place of his birth, his youth, apprenticeship and the 'kinds of books he read' be used as topics to remind readers of the importance placed upon 'what is read in youth' particularly within the application to become a missionary.<sup>19</sup> Recommending that readers use a missionary map to trace his journey to the South Sea Islands it is suggested that a short account should be given of the inhabitants which should include 'a few facts concerning the climate, soil,...and the abundance of fish caught'.<sup>20</sup> Like Hassell, many publications used within the Sunday schools highlighted the importance of wholesome literature particularly in light of increasing concerns surrounding the popularity of the Penny Dreadful. The 'Introduction' to Francis E. Clark's *In the Tiger Jungle* (1896), described as a book 'which may well be placed in every Sunday-school library', clearly emphasised the importance of the missionary biography:

I have long held the opinion, and often expressed it, that the young people of our land need not patronize the dime novel or the 'penny dreadful' to find stirring adventure and thrilling narrative. There is one source which furnishes stories of intense and dramatic interest, abounding in novel situations and spiced with abundant adventure; and this source is at the same time the 'purest and most invigorating fountain at which our youth can drink. To change the figure, this is a

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<sup>18</sup> Hassell, *From Pole to Pole*, p.439.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.440.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

mine hitherto largely unworked; it contains rich nuggets of ore, which will well repay the prospector in this new field.<sup>21</sup>

Sunday school magazines often published adverts for books and periodicals which appealed to ideas of patriotism and imperialism which were important features of the Sunday school ethos. Missionary biographies were regularly recommended as suitable material within Sunday schools in part as Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann suggest, that ‘there can be little doubt that the simultaneous evangelical activities of Bible societies, missionary societies, and Sunday schools created a public awareness of a particular kind of world and of an imperial duty of British Christians in the empire’.<sup>22</sup> This was clearly the experience of Charles Wiles author of *The Challenge of the Sunday School* (1916) and former Sunday school scholar who described how he and his fellow Sunday school scholars liked ‘to sing the heroic, martial music, and to study about those men and women who have flung themselves into some great cause’.<sup>23</sup> Wiles explained that the aim of the Sunday school was to ‘teach, guide, warn, save and train them, building them up into a Christlike character, and sending them out to become useful members of society and worthy citizens in the kingdom of God’.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the SSC in 1886 stated that:

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<sup>21</sup> Francis E. Clark, ‘Introduction’ in J. Chamberlain, *In the Tiger Jungle: And Other Stories of Missionary Work Among the Telugus of India* (Edinburgh & London, Oliphant, 1897), p.11 & p.13.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Van der Veer & Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p.22.

<sup>23</sup> Charles P. Wiles, *The Challenge of the Sunday School* (Philadelphia, The Lutheran Publishing Company, 1916), p.140.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.

The typical Sunday Scholar is a British subject born in a land which has a noble history and literature ...we would not grudge a revival of something of the old 'insularity' of feeling of the conventional John Bull if it fostered an honest pride in all that is venerable in our institutions and inspiring in our national annals.<sup>25</sup>

Missionary biographies were perfectly positioned to carry these messages, not least because it was recognised that ' - the boy must now have his hero, some picturesque personality who presents to him concretely a picture of what he dreams he himself might be... it must emphasize now the more social and humanistic elements. A fictitious hero is supplanted by a real one - Livingstone ...or some other man who was dominated by love or patriotism or humanitarianism or other noble motive'.<sup>26</sup> Biographies of heroic missionaries like Livingstone were able to supplant sensational adventure stories of fictitious heroes and came to be regarded as a useful conduit of moral principles and good character. The missionary biographies produced to appeal to young children which articulated the imperial ideal were used as prizes and rewards and as teaching aids within the Sunday school, as A.W. Halsey's 'Introduction' in *Missionary Studies for the Sunday School* (1906) suggests:

No higher ideal could be kept before the scholars of our Sunday schools to-day than the lives of Livingstone and Moffat, Mackay and Crowther and the other illustrious names in Africa's Missionary Hall of Fame. The aim of this little text-

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<sup>25</sup> SSC, 1886 as quoted in Entwistle, 'Children's Reward Books', p.93.

<sup>26</sup> F.L. Platteau, 'Biography and the Age at which it Appeals to the Pupil', in J. Williams Butcher, European ed., *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education, Vol. I* (London, Thomas Nelson, 1915), p.141.

book is to present in a simple way the story of these masterful lives consecrated to the service of Christ in Darkest Africa.<sup>27</sup>

Reward and prize books by their very name were earned and often valued by the child for good behaviour, attendance or collecting for the missionary cause, as this prize label awarded to Jessica Miles in 1906 'for letter written on mission exhibition' highlights (Figure 3).<sup>28</sup>



Figure 3 Sunday school prize label 1906; Gollock, *What's O'Clock*.

<sup>27</sup> A.W. Halsey, 'Introductory Notes', in G. H. Trull, ed., *Missionary Studies for the Sunday School: Great Missionaries to the Red Men: Great Missionaries in the Dark Continent* (New York, Board of Home and Foreign Missions, 1906), p.5; Entwistle in her study of children's reward books found that reasons for awarding prizes fell into three broad categories 'attendance, good conduct and religious reasons': Entwistle, 'Children's Reward Books', pp.196-197.

<sup>28</sup> Prize label in Georgina A. Gollock, *What's O'Clock: A Missionary Book for Boys and Girls* (London, CMS, 1892); Personal copy (photograph taken from inside cover).

Discussing the importance of books given as prizes, author Charlotte Yonge explained that ‘improving books’ should be used for prizes as ‘...the usual habit is to choose gay outsides and pretty pictures, with little heed to the contents, but it should be remembered that the lent book is ephemeral, read in a week and passed on, while the prize remains, is exhibited to relatives and friends, is read over and over, becomes a resource in illness, and forms part of the possessions to be handed on to the next generation’.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, an article on ‘Sunday-School Prize Books’ in the 1898 edition of *Hearth and Home* recognised ‘among cultivated people that books for the young should animate their patriotism and courage, enlarge their imagination and sympathies, and appeal to all ardent and poetical and heroic sensibilities of which youthful beings are capable’.<sup>30</sup>

The type of literature viewed as suitable was also reported in the ‘Teachers Comments’ of the Railway Road Sunday School in Darwen in 1900 ‘...readers are chiefly juveniles for this we are very pleased as the books placed in their hands are of a healthy and elevating character which has a tendency to some extent to prevent them from reading much of the spurious literature which is in circulation at the present’.<sup>31</sup> Forming part of the wider developments in child study discussed in Chapter One, the biographies offered a solution to solving concerns in relation to the moral education of working-class children. The assumed damaging effects of the ‘Penny Dreadfuls’ led to a concerted attempt to promote healthy and interesting literature which offered an

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<sup>29</sup> Charlotte Yonge, *What Books to Lend and What to Give* (London, National Society’s Depository, 1887), p.10.

<sup>30</sup> *Hearth and Home*, 1898.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Teachers Comments’ of the Railway Road Sunday school, Darwen cited in Entwistle, ‘Children’s Reward Books’, p.207.

essential blend of acceptable messages and models. Described as ‘a woman who is eminently fitted ... both in native ability, in general training, in religious interest, and in special training in pedagogical study’, Sophia Lyon Fahs suggested several ‘essential characteristics of literature interesting to children’ when writing specifically about the role of ‘Missionary Biography in the Sunday School’.<sup>32</sup> These included the view that literature ‘is radiant with the personal element’ and that ‘biographies for children present men and women of action whose work among primitive peoples or where civilization is simple. They are the stories of men whose lives are filled with adventure and courage, and whose virtues are molded in the large’.<sup>33</sup> Returning to their usefulness Fahs argued that if ‘rightly taught’ they will ‘if the interest aroused and maintained is genuine, and the activities engaged in are but the natural expression of that interest, in the future, when larger kinds of service are possible, the pupils naturally will devote their energies to service of wider significance’.<sup>34</sup>

The ‘wider significance’ of missionary biographies referred to by Fahs was also discussed at the 1908 Young People’s Missionary Movement of the United States and Canada Convention in Pittsburgh, where it was acknowledged that ‘One of the largest opportunities for service to-day is for writers who know missions, who can take the material, so full of adventure, sacrifice, and heroism, and put it in proper form for use in

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<sup>32</sup> F.M. McMurray, ‘Introduction’, Sophie Fahs, *Uganda’s White Man of Work: A Story of Alexander M. Mackay* (New York, Young People’s Missionary Movement, 1907), p.xi; Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography’, p.366.

<sup>33</sup> Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography’, p.367.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.370; Sunday-schools were encouraged to use the missionary within class work allowing scholars to ‘...select “favourite heroes or heroines” and tell the story in their own words to the class...If familiar stories are told again, they may be made “guess stories”, told without mentioning the name which is left to be guessed and given by the hearers; Julia H. Johnston, *Fifty Missionary Heroes Every Boy and Girl Should Know* (New York, F. H. Revell, 1913), p.8.



Sunday-school literature'.<sup>35</sup> Again, the effectiveness of exchanging material between Britain and America was also raised at the Convention and a 'strong conviction' established to promote 'missionary study among young people'.<sup>36</sup> In 1909 Miss Hetty Lee-Holland was appointed by the National Society to organise and run training courses and produce material for Sunday-schools.<sup>37</sup> Discussing the use of missionary literature as a narrative device Lee-Holland described the usefulness of 'Story Hour' which comprises of 'a story-a good long one, and no morals at the end...and stories - Bible, Church History, missionary adventures, heroes of any age or clime-good biography, at any rate'.<sup>38</sup> Lee-Holland also suggested that any 'averagely intelligent Teacher' could gain a 'profitable study hour...by making herself a self-teaching guide on a set of missionary postcards' and suggesting questions which included:

- (6) Study these pictures of missionaries and their work. Write down all you can find about their daily life.
- (7) What do you think are (a) the hardest, (b) the happiest things in their life?
- (8) How may they be helped by the people at home?
- (9) Draw a map of the country in which the natives and missionaries live, marking the route from England, the mission stations etc.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Fahs, 'Missionary Biography', p.370; *The Church and Missionary Education: Address Delivered at the First International Convention* (New York, Young People's Missionary Movement, 1908), p.30.

<sup>36</sup> *The Church and Missionary Education*, p.34; As part of that cooperation the sharing and profitability of the literature was acknowledged 'We have had to be content last year with a borrowed text-book, The Uplift of China - of which we have issued a British edition, modelled on your book. Of that we have sold about 12,000 and at present we have on the press a new edition of 5,000. Remember it is only the second year of our work. We hope by and by a third edition will be called for'; p.36.

<sup>37</sup> The National Society (for the promotion of education) had been responsible for providing Church Schools in England and Wales since 1811 and in 1912 'pointed to the links between elementary and secondary schools, training colleges and the work on Sundays, indicating that the National Society was the body best placed to develop all these; Lois Loudon, *Distinctive and Inclusive: The National Society and Church of England Schools 1811-2011* (London, The National Society, 2012), p.57.

<sup>38</sup> Hetty Lee-Holland, *Self-Teaching in the Sunday School* (London, NSSU, n.d.), p.117

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52; Hetty-Lee refers to the Sunday school teacher as female, and while women teachers did outnumber their male counterparts, it was never by any significant number.

The use of missionary literature was again discussed at the World's Seventh Sunday School Convention held in Zurich in 1913.<sup>40</sup> Representing the British Sunday School Union, Miss Emily Huntley (Extension Lecturer of the Sunday-school Union) gave an address about 'The Missionary Ideal of the Sunday-School', starting with recognition of the simple fact that 'The junior child loves stories of the faraway'.<sup>41</sup> As Huntley suggests, 'there is no finer material for child nurture than the record of noble missionary lives. In them Christianity is seen in the forms of activity that belongs to the essential interests of childhood. In the life of the pioneer missionary, the romance, primitive "dare", true conquest, of Christianity are seen'.<sup>42</sup> Huntley also relates the use of the missionary biography to contemporary concerns about children's reading habits '[t]he right kind of missionary biography is of untold value in the unsettled days; it presents men who made choices and pursued noble purposes to the end, and who proved Christ sufficient for all the hardest way'.<sup>43</sup> The usefulness of the missionary biography was also noted by Charles Wiles in *The Challenge of the Sunday School* who acknowledged how 'biographies when selected with care, will furnish fine heroic and ethical ideals' and states that any 'up-to date library' Sunday school library will contain 'several volumes on world missions and missionary heroes'.<sup>44</sup> An example of books suggested for the missionary library included:

1. Biographies of leading missionaries, as 'The Personal Life of David Livingstone,' by Blaikie.

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<sup>40</sup> Trumbull, *World-wide Sunday-School* p.214.

<sup>41</sup> Emily Huntley, 'The Missionary Ideal of The Sunday-School', in Trumbull, *World-wide Sunday-School*, p.264.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.265.

<sup>44</sup> Wiles, *The Challenge of the Sunday School*, pp.163-164.

2. Books of description which describe missionary work and tell of the people and the customs of foreign lands, as 'Chinese Characteristics', by Arthur. H. Smith.<sup>45</sup>

In the same year, Educational Secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions R.E. Diffendorfer discussed 'Missionary Education' and suggested that framed pictures of great missionaries and visits by serving missionaries would be complimented by the provision of 'good literature containing accounts of missionary pioneers and present day heroes' which could be used at home or within the libraries.<sup>46</sup> The literature, he argued would supplement missionary programmes which should consist of 'story-telling, in which the heroism, devotion, and achievements of missionaries and the supporters of missions are recounted'.<sup>47</sup> Highlighting internationality and reflecting upon heroism and the 'English boy' Diffendorfer fervently believed that:

In a practical country where material achievements are so constantly emphasized and so eagerly celebrated too much attention cannot be paid to public services of the higher kind artistic and spiritual achievements. Patriotic feeling in England, which is especially intense, is greatly fostered by the monuments of heroism erected at every point, so that an English boy is rarely out of sight of some memorial of English courage and sacrifice.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> W.A. Brown, *The Why and How of Missions in the Sunday-School* (London & Edinburgh, F. H. Revell, 1916), p.86.

<sup>46</sup> Ralph E. Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education in Home and School* (New York, Abingdon Press, 1917); R.E. Diffendorfer, 'Missionary Education in the Sunday school', *International Review of Mission*, 5.3 (1916), p.441.

<sup>47</sup> Diffendorfer, 'Missionary Education', pp.441-442.

<sup>48</sup> Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education in Home*, p.190.

Linked to ideas regarding the effectiveness of youth organisations discussed earlier, Diffendorfer expressed his desire for boys and girls to play an active part in clubs and societies where ‘there is a strong emphasis on service’, paying particular attention to the *Boy Scouts* ‘based upon the spirit and method of ancient knighthood’ and whose ‘Oath and the application of the Scout Law both give opportunities for missionary education’.<sup>49</sup> It is interesting that Diffendorfer differentiated between children under nine years and upon pre-adolescent boys and girls, whom he argued required stories of a ‘different character’ which involve ‘adult experiences and heroic acts of the physical sort’.<sup>50</sup> To ‘excite the hero-worshipping junior’ he argued that the stories must be true and concern big and wonderful deeds, but should also include the study of geography and history to provide a real interest in the ‘hitherto undiscovered worlds of the past and of the far away’.<sup>51</sup> The focus for Diffendorfer, however, was the adolescent whom he argued was the right age for ‘the stamping of character with the missionary spirit’.<sup>52</sup> Believing that boys and girls of the early adolescent age have a ‘tendency for hero-worship’ Diffendorfer argued that the missionary biography ‘yields the best material for character building’.<sup>53</sup> The ‘true biography’ he contended was a character study which ‘reveals those elements of life which constitute character’ and offers the ‘most unique opportunity to the missionary teacher’ becoming the ‘most desirable material for lessons in moral and religious education’.<sup>54</sup> To incite the pupil’s ‘admiration and emulation’ stories should, he argued deal ‘with the likes and dislikes,

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<sup>49</sup> Diffendorfer, ‘Missionary Education’, p.311 & p.316

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.445.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p.446.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.446-7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*; Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education in Home and School*, p.240.

the choices, the aspirations, the deep feeling, the powers of will, the springs of action, and the outreach of love. Biography thus becomes most desirable material for lessons in moral and religious education'.<sup>55</sup> In a review of Dawson's *The Last Journals of Bishop Hannington* (1888) readers are encouraged to read the 'tale of thrilling interest-of trial, hardship, sickness, peril bravely borne, and ending in a cruel death; a story in the best sense of the words full of edification. But to curtail or condense would be to spoil it. Our readers must be left to study it for themselves in the pages of Mr. Dawson's volume, and they will be amply repaid for doing so'.<sup>56</sup>

### Conclusion

The missionary biography as this chapter has highlighted was viewed by the Sunday schools as important and desirable, and as such, advances Thorne's view that for both boys and girls, Sunday schools were the 'primary site' for promoting and disseminating material about the missionary.<sup>57</sup> This chapter has also revealed how working-class children were 'thought to be particularly susceptible to the adventurous and imperial drama of the foreign mission field'.<sup>58</sup> Before we talk about the missionary biography in detail, it is important to provide a more general overview of the use and importance of the hero. The following chapter will, therefore, discuss the hero and hero worship and examine in detail literature incorporating the hero, i.e. biographies and adventure stories from a more general perspective. The chapter will conclude by considering the boy reader and his books followed by the same analysis for girl readers.

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<sup>55</sup> Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education*, p.239 & p.308.

<sup>56</sup> *Saturday Review*, 1886.

<sup>57</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, pp.114-115.

<sup>58</sup> Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education*, p.308.

## CHAPTER THREE

‘The “ripping good yarn” full of adventure...with the stalwart hero taking centre stage’ - The British Hero and Hero-worship and heroic narratives.

To remedy the ‘debasing effects of penny fiction,’ it was suggested that books ‘should be of a kind which hold up high ideals of conduct; they should contain stories of heroism, self-denial and integrity, and thus give the teacher the opportunity of teaching the value of character’.<sup>1</sup> Children’s literature at the end of the nineteenth century entered what many have described as its ‘golden age’ and due to technological advancement and progress in bookmaking, became a self-sufficient industry. In this period, book critics unanimously opposed ‘outmoded concepts of childhood’ and ‘postulated the social and psychological implications of the juvenile reading experience’.<sup>2</sup> In her study of childhood, books and schooling Gretchen Galbraith argues that the ‘Victorian and Edwardian British cared deeply about what their nation’s children read’ which grew from an understanding of reading as ‘consumption: you were what you read’.<sup>3</sup>

Writing in 1887 Charlotte Yonge author and mission supporter, clearly recognised books based on the hero as valuable for promoting appropriate behaviour, instil a sense of national pride, preserve the idea of the nation, create national unity and to promote

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<sup>1</sup> Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education*, p.308; *The Official Report of The World’s Seventh Sunday-School Convention*, p.633; The other suggestions included ‘Songs which stir the noblest emotions should be encouraged; songs tend to form the character of the young; Pictures which illustrate heroic deeds might be placed on the walls; Scholars should have their attention drawn to the laws of health and Christian conduct from which the evils of intemperance and other vices which degrade national character could be pointed out; Teachers could, by superintending games in the playground, promote manliness of character, self-control, and a love of fair play; The formation of an old scholars’ association cultivates loyalty to the school and a wholesome esprit de corps’.

<sup>2</sup> Marjory Lang, ‘Childhood’s Champions: Mid-Victorian Children’s Periodicals and the Critics’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 13.1(1980), p.18; For further reading see: Anna Davin, *Growing Up Poor: Home, School and Street in London, 1870-1914* (London, Rivers Oram Press, 1996); Thea Thompson, *Edwardian Childhoods* (London, Routledge, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Galbraith, *Reading Lives*, p.1.

British superiority: 'True manhood needs, above all earthly qualities, to be impressed on them, and books of example (not precept) with heroes, whose sentiments they admire, may always raise their tone, sometimes individually, sometimes collectively'.<sup>4</sup> Yonge was also very clear in endorsing the benefits of 'wholesome and amusing literature' believing that: 'If the boy is not to betake himself to "Jack Sheppard" literature, he must be beguiled by wholesome adventure. If the girl is not to study the "penny dreadful", her notions must be refined by the tale of high romance or pure pathos'.<sup>5</sup>

As revealed in Chapter Two, Yonge was only one of many commentators who believed that sensational literature was a bad influence upon working-class readers. Her strictures build, for instance, on the fears of Thomas Wright, who we met earlier, that: 'Boys may be found in tens of thousands who are "constant readers" of the dreadfuls - who have got through scores of them, and by dint of exchanges with schoolmates and playfellows are reading half a dozen of the concurrently - but who have never heard of "Robinson Crusoe", "The Arabian Nights", or "Peter Simple"'.<sup>6</sup> Wright continued to explain how: 'Of "Gulliver's Travels" they will probably never have heard; and so far as they are concerned, those heroes of heroes, the Fighting Smith of Scott, and the Hawkeye of Cooper, might well have remained unimagined'.<sup>7</sup> For Wright, as for countless other moral writers of the period, the hero was a potentially vital tool in engaging children in good reading. This chapter looks in more detail at the trope of the

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<sup>4</sup> Yonge, *What Books to Lend*, p.6; Yonge was an active supporter of missions and many of her fictional books were invested in the missionary enterprise but were more 'directly implicated in missionary projects, as it was her practice to donate all of the profits from her novels to various Anglican charities, including missionary endeavours. She famously donated the proceeds of *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853), her most popular novel, to fund the construction of a missionary ship for Bishop George Selwyn'; Teresa Huffman Traver, "'The Ship that Bears through the Waves'", *Women's Writing*, 17.2 (2010), p.256.

<sup>5</sup> Yonge, *What Books to Lend*, p.5.

<sup>6</sup> Wright, 'On a Possible Popular Culture', p.35.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

hero, examining how hero-worship was located within Victorian and Edwardian moral and imperial discourses.

### Hero-worship

The conviction shared by both Yonge and Wright that literature based upon the hero was influential can be traced back to Thomas Carlyle's celebrated book *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), which itself emerged from a well-known series of lectures given in 1840.<sup>8</sup> Carlyle championed the individual in history arguing that it was not social and economic circumstances that made the hero, but their spiritual strength. Walter Houghton has identified 'hero-worship' as one of the thirteen defining characteristics of the Victorian 'frame of mind' and states that the worshipping of heroes became a 'major factor in English culture'.<sup>9</sup> Heroes were useful for providing examples for emulation and soon became, as Geoffrey Cubitt has identified the object of a 'collective emotional investment'.<sup>10</sup> Cubitt also argues that heroic individuals were viewed as exemplary, relying on moral and ethical standards rather than their achievements, this he contends 'makes them educationally useful. Thus, the hero provides moral instruction which is relevant if they are to perform any social function'.<sup>11</sup>

Cubitt's view that the hero was part of a 'collective investment' can be linked back to an article 'The Moral Effects of the Heroic in History' published in *The*

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes and Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (London, Longmans Green, 1906).

<sup>9</sup> Walter Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind 1830-1870* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1957), p.310.

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, 'Introduction', in G. Cubitt & A. Warren, eds., *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives* Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2000), p.3.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.



*Practical Teacher* in April 1885.<sup>12</sup> Discussing Carlyle's work its author, Isabella Landale states that 'We are all familiar, through Carlyle's pages with the combination of "Hero-worship and the Heroic in History"; and perhaps the tendency to hero-worship is stronger in childhood than at any other period of life, it is of the highest importance that it should be utilised as a moral agent instead of being allowed to waste itself on unworthy objects'.<sup>13</sup> The hero and hero-worship became a useful means for educationalists and interested parties to use in their mission to impose an imperial world-view on British children; as an example, in 1901 the subject of hero-worship was discussed by the Parents' National Education Union. In a paper presented at their Fifth Annual Conference, it was acknowledged that 'Hero-worship ripens a child's intelligence until it becomes quick to recognize noble thought and eager to receive its inspiration'.<sup>14</sup> One of the most famous British fictional characters Tom Brown, for example, is described as marching 'down to the School-house, a hero-worshipper, who would have satisfied the soul of Thomas Carlyle himself'.<sup>15</sup> In a later review of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, the influence of the hero was again remarked upon 'No book has better described boys' character, with its infinite capacity for hero-worship and friendship, and its response to the influence of strong personality'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*; *The Practical Teacher*, 1885.

<sup>13</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1885.

<sup>14</sup> L.H. Montagu, 'Hero-worship as a Factor in Education', *Parents Review*, 12 (1901), p.561.

<sup>15</sup> Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, p.408.

<sup>16</sup> J. Howard Whitehouse, 'Bibliography of Books Dealing with English Public-School Life', in J.H. Whitehouse, ed., *The English Public School: A Symposium* (London, Grant Richards, 1919), p.150.

### The hero narrative

Narratives surrounding the British hero were recognised as providing a ‘nodal point for the negotiation of social and cultural concerns’, and offering children examples of men and women that crystallised the ideals and norms of society.<sup>17</sup> The ‘moral values of the hero’ as Dudley Jones and Tony Watkins argue, increasingly became ‘articulated through the ideological frameworks of gender, imperialism and national identity’.<sup>18</sup> It can also be argued that included within their list is the framework of class. This was in part due to the mid-nineteenth century work of Samuel Smiles who identified ideas of self-improvement, good character and a ‘muscular morality’.<sup>19</sup> Smiles was keen to advocate the value to the nation of the ordinary man and suggested that although history had been monopolised by statesmen and soldiers ‘progress has also been owing to multitudes of smaller and less known men’.<sup>20</sup> Smiles was clear in his belief and encouragement that ‘under almost all circumstances, however, externally adverse - in moorland shielings, in cottage hamlets, in the close alleys of great towns - the truer man may grow’.<sup>21</sup> Promoting his ideas, Smiles valued the use of ‘biographies of great, but especially good men’ because they are ‘most instructive and useful, as helps, guides and incentives to others’.<sup>22</sup> Smiles also suggested that biographies through ‘the power of self-help’ furnished examples of ‘truly noble and manly character’ and that:

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<sup>17</sup> Korte & Lethbridge, ‘Introduction: Heroes and Heroism’. p.4.

<sup>18</sup> Dudley Jones and Tony Watkins, ‘Introduction’, in D. Jones & T. Watkins, eds., *A Necessary Fantasy? The Heroic Figure in Children’s Popular Culture* (New York, Garland, 2000), p.4.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help; With Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London: John Murray, 1859).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.297; The effectiveness of Smiles work was described by working-class writer Robert Roberts ‘By 1900, however, those cherished principles about class, order, work, thrift and self-help, epitomised by Samuel Smiles and long taught and practiced by the Victorian bourgeoisie, had moulded the minds of even the humblest’ Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, pp.15-16.

<sup>22</sup> Smiles, *Self-help*, p.5.

British biography is studded...with illustrious examples of the power of self-help, of patient purpose, resolute working, and steadfast integrity, issuing in the formation of truly noble and manly character; exhibiting in language not to be misunderstood, what it is in the power of each to accomplish for himself; and illustrating the efficacy of self-respect and self-reliance in enabling men of even the humblest rank to work out for themselves an honourable competency and a solid reputation.<sup>23</sup>

Smiles's ideas surrounding the power of the hero to offer examples of self-help can be seen in H.W. Mabie's 1906 book on heroes, which explained that 'Stories of the heroes have often made other men strong and brave and true in the face of great perils and tasks, and this book is put forth in the faith that it will not only pass on the fame of the heroes of the past but help make heroes in the present'.<sup>24</sup> A lesson plan published in *The Practical Teacher* for the elementary school year 1906-1907 encouraged children to consider who should embody the title of hero and could be viewed as enabling, as discussed earlier, the 'collective investment' described by Cubitt:

What is a hero, and why is he worshipped? ...think out what it really is that makes a man a hero to his acquaintances, or to a nation...There was no greater hero in the nation's eyes at the close of the African War than Baden-Powell, and although no one deserved the encomium of praise showered on him more, there were (as he

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*; It is interesting to note that Smiles biography of *Life of George Stephenson* sold as many copies of Kingsley's adventure story *Westward Ho!* ; Juliette Atkinson, *Victorian Biography Reconsidered: A Study of Nineteenth-Century 'Hidden' Lives* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2010), p.16.

<sup>24</sup> H.W. Mabie, *Heroes Every Child Should Know: Tales for Young People of the World's Heroes in all Ages* (New York, Doubleday, 1906), p. xviii.

would be the first to admit) dozens that did their duty equally well, but who were comparatively unnoticed.<sup>25</sup>

The hero was also used to encourage good behaviour, again *The Practical Teacher* (1909), explained how the ‘Children’s Heroes’ series was an ‘excellent’ choice to read or to use as a ‘reward for good work’ and stated that:

When the book has been read through, it was given as a prize for some school achievement, or as a surprise award. ‘This book is for Tom Jones, because I heard him laugh and whistle when I thought he was going to lose his temper’. The recipient looked immensely pleased, and the incident would have rejoiced the heart of General Baden-Powell, who recommends us to whistle under all trying circumstances!<sup>26</sup>

This was not an entirely new concept; *The Critical History of Children’s Literature*, for example, argues that from the 1840s boys were developing a sense of community and personal development by ‘exploring remote regions, sailing the high seas, escaping from cannibals or redskins in the company of heroes’.<sup>27</sup> What proved significant towards the end of the century, however, was the ‘greater emphasis on personal acts and consequences’ and the moving away from ‘stern authoritarian morality

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<sup>25</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1906; Cubitt, ‘Introduction’, p.3.

<sup>26</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1909.

<sup>27</sup> Cubitt, ‘Introduction’, p.3; Cornelia Meigs et al., *The Critical History of Children’s Literature: A Survey of Children’s Books in English from Earliest Times to the Present* (New York, Macmillan, 1969), p.219; Martin Green has classified seven types of adventure story based upon variations of cultural and political contexts, which includes the ‘Robinson Crusoe Story’, ‘The Frontiersman Story’ and ‘The Wanderer Story’, Martin Green, *Seven Types of Adventure Tales: An Etiology of a Major Genre* (University Park, Pennsylvania State U. P., 1991), p.23.

stories...to the “ripping good yarn” full of adventure...with the stalwart hero taking centre stage’.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the biography was an increasingly popular medium for capturing children’s imaginations and creating worlds resplendent with images of heroic British men.

Although ‘the printed word...created the aura of heroism’ , John Lowerson suggests that it was ‘the ascription of moral values by the mediators which was of most importance’.<sup>29</sup> In 1901 Edmund Gosse wrote *The Custom of Biography*, which Alison Booth argues was both representative and influential in introducing the ‘changing aims of life writing as it developed from 1814 to 1914’.<sup>30</sup> Booth suggests that biography is never a solitary or individual practice’ but always ‘entails a network of positions (which may be occupied by more than one person): authors (or presenters, since the role often includes executors, illustrators, publishers, etc.), subjects (whether focused on one person or more) and readers (or audience, since again lives may be received by various media)’.<sup>31</sup> Booth’s analysis of the collaborative nature of biographies will be central to understanding the production and dissemination of missionary biographies which will be discussed in the following chapter. However, before discussing the missionary as a subject for biographers, it is important to gain an understanding of the content and ethos regarding biographies of different heroes written for children.

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<sup>28</sup> Smith, *Awarded for Valour*, p.6.

<sup>29</sup> *O.E.D.*, 2014; John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle-Classes: 1870-1914* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1995), p.70.

<sup>30</sup> Alison Booth, ‘Life Writing’, in J. Shattock, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830–1914* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P.,2010), p.50; Sir Edmund William Gosse (1849–1928) author of *Father and Son* (1907) was also a member of many influential committees including the ‘Royal Society of Literature, the Royal Literary Fund, the Nobel prize English committee, the London Library, and the Anglo-French Society; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, Oxford U.P.,2004).

<sup>31</sup> Alison Booth, ‘Life Writing’, p.53.

## Biographies

Biographies reflected the concerns of society which included imperialism, nation building, class, racial othering and gender, but moreover were far more useful than fictional stories by providing a purported 'true' account. Kate Flint finds that biographers believed female readers readily identified with the subject 'and that it was thought that reading could powerfully instil and confirm desirable moral and social qualities'.<sup>32</sup> By the late-nineteenth century, many more biographies based upon heroes written specifically for children were being produced. Although military heroes took centre stage, alternative heroes were given some agency, for example, Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Fry, as discussed in the introduction, were often written about and used 'as a potential energizing myth to inspire countless thousands of other unpretentious and recognized lives, from the "improving" middle class and the "self-made" working class alike'.<sup>33</sup>

Biographies about the soldier engaged in a noble struggle still remained popular, however, as they could fuse adventure with real-life, and as 'promoters of unity' and 'the embodiment of a collective will' existed as conductors of moral example designed to instruct and enlighten readers.<sup>34</sup> Houghton, for example, has argued that 'as long as patriotism aroused heroic attitudes of devotion and self-sacrifice ...[biographies] could be utilized for moral purposes'.<sup>35</sup> The fact that the presence of such overt patriotism is in evidence in many biographies reveals how pervasive the aim of promoting nationalistic

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<sup>32</sup> Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2002), p.36.

<sup>33</sup> This has been described as a 'proliferation and pluralisation of heroic concepts'; Korte & Lethbridge, 'Introduction: Heroes and Heroism', p.17; Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p.122.

<sup>34</sup> Mackenzie, 'Heroic Myths of Empire', p.115.

<sup>35</sup> Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, p. 324.

sentiment was. Describing biographies as valuable (and profitable) conduits of educational and cultural ideals, the *Edinburgh Review* in 1889 exposed their popularity stating that ‘at this moment the most popular form of literature...it is a curious characteristic of the literature of the day that biography preponderates to an enormous extent over every other branch of composition’.<sup>36</sup> Biographies written for children while romanticising and often mythologizing their subject were offered as factual and authentic accounts, and consequently, numerous biographies were written celebrating the lives of British heroes who triumphed for Queen, Country and Empire, and who symbolically embodied real and imagined nationalist or imperialist cultural greatness’.<sup>37</sup>

The use of biographies, perceived as providing morally inspiring stories also entered discussions in respect of the child’s moral and social education. Writing in 1903 educationalist Charles McMurray, for example, explained that ‘The study of biography is social in its effect, because it takes the child out of himself and loses him in the life and experience of another. The more biographies of the right sort a child studies appreciatively, the more his own life is expanded to encompass and identify itself with the lives of others’.<sup>38</sup> It was, therefore, no surprise that educationalists and moral reformers endorsed stories and biographies as appropriate material for building character

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<sup>36</sup> ‘The Literature and Language of the Age’ *Edinburgh Review*, 169 (1889) as cited in Atkinson, *Victorian Biography Reconsidered*, p.14.

<sup>37</sup> Beau Riffenburgh, *The Myth of the Explorer: The Press, Sensationalism, and Geographical Discovery* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 1994), p.2; A definitive catalogue of what constitutes a biography is difficult to define as they could include, for example, narratives based upon local philanthropists, religious leaders, tradesmen, dignitaries, commemorations by family members and often took the form of extracts from diaries or letters. This is apparent by the often-confusing categories biographies are listed under which can include travel, history or geography. Publishing firms such as Longmans and Routledge, for example, concentrated their efforts upon the lives of celebrated political and historical individuals, whilst others focused instead upon lesser known often humble characters.

<sup>38</sup> Charles McMurray, *Special Method in History*, 1903, as quoted in Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography’, p.366.

and promoting a Christian mentality, and importantly allowing young readers to share in the imperial responsibility and place themselves in the role of the hero. This view is acknowledged by Donal E. Hall in his study of children's books and colonisation who argues that children 'gradually assimilate cultural systems of belief. It is a complex process by which a group of potentially noncolonial infants becomes a nation of active colonizers, one in which adult ideologies slowly filter down and progressively become the ideas and assumptions of a new generation'.<sup>39</sup> In her study of children's literature and national identity, Rebecca Knuth, for example, claims 'that biographies were personal stories with cultural interpretations built in', and often, an individual only became a hero when '...his dangerous and daring exploits are narrated as adventures, when his triumph (even in death) is celebrated, when his qualities are recognised by an admiring public that constitutes the audience to his tale'.<sup>40</sup>

Many biographers constructed stories around their heroes to establish national myths that demonstrated the interconnection between social unity, imperial and national identity. Connected to the moral debates and concerns about the corrupting influence of sensationalist literature, many publishers of biographies based on British heroes followed the advice of concerned critics and commentators. Alexander Strahan in 1875, for example, implored publishers to provide literature for boys and girls, as distinguished from children, that must be 'forward-looking, and full of spirit and enterprise...It must be full of incident and picture, its *motif* must be will and feeling,

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<sup>39</sup> Donald E. Hall, "'We and the World': Juliana Horatio Ewing and Victorian Colonialism for Children', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 16.2 (1991), p.51.

<sup>40</sup> Rebecca Knuth, *Children's Literature and British Identity: Imagining a People and a Nation* (Lanham, The Scarecrow Press, 2012), p.50; Graham Dawson, 'Heroes of History, Heroes of Phantasy: Idealisation, Masculinity and the Soldiers of Empire', *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, 3 (1996), p.146.



rather than ideas. It must not be goody-goody, and it must certainly not be prudish'.<sup>41</sup>

He also suggested that 'the flood of bad literature could be very materially checked by any competent publisher taking a common-sense view of the subject, and working it out with the strong faith in human nature and in the growing progress of society'.<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, Salmon's 1886 essay 'What Boys Read' discussed the significance of the real-life hero and believed 'it is impossible to overrate the importance of the influence of such a supply on the national character and culture...It is the God-fearing courage of a Gordon which his reading should engender, not the ignoble daring of a Ned Kelly'.<sup>43</sup>

And again this was stressed by Charlotte Yonge a year later, who believed in the need to provide 'books of a superior class' and boys particularly, she argued 'should not have childish tales with weak morality or "washy" piety; but should have heroism and nobleness kept before their eyes'.<sup>44</sup>

In the same year under the auspicious title *Heroes of Britain* (1887) the qualities of the British hero were again described which included 'bravery, gallantry, intrepidity, daring, courage, boldness, magnanimity, and self-sacrifice'.<sup>45</sup> The author Edwin Hodder continued to inform readers of British superiority explaining that '...there is no country in the world where the deeds of great men are held in higher estimation than in Great Britain and in no other country can there be found so many men and women whose lives

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<sup>41</sup> Strahan, 'Bad Literature for the Young', p.991.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*; According to the *ODNB* 'With William Isbister, Strahan founded the publishing firm of Strahan & Co., which moved from Edinburgh to London in 1862. In its early years the company specialized in devotional works, illustrated literature for children, and inexpensive reprints of American titles... In *The Times* obituary, he was recalled as one who had been "a power to be reckoned with in the publishing world of the sixties and seventies" (*The Times*, 29 May 1918)'.

<sup>43</sup> Salmon 'What Boys Read', p.248 & p.258.

<sup>44</sup> Yonge, *What Books to Lend*, p.6.

<sup>45</sup> Edwin Hodder, *Heroes of Britain in Peace and War* (London, Cassell, 1878), p.2; Hodder was a prolific hymn writer was also the author of *Conquests of the Cross: A Record of Missionary Work Throughout the World* (London, Cassell, 1890).

have been devoted to energetic and praiseworthy works for the benefit of others'.<sup>46</sup> Most importantly, for the purposes of this thesis, the same messages continued to be disseminated. H.W. Mabie's *Heroes Every Child Should Know* (1906), for example, (whilst intended for 'every child' it included only male heroes) clearly saw heroism as the preserve of men: 'Courage and achievement are the two signs of the hero; he must possess or lack many other qualities, but he must be daring and he must do things and not dream or talk about them'.<sup>47</sup> Although most of the biographies were aimed at a male readership, girls were not completely excluded from discussions.

Within the aptly titled *Women Worth Emulating* (1877) produced by the National Sunday School Union while the value of the biography and its usefulness to readers' daily lives was discussed, the focus of those discussions rested upon studious habits, intellectual pursuits, domestic industry, and sound religious principles:

Emulation is the spirit most desirable to arouse in the young. What of personal progress and relative usefulness has been effected by others is always a valuable and inspiring study. That which we are constrained to approve and admire we are led to emulate, even where imitation may not be possible. The sterling qualities which made a character excellent, still more than the mental powers which made it remarkable, convey lessons for instruction and encouragement that all can apply.<sup>48</sup>

Salmon in his 1888 survey revealed that girls were often 'bored with books written for them' and as a solution recommended that girls be provided with the growing

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<sup>46</sup> Hodder, *Heroes of Britain*, p.2.

<sup>47</sup> Mabie, *Heroes Every Child Should Know*, p. xi.

<sup>48</sup> Clara L. Balfour, *Women Worth Emulating* (London, NSSU, 1877), Preface.

number of biographies.<sup>49</sup> Salmon argued that as biographies contained the ideal blend of moral instruction and adventure that ‘perhaps the best reading which girls can possibly have is biography, especially female biography, of which many excellent works have been published’.<sup>50</sup> Salmon continued by suggesting that ‘one cannot help as one reads the biographies of great women - whether of Miss Florence Nightingale, Mrs. Fry, or Lady Russell - being struck by the purity of purpose and God-fearing zeal which moved most of their subjects’.<sup>51</sup> What was striking about biographies based upon women was their use of familial and passive characteristics of patience, purity and devotion used when describing their subjects who were also often set against the physical attributes of male heroism. This distinction is evident within Mabie’s biographical collection *Heroines That Every Child Should Know* (1908) which included chapters on Joan of Arc, Grace Darling, Sister Dora and Florence Nightingale’.<sup>52</sup> Mabie argued that ‘The Book of Heroes should never be separated from the Book of Heroines; they are the two parts of that story of courage, service and achievement which is the most interesting and inspiring chapter in the history of human kind in this wonderful world of ours’.<sup>53</sup> Mabie furthers this statement by explaining that ‘whenever and wherever there has appeared a hero, a heroine has almost always worked with or for him; for heroic and noble deeds are rarely done without some kind of cooperation although women’s achievements may have been less dramatic than the soldier or explorer, they were of “a finer quality”’.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Edward Salmon, ‘What Girl’s Read’, *Nineteenth Century*, 20 (1886), p.527.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Hamilton Wright Mabie, *Heroines That Every Child Should Know: Tales for Young People of The World’s Heroines of All Ages* (New York, Doubleday, 1908), p.x.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p.vii.

Mabie's view that the 'heroine has almost always worked with or for' the male hero was certainly true of biographies produced before 1870 surrounding missionary women. Especially popular were short biographical sketches destined as prizes for Sunday school scholars and designed to offer girl readers adventurous stories that also served to endorse assumed gender roles and traits of national character. As suggested, biographies of both heroic men and women used the formula of the adventure story to entice their young readers, and it is, therefore, important at this stage to understand the role of the adventure story format played, before we delve deeply into questions of gender.

#### Adventure stories

In his classic 1932 *Children's Book of England* Harvey Darton highlights the power of the adventure story explaining that they 'gave English boys a better idea of the potential wonders of Empire than could be had from any school task'.<sup>55</sup> Helping to anchor children in their culture, history and traditions, William Bennett suggests that stories introduce children to a world of shared ideas.<sup>56</sup> Jeffrey Richards agrees, arguing that adventure tales did not just function as a 'mirror of the age' but as an 'active agency constructing and perpetuating a view of the world in which British imperialism was an integral part of the cultural and psychological formation of each new generation of readers'.<sup>57</sup> Richards suggests that 'popular fiction has been particularly potent because it

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<sup>55</sup> Harvey Darton, *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1932), p.304.

<sup>56</sup> William J. Bennett, 'Introduction' in W.J. Bennett, ed., *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1993), p.12

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*; Jeffrey Richards, 'Introduction' in J. Richards, ed., *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1989), p.3.

feeds the imaginative life of the reader [providing] a sediment in the mind, which it requires a conscious intellectual effort to erase'.<sup>58</sup> While contributing to children's personal development and sense of community, adventure stories, however, were not unified by force, but as Thomas Richards argues 'by information', which wholeheartedly embraced Christian values, masculinity and imperialism.<sup>59</sup> Importantly, Martin Green emphasises the place of the adventure story in the imagined community of the nation 'presenting them "collectively" as, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night; and in the form of its dreams, they charged England's will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer and rule'.<sup>60</sup> The adventure story was ideally situated to provide children with shared ideas and a sense of belonging to Anderson's imagined community.<sup>61</sup>

Patrick Brantlinger in his influential *Rule of Darkness*, contends that the whole subgenre of boys' adventure stories took as 'self-evident the notion that England was the vanguard nation, leading the world toward the future', - a view that, as we will see later in this chapter - can also be extended (though with some qualifications) to adventure stories written for girls.<sup>62</sup> Many were based upon the commercial and political aspects of the empire and often legitimised and glamorised Britain's superior world position. They exercised a powerful role in transmitting important educational messages by offering lessons in imperial geography and history, and by encouraging children to compare their

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<sup>58</sup> Richards, 'Introduction', pp.1-2.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London, Verso, 1993), p.1.

<sup>60</sup> Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (London & Henley, Routledge, 1980), p.3.

<sup>61</sup> Green also suggests that adventure tales of the respectable kind could be viewed as manifestations of 'national destiny...fondly imagined by people who shaped and enforced actual policy'; Green, *Seven Types*, p. 24.

<sup>62</sup> Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (New York, Cornell U.P., 1988), p.190 & p.239

own Christian moral character against other cultures and made foreign places appear adventurous and accessible. The same 'plot' retold within the adventure story reinforced its influence and popularity and provided a canvas for authors to include, within the excitement of the adventure story, underlying moral and social commentary. As Robert McDonald suggests the 'basic narratives become politicised, and their motifs reflect the hopes and anxieties of the age'.<sup>63</sup>

The imperial hero of the adventure story through a series of processes drew upon the power 'system of heroic manliness' and represented masculine exploits and virtue often in foreign and dangerous lands. They also offered children images of an environment free from restrictive social and class divisions which allowed them to understand their individual and collective place at home.<sup>64</sup> Morton Cohen in his biography based upon adventure story writer H. Rider Haggard argues that from the beginning of the 1880s a surge of interest in the romantic adventure story was largely driven by five authors 'Stephenson, Haggard, Kipling, Henty and Lang. In 1883 *Treasure Island* gave new vigour to the genre, in 1885 and 1887 *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* helped romance claim a vast new reading public'.<sup>65</sup> Cohen's argument can be validated by author Horace G. Hutchinson, writing in 1926, who described Haggard's considerable influence on him as a child, asserting that 'it is not to be doubted that [Haggard's] South African romances filled many a young fellow with longing to go into the wide open spaces of those lands and see the marvels for himself'.<sup>66</sup> Aware of his

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<sup>63</sup> MacDonald, *The Language of Empire*, p.210

<sup>64</sup> Green, *Dreams of Adventure*, p.3.

<sup>65</sup> Morton N. Cohen, *Rider Haggard: His Life and Works* (New York, Walker, 1961), p.179.

<sup>66</sup> Horace G. Hutchinson, 'Review of *The Days of My Life*', as quoted in W.R. Katz, *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire: A Critical Study of British Imperial Fiction* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2010), p.1; H. Rider Haggard wrote many adventure novels set in Africa notably *King Solomon's Mines*

intended audience, Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* is dedicated 'To all the big and little boys who read it', and as Mackenzie argues, many publishers aware of the lure of the adventure story chose to produce narratives 'not according to class background or educational attainment, but according to sex'.<sup>67</sup> The sharp division between boy's and girl's literature, he argues became the norm, providing the opportunity to relate the patriotic-imperial ideology to a sexual stereotype: 'aggressive individualistic adventure for boys [and] submissive domestic service and child-rearing for girls'.<sup>68</sup> It can also be argued that as most working-class girls contributed to the domestic responsibilities within the home, it was important for them to receive influential and appropriate models and advice. I will turn to the question of how successful the missionary biographies were in providing these ideals in Chapter Eight, but for now, it is important to consider the division between boy and girl readers.

### The boy reader and books for boys

Action and adventure stories were associated with boy readers. Lisa Honaker in her discussion of the shifting character of Victorian boys' fiction, for example, explains that 'the "romances of adventure" which subordinated character to action and often located that action in exotic settings, defined a genre aesthetically and ideologically at odds with nineteenth-century domestic realism'.<sup>69</sup> Honaker goes on to explain that this 'fiction

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(London, Cassell, 1887) and *She: A History of Adventure* (London, Longmans, 1887) which was first serialised in *The Graphic*; The adventure story was also an important aspect of the increasingly popular periodicals including *B.O.P.* (1879) and *Boys of the British Empire* (1882) and viewed as antidotes to the poisonous Penny Dreadfuls.

<sup>67</sup> Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, Dedication; Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.202.

<sup>68</sup> Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.202.

<sup>69</sup> Lisa Honaker, "'One Man to Rely On': Long John Silver: And the Shifting Character of Victorian Boys' Fiction", *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 34.1 (2004), p.27.

made the empire attractive to its readership and described those aspects of character-of manhood-needed to serve it'.<sup>70</sup> Boys adventure stories celebrated manliness and Christian self-sacrifice as a virtue, but as Kimberley Reynolds argues 'boys literature did not only define manliness but also produced a reader who accepts the definition'.<sup>71</sup> Many adventure books focused on the role of the masculine hero within an imperial setting and assured readers that with exploration and conquest as its defining symbols, through adventure the great masculine rite of passage was experienced.<sup>72</sup>

Empire featured prominently in the literature produced for boys and was presented in a way that was intended to inspire confidence and interest in empire but also gave examples of manly and patriotic heroic characters. Many of the characters produced by the effusive fictional adventure stories and magazines promoted the superiority of the British male character, and illustrate, as Robert MacDonald in his article *Signs from the Imperial Quarter* argues, 'three typical characteristics of imperial ideology'.<sup>73</sup> These he suggests include the mythologizing of history, the use of the language of power, and a theory of racial superiority, but critically they also set in place an 'assertive image of virile manhood'.<sup>74</sup> The messages within the narratives were clearly effectual as the responses to a competition in *Chums* magazine which invited boys to answer: 'ARE YOU PROUD TO BE A BRITON?' produced the following sample from the very positive replies: 'Yes! Because the chief characteristic of a Briton

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p.28.

<sup>71</sup> Kimberley Reynolds, *Girls Only? Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910* (New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), p.53.

<sup>72</sup> MacDonald, *The Language of Empire*, pp.209-210.

<sup>73</sup> Robert H. MacDonald, 'Signs from the Imperial Quarter: Illustrations in Chums, 1892-1914', *Children's Literature*, 16 (1988), p.35.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*



is his untiring energy and indomitable courage... Yes! Because Britain has an empire on which the sun never sets' while another contestant declared: 'For we have a past studded with glorious deeds'.<sup>75</sup> The narratives, however, also offered boys an awareness and sense of their heritage, and provided children with heroic examples who processed manly virtues that could almost be read as manuals for manliness. As Reynolds summarises this 'magnification' led to a construction of heroes who were 'more loyal, more patriotic, more cunning, more masterful and more reticent than ever before'.<sup>76</sup> Returning to Anderson's imagined community, boy readers through the construction of the male hero within the narratives were invited to imagine national, cultural and social belonging. But what about the girls?

#### The girl reader and books for girls

It is important to consider the narratives produced for girl readers. Books and magazines intended for girl readers often echoed the sentiments of conduct manuals and advice books which promoted an idealised womanhood, acting as Reynolds suggests 'no more than handbooks for good behaviour loosely held together by an unexciting story'.<sup>77</sup> Judith Rowbotham in her tellingly titled *Good Girls Make Good Wives* argues that females were largely excluded from the adventure story until well into the twentieth century.<sup>78</sup> When women were included, they merely served to reinforce a more 'robust version of the domestic ideal'.<sup>79</sup> While this may be true of plotlines, there is some

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<sup>75</sup> As quoted in Dunae, 'Boy's Literature', p.112.

<sup>76</sup> Reynolds, *Girls Only*, p.59.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93.

<sup>78</sup> Judith Rowbotham, *Good Girls Make Good Wives: Guidance for Girls in Victorian Fiction* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1989).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.266 & p.187.

evidence that girls were viewed as important consumers of adventure stories. Although the protagonist remained male, according to John Peck, after 1880 'the adventure story acquired fresh energy, reached out in new directions and began to appeal to a much broader audience than just boys'.<sup>80</sup> Salmon's survey of 'What Girl's Read' in 1886 acknowledged that many books were not read according to prescribed gendered confines and that the *Boy's Own Paper* (BOP), as an example, was:

...studied by thousands of girls. The explanation is that they can get in boys' books what they cannot get in the majority of their own-a stirring plot and lively movement. Probably as many girls as boys have read *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, *Sanford and Merton*...One lady writes to me: 'When I was younger, I always preferred Jules Verne and Ballantyne.'<sup>81</sup>

By this period, as women's roles and opportunities had begun to change, so too had ideas about the nature and content of books suitable for girls to read.<sup>82</sup> A poll in 1884 based on boys' and girls' reading by the publisher and bibliophile Charles Welsh, indicated that Dickens and Walter Scott were amongst the favourites with very little

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<sup>80</sup> John Peck, *Maritime Fiction: Sailors and the Sea in British and American Novels, 1719-1917* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p.151.

<sup>81</sup> Salmon, 'What Girl's Read', p.524; R.M. Ballantyne, *Coral Island: A Tale of the Pacific Ocean* (London, Nelson & Sons, 1858) was based upon the civilising effect of Christianity and the effects missionaries could have upon the savage heathen native as Ralph the narrator prompts 'God Bless and prosper the missionaries till they get a footing in every island', p.240.

<sup>82</sup> Fictional stories featuring strong female characters by authors such as L.T. Meade and Bessie Marchant became hugely popular. Bessie Marchant, for example, was described in the *Daily Chronicle*, 1923 'as the girls' Henty'. Marchant penned at least 150 girls adventure stories and her writing can according to Richard Phillips be compared to 'British Victorian writers such as Mary Kingsley and Isabella Bird, whose travel and adventure narratives gave girls and women the opportunity to go where few (of their generation) had been before-to far-off lands and seas.'; Richard Phillips, *Mapping Men and Empire: A Geography of Adventure* (London, Routledge, 1997), p.91; At the turn of the century L.T. Meade appeared on the cover of over 250 novels mostly written for girls.

reference to fiction written specifically for girls.<sup>83</sup> This trend was again highlighted by Salmon in his later work *Juvenile Literature As It Is* (1888), where the attraction of the boys' adventure stories to female readers was discussed.<sup>84</sup> Salmon included a letter from 'a young lady', who wrote that 'A great many girls never read so called "girls' books" at all: they prefer those presumably written for boys. Girls as a rule don't care for Sunday-School twaddle; they like a good stirring story, with a plot and some incident and adventure'.<sup>85</sup> The need for girls to have access to 'a good stirring story, with a plot and some incident and adventure' was certainly recognised by authors and publishers who became increasingly aware of the profitability of such books and acted accordingly.<sup>86</sup> Moving away from the traditional male-centred storyline, authors began to provide girl readers with their own adventurous heroines who were promoted as active and sensible, and as Julia Bush has argued in her study of Edwardian ladies 'offered important meanings to women who wished to share in the self-congratulatory adventure'.<sup>87</sup>

This new breed of adventure stories did, however, conform to conventional and regulated modes of femininity, which championed familial and often passive characteristics of patience, purity and devotion often set against the physical attributes of male heroism. In 1899 an article in *Current Literature* suggested that morals should be introduced indirectly into fictional works, allowing boys to intuitively recognise the qualities behind the heroes of adventure fiction, while girls would be stirred by feminine

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<sup>83</sup> Charles Welsh, 'Books for the Young' as quoted in Alec Ellis, *A History of Children's Reading and Literature* (Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1968), p.72.

<sup>84</sup> Edward Salmon, *Juvenile Literature as It Is* (London, Henry J. Drane, 1888), p.29.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.29; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, p.2; *The Girl's Realm* (1898-1915), for example, was clearly interested in developing a readership that was both contemporary and modern, rejecting mid-Victorian ideals of femininity by depicting its female protagonists as educated and feminine but who were also deemed heroic.

stories of ‘sweetness and innocence in charming profusion’.<sup>88</sup> G.A. Henty, for example, famous for his adventure books for boys, wrote several stories for *The Girl’s Realm* (a magazine aimed at young female readers) focusing upon the female heroine who, without compromising her essential femininity, exhibited all the heroic qualities usually associated with male heroes.<sup>89</sup> Such stories were also key to providing space for discussing issues felt to be relevant to all female readers. This, however, meant that many authors felt it important to stress differences between the sexes when it came to heroism. Mabie’s *Heroines That Every Child Should Know* described ‘women who have shown heroic courage, heroic patience, and heroic devotion’ as outranking men.<sup>90</sup> Mabie, however, is almost obligated to promote the heroism of ‘men whose deeds have had their inspiration in physical bravery, who have led splendid charges in full view of the world, who have achieved miracles of material construction in canal or railroad, or the reclaiming of barbarous lands to the uses of civilization’.<sup>91</sup> Mabie concluded by reiterating the domestic heroism of women and stated: ‘In a true scale of heroic living and doing women must be counted more heroic than men’.<sup>92</sup>

As discussed earlier, in his 1888 survey Salmon revealed that girls were often ‘bored with books written for them and as a solution recommended that they be supplied with some of the increasing number of biographies’.<sup>93</sup> The biographies of great women is a subject discussed in detail by Rosemary Mitchell who suggests that ‘the

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<sup>88</sup> Anne H. Lundin, ‘Victorian Horizons: The Reception of Children’s Books in England and America, 1880-1900’, *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, 64.1 (1994), p.43.

<sup>89</sup> Kristine Moruzi, ‘Feminine Bravery: The Girl’s Realm (1898–1915) and the Second Boer War’, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, 34.3 (2009), p.241.

<sup>90</sup> Mabie’s *Heroines That Every Child Should Know*, p.x.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Edward Salmon, ‘What Girl’s Read’, p.527.

opportunities offered by picturesque historiography to write the history of marginalized constituencies into the national narrative' was by the mid-nineteenth century 'seized by women writers ...mainly in the form of biographies of prominent, usually royal, women'.<sup>94</sup> Included in these works were the 'Strickland sisters' *The Lives of the Queens of England* (1840) and *The Lives of the Queens of Scotland* (1850-8).<sup>95</sup>

Educationalists and interested parties believed that suitable reading material would act as a reference point guiding the reader towards moral principles and appropriate social behaviours, which many commentators felt were lacking particularly amongst working-class girls. Providing reading material suitable for working-class girls was the objective of the *Girls Own Paper (GOP)*, 1881, which presented 'certain rules' that it argued 'belong as much to the young girls of the working class as to those in a higher position. Furthermore, that they are positively essential to their morals and preservation'.<sup>96</sup> Within the same edition in 'Answers to Correspondents', it is stated that it 'is intended for all classes, and we try to supply something that may be suitable to every reader in each number'.<sup>97</sup> Included within their publication were articles and stories based on the heroic female protagonist.

### Conclusion

In *Heroes and Heroism*, Barbara Korte and Stefanie Lethbridge argue that the Victorian period saw a 'proliferation and pluralisation of heroic concepts'.<sup>98</sup> This chapter has highlighted how the hero and ideas of hero worship were successfully deployed within

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<sup>94</sup> Rosemary Mitchell, *Picturing the Past: English History in Text and Image, 1830-1870* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2000), p.141.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *GOP*, 1881.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Korte & Lethbridge, 'Introduction: Heroes and Heroism', p.17.

children's literature to provide working-class children with moral exemplars definitively linked to ideas of British superiority, character formation and self-help which coalesced into an imperially inflected patriotism. By considering the representation of the hero both male and female, it has laid the foundation for the following chapter which will discuss the importance of the missionary biographies and their use of the adventure story formula. In 1897 Geraldina Stock asked girls to forgive her as she had 'told them so little about women heroes or heroines' which highlights an important factor within this thesis namely who were the missionary women.<sup>99</sup> The following chapter aims to answer this question by illustrating through a detailed examination of the representation of the male and female missionary, how the biographies dispensed clear imperial ideas and moral and social values. It will conclude with a section introducing missionaries James Hannington and Mary Slessor and a summary of their biographies which were frequently used by the Sunday schools and who will feature throughout Part Two of this thesis.

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<sup>99</sup> Geraldina Stock, *Missionary Heroes of Africa* (London, LMS, 1897), p.3.

## CHAPTER FOUR

‘Adventures of our missionary heroes are equal in thrilling interest to any Jack the Giant-Killer or Blue-beard’s doings’ - The Missionary Biography

The greatest adventurers of all are the missionaries. Have you ever considered the fact of the large number of really great missionaries, missionaries whose lives are upon our shelves, who felt the lure of this continent? Moffat, Livingstone, Mackenzie, Grout, Coillard, Hannington, Stewart, Mackay, Pilkington, Laws, Grenfell, Good, Lapsley, Mary Slessor - what a list!<sup>1</sup>

This quotation from Cornelius Patton’s *Lure of Africa* (1917) a book which he stated provides ‘the unusual chance to interest the young people’ offers some indication of the number of missionaries whose names were common to early twentieth-century readers.<sup>2</sup> J.S. Bratton in her article ‘Of England, Home and Duty’ provides a useful starting point for this chapter in her argument that children who attained a basic level of literacy were accessible through the telling of a good story.<sup>3</sup> This is also argued by Steven Mintz in his *Prison of Expectations* who states that the Victorians believed that self-improvement, respectability and even entertainment could be obtained at home through the written word.<sup>4</sup> The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed analysis of the missionary biographies and offer examples of how working-class children were targeted

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<sup>1</sup> Cornelius H. Patton, *The Lure of Africa* (New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1917), p.29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Bratton, ‘Of England, Home and Duty’, p.76.

<sup>4</sup> Steven Mintz, *A Prison of Expectations: The Family in Victorian culture* (New York, New York U.P., 1985), p.22 as quoted in Moss, *Manliness and Militarism*, p.71.

for moral and social education through biographies of popular missionary heroes in the form of prize books and rewards which were intended to shape moral standards and character, and provide ‘a common frame of reference and a shared set of norms and aspirations’.<sup>5</sup> This chapter will discuss the use of the biographies in keeping with Smiles’s ideology that: ‘Even the humblest person, who sets before his fellows an example of industry, sobriety, and upright honesty of purpose in life, has a present as well as a future influence upon the well-being of his country’.<sup>6</sup> It will consider how the biographies relied upon a familiar plot and believable heroes measured with equal doses of adventure, and as Craig suggests, the most interesting aspect for the reader is their ‘anecdotes of life on the edge of imperial expansion, on the edge of Christianity, on the edge of law and “civilized” control’.<sup>7</sup> These features, Bernice Cullinan suggests, helped children absorb quest tales ‘into the bloodstream’ but also as we shall see, dispensed clear imperial ideas and reinforced dominant gender constructs in an attempt to turn ‘the rising generation in the right road for good citizenship’.<sup>8</sup> In their quest to entertain and ‘channel the energies of boys into approved directions’, which included important ideas of gender and race, Christianity and Anglo-Saxonism, they also, as Edward Said has argued affirmed the ‘superlative values of white (i.e. English) civilization’.<sup>9</sup>

The chapter examines how the cultural construction of the missionary as an ‘imperial hero’ offered readers, thrills and adventure associated with sensational fiction and promoted qualities regarded by society as crucial for children to cultivate. This will

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22-23.

<sup>6</sup> Smiles, *Self-Help*, p.39.

<sup>7</sup> Craig, *The Missionary Lives*, p.23.

<sup>8</sup> Bernice E. Cullinan, *Literature and the Child* (San Diego, Harcourt Brace, 1989), p.306; Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, p.363.

<sup>9</sup> Richards, ‘Introduction’, p.4; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, Vintage, 1994), p.121.



allow for some understanding of how the biographies played an important part in the process of socially engineering young readers in aspects of individual self-help and character formation. It will consider representations of the male missionary who confirmed and bolstered British character and behaviour by offering ‘prescriptions for how boys ought to behave in an idealized adult world’.<sup>10</sup> This will be followed by an analysis of the representation of the female missionary which included both wives and single women. A brief analysis of alternative readings and attempts made to counteract any negativity will follow, and it will conclude with an account of James Hannington and Mary Slessor whose life stories play a crucial role in Part Two of this thesis.

While it is vital not to marginalise the religious belief and spirituality of the missionaries under discussion, it is important at this point to consider the complex relationship between the missionary enterprise and imperialism. Bishop Tucker, for example, writing in 1911 clearly outlined the position of Christianity over the civilising mission: ‘it cannot be too often or too strongly insisted upon that the first work of a Christian Mission is to Christianize, not simply civilize. Christianity can never be evolved out of civilization. Civilization in its best sense, follows in the wake of Christianity’.<sup>11</sup> Much scholarly debate exists over the relationship between missionaries and imperialism. Andrew Porter in *Religion versus Empire*, for example, explores this relationship and states that the possibility remains that ‘missionaries might not advocate empire, but were often associated with institutions and beliefs identified ... with

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<sup>10</sup> Peter J. Hugill, ‘Imperialism and Manliness in Edwardian Boys’ Novels’, *Ecumene*, 6.3 (1999), p.320.

<sup>11</sup> Bishop A. Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda and East Africa* (London, Edward Arnold, 1911), p.47; Although many missionaries were working in areas outside the formal bounds of the British empire this thesis is concerned with how their stories were routinely modified by biographers to promote their protagonist as a crusading imperial hero.

imperialism'.<sup>12</sup> Brian Stanley in *The Bible and the Flag* takes a different stance, arguing that in the eyes of missionaries the British Empire was ephemeral and the Kingdom of God eternal, and that 'Christian belief in divine providence goes a long way towards explaining why most missionaries and their supporters accepted imperialism as a general historical process, but the converse of their belief in providence was their unrelenting insistence on moral and spiritual responsibility'.<sup>13</sup> While Stanley does offer a strong argument for the complexity of the missionary relationship to imperialism, his forthright absolution of missionaries from the imperial quest, opens as many questions as it answers. This thesis, concords with Norman Etherington's view that the relationship 'was a two-edged sword that could undercut as well as sustain domination' but argues that the biographies as we will now see were an important conduit to promote ideas of an 'imagined community' to children through notions of British imperial, moral and religious superiority.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2004), p.316; Brian Stanley has also acknowledged the complicated relationship of missionaries to imperialism 'Current understandings of what imperialism is have been shaped as much by theory as by practice, and the continued existence of competing theories of imperialism is sure evidence that the "facts" of imperial history are too complex to allow any one monolithic interpretation to gain universal academic acceptance'; Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missionaries and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, Apollo, 1990), p.50.

<sup>13</sup> Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag*, p.70; Thomas Beidelman has also argued that 'Christian missions represent the most naive and ethnocentric and ...most thoroughgoing facet of colonial life...Pursuing this sustained policy of change, missionaries demonstrated a more radical and morally intense commitment to rule than political administrators or business men'; Thomas O. Beidelman, *Colonial Evangelism: A Socio-Historical Study of an East African Mission at the Grassroots* (Bloomington, Indiana U.P., 1982), pp.5-6.

<sup>14</sup> Norman Etherington, 'Recent Trends in the Historiography of Christianity in Southern Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 22.2 (1996), p.201; Abdul R. JanMohamed, explains the role of the missionary narratives was to 'justify imperial occupation and exploitation' whilst demonstrating that 'the barbarism of the native is irrevocable, or at least very ingrained, then the European's attempt to civilise him can continue indefinitely...and persist in enjoying a position of moral superiority'; Abdul R. JanMohamed, 'The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature', *Critical Inquiry*, 12, 1 (1985), p.62; The attitude of the RTS, publisher of many missionary biographies and the *Boy's Own Paper*, towards imperialism was clearly expressed at an assembly in 1881 where the keynote of the meeting was entitled 'What is True Imperialism?' which suggested 'true imperialism involved the salvation of heathen souls'; *Religious Tract Society Record*, No.18 (1881) as

### The importance of the missionary biography

The 1860 'Conference of Missions' held at Liverpool highlighted the importance of using missionary literature as an 'abundant and powerful channel of information'.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, delegates reported that 'incidents of missions and missionary travels, their scenes of strange lands and stranger races of men and children [were] the very subjects to play around youthful imaginations, and by their rich, pictorial impressiveness, reach their hearts'.<sup>16</sup> This idea was again discussed by A.R. Buckland in 1871.<sup>17</sup> Author of numerous missionary and religious publications Buckland felt it 'desirable...to set before children an ideal of self-sacrifice, honour, or conscientiousness, which, though possible, is higher than the common level, for thus their own aims are raised, and they learn to judge themselves and their own actions by a high standard'.<sup>18</sup> In 1888, Edward Salmon argued in his essay *Literature as It Is* that 'a child need not become a milksop because he has been taught to admire and observe that which is good' and suggested he read about the 'God-fearing courage of a Gordon... not the ignoble daring of a Ned Kelly'.<sup>19</sup> Salmon also suggested that 'only the most jealous regard to a boy's or girl's mental food will give him or her moral armour capable of resisting the insidious

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quoted in Patrick A. Dunae, 'Boys' Literature and the Idea of Empire', *Victorian Studies*, 24.1 (1980), p.108.

<sup>15</sup> *Conference on Missions* (London, James Nisbet, 1860), p.154.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*; Similarly, the *Missionary Year-book for 1889* reminded readers that 'our literature missionary literature with its fascinating details of biography and adventure, should have a place among the book-treasures in every Christian home. The names of those men and women...in the missionary field should be familiar as household words'; *The Missionary Year-book for 1889* (London, RTS, 1889) reproduced at: [http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook/The\\_Missionary\\_Year-Book\\_for\\_1889\\_1000502304#1](http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook/The_Missionary_Year-Book_for_1889_1000502304#1) accessed on 23 August 2014, p.13.

<sup>17</sup> *Golden Hours*, 1871.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Salmon, *Juvenile Literature*, p.237.

encroachments of depravity'.<sup>20</sup> The missionary hero was viewed as the perfect antidote to the 'ignoble...Ned Kelly' and the 'insidious encroachments of depravity'.<sup>21</sup>

In light of concerns already discussed, by 1902 it was clear that the missionary biography was perceived by those interested in promoting the missionary and the missionary cause as an ideal antidote: 'If hearing or reading of some of our present day pernicious literature can produce hooligans and ruffians, why should not the story of a Chalmers, a Livingstone, or a Gilmour produce in after days brave, enthusiastic workers in heathen lands?'.<sup>22</sup> By encompassing values of patriotism, manliness, courage and superiority the biographies provided moral inspiration through exemplary acts, and stories surrounding British missionary heroes provided children with examples of moral, racial, and physical supremacy. Consequently, the biographies became valuable educational assets and as John Wolffe in *God and Greater Britain* claims the 'Sunday Schools guaranteed its continuing promotion'.<sup>23</sup>

In a paper given by Miss J.M. Baggallie of the LMS in 1902 'How to Interest Children in Foreign Missions' it was proposed that 'those of us who have any practical knowledge of little children must have grasped...that a child's interests and sympathies are easily aroused'.<sup>24</sup> This she believed could be achieved by 'telling a good story of far-away brothers and sisters who are ready to perish', suggesting 'that some of the experiences and adventures of our missionary heroes are equal in thrilling interest to any

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain: Religion and National Life in Britain and Ireland, 1843-1945* (London, Routledge, 1994), p.224; For further reading see: Gillian Avery, *Childhood's Pattern: A Study of the Heroes and Heroines of Children's Fiction, 1770-1950* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1975).

<sup>24</sup> Miss J.M. Baggallie, 'How to Interest Children in Foreign Missions', *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, (1902), p.275.

Jack the Giant-Killer or Blue-beard's doings'.<sup>25</sup> By drawing on the motifs of the classic British fairy-tale Jack the Giant-Killer, the author assumed that children had a prior knowledge of the fairy-tale and that stories about the missionary hero could evoke the same interest, thereby uniting the courage of the fairy-tale hero with the missionary: 'A boy or girl who is allowed to grow up without knowing the names of Livingstone or Moffat, of Carey and Morrison, Gilmour and Chalmers, and all the splendid host of missionary pioneers and martyrs, has been deprived of the most precious part of its heritage as a child of Christendom'.<sup>26</sup> Although Balgarnie does mention the 'far-away brothers and sisters' her examples of 'pioneers and martyrs' are all men. While Salmon in his 1888 article clearly saw the biographies as suitable for boys and girls, Martha Hixon author of *Missions in the Sunday School* (1906) took a different stance.<sup>27</sup> Hixon believed there existed a clear distinction between what boys and girls liked to read, and suggested that it is necessary to keep in mind a 'double viewpoint, since boys and girls apparently take different views of life'.<sup>28</sup> Boys she argued 'seek masculinity, as shown in adventure, heroic deeds, and those features which picture life in action', while girls are 'attracted and influenced by a presentation of the needs of the field, especially the conditions existing among women and children...and in fact any of those things which contain sentiment and tend to arouse sympathy'.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.255.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p.iii; Martha B. Hixon, *Missions in the Sunday School: A Manual of Methods* (New York, Young Peoples Missionary Movement, 1906).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*; Hixon suggests the lessons can be made more interesting by including 'many accessories, such as maps, charts, chalk talks, pictures, curios, and the like'. p.32; Hixon also recommended a vast amount of material for the Sunday School library.

This was very much in keeping with the fictional adventure stories and their inherent relationship with men. Green, for example, argues that adventure:

...belongs to men (and vice versa) for the profoundest of reasons. Adventure is the name for experience beyond the law, or on the very frontier of civilization. At least, adventure is the high-spirited way of naming that experience and suggests the feeling of power that can go with it.<sup>30</sup>

The importance of the missionary biography and how it used 'high adventure and heroic romance' to stimulate children's 'mental hunger as well as their emotional interest' was discussed by Mathews in his introduction to *Yarns on African Pioneers*.<sup>31</sup> Mathews explained that this was a book of short biographies 'not intended, of course, to go into the hands of the boys, but is for the use of the leader' and suggested that '...just at an age when the new emotions of hero-worship, space hunger, and sex instinct are bringing these boys into a new world, the heroic missionary material is ideally fitted for drawing out high emotions and interests, and lifting them toward a clean, unselfish and courageous manhood'.<sup>32</sup> Included were several suggestions at the beginning of each *Yarn* for 'drawing the boys out by questions'.<sup>33</sup> One recommendation based upon missionary Alexander MacKay, for example, titled 'The boy who could turn his hand to anything' suggested that leaders 'open the conversation with the boys by asking what they want to be when men'.<sup>34</sup> And explained that a 'considerable proportion of Brigade

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<sup>30</sup> Green, *Seven Types*, p.3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3; Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, pp.3-4.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48.

boys and Scouts would like to do skilled work with their hands. This fact, intensified by the boy's universal passion for railway engines, gives the point of contact that brings them into immediate sympathy with the boy Mackay'.<sup>35</sup> As we will discuss in detail later in this study, the narrative was often accompanied by a detailed illustration which reinforced the messages. Here the following illustration of Mackay (Figure 4) in Padwick's, *Mackay of the Great Lake* (1917) was used effectively to accompany the text and highlight Mackay's skills:

Mtesa and his chiefs were delighted to have a man-of-all-work, and brought their broken treasures to be mended or their hoes to be sharpened. Mackay was glad to make friends by means of his clever hands, for he wanted to win a hearing for his message.<sup>36</sup>

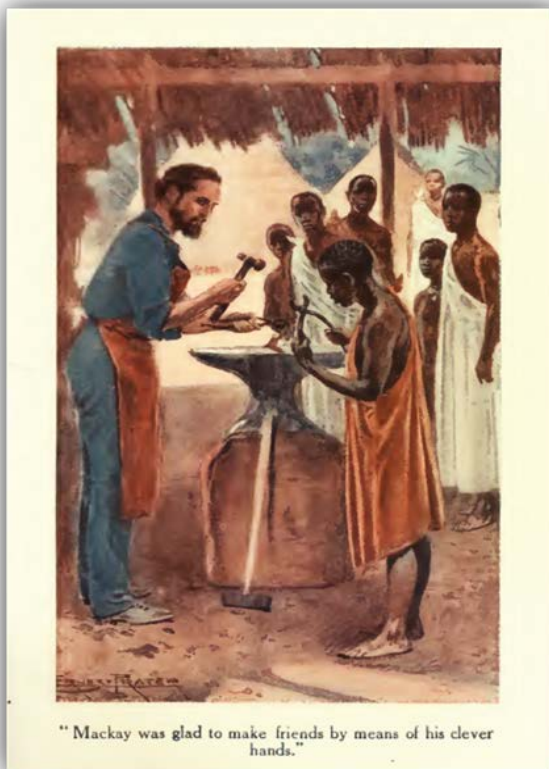


Figure 4 'Mackay was glad to make friends by means of his clever hands'; Padwick, *Mackay of the Great Lake*, p.66.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Constance E. Padwick, *Mackay of the Great Lake* (London, Oxford U.P., 1917), p.66.

Just as biographies of male missionary heroes were purported to provide boys with a model which defined and reinforced several important cultural values and ideologies, so too did those that related to women. Discussion also took place within the Sunday school organisation; Fahs, for example, in her article on the use of the missionary biography, suggested that the ‘study of biography is social in its effect, because it takes the child out of himself and loses him in the life and experience of another’, although it is suggestive that she used the male reader as her example.<sup>37</sup> Biographies based upon heroic missionary women who displayed (through a religious necessity) moral and physical strength, some element of independence, and who importantly retained their femininity were in a position to fill this gap.<sup>38</sup> Appearing as single life stories and memoirs, or, more commonly as collective biographies, they were designed to offer girl readers adventurous stories that also served to promote and endorse assumed gender roles and traits of national character.

As an example, recognising the ‘enormous value of the services which have been rendered to missionary work by women’, Edwin Hodder author of *Conquests of the Cross* (1890), explained ‘that in hardly any other sphere has Christianity drawn forth the womanliness of woman, with all her abounding wealth of influence, and all the depths of her heroism, more than in the missionary life’.<sup>39</sup> This was also discussed by Daniel

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<sup>37</sup> Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography’, p.366.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Creegan highlights this combination of adventure and real life within his Introduction to *Great Missionaries of the Church* ‘This volume combines the excellences of the spirited story of adventure, and the graphic biography of real men and women. What more happy combination could be found?’; Charles C. Creegan, *Great Missionaries of the Church* (New York, T.Y. Crowell, 1895), p.x.

<sup>39</sup> Hodder, *Conquests of the Cross*, p.38; Diffendorfer in his article on missionary education in the Sunday school also suggested that ‘Stories of the physical and moral heroism’ would incite the pupil’s admiration and emulation’; Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education*, p.308.



Wise in *Our Missionary Heroes and Heroines* (1884) who argued that ‘It looks like a perilous work for single young women to leave their native land, and sail thousands of miles to a strange and trying climate, to live with a strange people for the sole purpose of telling them the old, old story of the blessed Redeemer’s love for the souls of men and women’.<sup>40</sup> Wise continued by suggesting that while ‘it is a very great thing for any young lady to undertake’, it also ‘requires great faith, much love, rare courage, and genuine loyalty to Christ and to the perishing heathen for whom he died. But great as are the sacrifices this holy work demands, this “Women’s Foreign Missionary Society” has never lacked accomplished young women willing to undertake it’.<sup>41</sup> Biographies based on women also used the adventure story format. Women who, to use Green’s term, were working on the ‘frontier of civilization’ appeared with colourful titles like *Missionary Heroines of the Cross: True Stories of the Splendid Courage and Patient Endurance of Missionaries in Their Encounters with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts and the Forces of Nature in All Parts of the World* (1912) and *The White Queen of Okoyong: A True Story of Adventure Heroism and Faith* (1915).<sup>42</sup> Biographers used the adventure story formula to promote female bravery and sacrifice, but this was, as will be illustrated later in this thesis, done in such a way that they did not challenge the male missionaries’ authority or any question of their femininity.

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<sup>40</sup> Daniel Wise, *Our Missionary Heroes and Heroines; Heroic Deeds Done in Methodist Missionary Fields* (New York, Hunt & Eaton, 1893), pp.238-239.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Green, *Seven Types*, p.3; Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross: True Stories of the Splendid Courage and Patient True Stories of the Splendid Courage and Patient Endurance of Missionaries in Their Encounters with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts and the Forces of Nature in All Parts of the World* (London, Seeley, 1912); W.P. Livingstone, *The White Queen of Okoyong: A True Story of Adventure Heroism and Faith* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1915).

It must be remembered, however, that the biographies were produced as tools for the recruitment of future missionaries. Lambert's *Missionary Heroes in Africa* (1909), for instance, clearly illustrated this intention:

It is his hoped, nevertheless, that some of those into whose hands this book may come will be induced by what they read to make fuller acquaintance with the lives and aims of our missionary heroes, and so will catch something of that spirit which led them to face innumerable dangers, toils, and trials among heathen and often savage peoples, whether in the frozen North or the burning South, whether in the hidden depths of some vast continent or among the scattered 'islands of the ocean seas'.<sup>43</sup>

Recruitment was also the subject of an article written in 1917 by Ruth Rouse educational secretary of the Missionary Council who was described as 'one of the most influential women in the international Christian community'.<sup>44</sup> Rouse discussed the reasons for choosing missionary work as a vocation, and explained that while a 'child's missionary purpose is sometimes the result of a passing fancy: its motive is often trifling or fantastic, a desire to travel, or "to see wild beasts and bright birds"'.<sup>45</sup> Many she argued respond 'to a direct appeal made by a Sunday school teacher...Missionary stories, missionary pictures and games and missionary boxes, have all played their

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<sup>43</sup> John C. Lambert, *Missionary Heroes in Africa, True Stories of the Intrepid Bravery and Stirring Adventures of Missionaries with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts and the Forces of Nature in all Parts of the World* (London, Seeley, 1909), p.8.

<sup>44</sup> *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York, Macmillan, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> Ruth Rouse, 'A Study of Missionary Vocation', *International Review of Mission*, 6.2 (1917), p.249.

part'.<sup>46</sup> In a section 'Call Through Literature' Rouse explained how: 'Biography, however, is more fruitful than any other kind of literature in calling out missionaries. Carey, Emily Judson, Fidelia Fiske...are but a few examples of those whose call came through missionary biography'.<sup>47</sup> Records of candidates to the CMS attest this view, John Edward Church born in August 1899, was asked to the question 'Of what class of books has your reading chiefly consisted? Mention any books secular or religious that you have read recently'.<sup>48</sup> He answered 'I have read many missionary books, I think the life of Harold Starr of the N.W. Frontier was one I valued most. Dr. Grenfell's book on Labrador left a great impression on me of the adventurous and sporting side of missionary work'.<sup>49</sup> Ronald Heywood from Derbyshire, born in 1904 and described as a 'Schoolboy, 6<sup>th</sup> Form' wrote that 'since I was about 12, I have always wanted to go and help the many sufferers abroad, of whom I had heard and read a great deal at missionary meetings and in missionary magazines'.<sup>50</sup> Edward Church's answer to the question about books he had recently read described the 'adventurous and sporting side of missionary life', which was an aspect fervently endorsed within the biographies.

Before discussing representations of the male and female missionaries, it will be useful to consider the adventure story format and show how it was adapted by biographers of missionary heroes to prescribed recipes which appealed to what reception

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*; The CMS *Monthly Missionary Letter to Sunday Schools* (1899-1902), for example, was published with 'a view to their being useful for reading from the Sunday School Desk, or in the Sunday School class, or for distribution among the young'; *Monthly Missionary Letter to Sunday Schools* as quoted in The Missionary Periodicals Database reproduced at <https://divdl.library.yale.edu/misionperiodicals/viewdetail.aspx?id=161> accessed 13 April 2016; Also see Appendix A.

<sup>47</sup> Rouse, 'A Study of Missionary Vocation', p.249.

<sup>48</sup> *Candidates Papers*, Section III - Central Records, CMS Archives, University of Birmingham.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, C/ATM2/41.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, C/ATM2/19.

theorists term the readers 'horizon of expectation'.<sup>51</sup> Craig clearly outlines this understanding:

The writers, readers and subjects of missionary lives were very close in their expectations of each other. The readers were the constituency that had produced and that continued to support the missionary: the writer provided a report of the missionary's progress, measured against the readers' expectations. The missionary and the writer (often either together or separately) attempted to encourage further support and to stimulate readers to come forward themselves as missionaries. This triangle holds true across both biography and autobiography, and there is no profit in insisting on genre differences in life writing of this kind which so strongly avoids any element of fiction and which depends heavily on the sincerity of the original 'pacte'.<sup>52</sup>

Adventure stories - whether written exclusively for boys or girls, or read by readers of both sexes - were effective because they followed 'certain archetypal patterns', which John Cawelti maintains were 'embodied in specific images themes, and symbols that are current in particular cultures and periods'.<sup>53</sup> If missionary biographers were to be successful in appropriating the adventure story to captivate the interest of their readers - which is one of the central contentions of this doctoral dissertation-they needed to use the familiar generic patterns of the adventure story to employ the experiences of the

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<sup>51</sup> For the notion of readers' expectations in Reader Response Theory, 'horizons of expectations' provide an understanding of how readers judge a literary text which is based upon their knowledge and assumptions about the genre and theme but are also based upon broader social conditions; This term was developed by German literary critic Hans Robert Jauss in his important works including *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception: Theory and History of Literature* (Brighton, Harvester,1982).

<sup>52</sup> Craig, *The Missionary Lives*, p. xvii.

<sup>53</sup> John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery & Romance: Formula Stories as Art & Popular Culture* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1976), p.30.

subject they described. It is therefore important for our purposes to consider more fully the narrative structure of the adventure story and how an ‘idealized self-image’ of the hero was conveyed to young readers.<sup>54</sup> Within *Deconstructing the Hero*, Margery Hourihan reflects upon this formula which she explains involves the white, male, British, American or European hero who leaves the civilised order of home with a view to venturing into the wilderness in pursuit of his goal.<sup>55</sup> The wilderness may be a forest, Africa or some other non-European part of the world but must lack the order and safety of home.<sup>56</sup> By encountering a series of difficulties, the hero is often threatened by dangerous opponents but because he is ‘strong, brave, resourceful, rational and determined to succeed’, he achieves his goal and returns home to be gratefully rewarded’.<sup>57</sup> To gain a greater understanding of the hero’s quest, role and power, the work of Joseph Campbell is particularly relevant.<sup>58</sup> The hero, Campbell argues, is ‘someone who has given his life to something bigger than oneself’, with his quest taking the form of ‘*separation-initiation-return*’.<sup>59</sup> The hero ventures ‘forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder [where] fabulous forces are there

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<sup>54</sup> Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p.54.

<sup>55</sup> Margery Hourihan, *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children’s Literature* (London, Routledge, 1997). pp.9-10.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*; Although not directly associated with the adventure story, Colin Beard et al., have devised a useful template which relates to ‘adventure tourism’ but which can be redefined for understanding the activities and settings of the adventure story. 1) Physical activity, 2) Contact with nature, i.e. activities bringing contact with the natural world in general, or with specific wildlife, both taking place in the outdoors or wilderness, and, 3) Contact with different cultures, i.e. people, faith, lifestyles and 4) Journeys ...which are based in ‘remote unusual or exotic locations’; Colin Beard, John Swarbrooke, Suzanne Leckie & Gill Pomfret, eds., *Adventure Tourism: The New Frontier* (Hoboken, Taylor and Francis, 2012), p.17.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Novato, New World Library, 2008).

<sup>59</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth* (New York, Anchor, 1991), p.151; Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p.23.

encountered and a decisive victory is won [and] the hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man'.<sup>60</sup>

Although the heroic adventure story structure formed the basis for many biographies, biographers also drew on the ideas and format of the classic fairy-tale and nursery rhyme. Fairy tales were described by Salmon as 'engines for the propulsion of all virtues into the little mind in an agreeable form', and they were used by biographers to invigorate the narratives with examples of the strange and wondrous experiences encountered by the missionary hero.<sup>61</sup> Their use also allowed authors to remind children of the incorruptible authority, courage and attentiveness to duty of the British missionary, and to elevate his heroic status. Brian Street suggests that 'the creatures of fairyland were like the primitives, different from the knightly heroes, with unusual powers and customs and standards other than the reader's own'.<sup>62</sup> One missionary biographer to make use of such tropes was Charles Michael in his *Missionary Heroes* (1895), who explained that 'ENGLISHMEN are not generally found wanting in courage or enterprise' and incorporated a popular nursery rhyme to remind children that:

When there is a thing to be done, some Briton is sure to be found who will not rest until he has done it. Our old nursery rhyme tells us how the Ogre, sniffing the presence of a stranger in his grim domain, at once guessed the nationality of the bold intruder-

'Fee, fi, fo, fum!  
I smell the blood of an Englishman'.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p.23.

<sup>61</sup> Salmon, *Juvenile Literature*, p.157.

<sup>62</sup> Brian V. Street, *The Savage in Literature: Representations of 'Primitive' Society in English* (London, Routledge, 1975), p.20.

<sup>63</sup> Charles D., Michael, *Missionary Heroes: Stories of Heroism on the Missionary Field* (London, Partridge, 1895), p.88.

Similarly, the titles of books, chapters and illustrations employed inter-textual references to familiar fairy tales to captivate children's interest and sustain their attention. For example, A.B Lloyd's *In Dwarf Land and Cannibal Country* (1899) explained how:

Presently, upon looking up from my book, I became aware of a number of little faces peering at me through the thicket. Just in front of me was the trunk of a huge tree and around one side of it there peeped a tiny figure. For a moment I was completely taken aback; it was like being in fairyland and having visits paid to one by the fairies themselves.<sup>64</sup>

As was becoming a typical feature of such biographies at this time, this description was accompanied by an evocative illustration (Figure 5).<sup>65</sup>



Figure 5 'A Visit from the Dwarfs'; Lloyd, *In Dwarf Land and Cannibal Country*, p.309.

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<sup>64</sup> A.B. Lloyd, *In Dwarf Land and Cannibal Country: A Record of Travel and Discovery in Central Africa* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1899), p.309.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

Biographers used the adventure story format to provide children with tales of exciting and true adventure, one notable difference being that many missionaries died within the mission field rather than returning home to a hero's welcome. As we will discover in Chapter Nine, this was often adapted to promote and celebrate heroic self-sacrifice and martyrdom for the missionary cause. CMS author and teacher Constance E. Padwick (who will be discussed later in this thesis) explained in her 1917 article 'Children and Missionary Societies' that:

Myths and sagas and the tales of race heroes have come into the schoolroom, and the children may live in a veritable hall of heroes. The struggle for the existence of the missionary interest among other so enthralling has forced us to our storehouse of Christian hero-tales. Once there, we have discovered the value for boys and girls of contact with the selfless knights of missionary enterprise.<sup>66</sup>

What is clear, is that missionary societies and independent publishers were quick to appreciate the full potential of the missionary biographies of both males and females, particularly as they appealed to both educationalists and children for different yet complimentary reasons. For the time being, however, the discussion turns to the representation of the male and female missionary which will allow for an analysis of the authors and publishers and finally the biographies themselves.

Feeding the obsession with heroes and hero-worship, biographies based upon the Christian hero allowed authors to weave in *Boy's Own* - style stories of escapism,

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<sup>66</sup> Constance E. Padwick, 'Children and Missionary Societies in Great Britain', *International Review of Mission*, 6.4 (1917), p.571.



highlighting the subtle interfusion of fact and fiction and made more appealing by their claim of being both factual and true:

This is the age of enlightenment, and the presses of the missionary societies flood the world with interesting information, but there are those who will not read them...And yet the reports of missionary societies, and their periodicals, are filled with greater interest than the most fascinating romance, and have the advantage, or perhaps disadvantage, of being true. Perils by land, perils by sea, perils by robbers, perils by the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils among false brethren: in weariness, ... disappointments and successes: triumphs and abasements: all these and more are to be found.<sup>67</sup>

Although chief among their aims was to generate financial support (which will be discussed in Chapter Six), recruit future missionaries and justify the missionary enterprise, biographies based upon missionary heroes as we have seen, were also ideally positioned to provide examples of courage, achievement and daring adventure.<sup>68</sup> The biographies written for children incorporated all the values viewed by social commentators and educationalists and were promoted as an antidote to the perceived spiritual and social problems at home. The missionary hero epitomised the ideal of

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<sup>67</sup> *The Missionary Year-book for 1889*, p.13; It was only biographies that were published 'diaries, reports, letters, memoirs, histories, ethnographies, novels, children's books, translations, grammars and many more texts spilled from their pens'. The societies published prodigious quantities of texts which Anna Johnston describes as an influential part of the 'imperial archive' and each she suggests were aimed at a different audience, and although the material was often recycled between publications according to 'a sliding-subscription rate entitled individuals to different types of publication; Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 2003), p.3 & p.32.

<sup>68</sup> The LMS, for example, acknowledge that '...not only is a large immediate income to be derived from any properly-organised collection of their penny and halfpennies; but, what is much more important, the children of to-day will be the men and women of tomorrow'; *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* (London, LMS, 1902), p.255.

Christian moral duty, and those who came from poor backgrounds and succeeded through hard work and faith became useful as exemplars of Smilesian ethic of self-improvement and social advancement. For instance, a lesson plan outlined in *The Practical Teacher* in 1896 asked:

Who has not heard of Dr. Livingstone, the great African missionary and traveller? At the age of ten he was sent to work in a factory, having had scarcely any schooling; but his first savings were spent in the purchase of a Latin grammar, which he mastered along with a large amount of general reading by sitting up at night after his twelve hours' work in the mill.<sup>69</sup>

As Anna Johnston states 'Grocers, weavers, drapers, plumbers, clerks, rope makers, carpet makers, teachers and warehousemen' all sent in applications to the LMS inspired by 'success stories such as Livingstone's'.<sup>70</sup> One privately-held copy Jabez Marrat's biography of Robert Moffat bears a label revealing that it was presented to one Edith Scriven for collecting for foreign missions. The text describes David Livingstone's funeral in Westminster Abbey, explaining that it was attended by his father-in-law Moffat while also highlighted the family's humble background:

It is wonderful how some lives develop into unanticipated glories. The man whose coffin was borne in solemn state along the aisles of the sanctuary appropriated to the greatest names in English story was originally a weaver in Blantyre. The man

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<sup>69</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1896.

<sup>70</sup> Anna Johnston, 'British Missionary Publishing: Missionary Celebrity, and Empire', *Nineteenth-Century Prose*, 32.2 (2005), p.39.

whose presence was noted in the distinguished throng at the funeral was originally a gardener at Inverkeithing.<sup>71</sup>

If as Johnston suggests the missionary hero could inspire so many, it is imperative to consider how the missionary both male and female was represented within the biographies as heroic. The chivalrous and brave, Christian hero embodied national character in its highest form, and it was often taken for granted that the gender of the hero was male. Many biographies were written explicitly for boys. The missionary heroes within the biographies represented an 'exemplary imperial masculinity' and as David Gilmore in his study of the cultural concepts of masculinity argues 'societies construct an exclusionary image of manhood through trials of skill and endurance' which he argues 'must be largely culturally constructed'.<sup>72</sup> Ideals of manhood, he claims also make an 'indispensable contribution to the continuity of social systems and the psychological integration of men' into their communities.<sup>73</sup> Within fictional adventure stories, the hero's masculinity is often described in terms of his power and control over himself, his environment and the people he encounters. Biographies of male missionary heroes incorporated this type of masculinity with Christian militarism. As Figure 6 demonstrates, illustrations were also used to highlight the bravery and courage of the missionary.<sup>74</sup> Here, the illustration which related to the following narrative

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<sup>71</sup> Jabez Marrat, *Robert Moffat: the African Missionary* (London, Charles H. Kelly, 1884), p.95; Within the Preface it is written 'To the young especially the narrative is commended with the hope that it will interest their minds, and excite them to greater activity in tasks associated with Christian Missions', Preface, p. iv;

<sup>72</sup> Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p.83; David D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1990), p.23 & p.3.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Richard Lovett, *Tamate: The Life and Adventures of a Christian Hero* (London & Edinburgh, F. H. Revell, 1904), Frontispiece.

portrays the unarmed James Chalmers courageously facing up to the stereotypical fearsome native:

Again I felt I must have that club, or that club will have me. I had a large piece of hoop-iron, such as is highly prized by the natives, in my satchel. I took it out, wheeled quickly round, presented it to the savage, whose eyes were dazzled by it as ours would be with a bar of gold. With my left hand I seized the club and wrenched it out of his hand, and before he knew what was done I was heading that procession, armed as a savage, and feeling a good deal more comfortable than I had a minute or two before.<sup>75</sup>

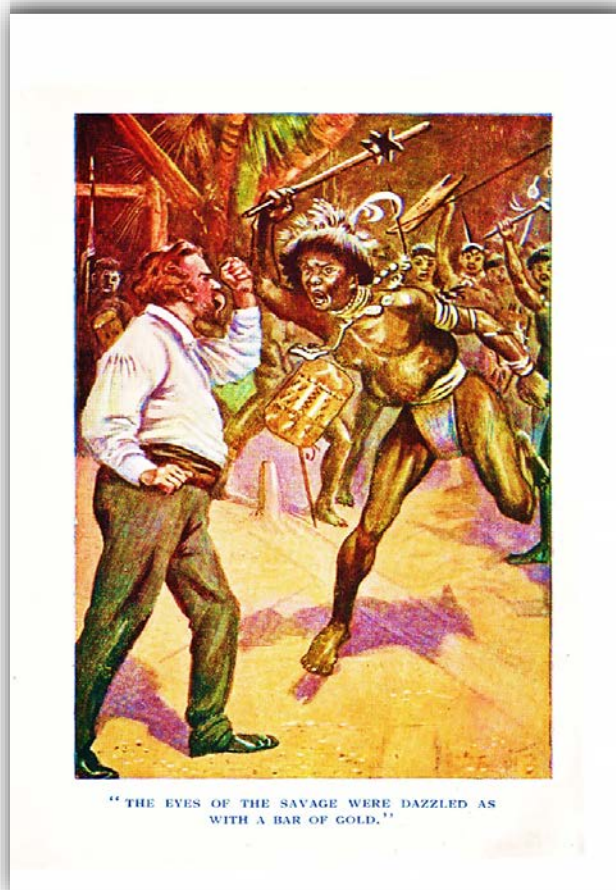


Figure 6 'The Eyes of the Savage were Dazzled' ; Lovett, *Tamate*, Frontispiece.

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.132.

Often described as the ‘literature of the imperial frontier’ the missionary heroes were also ideally situated to be described within the role of explorer or pioneer. In *Livingstone the Pathfinder* (1913), Basil Mathews provides a romanticised critique of Livingstone’s travels, while describing Livingstone as a ‘hero-scout’ and regaling children with stories of how ‘the Pathfinder could not rest till his work was done. He kept bravely on, trying to finish his explorations’.<sup>76</sup> Similar descriptions of missionary heroes served pedagogical purposes by providing children with examples of moral characters whom they could identify with, and emulate. While many biographies of male missionaries suggest they are written for boys *and* girls, for girls particularly the female missionary provided a female protagonist to whom they could relate. However, to remain acceptable to parents and educators, including the lucrative Sunday school market, it was important to promote ideas that would appeal to children, but not undermine the expectations of interested parties. Consequently, as we will discuss, biographers had to find ways to appease both.

Although their duties differed, many women in the mission field encountered the same conditions and experiences as the male missionary which included the opportunity for travel and adventure, and the challenges and experiences of living and working in a foreign country. Biographers grappled with how to write women into the adventure plot which through convention, repressed the female character. To understand the position biographers were placed in when attempting to represent single women, it important at

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<sup>76</sup> Basil Mathews, *Livingstone the Pathfinder* (London, Oxford U.P., 1913), p.152.

this stage to gain some understanding of how they were perceived within mission circles.<sup>77</sup>

Though missionary work was originally conceived as purely a male vocation, by 1899 it was estimated that women missionaries outnumbered their male colleagues by over one thousand.<sup>78</sup> Missionary wives had always been active agents within the missionary field, however, their work was restricted due to their subordinated status, and the expectation that they should portray an idealised picture of Western civilised domesticity and femininity. Single women, however, were provided with vocational opportunities and independence not available at home in Britain and employed as teachers and nurses, roles which it could be argued extended traditional women's roles of nurturing and protecting.<sup>79</sup> Often crossing gender norms prescribed by British society, missionary work provided single women with respectable opportunities for travel and adventure.<sup>80</sup> This was certainly true for one anonymous candidate who told

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<sup>77</sup> For further reading see: Nancy Rose Hunt, "Single Ladies on the Congo": Protestant Missionary Tensions and Voices', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 13,4 (1990), pp.394-403; Rosemary Seton, "Open Doors for Female Labourers": Women Candidates of the London Missionary Society, 1875-1914', in R.A. Bickers & R. Seton, eds., *Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues* (Richmond, Curzon Press, 1996).

<sup>78</sup> Jane Haggis, 'White Women and Colonialism: Towards a Non-Recuperative History', in C. Midgley, ed., *Gender and Imperialism* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1998), p.51; According to Haggis in her study of candidates for the LMS, only individuals aged between 'twenty-one and twenty-eight, full of health and vigor' were eligible to apply, fitting neatly, she argues, with the ideal marrying age for middle-class women at the time Haggis, "A Heart That Has Felt the Love of God", p.174.

<sup>79</sup> For further reading see: Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1985); Some aspects of missionary work available to single women were, however, like domestic roles available in Britain. This is clearly demonstrated by an advertisement placed in 1916 for single women to work in the South African mission field 'She must not mind turning her hand to anything. She must certainly be able to do all kinds of needlework. She will probably be asked to make chasubles, cassocks, and surplices. Then in mission stations where the priests are unmarried and there is no woman housekeeper, she will be called on to do all kinds of mending, repairing and darning. A slight knowledge of tailoring would be useful. You must certainly know how to cook properly and be prepared to cook a dinner on an oil stove; Cited in Sean Gill, *Women and the Church of England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (London, SPCK, 1994), p.181.

<sup>80</sup> As social reformer Lily Montagu claimed in her autobiography: 'It was the time of great changes in the lives of girls in the so-called leisured homes. Their education was too good to allow them being any longer content with the small home duties which in another generation satisfied unmarried girls. They felt

the Women's Committee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1876 that she was 'seeking a wider field for her talent than that which she found in England'.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, as their presence increased so too did their profile. Single missionary Mary Slessor, for example, although shy of publicity, by the late nineteenth-century had become so famous that 'unmarried female candidates modelled themselves on her, or rather on what they understood her to represent'.<sup>82</sup>

Although the recruitment of single women missionaries can be conceived as an example of clear female emancipation, the missionary societies were reticent to publicise the fact, and instead focused upon the role of missionary wives who worked within the boundaries of conventional ideologies of gender.<sup>83</sup> Defined as morally superior and thus able to perform a socially redemptive role, single women missionaries were only given approval within clearly defined areas. For instance, the LMS, explained that their employment was due primarily to the expansion of work with women in the 'East', for example, in the zenanas, the availability of single women at home, and the willingness of the public to finance their employment.<sup>84</sup> In an interesting debate following the deaths in 1895 and 1900 of women missionaries in China who worked in 'cities where there were no male missionaries', the depth of feeling surrounding the

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the need to justify their existence by some form of useful effort'; Lily H. Montagu, *The Faith of a Jewish Woman* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1943), p.13.

<sup>81</sup> USPG Archives, Women Candidates Sub-Committee Book 1874-1885, CWW27/1 as quoted in Sean Gill, 'Heroines of Missionary Adventure: The Portrayal of Victorian Women Missionaries in Popular Fiction and Biography', in A. Hogan & A. Bradstock, eds., *Women of Faith in Victorian Culture: Reassessing the 'Angel in the House'* (New York, Macmillan, 1998), p.176.

<sup>82</sup> William H. Taylor, *Mission to Educate: A History of the Educational Work of the Scottish Presbyterian mission in East Nigeria, 1846-1960* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1996), p.73; Livingstone remarked in his biography on Slessor that 'Round her name and work gathered a romance which deepened and widened interest in the missionary enterprise of the Church'; W.P. Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar: Pioneer Missionary* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1915), p.344.

<sup>83</sup> Haggis, 'White Women and Colonialism', p.51.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54.

employment of single women is highlighted by one commentator who uses their 'long immunity from violence' as a tool to detract and 'moderate the zeal of those who accuse the leaders of the mission of lack of chivalry and manliness in allowing them to do so'.<sup>85</sup>

The presence of women was also discussed within the biographies, E.C. Dawson - familiar to us as Hannington's principal biographer – for instance argued in his later *Heroines of Missionary Adventure* (1903) that:

There are still places in Africa to which it may be highly inadvisable to send women. There are others to which one may safely invite only ladies whom Bishop Hannington affectionately termed 'strapping old maids'. He meant, of course, strong and healthy women, who had tested their qualifications for rough work, and who had no intention whatever of being transformed into wives.<sup>86</sup>

Wives and daughters of serving missionaries had always been mentioned within biographies based on the lives of their husbands but apart from an occasional memoir and biographical collection they were seldom given any textual mileage.<sup>87</sup> Due to the nature of her work, the missionary wife, while experiencing strange and challenging situations, was framed through the conventional lenses of domesticity and motherhood,

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<sup>85</sup> Marshall Broomhall, *Martyred Missionaries of the China Inland Mission: With a Record of the Perils & Sufferings of Some Who Escaped* (London, Morgan & Scott, 1901), p.312.

<sup>86</sup> E.C. Dawson, *Heroines of Missionary Adventure: True Stories of the Intrepid Bravery and Patient Endurance of Missionaries in Their Encounters with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts and the Forces of Nature in All Parts of The World* (London, Seeley, 1903), p.237; Bishop Hannington himself was the subject of Dawson's aptly titled *Lion-Hearted: The Story of Bishop Hannington's Life Told for Boys and Girls* (London, Seeley, 1889).

<sup>87</sup> Amongst the earliest biographical collections was Jemima Thompson's *Memoirs of British Female Missionaries*. Although the subjects were all missionary wives, Thompson did make a good case for writing about women 'Missionary biography ought not, therefore, to be limited to Schwartz, Martyn, Drs. Morrison, Milne and Carey...women, possessing those indispensable qualifications...are needed to accompany the servants of Christ in their evangelical missions'; Jemima Thompson, *Memoirs of British Female Missionaries: With a Survey of the Condition of Women in Heathen Countries* (London, William Smith, 1841), p.ix.



thus remaining firmly rooted in restrictive evangelical understandings of gender boundaries. Or, as Judith Rowbotham states wives were given ‘a share, but not an equal share, in the terminology of heroism’.<sup>88</sup> In keeping with this ideology, the reliance and promotion of the female missionary as a ‘help meet for him...as a wife and a mother’ effectively inhibited women being employed as missionaries in their own right.<sup>89</sup> The *GOP* (1888) was particularly explicit in describing David Livingstone’s wife Mary as the linchpin in the work of her husband. Explaining that she was ‘Well trained to be a missionary hero’s wife [and] While the missionary’s wife was occupied in domestic matters, the missionary himself had some manual labour as a smith, carpenter, or gardener, according to whatever was needed’.<sup>90</sup>

Writing in 1895, Augustus Buckland author and editor for the RTS, acknowledged that the wives of missionaries were often ‘merged in the personalities of their husbands’.<sup>91</sup> Arguing that their work had long been ignored, Buckland suggested that ‘Indeed, the women who gave themselves to evangelise their sex in the earlier decades of the present century deserve something more than the passing acknowledgment which is commonly conceded, for women’s work had then received but scant encouragement or attention’.<sup>92</sup> However, even when missionary wives were given ‘more than the passing acknowledgement’ and their professional roles accepted,

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<sup>88</sup> Judith Rowbotham, “‘Soldiers of Christ’? Images of Female Missionaries in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain: Issues of Heroism and Martyrdom”, *Gender & History* 12.1 (2000), p.83.

<sup>89</sup> William Butler, *Land of the Veda: Being Personal Reminiscences of India, its People, Castes, Thugs, and Fakirs* (New York, Carlton & Lanahan, 1872), p.538.

<sup>90</sup> *GOP*, 1888; David Livingstone is often quoted within his biographies as stating ‘My wife, who has always been the main spoke in my wheel, will accompany me in this expedition, and will be most useful to me. ...In the country to which I am about to proceed, she knows that at the missionary’s station the wife must be the maid of all work within, while the husband must be the Jack of all trades without’; Clifford H. Howell, *The Advance Guard of Missions* (Portland, Pacific Press, 1912), p.233.

<sup>91</sup> Buckland, *Women in the Mission Field*, p.17.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

readers were quickly reminded of their domestic and maternal capabilities. The *Church Missionary Gleaner* (1897), for example, clearly stated that ‘Thousands [of missionary wives] have toiled unremittingly and uncomplainingly...they have proved that women can and do suffer, and yet not lose their womanliness’.<sup>93</sup> This was again reiterated in a biography of Mrs. Robert Clark which informed readers that while she was ‘a pioneer of medical missions’, in ‘every home duty Mrs. Clark was as brilliant as in public life. She was not of the number of those who are so intent on the good of others that their own vineyard they neglect to keep’.<sup>94</sup> How the relationship between the male and female was represented highlights the interesting and telling stance taken by biographers. Whereas women are defined in relation to their husband, it is rare for the male missionary to be described from their wives’ perspective, unless it is to comment upon his own bravery or self-sacrifice.<sup>95</sup>

The continued use of missionary wives within collective biographies highlights the perceived need by biographers to focus on the importance of marriage, family responsibilities and domestic life, as the description of Mrs. Clark above highlights. Wives, therefore, became increasingly useful to biographers to complement wider objectives, relating to domestic responsibility and neutralise her prominence within the very masculine arena, particularly as single women began entering the mission field. Writing in the *International Review of Missions* (1914), Agnes Fraser discussed this

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<sup>93</sup> *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1897.

<sup>94</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.39; Elizabeth Clark was trained as a Sister of St. John and is described as a ‘girl of somewhat unusual attainments who worked in the zenanas in India; Within the biographies chapter titles often gave the reader an indication as to their nature; a chapter based upon missionary wife Margaret Cahill, for example, is titled ‘A Lovely and Heroic Lady’; Wise, *Our Missionary Heroes and Heroines*, p.147.

<sup>95</sup> Several biographies of male missionaries are penned by their wives following their death and are often hagiographic in nature.

change and its effect on established missionary wives, suggesting that ‘In many instances the missionary’s wife has singlehanded been attempting to cope with the whole women’s work, but she gladly without any feeling of being “shelved” transfers her small beginning to the single woman missionary’.<sup>96</sup>

As we have discussed missionary women were often mentioned within collective biographies of the male missionaries, and only occasionally included in their own right, for example, H.K.W. Kumm’s, *African Missionary Heroes and Heroines* (1917) focused upon twelve missionaries, but only one woman was featured under the chapter ‘A Woman and a Missionary - Mary Slessor’.<sup>97</sup> Joanna de Groot has argued that ‘manliness and empire confirmed one another’, however, the increased presence of women in the mission field and within biographies had the capacity to distort this image.<sup>98</sup> One method used by biographers to depict brave women missionaries, which would seem unfeminine in Britain, was to promote acts of moral heroism necessary to ensure the success of the mission. With their increased textual attention, women’s roles were often carefully constructed for gender appropriateness, and in contrast to biographies based upon the male missionary that incorporated acts of bravery, patriotism, strength and above all manliness, women missionaries, to forestall less comfortable questions about her actual role, were presented through their domestic achievements.

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<sup>96</sup> Agnes Fraser, ‘Missionary’s Wife Among African Women’, *International Review of Missions*, 3 (1914), p.458.

<sup>97</sup> H.K.W. Kumm, *African Missionary Heroes and Heroines* (New York, Macmillan, 1917); By May 1894, however, it was noted that the ‘unmarried female agents of all the Protestant Societies numbered at least 2500, and the total number of women in the field exceeded the men by about a thousand’; Buckland, *Women in the Mission Field*, p.23; This also coincided with the first group of British girls completing their mandatory education.

<sup>98</sup> Joanna de Groot, “Sex” and “Race”: The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century’, in S. Mendus & J. Rendall, eds., *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century* (London & New York, Routledge, 1989), p.122.

Single women missionaries who did not 'fit' with this image were frequently described as extraordinary, distinctive or in the case of missionary heroine Mary Slessor 'complex', 'unique' and 'unusual in her conduct'.<sup>99</sup> Interestingly Slessor was also depicted within *Yarns on African Pioneers to be Told to Boys* as having 'a secure place among the world's heroines of the order of Florence Nightingale and Sister Dora, but more than either of these, she is essentially a boy's heroine'.<sup>100</sup> By defining single women as heroic guardians of the national interest, nurturing and safe-guarding the empire, the narratives could acknowledge the role of women, while protecting the image of missionary work as a masculine pursuit. This also had the advantage of ensuring explanations and challenges to gender norms were avoided. It can be argued that the creation of the heroic female missionary as nurturing allowed representations of the manliness of the male missionary to become even stronger. As noted in Chapter Three Geraldina Stock, hymnist and author of many missionary books for children, who we exposed earlier asking girls who read her book to 'forgive' her as she has 'told them so little about women heroes or heroines', continued her explanation by stating that:

This is partly because their work was generally more quiet and less known, and partly because there have been, among African heroes, far more men than women. Women could not take all the long journeys that have been taken in Africa. It is quite true that they can do some things men cannot do; but it is also true that men can do things they cannot do. And so most of the great things done in Africa have

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<sup>99</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, pp. iv & v.

<sup>100</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African*, p.33.

been done by men, though in some cases they would have been badly off without the women.<sup>101</sup>

What is noticeable within the biographies was their need to promote a positive image of the missionary. How the missionary was presented was carefully constructed to offer children examples of the missionary portraying characteristics viewed as essential to heroic behaviour. It is, however, important at this point to consider alternative readings of the missionary and the missionary enterprise in popular culture, and gain some understanding of how the heroism of the missionary was manipulated to provide examples of very masculine and very feminine heroes.

### Alternative readings

In his popular novel *Bleak House* (1853) Charles Dickens offered a rather cynical view of the missionary enterprise through his portrayal of the ‘telescopic philanthropy’ of Mrs Jellyby’s involvement in charitable work for missionaries in Africa, which he used to highlight her neglect of her domestic affairs.<sup>102</sup> The archetypal missionary in the cooking pot also formed the basis of many cartoons and jokes. In addition, as more women joined the ranks of the missionary service, leading to a perceived feminisation of the profession, a determined effort to promote the missionary took place. Although later than the parameters of this study the following example from *The Quiver* in 1924, captures ways of thinking that were by now well-embedded and provides a clear

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<sup>101</sup> Stock, *Missionary Heroes of Africa*, p.3.

<sup>102</sup> Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (London, Bradbury & Evans, 1853), pp.234-235.

example of methods used to reinstate the heroic image of the missionary. In an article enhanced by numerous illustrations titled 'THE MISSIONARY as he is supposed to be' argued that the missionary was nothing like the caricature of an 'extremely correct and conventional person, who, somewhere under a palm tree, exhorts primitive tribes to accept all the customs of western civilisation - pews, hymn books, tracts-and induces them to put on unsuitable clothes' (Figure 7).<sup>103</sup>



Figures 7 & 8 'The Missionary - as pictured in the comic Press' & 'The Missionary as he is'; *The Quiver*, 1924.

The second part of the piece 'THE MISSIONARY AS HE IS' described the daring and unconventional life of Livingstone who it argued 'would have made short work of Mrs

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<sup>103</sup> *The Quiver*, 1924.

Jellyby'.<sup>104</sup> The 'missionary of to-day' it explained 'is very far removed from the missionary as he appears at times in comic papers'.<sup>105</sup> A photograph of missionary Rev. H. Cecil Nutter, of Central Africa (Figure 8) accompanied the discussion where it is explained that the Rev. Nutter in 'the language of *Tom Brown* [Has] for over twenty years...been the teacher and friend of his tribe. As handy with a surgeon's knife as with a tennis-racket, linguist, educationalist, industrial worker, he has been the builder of the new life for his people'.<sup>106</sup>

The article interestingly included a brief comment about single missionary Mary Slessor, 'sometimes a Mary Slessor becomes almost a queen, like Deborah of old, among her tribe in Calabar' and concluded with a lengthy account of John Mackenzie of Africa and the experience of other missionaries, in an attempt to finally convince young readers of their heroic, not, comic characters.<sup>107</sup> The article made no introduction to Slessor and one can assume it was expected that readers would be aware of her story. This brings in nicely the following accounts of Mary Slessor and James Hannington whose life stories were numerous and popular within the Sunday school network. It will enable us to understand more fully the processes and connections made between male and female missionary heroes, and reveal why reconstructions of their lives were used to serve important cultural and social aims deemed important by the Sunday school network.

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<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

### Introducing James Hannington and Mary Slessor

By considering the textual representations within biographies based upon Hannington and Slessor provides a greater understanding of how the complex dynamics of imperialism, gender and class under the umbrella of heroism served important cultural and social aims which included self-help and character formation. Details of their lives exemplify the appeal of missionary biographies.

### James Hannington (1847-1885)

JAMES HANNINGTON, Bishop and Martyr - does not the title read like some old record laboriously unearthed out of the dust of some early mediaeval tomb? Yet it belongs to an Englishman of our own time, a personality summing up in himself those special qualities by which our race is destined to 'replenish the earth and subdue it' to a degree unparalleled by any other kind among the families of man.<sup>108</sup>

This description illustrates why biographies of James Hannington were considered by many as suitable for the inculcation of moral and social values. Born in Hurstpierpoint, Sussex he was the son of a businessman who was also a Justice of the Peace and Colonel of the 1st Sussex artillery volunteers. Hannington was educated at home until the age of thirteen when he was sent to Temple School in Brighton. After leaving school he worked in his father's business but also travelled extensively on his parent's yacht. Hannington did not enjoy working for his father and in 1868 decided to become an

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<sup>108</sup> *Belgravia: a London Magazine*, 1893.



Anglican clergyman and arrangements were made for him to attend St. Mary's Hall, Oxford and after encountering several difficulties was ordained in 1874. Hannington married in 1877 and had four children and in 1882 offered himself for missionary work and was sent by the CMS to the Victoria Nyanza mission.<sup>109</sup> Reaching Zanzibar his health suffered and he was forced to return to England to recover. Once his health was restored the CMS offered him the position as Bishop of East Equatorial Africa, and he arrived in Mombasa (travelling via Palestine) in January 1885. In July of that year Hannington decided to lead an expedition from his headquarters in Frere Town to open a shorter route to Lake Victoria through the Masai country. Mwanga the Kabaka (ruler) of Buganda fearful of British intervention ordered for Hannington to be captured and killed.<sup>110</sup> After eight days in captivity on 21st October 1885 Hannington was murdered and was reported as saying 'I am about to die for the Ba-ganda, and have purchased the road to them with my life'.<sup>111</sup>

### Mary Slessor (1848-1915)

Mary Mitchell Slessor was born in 1848 in Aberdeen, Scotland, although she spent most of her childhood in the industrial city of Dundee. Due to family circumstances, she was forced to leave school and work in the city's textile mills. Inspired by the death of David Livingstone, she was accepted as a missionary to the Calabar region of West Africa in

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<sup>109</sup> Eugene Stock gives the reasoning for Hannington's appointment: 'here a new man was the very man for the leadership: an Oxford man, a clergyman of eight years' experience, a Christian who knew what the forgiveness of sins means, a preacher whose country church (St. George's Chapel, Hurstpierpoint) was crowded with people from the villages for miles round, and a born traveller and naturalist'; Stock, *The History of the CMS*, p.403.

<sup>110</sup> The ancient kingdom of Buganda was at the centre of what is now Uganda.

<sup>111</sup> E.C. Dawson, *James Hannington, First Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa: A History of his Life and Work, 1847-1885* (London, Seeley, 1887), p.467.

1876. Disadvantaged in Britain by both gender and class, her early life exposed the ideological constraints placed upon women, however, her role as a missionary in Africa provided her with both power and influence which created a dialogue challenging notions of traditional femininity. Slessor began her missionary career assisting in the established mission stations, but in 1888 went alone to work among the Okoyong. Slessor is remembered for her campaigns for the rights of native women, the abolition of the murder of new-born twins, the rescue of abandoned children and the development of trade links between tribes and the introduction of Western education. In 1892, she was made Vice-consul in Okoyong, presiding over the native court. Slessor was also remembered for her unusual lifestyle. Her entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* describes how she ‘drank unboiled water, used no mosquito net, walked barefoot, and even went without the indispensable hat. Visitors commented upon the tiny Scotswoman's sunburnt face and unkempt appearance’.<sup>112</sup> It also suggests that her insistence on setting up lone stations led her into conflict with the authorities, who often thwarted her persistent applications to go further up-country.<sup>113</sup> After thirty-eight years’ service, Slessor died in January 1915 at her remote mission station and her body transported by river to Duke Town. A picture of her funeral is painted by J.H Proctor: ‘The Provincial Commissioner and other senior British officials stood in full uniform at the jetty as her coffin, wrapped in the Union Jack was lifted from the launch by four soldiers of the Nigerian Regiment...while the regimental band played the National Anthem’.<sup>114</sup> As both missionaries led extremely interesting and eventful lives that

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<sup>112</sup> *ODNB*.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>114</sup> J.H. Proctor, ‘Serving God and the Empire: Mary Slessor in South-Eastern Nigeria, 1876-1915’, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 30.1 (2000), p.45.

incorporated many of the values and practices deemed important. It was, therefore, no surprise that they became the subjects of numerous biographical works written for children.

### The biographies of James Hannington

Hannington recorded and illustrated many of his experiences, some of which he sent to children in Britain under the heading ‘A Missionary’s Illustrated Letters to the Youngsters at Home’ (Figure 9).<sup>115</sup> These were serialised in the *Graphic* in 1884, however, many biographers reused these images.<sup>116</sup> In an article ‘The Making of the Graphic’ published in 1888, the Editor of *The Graphic* explained:

Not long since I had a most delightful illustrated diary from a missionary in Africa. It was addressed to his little nephews and nieces, making merry jests and clever funny caricatures over his escapes and misfortunes, evidently only thinking with a gay heart how best he could amuse the dear little ones at home. These now have an especially mournful interest from being by the hand of the late Bishop Hannington, so foully murdered at his post of duty.<sup>117</sup>

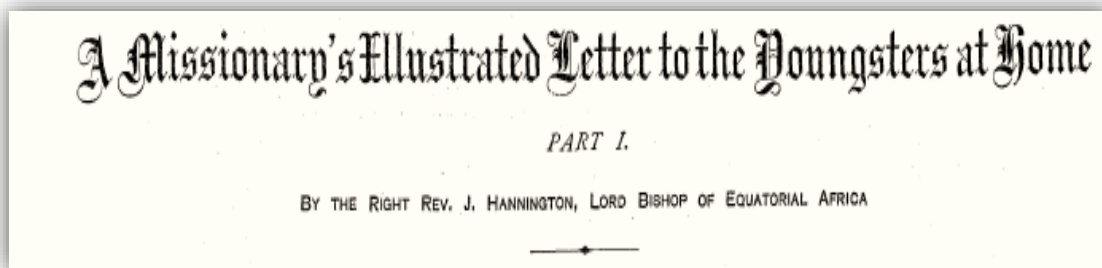


Figure 9 ‘A Missionary’s Illustrated Letters to the Youngsters at Home’;  
*The Graphic*, 1884.

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<sup>115</sup> *The Graphic*, 1884.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> W.L. Thomas, ‘The Making of the Graphic’, *The Universal Review*, 2.5 (1888), p.86.

Hannington's life and experiences told the story of Christian heroism which incorporated all the necessary elements to enable biographers to portray him as a positive role model. He was also clearly viewed as a useful remedy to the Penny Dreadful. Eugene Stock clearly saw the potential and usefulness of his story, and suggested children:

Read about Missions. Are you fond of reading? Don't fill your minds with the sensational rubbish which is found in the common novels, and in the foolish (so-called 'comic') papers of the bookstalls. Do you like stories of thrilling adventure in real life? ...If you have never read ... 'Lion-Hearted', the life of the martyr-bishop Hannington... you don't know what real adventure is.<sup>118</sup>

The first biography to be written was *James Hannington, First Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa: A History of his Life and Work, 1847-1885* (1887) and was often used as a reference for subsequent accounts.<sup>119</sup> This was penned by his friend the Rev. E.C. Dawson, Incumbent of St. Thomas's Church, Edinburgh who also wrote *The Last Journals of Bishop Hannington, Being Narratives of a Journey Through Palestine in 1884 and a Journey Through Masai-Land and U-Soga in 1885* (1888).<sup>120</sup> Although it cannot officially be described as a biography, extracts from his '*Illustrated Letters*' were edited by Dawson and published posthumously under the title *Peril and Adventure in Central Africa* (1886), but Dawson does provide a biographical introduction. Two years

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<sup>118</sup> C. F. Harford-Battersby, 'Conclusion', in E. Stock, ed., *Boys and Boys: A Missionary Book* (London, CMS, 1896), pp.118-119.

<sup>119</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*.

<sup>120</sup> E. C. Dawson, *The Last Journals of Bishop Hannington, Being Narratives of a Journey Through Palestine in 1884 and a Journey Through Masai-Land and U-Soga in 1885* (London, Seeley, 1888)

later he penned *Lion-Hearted: The Story of Bishop Hannington's Life Told for Boys and Girls* (1889) which he stated was 're-written...for the sake of the boys and girls who are too young to read the longer Biography'.<sup>121</sup> Both books proved popular with *Peril and Adventure* '9 editions published between 1886 and 1978' and *Lion-Hearted* '9 editions published between 1889 and 1914'.<sup>122</sup> The biographies were also popular in America as Dawson explains in his Preface to *Lion-Hearted*:

So many requests have reached the publishers and myself from persons in America and at home, for permission to re-write the Life of James Hannington in language suitable for boys and girls, that we have been drawn to the conclusion that a Child's Life might find a place ready and awaiting it in not a few little bookshelves...I trust that the narrative may be found to be written in such form as to be intelligible and entertaining, as well as useful and stimulating to young readers.<sup>123</sup>

*The Sunday at Home Magazine* (1887) described Dawson's 1887 biography *James Hannington* as 'all the more valuable because the Bishop is allowed as far as possible to tell his own story' and how his 'unselfish, self-denial, his patient endurance of fatigue, sickness, and hard fate, are the more striking in the case of one who could have commanded both honour and affluence at home'.<sup>124</sup> Similarly, *The London Quarterly* (1887) explained how 'there is no greater treat, in the present world of books, than a

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<sup>121</sup> Bishop Hannington, *Peril and Adventure in Central Africa* (London, RTS, 1886); Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.1.

<sup>122</sup> For details of their popularity see: <http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n88666863/> accessed 14 April 2017.

<sup>123</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, Preface.

<sup>124</sup> *The Sunday at Home: A Family Magazine for Sabbath Reading*, 1887.

quiet repast on the biography of a man of rich and noble character, confectioned by the hand of an intimate and capable friend'.<sup>125</sup> The biographies were understandably considered suitable material for use within the Sunday school. Within his 1910 biography *Bishop Hannington: The Life and Adventures of a Missionary Hero*, W. Grinton Berry, for example, explained how about a third of his book was taken from the 'graphic, racy, and altogether charming volume entitled *Peril and Adventure in Central Africa*' and explained that the 'object of the present compiler has been to produce a volume interesting to all the friends and supporters of missionary work, and specially adapted for wide-spread circulation among the older members of Sunday Schools, in Bible Classes, Christian Endeavour Societies, and kindred organisations'.<sup>126</sup>

Due to the 'stirring adventures, lively incidents, and heroic stories' incorporated within Hannington's story, he became the focus of numerous works which also proved popular with interested parties and readers.<sup>127</sup> Leslie Missen, for example, born in 1897 remembered as a child learning 'how Bishop Hannington met a lion in Uganda, threw his sunglasses at it and it ran away', while *The Practical Teacher* (1889) recommend the 'beautifully bound and clearly printed' collective biography *Good Men and True* (1890) which included a section on Hannington, as they believed it would 'have something interesting and stimulating to tell us. And it is so. Short, simple, suggestive, these biographical essays will rouse enthusiasm and awaken a desire to imitate the noble acts of these brave and good men. The book contains eight creditable illustrations. It is in all

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<sup>125</sup> 'Bishop Hannington' *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 8.135 (1887), p.129.

<sup>126</sup> William G. Berry, *Bishop Hannington: The Life and Adventures of a Missionary Hero* (London, RTS, 1910), pp. v-vi.

<sup>127</sup> Creegan, *Great Missionaries of the Church*, p. ix.

respects a desirable prize book and should be widely read'.<sup>128</sup> The events of his life depicting ideas of Christian manliness, daring exploits and a celebrated death adapted perfectly into the adventure story format, as a review of Dawson's original biography suggested: 'The name of Bishop Hannington requires no introduction...In the volume before us, one of his closest friends has told the story of his life-the pleasant waywardness of his youth, the heroic devotion of his manhood, and the pathos of his last days of lingering martyrdom'.<sup>129</sup>

By promoting Hannington in this way biographers could provide examples of Christian values, masculinity, imperialism and self-sacrifice, but also bolster notions of patriotism while supporting the broader Victorian objectives of character building, self-improvement and duty to others. In providing children with details of his family background children were reminded that being 'steady, keen and industrious' his grandfather laid down 'the foundation of the family fortune', which allowed him to purchase the 'beautiful country home' of St. George's where James Hannington was born.<sup>130</sup> Hannington was the ideal Christian hero and role model and his story allowed biographers to promote ideas of heroism and self-help. Biographer Charles D. Mitchell, for example, described how Hannington wrote of himself as enjoying 'the uphill, struggling path most of all' and explained that 'his whole life was a testimony to the

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<sup>128</sup> John Burnett, 'Introduction' in Burnett, ed., *Destiny Obscure*, p.25; Lesley Missen won a scholarship to the prestigious Perse School in Cambridge where he 'encountered a public-school regime, but a "mixed bag" of boys who included the sons of a college tutor, a vicar, a fishmonger and brewer's assistant'; pp.162-163; *The Practical Teacher*, 1889.

<sup>129</sup> *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 1887; Similarly, biographer Charles Michael states 'James Hannington, Bishop and martyr, is dead, but his spirit lives; and to-day the story of his bravery and devotion has power to move the pulses and stir the hearts of those who can appreciate the highest attributes of our human nature'; Charles Michael, *James Hannington Bishop and Martyr: The Story of a Noble Life* (London, Partridge, 1910), p.6.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

truth of this estimate of his own character. Each achievement was but a stepping-stone to some fresh conquest; and all his striving had for its object, not personal glory and gratification, but the glory of God and the good of others'.<sup>131</sup>

Hannington's heroism provided a model for patriotism and good citizenship. Biographers could also use his heroism to appeal to working-class children, Dawson in *Lion-Hearted*, for example, explained how 'Any boy may become a hero, even though he be not born strong and brave' and how 'He is brave who forgets himself; and he is strong who conquers himself. Though you are not big, yet you may be stronger than Goliath. Even though you are now timid and often frightened at many things, you may become as brave as David's three mighty men'.<sup>132</sup> Dawson continued to clarify that although Hannington was 'born brave and strong [and] not easily frightened' he still had to learn how to 'gain victory over himself before he could live like a hero and dare to die a martyr's death'.<sup>133</sup> While Hannington's biographies exemplify the appeal of the missionary biography, and their use for specific themes, Mary Slessor can be used to show how female missionary lives also played specific roles, but also how biographers attempted to address disruptive elements of her character and experiences by describing her as eccentric or by deploying overt domestic and maternal imagery.

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<sup>131</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, p.5.

<sup>132</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.1.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*



### The biographies of Mary Slessor

‘For while she was great as a pioneer and worker, she was equally great as a woman’.<sup>134</sup>

This statement highlights the importance placed by biographers upon Slessor’s pioneering spirit and work ethic, but also how they attempted to remind readers that she is female. Slessor was one of a small number of women missionaries who was written about individually rather than being part of a collective biography. As a single woman, Slessor provided biographers with the challenge of constructing narratives that allowed her to be heroic while maintaining her femininity. For working-class children Slessor was an ideal heroine to be promoted within the Sunday school, and comparisons were often made between Slessor and arguably the most heroic missionary of the age David Livingstone.<sup>135</sup> As ‘resolutely working-class imperial heroes’, both Slessor and Livingstone were often manipulated by writers to provide examples of self-help, faith and determination:

There are many striking points of likeness between the careers of these two torch-bearers to the Dark Continent. As children both had worked at the loom, studying hungrily as they toiled. Both did pioneer work, winning the confidence and love of the wild people they taught and served. No missionary to Africa, save Dr. Livingstone alone, has had a more powerful influence than Mary Slessor.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.351.

<sup>135</sup> As we discussed earlier Livingstone’s background was often used in comparison to other missionaries for humble backgrounds.

<sup>136</sup> John M. Mackenzie, ‘Empire and National Identities the Case of Scotland’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 8 (1998), p.226; Mary R. Parkman, *Heroines of Service* (New York, Century, 1916), pp.262-263.

The first biography of Slessor *Mary Slessor of Calabar: Pioneer Missionary* appeared shortly after her death in 1915 and was written by W.P. Livingstone editor of the *Missionary Record of the Church of Scotland*.<sup>137</sup> Livingstone's biography provided the source material for many future biographies of which there are many. Livingstone's work became popular worldwide which was acknowledged in a later biography *Mary Slessor, The Dundee Factory Girl Who Became a Devoted African Missionary* (n.d.): 'Mr. Livingstone said it astonished him to see how quickly Mary Slessor's fame had spread throughout the world. His book dealing with her life had been translated into many foreign languages, and he had just received that week a request to allow it to be printed in Braille for the use of the blind'.<sup>138</sup> This was discussed in the American weekly magazine *The Outlook*:

One of the most interesting biographies which has been written for many a day is 'Mary Slessor of Calabar', a book which has just appeared in this country, although it was published in England some months ago, and has had the unusual experience for a biography-and especially that of a foreign missionary-of being among the 'best sellers'. In its first months, it is already in its fourth edition, and

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<sup>137</sup> W.P. Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar: Pioneer Missionary* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1915).

<sup>138</sup> J.J. Ellis, *Mary Slessor: The Dundee Factory Girl Who Became a Devoted African Missionary* (Kilmarnock, Richie, n.d.), p.76; Livingstone's *Mary Slessor of Calabar* went through numerous editions and formed the basis for future biographies, Cuthbert McEvoy author of *Mary Slessor*, for example, acknowledges 'For the materials used in this brief sketch of a great life the Author is indebted to Mr. W. P. Livingstone's Biography-MARY SLESSOR, OP CALABAR. His thanks are due to Mr. Livingstone, to his publishers (Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton), and to the owners in the copyright of that book, the Women's Foreign Mission Committee of the United Press Church of Scotland'; Cuthbert McEvoy, *Mary Slessor* (London, Carey Press, 1917); W.P. Livingstone was also the author of *Christina Forsyth of Fingoland: The Story of the Loneliest Woman in Africa* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1918).

well it may be, for rarely has a life been lived so full of romance, of heroism, and at the same time of absolute sincerity and simplicity.<sup>139</sup>

In 1916 Livingstone produced a shorter version of this biography intended for children titled *The White Queen of Okoyong: A True Story of Adventure Heroism and Faith*.<sup>140</sup> According to a review in *The Expository Times*, this was ‘full, on every page, of just the sort of things profitably to grip the imaginative mind of heroic youth. It will be read with fascinated interest and after the thrills of its pages are past the souls will be saturated with the spirit of wonderful consecration and noble endeavor. Out of most adverse circumstances in Dundee to wide usefulness in Africa is a story to challenge every girl and boy’.<sup>141</sup> Her biographies were so admired they were also referred to within later biographies based upon other missionary heroines, for example, within G.T. Basden’s *Edith Warner of the Niger* (1927) it is explained that:

Many there are who have read the inspiring story of Mary Slessor, of Calabar. If we were asked for the briefest description of her personality the reply might be summed up in the one word ‘character’. Now if you can contemplate a character, prompted by similar impulses, yet completely opposite in expression, you will be able to form a fair idea of the personality of Edith Warner, the subject of this memoir.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> *The Outlook: Published Weekly with Illustrations*, 1917; By 1928 Livingstone’s *Mary Slessor of Calabar* was in its 28<sup>th</sup> edition.

<sup>140</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*.

<sup>141</sup> *The Expository Times*, 1917.

<sup>142</sup> G.T. Basden, *Edith Warner of the Niger; The Story of Work Amongst Ibo Girls & Women* (London, Seeley, 1927).

Although Slessor's unusual, 'down-to-earth, muscular and versatile' image could be used to their advantage, the expectation that children should be provided with a consistent heroic yet feminine image of missionary woman, meant that representing Slessor within the biographies became a challenge. Although Slessor offered readers examples of true adventure, her independence and individuality had to be confined and this was often achieved by describing her as possessing 'quaint ways and oddities' or even 'superhuman power'.<sup>143</sup> Within the first paragraph of his seminal biography Livingstone explained to readers that 'life for most people is governed by authority and convention, but behind these there lies always the mystery of human nature, uncertain and elusive, and apt now and again to go off at a tangent and disturb the smooth working of organised routine'.<sup>144</sup> Although often viewed as 'irregular' and 'unwise', Livingstone believed such people prefer 'ideals rather than rules' and explained that although they 'may be poor or frail, and in their own estimation of no account, yet it is often they who are used for the accomplishment of important ends. Such a one was Mary Slessor'.<sup>145</sup>

This interpretation of her individuality continued well into the twentieth century as James Ellis emphasised in his comparative 1929 biography based on Slessor and missionary Jeanie Gilchrist, in which he described Slessor as 'a bit of a character' and how she 'does a certain kind of work in a certain kind of way. I would not commend her as a pattern to others, but she has saved lives as no other man or woman could have dared to do'.<sup>146</sup> Both authors, Livingstone and Ellis, acknowledged her challenge to

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<sup>143</sup> Taylor, *Mission to Educate*, p.73; J. H. Morrison, *The Missionary Heroes of Africa* (New York, George H. Doran, 1922), p.251; Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.99.

<sup>144</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.iii.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p.iii.

<sup>146</sup> James J. Ellis, *Two Missionary Heroines in Africa: Mary Slessor and Jeanie Gilchrist* (Kilmarnock, John Richie, 1929), p.54

authority, and as a result, endeavoured to position Slessor as extraordinary yet capable.

Livingstone, for example, attempted to explain how many:

could not see her greatness for what they called her eccentricities, forgetting, or perhaps being unaware of, what she had passed through, experiences such as no other woman had undergone, which explained much that seemed unusual in her conduct. But when her life is viewed as a whole, and in the light of what she achieved, all these angles and oddities fall away, and she stands out, a woman of unique and inspiring personality, and one of the most heroic figures of the age.<sup>147</sup>

Slessor's story provided messages that could be tailored for both boys and girls as the dedication in Livingstone's shorter children's biography on Slessor 'To All Girls and Boys who are Looking Forward and Dreaming Dreams' clearly demonstrates.<sup>148</sup> Due in part to her individuality, it is interesting - that Slessor appears in many collective biographies intended for a male readership. As we have seen, Mathews described Slessor in his *Yarns on African Pioneers to be Told to Boys* as 'essentially a boy's heroine', suggesting that her 'powerful influence' made her an interesting, if not controversial figure, for biographer - and especially so for girls.<sup>149</sup> With evocative chapter titles, such as Mathew's 'The Woman Who Conquered Cannibals' biographies about Slessor provided a useful canvas for disseminating new meanings and ideas about gender, class, British superiority, and character formation particularly to girl readers.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.v.

<sup>148</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.vii.

<sup>149</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, p.33.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*; pp.33-47; Mathew's again used 'Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar, Pioneer Missionary*. (Hodder & Stoughton, 4s. 6d. net.)' as its source; p.47.

At a time when women were attempting to establish themselves politically and economically, Slessor's heroism challenged the deeply embedded attitudes concerning appropriate gender roles. It was, however, through her ability to improve her situation that biographers could advance and reinforce the romance of missionary work and bolster notions of patriotism, British superiority, self-help and character formation. By addressing concerns over the leisure time of Edwardian youth and the growing militancy for women's rights, for example, Livingstone described how Slessor was 'always vexed' by the thought of the 'thousands of girls at home living a purposeless life' and how she believed they should visit West Africa for six months doing light work and helping care for the children, which she felt would be 'better than stoning windows, for she had no patience with the policy of the women who sought in blind destruction the solution of political and social evils'.<sup>151</sup> Robert H. Glover, Foreign Secretary to the Christian and Missionary Alliance explained why Slessor became the subject of many biographies, explaining how from 'an unlettered factory girl in the homeland, she advanced into the foremost rank of missionary pathfinders'.<sup>152</sup>

### Conclusion

The 'rank of missionary pathfinders' was as Glover stated due in part to the role of biographies based upon heroic missionaries and this chapter has provided a discussion of the importance of the missionary biography and illustrated how biographers

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<sup>151</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.322; Livingstone continues to note that Slessor had declared that 'I'm for votes for women, but I would prove my right to it by keeping law and helping others to keep it. God-like motherhood is the finest sphere for women, and the way to the redemption of the world'.

<sup>152</sup> R.H. Glover, *The Progress of World-wide Missions* (New York, Harper, 1923), p.250.

represented male and female missionaries.<sup>153</sup> To gain a deeper understanding of biographies based on missionary women it was important to delineate the position of the single independent female missionary compared to the missionary wife. This chapter has also discussed alternative readings of the missionary and concluded with a detailed analysis of missionaries Hannington and Slessor who will be used throughout Part Two of this study to demonstrate both themes and arguments. This analysis allows us to move effortlessly to the next chapter which will discuss the role of publishers, the production and promotion of the narratives and the important role of both biographers and illustrators.

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER FIVE

‘there is a large market for missionary books of all kinds; and they pour from the press in increasing numbers’ - The biographies, biographers and publishers

The content, quality and promotion of biographies about the missionary hero was often discussed by publishers and interested parties. In 1900 *The Missionary Manual*, for example, was produced to provide ‘directions and suggestions’ for the use of the missionary biography which it felt could not fail to leave behind a ‘profound impression’, and included suggestions for reading which included narratives on ‘such men as Martyn, Paton, Mackay, Patterson, Duff, Herber, Morrison, Gilmour, Hannington, Moffat, Livingstone, Judson, Hamlin, Coan, and others almost beyond number’.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to focus on the role of the publishers, biographers and illustrators as being instrumental in providing children with a positive image of the heroic missionary and preparing them to become imperial citizens. It will begin by looking at the biographies and their marketability followed by a detailed study of publishers and authors which will include a biographical study of two prolific writers of missionary biographies Basil Mathews and Constance Padwick. The final part of this chapter will discuss the illustrators and the significant role their work performed within the biographical material.

It was explained in a report by the *Home Base of Missions* presented to the 1910 World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh that their the intention was to provide examples of how missionary work could be advanced, and importantly provided insight

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<sup>1</sup> Amos R. Wells, *The Missionary Manual: A Handbook of Methods for Missionary Work in Young People's Societies* (Boston & Chicago, United Society of Christian Endeavor, 1900), p.21.



into the methods used to generate and strengthen support for the missionary endeavour.<sup>2</sup> One example included a comprehensive list of missionary books and periodicals deemed acceptable for British children with the aim of providing ‘books which are of permanent value for missionary intelligence or which throw light on present-day missionary conditions’.<sup>3</sup> Recognising the work of psychologists and educationalists the *Report* noted under the aptly named heading ‘The Missionary Awakening of Boys and Girls’ the profound importance of ‘missionary teaching in education’, and argued ‘not only that a comprehensive policy of missionary education of the young is a necessity to missionary propaganda, but that the missionary ideal has a unique contribution to make to religious education, and is, in fact, a necessity for the building of true Christian character’.<sup>4</sup> As part of their policy it was suggested that books should be ‘reliable, entertaining, well-illustrated, printing and binding of the best, liberal and sympathetic.’<sup>5</sup>

As ‘entertaining and well-illustrated’ due to a large extent by the familiar traits and storylines borrowed from their fictional counterparts, the narratives incorporated the notion of the hero embracing the best of what it meant to be British. Many relied upon children’s familiarity with archetypal images which promoted ideas British cultural advantage and social ideals.<sup>6</sup> Constance E. Padwick who was employed by the CMS even suggested using authors of fictional stories and again highlights the need to provide a positive image of the missionary:

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<sup>2</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*; The 1910 Missionary World Conference was described by chairman John R. Mott as ‘the most notable gathering in the worldwide expansion of Christianity ever held’ as quoted in Charles H. Hopkins, *John R. Mott 1865-1955: A Biography* (Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1979), p.342; This multi-denominational conference was not unique as similar conferences had been held in Liverpool 1860 which had also considered ways to promote missionary work.

<sup>3</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, p.333.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.56.

<sup>6</sup> Hugill, ‘Imperialism and Manliness’, p.320.

If we believe that the imagination of the child is worthy of capture... We should undoubtedly pray for missionary writers and editors of high gifts within the societies. Not less earnestly should we ask that outside the missionary societies professional writers and publishers of children's fiction (not omitting authors of 1d., 2s and 8d novelettes) may treat the subject with respect instead of disdain.<sup>7</sup>

Within the 'Introduction' to *In the Tiger Jungle* (1897) 'a book that may well be placed in every Sunday school library', the Rev. Francis. E. Clark (President of the World's Christian Endeavor Union) explained how the 'very titles of these chapters engage the attention of every reader'.<sup>8</sup> These he listed as "In the Tiger Jungle," "Winding up a Horse," "Encounter with a Ten-foot Serpent," "The Stick-to-it Missionary," "An Audience of Monkeys," and others no less striking', and asked 'what young person could read these titles without desiring to know something more of this charming book?'.<sup>9</sup> And in 1902 the LMS made it clear that they were keen to bring attention to 'the very cheap terms on which part of our surplus stock of missionary books is being offered for sale', and hoped that Sunday schools and Young People's Societies would take full advantage of the opportunity.<sup>10</sup> The popularity of such missionary literature cannot be underestimated as the CMS, for example, stated that 'In 1890 a series of bright and helpful books for children inaugurated a new era. At first only one or two bound volumes were brought out in a year; but the demand has increased to such an extent that this year, 1905, it is hoped to issue nine books, each of

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<sup>7</sup> Padwick, 'Children and Missionary Societies', p.573.

<sup>8</sup> Clark, 'Introduction', p.12.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* (London, LMS, 1902), p.54.

which will probably appeal specially to a different set of readers'.<sup>11</sup> If we consider biographies published about martyred missionary James Hannington we can gain some insight into who the 'different set of readers' were.<sup>12</sup> Although partially dictated by availability, Portsmouth Public Library Annual Report for 1887 included a list of publications borrowed during the year which included Dawson's biography *James Hannington, First Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa* which was loaned to 'a domestic servant'.<sup>13</sup> His books were also popular within the elite public schools of Britain. Sedbergh School, for example, within their school magazine *The Sedberghian* noted that amongst the 'generous present of books' sent by a Mrs Simpson was 'the *Life of Bishop Hannington*'.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, the race to publish biographies of James Chalmers - who served in the Cook Islands for ten years before being murdered and reportedly eaten by cannibal tribesmen in 1901 - gives an indication as to the importance placed upon the narratives. Five biographies were written between 1902 and 1904 and each contained original source material which in turn would provide material for future works. The first biography was written by John H. Napier under the pseudonym Cuthbert Lennox for the NSSU.<sup>15</sup> His biography *James Chalmers of New Guinea: Missionary Pioneer, Martyr*

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<sup>11</sup> Barnes, *In Salisbury Square*, p.170; Circulation figures for magazines produced by the CMS give some indication of their popularity 'The Sunday-school Letter circulation reaches 42,000 a month, while each Sunday-school Lesson has an edition of 81,000 and upwards. A Paper for Schoolboys, and a Terminal Letter to Schoolgirls mean the output of a total of at least a hundred thousand such papers at frequent intervals'; p.170.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Phillip Waller, *Writers, Readers, and Reputations: Literary Life in Britain 1870-1918* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2008), p.53.

<sup>14</sup> *The Sedberghian*, 1890.

<sup>15</sup> Cuthbert Lennox, *James Chalmers of New Guinea: Missionary Pioneer, Martyr* (London, Andrew Melrose, 1902); According to John Hitchen in his study of Chalmers, this was much to the annoyance of Richard Lovett, the official biographer for the LMS and his publisher the RTS. When Lennox's book appeared without any reference to Lovett's official biography, the RTS considered court action as Lennox

(1902) drew heavily upon the information supplied in earlier biographies. Selling for 2s. 6d. it went through five printing runs in three years and was described by reviewers as ‘the story of a man as brave, and withal as broad-minded and prudent, as ever put his hand to the missionary plough. We shall not attempt to abbreviate it; it must be read as it stands’.<sup>16</sup> Lovett’s official biography *James Chalmers, His Autobiography and Letters* (1902) described by one reviewer as ‘one of the classics of modern missions’ soon followed, and due to its success, the RTS commissioned him to write a biography suitable for children.<sup>17</sup> Within *Tamate: The Life and Adventures of a Christian Hero* (1904) it is explained that:

the main purpose of the author has been to show that Tamate (the Rarotongan version of his surname was the name Chalmers preferred to be called) whose great aim in life was to do good to others, was as bold, as courageous, and as worthy of imitation as any explorer, man of science, soldier, or statesman whose name is famous in British annals.<sup>18</sup>

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had used, without acknowledgement, material from an article by Lovett published in the *Sunday at Home*. After numerous letters and a formal meeting between the NSSU, Melrose the publisher, and the R.T.S., it was agreed ‘to cancel the copyright passages... issue a new preface acknowledging the indebtedness of the book to the publications of the [R.T.] Society, and to withhold all further issue of the book’; as quoted in John Mason Hitchen, ‘Formation of the Nineteenth Century Missionary Worldview: The Case of James Chalmers’, unpublished Ph.D., thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1984, p.116.

<sup>16</sup> *The Spectator*, 1902.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Lovett, *James Chalmers, His Autobiography and Letters* (London, R.T.S.,1902); *London Quarterly Review*, 99 (1903), pp.174-5; Lovett was born in 1851 and by 1876 was accepted as a minister in Rochdale but changed direction six years later to become Book Editor of the RTS. He became a director of the LMS writing the society’s history for its centenary in 1899; *ODNB*.

<sup>18</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, Preface; Lovell also wrote *James Gilmour and His Boys* (London, RTS, 1894).

The NSSU used stories of Chalmers within their ‘Christian Education Materials’ and commissioned Lennox’s 1902 work *Chalmers of New Guinea* (1902) as part of their ‘Splendid Lives’ Series which included supplementary reading for brighter pupils.<sup>19</sup>

As noted in the Introduction several societies including The SPCK and the RTS (publishers of the *BOP*) and commercial publishing houses such as Macmillan, Seeley, and S.W. Partridge all produced biographies based on the missionary hero.<sup>20</sup> This trend was highlighted by Eugene Stock - editor, administrator, and historian of the CMS - in his four volume *History of the Church Missionary Society* (1890) when discussing Dawson’s biography of missionary James Hannington:

Mr. Dawson’s biography of him has effected a complete revolution in regard to missionary literature. Prior to its issue, publishers would not look at missionary books; if they published such books they could not sell them. Now, on the contrary, there is a large market for missionary books of all kinds; and they pour from the press in increasing numbers. The Life of Hannington not only achieved an unprecedented success itself; it also opened the way for a host of others. And then, what a character it displayed! What an example of unselfish devotion! And what a testimony to the reality of ‘experimental religion’! <sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Lennox, *James Chalmers of New Guinea* as quoted in Hitchen, ‘Formation of the Nineteenth Century Missionary Worldview’, p.130.

<sup>20</sup> The RTS was founded in 1799 and its founders belonged to the LMS and financed foreign missionaries through its profits. For an interesting article based upon the success of the RTS see: Aileen Fyfe, ‘Societies as Publishers; The Religious Tract Society in the Mid-Nineteenth Century’, *Publishing History*, 58 (2005), pp.5-41.

<sup>21</sup> Stock, *History of the CMS*, p.414.

The production of missionary books was again discussed at the 1910 World Missionary Conference where it was noted that:

Small editions of books published by the Societies, limited in sale by their own imprints, cannot hope to compete with the big editions issued by the modern publishers, either in quality, or appearance, or price...Moreover, co-operation would enable the Societies to lead public opinion in this matter instead of being obliged to follow it; to create the right demand by offering the right supply. At present, generally speaking, they are often only strong enough to supply whatever may happen to be in demand.<sup>22</sup>

Publishers' catalogues usually found as an Appendix at the back of many popular books also reveals the extent of their popularity. For example, Seeley advertised 'Missionary Biographies: With Many Illustrations and a Frontispiece in Colour' (Figure 10) and offered a range of titles at varying prices.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, S.W Partridge in their 1909 Catalogue offered twenty-six, fully illustrated 'Popular Missionary Biographies', including '*Grenfell of Labrador, William Carey: The Shoemaker who became the Father and Founder of Modern Missions and Missionaries I have Met, and the Work they have Done*'.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Home Base of Missions*, p.35.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Dawson, *Livingstone: The Hero of Africa* (London, Seeley, 1917).

<sup>24</sup> *S.W. Partridge Co.'s Catalogue of Popular Illustrated Books*, 1909 included as Appendix in Isabel S. Robson, *Two Lady Missionaries in Tibet* (London, Partridge, 1909).

# MISSIONARY BIOGRAPHIES

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS AND A FRONTISPIECE  
IN COLOUR

*Extra crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.*

**A HERO OF THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.** Being the Life of Dr. T. L. Pennell, of Bannu, told for Boys & Girls. By A. M. PENNELL, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), B.Sc.

"This is the glorious life-story of Dr. T. L. Pennell retold for boys and girls."—*Church Family Newspaper.*

"The life-story of a fearless Englishman of the best kind."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"Rightly named . . . He is a splendid example of the influence a man may wield over savage tribes by strength of character and uprightness."—*Athenaeum.*

**JUDSON, THE HERO OF BURMA.** The Life of Judson Told for Boys & Girls. By JESSE PAGE, F.R.G.S., Author of "The Black Bishop," &c. &c.

"A stirring life-story."—*Schoolmaster.*

"There is not a dull page in the whole book."—*Life of Faith.*

"Mr. Jesse Page has a graphic pen, and he tells in a most interesting and fascinating manner the story of the life of the first missionary to the Burmese."—*Record.*

**ON TRAIL & RAPID BY DOGSLED & CANOE.** The Story of Bishop Bompas's Life amongst the Red Indians and Esquimo told for Boys & Girls. By the Rev. H. A. CODY, M.A.

"A book of golden deeds, full of inspiration."—*Queen.*

"An admirable picture of a great career."—*Spectator.*

"The astonishing adventures of Bishop Bompas amongst Red Indians and Eskimos."—*The Challenge.*

**MISSIONARY CRUSADERS.** Stories of the Dauntless Courage and Remarkable Adventures which Missionaries have had in many parts of the World whilst carrying out their duties. By CLAUD FIELD, M.A. (Cantab.), sometime C.M.S. Missionary in the Punjab.

**MISSIONARY KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS.** Stories of the Indomitable Courage & Stirring Adventures of Missionaries with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts, & the Forces of Nature in many parts of the World. By JOHN C. LAMBERT, M.A., D.D.

SEELEY, SERVICE & CO. LIMITED

Figure 10 'Missionary Biographies with Many Illustrations and a Frontispiece in Colour'; Dawson, *Livingstone: The Hero of Africa* (London, Seeley, 1917).

Appearing in the 1915 Christmas edition of its in-house magazine *The Church Missionary Gleaner* (Figure 11), an advert of ‘select Christmas Gifts from the CMS store of Books’ showcased the very wide range of ‘mostly inexpensive’ books the society produced.<sup>25</sup> Suggestively, the accompanying article urged readers that ‘far from reducing their order for this kind of goods during war-time’, they should ‘economize if necessary in any other direction rather than this’.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 11 ‘Select Christmas Gifts’; *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1915.

The missionary societies did, however, heed the advice of the 1910 conference. The United Council for Missionary Education published a series of ‘Yarns’ intended for the

<sup>25</sup> *The Church Missionary Gleaner*, 1915.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



‘use of leaders and teachers of boys’, which eventually totalled ‘22 volumes from 1913 to 1940’, with mission author Basil Mathews producing five in the series.<sup>27</sup> This ‘higher interest’ in missionary literature and the popularity of the missionary biography, according to the RTS, resulted in a ‘large and increasing missionary library, biographical, historical, descriptive’, and ‘the lives of great missionaries illustrate, with a deep personal interest, the greatness of the work’.<sup>28</sup> That commercial publishing houses were producing numerous biographies of missionary heroes provides some indication that they were considered a lucrative commodity. This was in part due to the successful marketing campaigns that made the missionary hero visible to children.

The following examples of material about missionary James Chalmers show the intent and extent of the marketing strategy. In June 1901, the LMS Literature Committee commissioned an ‘uncoloured portrait of the late James Chalmers’ which they suggested should be sent for circulation, while the literature prepared for their Orient Exhibition to be held between 4 and 12 July 1908, included ‘A Missionary Alphabet: for recitation at missionary entertainments’ with the rhyme for the letter ‘C’ stating:

For wild New Guinea Chalmers gave his strength,

True pioneer, resourceful kind and brave -

Clubbed by the cannibals he died at length,

The very men he had gone to save.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Griffiths, ‘Popular Imperial Adventure’, p.62; These included Claverdon-Wood’s *Yarns on Heroes of India* which was written with the belief that stories of missionary adventure ‘appeal to the instincts of hero-worship and space hunger’ with ‘Notes and Suggestions’ by Stanley Nairne, Captain 18<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh Company, The Boys Brigade’; J. Claverdon-Wood, *Yarns on Heroes of India* (London, UCME.,1915), p.2.

<sup>28</sup> S.G. Green, *The Story of the Religious Tract Society for One Hundred Years* (London, RTS, 1899), p.124.

<sup>29</sup> *A Missionary Alphabet: for Recitation at Missionary Entertainments* (London, L.M.S.,1900) quoted in Hitchen, ‘Formation of the Nineteenth Century Missionary Worldview’, p.133.

Chalmers also featured in the new ‘Lantern Lectures’ series which the LMS launched in 1900 with high hopes ‘that much more use will be made of ... the three sets on Livingstone, Chalmers, and Williams. Biography in this form makes an excellent approach to audiences not very familiar with our missions and comes more nearly to the form of a story than any other lantern lecture’.<sup>30</sup> The LMS also produced a missionary game ‘A Voyage in the LMS Steamship “John Williams”: A Missionary Game for Young People’, which allowed players to explore places visited by Chalmers and discover where he had died.<sup>31</sup> And in 1915, Basil Mathews produced a lesson as part of ‘a Programme for Spring’ designed to celebrate the life of Chalmers which he suggested could be used ‘in every church, Sunday School and young people’s meeting’ to illustrate how ‘the forceful character, the entire devotion and the unwavering love for a little people shown by our last martyr ought ... to stir our heart afresh to the same high enterprise’.<sup>32</sup>

Another way missionaries were promoted was through the Juvenile Missionary Auxiliaries and Bands formed in many Sunday schools. Ellen Wilkinson born in 1891 whose father was a ‘half time worker in a cotton mill’ recalled how at various missionary meetings at her Wesleyan Sunday school ‘made speeches, dressed up as a Chinese or Indian girl’.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, talks given by missionaries’ visiting home on furlough provided children with information about the missionary field. Miss E. Ritson

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<sup>30</sup> *The Hundred and Twentieth Report of the LMS*, p.34.

<sup>31</sup> Hitchen, ‘Formation of the Nineteenth Century Missionary Worldview’, p.134; Hitchen also refers to the Minutes of the LMS from December 1902 which stated that ‘the Cantata prepared by Miss Balgarnie, based on Mr Lovett’s Life of Chalmers had been printed for sale at fourpence’; p.134.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.135-136.

<sup>33</sup> As cited in June Purvis, ‘The Experience of Schooling for Working-class Boys and Girls in Nineteenth Century England’, in I. Goodison & S.J. Bell, eds., *Defining the Curriculum: Histories and Ethnographies* (London, Routledge, 1984), p.99.

of Tokushima, Japan, for example, was ‘in Liverpool from March 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>. Her addresses, which were much appreciated and we doubt not will bring forth abundant fruit, were given in six girls’ schools in the city and suburbs, a large day-school, and a Sunday-school. C.M.S literature was circulated...altogether 1,300 young people were reached’.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, missionary Mrs Hinderer while home on furlough is described as telling ‘African tales to factory girls [and] spoke of dangers and toils and triumphs’.<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Howard born in 1873 also recalled the ‘really inspiring missionary meetings’ connected with St Mary’s church in the 1870s and 1880s which she stated ‘took our imaginations out into a freer and larger world, and we learned to know and admire personally Dr Peck, the sailor apostle to the Eskimos, and many of the pioneer workers in Uganda and other parts of the world’.<sup>36</sup> Although the visits were heralded as successful by the mission boards, they did not always have the intended effect. Born in 1905 in Salford to working-class parents, Robert Roberts described ‘gabbling in anticipation’ when a missionary just back from Africa visited his school with the promise of a lecture, a magic lantern show and a display of exotic creatures in glass jars.<sup>37</sup> The missionary, however, was described by Roberts as talking in a ‘London’ voice and the exotic creatures, as ‘peculiar and very dead’.<sup>38</sup> Although Roberts was unimpressed with the actual visit, his eager anticipation clearly illustrates that the visiting missionary was viewed both as adventurous and exciting. The missionary

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<sup>34</sup> *The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, 1903.

<sup>35</sup> Buckland, *Women in the Mission Field*, p.67.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Howard quoted in Mary Hewlett Martin ‘Children and Religion in Walthamstow and Leyton c1750-c1870’, unpublished Ph.D., thesis, 1999, University of London, 2000, pp.513-514.

<sup>37</sup> Roberts, *A Ragged Schooling*, p.162.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.164; According to Frank Prochaska ‘Children often travelled for miles to hear an address delivered by a missionary back from Africa or Asia’; F. K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-century England* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2003), p.88.

biographies were, however, produced to appeal to young children and articulated the imperial ideal by providing accounts of extraordinary courage and dauntless optimism against overwhelming odds. As we discussed in Chapter Four representations of the missionary hero became an integral part of the concerted effort to teach British children how to act for their own good, and for that of the wider world. ‘Country lad’ Benjamin Nightingale, for example, described as how as a child he was:

...greatly interested in missionary stories, which were often most exciting; for in those days the romance of Christian missions was at its height and “The Juvenile Missionary Magazine” was my great delight, [I] read every sentence in it, long preserved and treasured the copies and often felt that I would like to live and work in those strange and distant lands with which they were concerned.<sup>39</sup>

Having read about the missionary, Benjamin Nightingale’s wish to ‘live and work in those strange and distant lands’ corresponds with the ‘hero of Empire’ identified by John Mackenzie.<sup>40</sup> For Mackenzie, the ‘hero of Empire’ journeyed into other cultures, and through the defeat of ‘barbarism’ expanded the moral order all within ‘strict moral bounds’.<sup>41</sup> Within the missionary stories as was the case within school textbooks discussed in Chapter One, children were often reminded of their place in the empire, as Georgina Gollock, secretary of the CMS Women’s Department and author, clearly stated:

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<sup>39</sup> *Blackburn Times* article ‘Birth and Early Life’ by Rev. Dr. Benjamin Nightingale (1854-1928) reproduce at: <http://www.cottontown.org/Names%20of%20Note/Pages/Notable-Names-of-Blackburn-and-Darwen.aspx> accessed 5 March 2016.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; Mackenzie, ‘Heroic Myths of Empire’, p.113.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

We who belong to the British Empire ought to take a special interest in geography- firstly, because we ourselves are so small; and secondly because our foreign processions are so large. It is wonderful to remember what a tiny place England is. You could put ... two hundred into Africa. And yet how much stronger and more prosperous England is than any of these countries, because she has the Word of God.<sup>42</sup>

Children were also told of their privileged position regarding their education. In a lesson plan devised by B. Elderkin in the *Practical Teacher* (1896) it was argued that ‘much of what is most essential for boys and girls to learn may be successfully taught through biographies’.<sup>43</sup> Elderkin explained that lessons should stress how eminent men and women have often struggled for education ‘and would have given all they possessed to have had such chances of learning as are now the common heritage of every British boy’.<sup>44</sup> One lesson outlined by Elderkin analysed the life of David Livingstone:

Who has not heard of Dr. Livingstone, the great African missionary and traveller? At the age of ten he was sent to work in a factory, having had scarcely any schooling; but his first savings were spent in the purchase of a Latin grammar, which he mastered along with a large amount of general reading by sitting up at night after his twelve hours’ work in the mill. When Livingstone conceived the ambition of being a missionary, the great difficulty was how to obtain the necessary medical degree. He

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<sup>42</sup> Georgina A. Gollock, *Light on Our Lessons: A Missionary Book for Boys and Girls* (London, CMS, 1892), pp.52-3; Georgina Gollock within the CMS memorial minutes it is explained that ‘She stimulated C.M.S. work among children and initiated efforts among girls of leisure and indeed every plan for advantage during her period of service showed traces of her fertile thought and dedicated imagination’; Paton Williams, ‘Georgina Ann Gollock’, *International Review of Missions*, 30.2 (1941), p.242.

<sup>43</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1896.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

set himself to work on such studies as he could master by himself, practiced the strictest economy while work at the factory was plentiful and then out of savings of the summer months, paid for his attendance at college classes in the winter.<sup>45</sup>

This lesson was intended not only to praise David Livingstone's achievements but also to ask children 'what such examples teach us about our own educational advantages' in a clear attempt to instil the desirable traits of self-improvement, hard work and economy.<sup>46</sup> In line with popular discourse on the moral and social development of children which aimed to transform them into 'citizens of their community and nation', the biographies became a useful tool for disseminating and guiding children in ideas of self-achievement and good citizenship; offering working-class children a sense of belonging to a great nation, and to borrow Anderson's term, to an imagined community. This notion of a collective imperial identity was clearly provided within *Missionary Heroes of Africa*:

I daresay you have had a share in the Jubilee festival this year, and no doubt you have been told how greatly England has prospered and advanced during the reign of our Queen. It would have been a sad thing if that were all! When God blesses a nation, He means that nation to be a blessing to other people. And England has been a blessing to some nations far away.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Stock, *Missionary Heroes of Africa*, p.203.

And similarly, fifteen years later the same message was repeated in the Preface to Charles A. Abel's *Savage Life in New Guinea* (1902): 'It is a very great pleasure to me to have the opportunity of writing this book for you boys and girls of Great and Greater Britain'.<sup>48</sup> It later asks:

If ever you British boys and girls sing the old hymn I used to sing as a child, do so with all your hearts when you come to the words:

'I thank the Goodness and the Grace  
Which on my birth have smiled,  
And made me in these Christian days,  
A happy English child'.<sup>49</sup>

The biographies offered to working-class children incorporated the values viewed by social commentators and educationalists as important and were promoted as an antidote to the perceived spiritual and social problems at home. To satisfy parents, educators and importantly appeal to their young readers, the biographies were often subject to rigorous editorial manipulation. It is, therefore, useful to discuss the strategies and intentions of biographers, to look in detail at the profile of two prolific biographers and to consider the role of illustrators and their illustrations.

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<sup>48</sup> Charles A. Abel, *Savage Life in New Guinea: The Papuan in Many Moods* (London, LMS, 1902), Preface.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

### The biographers – enactors of the national will.

According to Leon Edel the ‘biographer, after all, is as much of a storyteller as the novelist or historian, indeed he is a specialized kind of historian’.<sup>50</sup> Intervening in the life stories missionaries wanted to tell, as mediators biographers used the conventional and prescribed narrative features of the adventure story to meet readers’ expectation, and appease parents and educators. In one of the earliest essays to address the idea that literature written for children was not ideologically innocent, R.D. Sutherland argued that ‘authors of children’s books are inescapably influenced by their views and assumptions’.<sup>51</sup> He also suggested that books ‘thus express their authors’ personal ideologies (whether consciously or unconsciously, openly or indirectly)’.<sup>52</sup> Sutherland’s arguments have been developed further by John Stephens, who argues in *Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction* that writing for children is ‘usually purposeful, its intention being to foster in the child reader a positive appreciation of some socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shaped by the authors audience’.<sup>53</sup>

Ghassan Hage outlines what he describes as ‘the homely imaginary of nationalist practices’ in which dominant groups imagine themselves as occupying a ‘privileged position within national space’ and as such, perceive themselves as enactors of the national will.<sup>54</sup> In the same way, those responsible for writing, publishing and promoting missionary biographies often privileged certain rhetorical positions while

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<sup>50</sup> Leon Edel, ‘The Figure under the Carpet’, in S. Oakes, ed., *Biography as High Adventure: Life-Writers Speak on their Art* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts, 1998), p.20.

<sup>51</sup> R.D. Sutherland, ‘Hidden Persuaders: Hidden Ideologies in Literature for Children’, *Children’s Literature in Education*, 16.3 (1985), p.143.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> John Stephens, *Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction* (London, Longman, 1992), p.8.

<sup>54</sup> Ghassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society* (London, Routledge, 2000), p.38.



silencing and diluting others in their attempt to provide a positive image of the heroic missionary and prepare children to become imperial citizens through tales of bravery, adventure and self-sacrifice. What differentiated their texts from the fictional authors described by Sutherland and Stephens are their claims to be true.

Trustworthiness became an important facet of missionary narratives with many providing evidence of their sources to make their accounts more creditable. E.C. Dawson, author of *Heroines of Missionary Adventure*, for example, acknowledged the valuable information provided to him which included 'private letters, pamphlets and books', while *Yarns on Heroes of India* explained 'the Yarns themselves are historically true. The realistic detail and local colour give accurate setting without doing violence to the essential facts'.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, a 1911 Congregational Tract stated that 'the teaching material provided by foreign missions is the finest in the whole realm of life for presentation to the child and adolescent. It is full of colour and movement, strangeness and wonder, inexhaustible variety and stirring heroic story, with all the glory of romance and that added fact that it is true'.<sup>56</sup> The biographies were promoted as true accounts, and often this was highlighted in titles, introductions and prefaces, book reviews or bibliographies. John Lambert's *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*, for example, was described as 'True stories illustrating the devotion of heroism of missionaries: romantic and authentic; excellent for reading circles of younger students'.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> E.C. Dawson, *Heroines of Missionary Adventure*, Preface; Claverdon-Wood, *Yarns on Heroes of India*; p.3.

<sup>56</sup> *The Challenge of the Modern Situation: Some Thoughts for Free Churchmen* (London, Menzies, 1911), p.65 as quoted in Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.115.

<sup>57</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, p.399.

To combine heroic qualities with adventurous exploits, and provide children with a wholesome moral alternative to the Penny Dreadful, the truth was, however, often stretched. This was clear from the diary entry of missionary John Patterson cited in Yonge's 1875 *Life of John Coleridge Patteson*:

In these introductory visits, scarcely anything is done or said that resembles Mission work as invented in stories, and described by the very vivid imagination, of sensational writers. The crowd is great, the noise greater, the heat, the dirt, the inquisitiveness, the endless repetition of the same questions and remarks, the continual requests for a fish-hook, for beads, etc. - this is somewhat unlike the interesting pictures, in a Missionary Magazine, of an amiable individual very correctly got up in a white tie and black tailed coat, and a group of very attentive, decently - clothed and nicely-washed natives. They are wild with excitement, not to hear 'the good news', but to hear how the trading went on.<sup>58</sup>

Patterson's argument - so reminiscent of some of the debates about the deleterious effects of working-class reading tracked in previous chapters - that missionary work was 'invented in stories, and described by the very vivid imagination, of sensational writers' was also highlighted by missionary R.H. Stone in his account of a confrontation with a 'dangerous and angry mob' within *In Afric's Forest and Jungle or Six Years Among the Yorubans* (1899).<sup>59</sup> On this occasion, Stone explains that 'a mutilated form of this story was afterwards published in England' and 'had this been

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<sup>58</sup> Charlotte Yonge, *Life of John Coleridge Patteson: Missionary Bishop of the Melanesian Islands*, Vol. 2 (London, Macmillan, 1875), pp.173-174.

<sup>59</sup> R.H. Stone, *In Afric's Forest and Jungle or Six Years Among the Yorubans* (New York, F. H. Revell, 1899), p.93.

true, I should not have lived to write this true account'.<sup>60</sup> Missionaries themselves were also inclined to enhance their accounts. Missionary John Moffat acknowledged in one of his reports that 'one is so tempted to write for effect. I fear, judging from personal observation, that five-sixths of the interesting narratives in missionary periodicals are mere romances'.<sup>61</sup> His wife Emily Moffat also declared that the '...editor's pencil, identifying those passages that are fit for publication, can still be seen on many letters from the field. On one occasion, he even writes 'on no account publish this' and explains that 'there is so much bosh written and printed, so much that is calculated to mislead minds and to give the wrong impressions'.<sup>62</sup> Both secular and religious publishers, as previously discussed, concentrated on heroism and adventure. The biographies which R.H. Stone described as 'a mutilated form' were often adapted from memoirs, letters and reports, but could also be taken from earlier biographical works and tailored to meet the demands of publishers, organisations and readers themselves. It is useful at this point, therefore, to consider who was writing the biographies and to understand their motivation and aims.

To achieve this two biographers have been chosen, Basil Mathews of the LMS and Constance Padwick of the CMS, both of whom as workers for two of the main missionary organisations are suggestive examples to explore. The intention to focus on two missionary biographers incorporates ideas surrounding Alison Booth's ideas about 'network of positions' and Robert Darnton's influential 'communication circuit',

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> As quoted in J.P.R. Wallis, ed., *The Matabele Mission: A Selection from the Correspondence of John and Emily Moffat, David Livingstone and Others, 1858-1878* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1945), p.151.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.118-119

discussed in his seminal essay 'What Is the History of Books?'.<sup>63</sup> Within this essay, Darnton explains how printed books commonly pass through roughly the same life cycle which runs from 'the author to the publisher... the printer, the shipper, the bookseller, and the reader. The reader completes the circuit, because he influences the author both before and after the act of composition.'<sup>64</sup> In respect of authors (in this case Mathews and Padwick), he suggests 'Authors are readers themselves. By reading and associating with other readers and writers, they form notions of genre and style and a general sense of the literary enterprise, which affects their texts, whether they are composing Shakespearean sonnets or directions for assembling radio kits'.<sup>65</sup> As we know very little in regard to what happened within the publisher's cutting room, it is important to delve into what ideological concerns motivated their editorial practices which also provides some insight into the choices of other missionary biographers and editors about whom less is known. As we shall see both Padwick and Mathews explicitly concerned themselves with educational theory and were avowed supporters of heroic literature, although they held very different perspectives on gender.

#### Basil Mathews (1879-1951)

Mathews joined the staff of the *Christian World* and in 1910 attended as a reporter the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh which it is reported 'kindled a lifelong enthusiasm for Christian missions'.<sup>66</sup> In the same year, he became editor of the LMS's

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<sup>63</sup> Alison Booth, 'Life Writing', p.53; Robert Darnton, 'What Is the History of Books?', *Daedalus*, 111. 3 (1982), p.67.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *ODNB*.

publications, a role for which the *ODNB* suggests he was ideally suited: ‘To the skill of a professional journalist he joined natural teaching gifts, a fine understanding of a great field of Christian thought and action, and the persuasiveness of a man who believed what he wrote and wrote what he believed’.<sup>67</sup> Mathews held this position until 1919 and ‘contributed ... to the creation of a new type of missionary journalism and missionary literature’, which included new ideas in child study resulting in his publication *The Fascinated Child :Talks with Boys and Girls* (1909).<sup>68</sup> Within this publication Mathews stressed the role of the hero (the hero in this instance being Jesus, although he does mention Greenheart, who was missionary James Chalmers) but interestingly clearly sees the role of the hero as appealing to boys and girls in different ways:

Above all - and it is a scene to thrill boys and make their pulses leap - at the Trial and at Calvary, we have the supreme example in history of absolutely unboasting, undaunted, heroic bravery beside which even the stirring deeds of Greatheart or Nelson are relatively unimpressive. Grip a boy with the reality of that, and his loyalty to the Hero-Saviour has been won for life. And Jesus’ life has also all the qualities that stir the blood and set alight the gentler flame of idealism in the girls... It is the knowledge of a Jesus ...who makes a class of boys who own His leadership feel like some Round Table of Knights, no longer wielding the wooden sword of ‘make believe’ and ‘Let’s pretend’, but going out to fight in a larger battle. The girl finds in the service of her Hero not simply the cloistered virtue of

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Norman Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895–1945* (Oxford, Oxford U.P.,1954), p.548.

‘correct’ opinion and conventional attire, but the large and joyous adventure of ‘doing good’ and ‘having life more abundantly.’<sup>69</sup>

Apart from the numerous biographies which included *Yarns on African Pioneers* and *Livingstone the Pathfinder* which ‘won speedy and widespread popularity and set the pattern for a successful series of missionary biographies’, Mathews also edited the LMS publication *News from Afar* which was aimed at children between the ages of approximately seven to twelve.<sup>70</sup>

#### Constance E. Padwick (1886-1968)

Constance E. Padwick trained as a teacher having studied Arabic at the University of London. Between 1909 and 1916 she was employed on the home staff of the CMS and in 1909 became editor of children’s magazines stating that ‘I have come to the deliberate conclusion that it is as a C.M.S literature missionary, if C.M.S. will have me, that I want the privilege of serving’.<sup>71</sup> Padwick worked between 1916 and 1921 in Cairo for the Nile Mission Press and apart from returning to London to continue her studies, worked in Egypt and Palestine until she retired in 1952. Much of her writing was based upon the Muslim faith and included the biography of Temple Gairdner which was described within an article celebrating her life as ‘one of the classics of missionary biography of this century’.<sup>72</sup> In discussing her writing for children, the author Kenneth Cragg states:

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<sup>69</sup> Basil Mathews, *The Fascinated Child: Talks with Boys and Girls* (London, Jarrold, 1909), p.17; as quoted in Brewer, ‘The Hope of the World’, p.191.

<sup>70</sup> *ODNB*.

<sup>71</sup> Kenneth Cragg, ‘Constance E. Padwick 1886-1968’, *Muslim World*, 59.1 (1969), p.3.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*.

The father of the children with whom she lived through most of her teens in London was James Pratt, grandson of Josiah Pratt, a founder in 1799 of the Church Missionary Society. Her early biographies *White Heroines of Africa* (London, UCME, 1914); *Mackay of the Great Lake* (London, Mitford, 1917) ...were all in the familiar vein of missionary education.<sup>73</sup>

Missionary education was important to Padwick and her article written in 1917, as previously discussed, advocated three important aspects of effective missionary work. Padwick explained how 'The Talks' series of lesson-books which started in 1905 marked a new 'era of effort and thought'.<sup>74</sup> An example from the 'Talks Series' *Talks on China* (n.d.) will be discussed in Chapter Nine.<sup>75</sup> Padwick, however, was keen to suggest that 'to raise the standard of missionary lesson-material...higher teaching skill was needed in the writers'.<sup>76</sup> Padwick was a strong advocator of using the hero as an educational tool, however, she was also resolute in her opinion of how the hero should be used: 'The immediate problem for Christian teachers in writing these books, or in using them with boys and girls, is how best to let Christ shine through His heroes, that the children may see in missions not the enterprise of men on His behalf, but His own outgoing through His men and women'.<sup>77</sup> Within her *White Heroines in Africa*, for example, Padwick clearly used this idea suggesting in a lesson that 'we will tell them the

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>74</sup> Padwick, 'Children and Missionary Societies', p.574.

<sup>75</sup> *Talks on China* (London, CMS, n.d.).

<sup>76</sup> Padwick, 'Children and Missionary Societies', p.574.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.571.

story of Christina the Wanderer, for it shows a loyal response to the claims of Christ, due to the glad conviction that He can never ask too much'.<sup>78</sup>

These perceptions and interpretations must, however, be examined in relation to variations in age, class and experience, and aware of the literary limitations of their readership many biographers including Mathews and Padwick effectively reinforced their narratives with lavish illustrations which contained a series of motifs defining imperial ideologies of heroic endurance, superiority and self-sacrifice.<sup>79</sup> Many illustrations were produced by popular illustrators of children's books, Ernest Prater, for example, well known for his illustrations in popular adventure stories by Henty and Ballantyne, was employed to illustrate a number of missionary biographies, including Basil Mathews's *Livingstone the Pathfinder* and *John Williams the Shipbuilder* (1915), and Constance Padwick's *Mackay of the Great Lake* (1917).<sup>80</sup> Prater also illustrated W.P. Nairne's biography of James Chalmers *Greatheart of Papua* (1913) which it was explained came with 'a map, four illustrations in colour and twenty-two in half-tone, chiefly from drawings by Ernest Prater'.<sup>81</sup> It is to the illustrators and their images we now turn.

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<sup>78</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines of Africa*, p.40.

<sup>79</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, for example, suggested that 'As children learn most from pictures in strong colours, so the best illustrations come from where the light of the Gospel is seen against the dark background of heathendom. Therefore, if those who prepare Sunday School courses draw more largely upon the mission field for their illustrations, the teaching would be enriched, and the reflex action upon foreign missions would be very considerable'; *The Home Base of Missions*, p.31.

<sup>80</sup> Basil Mathews, *John Williams the Shipbuilder* (London, Oxford U.P., 1915); As Zhihui Fang argues 'The short attention spans of the young child, coupled with their limited vocabulary, syntax and world knowledge, place special demands on illustrations to help develop plots and characters'; Zhihui Fang, 'Illustrations, Text, and the Child Reader: What are Pictures in Children's Storybooks For?', *Reading Horizons*, 37.2 (1996), p.138.

<sup>81</sup> W.P. Nairne, *Greatheart of Papua* (London, Oxford U.P., 1913), Title Page.



### Illustrators and their illustrations

Deborah Tannen has argued that the order of ideas within a text make sense to the implied reader, and in a similar way, illustrations can contribute to the coherence of the text by providing a visual context.<sup>82</sup> It was important for children to be able to recognise, interpret and understand the images within the biographies as without this the meanings attributed to them became futile. Historian Chang-Tai Hung argues that images mirror society, shape popular sentiments and are effective tools of persuasion.<sup>83</sup> Although focussing upon cartoons, his analysis is relevant when discussing the use of illustration, particularly his view that the choice of visual language - 'setting, figure, gesture, color' - was designed both to air the artist's view and to influence contemporary perceptions.<sup>84</sup> Importantly for a study concerned with readers who - for reasons of age and class - did not necessarily have well developed literacy skills, Hung argues that visual images are extremely effective even to those who cannot read, as 'complex situations' are reduced to simple images that often 'mask a forceful intent behind innocuous facade'.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, in her study of visual texts in nonfiction for children, Clare Bradford provides a clear understanding of the 'visceral and immediate way' visual texts work upon their readers, and how because of their capacity to inscribe ideologies they were especially powerful.<sup>86</sup> Investigating the 'narrative strategies of

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<sup>82</sup> Deborah Tannen, 'Introduction', in D. Tannen, ed., *Coherence in Spoken and Written Discourse* (Norwood, Ablex, 1984), pp. xiii-xvii.

<sup>83</sup> Chang-Tai Hung, 'The Fuming Image: Cartoons and Public Opinion in Late Republican China, 1945-1949', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 36.1 (1994), p.123.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*; Missionary James Hannington drew several cartoons detailing his experiences as a missionary which will be discussed in Part Two of this study.

<sup>85</sup> Hung, 'The Fuming Image', p.124.

<sup>86</sup> Clare Bradford, 'Picturing Australian History: Visual Texts in Nonfiction for Children', in A. Lawson Lucas, ed., *The Presence of the Past in Children's Literature* (Westport, Praeger 2003), p.99.

selection, shaping and focalization' used in illustrated nonfiction books, Bradford highlights their striking similarity to the role played by visual images in fiction.<sup>87</sup>

Illustrations without any specific narrative reference offered, as one historian has stated 'clues for the limping reader' implying, as it were, that the illustrations became 'systems of signification'.<sup>88</sup> Although they were useful to counteract a limited imagination or knowledge and act as a springboard from which readers could consider further and more complex imaginings, in opposition to this view by using detailed visual information, it is argued imagination could be stifled, readers offended or as one historian discovered some texts found to be of no interest were simply tossed into the bin.<sup>89</sup> This was an important lesson for publishers and interested parties who became acutely aware of the need to embrace modern ideas and to incorporate dynamic illustrations to buttress the narratives and effectively suggest character, advance the plot and infuse drama.

As discussed illustrations allowed children who could not read, or who had limited literacy skills, some understanding of the information authors wished to impart. As a result, like the written word they were subjected to editorial manipulation. The CMS, for example, readily admitted that 'Sometimes a missionary who does not know how to draw properly will just outline quite roughly a group of natives doing something unusual... Perhaps he only scratches it on the page of a note-book, or in the midst of a letter home; but if it comes to us we can make use of it, and turn it into a pretty

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.100.

<sup>88</sup> Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, Stanford U.P., 1998), p.172; System of signification is where meaning or significance is conveyed using signs.

<sup>89</sup> Rose, 'Rereading the English Common Reader, p.60.

picture’.<sup>90</sup> To attract and retain readership the pretty pictures produced from ‘scratches on the page’ were often turned into lavish and detailed illustrations which provided context and mirrored those within popular fictional works.<sup>91</sup>

In the 1880s the Aestheticism movement saw a heightened intellectual interest in the artistic principles in areas of literature, arts and architecture. This greater interest in illustrations for children’s books enabled by technological developments in the printing industry meant that many of the missionary biographies could include exciting images allowing them to compete with popular adventure books on a more even footing. The illustrations relied heavily upon previously encountered ideological and experiential meaning but also created stereotypes that were emulated visually and textually. Translated from the conventions of the adventure story, the illustrations along with carefully chosen captions reinforced the suspense and placed the reader at the centre of the action. As we will discuss later in this thesis, in later editions while the text did not change, it was often the case that the illustrations were modernised to make the missionary relevant and appealing to new generations of readers.

The front cover illustrations depicting exciting situations including struggles with wild animals, ferocious natives or mysterious witch-doctors (along with stirring titles) were equally important as they implicitly influenced readers’ horizons of expectation. As approaches to the production of colour printing evolved, so too did the quality, range and quantity of illustrations within the biographies. The usefulness of book covers in the process of reading is discussed by Suman Gupta in her *Re-reading Harry Potter* in which she argues that ‘the images and words on book covers convey a

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<sup>90</sup> Gollock, *Light on Our Lessons*, p.83.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

fleeting first impression of what may be in the book, arouse expectations; book covers draw certain readers in, select them as they select the book; book covers tacitly mould readers' expectations'.<sup>92</sup> The following image, for example, portrays the male missionary hero, James Hannington, unarmed at the centre of the scene, surrounded by threatening natives (Figure 12).<sup>93</sup>

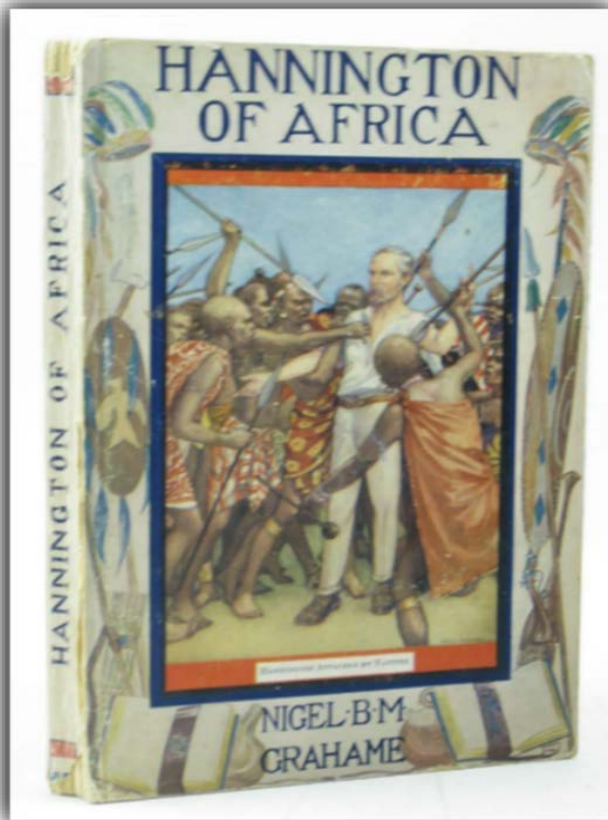


Figure 12 '*Hannington of Africa*; Grahame, *Hannington of Africa* (London, Seeley, 1924).

Melodramatic scenes such as this reinforced both imperial romance, the heroism of the missionary and the characterisation of the native as barbaric and in need of civilisation.

<sup>92</sup> Suman Gupta, *Re-reading Harry Potter* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2009), p.3.

<sup>93</sup> Nigel B.M. Grahame, *Hannington of Africa; The Fine Life-story of a Man of Lion-like Courage, Tenacity of Purpose and Kindliness of Heart, Retold for Boys and Girls* (London, Seeley, 1924); As we will discuss later illustrators often placed missionary women in similar scenes to highlight the dangers they encountered, but they were often accompanied by a caption reasserting their feminine or maternal role.

Many of the illustrations mirrored those found in popular adventure stories, for example, the image from Haggard's 1915 edition of *King Solomon's Mines* (the book Horace G. Hutchinson recalls as having a considerable influence upon him) clearly demonstrates the close connection between images in fictional adventure books and the missionary biographies (Figure 13).<sup>94</sup>

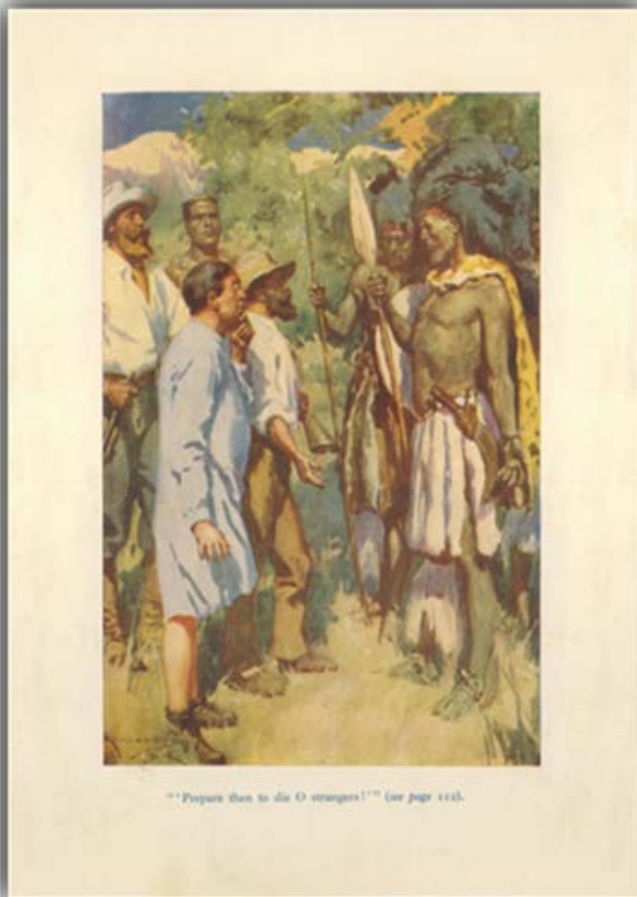


Figure 13 'Prepare then to die O strangers'; Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, p.168.

Another artist employed by the LMS was Harold Copping who illustrated several missionary books and painted the 'Hope of the World', which was circulated via Sunday Schools as a framed picture, a postcard and even as a jigsaw. The extent of its

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<sup>94</sup> H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines: A Novel* (London, Cassell, 1915), p.168.

influence was commented upon by the NSSU following his death in 1932 who explained that his works had ‘passed into millions of hands’.<sup>95</sup> As highlighted one important form of this material culture were postcards which were often used as teaching aids and incentives by the Sunday schools offering children visual evidence of missionary work, and to stimulate their imagination and to promote the imperial message. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, Hetty Lee-Holland, of the Church of England National Society suggested that any ‘averagely intelligent Teacher’ could gain a ‘profitable study hour...by making herself a self-teaching guide on a set of missionary postcards’.<sup>96</sup> Ian MacDonald in his work *The Boer War in Postcards* explains that many postcards ‘were more than just pictures. They were a leap into the world of wider communication [and] suddenly made people more aware of the world around them’.<sup>97</sup> Postcards were perfectly suited for missionary propaganda and widely circulated by missionary societies, Sunday schools and interested parties. They could also be used by family members to reinforce such messages: a copy of Harold Copping’s *The Healer* (Figure 14), for example, was sent to a Master Jim Palin of 8 Domingo Street, Anfield, Liverpool in 1917 with the following message:

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<sup>95</sup> As quoted in Sandy Brewer, ‘From Darkest England the Hope of the World: Protestant Pedagogy and the Visual Culture of the London Missionary Society’, *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief*, 1.1 (2005), p.1.

<sup>96</sup> Lee-Holland, *Self-Teaching in the Sunday School*, p.117.

<sup>97</sup> Ian McDonald, *The Boer War in Postcards* (Mbabane, Bok Books International, 1990), p. x; Saloni Mathur examines ‘the attraction of these persuasive little agents’ between 1890 and 1919 explaining that in Britain ‘over 860 million cards were reported to have passed through the British post, a figure that some claim is unmatched in history’; Saloni Mathur, ‘Wanted Native Views: Collecting colonial postcards of India’, in, Antoinette Burton, ed., *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities* (London, Routledge, 1999), p.99.

My dear Jim, I was so sorry to hear from Mother yesterday that you were ill & I do hope you are much better today, I hope Mother & Flo are quite well. I wonder if you can tell Mother a story about the picture on the other side of this card. If not, Mother will be able to tell you if you are a good boy. Lots of love, From Auntie Kathleen.<sup>98</sup>

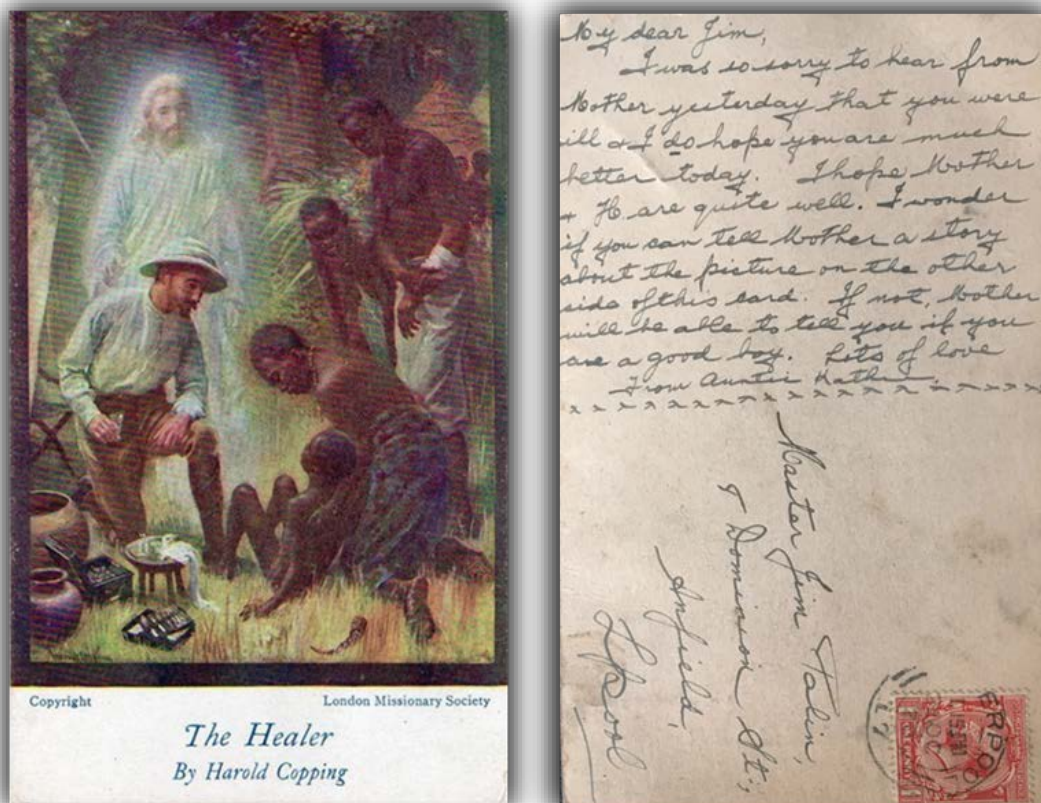


Figure 14 *The Healer* by Harold Copping.

<sup>98</sup> Postcard: *The Healer* by Harold Copping produced by the LMS; Personal copy.

### Conclusion to Part One

This thesis so far has provided evidence of how the biographies, often privileging certain rhetorical positions, were produced, illustrated and marketed, and how through their narrative position a positive image of the missionary as a hero was promoted. It has explored how working-class children were targeted by many commentators and educationalists through their quest for 'national efficiency' and discussed the basis of their concerns which included the suitability of what they were reading notably the accessibility of the Penny Dreadful. It has looked at how strategies to guide children 'towards the achievement of character through indirect, though persuasive, disciplinary influences' were used to address the perceived problems which included youth organisations, the elementary education curriculum, and importantly the Sunday schools.<sup>99</sup> It has considered the use of the missionary biography within the Sunday schools followed by a chapter dedicated to the hero and how narratives surrounding the hero were deemed as wholesome literature. It has also considered alleged differences between boy and girl readers and the type of books produced for them. The missionary biography was then discussed which included a summary of who the missionary protagonists were, along with an introduction to James Hannington and Mary Slessor who will feature throughout Part Two. It has also looked briefly at alternative readings of the missionary as heroic. This section concluded with a chapter based upon the production and marketing ability of the biographies, and discussed how biographers, publishers and illustrators provided children with accessible, entertaining and well-

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<sup>99</sup> Nathan Roberts, 'Character in the Mind: Citizenship, Education and Psychology in Britain, 1880-1914' *History of Education* 33.2 (2004), p.197.



illustrated narratives which promoted ideas of British cultural advantage and social ideals.

The second part of this thesis turns from the context within which missionary biographies were published and promoted to the themes that they commonly deployed, engaging in close textual analysis of a wide range of material which is now generally forgotten but during the period in question was actively promoted to working-class children through Sunday schools, giving them value laden messages about empire, nation and gender. It will comprise of four chapters which through a careful analysis of both the story and structure, will allow for an understanding of how biographers were able to frame important ideas, particularly relating to gender difference. It will also discuss how they were able to transmit social and cultural concerns through ideas of self-improvement and nationhood which enabled imperialist messages to be provided in aspects of British superiority, patriotism, socialisation and character formation. The first chapter will consider themes common in biographies of both male and female missionaries being descriptions of their childhood, accounts of travelling and their encounters with wild animals and often hostile natives. The biographies based upon Hannington and Slessor will be used to provide a more detailed discussion. Chapters Seven and Eight will differentiate between biographies of male missionaries and biographies based upon women, while the final chapter returns to the common theme of self-sacrifice, highlighting intertextual connections and the interplay between competing versions of ideal femininity and masculinity.

## CHAPTER SIX

‘glimpses of strange worlds were not documentary, whatever their intention, they were ideological, generally reinforcing the sense of superiority of “civilised” over the “primitive”’ - Childhood, Journeys and Hostile Encounters.

The biographies derived their appeal from the character and exploits of their subjects.

Serving pedagogical purposes by providing children with examples of brave moral

characters, the representation of the missionary hero was crucial for disseminating core

values of citizenship and self-help. To resonate with the working-class reader

biographers were keen to provide examples of situations and experiences that could be

recognised and understood. As Richard Altick suggests the child’s imagination was

‘constantly stirred [by] tales of travel and lives of missionaries. Even in bleak Yorkshire

there was no lack of exotic atmosphere and adventuresome narrative so long as

Methodist periodicals kept arriving from City Road’.<sup>1</sup> The chapters within Part Two

consider themes common within the biographies that provided ‘exotic atmosphere and

adventuresome narrative’.<sup>2</sup> This first chapter, Chapter Six, begins by considering how

the childhoods of both male and female missionaries were used to connect with their

readers (and gain support and elicit money for the missionary cause). It will also discuss

how they used childhood experiences as a medium to make moral statements regarding

vices such as the consumption of alcohol and gambling which were particularly relevant

topics for concern within the Sunday school organisation. It will also discuss how many

describe the reading of ‘healthy literature’ as a model for self-improvement. Childhood

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1989), p.118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

descriptions will be followed by accounts of their journeys and encounters, with wild beasts, savage natives and untamed landscapes used to reinforce the physical and mental capabilities of missionaries struggling against adversity. Both themes will incorporate descriptions of Hannington and Slessor and will consider whether traditional gender ideologies were challenged or reinforced within the narratives.

### Childhood

The childhoods of missionary men and women were used by biographers to provide the future generation with illustrations of men and women who often grew up in circumstances like their own. Although some famous missionaries came from privileged backgrounds many, not all, as we have discovered, started life in far from comfortable environments. Many biographies used childhood experiences to promote ideas based on self-improvement and the drive for respectability. For example, in Lovett's *James Gilmour and His Boys* (1894), it is explained that:

He has himself written an account of his boyhood, and one of his brothers has also told us more about him and his boyish ways. And you will see from these accounts that James loved fun and play, and sometimes a little mischief, just as other boys do. But he also got to love hard work, and did much hard work both at school and at college.<sup>3</sup>

By focusing on aspects of character development emphasised through hard work and self-improvement, children were given examples of how they too could become strong

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Lovett, *James Gilmour and His Boys* (London, RTS, 1894), p.13.

and capable and successful. Missionaries' childhood experiences were also used to remind readers of their British heritage, and to foster a belief that they could participate in adventures of their own and importantly participate in an 'imagined community' based upon a 'shared capacity to bestow the gift of foreign missions'.<sup>4</sup>

The biographies were written with several intended outcomes which included notions of imperial citizenship and socialisation interweaved with religious teaching. Important to the missionary societies was their aim to gain the support of children for foreign missions, which involved collecting money for the missionary cause. Both Frank Prochaska and Brian Stanley have discussed the involvement of children in the missionary movement, while Prochaska describes them as 'little vessels' being shaped in sentiment, attitude and behaviour, Stanley takes a more militaristic view describing them as a 'missionary regiment'.<sup>5</sup> The extent of their support was acknowledged in an 1878 treatise: 'The Sunday school children with their missionary-boxes, and the cards with the laboriously gathered shillings and sixpences - these are the real main support of our great societies'.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, an article in *The Wrexham Advertiser and North Wales News* reporting on a Sunday school meeting explained how: 'Another hymn was then sung and the missionary gift books presented to the collectors of sums over 5s towards the London Missionary Society, twenty collectors who had fulfilled these conditions

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<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.169.

<sup>5</sup> F.K. Prochaska, "'Little Vessels': Children in the Nineteenth-Century English Missionary Movement', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 6.2 (1978) pp.103-18; Brian Stanley, 'Missionary Regiments for Immanuel's Service : Juvenile Missionary Organization in English Sunday Schools, 1841-1865' in D. Wood, ed., *The Church and Childhood, Studies in Church History* (Oxford, Blackwell,1994); For further reading see: Hugh Morrison, "'Little vessels" or "little soldiers" : New Zealand Protestant children, foreign missions, religious pedagogy and empire, c.1880s-1930s', *International Journal of the History of Education*, 47. 3 (2011), p.303; Procheska also claims that by the end of the nineteenth century children's missionary societies ... numbered in the thousands, some of them with thousands of members... the pennies [adding] up to millions of pounds'; Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, p.77.

<sup>6</sup> As cited in Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.126.

receiving prizes'.<sup>7</sup> Although the collection of money for the missionary movement was significant and did provide 'a means and channel of education and inspiration', and as we have shown, was often the reason for prize books being received, this thesis is concerned with the examples of how heroism and exemplary behaviour within the narratives was used to 'instil into the British schoolboy and schoolgirl a sense of their Imperial and Christian missionary duty, and, if well worked, to draw out their enthusiasm about it' and provided children with the notion that they could overcome and enhance their situations through hard work and dedication.<sup>8</sup>

The messages within the biographies, however, were often the same regardless of the missionary's background. The author of *Fifty Missionary Heroes every Boy and Girl Should Know* (1913), for example, explained that 'The childhood and youth of the characters have been dwelt upon, and available incidents, showing them to have been actual boys and girls'.<sup>9</sup> A copy of Dawson's *Missionary Heroines*, a Sunday School prize book presented to Marie Sully for '50 attendance morning school', described the childhood of society girl Irene Petrie who 'had every advantage of birth, education, and breeding' alongside missionary Mrs Bowen-Thompson whom he explained had an 'equanimity...learned in the school of adversity, which so sternly educates all'.<sup>10</sup> In order to make the lives of the missionary heroes familiar, many recounted a childhood littered with 'boyish pranks verging on juvenile delinquency', or, for girls, as the childhood of missionary Annie Taylor's attests, as a 'restless, vivacious child, very difficult to control, often in mischief and eager for adventure', providing as Craig has

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<sup>7</sup> *The Wrexham Advertiser and North Wales News*, 1884.

<sup>8</sup> *Home Base of Missions*, p.32 & p.92.

<sup>9</sup> Johnston, *Fifty Missionary Heroes*, p.7.

<sup>10</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.66 & p.155; See Appendix A for copy of prize label.

argued ‘a pattern of normalcy the authors feel they must present’.<sup>11</sup> What is important in these descriptions is their redemptive aspect. At thirteen Taylor is described receiving ‘the call to consecrate herself to God, a call which, once obeyed, moulded and ennobled her whole future’.<sup>12</sup> As an adult, it is explained that Taylor became a missionary in China and became the first Western woman to enter Tibet.<sup>13</sup> Redemption became a common theme within the biographies, but it was not only restricted to the heroes of the narratives, as the rescued parents and friends from society’s ills were often included.

Although falling just outside our period the following description of missionary Jeanie Gilchrist’s father, provides a clear example and evidence of established ways of thinking. The account takes up the first four pages of her autobiography *Pioneer Missionary* (1920), and explained how he ‘kept a licensed house for the sale of intoxicating drinks which ...was frequented by the roughs of the place, and on Saturday nights, when the farm servants and labourers from the surrounding country came into the village, dancing and revelry were kept up till a late hour...He lived for the world, heedless and indifferent to things eternal’.<sup>14</sup> The text continued to describe how her father was ‘awakened by the power of the Spirit of God [and] saved by grace...to see his guilt and danger’ and after a period of deep distress:

The whisky barrels stared him in the face, and he stood condemned before them,  
The Spirit of God indwelling the young believer, and the “spirit” which makes  
men mad and ruins both soul and body, could not remain together under the same

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<sup>11</sup> Craig, *The Missionary Lives*, p.39; Robson *Two Lady Missionaries*, p.13.

<sup>12</sup> Robson *Two Lady Missionaries*, pp.13-14.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Jeanie Gilchrist, *Jeanie Gilchrist: Pioneer Missionary to the Women of Central Africa* (Kilmarnock, John Richie, 1920), p.5.

roof... the father of a family saved, and fully on the Lord's side, living a godly life and setting a bright example before his household finally staring the whiskey barrels in the face discharged their contents into the gutter.<sup>15</sup>

Biographies based on the life of missionary James Chalmers provide an interesting illustration of how his childhood mirrored those of his boy readers. His biographer Richard Lovett argued that 'although Chalmers became a great missionary, there was nothing of the story-book good boy about him in his early years. He lived a wild free life, near one of the great Lochs of Scotland, and it was natural that the high-spirited boy should play many pranks and get into many difficulties'.<sup>16</sup> Lovett then used examples from Chalmers's childhood to reinforce social conformity and to comment upon society's problems: 'at the next school which Chalmers attended the master was popular because he frequently gave sweets to his scholars, and also, unhappily, because his liking for whisky was so great that the boys had, in consequence of his drinking habits, many whole and half-holidays'.<sup>17</sup> As concerns continued over the moral and physical welfare of the future generation, the biographies were used as a medium to make moral statements regarding vices such as the consumption of alcohol and gambling which were particularly relevant topics for concern within the Sunday school organisation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, p.11.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>18</sup> As discussed in the Introduction Entwistle found that common themes within the prize books she examined were 'trust in God', 'self-sacrifice', 'philanthropic work', 'good-temper', 'teetotalism', 'industriousness', 'studiousness' and 'the influence of mothers'; Entwistle, 'Embossed Gilt and Moral Tales', p.86.

Although their purpose was to provide children with role models with which they could identify, the stories still risked alienating readers, as the messages they contained often subtly (or not) adopted models of middle-class authority. Padwick's *White Heroines in Africa*, for example, suggested Leaders prepare their lesson about missionary Anna Hinderer by considering the following class laden scenario: 'Have you ever travelled in the train with a working mother who alternately showed off, slapped, and fed with cakes and apples a jaded and undisciplined little person of three? Can our girls reach something higher than this?'.<sup>19</sup> Padwick again uses class as a marker when discussing the 'spiritual life' of Christina Coillard:

We all know of comfortable cliques in girls' clubs or Sunday classes and the real difficulty in keeping the members alert to seek for and welcome new-comers. That spirit of comfortable ownership, in the religion of the mothers of working-class homes, will be quite enough to deaden the missionary zeal of a town.<sup>20</sup>

This observation and the earlier example clearly highlights Padwick's belief that while encouraging girls to stay and welcome new members, she also imposes a middle-class view of domestic ideology and improvement upon working-class girls, all buttressed by ideas of Smilesian self-help and moral values of Christianity. Slessor proved to be useful for biographers as a model for self-help and as one argued 'we must not think less, but more, of her for coming out of such a home. It is not always the girls and boys who are highly favoured that grow up to do the best and biggest things in life'.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.32.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

<sup>21</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.9.



### Slessor's childhood and youth

The detail of Chapter One within Livingstone's *The White Queen of Okoyong* displayed the following information and provides a useful description of why Slessor's childhood made an important subject for biographers:

Chapter 1: Tells how a little girl lived in a lowly home, and played, and dreamed dreams, and how a dark shadow came into her life and made her unhappy; how when she grew older she went into a factory and learned to weave, and how in her spare minutes she taught herself many things, and worked amongst wild boys; and how she was sent to Africa.<sup>22</sup>

Her childhood incorporated examples which illustrated many of the perceived societal concerns surrounding working-class youth already discussed, but also her experiences 'bravely [battling] against hardship and difficulties' verified Smiles's ideas of self-help which claimed that the 'battle of life is, in most cases, fought uphill; and to win it without a struggle were perhaps to win it without honour. If there were no difficulties there would be no success; if there were nothing to struggle for, there would be nothing to be achieved'.<sup>23</sup> The messages within the biographies based upon Slessor offered girl readers examples of self-improvement they should strive to mimic. They were, therefore, considered valuable as an alternative to the perceived influence of the Penny Dreadfuls. This was very much in keeping with the earlier views of Salmon who had described 'the effect on the maiden mind of the trash the maiden buys' and suggested that:

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1.

<sup>23</sup> Smiles, *Self-help*, p.342.

if we were to trace the matter to its source, we should probably find that the higher-flown conceits and pretensions of the young girls of the period, their dislike of manual work and love of freedom, spring largely from the notions imbibed in the course of their perusal of their penny fictions.<sup>24</sup>

The values embodied within descriptions of Slessor's childhood were used to instil moral codes and direct the child reader in ideas of Christian morality. Descriptions of Slessor's mother, for example, provided authors with an opportunity to interweave principles of female domesticity and maternal instincts despite her disadvantaged situation: 'it was not a very fine house...but her mother, a sweet and gentle woman, worked hard to keep it clean and tidy, and love makes even the poorest place sunshiny and warm'.<sup>25</sup> Importantly, the biographers were also eager to call attention to the fact that her mother ensured that all her children attended Sunday school despite their deprived background. For Livingstone, this showed that 'no girl or boy should despair because they are poor or lonely or crushed down in any way; let them fight on, quietly and patiently, and in the end better things and happier times will come'.<sup>26</sup> This optimistic and positive view was again described in Cuthbert McEvoy's *Mary Slessor* (1917) which explained that her duties as an elder sister trained her 'to be the mother of her people; and the struggle with poverty made her the stateswoman and economist she afterwards became'.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Salmon, *What Girl's Read*, p.523.

<sup>25</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>27</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, pp.5-6.

Again to appear relevant to children, Slessor was made to appear ordinary. Her background allowed biographers to foreground the working-class experience while providing a canvas for critiques of unacceptable behaviour and its effect on family life. Slessor's father was a particular target. Livingstone, for example, described how his severe drinking cast a 'dark shadow, darker than death...over the home...He began to spend a large part of his money in the public-house, and his wife and children had not the comfort they ought to have had'.<sup>28</sup> In this context, Slessor's childhood epitomised self-help. McEvoy explained that 'her home difficulties might well have rendered her careless or sullen' but reminded readers in true Smilesian sense:

that her spirit was the victor, and not the victim, of the unfavourable elements of her environment; that instead of succumbing, as so many in her position might have done, she soared [and] making stepping stones of her very obstacles, she surmounted the first steep slopes of that eminent and heroic virtue that made her personal influence a blessing to thousands, and will make her name a lasting inspiration to the world.<sup>29</sup>

Livingstone also offered an interesting critique of the working-class experience and its usefulness to missionary work: 'her faith in the home-trained domesticated type - girls who had brothers and sisters and had learned to give and take and find duty in doing common things, rather than those turned out by the training schools, who were, she thought, apt to be too artificial and full of theories'.<sup>30</sup> Livingstone hastily clarified,

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<sup>28</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.4.

<sup>29</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, pp.5-6 & p.12.

<sup>30</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.197.

however, that she ‘did not, of course, depreciate culture, so long as practical qualities of heart and hand went with it’.<sup>31</sup>

Slessor’s childhood experiences provided opportunities for biographers to make powerful statements about social change and about the very different lives led by young girls in the 1850s and the 1910s. In describing Slessor’s working conditions, for example, Livingstone pointed out ‘How different her lot was from that of most girls of to-day! They have leisure for their lessons, and they learn music and do fancy work and keep house and bake-and how many hate it all!’.<sup>32</sup> Dress too, became a common theme in the biographies of Slessor, both in childhood and in Africa, with many commenting upon the plainness of her clothes. Livingstone, for example, explained how ‘her dress was coarse and plain, and she wore no pretty ornaments, though she liked them as much as her companions did, for she was learning to put aside all the things she did not really need’.<sup>33</sup> This description has a number of messages attached: not only are children made aware of the limited material goods available to Slessor but in common with conduct and advice books during this period, it highlighted Victorian values of female self-denial and moral discipline, particularly in respect of the ‘love of dress’.<sup>34</sup> This was a topic discussed within the 1857 *Sunday School Teacher’s Magazine* which explained that ‘The more one has to do with female scholars...the more do we deplore the evil effects of the love of dress, even among some of the humblest scholars’.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-11.

<sup>33</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, pp.8-9.

<sup>34</sup> Female ‘self-denial’ was often used within the biographies of women missionaries as opposed to ‘self-discipline’ within those based upon the male missionary.

<sup>35</sup> *The Sunday School Teachers’ Magazine*, 1857; The same magazine in 1867 also commented upon ‘that LOVE OF DRESS, which now more than ever is corrupting the morals of our young girls, absorbing their minds, to the exclusion of every better and nobler taste’. Incorporating the belief that the regular wage packets of young girls were detrimental, it was also argued that girls of the ‘working class are much to be

Descriptions of her dress were also used to explain Slessor's eccentricities in West Africa. *The Missionary Review* (1916), for instance, described how she was 'most unconventional in dress and appearance - she went unshod and hatless during all of her thirty years in Africa'.<sup>36</sup> McEvoy too provided a detailed description of her unconventional dress: 'Heaven knows who had dressed her. She wore a skimpy tweed skirt, and a cheap nun's veiling blouse, and on her iron-grey hair was perched rakishly a forlorn, broken picture-hat of faded green chiffon with a knot of bright red ribbon to give the bizarre touch of colour she had learned to admire among her surroundings'.<sup>37</sup> Slessor's appearance was therefore far removed from the ideal and required careful handling by her biographers. Livingstone, for instance, carefully crafted the fact that Slessor did not have shoes as a child into a reason for her unconventional behaviour in the missionary field: 'It was the custom then for girls and boys to go bare-footed in the summer, and Mary liked it so much that she never afterwards cared to wear shoes and stockings'.<sup>38</sup>

For such messages to appear relevant to children, Slessor had to made to appear ordinary. One later biographer, for example, described her as 'a wild lassie [who] ran about streets with other children as wild as herself', while Livingstone portrayed her as 'good and obedient, though like most girls, she sometimes got into trouble...She loved a

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pitied that they are their own mistresses at so early an age, having full liberty to spend the money they earn (which in our day is no small sum,) and being able to carry out every vain and foolish desire'; *The Sunday School Teachers' Magazine*, 1867.

<sup>36</sup> 'Books on Missions and Mission Lands', *The Missionary Review of the World*, 29 (1916), p.238.

<sup>37</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.59.

<sup>38</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p. 5; Similarly, Livingstone in his 1915 biography explained under the heading "'Eccentricities,' Spade-Work and Day-Dreams' how she never wore shoes and stockings 'although jiggers and snakes and poisonous plants were common in the bush pathways'; Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.133.

prank too, and was sometimes naughty'.<sup>39</sup> This image of Slessor as a 'wild, merry, eager-spirited factory girl' allowed biographers to use these traits to promote Slessor's ability to improve her situation and that of others.<sup>40</sup> Descriptions of her teaching at the local Sunday school and working with the 'wild boys of the streets' again gave biographers an opportunity to promote ideas of self-help.<sup>41</sup> Biographers often alluded to her interest in the missionary cause facilitated by reading of missionary literature and listening to visiting missionaries home on furlough. As discussed earlier in this thesis, comparisons were often being made between the early life of Slessor and David Livingstone. Parallel with descriptions of David Livingstone's childhood, her work ethic and thirst for knowledge was used to promote social values deemed important: 'she had to be up at 5 every morning in order to help in the work at home, and yet with all the strenuous hours she managed to find time to cultivate her mind; like Livingstone, propping a book up on her loom'.<sup>42</sup>

Through 'hard toil, self-sacrifice and earnest and sustained effort', one biographer explained 'It has been said that character is best seen in the way leisure hours are employed. Mary found her recreation in mission work. Especially the savage lads who warrened in the alleys were her choice'.<sup>43</sup> Stories of Slessor's ability to reach 'the wild boys of the streets' provided a useful critique of self-help, class difference and social mobility 'Mary Slessor was a powerful influence because she entered their world as one of them, with a faith in the better self of each that called into new life his all-but-

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<sup>39</sup> Esther E. Enoch, "*Ma*": *The Missionary Heroine of Calabar: A Brief Biography of Mary Slessor* (Glasgow, Pickering and Inglis, 1930), p.4; Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.5.

<sup>40</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.12.

<sup>41</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.240.

<sup>42</sup> Enoch, "*Ma*": *The Missionary Heroine*, p.6.

<sup>43</sup> Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, p.14.

extinguished longing for better things'.<sup>44</sup> Through accounts of her work amongst the 'toughs from the slums of the town', biographers could explain how she put 'many of them on the road to useful, happy living'.<sup>45</sup> One incident is repeatedly described. Before leaving for Africa, Slessor worked as a teacher in the local mission. Descriptions within the biographies explained how she found herself one evening surrounded by a group of 'undisciplined roughs who infested the neighbourhood'.<sup>46</sup> Readers are provided with graphic details of how she was threatened by the leader with 'a leaden weight at the end of a piece of cord', and by standing up to them gained their respect and to show their 'appreciation of her spirit' attended the local mission meeting.<sup>47</sup> Such descriptions of her 'brave spirit' allowed biographers to explain how her 'sympathy and her firmness shaped the boys into order and attention', but once again provided a backdrop for ideas of self-improvement. This was clear from the following description: 'on the wall of one of her bush houses in West Africa there used to hang a photograph of a man and his family. The man was the lad who had swung the lead. On attaining a good position, he had sent her photograph in grateful remembrance of what had been a turning-point in his life'.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.239.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.11.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.11-12.

### Hannington's childhood and youth

While Mary Slessor's childhood was defined by her difficult background James Hannington's childhood allowed biographers to tell a somewhat different story - while also showing how childhood actions, experiences and decisions effect, a one biographer stated 'the childhood shows the man. As morning shows the day'.<sup>49</sup> Dawson described Hannington as 'not by any means a perfect little boy' who was 'naturally passionate, and sometimes wilful. Like many other little boys, too, he loved play much better than lessons, and holidays more than hard work ...He meant well, no doubt, but he was always in some mischief or other'.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Ellis described how 'innumerable stories, illustrating James' mischievous temperament, have been preserved...His daring was in his nature, and it remained there until an intense, God-given earnestness made him apply his natural intrepidity in a way which produced glorious and abiding results'.<sup>51</sup>

Hannington's 'juvenile pranks' were accepted as natural and used by biographers to provide an image of a nature-loving and romantic disposition.<sup>52</sup> This imperfect image allowed children to relate to Hannington, but also made him instantly likeable. Described as 'a headstrong, passionate boy, with a marked individuality, and perfectly fearless', biographers provided readers with the idea that Hannington 'possessed a *commanding* - we do not say imperious-personality'.<sup>53</sup> One incident used to illustrate this passion repeated in many biographies was his attempt in 'one of his mad pranks...to

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<sup>49</sup> J.J. Leak, *James Hannington: The Merchant's Son who was Martyred for Africa* (London, Pickering & Inglis, 1920), p.5.

<sup>50</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.4.

<sup>51</sup> Leak, *James Hannington*, p.10.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.2.



blow up a wasp's nest by gunpowder', an ill-advised jape by which 'James lost the thumb of his left hand'.<sup>54</sup> Hannington's 'schoolboy escapades' - which also included 'lighting a bonfire in his dormitory' and 'flinging his rejected papers at the head of a long-suffering German master' - gained him 'sobriquet of 'Mad Jim', but they did also have a wider exemplary purpose with an implicit class dimension.<sup>55</sup>

In working-class children, this behaviour would not be viewed as an acceptable 'escapade' or 'prank' but rather as disruptive and as needing to be controlled. To justify his actions, many biographers described his 'strong sense of honour' and used as an example of the underlying 'strength of his moral character' the story of his 'broken promise' to his mother not to fight the school bully.<sup>56</sup> Explaining how Hannington 'always loved to tell the truth' and how 'there is always hope for the boy who hates to tell a lie', Dawson described how Hannington attacked the school bully and consequently received a 'tremendous thrashing'.<sup>57</sup> Having promised his mother he would not fight again, Dawson explained how the 'young imps' at school, realising he could not be provoked, 'made him thoroughly wretched' and after 'great provocation' he fought the bully and was never bullied again.<sup>58</sup> While Dawson acknowledged the 'broken promise', he justified Hannington's actions by explaining how 'we must remember the great provocation which he had received, and perhaps rather praise him that he had borne the heavy burden laid upon him so well and so long'.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, pp.19-20.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>57</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, pp.8-9.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

After leaving school at the age of fifteen Hannington began working for his father, but as Ellis explained it soon ‘became evident, painfully evident...that his heart was not in his work’, although Ellis was quick to remind readers that this was not due to ‘idleness, for the pursuits which lay near his warm heart he was tremendously diligent’.<sup>60</sup> In 1868 Hannington entered St. Mary’s Hall, Oxford and again biographers show him as a ‘far from industrious student’ but as ‘the leader in everything’.<sup>61</sup> ‘The young Englishman’s love for a stand-up fight’ is made clear in descriptions of his involvement in the ‘town-and-gown rows’ which are described as ‘long a disgrace to the University’.<sup>62</sup> Even though students were expected to remain within the college, Hannington is portrayed as being ‘in the thick of the melee’ and having witnessed the fatal blow which killed an undergraduate he is described as ‘filled with a Berserk rage and thirst for retribution’.<sup>63</sup> This incident within Dawson’s biography written for ‘boys and girls’ is described in such a way that Hannington is almost excused for his behaviour. Explaining that while ‘most plucky boys are fond of a fight. When they grow older, they learn that fighting is the least profitable of things, unless the cause is good and necessary’.<sup>64</sup> Class distinction is again brought into Dawson’s commentary: ‘a great mob of “townsman” composed of all the riffraff of the place used to assemble in the High Street. Against these, companies of undergraduates would sally forth’.<sup>65</sup> Although Hannington is described as ‘raging and indignant...the light of battle in his eye, and his fist stained red with the gore of his adversaries’, Dawson quickly explained that

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<sup>60</sup> Leak, *James Hannington*, pp.14-15.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>62</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.49.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.29.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

Hannington was ‘far from quarrelsome; but if he were attacked, he was as they say “bad to beat”’.<sup>66</sup> To restore Hannington’s character, biographers were keen to re-establish his good characteristics:

I never knew him to fall into any of those vices common to young men. While he was eminently social, he never indulged himself to excess. During his residence at Oxford he exercised a real and entirely salubrious influence over his fellows. At the club ‘wines’, under his presidency, sobriety became the order of the day, and to exceed became discreditable. He was, in his wildest moments, sound at the core, and there are not a few who will have felt the better for his companionship.<sup>67</sup>

Children are informed that after his first year at Oxford it was suggested that Hannington find a private tutor in the countryside ‘away from the allurements which are so closely associated with life in a large and more or less fashionable college’.<sup>68</sup> This proved successful and once ordained it was explained that he spent time in Derby learning how to work in a parish and Dawson wishing to provide an image of Hannington as adaptable and ordinary explained how he ‘won the hearts of the people’ and how his ‘frank and open manner took them by storm’.<sup>69</sup>

The childhoods of both Hannington and Slessor although from widely differing backgrounds allowed biographers to communicate to children various messages about self-improvement and character formation. Descriptions within the narratives of missionary childhood were commonly used to provide children with examples of their

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<sup>66</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>67</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.50.

<sup>68</sup> Leak, *James Hannington*, p.24.

<sup>69</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.63.

heroes as like themselves. Descriptions of their journeys and encounters in the mission field provided an opportunity for biographers to offer a critique of appropriate gender roles and to provide children of all classes, with ideas of British superiority in the face of adversity, which importantly provided children with a sense of belonging to a larger imagined community.

### Travelling and hostile encounters

As vanguards of Empire and ‘frontiersmen of all parts of our empire’ missionaries (along with explorers) were described by Baden-Powell in his *Scouting for Boys* as ‘peace-scouts, real men in every sense of the word’.<sup>70</sup> Baden-Powell’s reference to ‘real men’ is an indication of the emphasis placed upon missionary masculinity during the early twentieth -century. According to Walls, after 1880 the ‘missionary pioneer was spoken of in the vocabulary of the imperial pioneer’.<sup>71</sup> Confronting the challenges of the unknown, as discussed in Chapter Four, narratives based upon pioneering missionary work were often linked to the ‘literature of the imperial frontier’.<sup>72</sup> This was evident from the titles of many biographies, for example, *Yarns on African Pioneers to be Told to boys* and *Yarns on Heroes of the Lone Trail: A Book for Workers Among Boys* (1917).<sup>73</sup> In a similar way to school primers and popular adventure stories, maps and

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<sup>70</sup> Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, p.13; In 1911, the CMS produced a fictional book *The Peace Scout* which was ‘dedicated to the boy scouts of every land and to British boys all over the world’; Irene Barnes, *The Peace Scout* (London, CMS,1911).

<sup>71</sup> Andrew F. Walls, ‘The British: Mission as in the Imperialist Era, 1880-1920’, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 6.2 (1982), p.62.

<sup>72</sup> Jean & John Comaroff, ‘Through the Looking-glass: Colonial Encounters of the First Kind’, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1.1 (1988), p.10; For further reading see: W.J.T. Mitchell, ‘Introduction’, in W.J.T. Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002).

<sup>73</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*; A.P. Shepherd, *Yarns on Heroes of the Lone Trail: A Book for Workers Among Boys* (London, UCME,1917).

descriptions of landscapes were used as a 'medium of exchange' and 'a site of visual appropriation', offering an allegory of Christian progress, and synthesising civilisation and imperial expansion.<sup>74</sup>

The biographies also provided details of everyday life, geographical and topographical information which according to Susan Thorne helped 'to democratize the imperial process'.<sup>75</sup> Maps within the biographies were valuable tools for constructing 'a concrete (rather than purely abstract) cultural space' and for children provided the potential for realising the scale of the missionary's task and promoting national pride.<sup>76</sup> Through their association with mastery over the landscape, they were also used metaphorically to promote the missionary's goal to establish Christianity in undeveloped and uncivilised spaces. By depicting the missionary's journey and settlement, the enormity of the missionary hero's quest was validated. Within *Yarns on African Pioneers*, the book 'not intended' to go into the hands of the boys, it is suggested that 'it will greatly add to the interest in group or class work to get a large brown-paper outline map of Africa, and let the boys fill in the details as the Yarns proceed. All needed details will be found in the small outline map on pages 94-5'.<sup>77</sup> It was suggested for a lesson based upon the journey undertaken by missionary Alexander Mackay that to 'recall the determination of Mackay' and with the 'aid of a small map of the British Empire' leaders should 'Let the boys follow the voyage up the lake on the big map. Let one boy

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<sup>74</sup> Three popular adventure books from this period Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (London, Cassell, 1883), H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* and Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1912) all featured a map; James Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.19.

<sup>75</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.68.

<sup>76</sup> Phillips, *Mapping Men*, p.12.

<sup>77</sup> Basil Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, p.4.

take the brown-paper map home and draw Great Britain to scale in the bottom left-hand corner to contrast it with Victoria Nyanza, and marks Mackay's route from Zanzibar to Uganda'.<sup>78</sup>

Mackay was also a favourite with biographers, and many of their narratives contained maps of his journey through Africa.<sup>79</sup> In *The Story of the Life of Mackay* (1898) a book 'written especially for boys, in the hope that Mackay's example may lead many of them to think of Africa, and devote their lives to its moral and spiritual regeneration', children are exposed to two imperial messages through the image of a map.<sup>80</sup> The first comes from a description on page 2 of 'a large map of Africa' which Mackay's father 'suspends from a nail on top of the bookcase:

A quaint-looking map it was. Certainly no ships sailed on its waters; neither did rhinoceroses, hippopotami, or ostriches disport themselves on its shores, nor yet had the engraver

'O'er uninhabitable downs,  
Placed elephants for want of towns';

and yet strange it seemed, the greater part being delineated as an immense featureless blank, near the middle of which a solitary caterpillar crawled, with the label 'Mountains of the Moon' distinctly printed on its back. For up to this time the continent of Africa had been, as it were, hidden, and its myriad peoples almost unknown.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.56 & p.58.

<sup>79</sup> For further reading see: Alexander M. Harrison, *Pioneer Missionary of the Church Missionary Society in Uganda* (New York, A. C. Armstrong, 1890); A.E. Macdonald *Alexander Mackay, Missionary Hero of Uganda* (London, SSU, 1893); Alexander M. Harrison, *Mackay of Uganda. The Story of the Life of Mackay of Uganda* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1906); Fahs, *Uganda's White Man of Work*.

<sup>80</sup> Harrison, *Mackay of Uganda*, p.iii.

<sup>81</sup> Harrison, *The Story of the Life of Mackay*, p.2.

The second message again highlights the goals of empire, missionary enterprise and allowed children as British citizens to negotiate their place in the world:

The old map of Africa (see p.2) was discarded by the father; but the boy cherished his familiar friend and suspended it in his own room, where he spent many a happy hour in tracing on it the results of the most recent explorations. He used to say, 'I like to think that the missionaries had a hand in promoting these discoveries, and that Captain Speke has so nicely acknowledged it by suggesting Karague, Uganda, and Unyoro as favourable fields for missionary enterprise'.<sup>82</sup>

It was not only the biographical texts that provided children with narratives that enclosed, defined, shaped, structured and controlled space, associated games too offered children accessible and appealing images that contained a measure of power and authority and could be viewed as central tools in the creation of a national identity.<sup>83</sup>

“‘The Christian’ Series of Picture Models’ of David Livingstone from 1870 (Figure 15) provided children with a colourful landscape on which to place various cut-out figures.<sup>84</sup> On the reverse, it was explained how it offered ‘a descriptive story at back, and printed in full colours. Interest, Amusement and Knowledge are gained by making up these

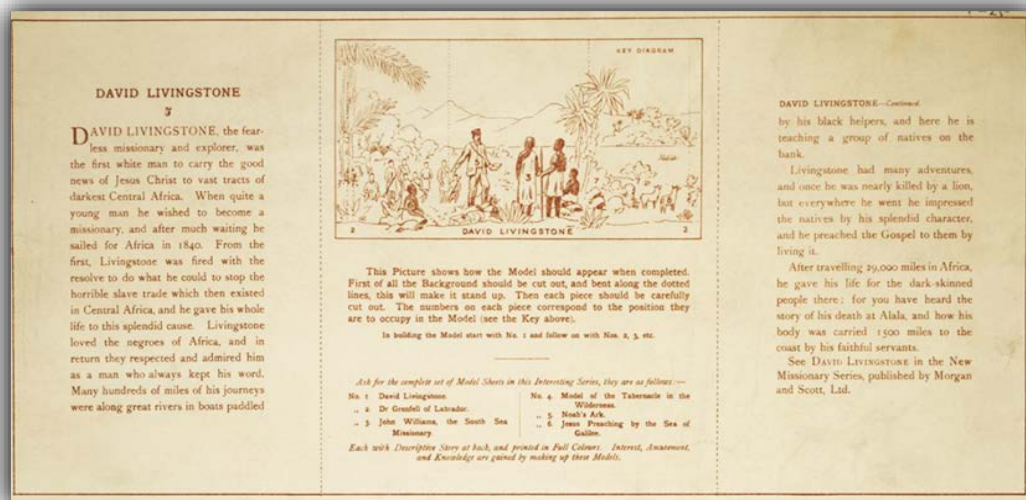
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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.iii & p.37.

<sup>83</sup> Phillips, *Mapping Men*, p.12; Within the successful geography textbook *Geography Generalised* children are informed that ‘In every period of their history, and in every part of the world, the Caucasian or European race have themselves been superior to all others in enterprise, energy, and courage. The inhabitants of every country and climate have felt and acknowledged their superiority, and the whole world seems destined...to come under their domination’; Robert Sullivan, *Geography Generalised; or an Introduction to the Study of Geography on the Principles of Classification and Comparison* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1854), p.192 as cited in Phillips, *Mapping Men*, p.14.

<sup>84</sup> David Livingstone: ‘The Christian’ Series of Picture Models, No.1 reproduced at: [http://www.sil.si.edu/exhibitions/artofafricanexploration/enlarge.cfm?id=10821&\\_ga=2.113906375.1919931476.1508690722-84997875.1508580996](http://www.sil.si.edu/exhibitions/artofafricanexploration/enlarge.cfm?id=10821&_ga=2.113906375.1919931476.1508690722-84997875.1508580996) accessed 13 September 2017.

Models' and following the 'descriptive story' children were directed to read the biography 'David Livingstone in the New Missionary Series, published by Morgan and Scott Ltd.'<sup>85</sup> The series also included Dr. Grenfell of Labrador and John Williams, the



South Seas Missionary.<sup>86</sup>

Figure 15 'David Livingstone; 'The Christian' Series of Picture Models'.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*



Descriptions of landscapes were equally important. A chapter entitled 'Mrs. McDougall: Among the Pirates of Borneo' by Dawson in his collective biography *Missionary Heroines of the Cross* (1912) - talked about the landscape of Borneo: 'the coast of Sarawak is described as beautiful. It is deeply indented by waterways, which are the high roads into the interior. Deep forests of great age come down to the water's brink and darkly fringe the winding rivers. In these woods are no wild beasts, but they were haunted by wilder men'.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, as part of the 'Splendid Lives' Series the SSU's biography based upon Alexander Mackay's journey in Uganda explained:

In a month he had cleared a splendid waggon road fifty miles long, through 'dense and thorny jungles' which offered resistance 'peculiar to themselves', Imagine a forest of lofty slender trees with a cop between of thorny creepers, so dense below that a cat could scarcely creep along, and branched and intertwined above, like green, unravelled hemp.<sup>88</sup>

Accounts could also be used to promote the bravery of the missionary in comparison to the native population. Chalmers, for example, in Lambert's *The Romance of Missionary Heroism* was described entering a New Guinea temple 'alone as the Chief who had accompanied him so far was too frightened to go further. It contained six strange figures with enormous frog-like mouths out of which small bats flew in rapid succession'.<sup>89</sup> And as opportunities increased for illustrations, these alien landscapes

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<sup>87</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.133.

<sup>88</sup> Alexander Mackay: *Missionary Hero of Uganda by the Author Of 'The Story of Stanley'* (London, SSU, n.d.), p.30.

<sup>89</sup> Lambert, *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*, Following p.288.

could also be depicted visually (Figure 16), reinforcing the challenges facing a missionary in a hostile landscape.<sup>90</sup>



Figure 16 'I entered that eerie place'; Lambert, *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*, p.288.

As Hermann Wittenberg suggests, these topographical descriptions can be viewed as another form of control: 'landscapes and the arrangement of colonial bodies within their pictorial and textual spaces are expressive of the subjectivities generated by the ideological needs and constraints of particular colonial moments'.<sup>91</sup> The rhetoric within the biographies also identifies with Mary Louise Pratt's 'monarch-of-all-survey' trope

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.288.

<sup>91</sup> Hermann Wittenberg, 'Imperial Space and the Discourse of the Novel', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 13. 1-2 (1997), pp.128-129.

which she argues was often used in nineteenth-century travel literature highlighting the authoritative tone of verbal and visual pictures.<sup>92</sup>

Particularly relevant to this study is Pratt's acknowledgment that 'depicting the civilizing mission as an esthetic project is a strategy the West has often used for defining others as available for and in need of its benign and beautifying intervention'.<sup>93</sup> Many biographies provided evidence of the civilised and cultivated landscape once the missionary had taken control. For example, G. Watt Smith in his biography of David Livingstone, clearly connects the landscape to British and Christian achievement:

...to the west of him, he had seen in his mind's eye a colony growing up from which would go out all the benefits of the Christian civilisation to bless her children...Her plateaus, her slopes striated with valleys clothed with foliage, her winding rivers, her deep gorges, and yawning ravines, the pictures painted into a beautiful landscape by the hand of the God who first made Africa - all these invited attention. Among them in such a city of God, the white superiors and the coloured masses of men, would live and work together in a continuous harmony because they would all recognise a common God.<sup>94</sup>

Descriptions like this were intended to provide children with a sense of pride in British accomplishment, and this was also achieved through accounts of the missionaries' journeys through the inhospitable mission field.

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<sup>92</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel and Transculturation* (London & New York, Routledge, 1992).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p.201.

<sup>94</sup> G. Watt Smith, *David Livingstone: The Great Heart of Africa* (London, Arthur H. Stockwell, 1913), pp.181-182.

### The journey

Descriptions of journeys were a staple within the biographies allowing authors to eulogise the missionary hero's stoic hardiness and self-reliance, as well as documenting the landscape and people encountered. Lovett in his biography of James Gilmour, for example, reinforced both his bravery and heroism by including a letter describing his journeys through Mongolia sent by Gilmour to his sons: 'Our next adventure was in a river. The leading mule sank in a quicksand. The carter, shoes and all, jumped into the water; in a few seconds I had stripped all but a cinglet and pants, and was in the river too. We got out after a little while'.<sup>95</sup> This was accompanied by a dramatic and colourful illustration presenting children with an image of Gilmour heroically holding onto the wagon as the mule struggles in the mud (Figure 17).<sup>96</sup>

Reports of journeys allowed for the presentation of the missionary as both explorer and adventurer in the hope of inspiring children and especially boys to take an interest in travel and exploration, as well as pride in Britain and a moral stoic British character. By drawing upon actual accounts, the narratives recounted tales of exciting and exotic environments that stimulated children's imaginations and consequently played a significant role in legitimising empire. 'Informed by ideologically charged cultural codes', landscape and the missionaries' quest through hostile terrain effectively reinforced the inherent superiority of the British Christian male character and resilience, which was closely tied to the representation and legitimisation of empire.<sup>97</sup> The

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<sup>95</sup> Lovett, *James Gilmour*, pp.274-275.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, Frontispiece.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129.

following description of James Gilmour's travels, for example, demonstrated both a hardiness of character and devotion to the missionary cause:

The journey was undertaken in mid-winter, and involved exposure to dangers and hardships of no common kind. It illustrates in a very striking way his absolute devotion to duty and his almost pathetic disregard of his own personal comfort or convenience, while at the same time it affords a rare example of his zeal and enthusiasm as a bearer of the Master's message to perishing men.<sup>98</sup>

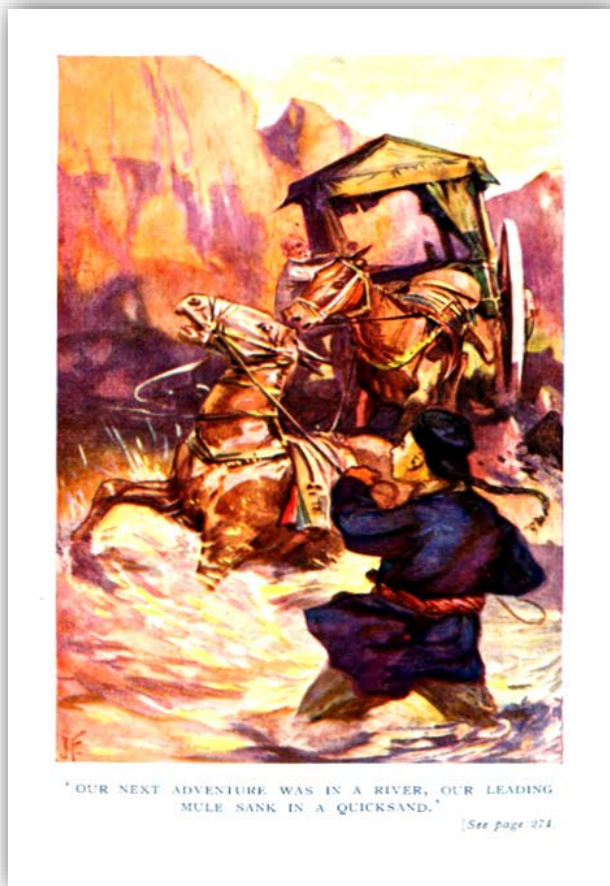


Figure 17 'Our Next Adventure'; Lovett, *James Gilmour and His Boys* Frontispiece.

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<sup>98</sup> Charles D. Mitchell, *Missionary Heroes: Stories of Heroism on the Missionary Field* (London, Partridge, 1895), p.15.

Lack of ‘personal comfort’ and the ability to struggle through adversity were themes regularly utilised within the biographies. In 1910 *The Quiver* saw this as an important feature of the missionary’s character and stated that ‘there is indeed, something approaching the divine in their power to rise above hard conditions, and to use their minds for the purpose of mocking at the miseries of their bodies’.<sup>99</sup> Again, this aspect of the missionary’s quest was used to remind readers of the advantages of living in Britain: ‘At home he could ride in a comfortable carriage; which rolled pleasantly over the smooth roads; in Africa, he must travel in a rude clumsy wagon...over land in which there were no roads, and where he must either cut a way through tangled underwood...or jolt over stony hills, or wade through deep mud’.<sup>100</sup> Journeys made by missionaries without their families, while arduous and filled with unexpected dangers, were effectively used to illustrate the heroic British quality of ‘making the best of things’.<sup>101</sup> A brief extract from missionary Dr. Bowie’s diary described his ‘long and tedious journey’ through Africa and demonstrated his ability to accept his situation: ‘However, we just made a picnic of the thing and enjoyed ourselves. We thought had we been at home such a time would be considered a delightful adventure...the faculty for making the best of things...stood the brave doctor in good stead’.<sup>102</sup>

Descriptions of journeys taken by female missionaries were also steeped in the rhetoric of danger and bravery and offered children a vision of capable and empowered women. In a similar fashion to popular adventure books, however, the rhetoric of travel

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<sup>99</sup> *The Quiver*, 1910.

<sup>100</sup> Robert Moffat, *Rivers of Water in a Dry Place: An Account of the Introduction of Christianity in South Africa* (London, RTS, 1863), p.7.

<sup>101</sup> Mitchell, *Missionary Heroes*, p.36.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

through inhospitable lands was also infused with metaphors that reinforced mainly masculine prerogatives. In 1894 the CMS publication *God's Earth; or, Well Worth* asked its readers if they had:

...ever thought how it is that without leaving your own country, or even your own home, you can know something of what other countries are like, all over the world? How is it that nice books have been written to tell you these things? It is because men - and a few women too - have taken the trouble to go and find out all about them. If they had not taken long and toilsome journeys, and gone through many dangers and hardships, we should have no geography books, and no nice stories of travellers...Is this an easy matter? Not at all.<sup>103</sup>

Men are situated at the centre of this question, although 'a few women' are acknowledged.<sup>104</sup> As the number of missionary women negotiating hostile landscapes in ways that mirrored journeys taken by their male counterparts increased, it became necessary for biographers to incorporate their experience and adventures. Their inclusion was-as ever contained within the rhetoric of femininity. In *Conquests of the Cross*, the journey to an 'important mission station' in Mongolia undertaken by Mr and Mrs Redslob is described as 'a long and arduous journey for a lady'.<sup>105</sup> While the description of rugged mountain paths, raging torrents and trying moments enhance the scene, it is clear that while Mrs Redslob is participating fully in the experience, the author undoubtedly wishes to explain that it is only by being 'bound to the back of a

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<sup>103</sup> Sarah Geraldina Stock, *God's Earth; or, Well Worth: A Missionary Book for Boys and Girls* (London, CMS, 1894), pp. vii-viii.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Hodder, *Conquests of the Cross*, p.220.

strong man' that she could complete the journey.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, when women are placed in dangerous and life threatening positions, it is the 'gentlemen' who come to their rescue.<sup>107</sup> Following the sinking of their ship, missionary wife Mrs Jones 'alone on the wreck' is described as 'falling into a swoon, to awake, worn and exhausted, but safe on shore and among kind friends...two gentlemen from the harbour had manned a boat and bravely pushed off as soon as they heard the news'.<sup>108</sup>

As women travelling in hostile environments could be viewed as unconventional, writers were required to find ways to justify their actions, resorting once again to the rhetoric of remarkability. The description of missionary Mary Bird, for example, speaks clearly of her uniqueness, but also reminds readers of her frailty and timid nature by explaining how 'difficulties were often stepping-stones; for instance, though naturally frail and timid she made herself an exceptionally good traveller, and might have become famous in that respect if she had devoted her life to travelling instead of to missionary work'.<sup>109</sup> When an extraordinary nature could not be proven, elements of femininity were actively defined. As late as 1925, Dawson's account of the journey of missionary Madame Colliard and her niece depicted them adapting to survive within a very masculine environment. However, to uphold their femininity, they are portrayed resorting to the decidedly feminine act of sewing:

Next morning the two brave women had to stand a still greater strain upon their nerves. The whole tribe was out. The wagons were surrounded by a hooting mob brandishing their weapons and clamouring for powder and guns. To add to their

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<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p.220.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p.509.

<sup>109</sup> Clara C. Rice, *Mary Bird in Persia* (London, CMS, 1916), p.7.



troubles, Mme. Coillard's wagon sank in a marshy stream up to the axles of the wheels, and the oxen could not pull it out. She and her niece were determined to show no fear, so, while the wagon was being lightened, they got out and sat beneath the shade of a tree to sew.<sup>110</sup>

While the title of the biography 1920 *Three Brave Women: Stories of Heroism in Heathen Lands*, based on the lives of Mary Slessor of Calabar, Mrs. Burleigh of Cape Horn, and Mary Bird of Persia, clearly celebrates their bravery and heroism, descriptions of their journeys within the narrative lessens their accomplishments.<sup>111</sup> The description of Miss Bird's journey to Persia in 1891, for example, is explained almost routinely:

She started from England in the month of April, in company with Miss Laura Stubbs, they two being the first unmarried lady missionaries to visit Persia. The journey was a tedious one, though they experienced several modes of transit. Having crossed the channel they proceeded by rail to Constantinople, took a French steamer across the Black sea, then the Russian railway to Baku, a Russian steamer across the Caspian to Enzelli, thence the carriage to Resht, and finally a fortnight's ride on horseback over the mountains to Theran and Ispahan.<sup>112</sup>

Another approach used to explain the presence of women travelling in dangerous and untamed lands was to relate their experiences to the progress of the missionary

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<sup>110</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.209; Madame Colliard was born in Scotland and married Francois Colliard in 1861.

<sup>111</sup> Jennie Chappell, *Three Brave Women: Stories of Heroism in Heathen Lands* (London, Partridge, 1920).

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p.123.

cause. Isabel Robson in her biography of Miss Annie Taylor (who ‘went alone with a few native servants’) and Dr. Susie Carson Moyles (whose journey was described as ‘disastrous...of which she was the sole survivor’) explained how their ‘journeys were undertaken in no spirit of adventure, no desire to “break a record” or triumph where so many had failed, but solely as pioneer missionary journeys, undertaken with the object of discovering the possibilities of mission work in the heart of the country’.<sup>113</sup> Robson also explained how ‘their example [was] an inspiration to those half inclined to believe that the age is utilitarian and romance and altruism dead’.<sup>114</sup> In comparison to Robson’s description of Annie Taylor’s exploits, William Carey’s biography is written in a very different tone. Describing the ‘steady cheerfulness she exhibited under all circumstances’ as simply heroic, Carey described Taylor as a ‘plucky and resourceful woman who pushed her way, practically alone, through the heart of Tibet’.<sup>115</sup> The biography he explained is a book ‘for anybody to read. It is travel and adventure; who will not rise to that? And it is travel and adventure in the hardest of all lands left to explore’.<sup>116</sup>

Although Carey mediated concepts of modernity by celebrating Taylor’s ability to travel alone, he was, however, quick to explain how ‘mere daring and love of adventure would never have introduced this frail woman to hazard her life in such an enterprise’ and that while accepting that ‘it was heroism’ he ensures that readers

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<sup>113</sup> Robson, *Two Lady Missionaries*, Preface; Personal copy which includes a prize label from the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School awarded to Eva Newson in 1913 for ‘enthusiasm in missions’; See Appendix A.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, Preface.

<sup>115</sup> William Carey, *Adventures in Tibet* (Boston, United Society of Christian Endeavor, 1901), p.13.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

understand that it ‘was also the heroism of faith’.<sup>117</sup> The faith of women, like Taylor, who were able to embark on difficult and treacherous journeys usually only accessible to men, became important to biographers as a tool to explain why women undertook, often alone, such arduous journeys: ‘through all her misadventures and hardships [her] indomitable courage, her unquenchable faith never faltered’.<sup>118</sup> Such extreme bravery was also reinforced visually, including an illustration depicting Taylor’s composed response to a terrifying attack by a group of Tibetan brigands (Figure 18), published in Lambert’s *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*.<sup>119</sup>



Figure 18 ‘Miss Taylor and Her Party Attacked by Tibetan Brigands’; Lambert, *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*, p.81.

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.

<sup>118</sup> Robson, *Two Lady Missionaries*, p.66.

<sup>119</sup> Lambert, *The Romance of Missionary Heroism*, p.81.

Another method frequently used by biographers was to play upon the innocence and naïveté of the women. Taylor again provides a useful example, describing the stealing of her tent and belongings Carey explained how ‘The telescope was stolen, and it does not appear that she ever had occasion to use it...without aneroid, thermometer, or theodolite, she toiled over unmapped mountains and jogged through unvisited valleys’.<sup>120</sup> Her experiences had they been undertaken by a male missionary would certainly have been celebrated and defined as heroic, but in Taylor’s case, her actions are concluded with a gendered comment with the intention of restoring some degree of femininity: ‘provokingly oblivious of the claims of science, and constrained only when something went wrong with the cooking to notice the boiling-point’.<sup>121</sup> When gender was not able to be included, humour was often used as a strategy to undermine heroic achievement, describing Taylor again ‘when, at last, the tent had been taken, and no cave could be found, she settled herself to sleep on the snow. What a comical little bundle it must have been for the merry stars to wink at!’.<sup>122</sup>

### Slessor’s journeys

In keeping with the stylistic codes of the adventure story which take the reader into ‘terrifying and magical places’, Slessor’s biographies too are peppered with exotic and dangerous images.<sup>123</sup> Journeys undertaken by Slessor were enhanced by descriptions of ‘mud-coloured rivers...mysterious lands [and] wild animals...huge hippopotami and

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<sup>120</sup> Carey, *Adventures in Tibet*, p.14.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.14-15.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Hourihan, *Deconstructing the Hero*, p.22.

crocodiles in the creeks; elephants, leopards, and snakes in the forests; and lovely hued birds that flashed in the sunlight'.<sup>124</sup> Readers were also reminded of the sacrifices made in 'a land, also, of disease and fever and white graves'.<sup>125</sup> This impression of an uncivilised wilderness provided a useful setting to transmit ideas of how the landscape could be radically transformed through British intervention. Illustrating Slessor's arrival in West Africa, McEvoy described the scenery as 'shabby and unromantic' but explained how she knew the hill behind the town 'had been the very place where the dead bodies of the natives used to be cast into the bush to become the food of wild beasts. And that hill was now crowned with the mission buildings'.<sup>126</sup> McEvoy, not wishing to diminish the danger and courage of his heroine explained that 'responsive as Mary Slessor's vivacious nature was to all the elements of interest, excitement and romance of her novel surroundings, she was aware that beneath the gleaming surface, that seemed bright and fair, there lay sinister depths that harboured incredibly terrible things'.<sup>127</sup>

Descriptions of Slessor's trips alone into the wilderness were equally thrilling and 'involved long and perilous journeys through the bush or along the great rivers fringed with the exposed and tangled roots of the forest trees which overhung them'.<sup>128</sup> Slessor was often described travelling by canoe in unsafe waters, which allowed biographers to expand upon the dangerous and exciting events, but also provided children with an image of a woman transgressing prescribed gender roles in a very

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<sup>124</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.23.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>126</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.23.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

authoritative manner. Described as one of the ‘many thrilling adventures that filled the days of the brave young missionary’ one biographer explained how on a return journey from ‘Elephant Country’ a storm hit the canoe whirling ‘it about like a paper toy’.<sup>129</sup> While the crew and chief were apparently ‘helpless from terror’, Slessor is said to have taken her ‘own fear in hand and ordered the rowers to make for the tangle of trees that bordered the bank. The men pulled together with renewed hope and strength until the shelter of the bush was reached’.<sup>130</sup> While it would seem unusual in Britain for a woman to hold such influence the authoritative rhetoric used within the literature highlights the cultural, intellectual and moral superiority of British women when set against the native, which also reinforces her power and authority.

Livingstone’s exciting description of Slessor’s journey into the ‘terrible cannibal country’ and her ‘dream of conquering Okoyong’ was repeated within many subsequent biographies. Ellis, for example, described how: ‘On one of her journeys up the Cross river in a canoe with some of her children a huge hippopotamus attacked them. It snapped its jaws, butted against the frail vessel, the men beating it and thrusting their paddles down its throat. Ma prayed and gave encouragement to the men, and after a while they got away from their huge assailant’.<sup>131</sup> In Livingstone’s version of this experience ‘Slessor took control of the situation by using cooking pots as shields and ‘succeeded in baffling the monster’.<sup>132</sup> In his later *The White Queen of Okoyong*, aimed particularly at children, this same textual account was accompanied by an elaborate

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<sup>129</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.252 & p.251.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.251.

<sup>131</sup> Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, pp.35-36.

<sup>132</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.171.

illustration (Figure 19) which reinforced the immediacy of the attack but also depicted Slessor passively watching as the scene unfolds.<sup>133</sup>



ON ONE OF HER JOURNEYS THE CANOE WAS ATTACKED BY A  
HUGE HIPPOPOTAMUS. (Page 125.)

Figure 19 The canoe was attacked by a huge hippopotamus'; Livingstone, *The White Queen*, Frontispiece.

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<sup>133</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, Frontispiece.

Descriptions of Slessor's journeys provided children with examples of her independence, ability and courage, traits usually associated with men. For example, Parkman quotes from a letter sent by Slessor to a friend in Scotland, in which she explained 'I am going to a new tribe up-country, a fierce, cruel people, and every one tells me that they will kill me. But I don't fear any hurt only to combat their savage customs will require courage and firmness on my part'.<sup>134</sup> This provided readers with ideas which indirectly challenged gender assumptions about women's capabilities and limitations, but biographers often justified this through religious conviction. As Livingstone explained, for example, 'what made her so courageous was her faith in God. She believed He wanted her to do this bit of work, and that therefore He would take care of her'.<sup>135</sup> This transgression of gender boundaries proved difficult for biographers, who conscious of their market, were required to re-establish her femininity. Livingstone aware of this duality reminded readers of her feminine traits:

Does it seem as if we were watching the career of a woman of hard, self-reliant, and masculine character, capable of living by herself and preferring it, and unconscious of the natural weakness of her sex? In reality Mary was a winsome soul, womanly in all her ways, tremulous with feeling and sympathy, loving love and companionship, and not unacquainted with nervousness and fear.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.260.

<sup>135</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, pp.48-49; This courage was also attributed to her Scottish upbringing 'It's true, that thanks to her sturdy Scotch training, she was able to walk abroad without a hat, go barefoot through the tangled undergrowth of the forests, but in time she found that tropical beauty is poisonous to vigour and activity'; Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, p.17.

<sup>136</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, pp.130-131.



Accounts of journeys undertaken by Hannington provided children with a very different picture, and although his experiences were similar in many ways to Slessor's, they were celebrated and used to reinforce his masculinity.

### Hannington's journeys

On his arrival at the coastal areas of East Africa it is explained within *Peril and Adventure* how 'it may assist your geography if I give you a brief description of the whole route from the coast to the lake':

It has been well divided by the great African traveller Burton into five different regions. The first of these is the coast belt which lies between the Indian Ocean and that vast chain of mountains which runs from Abyssinia, to Lake Nyassa, and which numbers among its peaks Kenia and Kilimanjaro. This district abounds in rivers, and has the general appearance of English park scenery. The second region is that occupied by the mountain chain we have just named, and is truly beautiful, being in places not unlike the best parts of North Devon. Here we have two flourishing mission stations, namely Mamboia and Mpwapwa.<sup>137</sup>

As Melanie Tebbutt suggests a 'sense of home, frequently conflated with ideas of homeland', acted as a narrative anchor to convey the danger and excitement of journeys

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<sup>137</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.21-22; A similar description is found in Martin Hall's *Through my Spectacles in Uganda* 'And now we find ourselves in the mountains, amid fresh breezes and fresh flowers, as well as familiar English clover, Scottish thistle and Irish shamrock, or at any rate their African cousins with a stray family likeness', Martin J. Hall, *Through my Spectacles in Uganda* (London, CMS, 1898) p.36.

into the unknown.<sup>138</sup> Similarly, Peter Hunt claims that ‘not only do the complex layers of history embedded (as it were) in the landscape enrich the texture of the stories, but the meanings of the landscapes themselves provide a subtext for the journeys’.<sup>139</sup> As we can see from Hannington’s description of the coastal areas of East Africa, the sub-text underlying his descriptions conform to a pattern of imperial expansion and cultural appropriation. Reminding readers of the exploits and conquests of British explorer Richard Burton, whom Hannington explained divided Africa into five different regions, the description then included ‘the mountain chain we have just named’ and references to the ‘two flourishing mission stations’.<sup>140</sup> There is in this description an assumption that children would be aware of the British explorer and author Sir Richard Burton, and his domination of the landscape. By describing the naming of the mountain chain, Hannington’s text reflects Mary Louise Pratt’s arguments surrounding the intrusive and exploitive Western desire to label, classify and contain ‘a new field of visibility’ of the natural world into a new kind of Eurocentred ‘planetary consciousness’.<sup>141</sup> This was

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<sup>138</sup> Melanie Tebbutt, ‘Rambling and Manly Identity in Derbyshire’s Dark Peak, 1880s-1920s’, *The Historical Journal*, 49.4 (2006), p.1149.

<sup>139</sup> Peter Hunt, ‘Landscapes and Journeys, Metaphors and Maps: The Distinctive Feature of English Fantasy’, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, 12.1 (1987), p.11.

<sup>140</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.21-22; Burton received the Royal Geographical Society’s Gold Medal in 1859 for ‘his various exploratory enterprises, and especially for his perilous expedition with Captain J.H. Speke to the great lakes in Eastern Africa’.

<sup>141</sup> Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, p.29 and p.38. A further example of this is in the descriptions of Hannington’s passion for the gathering of specimens, building collections and naming new species functioned as a stamp of authority and as a seal of ownership. As a keen botanist Hannington makes constant reference to the landscape and plant life within his journals and within Dawson’s biography *James Hannington* readers are provided with an extract from a letter describing the specimens of butterflies and mosses sent to the British Museum and informed how ‘Hannington’s name is associated with an Asplenium, *A. Hanningtoni*, and a Passion Flower, *Tryphostemma Hanningtonianum*’; Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.365; Detailed descriptions and ink drawings of the species collected by Hannington appear within the *Journal of the Linnean Society of London Botany*, 22.146 (1886), pp.298-329; Choosing Latin as the formal language, The Linnaean system, created by Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in his *Systema Naturae* (1735) classified and codified all the plants of the world. Hannington was elected a Fellow of the Linnean society on 8 December 1883.

again reinforced through descriptions of the planting of two mission stations that provided children with an image of British power and increased the sense of permanence and stability, which could also be interpreted as providing ideas of hope, achievability and native receptivity to civilisation and Christianity.

Staying true to the structure of the classic hero adventure story, descriptions of Hannington's journey provided readers with images of terrifying and magical places. Within *Peril and Adventure*, for example, Hannington explained how the streets of Zanzibar, 'like those of all Oriental towns, are very narrow and tortuous, and have such a cut-throat appearance'.<sup>142</sup> Hannington's descriptions also enabled readers to imagine the exotic and 'fairy-like scene[s]' through which he travelled:

the vegetation underwent a complete transformation, assuming an entirely different aspect, and we beheld for the first time what is usually understood by the term 'tropical forest scenery'. Gigantic trees, towering aloft, and supporting endless creepers and parasitic plants, presented to the eye every shade and variety of foliage.<sup>143</sup>

Accounts of Hannington's preparations for his journey also included the hiring of porters which provided children with descriptions of strange and exotic peoples, who were 'for the most part of two different races - namely, the Wanguana, or coast men from Zanzibar, and the Wanyamwezi, or the men from the Country of the Moon'.<sup>144</sup> Hannington's own account of his journey contained a powerful subtext that endorsed

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<sup>142</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.15.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p.26.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19.

white racial and cultural superiority. One incident concerned his attempt to cross a small river, in which Hannington explained that as he was waiting patiently to cross as ‘there were no head-men’ his ‘boys’ volunteered to carry him, however: ‘the ambitious Johar must needs have all the honour and glory to himself: he seized me and bore me off in triumph’.<sup>145</sup> This is followed by a description of Johar collapsing ‘like an indiarubber ball punctured like a pin’ mid-stream and dropping Hannington in the process.<sup>146</sup> Although children are introduced to Johar, the tale soon reverts to Hannington’s own discomfort: ‘far better would it have been for me had I walked through, for then I should have been wet merely to the knees, whereas now I was soaked from head to foot’.<sup>147</sup> This scenario was repeated within the biographies with Hannington’s physical health always being the priority. Michael’s account of this event informed readers how Hannington’s ‘iron will and splendid courage enabled him to face the difficulties and dangers’ of the long march, and how he had only been allocated four bearers instead of six and ‘of these three were the very dregs...and had neither the power nor inclination to carry him properly’ and ‘as he expected, they dropped him’.<sup>148</sup> As a result, Michael explained ‘in desperation, he got out of the hammock and walked for two hours’.<sup>149</sup> A more detailed description of this event is recounted within *Peril and Adventure*: ‘After about an hour and a half my men began to show signs of utter collapse, and jerked and shook me most painfully. By-and-by a stumble, and both went down. I had been looking out for this, and so broke my fall; but it is very dangerous to be thus dropped, nothing

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, p.26.

<sup>148</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, pp.101-102.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.102.

being more likely to injure the spine'.<sup>150</sup> Again as the following description illustrated, Hannington's discomfort was the priority, serving to enhance and reinforce racial and cultural superiority:

There was often an immense deal of water on the road, sometimes ankle, sometimes knee-deep, and sometimes I have been carried for the best part of an hour with the water up to the men's chins. In cases of this kind I used to cling round the pole of my hammock, and six men would carry me on their heads as if I was a log of wood; but it was by no means comfortable, although far better than getting wet.<sup>151</sup>

To add to the impact of the incident, Hannington provided several 'pen and ink sketches' which were incorporated into many of the biographies and reinforced the subtext of racial and cultural superiority visually, particularly for those readers who might not have been able to read sufficiently well (Figures 20 & 21).<sup>152</sup>

Again, offering no concern for his porters, accounts of his travelling by hammock focus upon his discomfort, as Dawson commented:

Writing for the children at home, Hannington described his experiences of life in a hammock in a socio-comic vein. He says: It sounds wonderfully luxurious to talk of being transported from place to place in such a manner. Well, all I can say is, let anybody try it, and see if they care to repeat the dose. I think I could write a

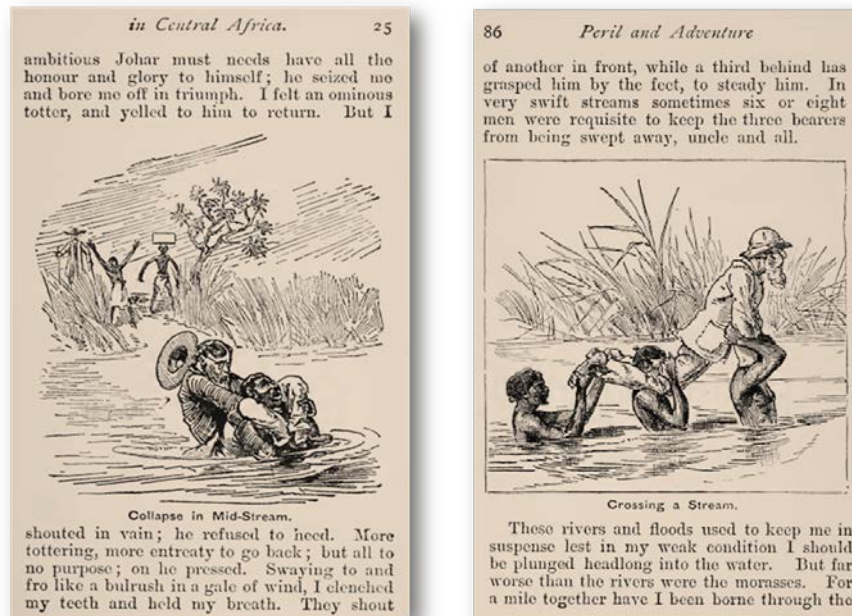
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<sup>150</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.54.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

<sup>152</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.25 & p.86.

book on the subject, I have had so much of its excitements, its monotony, and discomforts.<sup>153</sup>



Figures 20 & 21 'Collapse in Mid-Stream' and 'Crossing the Stream';  
Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.25 & p.86.

Hannington's arrival at the Church Missionary Stations at Mamboia provided children with ideas of cultivation and occupation of the land by the British. It is explained, for example, that the 'bungalow' occupied by Mr and Mrs Last was situated in an area where the 'soil is most productive, and the climate sub-Alpine, allow so that our English vegetables grow to great perfection. The flower garden in front of the house was one mass of geraniums, nasturtiums, petunias, and other denizens of our home gardens'.<sup>154</sup> Similarly, Michael compared the scenery in Momboia to Britain as being

<sup>153</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, pp.129-130.

<sup>154</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.30.

‘not unlike that of North Devon’.<sup>155</sup> Such images incorporated the metanarrative of progress, civilisation and justified the presence of the missionary enterprise but also provided children with ideas based upon the superiority of the British. This was also the practice in the portrayal of hostile and threatening encounters between the missionary and natives.

### Hostile encounters

Using the adventure story template in which the hero is ‘threatened by dangerous opponents’ who may include ‘...wild animals, witches, giants [and] savages’ biographers could exploit and expand the myth of the ‘irreligious and barbarous savage’ making the trials of missionary work more impressive.<sup>156</sup> Such images of high drama involving wild beasts, savage tribes, cannibals and cruelty were frequently combined with ‘facts, principles, and purpose of missions’, which the 1910 *Home Base of Missions* explained would more effectively appeal to the ‘imagination and live impulses’ of children.<sup>157</sup> As voyeurs of exotic savagery and horror, the biographies were successful in delivering and reinforcing a sense of civilised values and superiority to the child readers.<sup>158</sup> Comparisons with the ‘irreligious and barbarous savage’ were successfully used to impose a strong image of British male identity and the superior nature of Christianity.<sup>159</sup> Many were complemented with illustrations which helped to create a more complex understanding of the missionary venture, but on a more basic

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<sup>155</sup> Michaels, *James Hannington*, p.91.

<sup>156</sup> Hourihan, *Deconstructing the Hero*, p.9; Batty, ‘About Ourselves’, in Stock, ed., *Girls and Girls*, p.8.

<sup>157</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, p.78 & p.71.

<sup>158</sup> As the pinnacle of savagery one behavioural feature that young readers familiar with from the adventure novel was the sensationalism surrounding cannibalism.

<sup>159</sup> Batty, ‘About Ourselves’, in Stock, ed., *Girls and Girls*, p.8.

level would appeal to children as they mirrored the illustrations within secular adventure stories. For example, here we have the front cover of Chalmers biography *Greatheart of Papua* (1913) depicting the ‘white scout’ wearing the traditional and symbolic explorer’s pith helmet and white safari outfit surrounded by hostile islanders, and the cover of *Missionary Heroines of the Cross* which revealingly only depicts one woman (Figure 22).

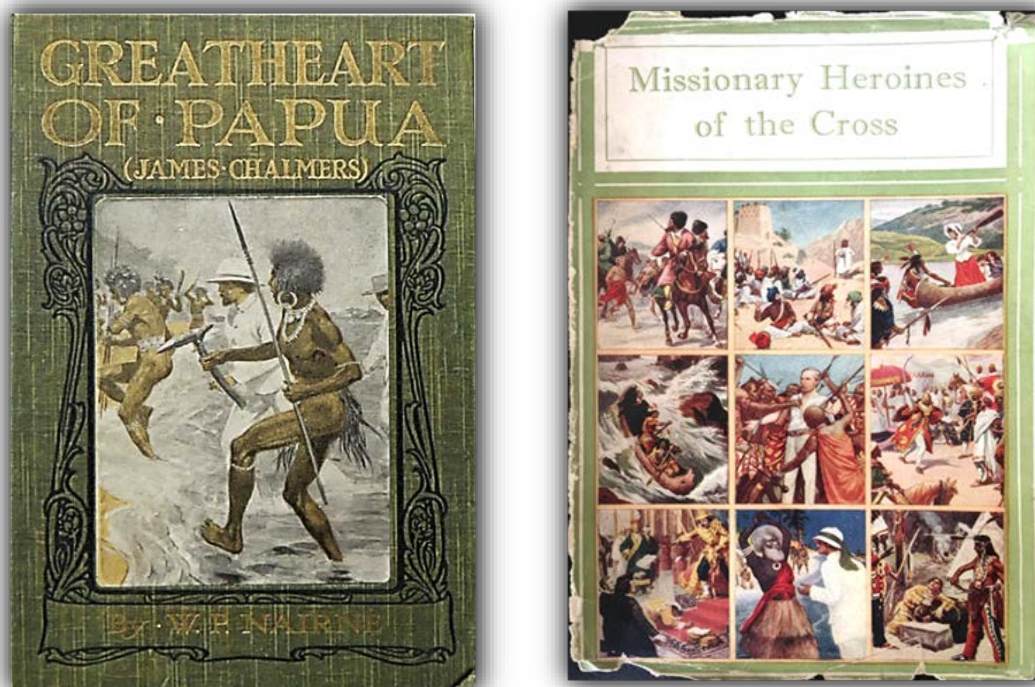


Figure 22 Chalmers, *Greatheart of Papua* & Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*.

If we consider the two illustrations, the missionary can be seen occupying a central and dominant position. This is in sharp contrast to the distorted and shadowy depiction of the partially clothed natives, who are only identifiable only through their stereotyped image, or as Anne McClintock has argued are ‘mapped, measured and



ranked against the 'universal standard'.<sup>160</sup> The element of space and the structure of spatial relationships here, define the hierarchical structure placing those at the centre (Missionary) as important and those who are not (Natives) at the margins. The use of contrast suggests that the artist has considered the role of the child viewer and whilst the Christian message is dominant, would suggest the illustrations were also intended to trigger conscious or unconscious associations and connections to imperialism.

Continuing the theme of opposition, the image of Moffat here portrays the dualistic world of light and darkness. Firmly yoked in missionary discourse, light held enormous symbolic appeal for the missionary movement linked directly to Christianity and civilisation, whilst dark in contrast, was associated with ignorance and depravity.

Relevant to this thesis the allegory of 'light and dark' was also important to the Sunday school, for instance as part of the discussions held at the 1910 World Conference it was suggested that 'As children learn most from pictures in strong colours, so the best illustrations come from where the light of the Gospel is seen against the dark background of heathendom'.<sup>161</sup>

The missionary was also represented within the biographies as paternal, capable and possessing expertise in dealing with adverse situations and even coping with failure with a fortitude which validated his superiority. By accepting that not all missionary intervention was successful, the biographies continued to rework difficulties in such a way as to present the commitment and strength of the missionary. *The Story of the South*

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<sup>160</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (Abingdon, Routledge, 1995), p.34.

<sup>161</sup> *Home Base of Missions*, p.32.

*Seas* (1894) a volume designed as a prize for ‘those who had worked so nobly in raising money’, highlighted this positive perspective:

Difficulties have to be reckoned with. They cannot be ignored, but they can be overcome; and though obliged to record them, we must not allow our readers to imagine that our workers have lost heart. By no means. With unfailing courage, tact. Patience, and perseverance, they pursued their great task, and, no matter from what source their difficulties arose, bravely grappled with them.<sup>162</sup>

Women too were included within descriptions of hostile encounters and the traditional male space was often redefined through descriptions of women protecting themselves and their homes. Disrupting conventional gender understandings, the nature of missionary work positioned women in often extreme situations enabling authors to provide examples of their adaptability courage and physical strength. The difficulties facing missionary wife Rebecca Wakefield, for example, were described as:

Wild beasts roamed at night, poisonous reptiles lurked in the path by day, and vermin of all kinds swarmed over the house. Added to this was the deadly nature of the climate, which at times made life a burden, and increased the danger and hardship of their existence. Rats and ants were especially troublesome.<sup>163</sup>

Similarly, Mrs Clark, ‘the pioneer of medical missions’ discussed in Chapter Four was portrayed protecting her child from a panther: ‘One night she woke up to find a panther

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<sup>162</sup> George Cousins, *The Story of the South Seas: Written for Young People* (London, CMS, 1894), p.vi & p.177; Cousins was editorial secretary of the LMS between 1885 and 1898.

<sup>163</sup> Frank Mundell, *Heroines of the Cross* (London, SSU, 1897), p.102.

in the tent in the very act of annexing her infant; and if she had not, with the greatest courage and presence of mind, snatched up a stick from the smouldering fire and thrust it full into the animal's face, the present lines would never have been written'.<sup>164</sup> In this instance, the textual message was reinforced by a visual illustration designed to engage the reader more emotionally in the incident which was tellingly entitled 'A Courageous Mother' (Figure 23).<sup>165</sup>

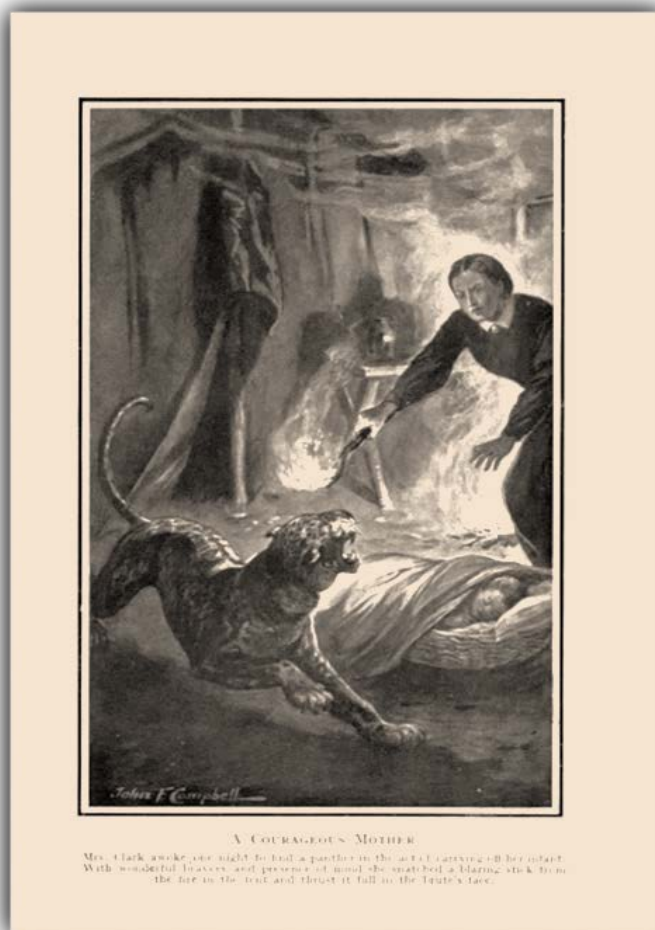


Figure 23 'A Courageous Mother'; Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.40.

<sup>164</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.40.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

Again, describing life in Fiji, the destination of Mrs Cargill ‘a lovely and heroic wife’, author Daniel Wise informed his readers that the Pacific island was indeed a ‘call to do heroic work’, because ‘the Fijians were still savages, cannibals, warriors, as debased a people as could be found in any of the Polynesian islands’.<sup>166</sup> Wise explained that Mrs Cargill and her fellow missionaries approached the mission with full knowledge of the dangers they were likely to encounter, having been told of ‘a horrid feast at which two hundred men and one hundred women were slaughtered, cooked, and eaten in one of the Fiji Islands!’.<sup>167</sup> This Wise continued meant that ‘they knew that many white men had been killed and eaten by those barbarians, that women and children were quite commonly murdered and eaten as delicacies by the cruel chieftains of those islands’.<sup>168</sup> Wise completed this scenario by contrasting the natural beauty of the islands with the ugliness of its people: ‘so beautiful in their landscapes, so rich in fruits and flowers, yet inhabited by some of the vilest specimens of the human race’.<sup>169</sup> Explaining how ‘the delicate and graceful Mrs. Cargill’ received the unexpected and sudden news to go to Fiji, which was expressed as a ‘compliment to Mr. Cargill’s ability’, the author attempted to remind children of her femininity, explaining that she was ‘a Christian heroine of the noblest order’.<sup>170</sup> And suggesting that ‘No doubt it awakened her womanly fears’ and that her meek reply was that the ‘Lord knows what is good for us’ and thus ‘submitted to his will’ her femininity was secured.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Wise, *Our Missionary Heroes and Heroines*, p.151.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p.152.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

Undercutting the traditional gender paradigm in a similar way to the biographies of male missionary heroes, the trials and tribulations encountered by women provided images and descriptions of missionary women using weapons and triumphing over ‘savage’ forces. Within *Through Uganda to Mount Elgon* (1909), for example, John Purvis explained that ‘Mission ladies have often had attempts made to enter their house at night-time; leopards repeatedly walk across their courtyard’.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, in a chapter devoted to Mrs Bishop, a ‘friend and mother’ of missions, E.C. Dawson explained how when travelling alone through Persia she ‘never minded being alone; she was quite sufficient for herself. It never troubled her that she was only a woman. She faced thieves, curious and unfriendly crowds, or mutinous servants, with the same unruffled composure, and quietly mastered them all’.<sup>173</sup> Although this description undoubtedly disrupts conventional gender norms by portraying a single woman alone facing thieves and unfriendly crowds, many biographers interweaved such unconventional instances with tropes of domesticity. For example, Dawson suggested that Mme. Colliard had been so ‘surprised one morning by a party of armed burglars, who arrived with wagons at her door’ that they ‘hurried her out of the country at such a rate that she had not even time to take her new-baked bread out of the oven’.<sup>174</sup>

Although many women encountered dangerous situations, their experiences were often subsumed within their husband’s achievements. In a biography of missionary heroine Jane Chalmers by Henry Moore it is her husband who is depicted as noble and a martyr: ‘In the life of that noble missionary, James Chalmers we get glimpses of a

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<sup>172</sup> John B. Purvis, *Through Uganda to Mount Elgon* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1909), p.236.

<sup>173</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines in Many Lands*, p.72.

<sup>174</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.205.

woman who was indeed a heroine, and who had the unpleasant experience of being left for a time, without any white companions, in the midst of cannibals. This was Jane Chalmers the martyr-missionary's first wife'.<sup>175</sup> Within the Preface, Moore explains that his intention within the book was to show:

how women, old and young, in many ranks of life, have proved themselves in times of trial to possess as much courage and daring as men. Some of these 'Brave Women' died for their Master's sake, whilst others, in His cause, passed through dire peril and grievous suffering. All of them counted not their lives dear unto them, so long only as they might do their duty. I have designedly omitted many familiar heroines in the hope of winning attention for some whose deeds have been less widely recognised.<sup>176</sup>

Within *Tamate; the Life Story of James Chalmers*, Lovett presents in great detail Jane Chalmers's determination to escape from a crowd of curious natives by climbing 'twenty-two or more feet' up a not very straight ladder made of 'tree stems tied across, two feet apart (sometimes more), to two long slender poles'.<sup>177</sup> As this action would be seen as unconventional for any woman, Lovett attempted to re-assert her domesticity by explaining that once up on the roof she 'unpacked the food, and we had cocoanuts to drink'.<sup>178</sup> In describing the descent from the roof as 'dreadful', it is explained that a misunderstanding between the natives and some of their teachers occurred and 'in a

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<sup>175</sup> Henry Charles Moore, *Noble Deeds of the World's Heroines* (London, RTS, 1903), p.14.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, Preface.

<sup>177</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, p.263.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

moment every one seemed armed - bows, arrows, and those dreadful clubs'.<sup>179</sup> This event was accompanied by a detailed illustration showing Mrs Chalmers climbing down ladder alone, while her husband and native converts calmly stand in the middle of the disorder (Figure 24).<sup>180</sup>



Figure 24 'A  
Critical  
Moment';  
Lovett,  
*Tamate*,  
p.263.

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<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p.262.

This image of Mrs Chalmers climbing a makeshift ladder breaks down the notion of feminine restraint by offering girls a view of a woman participating in a physical activity previously regarded to be exclusively within the all-male realm, and as such, promotes a femininity not based purely upon outward appearance but also inner qualities. Descriptions of Slessor also provided readers with images of a woman in situations that were usually associated only with men.

#### Slessor's hostile encounters

Slessor was often described in situations which child readers in Britain would have found adventurous and terrifying. Encounters with natives provided ideal material to make her story entertaining to young readers. Accounts of her wrestling guns from intoxicated natives, standing between two warring tribes and fighting superstition presented children with images of what Livingstone described as Slessor's 'utter fearlessness'.<sup>181</sup> Livingstone again provided a comprehensive description of her environment and encounters:

What a land was this she had chosen to make her dwelling-place-a land formless, mysterious, terrible, ruled by witchcraft and the terrorism of secret societies; where the skull was worshipped and blood-sacrifices were offered to jujus; where guilt was decided by ordeal of poison and boiling oil; where scores of people were murdered when a chief died, and his wives decked themselves in finery and were strangled to keep him company in the spirit-land; where men and women were bound and left to perish by the water-side to placate the god of shrimps; where the

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<sup>181</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.181.



alligators were satiated with feeding on human flesh; where twins were done to death, and the mother banished to the bush where semi-nakedness was compulsory, and girls were sent to farms to be fattened for marriage.<sup>182</sup>

While Slessor is described as undertaking her 'great adventure' with a 'resolute spirit, full of dash and fun', such undeniable excitement was counteracted with feelings of anxiety and uncertainty: 'she thought of what might lie before her, of the perils of the forest, and the anger of the blood-thirsty Okoyong, and wondered if she had done right'.<sup>183</sup> To offset any question of her femininity, Slessor's response to such concerns was disarmingly familiar to readers back home in Britain: "'We'll have a cup of tea, anyhow'" she said to herself, and got out an old paraffin stove...when the tea was ready Ma opened a tin of stewed steak and cut up a loaf of home-made bread'.<sup>184</sup> Courage was a characteristic biographers wished to promote, and Christine Cannell's chapter 'Older Boys and Girls...Some Things to Think about and Do' based on Slessor asked 'What is your definition of courage? Is it fearlessness? Or would you say it was being brave in spite of being afraid? Mary Slessor was courageous, but if you had said to her she would probably have laughingly said, "Nay, child, I'm most times skeered out of my life"'.<sup>185</sup> Binary opposites of courage/fear were used to readdress Slessor's unconventional behaviour and could be used to convince readers of her ordinariness. Also, as Slessor was in danger of stepping outside conventional gender categories, her fear of hostile

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<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.23-24.

<sup>183</sup> Morrison, *The Missionary Heroes*, p.254; Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.48.

<sup>184</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.48.

<sup>185</sup> Christine Cannell, 'Mary Slessor: The Scottish Weaver Girl who became the White Queen of Okoyong', in S.C. Lucker, *Missionary Heroes in Many Lands: Stories of Adventure, High Endeavour, and Great Enterprise* (London, NSSU, n. d), p.101.

encounters was used by authors to minimise any criticism. Slessor's dangerous encounters were also used to define the civilising role of the missionary enterprise. In *Under Many Flags* (1922) Slessor's meeting with 'many black men, wearing almost no clothing, but armed to the teeth', for example, was reminiscent of descriptions in earlier works and allowed authors to explain how difficult yet necessary her missionary work was:

Missionaries try to speak as kindly as possible about the people among whom they work, but for these poor Africans they had only dreadful words, 'bloody,' 'savage,' 'cruel,' 'crafty,' 'devilish,' 'cannibals,' 'murderers.'...But into this country Mary Slessor had gone, and here she was at dawn, alone, facing a tribe of angry men - not only facing them, but giving them orders.<sup>186</sup>

Although Slessor's authority to 'subdue these wild people' was defined by Livingstone as 'mysterious' this framing of her career reveals an inherent belief and attitude in the strength and privilege of the white, British missionary - whether male or female: 'It was the first time in the history of our Empire that a woman had done such things. The result was all for good. Wild and lawless as the people were, they obeyed Ma, and so the rule of Britain over them began in peace'.<sup>187</sup> Slessor's ultimate authority lay in the fact that she was appointed in 1891 as Vice-consul for Okoyong, which went unquestioned within the biographies: 'She presided at the native courts, created public opinion, established just laws, protected the poor, and quietly co-ordinated native customs with new legislation and generally conducted all the public affairs of the

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<sup>186</sup> Katherine Cronk, *Under Many Flags* (New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1921), pp.74-75.

<sup>187</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.99; Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.88.

tribe'.<sup>188</sup> Her authority was, however, sometimes provided in a more direct example: 'The tribes in of the out-of-the-way places were apt to forget that British law was now the law of the land, and go back to the old habits that were so deep-rooted in their nature. Ma often threatened that she would have to make them feel the power that stood behind her'.<sup>189</sup> Descriptions of British power and influence within the biographies can be viewed as forming part of the ideological project that incorporated children into the British imperial enterprise, this power, however, was often confined. Livingstone, for example, when describing how people travelled hundreds of miles to see the 'wonderful person' asked 'And what did they see? A powerful Sultana sitting in a palace with an army at her command? No, Only a weak woman in a lowly house surrounded by a number of helpless children'.<sup>190</sup>

Some descriptions of Slessor, however, often blurred the lines between British and African identity. Refusing to conform to expected behaviour, Slessor did not prove an easy subject for biographers to locate within the true imperial setting. Accounts of Slessor's 'knowledge of the native, his language, ways of thought, his diseases, his difficulties, and all that he is' provided an image of her immersed within the African lifestyle.<sup>191</sup> Describing a walk in the torrential rain to treat a Chief in a neighbouring village, Livingstone explained how her 'boots were soon abandoned; then her stockings; next her umbrella, broken in battle with the vegetation, was thrown aside. Bit by bit her

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<sup>188</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.56; This was later followed by her appointment as vice-president of a native court. She was awarded the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in 1913.

<sup>189</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.105.

<sup>190</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.170.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p.143; Parkman also stated how 'It was wonderful the way Mary Slessor was able to move about among the rude, half-naked savages as confidently as she had among her people in Scotland; Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, pp.246- 247.

clothes, too heavy to be endured, were transferred to the calabashes carried by the women on their heads, and in the lightest of garments she struggled on through the steaming bush'.<sup>192</sup> This state of undress, like the many descriptions of native dress, was described throughout the biographies. Her lack of clothing and very British accessories (stockings and umbrella) blurred the lines between the British and African, but biographers acted decisively to dampen down this impression. Livingstone was quick to inform readers that 'Feeling humiliated at her appearance, she slunk shyly and swiftly through their midst and went on'.<sup>193</sup> Similarly, Morrison explained how 'She went about with bare feet and bare head, subsisted on native food, drank unfiltered water, slept on the ground, got drenched with rain, and in short did everything that would have killed any ordinary person'.<sup>194</sup> This reference to her being far from 'ordinary' emphasised Slessor's individuality, and her clear difference allowing biographers to stabilise images of her breaching acceptable feminine behaviour. Hannington's encounters, however, took on a different stance and paid more attention to the adventurous aspects of his confrontations.

#### Hannington's hostile encounters

One approach used by biographers to justify the missionary presence was to provide children with images of native people in need of improvement and civilisation.

Hannington visited several villages on his journey which allowed biographers to regale

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<sup>192</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.76.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, p.76.

<sup>194</sup> Morrison, *The Missionary Heroes*, p.255.

children with illustrations of the unbounded ‘curiosity of the natives’ who ‘swarmed’ around their ‘tents from morning till night’:

The men are exceedingly undressed, wearing only short goat-skins from the shoulder to the hip-bone. They besmear themselves with red ochre and paint hideous devices on their faces, so that they look like red men rather than black...

The Ugogo type of countenance is for the most part very low in the scale, the features being broad and flat, with but little forehead.<sup>195</sup>

This was accompanied by an illustration which shows Hannington’s tent surrounded by the curious natives (Figure 25).<sup>196</sup>

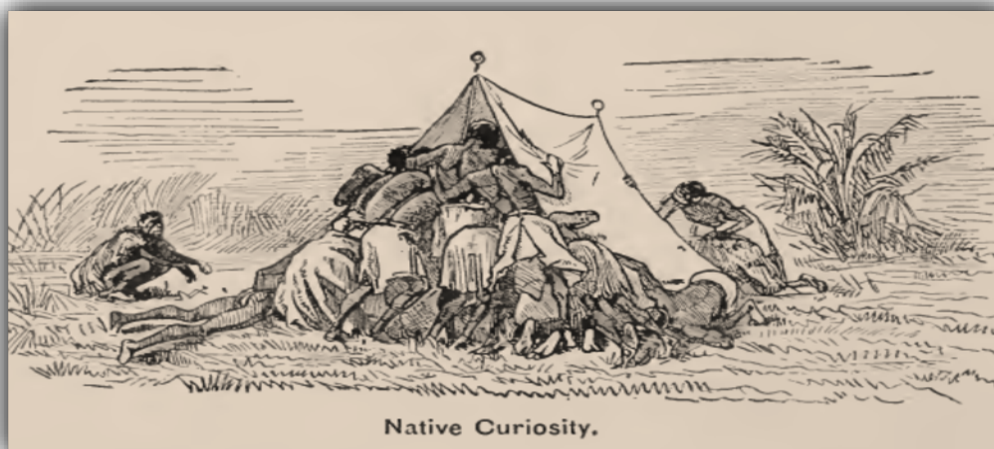


Figure 25 ‘Native Curiosity’; Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.41.

<sup>195</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.41; The ‘scale’ Hannington refers to is also discussed at length within *The Church Missionary Atlas* (1879) which explains how the people of Africa ‘must rank very low in the scale of civilized communities, because they indulge in habits and practices which belong to the very lowest stage of savage life, and are at the same time a reproach to humanity’; *The Church Missionary Atlas* (London, Seeley, 1879), p.21.

<sup>196</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.41; Hannington’s tent became part of the CMS Loan Department and was sent around the country as a feature for Exhibitions representing East Africa. The aim of the exhibitions was to ‘give an object lesson on a large scale of the work being done in foreign lands by the missionary societies...Another object was to promote a greater amount of reading about foreign missions for which purpose the exhibition includes a bookstall’; *Berrow’s Worcester Journal*, 1894; His name was also used to advertise Benjamin Edgington’s Double Ridge Roof Tent as ‘The Best Tent for Africa’ in 1893.

Interestingly, descriptions of encounters made within Hannington's journey occasionally provided an alternative image of the African which reversed the Eurocentric gaze:

In some of the places I passed through they had never seen a white man before. They would gather round me in dozens, and gaze upon me with the utmost astonishment. One would suggest that I was not beautiful - in plainer language that I was amazingly ugly. Fancy a set of hideous savages regarding a white man, regarding your uncle, as a strange outlandish creature frightful to behold...An almost endless source of amusement was the immense amount of clothing, according to their calculation, that I possessed. That I should have waistcoat and shirt and jersey underneath a coat, seemed almost incredible, and the more so when I told them that it was chiefly on account of the sun that I wore so much (Figure 26).<sup>197</sup>



Figure 26 'Personal Attention by the Natives'; Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.43-45.

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<sup>197</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.43-45.

Hannington's 'pen and ink' drawings were reproduced within many of his biographies, and it is interesting to note how his appearance in the 1886 edition *Peril and Adventure* is changed within Michael's 1910 biography. This was possibly an attempt to allow readers to relate to the missionary, but could also to incorporate aspects of modernity to the missionary enterprise (Figure 27).<sup>198</sup>



Figure 27 'A Trying Time with Inquisitive Natives'; Michael, *James Hannington*, p.141.

Although the Africans' opinions are portrayed within this description, they were still described as 'hideous savages' in the accompanying text and the fact that they did have opinions raised some alarm.<sup>199</sup> The scene of 'inquisitive Wa-Gogo' is repeated

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<sup>198</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, p.141.

<sup>199</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.44.

within Dawson's *Lion-Hearted* and again the African is given agency, but the use of the word 'vexing' highlighted a frustration on the part of the author: 'The vexing part of it was that they seemed to think us far more curious than they were, and not so nearly as enlightened, or civilized, or fashionably dressed'.<sup>200</sup> This was followed by a description and illustration that resituated Hannington's control and superiority. Dawson, for example, explained how 'like naughty children, the people were not only inquisitive but quarrelsome' and how 'more than once the Whiteman had to step in and interfere'.<sup>201</sup> Dawson described how Hannington would 'run in with his white umbrella and brush aside the combatants without ceremony'.<sup>202</sup> In Hannington's own words he describes 'rushing in...like Mrs. Brown' to stop 'a tremendous fight with my umbrella. Words had not only waxed high, but guns were about to be used. Your uncle seized one of their guns, but it was some time before I could drag it out of the man's hands; nor did I feel safe in the skirmish, for a full-cocked loaded gun with weak and worn-out locks is not the safest thing to be wrestling over; but such is life out here - one cannot stop to think what is safe or what is unsafe' (Figure 28).<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.97.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p.98.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>203</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.47- 48.



effect of their provisions being scant began to show itself in their growing rather quarrelsome, for soon after starting I had to rush in and, like Mrs. Brown, stop a tremendous fight with my umbrella. Words had not only waxed



Settling a Quarrel.

high, but guns were about to be used. Your uncle seized one of their guns, but it was some time before I could drag it out of the man's hands; nor did I feel safe in the skirmish, for a full-cocked loaded gun with weak and worn-

Figure 28 'Settling a Quarrel'; Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, pp.47- 48.

Although Hannington's authority is restored in descriptions of this incident, to ensure children fully understood his position a further example of his control and influence was provided. This was the occasion when Hannington's boatmen refused to travel any further and Mzee their Captain became 'intolerable in his insolence and brutality'.<sup>204</sup> Requesting his gun, it was explained how Hannington 'with much deliberation and show, loaded it with ball', and suddenly standing up 'presented it full at Mzee's chest, almost touching him, and cried: - *Now, will you go on?*' (Figure 29).<sup>205</sup> The effect was described as 'magical', and it was explained how soon the Africans were 'making great friends with the victorious white man'.<sup>206</sup> It is also clarified that 'But I had found out a secret - I was, from that moment, the master, and it is not too much to say that our lives were saved by that one prompt action'.<sup>207</sup> This description justifies his behaviour but also portrays both power and authority, and provided readers with a clear example of British superiority.



Figure 29 'Will you go on now?'; Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.120.

<sup>204</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.120.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p.121 & p.76.

<sup>207</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.23.

Eric Hobsbawm has stated that ‘glimpses of strange worlds were not documentary, whatever their intention, they were ideological, generally reinforcing the sense of superiority of “civilised” over the “primitive”’.<sup>208</sup> Again the use of Hannington’s umbrella was used to highlight his resourcefulness, the narrative not only described his ingenuity but used the opportunity to highlight British Christian superiority as opposed to the ‘unconverted pagan’.<sup>209</sup> This was achieved through an explanation of how Hannington having picked up a lion cub ‘showed equal pluck and presence of mind. Dropping the cub, he put up his umbrella. And gallantly charged the lion and lioness, dancing and yelling as if he had been one of the unconverted pagans celebrating some diabolical rite’.<sup>210</sup>

Utilising the image of the brave adventurer in command of the unknown and supplying ‘that frisson of fear that has so often been an essential part of story-telling for children’, having mistakenly killed a lion cub, children are told how Hannington was faced with ‘a terrible dilemma, and in such a case most men would have given themselves up for lost. But not so Hannington’.<sup>211</sup> Within *Peril and Adventure*, it was explained how he ‘ran five or six steps; every step she gained on me, and the growls grew fiercer and louder. Do I say *she* gained? *they* gained, for the lion was close behind her, and both were making straight for me’.<sup>212</sup> This was concluded with a description of his death-defying escape: ‘After an interval I decided not to fire at them, but to try

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<sup>208</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (London, Pantheon, 1987), p.80.

<sup>209</sup> *Chatterbox*, 1893.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> John M. Mackenzie, ‘Hunting and the Natural World in Juvenile Literature’ in J. Richards, ed., *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 1989), p.147; Michael, *James Hannington*, p.107.

<sup>212</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.53.

instead what a little noise would do. So I suddenly threw up my arms in the air, set up a yell, and danced and shouted like a madman...they both bounded into the bushes as if they had been shot'.<sup>213</sup>

Hannington's prompt action during his encounter with the lions was retold in many formats. The original story and illustration appeared in *The Graphic* in 1884 as part of the series of letters sent by Hannington to 'his nieces and nephews'.<sup>214</sup> It was also published in the *Sunday at Home* (1886), which described Hannington's 'indomitable nature' and explained how 'an ordinary man encountering lions for the first time, would probably have lost all presence of mind, and turning to run, have been inevitably destroyed'.<sup>215</sup> *The Practical Teacher* for 1892 also suggested that Hannington's encounter : 'No. 218...A BISHOP'S UMBRELLA [was] suitable for 'Unseen Tests' in Reading, Standard V.<sup>216</sup> Hannington's bravery, resourcefulness and superiority was often promoted alongside the story, as displayed in the periodical *All The Year Round* (1887) which explained to readers that following his 'exploit' he was given 'immense influence with the men who learned not only to regard him as invincible, but also dreaded opposing his expressed will'.<sup>217</sup> Clearly this story also had some influence upon readers as Leslie Missen, whom we encountered earlier, clearly remembered as a child learning 'how Bishop Hannington met a lion in Uganda, threw his sunglasses at it and it ran away'.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>214</sup> *The Graphic*, 1884.

<sup>215</sup> *Sunday at Home*, 1886.

<sup>216</sup> *The Practical Teacher*, 1892.

<sup>217</sup> *All the Year Round*, 1887; Dawson also explains that the skin of the cub was 'unfortunately eaten by ants, but the tuft at the end of its tail is still preserved as a trophy of one of the coolest acts of deliberate hardihood ever performed by man'; Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.216.

<sup>218</sup> Burnett, 'Introduction', p.25.

## Conclusion

The very nature of missionary work meant inevitably that missionaries' individual lives provided a range of circumstances and experiences, but as this chapter has shown descriptions of their childhoods, journeys and hostile encounters shared dominant features and patterns that allowed biographers to engage with many of the social, political and cultural debates and provide examples for children to emulate. Missionary biographies followed a standard life cycle, giving descriptions of the missionary's normal and often rebellious childhood, their call to missionary work, leaving home, and their journey to and experience within the mission field. Biographers, for example, used the poor and often fraught backgrounds of the missionary to resound with their readers' own circumstances, in so doing promoting conventional ideas of self-help. Upon this basic structure, more interesting and personalised stories were created, designed to tempt, excite and instruct young British readers.

Journeys and encounters by missionaries described by biographers illustrated how gender roles were defined but also how encounters with the native were used to enforce racial stereotypes which strengthened and valorized the superiority of the white British missionary. By codifying and mapping lands and people descriptions of the landscape were transformed into recognisable parts of the empire, which as Ymitri Mathison explains 'could be more readily consumed'.<sup>219</sup> While this chapter has considered themes relevant to both the male and female missionary the following chapter will concentrate upon themes based upon the male missionary which exemplify

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<sup>219</sup> Ymitri Mathison, 'Maps, Pirates, and Treasure: The Commodification of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century Boys' Adventure Fiction', in D. Denisoff, ed., *The Nineteenth-Century Child and Consumer Culture* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008), pp.173-174.

and expand upon discussions of masculinity. As we will discover biographers used themes of self-help, chivalry, athletic prowess and militarism to strengthen the idealised masculine image of the missionary, but also to promote British superiority and to restore traditionally accepted gender roles and boundaries.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

‘Ideally some sort of imprinting process will take place, and the manliness of the hero will become the manliness of the reader’ - the male missionary as an imperial hero.

The biographies based on the lives of male missionaries promoted a style of British masculinity that was modelled upon values of manliness, athleticism and chivalry. This chapter seeks to illustrate how through their endeavours and interconnecting qualities of an ideal masculinity, these core ideas were transmitted to children, and how the missionary contributed to and became part of the image of the perfect hero who served as an example to whom young boys could relate. The idea being that:

Having such an accessible and predictable hero is plainly to encourage the reader to project himself into the character and thereby to take a personal interest not only in the details of battles and campaigns but in the hero’s ultimate success. Ideally, some sort of imprinting process will take place, and the manliness of the hero will become the manliness of the reader? <sup>1</sup>

This chapter will also question the reliance upon a generic representation of the white male hero who embodied national character in its highest form and offered readers examples of self-help. Integral to this chapter will also be a discussion of how depictions of the male missionary endorsed a consistent and traditional image that justified, directly or indirectly Britain’s imperial role, British superiority and a common national consciousness. The biographies also provide excellent windows through which to view

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<sup>1</sup> Claudia Nelson, *Boys Will Be Girls: The Feminine Ethic and British Children’s Fiction, 1857-1917* (New Brunswick, Rutgers U.P., 1991), p.107

how representations of the male missionary offered children illustrations of self-help and good citizenship. Using examples of individual missionaries followed by a more detailed examination of the biographies regarding missionary James Hannington, this chapter will investigate how literary manifestations of the heroic male missionary, utilising the adventure story structure, concentrated upon several reoccurring themes. As Philip Mason in his study *The English Gentleman* has suggested, there are four archetypes of the English gentleman, which include the athlete, scholar, Christian and military gentleman.<sup>2</sup> Representations of the missionary within the biographies often encompassed, in various guises, all four of Mason's suggestions. This chapter will, therefore, consider themes within the biographies of male missionaries which were distinctly gendered and included examples of manliness, athleticism, chivalry and tropes of militarism.

Given the threats to masculinity at the end of the nineteenth century, which was challenged by the emergence of the New Woman and increased attention on homosexuality, the celebration and inclusion of masculine character and behaviour led to a heightened, even exaggerated emphasis on manliness.<sup>3</sup> Andrew Roberts in his study *Conrad and Masculinity* provides a broad definition of masculinity as a socially constructed identity, as a 'psychic structure, as a fantasy, as a code of behaviour, or as a set of social practices and constraints'.<sup>4</sup> When read in conjunction with Dawson's study of the soldier hero, this provides an interesting basis for understanding why the

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal* (London, Pimlico, 1993), p.22.

<sup>3</sup> For commentary upon threats to masculinity see: Michael Roper & John Tosh, eds., *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London, Routledge, 1991); George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Andrew M. Roberts, *Conrad and Masculinity* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000), pp.4-5.



missionary biographies were dominated by masculine figures who embraced cultural narratives of heroism, muscular Christianity and martyrdom.<sup>5</sup>

As discussed in previous chapters, the ideological constructions of masculinity were articulated by popular writers such as Thomas Hughes and Thomas Carlyle and used to express the importance of character and manly behaviour.<sup>6</sup> The Sunday schools linked character not only to behaviour but also to good citizenship. Fahs citing the work of Dr. G. Stanley Hall suggested that ‘Children of this age lead a life eminently objective; they look outward, and should not be encouraged to look inward. They love exciting events, battles, the flood and tower. They admire character; for this is an age of intense hero-worship, and interest in persons is necessary to animate interest in causes, ideas, all geographical localities, ceremonials, etc.’.<sup>7</sup> Representations of the male missionary were thought to successfully exhibit all of these traits. George Hawker’s description of missionary Alfred Saker, for example, explained how:

Here, amidst appalling degradation and rampant cruelty, this master-builder laid the foundations of a Christian civilization. He made bricks, built houses, reduced the language to writing, established printing presses, compiled grammars and dictionaries, translated the Scriptures into the Dualla tongue, endured persecution, won confidence, made converts, and, supported by faithful colleagues, achieved once more the miracles of regeneration and uplifting, possible only to men who are the organs of the Spirit of Christ.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Thomas Carlyle and Charles Kingsley see: James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithica, Cornell U.P.,1995).

<sup>7</sup> Fahs, ‘Missionary Biography’, p.364.

<sup>8</sup> George Hawker, *The Life of George Grenfell: Congo Missionary and Explorer* (London, F. H. Revell,1909), pp.46-47.

In reviewing Thomas Hughes's biography of David Livingstone, the *London Quarterly Review* clearly saw the missionary as a 'man of action':

Livingstone could not be omitted from any series of biographies of English 'Men of Action'. The publishers have been fortunate in obtaining the help of Mr. Thomas Hughes to write this record. To give a clear and well-written outline...of the vast work done by this brave and good man, this noble and tender man, this most sagacious and adventurous pioneer - in so doing to reveal the living traits of his very vivid personality, and to do all this in a spirit of sympathy with the Christian character and the missionary inspiration of his hero, was what was required of the writer of this brief biography.<sup>9</sup>

And in a similar vein and highlighting the scope, skills and range of equipment needed by the missionary, Padwick in *Mackay of the Great Lake* explained:

For the mission's use it should bring with it a supply of hammers, saws, augers, chisels, axes, hatchets, adzes, carpenters' and blacksmiths' tools...trowels, a couple of good-sized anvils, a forge and bellows, an assortment of nails and tacks, a plough, spades, shovels, pickaxes...Most desirable would be an assortment of garden seed and grain; also white lead, linseed oil, brushes, a few volumes of illustrated journals', gaudy prints, a magic lantern, rockets, and photographic apparatus.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *The London Quarterly Review*, 1889.

<sup>10</sup> Padwick, *Mackay of the Great Lake*, p.20; The range of abilities the missionary possessed was still being discussed in 1924 as a contributor to the *Quiver* magazine explained that the missionary 'is a scholar and an athlete; he has more than a smattering of a good many trades, and he knows something of medicine'; *The Quiver*, 1924.

Working alongside these examples were reoccurring themes which promoted an image of masculinity that not only provided boys with illustrations that encouraged self-reliance, physical endurance, the development of skill and building of character, but also as we shall discover were familiar, exciting and therefore readable.

### Character and themes of self-help

Character, and particularly the Christian character, was often prized as the hallmark of the ‘moral and manly individual’, and was viewed as a particularly ‘English quality that led inexorably to imperial predominance and the disciplined and chivalrous exercise of duty’.<sup>11</sup> Character was often used as a code word for manliness or masculinity to encourage traits of individuality, fair play and physical endurance. Providing examples of heroism and the ‘native strength and soundness of the English race, and of manly English training’, Smiles, for example, claimed that no greater ‘energy and courage’ had been displayed than by ‘labourers in the missionary field’.<sup>12</sup> Basil Mathews, writer and editor, reiterates this within *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers* stating that ‘The Yarns are designed so to build up the character of the boys that they will be fitted to play their part in life’.<sup>13</sup> Capitalising upon Smiles’s illustrations of self-help and cultivating a desire for adventure and heroism, the literature keenly offered the missionary as a true example of

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<sup>11</sup> Nathan Roberts, ‘Character in the Mind: Citizenship, Education and Psychology in Britain, 1880-1914’ *History of Education* 33.2 (2004), p.177.

<sup>12</sup> Smiles, *Self-help*, p.165: Smiles suggests missionaries ‘Henry Martyn, William Carey, John Williams and David Livingstone’ as examples of ‘self-help’ heroism.

<sup>13</sup> Basil Mathews, *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers: A Book for Workers Among Boys* (London, Edinburgh House Press, 1913), p.3; Each Yarn is followed by some “Notes and Suggestions” for carrying the impression of that story further by leading the boys into conversation. The exercise of asking questions and making suggestions will drive in the meaning of the story more closely to their own lives.’; p.2.

how working-class boys could achieve success. J.T. Gracey's chapter on 'Alexander M. Mackay: The Hero of Uganda' clearly illustrated this:

Mackay's character and career will repay close examination ... especially by young men affording them help in character building. The heroic element is so prominent, the experiences so thrilling at times, and the noble balance of all manly qualities so remarkable, that, in fact, there is no class of readers who will not be instructed and interested by the life story of this man, who, when gauged by his mighty achievements, 'was not too young to die'.<sup>14</sup>

Character and manly qualities described within the missionary biographies were constructed upon the framework of the adventure story. As discussed in Chapter Three the popular adventure story championed the male hero, and according to Rebecca Knuth owed 'a lot to *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)' which she argues is a tale of character, 'a story of individual enterprise, Protestant piety, hard work, and self-help'.<sup>15</sup> Fitting neatly with Smiles's 'self-help', *Robinson Crusoe* encapsulates the interplay between adventure and character, and as Green argues it 'has been so entwined with the key ideas of modern politics, economics, exploration, science, and so on, it can be retold again and again, and each time with a different point'.<sup>16</sup> Missionary Dr. Robert Laws, for example, was

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<sup>14</sup> J.T. Gracey, 'Alexander M. Mackay: The Hero of Uganda', in W.F. McDowell, et al., *The Picket Line of Missions: Sketches of the Advanced Guard* (Chicago, Missionary Campaign Library, 1897), p.73.

<sup>15</sup> Knuth, *Children's Literature*, p.52; *Robinson Crusoe* was the most popular book highlighted in Edward Salmon's 1888 survey of 790 boys in different kinds of schools, Salmon, *Juvenile Literature*, p.15; The *GOP* also produced a serial *Robina Crusoe and Her Lonely Island* appearing between December 1882 and July 1883; Green, *Dreams of Adventure*, p.25; For a further discussion on the influence of *Robinson Crusoe* see: Rose, *The Intellectual Life*, pp. 93-111.

<sup>16</sup> Green, *Seven Types*, pp.25-45 & p.49.

described by W.P. Livingstone as ‘a sort of Robinson Crusoe’.<sup>17</sup> And after his death missionary John Williams the subject of Sunday school lesson plans and numerous biographies was also depicted as a ‘true-life Robinson Crusoe - who combined godliness with practical ability’ and was identified by Smiles in his bestseller as one of his self-help heroes.<sup>18</sup> Just as ideas of manly behaviour were championed within the biographies so too were images of the missionary as sporting and athletic.

### Manliness and athleticism

Representations of sport and athleticism within the biographies provide an interesting and complex argument. During the late 1850s, Muscular Christianity and athleticism became integral in the public school educational system but was also developed as a means of developing character in children from different social backgrounds. Wray Vamplew, for example, argues that from the 1870s sport gave young ministers and teachers ‘a point of contact for conversion, but, more than that, sport was character-forming as it taught self-discipline and team spirit and it offered a counter attraction to gambling, drink and crime’.<sup>19</sup> Ideas of Christian morality and sportsmanship formed the

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<sup>17</sup> W.P. Livingstone, *The Hero of the Lake: A Life of Dr. Robert Laws for Boys* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1933), p.33; John Lambert within his collection of missionary biographies quotes a review of missionary James Gilmour’s biography *Among the Mongols*; “‘Robinson Crusoe’ he said, has turned missionary, lived years in Mongolia, and written a book about it. That is this book’ and adds that ‘the advantage of Gilmour’s book as compared with Defoe’s, it must be remembered that everything that the former tells us is literally true’; John C. Lambert, *Missionary Heroes in Asia: True Stories of the Intrepid Bravery and Stirring Adventure of Missionaries with Uncivilized Man, Wild Beasts and the Force of Nature* (London, Seeley, 1910), pp. 39-40.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony Kearney, ‘The Missionary Hero in Children’s Literature’, *Children’s Literature in Education*, 14, 2 (1983), p.107; Smiles, *Self-help*, p.241.

<sup>19</sup> Wray Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 2004), pp. 51-52.

basis of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* as Tom's character is shaped by playing sport.<sup>20</sup> The *BOP* similarly used images of games and physical exercises, which as Springhall argues 'supposedly built up the national character and thereby contributed to the Empire's greatness, hence the link between sports and the perpetuation of the imperial mission'.<sup>21</sup>

Descriptions of the athletic achievements missionaries gained in their youth were a common theme within the biographies, although they were often only mentioned within biographies of missionaries from middle or upper-class backgrounds. Edward Church, the aptly-named CMS candidate we introduced earlier, described how 'Dr. Grenfell's book on Labrador left a great impression on me of the adventurous and sporting side of missionary life', and this association between the missionary and the athlete was particularly conspicuous in biographies focusing on the abilities and prowess of a group of students from Cambridge University commonly known as the 'Cambridge Seven'.<sup>22</sup> Many biographies explained how in 1895 they made the decision to become missionaries in China, and that both Stanley P. Smith, and his friend C.T. Studd, from

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<sup>20</sup> The adoption of sport to develop character and moral values, was soon realised as beneficial in the education of all children regardless of class. Eagerly supporting the idea that games should be extended to working-class children the Secretary to the Board of Education, Robert Morant argued in 1904 that 'the corporate life of the School, especially in the playground, should develop that instinct for fair play and for loyalty to one another which is the germ of a wider sense of honour in later life'; 'Elementary Code, 1904' in J.S. Maclure, ed., *Educational Documents England and Wales 1816-1963* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1965), pp.154-155; By 1906 hockey, cricket and football were introduced within the school curriculum of English elementary schools.

<sup>20</sup> Youth organisations, like the Boys' Brigade attempted to use athleticism to inculcate 'an *esprit de corps* parallel to the sort of school feeling that you have in an English public school'. Thomas W. Cuthbertson, honorary treasurer of the Boys' Brigade as quoted in Brendan Power, 'The Functions of Association Football in the Boys' Brigade in Ireland, 1888-1914', in L. Lane & W. Murphy, eds., *Leisure and the Irish in the Nineteenth Century* (Liverpool, Liverpool U.P., 2016), p.45. The Sunday schools also viewed sport as an important factor in the formation of character 'it is well known by students of boy life that the character of the boy is very largely determined by the informal education which comes from his part in sports and play' John L. Alexander, *The Boy and the Sunday school: A Manual of Principle and Method for the Work of the Sunday School with Teen Age Boys* (London, Association Press, 1913), p.34; For further reading see: Paul Wilkinson, 'English Youth Movements', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4.2 (1969), p.10.

<sup>21</sup> Springhall, 'Building Character in the British Boy', pp.66-67.

<sup>22</sup> *Candidates Papers*, C/ATM2/41.

Trinity College, Cambridge, were distinguished in the athletic world as ‘evangelical devotees of public school athleticism’.<sup>23</sup> The seven undergraduates promoted a high moral value and masculine physical endeavour propagated by the public-school code of winning graciously and keeping a stiff upper lip in defeat.<sup>24</sup> Their parting speech, recast within many biographies, again emphasised the relationship between sport and the missionary endeavour and explained ‘how much more noble a sphere of service was offered by CHRIST to young men with great possessions and good abilities, than any the cricket field, or the river, the army, or the bar could afford’.<sup>25</sup>

Within the biography of missionary Arthur Fraser Sim, the connections between the missionary, character formation and the athlete were again made by introducing readers to his public-school rowing team: ‘Speaking from personal experience’, Sims was said to have ‘left it as his opinion that the most necessary qualifications for such a life, even the smaller points of character, can be picked up in a college boat’ and that ‘training gave him lessons in self-control, under his coach’s heckling he grew patient, as first-boat captain he learnt to keep a crew together’.<sup>26</sup> *Yarns on Heroes of India* (1915), ‘the third of a series of text-books prepared for those who work among boys aged twelve to sixteen’ also offered children examples of how participation in sport could help develop good character.<sup>27</sup> The volume’s ‘Notes and Suggestions’ recommended that when leaders discussed with their students the chapter ‘Making Men out of

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<sup>23</sup> Steven S. Maughan, *Mighty England do Good: Culture, Faith, Empire, and the World in the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1850-1915* (Grand Rapids, Eardmans Publishing Company, 2014), p.252.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes, *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*.

<sup>25</sup> M. Geraldine Guinness, *The Story of the China Inland Mission* Vol.2 (London, Morgan & Scott, 1894), pp.441-442.

<sup>26</sup> *Young England: An Illustrated Magazine for Boys Throughout the English-Speaking World*, 1899.

<sup>27</sup> Claverdon-Wood, *Yarns on Heroes of India*.

Jellyfish’, based upon the work of missionary Tyndale-Biscoe, they should explain how games ‘have been used both to develop the body and to teach manliness and fair play’.<sup>28</sup> This he suggested would lead to ‘a good discussion upon what the qualities are that we admire most in British boys. We often sum them up in the phrase “a true sportsman”’. What do we mean by this? (e.g. courage and manliness) - we attach great value to games because of the way in which they bring out these qualities; honesty and playing fair - “playing the game” is a thing we try to bring into our whole life’.<sup>29</sup> The playing of team sports applauded both strengths of character and physical dexterity and offered readers - and their students - an image of the missionary hero as a true sportsman which utilised the powerful allegory of national prowess, quality and virtue.

Athleticism was also useful for biographers to use when describing the missionary partaking and organising games within the mission field. Examples of missionaries transforming and civilising local populations through games provided an opportunity for biographers to compare and celebrate British sportsmanship, but also the superiority of the British. Although it could be argued that to many working-class children the class-laden language of the following example would be beyond their own experience - if it even made sense to them in the first place - the description of different rowing styles would possibly not be lost on them. A chapter ‘Boys in West Africa’ by missionary T.E. Alvarez described young African rowers and explained how ‘strange their rowing must seem to you as you watch them! And how shocking our Varsity friends would be to see men standing up all together on the thwarts to row every third stroke, and what a “shock” we should have if we tried to do such a thing on the Thames

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.73.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72.



in a light “eight!””.<sup>30</sup> Although Alvarez, in true missionary spirit, offered an example of their capability to be reformed as true civilised Christians, he communicated British superiority and provided readers with a sense of belonging to an imagined community when describing how the ‘Bright, strong, merry fellows...look somehow as though they would have made capital “forwards” in the school “pack” with us, had they been white and God had sent them to the same school with us in England’.<sup>31</sup> This sense of community was not, however, always promoted. In a later chapter ‘Be a Missionary Yourself’ Alvarez spoke directly to those with a privileged education, and saw only the public-school pupil as athletic and strong: ‘you fellows with life before you, you who have had the great advantage of a public school education, you who have gained the athletic prizes and have strong bodies, you great scholars - yes, and you more humble scholars, who yet know what it is to be faithful to your heavenly Master - in His Name come along!’.<sup>32</sup>

As athleticism was slowly incorporated into the elementary school system, the ‘humble scholars’ referred to by Alvarez were slowly being given a chance to emulate the sporting prowess of the public-school pupil. As J.A. Mangan and Colm Hickey point out: ‘The Report of the Cross Commission’ in 1888 found that the playing of team games was missing in the curriculum of teacher training colleges, and in addition should be ‘responsible for gradually promoting a new masculinity, a masculinity of the games field, in the elementary schools and among the elementary schoolboys of England,

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<sup>30</sup> Mr. T.E. Alvarez, ‘Boys in West Africa’, in Stock, ed., *Boys and Boys*, p.22.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p.123.

Britain and empire'.<sup>33</sup> This was borne from a fear by middle-class reformers that if working-class boys in urban areas did not have the opportunity to partake in 'bona-fide athletic sport', they would as George F. Shee claimed in 1901 'seek amusement in vicious and unhealthy forms'.<sup>34</sup>

Using references within the narratives to a sport that all children could partake in did, however, provide a common theme. Athletics, with a focus on running, was used within the *Church Missionary Juvenile Instructor* (1880) as a symbol to highlight both the missionaries' task and to provide children with a moral lesson. In an article 'The Race' it was explained that the Christian runner 'eager to reach his goal' felt the same as them when they raced 'striving, and straining to reach the winning-post; *the thinking only about what remains to be done*'.<sup>35</sup> The intention of the story was to explain to children that through 'a preparation to make, a goal to aim at, and a prize to win; he must persevere to the end, or else he will not succeed'.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, a short biographical piece on missionary Keith Falconer highlighted his 'muscularity' by describing his achievements on a bike: 'he won in the 50 miles Bicycle Union Amateur Championship race...beating by seven minutes all previous records'. His triumphs, it was explained 'help us measure the energy which he carried into noble spheres of effort' but are also reworked allowing the important message of compromise to be made by reminding readers that 'he never allowed his bicycling to interfere with his reading'.<sup>37</sup> This was

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<sup>33</sup> J.A. Mangan and Colm Hickey, 'Athleticism in the Service of the Proletariat: Preparation for the elementary School and the Extension of Middle-Class Manliness', in J.A. Mangan, ed., *Sport, Europe, Gender: Making European Masculinities* (London, Frank Cass, 2000), p.136.

<sup>34</sup> George F. Shee, *The Briton's First Duty: The Case for Conscription* (London, Grant Richards, 1901), p.200.

<sup>35</sup> *Church Missionary Juvenile Instructor*, 1880.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *The Sunday at Home: A Family Magazine for Sabbath Reading*, 1888.

also a message repeated in popular biographies of C.T. Studd, many of which reproduced a letter sent by Studd to his brother which again reminded children of the compromise needed between sport and faith:

I do not say, Don't play games or cricket and so forth. By all means play and enjoy them, giving thanks to Jesus for them. Only take care that games do not become an idol to you as they did to me. What good will it do to anybody in the next world to have been the best player that ever has been? And then think of the difference between that and winning souls for Jesus.<sup>38</sup>

We can understand the role of athleticism and the construction of the missionary hero by exploring how Hannington's athletic qualities were represented by biographers. The following passage from Berry's biography of Hannington, unlike those above which highlighted compromise, explained how through sporting achievement character could be developed:

His studies, such as they were, did not seriously interfere with his sports, and especially with boating, of which he was passionately fond. Of course he was elected captain of the boat club. Hannington had, and continued to have throughout life, that indefinable something which we call 'weight' or 'character' which points out a man to his fellows as their born and natural leader; the impress of his personality, without any conscious effort of the man himself, made itself immediately felt wherever he was - whether in the committee-room of the C.M.S.

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<sup>38</sup> Norman P. Grubb, *C.T. Studd, Athlete & Pioneer* (London, RTS, 1933), pp.51-52.

at Salisbury Square, or amidst a throng of excited, squabbling, perverse natives in the heart of Africa.<sup>39</sup>

For working-class children, the likelihood of them ever being elected ‘captains of the boat club’ was remote, however, the public-school games ethos could, as Humphries has shown in his oral history of working-class childhood, reflect and reinforce a number of cultural traditions, in particular, the street gangs’ concern with territorial rivalry and the assertion of masculinity.<sup>40</sup> Robert Roberts, for example, discussed reading about the fictional Greyfriars Public School which appeared in *The Magnet*, and explained that ‘the public school ethos, distorted into myth and sold among us weekly in penny numbers, for good or ill, set ideals and standards’.<sup>41</sup> By allowing biographers to extol his ‘strength of will and power of endurance’ Hannington’s sporting activities provided a canvas for critiques in relation to broader societal concerns regarding manliness, physical fitness and national character.<sup>42</sup> On a mountaineering trip to Switzerland, for example, it was explained that:

He set himself against intemperance, and became a total abstainer; conceiving himself bound everywhere by this resolve, years after, while seeking health in Switzerland, he was making the ascent of Monte Rosa. He was not well, and suffered from "snow-sickness." The usual remedy is a mouthful of brandy, and it would, no doubt, have been effectual. The guides repeatedly urged him to take it,

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<sup>39</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.10.

<sup>40</sup> Humphreys, *Hooligans or Rebels?* p.41.

<sup>41</sup> Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, p.161; Roberts also suggests that author of the stories Frank Richards ‘had more influence on the mind and outlook of young working-class England than any other single person, not excluding Baden-Powell’.

<sup>42</sup> Strong, *In Lands Afar*, p.10.

but he resolutely refused, and, conquering by sheer effort of will, he reached the summit.<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, his strength and determination were used to show children the importance and usefulness of fortitude and resilience ‘This same strength of will and power of endurance saved his life more than once in Africa. At one time he was left for dead by his bearers, but found strength to crawl after them into camp’.<sup>44</sup> It was his sporting achievements that allowed one biographer to describe him as ‘a proud young English gentleman - wealthy, cultured, athletic.’<sup>45</sup> For the most part, biographers perpetuated the image of the athletic missionary as a masculine prototype. Helping them accomplish this idea of the manly missionary was the use of qualities associated with chivalry which also embodied principles of honour, national identity and responsibility.

#### The manly man and chivalry

H.W. Tucker, Assistant Secretary to the USPG, linked patriotism and chivalry with tales of heroism by suggesting that ‘Nothing generates patriotism in the young so much as the tales of heroism which are part of our national history; and not until our children have been fired with the records of Christian chivalry are they likely either to have a due appreciation of missionary work, or to volunteer for it themselves’.<sup>46</sup> Descriptions of heroic manly missionaries that incorporated reworkings of the older model of the

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> F.W. Boreham, *A Bunch of Everlastings; or, Texts that made history* (New York, Abingdon Press, 1920), p.173.

<sup>46</sup> H.W. Tucker, *Under the Banner: Papers on The Missionary Work of Modern Times* (London, SPCK, 1897), p.419.

muscular Christian endorsed by Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes, were used to inculcate children in ideas of patriotism and masculinity. This is discussed by Mangan and Walvin in *Manliness and Masculinity* who state it ‘would be wrong to imagine that manliness was a simple, single, coherent concept linked to a single locality. It was, in effect, a portmanteau term which embraced a variety of overlapping ideologies’.<sup>47</sup>

Within *The Savage in Literature* Brian Street describes the gentleman missionary as ‘the latter-day Sir Galahad...with his courage, honour and chivalry, resembles the Arthurian knight, and his journey through strange lands peopled with uncouth beings resembles that of the knight through fairyland’.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Isabel Hofmeyr, explains that missionaries often saw themselves as ‘chivalric knights, serving their nation, their queen, their God’.<sup>49</sup> Within the biographies, gentlemanly conduct and romanticised ideals of chivalry were useful themes to promote the missionary hero and connect his heroism and manliness with imperial ideology.<sup>50</sup> As Mark Girouard states ‘all gentlemen [knew] that they must be brave, show no sign of panic or cowardice, be courteous and protective to women and children, be loyal to their comrades and meet death without flinching’.<sup>51</sup> Girouard argues that they knew this:

because they had learned the code of the gentleman in a multitude of different ways, through advice, through example through what they had been taught at

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<sup>47</sup> J. A. Mangan & James Walvin, ‘Introduction’, in Mangan & Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality*: p.3.

<sup>48</sup> Street, *The Savage in Literature*, p.20.

<sup>49</sup> Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of the Pilgrim’s Progress* (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 2004), p.161.

<sup>50</sup> The protagonist Richard Coeur de Lion, in Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* (1820), for example, although of Norman origin, is shaped into a ‘champion of specifically *British* chivalry and liberty’; Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, p.142; The Scout Movement also used the code of chivalry exhorting boys to follow the example of St. George, England’s patron saint.

<sup>51</sup> Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale, Yale U.P., 1981), p. 7.

school or by their parents and through endless stories of chivalry, daring Knights gentlemen and gallantry which they had read or been told by way of history books, ballad. poems, plays, pictures and novels.<sup>52</sup>

Writing in 1917, A.C Hill described the missionary as a ‘servant of the Crown’ who ‘stands forth as one of the most heroic figures in the army of those who have carried the flag to the far corners of the world. Think of him in the highest terms...and he becomes one of the mighty, albeit unconscious figures of the modern world’s romance, worthy to rank with any knight or paladin of the palmy days of chivalry.’<sup>53</sup> Biographies of the chivalrous missionary hero were useful for the Sunday schools who viewed chivalry as an important lesson for children to understand: ‘We can appeal to chivalry and win young people in our schools to raise the standard of the school up so as to have the *esprit de corps* of the very finest and best’.<sup>54</sup> For example, in his biography *Livingstone the Pathfinder*, Mathews explained how Livingstone was a ‘knight of the newer days. For, not in battle nor romantic heroism, but in ceaseless trudging over a thousand miles of blistering plain and tangled forest, he was true to his word to a group of poor and ignorant Africans’.<sup>55</sup> And again, this portrayal of Livingstone as a ‘knight of the newer days’ was used by Chief Scout Librarian F.K. Mathews:

You like heroes of daring, lives of men full of generous noble deeds. Such a man was David Livingstone, a modern knight of the nineteenth century, and this story

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> A.C. Hill, *Christian Imperialism* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), p.297.

<sup>54</sup> *The Development of the Sunday-School: 1780-1905: The Official Report of the Eleventh International Sunday-School Convention*: Toronto, Canada, June 23-27, 1905, p.149.

<sup>55</sup> Mathews, *Livingstone the Pathfinder*, p.107.

of his life, written for red-blooded boys who have heard the ‘call of the wild’, is such as to make your ‘blood tingle’...for a boy not to know intimately such a man is to lose the throb and thrill of companionship with one of the earth’s greatest heroes.<sup>56</sup>

Not only did this depict Livingstone on a self-sacrificing quest, but it also legitimised his presence and that of the missionary enterprise as part of an ancient and noble tradition. One of the great legendary heroes King Arthur evoked chivalric images of virtue and fighting prowess, and was often used to promote the imperial endeavour. Depicting the ‘lives and deaths of Livingstone Gordon, and Paterson’, Elizabeth Rundle’s *Three Martyrs of the Nineteenth Century* (1885) made the connection between the missionary hero, chivalry and imperialism:

Our England, our ‘Greater Britain,’ is said by some to be verging towards decline, false to her old ideals, capable only of selfish aims and vacillating efforts as of decrepit old age. But here are three of her sons with a romantic, boyish love of enterprise, keen as in the days of Drake and Raleigh and the old explorers; and with a chivalrous care for the weak and oppressed as King Arthur might have craved for his Round Table; and with the statesmanlike recognition of evils and large marshalling of forces against wrongs, worthy of Alfred, Deliverer and King.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> *Boy’s Life*, 1913; An advertisement for ‘The Pathfinder Series’ states ‘LIVINGSTONE THE PATHFINDER by Basil Mathews. Third Edition (completing 25,000 copies). Published in Welsh, German, Chinese, 1913’.

<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Three Martyrs of the Nineteenth Century* (London, S.P.C.K., 1885), pp.vii-viii.



By reviving the code of heroic chivalry, the missionary was often compared to the medieval knight processing qualities of honour, virtue and moral fibre.<sup>58</sup> Missionary Bishop Selwyn, for example, is described as ‘like a knight in olden days he believed that wrongs were meant to be righted’.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, in John Tillotson’s collective biography *Our Untitled Nobility* (1873) it was suggested that nobility ‘like the word gentleman...signifies a state of mind and heart rather than a condition...true Nobility, a man must win for himself’.<sup>60</sup> Tillotson proposed that ‘self-won true nobility’ is found among all classes and asked children to think ‘how many brave men and women have worked their way into the illustrious roll, and without being “born great”, have achieved greatness’.<sup>61</sup> Tillotson also suggested that ‘If we had to design a coat of arms for those men, it should be - stars *argent* in a field *azure*, the crest a cross, the motto, “Go thou and do likewise”’.<sup>62</sup>

Drawing links between the knights of Camelot and their quest to find the Holy Grail and the ‘modern knights of empire with dragons of their own to slay in India, Africa, and the Far East’, the missionary was symbolised as not only respectable but also reassuringly masculine.<sup>63</sup> Again, Basil Mathews in *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers* attempted to ‘stimulate a twentieth century equivalent of the chivalry of the age of the

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<sup>58</sup> The cultural currency of medieval revivals to consolidate national identities has been studied by a number of scholars including; Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale, Yale U.P., 1981) and Stephanie Barczewski who, for example, focuses upon the instrumentality of the myths narratives Robin Hood and King Arthur in the formation of British identity; Stephanie Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2000).

<sup>59</sup> Frank, L. Paton, *Patteson of Melanesia: a brief life of John Coleridge Patteson, Missionary Bishop* (London, S.P.C.K., 1900), p.25.

<sup>60</sup> John Tillotson, *Our Untitled Nobility* (London, Gall & Inglis, 1873), p.iii.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. iii-iv.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.vi.

<sup>63</sup> Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-century Britain*, p.10.

knights'.<sup>64</sup> Mathews argued that 'all these instincts are led out into happy expression through 'stories of heroic deeds which have been part of that great Christian enterprise of foreign missions - the finest modern expression of what we call chivalry, with its central thought of *Noblesse oblige*'.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, in a chapter titled 'The Knight of a New Crusade' included in his later *Yarns on African Pioneers*, Mathews suggested that the 'Leader's Aim' should be 'to show how a courage greater than that of the Crusaders was given to a pioneer called by God to carry the Gospel to North Africa'.<sup>66</sup> And again in his 1913 publication *The Splendid Quest*, Mathews clearly equates the missionary with the knight, depicted their adventures as quests, and informed his readers how 'this book salutes the fearless and eager young chivalry of to-day, The Table Round of the Twentieth Century. Ten - out swords for "The splendid quest, the good fight ringing clear!" No Quest, no Adventure! No Quest, no Conquest!'.<sup>67</sup>

Working alongside chivalric imagery, the trope of the English gentleman was also incorporated within the biographies. Nairne, for example, in his biography of James Chalmers explained how 'He was God's gentleman, even to New Guinean savages'.<sup>68</sup> This image of the gentleman according to Richards was 'the embodiment of the virtues of bravery, loyalty, courtesy, generosity, modesty, purity and compassion and endowed with a sense of *noblesse oblige* towards women, children and social inferiors'.<sup>69</sup> This

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<sup>64</sup> Mathews, *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers*, p.2.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*; The first run of 10,000 copies of *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers* sold within a year...with over 37,000 copies printed during four decades'; Hitchen, 'Formation of the Nineteenth Century Missionary Worldview'; p.135.

<sup>66</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, p.7.

<sup>67</sup> Basil Mathews, *The Splendid Quest, stories of knights on the pilgrims' way* (London, F. H. Revell, 1913), p.ix.

<sup>68</sup> W.P. Nairne, *Greatheart of Papua*, p.101.

<sup>69</sup> Jeffrey Richards, 'Popular Imperialism and the Image of the Army in Juvenile Literature', in J.M. Mackenzie, ed., *Popular Imperialism and the Military*, p.87.

image of the missionary served to reinforce and counter any possible threat to the missionaries' masculine prowess. The spiritual and humanitarian aspect of their work and descriptions of Christian responsibility set it apart from its fictional counterparts:

There was no spot under the British flag...where missionary enterprise could be pointed to with more assured conviction and satisfaction of its marvellous and beneficial results...all the way up...there were to be seen naked pagan savages, people living their tribal life in the darkness of ignorance and savagery, but [soon] found themselves in a new world-one of clothed, well-mannered, well-organised, and polite people.<sup>70</sup>

This was particularly true within biographies describing the compassion, bravery and work of the male medical missionary who provided authors of the biographies with the ideal combination to link ideas of heroic duty and romance with imperial authority.<sup>71</sup> The work of medical missionaries was also effective for highlighting the need for intervention and the superiority of British methods 'The horrors of superstitious mal-treatment of the sick and injured are relieved in many lands only by medical missionaries who walk through those regions of pains in the name and spirit of the Great Physician'.<sup>72</sup> This was often done by providing descriptions and sensationalised images deriding superstitions and the practices of medicine-men and witch doctors as 'servants of evil, who shook their magic wands'.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Hannington, *Peril and Adventure*, p.208.

<sup>71</sup> Although women were increasingly employed as doctors (and nurses) it is rare for their struggles with superstition and witch doctors to be discussed within the juvenile biographies.

<sup>72</sup> Arthur Judson Brown, *The Foreign Missionary: An Incarnation of a World Movement* (London, F. H. Revell, 1907), p.107.

<sup>73</sup> Padwick, *Mackay of the Great Lake*, p.67.

Similarly, images of the chivalrous male missionary protecting women and children are prevalent within the narratives. Deborah Cameron has argued that ‘men can be men only if women are unambiguously women’ and often descriptions of wives were used within the biographies to explain and expand the masculine role.<sup>74</sup> This is demonstrated in the account of missionary Robert Moffat in *Great Missionaries of the Church* (1895) a book that was dedicated to ‘The Young People of Our Day’.<sup>75</sup> Creegan, its author, explained how Moffat having been accused of causing a drought, and ‘at the point of the spear’ was ‘fortified by the courage of his wife, who stood at the door of their cottage with their baby in her arms’.<sup>76</sup> ‘Throwing open his waistcoat’, Moffat is emboldened to declare “‘If you will, drive your spear to my heart. We know you will not touch our wives and children”. The would-be murderers turned away, saying, “These men must have ten lives, when they are so fearless of death””.<sup>77</sup> In an earlier account of the same incident in David Deane’s biography of 1880, Moffat’s display of masculine courage is enhanced still further with an elaborate illustration which featured that missionary’s wife portrayed in a maternal role cradling their child behind the protective shield of her husband (Figure 30).<sup>78</sup> This not only served to reinforce his dominant patriarchal authority and bravery but also highlighted her dependency and passivity.

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<sup>74</sup> Deborah Cameron, *Feminism and Linguistic Theory* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1992), pp.155-156.

<sup>75</sup> Creegan, *Great Missionaries of the Church*, p.62.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> David Deane, *Robert Moffat: The Missionary Hero of Kuruman* (London, Partridge, 1890), p.61.



Figure 30 'Now then, if you will, drive your spear to my heart'; Deane, *Robert Moffat*, p.61.

Like Moffat, Hannington was also portrayed by biographers as a 'chivalrous, knightly Christian'.<sup>79</sup> Berry the author of *Bishop Hannington: The Life and Adventures of a Missionary Hero* described Hannington as 'just the sort of man, a fighting, chivalrous, knightly Christian, every inch of him, to whom that work, once known, would powerfully appeal'.<sup>80</sup> Throughout the biographies this was a recurring theme. Michael, for example, described his 'high sense of honour, a love of truth, and a conscience that compelled him at all costs to keep his word', while Dawson explained how 'Had he

<sup>79</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.32.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

lived in still earlier times he might have been a Knight Templar, and, with virgin heart and body, have wielded a good lance for the honour of Christ and His Church'.<sup>81</sup>

Within the mission field the family often operated as a key site of imperial processes, particularly in transmitting the cultural norms and virtues of a monogamous Christian home. Hannington, however, travelled alone to East Africa and biographers were careful in explaining why, although married with children, he had decided to leave them behind. Many use his faith and commitment as a reason, and one biographer applied the following quotation from Greek philosopher Epictetus to justify his actions: 'If some wifeling or childling be granted you, well and good; but, if the Captain call, run to the ship, and leave such possessions behind you, not looking back!'.<sup>82</sup> Another method was to describe his independent nature which also incorporated acts of chivalry. Dawson as an example explained that before his marriage 'his friends and companions were mainly, and, indeed, almost exclusively, of his own sex. Not that he was unpopular with women...in his eyes they were but weaker men, to be treated with chivalrous consideration, but otherwise as companions - nothing more'.<sup>83</sup> Michael too evokes manliness, chivalry and devotion to his work 'he was a man first ... a true chivalrous knight...he enjoyed his independence, he was a "handy" man not needing the ministrations of women...and above all he was wedded to his work'.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, Berry described how his nature was manifested through his letters home 'the blithe, undaunted spirit in which the great missionary encountered difficulties, and as such they are valuable for the insight they give into the mind and soul of an intrepid soldier of the

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<sup>81</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, p.20; Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.149.

<sup>82</sup> Boreham, *Bunch of Everlastings*, p.180.

<sup>83</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.34.

<sup>84</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.24.

cross'.<sup>85</sup> Describing Hannington as a soldier of the cross Berry used a trope familiar within most biographies that of militarism.

### Militarism

Our age demands some moral equivalent...to take the place of war. Our young men demand an opportunity to prove their courage and heroism, and our Christian zeal cries out for the privilege of sacrifice...Foreign missions are broad enough, hard enough, rewarding enough to satisfy the soul that aspires to hardship and heroism.<sup>86</sup>

This statement within the *Home Base of Missions* report presented to the 1910 World Missionary Conference recognised the link between the military soldier and the missionary. Thorne argues that many missionaries returning to England from their sojourns abroad were viewed as 'as conquering heroes of an uncharted heathen wilderness and were greeted by receptions not unlike those that would be accorded to military heroes and monarchs'.<sup>87</sup> This was certainly the case made by the Rev, Albert Swift in his article 'How to Interest Children in Missionary Work' published in the 1902 edition of the LMS magazine *The Chronicle*:

Very much more might be done to Interest and Instruct them in Missionary Work through the Romance and Adventure which always pertain thereto - This element

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p.117.

<sup>86</sup> *The Home Base of Missions*, p.263; Hassell in his handbook for Ministers and Teachers also used tropes of militarism to encourage their teaching: 'It may be that the one great thing which you are called to do is to infuse a missionary spirit into the children committed to your care, and then, for ought you know, you may have the honour of supplying the Church with recruits to fill up the ranks of her invading army-men and women who, animated by the spirit of their Great Commander, shall carry the Gospel banner into the very stronghold of the enemy, and plant it upon the citadel of heathenism'; Hassell, *Pole to Pole*, p.23.

<sup>87</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.64.

had much to do with the successful appeals of other days, when the returning missionary was heralded as a hero coming home from war. Young life particularly responds to this kind of thing.<sup>88</sup>

This was also true within the narratives based on the missionary heroes. Linked to tropes of muscular Christianity and implicated within a broader shift towards a dominant masculine ideal, the missionary hero, enhanced by both distance and exotic locations, was commonly represented as a Christian soldier taking part in a spiritual battle. As discussed in the introduction, the relationship between the missionary and imperialism was complex. The following extract from a 1910 article entitled ‘The Romance of the Missionary’ published in *The Quiver* described how the missionary enterprise interacted with empire, but also how the missionary, although described as a soldier, was using the Bible as his weapon in a spiritual war:

If commerce follows the flag, the flag follows the missionary. It is one of the facts of history. From the days when the lean Jesuits blazed the way in North America for the flag of France, till Livingstone opened the Dark Continent to European exploitation, the missionary has marched before the soldier; the Prayer Book and the Bible have proved more powerful than the rifle and the machine gun.<sup>89</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Two, boys were increasingly encouraged to participate in organised groups which often imitated and supported the rhetoric and discipline of the

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<sup>88</sup> Albert Swift, ‘How to Interest Children in Missionary Work’, *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, (1902), p.276.

<sup>89</sup> *The Quiver*, 1910.



British military.<sup>90</sup> The biographies also made direct reference to readers about their own militarism. The CMS publication *Through my Spectacles in Uganda* (1898) suggested that there are ‘soldier readers’ who ‘Read missionary books and magazines to learn how the “Holy War” is going on in the world, where “forts of darkness” are being assailed by the “soldier of light”’. Readers who read Christ’s missionary calls, and precepts, and promises, as “marching orders” for their own hearts’ use and obedience’.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, it was suggested children could ‘prepare in your school days for a “call to the front” using examples of both Livingstone and Carey to highlight the fact “Livingstone learned Greek at his loom in Glasgow as a boy, on purpose to train as a medical missionary. Carey, the great missionary to India, prepared a missionary map of the world to study whilst working as a cobbler”’.<sup>92</sup>

As we discovered in Chapter One, tales of battles and great victories which centred around the hero were the staple ingredient of many adventure stories and school texts books celebrating the lives of military men such as Kitchener, Gordon and Havelock and promoting ideas of heroism and public duty.<sup>93</sup> Peter Yeandle has stressed that the achievements of famous generals *and* common soldiers, or, to use John Price’s term ‘everyday heroes’, were an ‘essential feature of the national character’.<sup>94</sup> Yeandle

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<sup>90</sup> The scout movement, although denying any military connection did encourage boys in war games and rifle shooting see Martin Dedman, ‘Baden-Powell, Militarism, and the “Invisible Contributors” to the Boy Scout Scheme, 1904-1920’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 4. 3 (1993), pp.201-223; For further reading on Victorian and Edwardian militarism in general see: Olive Anderson, ‘The Growth of Christian Militarism in Mid-Victorian Britain’, *English Historical Review* 8.6 (1971), pp.46-72; Alan Penn, *Targeting Schools: Drill, Militarism, and Imperialism* (London, Woburn Press, 1999).

<sup>91</sup> Hall, *Through my Spectacles*, p.101.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> See Peter Yeandle’s chapter ‘Enlightened Patriots: Heroes, Heroines and “Pioneers of Progress” in the Teaching of History’, in P. Yeandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire: The Politics of History Teaching in England* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2016), pp.118-146.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p.127; John Price, *Everyday Heroism: Victorian Constructions of the Heroic Civilian* (London, Bloomsbury, 2014).

also argues that biographical stories were ‘intended to appeal not only to the child’s sympathetic interest, but also to its social and religious interests’.<sup>95</sup> The soldier hero provided publishers of the missionary biographies who recognised the significance of Christian militaristic symbolism, with a template for reinforcing the missionary’s masculine image. Popular hymns such as *Onward Christian Soldiers* (1871) composed for a Whitsun Sunday-school procession and *Fight the Good Fight* (1863) also used military terminology, highlighting the link between military discipline, imperialism and religion. Poems too, incorporated militaristic images:

Take thy sword-God’s Holy Word,  
At thy Captain’s side remain,  
Raise the banner of thy Lord,  
Loud proclaim Messiah’s name!<sup>96</sup>

The soldier was the ‘quintessential figure of masculinity’ and was linked to ideas of patriotism, the ‘virtues of manhood’ and British superiority.<sup>97</sup> Through the metaphor of warfare and images of self-sacrifice, ‘the noble army of martyrs’ who ‘endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ Jesus in the battle against heathenism’ allowed the missionary to be portrayed as the perfect soldier-saint.<sup>98</sup> An example of this is missionary James Chalmers, who biographer Lovett suggested was as ‘brave a man as ever fought in the British Army or Navy. He was as true a hero as any Englishman who

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<sup>95</sup>Yeandle, *Citizenship, Nation, Empire*, p.127.

<sup>96</sup> *The Juvenile Companion and Sunday-School Hive*, 1851.

<sup>97</sup> Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p.1.

<sup>98</sup> Michael, *Missionary Heroes*, p.89 & p.23.

has ever been honoured by the nation for victories won in the field or on the sea'.<sup>99</sup>

Lovett continues by including children within this imagery:

The book is sent forth with the prayer that the brave deeds and stirring words and consecrated life of Tamate may kindle in many a young heart the desire and the ambition to follow in his steps, as a brave soldier, in the struggle to bring light and truth and hope to those, whether at home or abroad, who are yet in the darkness and sorrow of sin.<sup>100</sup>

Similar descriptions of courage and devotion to duty allowed the idealised image of the missionary to reflect patriotic self-sacrifice, and to inform children that the missionary was no less brave than the soldier. To appeal to children's expectations and interest, titles often reflected the militaristic side of missionary work. Within the aptly named *Forts of Darkness and Soldiers of Light* (1895) the author described the missionary within this context 'going forth to share in the hardest and longest battle that has ever been fought...we do not know when it will end; but we do know that the side on which the Christian soldiers fight is *winning*, for one day their great Captain, Jesus Christ will lead His army to the perfect victory'.<sup>101</sup> Militarism was evident within a short pamphlet produced by C.T. Studd in 1912 in which he described the Christian hero

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<sup>99</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, p.3; Similarly, 'The labours of zealous Missionary-pioneers' within Ernest Foster's *Heroes of the Indian Empire* 'intended for young people' sketches the careers of the leading 'Warriors and Statesman', 'Soldiers of the Cross' and 'Men of the Mutiny'; Ernest Foster, *Heroes of the Indian Empire* (London, Cassell, 1886), p.v. & Contents page.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>101</sup> Eugene Stock, *Forts of Darkness and Soldiers of Light: A Missionary Book for Boys and Girls* (London, CMS, 1895), p.2; Similarly, *Vanguard of the Christian Army* (1882) clearly demonstrates: 'The work of Christian Missions is great and noble...The Missionary army...but small in numbers, yet it has upon its roll the names of many of the most heroic men who have ever lived'; G. Wood, *Vanguard of the Christian Army, or, Sketches of Missionary Life* (London, RTS, 1882), p.v.

‘In peace true soldiers are captive lions, fretting in their cages. War gives them their liberty and sends them, like boys bounding out of school, to obtain their heart’s desire or perish in the attempt. Battle is the soldier’s vital breath! ... War makes him a whole man again, and gives him the heart, strength, and vigour of a hero’.<sup>102</sup> Militaristic ideas were linked to the missionary were increasingly used in the years preceding the First World war and provided readers with examples of national character and values deemed necessary to represent the British nation. This idea has been explored by Melvin Smith in his study of the history of the Victoria Cross, who argues that concepts of heroism included in literature ‘were transferred to the readers, some of whom went on to perform heroic acts, which in turn provided inspiration for tales of derring-do even more daring in the doing’.<sup>103</sup> Smith also suggests that this cycle was probably a factor in the number of underage volunteers in the first months of the war.<sup>104</sup>

Clearly such rhetoric made even deeper impressions once the nation was actually at war. The 1917 edition of *Mackay of the Great Lake*, was put together against the backdrop of the First World War, and included an additional preface in which C. Mollan Williams, Editorial Secretary of the CMS, described how the book was written in a ‘style calculated to appeal to boys of the scout class’ and linked the missionary explicitly to the heroism of war: ‘we are celebrating a great victory, for our victory is due, under divine providence, to the display by our sailors, soldiers and airmen of the same qualities of courage, unselfishness, and tenacity of purpose as those which stand

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<sup>102</sup> C.T. Studd, *The Chocolate Soldier* (Fort Washington, Christian Literature Crusade, 1912), p.3.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Melvin Smith, *Awarded for Valour: A History of the Victoria Cross and the Evolution of British Heroism* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p.6.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*; For further reading see: Mark Moss, *Manliness and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War* (Toronto, Toronto U.P., 2000).

out so prominently in the life of Alec Mackay'.<sup>105</sup> Compiled by Basil Mathews at the beginning of the war, the life of John Williams included within the Pathfinder Series, also connected the naval hero to the missionary. Mathews in the first chapter described the heroic life of Captain Cook, and explained that 'Boys who read or heard the story of his travels round the world, which were stranger than the stories of fairyland, yet were true in every word, dreamed at night of doing as Cook had done as a boy'.<sup>106</sup> Mathews described how Williams was born 'seventeen years after Captain Cook had been clubbed to death by savages on the beach of the far-off South Sea island' and how:

Boys at school and men in workshops told one another the marvels that Captain Cook had seen as he sailed from island to island in the Pacific on his way round the world. The books that told the story of how he sailed round and round the world were read by everybody. So the Williams children in Tottenham would hear the stories and play games at being Captain Cook.<sup>107</sup>

Mathews included an important footnote to this passage and explained to his readers that 'Captain Cook's Travels would have the same fascination for John Williams as a boy that Scott's South Polar Expedition has for a boy now'.<sup>108</sup> Later in the biography when Williams reached the island of Rurutu, inherent within the religious message, was a blatant imperialistic subtext 'Captain Cook, Williams remembered, had hoisted the

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<sup>105</sup> Padwick, *Mackay of the Great Lake*, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>106</sup> Mathews, *John Williams the Shipbuilder*, p.10; This connection had been made much earlier by biographer John Campbell who stated that 'The career of the seaman shone resplendent with maritime, the career of the missionary with moral, glory. They were both Englishmen...the one represented England's power and science, the other her piety and humanity...both were killed by the club of the savage. Behold the parallel!'; John Campbell. *The Martyr of Erromanga: or the Philosophy of Missions* (London, John Snow, 1842), p.250.

<sup>107</sup> Mathews, *John Williams*, p.16.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

ensign of Britain on many of these shores, claiming them for King George. John dreamed of bringing all those islands into the empire of our Lord whose Cross is blazoned upon that British flag'.<sup>109</sup>

We can see how this ingrained symbolism continued into the inter-war period through Mathews's collective biography *The Book of Missionary Heroes* (1922), in which he included a chapter on Williams linking his heroism and self-sacrifice to military symbols: 'the torch-bearer of the Pacific, whom the brown men loved, the great pioneer, who dared death on the grey beach of Erromanga, sounds a morning bugle-call to us, a Reveille to our slumbering camp'.<sup>110</sup> Likewise, militaristic language regarding the death of Williams was used by Norman Davidson within his biography *John Williams of the South Sea Islands*, (1925): 'Thus died a great and good man, like a soldier standing to his post'.<sup>111</sup> Militarism was an especially useful theme of James Hannington's life experiences. Most biographies informed readers how at the age of sixteen, before becoming a missionary, Hannington had acquired a commission as Second Lieutenant in the 1<sup>st</sup> Sussex Artillery Volunteers. This episode allowed biographers to present Hannington as a 'fine specimen of English youth', using ideas of leadership, patriotism and self-sacrifice:

Soldiering was much more in his line than business - was he not, once he was converted, and until he received the crown of martyrdom, a typical fighting Christian? - and he made an excellent officer. He knew how to command and, not less, how to win the affections of his men. He was a splendid specimen of an

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Basil Mathews, *The Book of Missionary Heroes* (New York, George Doran Co., 1922), p.85.

<sup>111</sup> N.J. Davidson, *John Williams of the South Sea Islands* (London, Seeley, 1925), p.58.

English youth, standing, on his seventeenth birthday - as he records in his diary - 5ft. 10in. high, and weighing 11st. 6lb. He was long, but his weight shows that he could not have been lean. 'He threw himself heart and soul into the work of his battery' says Mr. Dawson, and received his commission as captain.<sup>112</sup>

Militaristic images highlighting British control and power were dispersed within the biographies. Hannington's description of a trip to Cairo is recounted within Dawson's biography *The Last Journals of Bishop Hannington* which explained how 'It seems strange, in the midst of mosques, minarets, and pyramids, to see the English soldier mounted sentry and apparently master of the situation. It was not Jemadari Abou Shakahdi, or Daoud Pasha who gave leave for me to inspect the fort, but Major - of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sussex'.<sup>113</sup> Hannington's biographies are peppered with militaristic tropes, for example, Michael, described each of his achievements as 'but a stepping-stone to some fresh conquest'.<sup>114</sup>

Women missionaries were of course similarly placed within the mission field, however, while the virtues of duty and bravery of the male missionary allowed biographers to articulate and exploit militaristic rhetoric, for women it had to be reworked or ignored. By concentrating upon the sacrifices made by women, recast through images of their moral femininity, biographers could show female missionaries possessing 'ordinary qualities practiced to an extraordinary degree'.<sup>115</sup> Although viewed metaphorically as part of a 'vast army of Christians', individual missionary women were

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<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

<sup>113</sup> Dawson, *The Last Journals*, p.139.

<sup>114</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, Preface.

<sup>115</sup> Rowbotham, 'Soldiers of Christ', p.88.

rarely, if at all, described in militaristic terms. When women were occasionally described using a military metaphor, they were always under the command of a male authority and cast as 'infantry, not officers'.<sup>116</sup> One missionary wife, for example, it was explained 'when she died...worn out by the long endurance of a heavy burden, she died as a soldier who stands to the end at his post'.<sup>117</sup> The deaths of missionaries in China in 1895 and 1900, however, as we will discuss in Chapter Nine compelled some biographers to re-evaluate the use of militaristic terminology, but again this was regulated within strict gendered boundaries.

#### Slessor: an exception to the rule

It is an interesting anomaly that female missionary Mary Slessor in respect of militaristic narratives proves an exception, due possibly to her individuality that could also appeal mutually to girl and boy readers. It is both interesting and telling that she appears in many collective biographies intended for a male readership, as one biographer explains:

Of Miss Slessor Dr. Laws formed a high opinion, one well deserved. He said, 'She is a bit of a character'. What a Salvation Army lass is to the Church at home, so is Miss Slessor to the mission. She does a certain kind of work in a certain kind of way. I would not commend her as a pattern to others, but she has saved lives as no other man or woman could have dared to do. Had a man attempted to do what she had done during the recent riot he would have had his throat cut.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p.98.

<sup>117</sup> *Foreign Mission Chronicle*, 1902.

<sup>118</sup> Ellis, *Two Missionary Heroines in Africa*, p.54; Dr. Laws was a Scottish missionary who headed the Livingstonia mission in the Nyasaland Protectorate (now Malawi) for more than 50 years.



Again, in Mathews description of Slessor as ‘essentially a boy’s heroine’, biographers uniquely included militaristic images and accounts of Slessor as ‘a soldier for Jesus Christ’ and provided children with an image of a warrior with ‘no material weapons...armed with the sword of the spirit and love in her heart to conquer the people of Okoyong’. <sup>119</sup> Biographer W.P. Livingstone, for example, claimed ‘She did not say, “I am only a girl, what can I do”? She knew that when a General wanted an army to fight a strong enemy he did not call for officers only, but for soldiers - hosts of them, and especially for those who were young’. <sup>120</sup> In a similar way, the ‘Forward’ to *Under Many Flags* (1921), a collective biography of ‘brave men and women’ which included Slessor, again shows how militaristic images continued to be used: ‘Two thousand years ago, a new king sent his army into the world...with no guns and no battleships’ and how this army grew to ‘hundreds and thousands’ and who ‘by their lives and their teachings they lifted the flag of their Leader above all’. <sup>121</sup> And explained how they hoped that ‘the boys and girls who read it will enlist in this army’. <sup>122</sup> The chapter based on Slessor explains how she was stopped from moving away from Okoyong because of the lack of missionaries to carry on her work, and she is described asking ‘where are the soldiers of the Cross? The banner of the cross goes a-begging. Why should the Queen have all the good soldiers and not the King of Kings?’. <sup>123</sup> The militaristic symbols continue by descriptions of Slessor producing a ‘plan of campaign’ for the missionary committee,

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<sup>119</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, p.33; Also, within his biography for children Livingstone used her story to comment upon the Britain’s stance during the First World War (1914-1918) ‘She...read of the invasion of Belgium by the Germans, with all the horrors of that terrible time, the coming of Britain into the struggle on the side of right and justice and freedom. ‘Thank God,’ she cried ‘we are not to blame’; W Livingstone, *The White Queen*, pp.198-199; Luckier, *Missionary Heroes in Many Lands*, p.107 & p.103.

<sup>120</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.12.

<sup>121</sup> Cronk, *Under Many Flags*, Forward.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Luckier, *Missionary Heroes in Many Lands*, p.116.

and portrayed as being ‘like a wise general she had surveyed the land and chosen her strategic points’.<sup>124</sup> Following this, readers were asked to consider:

Mary Slessor always spoke of herself as a soldier of Jesus Christ. What are the essential qualities of a soldier? ...Read Ephesians 6,11-18, which catalogues the Christian soldier’s equipment. List the things included in ‘the armour of God’...thinking of all you know about Mary Slessor. Do you agree that it outlines the dangers and difficulties she faced, and the weapons she used in overcoming them? Choose an incident in her life when her only weapon was the ‘gospel of peace’.<sup>125</sup>

To conform to gender expectations, however, the soldier-like courage of Slessor was often counteracted with descriptions of feminine and maternal images. McEvoy, for example, quoted fellow helper in Okoyong, Miss Amess, who described how Slessor ‘had been so courageous that I imagined she must be somewhat masculine, with a very commanding appearance, but I was pleasantly disappointed when I found she was a true woman, with a heart full of motherly affection’.<sup>126</sup>

### Conclusion

Although this chapter has concluded with descriptions of a female missionary it has, however, concentrated upon how the male missionary hero was portrayed through themes of manliness, chivalry and militarism; themes that were inextricably linked ideas

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p.117.

<sup>125</sup> Lucker, *Missionary Heroes in Many Lands*, p.107.

<sup>126</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.60.

of imperialism gender, good citizenship and character. By utilising fictional styles, biographers were able to combine popular entertainment with an indirect agenda which emphasised qualities of manliness, chivalry and gentlemanliness, and intended to validate and reinforce acceptable behaviour. Militarism was used to provide an image of the moral superiority of the British missionary hero and readers were offered a model which embodied national character in its highest form endorsing a consistent and traditional image that justified, directly or indirectly Britain's imperial role. These dimensions of missionary life-writing as discussed were exaggerated by the coming of European war which played a part in helping to form character and prepare readers for war. Descriptions within the biographies relating to James Hannington provided more direct examples of how the themes functioned rhetorically to inspire readers, how they adhered to a masculine script, and why the missionary hero was (and, to a large extent, still is) regarded as examples worthy of imitation.

Unusually descriptions of Slessor included tropes of militarism which as shown were often manipulated to conform to the expectations of many parents and educators. The following chapter will discuss how the rhetoric surrounding representations of women missionaries in settings usually associated with men was again modified to meet expectations, and will concentrate on relevant themes of homemaking, child care and health and, although athleticism was deemed a masculine pursuit will consider how descriptions of women partaking in physical activities were managed.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

‘bewildering in their number are the names on the roll of women of courage’ -  
Negotiating the presence of women missionaries

Biographies based upon the female heroine became popular at a time when commentators, social reformers, educationalists and religious bodies intensified their examination of the socialisation of girls in Britain, and when the number of books targeted specifically at young female readers grew noticeably. Writer Frank Mundell who was employed by the SSU explained in 1908 that: ‘bewildering in their number are the names on the roll of women of courage, and there is hardly a field of action in which men have distinguished themselves where women have not also won fame’.<sup>1</sup> If Mundell’s statement was true, the lack of attention given to women within biographical works is telling. This paucity of biographies based upon the lives of heroic women was discussed at the 1910 Sunday School Convention held in Washington, attended by delegates from North America, Great Britain, Europe, Africa and Asia.<sup>2</sup> Although authors of the official report acknowledged that many biographies were ‘beautifully illustrated’ they also recognised that girls ‘prefer stories of great women rather than of great men. It is true there are many more stories of heroes than of heroines written for our young people, and it would seem that we discriminate in favor of the men’.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Mundell, *Success in the Making* (London, SSU, 1908), p.65 as cited in Moniez Baptiste, *Late-Victorian Heroic Lives in the Writings of Frank Mundell* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), p.31; Amongst Mundell’s works were the *Heroines Library* published between 1896 and 1898 which included the collective missionary biography *Heroines of the Cross* (London, SSU, 1897).

<sup>2</sup> Examples of denominations represented included Baptist, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Church of England and Lutheran; For full list of delegates see: Trumbull, ed., *World-Wide Sunday-School Work*, pp.597-618.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.166 & p.449.

Many recent studies of gender relationships have highlighted the inadequacies of the ‘separate spheres’ model revealing that the boundaries between the private female and public male realms were not only unstable but regularly transgressed. Amanda Vickery, for example, sees the vocabulary of this model as a ‘conservative response to an unprecedented *expansion* in opportunities, ambitions and experience’.<sup>4</sup> Regarding heroism, John Price provides an important dimension to this argument by stating that ‘within the wider context of the Victorian understanding of heroism...the distinctly female construction was as much concerned with protecting and defending the integrity of the idea itself, as it was about restricting women to their own limited sphere of influence’.<sup>5</sup> The study of gendered imperial literature has recently developed to include analysis of the female reader. Michelle Smith’s *Empire in British Girls’ Literature and Culture*, for example, offers a ‘nuanced portrait of “imperial girls” in British print culture’, and considers the role of the female protagonist and how ‘girls were shaped by, and were imagined as shaping, the British Empire’.<sup>6</sup>

Missionary work not only allowed them ‘some form of useful effort’ it also opened up new spaces of engagement which transcended prescribed gender roles and lay beyond the strictures of male dominance.<sup>7</sup> Symbolising independence, intelligence and bravery women were able to engage with powerful ideas about the nation and empire, reject fixed gendered identities and have, as a consequence, been described by modern

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<sup>4</sup> Amanda Vickery, ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History’, *The Historical Journal*, 36.2 (1993), p.400.

<sup>5</sup> John Price, *Everyday Heroism: Victorian Constructions of the Heroic Civilian* (London, Bloomsbury, 2014), p.169; Price provides a detailed account in his chapter ‘“Courage for a Man is Heroism for a Girl”: The Gendered Nature of Heroism’, pp.167-195.

<sup>6</sup> Michelle Smith, *Empire in British Girls’ Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880-1915* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*; Elizabeth Prevost, ‘Married to the Mission Field: Gender, Christianity and Professionalization in Britain and Colonial Africa, 1865-1914’, *Journal of British Studies*, 47.4 (2008), p.796.

scholars as ‘outriders of women’s liberation’.<sup>8</sup> However, aware of debates surrounding the role of women within the missionary field and keen not to promote the work of the single female missionary as liberating and radical, biographers knew it was imperative to strike a balance between promoting the opportunities of mission work for women as an emancipative tool, while at the same time upholding their conventional femininity in terms of their domestic, maternal, religious and humanitarian duty. While ministering to the perceived expectations of those interested in the education of children and deflecting any possible criticism, biographers, as we discovered in Chapter Five, would intentionally reconfigure and modify the dialogue. Consequently, the engineered narratives included feminine and domestic rhetoric that made it clear that women, as workers for God, could be relied upon for truth, and therefore should be treated with considerable respect.<sup>9</sup> Many authors had little first-hand knowledge of the work of wives and single women within the mission field and often supplemented the material using metaphors and analogies derived from popular adventure stories enhanced by their own imaginations and experiences.

The reader will recall from discussions in previous chapters that many biographies made direct reference to concerns and issues felt to be relevant to working-class girls. Returning to the 1913 Sunday school Convention, debates were held to consider the influence of heroic example upon the character and behaviour of young

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<sup>8</sup> Luree Miller, *On Top of the World: Five Women Explorers in Tibet* (New York, Paddington Press, 1976), p.14; According to Diniejko the New Woman was ‘a significant cultural icon of the of the fin de siècle, departed from the stereotypical Victorian woman. She was intelligent, educated, emancipated, independent and self-supporting. The New Women were not only middle-class female radicals, but also factory and office workers’; Andrzej Diniejko ‘The New Woman Fiction’ reproduced at <http://www.victorianweb.org/gender/diniejko1.html> accessed 05/11/2016.

<sup>9</sup> Judith Rowbotham “‘Hearing an Indian sister’s plea’: Reporting the work of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Female Missionaries’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 21.3 (1998), p.247.

girls. For example, as a solution to stubbornness, it was suggested that it 'may be disciplined to noble will, wilfulness into responsibility...and vanity into self-respect, gang loyalty to citizenship and patriotism...Home and home-making must receive attention'.<sup>10</sup> Girls it was argued 'instinctively seek to be personal helpers and to be appreciated as personal factors in human welfare'.<sup>11</sup> Published the year after Fahs recommendation to provide examples of 'passive virtues of love and devotion under trying circumstances', Padwick's *White Heroines in Africa*, written for 'Leaders amongst Working Girls', carefully incorporated 'vivid stories' of missionary heroism with a number of practical domestic and family activities focusing on improving the training of girls :

The following suggestions are tentative only, pointing to ways in which the lives of African heroines can be made more real by kindred occupations on the part of the girls whom we teach. Of course, no girls' class will be able to carry out all these schemes, and many will think of their own ways of linking the lessons to the girls' lives.<sup>12</sup>

Within this publication three missionary women are discussed, Mary Moffat, Home-Maker, Anna Hinderer, Lover of Children and Christina Coillard, Adventurer into the unknown'.<sup>13</sup> All are wives of missionaries in Africa spanning a timeframe between 1816 and 1891, and all provided examples of child-care, activities in cooking, nursing, home-

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<sup>10</sup> Trumbell, *World-Wide Sunday-School*, p.544.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.545.

<sup>12</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.58. By Leaders Padwick is referring to 'class-leaders' who need to prepare lessons for 'those who have left school and are already among the world's workers'; p.3.

<sup>13</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.5.

making cleaning and sewing. As Padwick explained, ‘there is something in girls and women that responds to the thought of making a home...it is a part of womanhood to want to shelter and feed and tend to those whom we love. We can rely upon the home-making instinct (all unexpressed though it may be, unrealised and dormant in their lives) in the girls of our classes’.<sup>14</sup> The remainder of this chapter will consider the topics suggested and discuss how women missionaries were represented with the themes of home-making and childcare, but will also consider how their frailty and health became a useful tool for editors to use to remind readers of the limitations of their gender. It will then discuss how the physical activities and participation in sports were managed by biographers.<sup>15</sup> As a final point, it will discuss how women who did not fit into acceptable gender categories were often described as extraordinary. Throughout the chapter, consideration will be given where applicable to how the biographies acted as a reference point for moral principles and appropriate social behaviours to relay the messages to working-class girl readers. In keeping with the format of the previous chapter, a detailed analysis will be made of the representation of missionary Mary Slessor.

### Home making, health and exercise

By exaggerating domestic and maternal qualities, the rhetoric of nurturing and responsibility for the Christian and civilised home became a symbol of women’s identity

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>15</sup> Athleticism was a term only used when discussing the male missionary, and as shown in the previous chapter inextricable linked to the masculine muscular Christian; Descriptions of women partaking in physical activities were included in several biographies but did, however, place a different emphasis upon the goal / objective.



but also allowed authors to provide images that promoted notions of British superiority. A biographical account of missionary Anna Hinderer, for example, described her as ‘an ardent lover of anything little and young. A brave and earnest missionary, a devoted wife, she proved; but above all, this childless woman was a passionate child-lover’.<sup>16</sup> This became a well-used method by authors to stabilise and legitimise representations of single women in traditional and conventional gender roles, and by placing importance upon the fundamental power of women in a maternal and nurturing role girls would be encouraged to consider their role as future mothers responsible for the care of the future generation, especially patriotic sons.

Descriptions of civilised homes were equally important as a space to inscribe appropriate feminine elements of domesticity. Missionary wife Mrs Green’s ‘tiny home’ in China, for example, is described as the ‘centre of love and sweetness, shedding a gracious influence in the roughness and wildness’.<sup>17</sup> Miss Taylor ‘the only Englishwoman in Tibet’ was also described attempting to make her surroundings, this time a hospital ward, homely: ‘We see her, womanlike, trying to make the windowless ward with its earthen floor more bright and cosy for the bad cases’.<sup>18</sup> Robert Moffat and his wife Mary Moffat, one of the heroines highlighted by Padwick, were the subject of numerous biographies.<sup>19</sup> Unusually, many of these biographies singled out Mary for attention, but by concentrating on her home-making and nurturing abilities, biographers were able to represent her as the ultimate Christian matriarch. Mary became a useful

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<sup>16</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.23.

<sup>17</sup> Dawson, *Heroines of Missionary Adventure*, pp.240-241.

<sup>18</sup> Robson, *Two Lady Missionaries*, p.110.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Moffat was the wife of missionary Robert and mother of David Livingstone’s wife Mary and numerous biographies surrounding the Moffat’s were published particularly after 1870 when they had completed their missionary service.

example for biographers who wished to portray a missionary woman within a conventional gender role, domesticating the landscape and setting up a civilised Christian home in support of her manly husband, all of which were viewed as transferable skills that provided an ideological framework and exemplary model for girls at home to follow. The problems faced by Mary Moffat in making a home in Africa incorporated many transferable ideas for a civilised home:

Now began Mary's difficulties in making a home. She soon found that it was no use for her, like most brides, to take pride in her furniture and in all the treasures she had brought from home. As many savages as pleased would come and visit her in her hut, crowding every corner of it...Sometimes if Mary gently asked them to go, they would threaten to throw a brick at her. They were daubed in grease and red ochre, and everything they touched became adorned in the same way.<sup>20</sup>

Padwick used this passage to promote idealised notions of how British women should behave in often trying situations, but also reinforced the view of the uncivilised heathen who given time will become civilised. This description provided several important ideas for girl readers. The superiority of the British home was clearly acknowledged, and pride in belongings was expected, but in practical terms it allowed the author to suggest later that girls hold an 'anti-grease evening' to find out 'several good ways of removing stains'.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, home-making was used to legitimise any transgression of gender norms, and this was particularly true when women were required to make a home while

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<sup>20</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.10.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.58; Another heroine described by Padwick as 'one of the first white women to risk the dangers of the Yoruba climate' was missionary wife Anna Hinderer.<sup>21</sup> Within the text it is explained she had to exercise all her 'ingenuity in making it appear homelike'.

travelling in what would be considered a traditionally masculine space to or between mission stations in wagons, caravans or boats. Under the title 'Christina the Houseless', Padwick explained that missionary wife, Christina Coillard, 'rarely had a roof over her head except the roof of the ox-waggon in which she and her husband travelled. They made the waggon like a home, with a leopard skin on the floor, and plants and curtains'.<sup>22</sup>

Part of this civilising mission involved transforming the wilderness which often involved a redefinition of spaces 'traditionally perceived as public and identified as male'.<sup>23</sup> Descriptions of the missionary home and landscape were made familiar to readers, and, as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue, 'home' became 'as much a social construct and state of mind as a reality of bricks and mortar', with women responsible for its creation and maintenance.<sup>24</sup> Again Padwick's description of Mary Moffat planting 'flowering trees - flowers always make a place more like home', provided a useful example of both civility and self-preservation.<sup>25</sup> This was also true in the following description of missionary wife Mrs Gladwin's assurance that 'English customs are retained by us, although surrounded by uncivilized beings. We are too much attached to our good old customs to wish to give them up'.<sup>26</sup> The home quickly became a space where biographers could locate women in their natural and acceptable

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<sup>22</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.43; For further discussion see Esme Cleall, 'Far-Flung Families and Transient Domesticity: Missionary Households in Metropole and colony', *Victorian Review*, 39.2 (2013), pp.163-179.

<sup>23</sup> Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1992), p.210.

<sup>24</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London, Routledge, 2002), p.358 & p.360; Within the biographies based upon male missionaries references to building the mission home was commonly used.

<sup>25</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.10.

<sup>26</sup> *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering*, 1856.

surroundings and became a symbol for promoting ideas concerning the expected role of women abroad and at home, but also their ability to demonstrate skills that they would not be expected to possess in Britain. Descriptions of their ability to transform her home correspond with Pratt's 'normalizing discourse' which she argues worked to codify difference and reinstate women in acceptable domestic roles.<sup>27</sup>

In *Pioneers and Founders* (1878) Charlotte Yonge author of numerous fictional and non-fictional works, explained that for missionary wife, Mrs Robinson, 'A hut was soon raised, and Mrs. Robertson here ruled in her own peculiarly dignified and tender way as the mother of the whole station, keeping guard there while her husband went on expeditions to visit the king and his son Ketchewayo'.<sup>28</sup> The language used by Yonge when discussing Mrs Robinson reveals the contradictions and inconsistencies within the biographies portrayal of the female missionary. Initially, she assumed the paternal authority as a ruler of her home and keeping guard while her husband was away, but this is immediately counteracted using more traditional maternal language explaining that this was done in a 'dignified and tender way'.<sup>29</sup> A further strategy to reinforce femininity used alleged notions about the apparent fragility and nervous temperament of women on the mission field. Missionary wife Mrs Green, for example, it was explained 'would have been the very first in disclaiming the possession of anything of the spirit of the martyrs, yet nervous, frail and delicate, in a life filled with privation, loss and danger, with great love she bore her witness'.<sup>30</sup> This was again made clear in a

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<sup>27</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, 'Scratches on the Face of the Country', *Critical Inquiry*, 12.1 (1985), p.120.

<sup>28</sup> Charlotte Yonge, *Pioneers and Founders: or, Recent Workers in the Mission Field* (London, Macmillan, 1871), p.313.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Foreign Mission Chronicle*, 1902.

description of the ‘courageous and self-denying action’ of missionary wife, Mrs Chalmers. Having chosen to ‘remain alone amid a horde of cannibals’, readers are reminded of her ‘nervous excitement of the thrilling scenes’ which, they are informed placed a strain upon her health rendering her more susceptible to fever, and consequently ‘hastened the end’.<sup>31</sup> Many biographies used descriptions of maternal home-making and frailty to reinforce feminine behaviour, but as shown earlier through Yonge’s portrayal of Mrs Robinson, the narratives were often fraught with contradiction. As a single missionary, Mary Slessor provides an excellent example of how descriptions of her femininity became a battleground of contested and regulated meaning.

#### Mary Slessor: homemaker and mother

Livingstone’s biography for children *The White Queen of Okoyong* offers a clear example of how Slessor confirmed and challenged gender expectations.<sup>32</sup> In descriptions of Slessor building and furnishing her ‘new house and hall’ she is described as appointing herself to very masculine roles of ‘architects, clerk of works, and chief labourer’.<sup>33</sup> This theme was reiterated in other biographies, for example, McEvoy’s *Mary Slessor* explained how she was often ‘found her on the roof re-tiling her house after a storm. Once she was discovered making cement. Asked if she had ever had any lessons in cement-making she replied, “No, I just stir it like porridge”’.<sup>34</sup> Once built, the furnishing of her home allowed biographers to describe the very feminine attribute of

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<sup>31</sup> Lennox, *James Chalmers of New Guinea*, p.124.

<sup>32</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*.

<sup>33</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.83.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*; McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.52.

equipping her home with European style furniture. Livingstone described how ‘In one of the rooms she put a fireplace of red clay, and close to it a sideboard and dresser of the same material...Her next achievement was a mud-sofa where she could recline, and a seat near the fireside where the cook could sit and attend to her duties’.<sup>35</sup>

Perpetuating the theme of femininity, it is explained that Slessor was known locally as ‘Ma’, and authors regularly referred to this, not only to describe her love of babies but as a symbol of her maternal feelings for the people of West Africa. Slessor’s campaign to eradicate the custom of killing twin babies and her adoption of those abandoned and left to die provided biographers with useful material to restore any doubts regarding her femininity and womanly status. Accounts of Slessor’s love and need to rescue babies and children (often illustrated, as in Figure 31), also allowed authors to explain why she so often faced dangerous and hostile situations.<sup>36</sup>

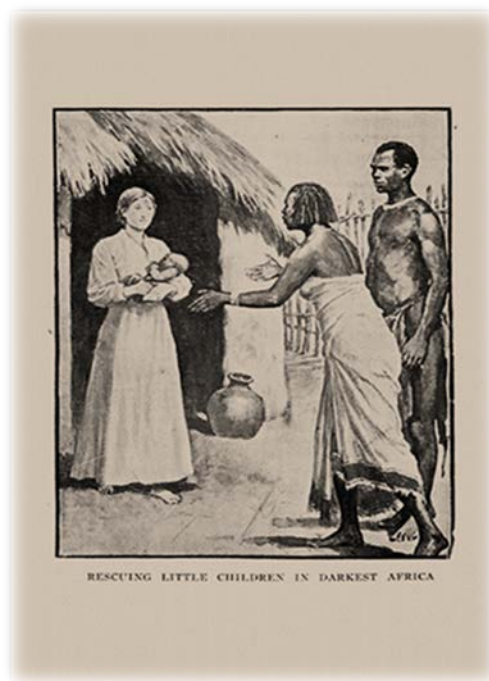


Figure 31 ‘Rescuing Little Children in Darkest Africa’; Tabor, *Pioneer Women*, Frontispiece.

<sup>35</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, pp.83-84.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Tabor, *Pioneer Women: Elizabeth Fry, Elizabeth Blackwell, Florence Nightingale, Mary Slessor* (London, Sheldon Press, 1925).

Similarly, Parkman wished to inform readers of her maternal feelings: ‘Many women who have never held children of their own in their arms have been mothers to many in their work...It was the woman’s tenderness that made Mary Slessor, that torch-bearer to Darkest Africa, the “white mother” of all the black people she taught and served’.<sup>37</sup> Her love of children is reinforced by Parkman who argued that ‘The “White Mother” of Calabar always had a family of little black waifs that she had rescued from violent death or neglect...Mary Slessor loved her strange black brood tenderly. “Baby things are always gentle and lovable”, she used to say’.<sup>38</sup>

### Health

Dawson’s reference to the need for ‘strong and healthy women who had tested their qualifications for rough work’ discussed in Chapter Four referred to the perceived biological differences between males and females which were often used within the biographies to substantiate the belief that women were the weaker sex, thus rendering themselves vulnerable to mission work.<sup>39</sup> Dawson’s view was validated within many of the biographies, particularly through references to the fragile health of women and their need to return home to recuperate. John Telford, for example, explained that Mr Saker (missionary in Africa) had been obliged to ‘send his wife and daughter to England. They were both so ill that he feared they might not live’.<sup>40</sup> Although the health of women was

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<sup>37</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.ix.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.257; Similarly, McEvoy states ‘It would be a misconception to think of Mary Slessor merely as a woman devoid of those tenderer qualities which are the particular grace of her sex. She had a passion for children. “I never saw anything”, wrote Miss Welsh, “more beautiful than her devotion to these black children”’; McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.54.

<sup>39</sup> Dawson, *Heroines of Missionary Adventure*, p.237; Their health and perceived fragility within the biographies will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

<sup>40</sup> John Telford, *Women in the Mission Field: Glimpses of Christian Women Among the Heathen* (London, Charles Kelly, 1895), p.128.

often discussed, alternative views were occasionally provided. In the collective biography, *Women in the Mission Field* (1895) Buckland explained that through ‘the history of a few noble women’ in terms of ‘enterprise, devotion, patience, and industry, men have been well matched in the mission field by workers of the sex often condescendingly labelled “the weaker”’.<sup>41</sup>

Due to the nature of Slessor’s work and achievements it was easy for biographers to portray her in the mission field as timid or, as noted earlier, frail or in poor health while reinforcing her commitment to the missionary cause: ‘When people saw, or heard of her, toiling with her hands they were apt to imagine that she possessed a constitution of iron, never realising that her life was one long martyrdom. She was seldom free from illness and pain’.<sup>42</sup> Biographers also used her timidity not only to reinforce her femininity but also her faith in God:

she was really very timid. Just before leaving Devonshire she would not go out on Guy Fawkes’ Day, because she shrank from the crowds who were parading the streets; and yet, here she was going alone to an unknown region of Africa to face untamed savages. What made her so courageous was her faith in God.<sup>43</sup>

In the mission field, while acknowledging Slessor’s ‘political influence’ Livingstone used a description from government official Mr. T. D. Maxwell to describe her frailty and how she was able to balance her official duties with nurturing responsibilities: ‘A

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<sup>41</sup> Buckland, *Women in the Mission Field*, p.24; This book is described within *Good Words*, 1902 as ‘A Series of Brief Memoirs, compiled by the Author with a view to indicating the growth within recent years of women’s work in the foreign mission field, and illustrating the peril as well as the happiness of that work from the lives of consecrated women’.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.131; Ellis, *Two Missionary Heroines in Africa*, p.32.

<sup>43</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.48.



little frail old lady with a lace or lace-like shawl over her head and shoulders (that must, I think, have been a concession to a stranger, for I never saw the thing again), swaying herself in a rocking-chair and crooning to a black baby in her arms'.<sup>44</sup> What is striking from this description is the picture of Slessor as a 'little frail old lady' which was used to remind readers of her womanly status a common strategy used by biographers, as we shall discover.

### Physical exercise

As previously discussed, physical exertion and sport were often encoded as a manly activity. Within the biographies of missionary women, their involvement in any sport, which was possibly viewed as unladylike, was often treated by writers as insignificant and consequently only ever briefly mentioned or not included at all.<sup>45</sup> While it is clear that physical activity was encouraged by the missionary societies, within the biographies women were often described as facilitating sport, but seldom participating in it. It is possible to argue that the omission of any reference to women missionaries being involved in sport within the biographies was an effective mechanism for reinforcing culturally defined gender-based ideas that positioned women as physically inferior.<sup>46</sup> Kathleen McCrone has argued that 'while sport could act as the ultimate idiom of conformity' as illustrated in descriptions of male missionaries, it could also be viewed as a 'deviant activity, a channel for expressing hostility to social

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<sup>44</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.132.

<sup>45</sup> Many contemporary commentators believed had women neither the strength nor inclination to pursue any strenuous physical exercise.

<sup>46</sup> Although from the late nineteenth century school sports were becoming increasingly popular for adolescent girls, they remained restricted by social convention committed to preserving conservative values of society and thus projected an image of moderation and respectable femininity.

norms'.<sup>47</sup> It is possible that within the minds of authors, this expression of 'hostility to social norms' was viewed as a threat, and, consequently descriptions of the athletic abilities of women missionaries consciously omitted.<sup>48</sup>

To encourage readers of the benefits of sport, however, the biographies did include descriptions of women missionaries facilitating sporting activities which they used as a useful educational tool. This was in line with the thinking of the *BOP* who as early as 1880 advised readers that 'there is no harm in girls playing cricket or the other games, that we can see'.<sup>49</sup> It was suggested, for example, that where 'manual work is despised and organised games are unknown, it is no facile matter to...turn attention from ceaseless cramming of books to healthy vigorous sport'.<sup>50</sup> Single missionary, Miss Lyon, was said to have recognised the 'need of balanced development of physical as well as mental habits' and quoted as stating that '[w]e need to introduce wise and healthy ideals not only in our minds, but in our muscles', although, no reference was made to Miss Lyon's own athletic abilities.<sup>51</sup> Facilitating sport could provide beneficial results, as a manual prepared for newly recruited missionaries explained:

we have heard a West African lady missionary tell of the health she enjoyed because she was able to manage the unruly little Native horses, and so get riding exercise every day; and, as a rule, ladies going to join the Persia Mission have to face a fortnight's ride over the mountains to Ispahan, Yes, walking, climbing,

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<sup>47</sup> Kathleen E. McCrone, 'Play Up! Play Up! and Play the Game! Sport at the Late Victorian Girl's Public School', *Journal of British Studies*, 23.2 (1984), p.133.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Boy's Own Paper*, 1880.

<sup>50</sup> Georgina A. Gollock, *Missionaries at Work* (London, CMS, 1898), p.58.

<sup>51</sup> Parkman, *Heroines of Service*, p.50.

boating, cycling, riding, cricketing may be done to the glory of God, and in direct preparation for a missionary career.<sup>52</sup>

While most team sports were viewed as the antithesis of femininity, physical activities that could be carried out independently were viewed as acceptable. As described above, female horse riding, and later cycling were considered suitable amusement for young middle-class ladies. As horses were often used as a form of transportation within the mission field descriptions of horsemanship often blurred the line between work and sport. As the *Medical Missionary* in 1911 explained ‘many of the ladies of our mission are perfectly at home in the saddle and do most of their itinerating on horseback’.<sup>53</sup> In Dawson’s collective biography of missionary heroines, Mrs Bishop’s journey on horseback through Tangier is recounted to provide juvenile readers with an image of a strong independent woman constructing her own identity.<sup>54</sup> Dawson reproduced a letter she sent to a friend safely back home in Britain to highlight her ability: ‘As usual she bestrode the fiercest and best horse she could buy’:

‘You would fail’ to recognise your infirm ‘friend astride on a superb horse, in full blue trousers and a short full skirt, with great brass spurs belonging to the generalissimo of the Moorish army, and riding down place awful even to think of, where a rolling stone or a slip would mean destruction’.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Georgina A. Gollock, *Candidates-in-Waiting: A Manual of Home Preparation for Foreign Missionary Work* (London, CMS, 1892), pp.76-77.

<sup>53</sup> *The Medical Missionary* (Battle Creek, Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association, 1911), p.92.

<sup>54</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines in Many Lands*, pp.86-87.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

The accompanying illustration titled 'Fearless Riding' showed Bishop's proficiency in horse-riding, but was also used to remind readers of her physical frailty at a time when she was suffering from 'a tumour close to her lungs and heart'.<sup>56</sup> The caption stressed that 'although she suffered from an incurable malady...only her horsemanship saved her from capture or death' (Figure 32).<sup>57</sup>

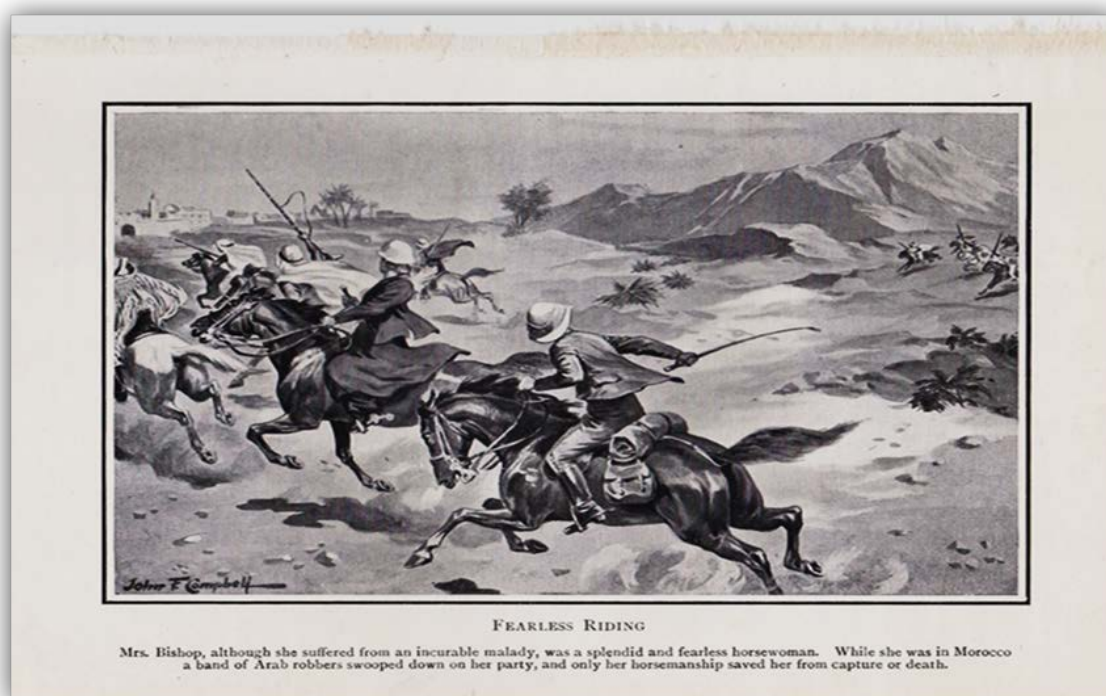


Figure 32 'Fearless Riding'; Dawson, *Missionary Heroines in Many Lands*, p.83.

Cycling was also regarded as appropriate for women and provided women 'with their most extensive experience of physical exercise and did more than any other activity to break down conservative restrictions'.<sup>58</sup> Cycling incorporated ideas of

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p.83.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Kathleen McCrone, *Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women 1870-1914* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1988), p.177.

modernity, freedom and control and for the missionary woman mobility. Livingstone, for example, explained how Slessor urged by government officials to get a bicycle due to the advancement of roads, upon receiving a 'beautiful machine from England' soon 'learned to ride, and it became a great help in her work'.<sup>59</sup> This also proved valuable to biographers to justify the presence and usefulness of the British in West Africa. To re-establish her femininity, her frailty and inability to continue riding her bicycle provided an ideal opportunity for biographers. Ellis, as an example, explained how 'on account of her weakness, the ladies of a Glasgow church sent her a basket chair, which could be pushed or pulled by two boys'.<sup>60</sup> This he explained, allowed Slessor to inspect suitable sites for future schools 'for her dream was of a vast army of Christians covering the whole of the district'.<sup>61</sup>

Like descriptions of her bicycle riding Slessor's physical stamina and activities in West Africa were well documented, but again her frailty as compared to men was often implied. By 1915 when the first biography of Slessor appeared (written by W.P. Livingstone), women were increasingly enjoying physical activities. Although often breaching acceptable behaviour, it was apparent that the narratives were becoming more tolerant of descriptions of women and physical pursuits. It is explained, for example, that upon her arrival in Africa, Slessor 'sometimes vexed the older and more serious missionaries. She climbed trees and ran races with the black girls and boys' and to 'let off the high spirits that had been bottled up...she would climb any tree that took her fancy'.<sup>62</sup> Her journey through Africa also provided examples of her physicality 'Most of

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<sup>59</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.140.

<sup>60</sup> Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, p.64.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Livingstone, *The White Queen*, p.26; Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.28.

the journey lay through the bush, and involved long and fatiguing marches, climbing, jumping and wading a burdensome enterprise... but to her a thoroughly enjoyable excursion.<sup>63</sup>

There was, however, very little mention of her partaking in any organised sporting activity. Describing her attendance at the government Barracks to receive her medal from the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, she was described as ‘an advocate of all games, and believed they were excellent civilising agencies’. She concluded her trip by attending a cricket match.<sup>64</sup> Interestingly, evoking ideas of British superiority, Livingstone also explained how she watched a ‘sham fight, where the “enemy” dressed themselves up as “savage warriors” and attacked the Barrack Hill’, commenting that she was ‘much impressed’ and stated ‘just splendid. Look how the officers lead them’.<sup>65</sup>

#### Exceptional and extraordinary women

Slessor and Bishop provide examples of women who did not fit with conventional gender expectations and who therefore proved problematic for authors to fit into prescribed narratives, and who were consequently redefined as exceptional, extraordinary, and at times eccentric. This was also true for Victorian women travellers more generally, who, according to Sara Mills in her analysis of the complexities of female travel writing of the period, were ‘almost invariably described by critics in terms of exceptional individuals: each traveller is written about in terms of her strong

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<sup>63</sup> McEvoy, *Mary Slessor*, p.29.

<sup>64</sup> Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.306.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

personality which is manifested in the text'.<sup>66</sup> As an 'exception to all rule', single missionary Christina Forsyth was described as a 'marvel' and her actions:

...proving that not all would-be missionaries are fitted for the rough and lonely work of pioneering in Africa. 'Few women' writes the Rev. John Lundie of Malan Mission, 'have the nerve for such work'. Fewer still can stand the isolation and the disappointments with native character without breaking down in health and spirits. Mrs Forsyth always seemed to me fitted by nature, temperament, and physique, as well as spirituality, for the niche she filled.<sup>67</sup>

Charlotte Tucker who went to India at the age of fifty-four as a self-supporting missionary and was a prolific writer of children's books under the pseudonym A.L.O.E. was treated in similar ways. Within a review of Agnes Giberne's biography of Tucker the *London Quarterly Review* 1896, her individuality was made clear: 'This volume does not seek to conceal the real woman whose strength and determination sometimes ran into obstinacy, and became a trifle dictatorial. She has extraordinary force and vitality, was very resolute, very persevering, very affectionate, reserved yet demonstrative, untidy yet methodical'.<sup>68</sup> This was reinforced by Dawson's description of Tucker, whom he presented as 'a splendid type of the indomitable English woman', explaining that 'there are all sorts of types in Britain, and some that are very lovely and

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<sup>66</sup> Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London, Routledge, 1991), p.111.

<sup>67</sup> Livingstone, *Christina Forsyth of Fingoland*, p.116 & p.v & p.120; Her character was also described as 'almost as unique as her work' and she was 'likened to another single missionary, Mary Slessor, the pioneer missionary of Calabar, in character, faith, humour, patience, and courage'; p.vii.

<sup>68</sup> 'History and Biography', *London Quarterly Review*, 85 (1896), p.379.

very unlike Miss Tucker's. But we should do very badly without a strong infusion of that Tucker type'.<sup>69</sup>

### Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the inclusion of women as heroes within the biographies was a complicated affair. The 'Tucker type' alluded to by Dawson was one strategy used by biographers to depict women outside traditional gender expectations and to promote the employment of strong independent women in the mission field. The biographies not only mirrored acceptable domestic ideology but also constructed it. This chapter, however, has considered how traits of homemaking, child care and health solely relating to the women missionaries were used to enhance their femininity but also offered a hybrid view that exposed their readers to many complex and contradictory messages regarding their position. This was also true in respect of women missionaries partaking in physical activity. As exemplary figures, the missionary women were placed within an interpretive framework emphasising moral elements and character formation, which not only served a didactic process but also reinforced and upheld a normative middle-class domestic ideology. As active and responsible models of femininity, this chapter has also illustrated how missionary women were portrayed as fundamental to upholding British values and to stability. The final chapter will return to themes of self-sacrifice and martyrdom which were pertinent to representations of both male and female missionaries. This is important in the context of the thesis as it allows for an understanding of how biographers contested and made gendered meanings, but also how

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<sup>69</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, p.42.



examples of self-sacrifice were used to deliver ideas of duty for a greater cause and importantly by portraying them as susceptible to loneliness and death conveying to readers that they too could become heroes.

## CHAPTER NINE

‘To do one’s duty often means toil, danger, self-sacrifice; but what boy would be so cowardly as to shirk duty because of this?’ - Missionary self-sacrifice and martyrdom

As we have seen in previous chapters the missionary biographies incorporated many themes which mirrored the heroic adventure story, but they diverged from this standard format in one crucial way. While in standard adventure stories, as Margery Hourihan suggests, the hero achieves ‘his goal and returns home to be gratefully rewarded’, an inherent - and almost inevitable - theme of missionary biographies is the self-sacrifice and ultimate martyrdom of the central character, many of who gave their lives on the mission field.<sup>70</sup> Importantly, this was not an unexpected fate, but instead a function of the missionary calling. As Emma Pitman pointed out, many missionaries ‘went in faith to do Christ’s work to which He called them, aware of the early death that probably awaited them, what other title can we find than that of Christ’s martyrs?’.<sup>71</sup> This chapter will consider how the rhetoric of missionary self-sacrifice and martyrdom differed between male and female missionaries. It will aim to gain an understanding of how the narratives promoted British superiority by providing children with examples of men and women who through their steadfastness and willingness to die for the missionary cause became worthy examples for children to both admire and emulate. It will also discuss how the heroism and martyrdom of missionary, although often compared to the military soldier or daring explorer, was described in terms of an unquestioned sense of national and religious duty. Traits which the Sunday schools were keen to promote.

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<sup>70</sup> Hourihan, *Deconstructing the Hero*, p.10.

<sup>71</sup> Pitman, *Central Africa*, p.102.

Dignified self-sacrifice was a theme within most missionary biographies and firmly sealed the missionary as the ultimate hero in the eyes of the reader. For male missionaries, self-sacrifice and moral courage were used to promote manliness, and this was often achieved through their ultimate martyrdom. In an article published in *The Quiver* in 1896, a contributor explained that ‘in the prime of his splendid manhood’ the missionary ‘goes into voluntary exile to a distant land, among barbarous people. He gives up - and for ever - the world and its delights; society, culture, learning, art, ease, comfort, home, and - more than these - love’.<sup>72</sup> This was clearly illustrated to children within Richard Lovett’s *James Gilmour and His Boys* which published a series of letters sent by Gilmour to his children back in Scotland in which Lovett explained this ‘long series of letters a very helpful and a very beautiful book for boys and girls might be made [and] ... So far as I know, no book of this kind and so written has ever been printed before’.<sup>73</sup> The letters contain many insights into missionary life, but also expose the loneliness and dangers faced. One poignant letter which was reproduced (Figure 33) informed them of the death of their brother, but in true missionary spirit explains ‘Don’t sorrow over Alick. He is with Jesus’.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *The Quiver*, 1896; For interesting discussions surrounding nineteenth century paternity in Britain and the Colonies see: Trev Lynn Broughton & Helen Rogers, eds., *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

<sup>73</sup> Lovett, *James Gilmour*, p.11.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p.151 & p.154.

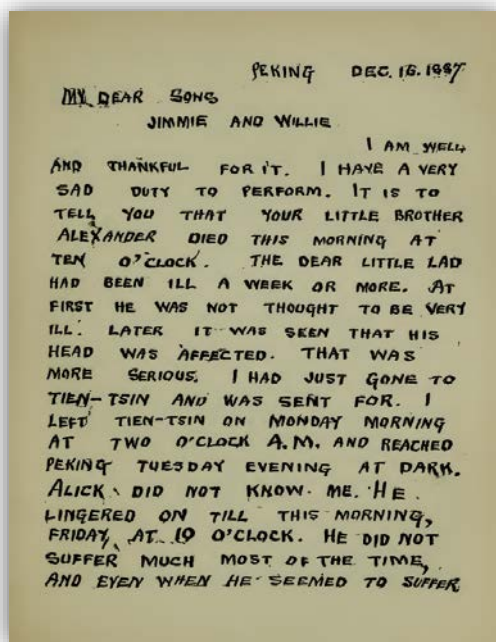


Figure 33 'My Dear Sons'; Lovett, *James Gilmour*, p.154.

Moreover, in *Yarns on African Pioneers*, Basil Mathews described how missionary Alexander Mackay had the 'power both to endure the most severe of all tests, that of the fear of death'.<sup>75</sup> Significantly, this had a profound effect on those who encountered him - including native peoples he engaged with in the mission field as well as children who would later hear about or read his story:

...greater still, his power to inspire the same fearless heroism in the sons of the most degraded and treacherous savages. The series on Mackay, and indeed the Yarns, will only have achieved their purpose if they communicate to those who hear them the contagion of Mackay's spirit of sacrificial heroism and devotion to his Lord.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Mathews, *Yarns on African Pioneers*, p.73.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

The missionary martyr was both instrumental and instructive in promoting the paradigm of the imperial hero and the virtues of patriotism, and Christianity. Again, in a chapter based upon Mackay's exploits in Uganda, J.T. Gracey explained how:

Mackay's character and career will repay close examination ... especially by young men affording them help in character building. The heroic element is so prominent, the experiences so thrilling at times, and the noble balance of all manly qualities so remarkable, that, in fact, there is no class of readers who will not be instructed and interested by the life story of this man, who, when gauged by his mighty achievements, 'was not too young to die'.<sup>77</sup>

A willingness to die in pursuit of a noble objective was lauded as the ultimate sacrifice. For example, the 1879 edition of the *Church Missionary Atlas* explained how many missionaries 'went in faith to do Christ's work to which He called them, aware of the early death that probably awaited them, what other title can we find than that of Christ's martyrs?'.<sup>78</sup> Numerous biographies were produced about missionary John Williams, inspired in part by the sacrificial nature of his death, as he was reportedly killed and eaten by the South Sea islanders. As John Mackenzie argues 'the most potent hero is the dead hero and in particular the martyred hero since it is through his death for a noble cause and his disappearance from the temporal world that his heroic status can

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<sup>77</sup> J.T. Gracey, 'Alexander M. Mackay: The Hero of Uganda', in McDowell, W.F, et al. *The Picket Line of Missions: Sketches of the Advanced Guard* (Chicago, Missionary Campaign Library, 1897), p.73: J.T. Gracey and his wife were missionaries in India. His wife was also the author of *Woman's Medical Work in Mission Fields* (1881) and *Eminent Christian Women* (1898).

<sup>78</sup> *The Church Missionary Atlas*, p.14.

be most easily inflated, interpreted and manipulated'.<sup>79</sup> The martyrdom of Williams was well publicised through many forms of media. This included popular fiction, for example, Rod Edmond's study of colonial discourse and the South Pacific argues that Ballantyne borrowed extensively from Williams's narrative and flagrantly replicated his experiences.<sup>80</sup> The death of Williams became a source for inspiring children. In his biography *John Williams: The Martyr Missionary of Polynesia* (1889) James Ellis included an epigraph from an earlier biography on his title page, depicting Williams as 'A man who has achieved for himself a deathless fame, and concerning whom generations to come will doubtless feel a laudable and reverential curiosity'.<sup>81</sup> Such sentiments were further reinforced by visual illustrations, which often depicted Williams's saintly composure at the moment of his death (Figure 34).<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Mackenzie, *Popular Imperialism*, p.112; One popular biography produced for children in 1894 was George Cousins, *The Story of the South Seas* which was described as 'a handsome gift-book' within a *Catalogue of Books* published at the back of Stock's, *Missionary Heroes of Africa*. Under the heading 'A Few Opinions of the Press' it was described as 'a marvel of cheapness...It ought to be ...in every house where children are to be taught the work done in our days and in the old times before them' as 'a good book for Sunday School libraries' and 'a magnificent theme, full of adventure and heroism and triumphant success'; *Catalogue of Books* in my personal copy which was 'Presented to Minnie Edney by the London Missionary Society for collecting the sum of 5/9 'for the New Year offering for ships, January 1898, in connection with Congregational Sunday School, Watford 'for the new year offering for ships, January 1898 in connection with Congregational Sunday School, Watford'; Stock, *Missionary Heroes of Africa*.

<sup>80</sup> Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1997), p.147.

<sup>81</sup> Ellis, *John Williams*, Title page.

<sup>82</sup> Mathews, *John Williams the Shipbuilder*, p.286.

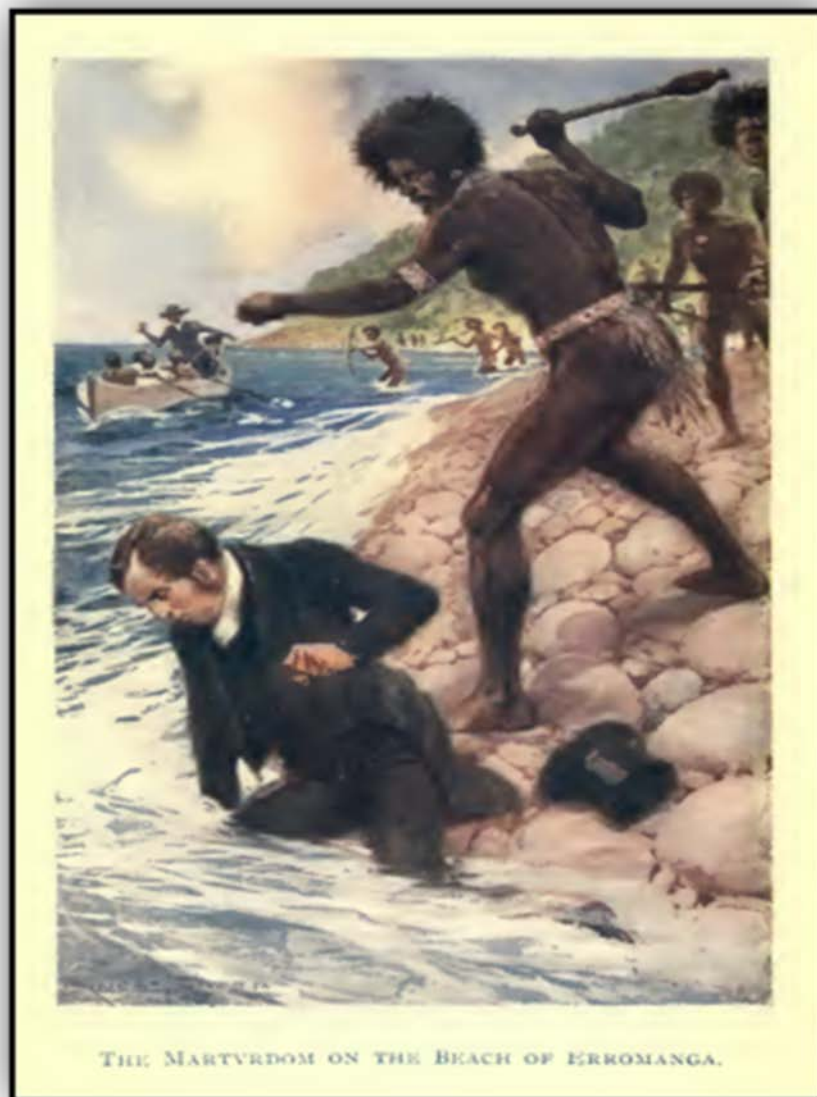


Figure 34 'The Martyrdom on the Beach of Erromanga'; Mathews, *John Williams the Shipbuilder*, p.286.

An honourable death was the theme of the following passage from *The Foreign Missionary* (1907) written for 'mission study classes in colleges and churches':

But the dead soldiers of the Cross lie where they fell on our lonely missionary outposts - amid the jungles of Africa, in the swamps of Siam, beside the rivers of

China and under the palm-trees of India. From the grave of a Labaree or a Pitkin, as well as of the English general, a poet might have written:

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,  
As his course to the rampart we hurried:  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.<sup>83</sup>

Descriptions of heroic self-sacrifice continued to be published during (and after) the First World War which highlights the continuing power and intensity of their sentiment in offering children reassuring words in terms of sacrifice for the greater good that was both moral and patriotic. But it could be argued that the messages also made self-sacrifice familiar, *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers*, for example, suggested that Leaders of boy's groups use descriptions of William's death 'to show that the call of duty is often a call to self-sacrifice', and that boys be told 'To do one's duty often means toil, danger, self-sacrifice; but what boy would be so cowardly as to shirk duty because of this?'.<sup>84</sup>

The stories of missionary martyrdom were promoted by publishers together with those of secular martyrs, such as Havelock and Gordon, and aimed to endorse the missionary as an imperial hero. In *Three Martyrs of the Nineteenth Century* (1889) alongside Gordon and Patterson, Livingstone is one of the martyrs profiled by prolific author and poet Elizabeth Rundle.<sup>85</sup> Descriptions of missionary martyrdom linked to the imperial soldier served to unify Christianity with British imperialism but also allowed

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<sup>83</sup> Judson Brown, *The Foreign Missionary*, p.8 & p.382.

<sup>84</sup> Mathews, *Yarns of South Sea Pioneers*, pp.33-34.

<sup>85</sup> Rundle Charles, *Three Martyrs of the Nineteenth Century: Studies from the Lives of Livingston, Gordon and Patterson* (London: SPCK, 1889).



authors to promote outstanding moral qualities to inculcate ideals of courage, obedience, determination and responsibility. The Preface of Lovett's biography of James Chalmers, for example, explained that 'It is a good thing that young readers, and especially boys, should see that a true Christian man can also be a hero... In this work he often endured hardship, hunger, fever, shipwreck and weary toil, and on not a few occasions risked even life itself. His career should prove an inspiration to young and earnest hearts'.<sup>86</sup> Again, the messages of inspiration within his biography were closely tied to those desired by the Sunday school organisations. Inspiration was also the word used by the LMS when describing their new publications for 1915, which proudly announced that 'Chief among them has been "John Williams the Shipbuilder" by the Society's Editor, with illustrations by Mr. Ernest Prater':

This book was produced by the Oxford University Press for sale at 2s. net, in a style uniform with 'Livingstone the Pathfinder' and 'Greatheart of Papua' [and] now stand in a category almost alone, for they have captured the imagination of tens of thousands of young people and will continue to act as missionary educators and inspirers for many years to come.<sup>87</sup>

The inspirational significance of similar biographies was clearly acknowledged by Thomas Beetham (born in 1906), who as a reader of missionary biographies recalls the effect they had on him as he 'learned a sense of responsibility to share the Gospel

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<sup>86</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, Preface; Interestingly James Chambers and his wife sailed to Australia in the *John Williams* the missionary ship bought with £6000 raised by children. Jessie Cleland according to the prize label is the recipient of R. Wardlaw Thompson, *My Trip in the 'John Williams'* (London, LMS, 1900) for collecting the sum of 8s. 'for the New Year offering for ships, January 1900, in connection with Donegal St. Congreg. Church S. School, Belfast'.

<sup>87</sup> *The Hundred and Twentieth Report of the LMS*, pp.34-35.

with people across the world...heightened by missionary biographies that spelled out the adventure and sacrifice of those who went to serve in foreign lands'.<sup>88</sup> As exemplars of Christian courage who faced death with both dignity and a willingness to die for a greater cause, the missionary could be regarded as even more heroic than his military or secular counterparts. This allowed publishers and interested parties to emphasise the ideal British character and the power of their faith to manipulate those qualities and inculcate children with values deemed as the necessary ingredients for good citizenship and patriotic manhood. This technique was employed very early on: as early as 1851, the *Juvenile Missionary Magazine* suggested that: 'it is well to bear in mind the men who first went forth to the great conflict of heathendom. Especially...for those who are young in years to read the story of lives so full of high principle, fervent zeal, indomitable perseverance, and glowing love for Christ...who formed the Vanguard of the Christian Army'.<sup>89</sup> Presenting the ultimate sacrifice as a victory - played a highly symbolic role in promoting the missionary's devotion to God and the missionary cause. Within *Missionary Heroes of Africa*, the deaths of four missionaries are described as 'Sorrowful things indeed! And yet joyful; for those dear servants of Christ went to be with Him. They had the honour of following in their Master's footsteps'.<sup>90</sup>

One popular way in which biographers emphasised the ultimate sacrifice of the missionary hero was to focus on their final resting places. Graves of martyred missionaries served as important visual analogues and were used to stimulate readers into action. Indexing the reach of missionary endeavour and acting as a metonymy for

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<sup>88</sup> T.A. Beetham, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 14.4 (1990), p.167.

<sup>89</sup> *The Juvenile Missionary Magazine*, 1851.

<sup>90</sup> Stock, *Missionary Heroes of Africa*, p.190.

Christian and imperial amelioration, graves were used to both celebrate and challenge the missionary project. Anthropologist Marianne Gullestad in her study of missionary photography has argued that missionaries ‘rooted themselves in the soil of their mission fields... investing profound meanings in the missionary graves’.<sup>91</sup> This process is reflected in a passage in the collective biography *Modern Heroes of the Mission Field* (1890), which claimed that ‘the crowded graveyard at Kissy is to this day a memorial of the dauntless bravery of that heroic band who formed the forlorn hope of Africa’.<sup>92</sup> Although the graves became tropes of Victorian imperial discourse, they also highlighted unification where physical and imaginative spaces merge: ‘there is on the East African coast a lonely grave of a member of the Mission cause...This is a sign that you have commenced the struggle with this part of the world; and the victories of the church are gained by stepping over the graves of her many members’.<sup>93</sup> Christian martyrdom was one arena in which women could compete on an equal footing to men.

### Women, self-sacrifice and martyrdom

Titles of biographies often alluded to the self-sacrifice of women missionaries as demonstrated by Daniel Eddy’s *Christian Heroines, or, Lives and Sufferings of Female Missionaries in Heathen Lands* (1885), which he claimed were ‘designed for the Young Woman, the young Wife, and the Mother’.<sup>94</sup> One of the stories told by Eddy involved the ‘sacrifice and self-denial’ of missionary wife Harriet Stewart who:

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<sup>91</sup> Marianne Gullestad, *Picturing Pity: Pitfalls and Pleasures in Cross-Cultural Communication* (Oxford, Berghahn, 2007), p.167.

<sup>92</sup> William P. Walsh, *Modern Heroes of the Mission Field* (London, F. H. Revell, 1890), p.181.

<sup>93</sup> Stock, *The Story of Uganda*, p.6.

<sup>94</sup> Daniel C. Eddy, *Christian Heroines, or, Lives and Sufferings of Female Missionaries in Heathen Lands* (London, Walter Scott, 1885).

resolved to go - to go, though home was to be abandoned, friends to be left, loved scenes deserted, and a life of toil to be endured. She resolved to go - to go, though she might pass through a sea of tears, and at last leave her enfeebled body upon a couch that would have no kind friends to surround it when she died. She resolved to go, though she should find in savage lands a lowly grave.<sup>95</sup>

Biographers could use self-sacrifice as a tool to highlight women's commitment and willingness to leave family members and surrender the comforts of home to serve as missionaries. Before 1870, the traditionally privileged portrayal of the missionary as a noble martyr was reserved exclusively for men who died at their posts regardless of the cause.<sup>96</sup> Women were denied the status of martyr and only described within the language and metaphor of self-sacrifice.<sup>97</sup> As acknowledged in Chapter Seven dying passively as a 'soldier at the end of her post...nervous, frail and delicate', placed clear limits upon the female missionary's Christian militancy, and allowed her to be depicted in a more traditional feminine light, thus reducing any challenge to male authority.<sup>98</sup> The emphasis on female fragility was eventually to change, however. The massacre of seven female missionaries at KuCheng, China in August 1895 and the deaths of 180 missionaries and their families during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 compelled authors to re-evaluate the possibility that women might become martyrs equal to men. For example, not long after the Rebellion we find the biographer of Mrs A.E. Glover - who

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p.107.

<sup>96</sup> Reverend S.F. Harris, for example, argued that martyrdom should be restricted to men who have 'met a violent death in the service of Christ ...those who have sealed their testimony with their blood'; as quoted in Rowbotham, 'Soldiers of Christ', p.100.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p.99.

had survived the Boxer Rebellion - using more openly militaristic terminology to describe her missionary service: ‘She died unto the Lord: and to her was given the single honour of being counted worthy of a place among the martyrs of Jesus, as the last of the “noble army” of 1900 to pass from the cross to the crown’.<sup>99</sup>

As we have discussed, a number of methods were used to illustrate and inform children of missionary heroism. The CMS in its *Talks on China* (n.d.) ‘intended primarily to provide material for six Missionary Addresses to gatherings of children or young people’, for example, used various approaches to illustrate the martyrdom of Christian missionaries in China which included a Blackboard Summary ‘TORTURED - TEMPTED-TRIED: “The Noble Army of Martyrs - PRAISE THEE”’ a poem, a ‘Diagram to accompany TALK V’ (Figure 35), and a series of notes, including:

Note 1.- A Thorough Man - Mr. Stewart was in every way a thorough man, whom to meet was to respect and love - a man without fear, and without fanaticism. Such men - men like Livingstone, Mackay of Uganda, and others - are the pioneers who clear the way for British influence, civilization, and religion, whose lives are examples to every man, whose deaths are losses to the nation.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Archibald Glover, *A Thousand Miles of Miracle: A Personal Record of God’s Delivering Power from the Hands of the Imperial, Boxers of Shan-Si* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), p.370.

<sup>100</sup> *Talks on China*, p.23;

‘Perished, by spear, and flame, and smoke,  
Meek maid and helpless child.  
The sun blazed at noon-day  
On martyrs bathed in blood—  
Charred, with loved kindred ashes, lay  
The minister of God; p.31.

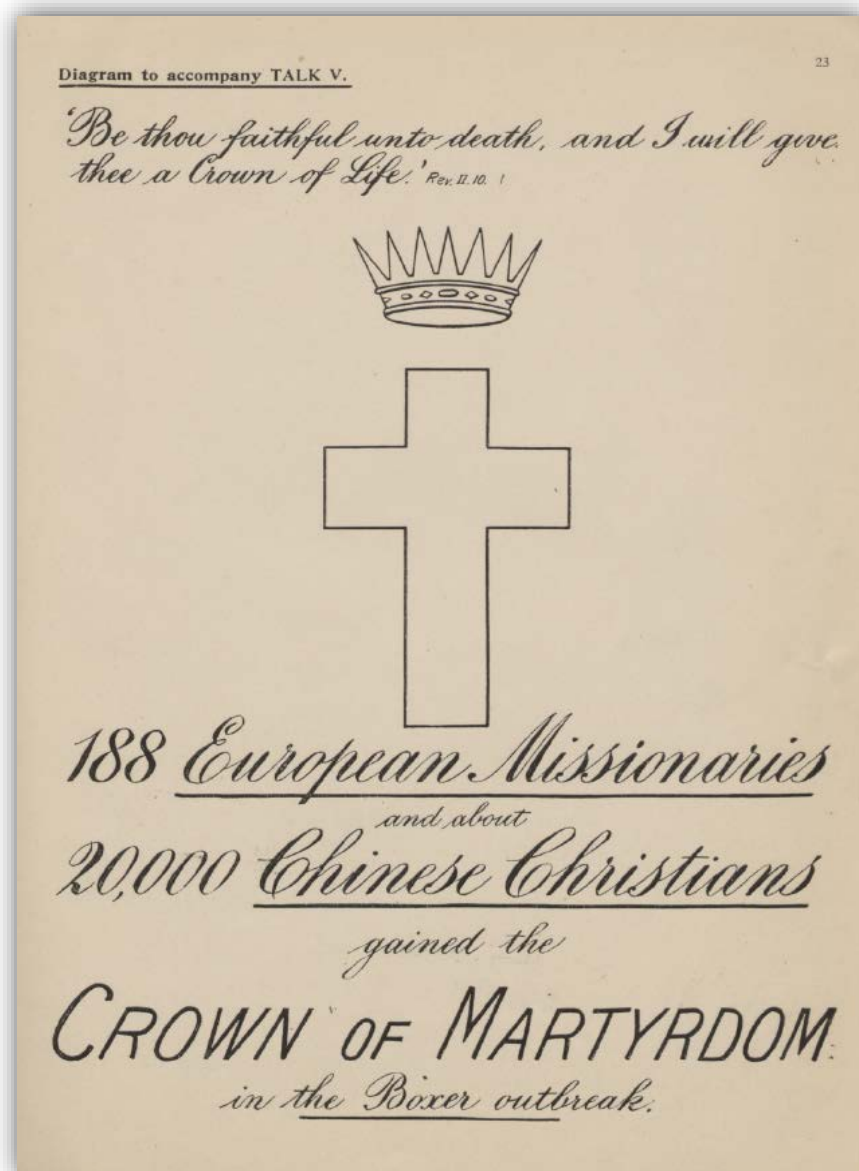


Figure 35 'Be thou faithful unto death'; *Talks on China*, p.23.

Numerous biographies were produced recording the atrocities in China.

*Martyred Missionaries of the China Inland Mission: With a Record of the Perils & Sufferings of Some who Escaped* (1901), which also provided 'portraits, maps and illustrations, for example, was described by *The Spectator* in 1900 as a book that 'stands

altogether apart [providing] plain tales of heroism and self-sacrifice'.<sup>101</sup> Again, the impact made by these textual accounts was reinforced visually, as for example by an illustration of 'Heroic Missionary' Miss Coombes 'shielding two of her Chinese girl scholars with her own body and eventually paid for this act with her own life' (Figure 36).<sup>102</sup>



Figure 36 'A Heroic Missionary'; Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, Frontispiece.

<sup>101</sup> Marshall Broomhall, *Martyred Missionaries of the China Inland Mission: With a Record of the Perils & Sufferings of Some Who Escaped* (London, Morgan & Scott, 1901); To add to the dramatic descriptions a 'Route Map, with routes taken by Missionaries who escaped marked in red' is supplied at the end of the volume; *The Spectator*, 1900.

<sup>102</sup> Dawson, *Missionary Heroines of the Cross*, Frontispiece.

The deaths of women missionaries in China allowed biographers to promote and defend the domestic role of women and their usefulness, while the sub-text encouraged girls at home to be self-sacrificing and self-disciplined. Describing Mrs Edith Searell who ‘suffered martyrdom June 30,1900’, for example, it is explained how:

Hers was a warm, affectionate nature and ready for any sacrifice. Where it was in her power to give help to any, she would give it ungrudgingly, and her more than ordinary abilities often put her in the position of being able to do so. There seemed to be nothing in the practical line of house-keeping which she did not know, and often when visiting one and another of our Shan-si stations, if comment had been made on the excellence of the bread or of some jam, the answer would be: ‘I got the recipe from Miss Searell’. She was so ready to help, and it was characteristic of her...from morning till night she was busy. What with teaching, dealing out the medicine for the opium patients, visiting, and housekeeping, there was not an idle moment.<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, when discussing the death of missionary martyr ‘Dr. Laws’, Ellis used this opportunity to inform both boys and girls how they too could become a martyr: ‘Yes, the noble army of martyrs has many a brave boy and loving girl who has suffered derision, pain, and loss for the Saviour. At home, at school, it is necessary for peace of mind to avow one’s faith, but sometimes sneers, cold contempt and cutting mockery will be the consequence of such showing one’s colours’.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Broomhall, *Martyred Missionaries*, p.28.

<sup>104</sup> Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, p.54.



Through the interaction of text and image incorporating common themes of heroism, self-sacrifice and martyrdom, the noble deaths of missionary women came to be received by readers as symbols for Christian and imperial improvement. Eddy recalled that 'In our homes the story of death was told, and sadness filled the pious heart, as the thought that another servant of God, another heroine of the church, had fallen at her post, a martyr in the cause of truth'.<sup>105</sup> Such themes were once again incorporated in suggestions offered to class leaders by Padwick in *White Heroines in Africa*, Padwick proposed a lesson based on the story of Anna Hinderer, 'Lover of Children', who always had a 'longing to do something for Christ':

Do you remember in the *Te Deum* (omit if the girls do not sing the *Te Deum*) we sing about 'the noble army of martyrs?' Every time Anna sang that, it used to be a sort of dream with her that she might be one of the noble army; then she thought she would like to be a missionary, because missionaries were heroic people who sometimes became martyrs.<sup>106</sup>

By adding weight to the commitment and authority of the female missionary and the missionary cause, as Rowbotham argues, this 'noble army of martyrs' became a 'national inspiration not restricted by femininity'.<sup>107</sup> Aware of the fascination children had with death, which according to James Curl, was satisfied with robustly...attractively (if lugubriously) illustrated tales like those of the dead *Cock Robin* and the *Three Little*

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<sup>105</sup> Daniel C. Eddy, *Heroines of the Missionary Enterprise, or, Sketches of Prominent Female Missionaries* (London, A. Hall, Virtue, 1850), p.122.

<sup>106</sup> Padwick, *White Heroines in Africa*, p.25.

<sup>107</sup> Rowbotham, 'Soldiers of Christ', p.101.

*Kittens*, biographers and their publishers did not spare them any detail.<sup>108</sup> Similarly, for older children whom it was believed were fed on a mixture of horror and murder by their reading of sensational Penny Dreadfuls, authors attempted to rival their appeal by producing equally horrific images associated with messages of heroic self-sacrifice that would make them inspiring and appealing to their fertile imaginations. Sensational descriptions were used to emphasise heroism and commitment, within *Women in the Mission Field*, for example, the violent deaths inflicted on a female at KuCheng are catalogued ‘Mr and Mrs Stewart, Miss N. Saunders, and Miss Lena Irish [Yellop] were burnt in the house. Miss HESSIE Newcombe was speared and thrown down a precipice. Miss Marshall’s throat was cut. Miss Gordon was speared in the brain. Miss Lena Stewart died from shock’.<sup>109</sup> In this instance it is revealing that this gory sequence was immediately followed by an account of the only male missionary, ‘the central figure of this group - Robert Warren Stewart’.<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, the chapter concluded with the confident assertion that the full knowledge of the fate of the martyred women ‘will but kindle the enthusiasm of recruits in numbers more adequate to replace the slain’.<sup>111</sup> Buckland’s description of the death of Miss Lena Stewart from ‘shock’ was another strategy used by biographers to redefine their martyrdom. As discussed in Chapter Eight images of innate physical frailty and ill-health were useful to recuperate any lost imageries of their femininity, as Ellis explained ‘For those who die from privation,

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<sup>108</sup> James Stevens Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death* (Stroud, Sutton, 2000), p.202.

<sup>109</sup> Buckland, *Women in the Mission Field*, p.28.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.29.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

sickness or overstrain for God are as truly martyrs as those who are speared or burnt to death. It is the spirit and motive that count'.<sup>112</sup>

While women were increasingly capable of being depicted as martyrs, however, the death of missionary women also provided biographers with an opportunity to reinforce the married woman's dependence on the influence and support of the male missionary. In a passage that incorporates many images of hardships endured by missionary wives, Lovett describes the self-sacrifice of James Gilmour's wife:

In 1874 Mr. Gilmour had married Miss Prankard, a lady who went out from England to become his wife, and who learned to speak the Mongol language, and to love them very much. And she was so brave that she twice spent the summer travelling about the plain with her husband, and sleeping in a tent, and enduring hardships which are terrible even to think about. It is hard enough for a brave and strong man to go through the toils and privations of Mongolian life, but it is much harder for a lady, and it is to be feared that her self-denial in this way for the Mongols she and her husband so wished to win for Jesus, shortened her life.<sup>113</sup>

Thus, Eddy suggested that 'almost all heroines who have gone forth...to dot heathen soil with their lowly graves, have been attended by some stronger arm than that of weak, defenceless women. Many of them have had husbands on whom they relied for support and protection, and to whom they could turn with the assurance of sympathy'.<sup>114</sup> Indeed, the graves of missionary wives feature heavily within biographies based on the lives of

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<sup>112</sup> Ellis, *Mary Slessor*, p.54.

<sup>113</sup> Lovell, *James Gilmour*, p.70.

<sup>114</sup> Eddy, *Heroines of Missionary Enterprise*, p.124.

their husbands. Stock, for example, encouraged her readers to ‘look at the funeral...of the wife of a “stranger in a strange land” ... the first occupation of East Africa by a “servant of Christ”. On that day the land was taken possession of in the name of Him whose rightful inheritance it is’.<sup>115</sup> Often, however, the focus was placed on the husband’s suffering and loss rather than the sacrifice made by his wife. In an autobiography addressed explicitly to ‘young folks’, John Paton explained how difficult he found it to be ‘resigned, left alone, and in sorrowful circumstances’ following the death of his wife.<sup>116</sup> However, ‘in light of such dispensations’, he observes that ‘it becomes us all to love and serve our blessed Lord Jesus so we may be ready at His call for death and Eternity’.<sup>117</sup> The narrative is enhanced by a heart-wrenching illustration of Paton at his wife’s grave with the caption ‘The Lonely Vigil’ (Figure 37).<sup>118</sup>

Images of self-sacrifice and martyrdom were defined by biographers to portray the missionary as more heroic and selfless than their fictional or secular counterparts. The strong visual images added to this claim but also emphasised to the reader the prevailing view of savagery as the native is often shown attacking his unarmed victim from behind in what could only be perceived as a cowardly act. Lovett summarises this within his biography based on James Chalmers, but as we have shown this could effortlessly be reproduced at the start of countless biographies:

The book is sent forth with the prayer that the brave deeds and stirring words and consecrated life of Tamate may kindle in many a young heart the desire and the

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<sup>115</sup> Stock, *The Story of Uganda*, p.6.

<sup>116</sup> John Paton, *The Story of John G. Paton, Told for Young Folks: or, Thirty Years Among South Sea Cannibals* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1892), p.59

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p.56.

ambition to follow in his steps, as a brave soldier, in the struggle to bring light and truth and hope to those, whether at home or abroad, who are yet in the darkness and sorrow of sin.<sup>119</sup>



THE LONELY VIGIL.—PAGE 33.

Figure 37 'The Lonely Vigil'; Paton, *The Story of John G. Paton*, p.36.

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<sup>119</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, p.4.

Hannington and Slessor both died in the mission field but their experience differed greatly, and consequently, descriptions of their self-sacrifice and martyrdom were presented to children in very different ways.

#### Hannington: self-sacrifice and martyrdom

‘The young bishop, who so soon became a martyr, leaps up, in this already popular biography, to his rightful place as a permanent household friend, to win an ever-widening circle of admirers’.<sup>120</sup> This review of one of the many biographies written about the life and martyrdom of Hannington highlights the scale of interest in his life story. From his initial sacrifice of leaving his wife and children, to the very public nature of his capture and subsequent death, Hannington is described in terms of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. When leaving home, for example, Berry using militaristic metaphors explained how ‘He said that if he lost his life in Africa, no man was to think that his life had been wasted. As for the lives which had been already given for the cause, they were not lost, but were filling up the trench so that others might the more easily pass over to take the fort in the name of the Lord’.<sup>121</sup> The intense coverage of the dramatic events that led up to his capture and death, particularly in national and local newspapers in Britain, meant that biographers were able to fill their pages with dramatic images but also used them to highlight his character and level of self-sacrifice. Many reproduced Hannington’s own words from his diary entry for 5 July 1885 which described his final trip:

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<sup>120</sup> *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 1887.

<sup>121</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.44.

Starvation, desertion, treachery, and a few other nightmares and furies hover over one's head in ghastly forms, and yet, in spite of all, I feel in capital spirits, and feel sure of results, though perhaps they may not come in exactly the way we expect...If this is the last chapter of earthly history, then the next will be the first page of the heavenly - no blots and smudges, no incoherence, but sweet converse in the presence of the Lamb.<sup>122</sup>

Vivid descriptions of Hannington's captivity and death provided biographers with an opportunity to extol the virtues of their hero. Michael, for example, explained how 'it is a noble and pathetic record, and presents James Hannington at his best'.<sup>123</sup> While Dawson explained how 'In that supreme moment we have the happiness of knowing that the Bishop faced his destiny like a Christian and a man'.<sup>124</sup> These narratives were often explained by vivid illustrations, many of which depicted the moment of his death. Figure 38, for example, shows Hannington as a resolute and fearless man of peace, unarmed and with his hat removed, pointing towards the sky.<sup>125</sup> A scene which A.R. Buckland in *The Heroic in Mission* (1894) eloquently described:

He was led to execution, singing, after the pattern of many other martyrs, hymns in which men caught the name of Jesus. The story of his life and death has been told by a friend, and has inspired a work by a master-hand in fiction. His example has borne much fruit, and may bear still more for the profit of Africa.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Reproduced in Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.333.

<sup>123</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, p.156

<sup>124</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.384.

<sup>125</sup> Michael, *James Hannington*, Frontispiece.

<sup>126</sup> Augustus Buckland, *The Heroic in Missions: Pioneers in Six Fields* (London, Isbister, 1894), p.54.

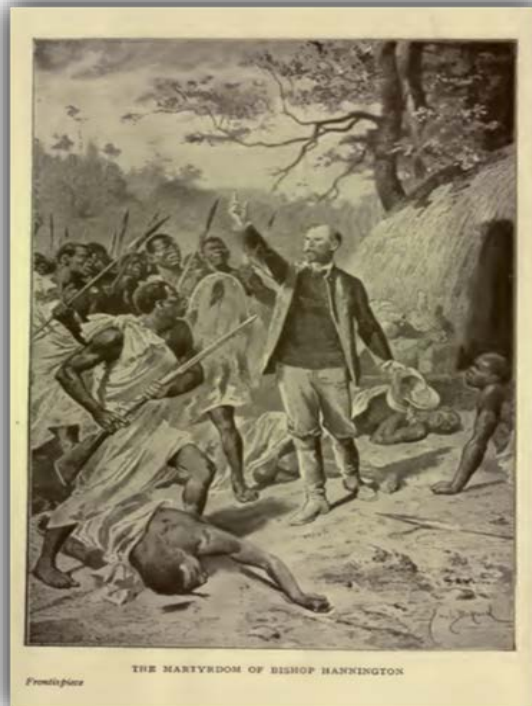


Figure 38 'The Martyrdom of Bishop Hannington; Michael, *James Hannington*, Frontispiece.

Adding excitement and suspense to the narratives, the capture of Hannington provided children with an image of stoicism and courage in the face of great danger. Many biographers used Hannington's own words to describe his capture, as Berry stated 'What followed is best told in the Bishop's own words':

They violently threw me to the ground, and proceeded to strip me of all valuables. Thinking they were robbers, I shouted for help, when they forced me up and hurried me away, as I thought to throw me down a precipice close at hand. I shouted again, in spite of one threatening to kill me with a club. Twice I nearly



broke away from them, and then grew faint with struggling, and was dragged by the legs over the ground.<sup>127</sup>

Again, this was accompanied by a vivid illustration (Figure 39).<sup>128</sup>

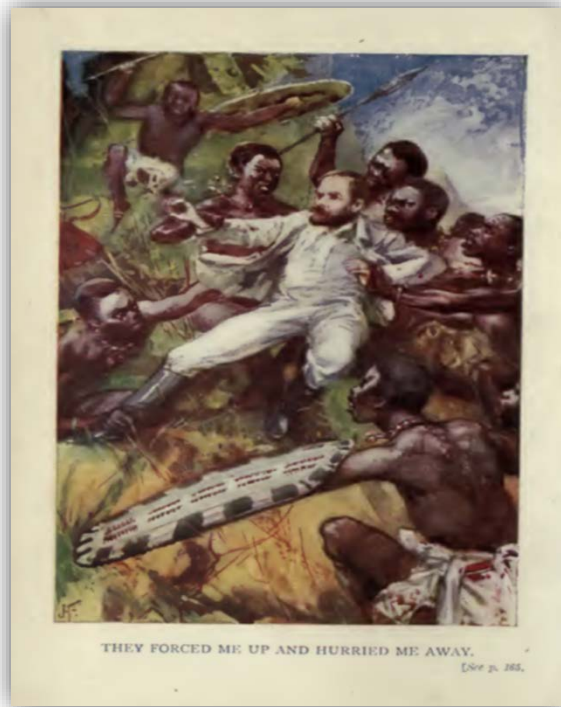


Figure 39 ‘They forced me up and hurried me away’; Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, Frontispiece.

Dawson uses Hannington’s diary to great effect and informs readers how the last entry stated “‘A hyena howled near me last night, smelling a sick man, but I hope it is not to have me yet.’” This is the last entry in the little pocket diary’.<sup>129</sup> Accounts of

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<sup>127</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p.165.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, Frontispiece.

<sup>129</sup> Dawson, *James Hannington*, p.382; Within the footnote Dawson explains how ‘The book is one of Letts’ monthly pocket diaries, very thin, and only 4½ inches by 2¾ with an entire page for each day. Into this small space the Bishop has managed to get as many as forty-six lines to a page, each line averaging twelve or thirteen words. The writing is very minute; indeed, a lens was found almost necessary to decipher some parts of it’; Robert Ashe who was in Uganda at the same time as Hannington also used his diary to detail events, however, he stated that his copy of Hannington’s diary and his ‘do not always agree’ and at one point contends: ‘Here Mr. Dawson and I differ a good deal. May I venture to say that I cannot look at Mr. Dawson’s changes as improvements. Hannington’s own words, though often rugged,

Hannington's martyrdom were not only directed towards boys. *Every Girls Annual* (1886), for instance, provided a six-page biographical sketch on Hannington which not only linked him to General Gordon but also explained how his death could be used for good:

The news of his death fell like a thunderbolt, not only on that sorely bereaved household which claimed him as husband and father, but on the Church at large. England had thrilled in January 1885 at the news of the death of the soldier saint, General Gordon, in beleaguered Khartoum; now in the early dawning of 1886 came the news of no less heroic death of the young English bishop among the savage tribes of Central Africa.<sup>130</sup>

The author continued by explaining how their deaths showed that 'the days of grand and surpassing self-sacrifice are not at an end'.<sup>131</sup> This impassioned rhetoric was used to remind readers of the high moral purpose of the British as God's chosen people and the sacrifices made in that cause, but also the nationalist discourse allowed working-class readers to again feel part of a God-given imagined community. Hannington's death provided biographers with an opportunity to highlight heroism and bravery, to promote the missionary cause and to recruit new missionaries. Berry is one of many biographers, for example, to explain how 'Hannington did more for Africa by his death than in his life. Within a few weeks, after the news came to England, fifty men had offered

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are always living pictures'; Robert Pickering Ashe, *Two Kings of Uganda: or, Life by the Shores of Victoria Nyanza: Being an Account of a Residence of Six Years in Eastern Equatorial Africa* (London, Sampson Low, 1890), p.182 & p.187.

<sup>130</sup> *Every Girls Annual*, 1886.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

themselves to the C.M.S. for service in the mission field’ highlighting the very practical purpose of the biographies, as discussed in Chapter Four which was to recruit future missionaries.<sup>132</sup>

For biographers of the male missionary, heroic martyrdom was gained through images of them going ‘in faith to do Christ’s work to which He called them, aware of the early death that probably awaited them, what other title can we find than that of Christ’s martyrs?’<sup>133</sup> Mary Slessor died of old age at her mission station which forced biographers to focus more upon self-sacrifice rather than martyrdom. Consequently, descriptions of sickness and frailty surrounded her death was used to reinforce her commitment to the missionary enterprise. Describing her ‘moral and physical courage... a martyr to pain’ it was explained that her last days ‘were filled in with unremitting toil’ but that she ‘went forward without fear, knowing that she might, through inadvertence, incur suffering, but willing to bear it for His sake and His cause’.<sup>134</sup> Livingstone shrewdly used Slessor’s faith as a strategy to dispel concerns over her ‘eccentric’ behaviour and thus avoid difficult questions: ‘Her faith and devotion led her into strange situations, and these shaped the character of her outward life and habits. She shed many conventions, simply because it was necessary in order to carry out the will of Christ’.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Berry, *Bishop Hannington*, p173.

<sup>133</sup> *The Church Missionary Atlas: Maps of the Various Missions of The Church Missionary Society* (London, CMS, 1862), p.14.

<sup>134</sup> Livingstone also reproduced a copy of a poem ‘The Lament of her African Children’ written by a fifteen-year-old Scottish girl Christine G. M. Orr to highlight her devotion and sacrifice which included the words:

Oh! our mother-she who loved us.  
Much in loneliness and danger. She who lost herself in service.  
Fevered oft, beset with trouble. She who lightened all our darkness,  
Still she strove for us, her children; She has left us, and we mourn her;

Livingstone, *Mary Slessor of Calabar*, p.341, p.132 & p. iv.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p.132.

## Conclusion

By considering how biographers incorporated images of self-sacrifice and martyrdom within the biographies to provide examples of missionary heroism, this chapter has considered how representations differed between male and female missionaries.

Descriptions of missionary self-sacrifice and martyrdom, along with strong visual images, provided children with examples of brave men and women worthy to both admire and emulate. Their steadfastness and willingness to die for the missionary cause was used to equate the missionary hero with the military soldier or daring explorer.

Unlike the soldier or explorer, however, the heroism and martyrdom of the missionary was done in the name of Christianity and not for personal or temporal gain. The self-sacrifice and martyrdom displayed within the biographies emphasised an unquestioning obedience to God and a strong sense of duty, all traits the Sunday school would hope to instil in its working-class scholars. Importantly through images of their sacrifices, loneliness and possible death the missionary although heroic, displayed many characteristics working-class children could relate to. Dawson, as discussed in Chapter Four, highlighted this explaining that ‘Any boy may become a hero, even though he be not born strong and brave...He is brave who forgets himself; and he is strong who conquers himself’. <sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Dawson, *Lion-Hearted*, p.1.

## CONCLUSION

As highlighted in the previous chapter Richard Lovett in his biography based on the life of James Chalmers wrote ‘It is a good thing that young readers, and especially boys, should see that a true Christian man can also be a hero...His career should prove an inspiration to young and earnest hearts’.<sup>1</sup> This statement highlights several key issues raised within this thesis: namely the importance and usefulness of biographies based on the missionary hero which embodied the sentiments of educationalists, politicians, social commentators and evangelists that identified the education of working-class children as crucial to Britain’s future. As discussed in the introductory chapter, missionary biographies have, for the most part, been relegated to the margins of any serious analytical investigation. This thesis, however, has provided a long overdue textual analysis of the study of juvenile missionary biographies produced for working class children attending Sunday school between 1870 and 1917 and has built upon the work of Makenzie, Johnston and Thorne by placing them in a central position within larger scholarly frameworks. Importantly, this analysis offers the potential for research in new directions within the field of childhood studies, the history of education and 19<sup>th</sup> century children’s literature including the adventure story genre. This study also converges upon a number of academic disciplines and offers significant new insights into literature in the fields of social and cultural history, missiology, print culture, literary studies, sociology of texts, gender studies, and visual culture among others.

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<sup>1</sup> Lovett, *Tamate*, p.3.

This work has, however, delved deeper into the role of the biographies and has exposed how the rhetoric promoted ideas of imperialism, citizenship and character formation, as well as the complex relationship between the hero and gender. It has shown how biographers acting as mediators used stories of missionary heroes based on the adventure story format as an effective means of establishing in working-class children a sense of citizenship and belonging to an imagined community. This has important implications for how scholars think about the relationship between empire and British children, not least for the vigorous debate between John Mackenzie and Bernard Porter which has shaped recent scholarship on the extent and impact of imperial culture in Britain. This thesis contributed to this debate by illustrating that through the distribution of biographies based on the missionary hero, imperial ideas and ideals were promoted to working-class children through the Sunday school network. This study has had two tasks. The first was to provide an understanding of the importance placed upon the education of working-class children particularly through concerns surrounding what they were reading. It also looked at the Sunday school network and how, through its use of missionary biographies, this network sought to inculcate children in important ideas of imperialism, citizenship and character formation. The second has been to interrogate how through common themes these ideas were promoted.

Chapter One considered the problems and anxieties surrounding the education and socialisation of Britain's working-class children and discussed the interlinked influences of youth organisations, educational texts and, central to the concerns of this thesis, the Sunday school. This led to the analysis in Chapter Two of the literature used within the Sunday school and the importance of the missionary biography as a tool in

transmitting values and examples associated with the heroic missionary. The third chapter looked at the broader issues of hero worship and the task of the hero within children's reading material and considered the role of biographies and the adventure story, particularly relating to differences between boy and girl readers. Chapter Four considered in detail the importance of the missionary biographies and how they used the adventure story format to stimulate interest and to promote the missionary as heroic. Martin Green's argument that adventure 'belongs to men' was a useful point to introduce a discussion of how biographers represented heroic women missionaries that both confirmed and challenged gender roles.<sup>2</sup> This included a short analysis of the missionary wives and single female missionaries, alternative readings of the missionary and strategies to counteract any negative messages were discussed. The chapter concluded with a detailed account of James Hannington and Mary Slessor whose biographies were popular in the Sunday school, and who were used as paradigmatic examples throughout Part Two to illuminate themes, ideas and to show how Christian values present within the narratives were disseminated. The final chapter of Part One considered the importance of the role played by biographers, publishers and illustrators who formed part of a network providing children with accessible, entertaining and well-illustrated narratives which incorporated the notion of the hero embracing the best of what it meant to be British.

Part Two (Chapters Six to Nine) focused directly upon significant themes and discussed examples of how gender, imperialism and socialisation were incorporated within the narratives. Themes included childhood, journeys, chivalry, athleticism,

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<sup>2</sup> Green *Seven Types*, p.3

militarism, home-making, health and self-sacrifice. Incorporated within each chapter was a more detailed analysis of missionaries James Hannington and Mary Slessor. At the same time consideration was given to the methods used to offer working-class children an avenue that allowed them to feel part of an imagined community. It has shown how often indirect messages inscribed in these texts provided principles and values that could impact upon the imperialist horizons of some working-class children. By analysing set themes, it was clear from their stock nature that biographers followed a set pattern embodied within the adventure story format, providing children with an image of a hero regularly battling wild animals, ferocious natives and inclement landscapes. Importantly it illustrated how biographers were able to modify and adapt their narratives to account for the gender of their protagonist and to incorporate broader changes in British society and culture. For example, once accepted as an important part of the missionary enterprise the expectation to provide heroic narratives based upon of single women missionaries required a reassessment by biographers, but as we have shown within this revision many attempted to reinforce and preserve, when possible, traditional gender roles, for example, home-making was never discussed within representations of male missionaries. The biographies based upon the male and female missionary despite an increasing interest in the role of missions in imperialism are a 'neglected part of the larger story of imperial textual control'.<sup>3</sup> By focusing upon representations of the missionary as an imperial hero within biographies produced for working-class children and disseminated through the Sunday school network, this study has critically engaged with the importance of the narratives and has offered a

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<sup>3</sup> Gareth Griffiths, 'Popular Imperial Adventure Fiction', p.51.



substantive contribution to scholarly conversations that intersect with concepts of socialisation, moral training and character formation, all under the umbrella of popular imperialism.

Limitations, rediscovering the imperial missionary hero and suggestions for future research

At the outset, the original intention for this thesis was to provide accounts of children's encounters with the biographies and the messages they contained. This was to follow Jonathan Rose's advice for a history of audiences, which is that 'the only workable method is to consult the readers themselves and let them explain how they made sense of it all'.<sup>4</sup> I have been able to draw on some anecdotal and material evidence confirming the everyday use of the missionary biographies by working-class children and pointing to how they were received. This aspect of the research has been limited by the availability of evidence pertaining to the reading experiences of specific child readers. In a sense, my research supports Thorne's conclusions about the missionary movement's impact on popular perceptions of empire, that 'working people came to church, attended missionary meetings and read missionary literature; but the fact that they consumed missionary material does not in itself reveal the consequences of their so doing'.<sup>5</sup>

To address this issue, it has been necessary to consider the material from an alternative perspective, focusing instead upon the vital role of biographers, illustrators, publishers and Sunday schools in mediating missionary lives. Each of these agents had a role in articulating and disseminating certain ideas about citizenship and character

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<sup>4</sup> Rose, *The Intellectual Life*, p.367.

<sup>5</sup> Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, p.125.

formation to children, whether in text and subtext, in an appealing and engaging format. ideas of citizenship and character formation. The narratives also facilitated and supported a single, superior, British identity that allowed working-class children to feel part of an imagined community. These textual messages were reinforced by visual illustrations and increasingly elaborate book covers, with publishers taking advantage of the increasing complexity of printing techniques to market these books as exciting and desirable commodities - imitating and then supplanting the more seedy visual world of the Penny dreadfuls. Not only do these illustrations show that publishers coonsidered missionary biographies to be be profitable and consequently worthy of such attention, both from a commercial perspective, they also ensured that messages about gender, empire, nation and gender could reach even those children who had only limited literacy. As Margaret Meek has suggested, these act as 'windows on a cultural context' were successfully employed as persuasive tools to sway children's opinions.<sup>6</sup>

Understanding the intentions of writers, illustrators and publishers does not suggest that all working-class children who received a prize book based upon the missionary hero understood the values assigned to the symbols and metaphors. Nevertheless, the fact that they undoubtedly reached many thousands of working-class children is indicated by the sheer numbers of children attending Sunday schools, the prominence of missionary biographies in 'prize book' catalogue entries, as well as the rich publishing history of the biographies – many of which went throughout multiple editions and reprints, and were very widely recommended both by Sunday schools and by other social and cultural institutions. Running through this thesis was also was the

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<sup>6</sup> Margaret Meek, ed., *Children's Literature and National Identity* (Stoke on Trent, Trentham Books, 2001), p. xiv.

physical evidence of Sunday school prize labels within the biographies, which provides evidence of specific books being awarded to specific named individuals – often with additional textual material revealing the impact that each book was expected to have on the specific child to whom it was awarded. Moreover, according to Reynolds ‘copies of books received as rewards in England are regularly found in North America, Australia and countries that were part of the empire. Their owner must have cared about them sufficiently to take the trouble to transport and preserve them under difficult circumstances’.<sup>7</sup>

### Rediscovering the imperial missionary hero

As this thesis has proved biographical studies of missionary heroes were especially suited to providing working-class children with examples of men and women who could be held up as exemplary role models. Written to educate and entertain readers hungry for excitement, they based their narratives upon the flourishing adventure book genre which included ideologies of imperialism, gender and citizenship. The popularity of biographies surrounding the missionary heroes continued well into the twentieth century managing to endure the First World War. Many scholars have discussed the role of the hero after the war arguing that ‘nineteenth-century ideals of duty, honour, and sacrifice were buried with the corpses of the Western Front’.<sup>8</sup> Katheryn Castle, for example, suggests that many publications began a transition from the ‘old world of imperial

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<sup>7</sup> Kimberley Reynolds, ‘Rewarding Reads? Giving, Receiving and Resisting Evangelical Reward and Prize Books’, in J. Briggs, D. Butts & M.O. Grenby, eds., *Popular Children’s Literature in Britain* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008), p.202.

<sup>8</sup> Jones, *The Last Great Quest*, p.262; For further reading see: Jessica Meyer, ed., *British Popular Culture and the First World War* (Leiden, Brill, 2008) Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (London, Routledge, 1991).

fiction [illustrating] new relations with the savage world and its inhabitants'.<sup>9</sup> As Castle neatly summarises 'the post-war period claimed the legacy of empire while redirecting youth to new frontiers'.<sup>10</sup> Although Max Jones has suggested that while the sacrifice of the First World War made it difficult to generate heroic icons from military men, heroic ideals were 'transferred from the battlefield to the romantic vistas of the explorer' and consequently biographies based upon the missionary hero continued and to promote the white male missionary as an intrepid Christian imperial hero.<sup>11</sup>

Although the image of the heroic, itinerant missionary among the British adult churchgoing population was, according to Jeffrey Cox, gradually replaced by that of the 'institution builder, who created schools, hospitals and training institutions' this was not the case within the biographical narratives written for a juvenile audience, which continued to promote the missionary as an imperial adventurer.<sup>12</sup> Although the war challenged military heroes and placed manly behaviour under scrutiny, missionaries along with the explorers and adventurers like Scott of the Antarctic and Lawrence of Arabia could be celebrated as heroes of peace who continued to be promoted as physical exemplars and self-sacrificial heroes, intrinsic to Britain's post-Edwardian imperial recovery. Similarly, children's adventure stories also continued to promote the hero, but a hero like Biggles who was depicted as partaking in ripping yarns that emphasised mobility and action.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Kathryn Castle 'Imperial Legacies, New Frontier: Children's Popular Literature and the Demise of Empire', in, S. Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester, Manchester U.P., 2001), p.152 & p.148.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.161.

<sup>11</sup> Max Jones, *The Last Great Quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic Sacrifice* (Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2003), p.269.

<sup>12</sup> Cox, 'From the Empire of Christ', p.91.

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Dorothea Flothow, 'Popular Children's Literature and the Memory of the First World War, 1919-1939', *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 31 (2007), pp.147-161.

Biographies of the missionary hero incorporating romantic notions of self-sacrifice and Christian martyrdom continued to be disseminated to children via the Sunday school throughout the inter war period, and well beyond.<sup>14</sup> A copy of John Hawthorn's 1932 biography *Dan Crawford* was presented as a Sunday school prize book to Roy Brown 'for collecting the grand sum of £7-1-2 for Home and Overseas Missions during the year 1950'.<sup>15</sup> This provides a good example of how the image of the missionary hero remained unchanged, illustrating the extent to which the biographies continued to spread imperial values to the young. Published as part of the long-running 'Memoir Series of Mighty Men and Women' which also included Mary Slessor, the text continued to promote notions of British moral and religious superiority, despite the changing context in which missionary working-class actually took place by the 1940s and 50s:

Fearlessly he faced the dangers of the African Bush, trampling over difficulties and dangers with an indomitable courage that few possess...His travels, adventures, and achievements were but the moving pictures of the magnetic influence of the man who became one of the most unconventional, and uncompromising, yet most lovable missionaries Africa has yet known. It will do the heart good to read the inspiring story.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The 'Christian Heroes Then and Now' series was first published in 1998 and includes missionaries William Carey, C.T. Studd, Mary Slessor and John Williams who is described : 'With unshakable courage, John Williams gave his life to see the gospel message of love and peace spread to the fierce warriors and cannibals on the thousands of islands in the Pacific Ocean'; Janet Benge, *John Williams, Messenger of Peace* (Seattle, YWAM, 2002) ; the series also includes modern-day missionaries, for example, Eric Liddell and Jim Elliott and are also available as Audiobooks and CD's.

<sup>15</sup> John Hawthorn, *Dan Crawford: Central African Missionary* (London, Pickering & Inglis, 1932).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Epigraph; Similarly, in the later 'Stories of Faith and Fame' series promoted 'Stories of Faith and Fame are books about famous men and women told primarily for young people. They will include most of the great names which have inspired past and present generations. These men and women whose fame

The illustrated cover of this book also provides an interesting comparison with those in earlier biographies as described in Chapter Six. The white explorer type outfit prevalent in most illustrations of the missionary hero considered in this thesis has been replaced by the modern suit and tie, although the pith style helmet remains (Figure 40).<sup>17</sup> Crucially, however, the image continues to emphasise the missionary's superiority, reflected in his civilised mode of dress (reminiscent of the older images) in sharp contrast to the scantily dressed native porter. The illustration on the back cover (Figure 41) uses the well-worn adage of bringing darkness (Heathens) to light (Christianity).<sup>18</sup> The image, again portraying the white male symbolically dressed in a suit, signified progress and acted as a cultural metaphor for Christian values. In sharp contrast, the natives are shown in traditional dress, thereby continuing to consolidate ideas of national identity and popularise notions of racial difference.

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rests not only upon what they achieved but on their own personal faith' Cecil Northcott, *Forest Doctor: The Story of Albert Schweitzer* (London, Lutterworth Press, 1955), Back cover

<sup>17</sup> Hawthorn, *Dan Crawford*.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*



40 John Hawthorn, *Dan Crawford: Central African Missionary* (London, Pickering & Inglis, 1932).



Figure 41  
*Memoir Series.*

The biographies were not, however, the only means by which missionary heroes continued to be re-cast and emerge transformed into popular hero-narratives.<sup>19</sup> John

<sup>19</sup> This included plays, newspaper articles and stained-glass windows, Hannington and Slessor are both portrayed in stained-glass windows, Hannington in Liverpool Cathedral and Slessor in Dundee's McManus Art Gallery and Museum. Hannington also has a feast day, a dedication stone, a church in Sussex and St. Peter's College Oxford named their dining hall 'Hannington Hall' a dining hall whose Trust Deeds dated 1928, list one of their primary objects 'to train, cherish and encourage candidates...

Mackenzie has demonstrated the ‘striking continuity’ between adventure fiction and biographies and their adaptation for cinema, which he argues ‘continued to rework the adventure, militarist, and imperial traditions of an earlier popular culture’.<sup>20</sup> As discussed in my Introduction the film *Livingstone* supported by the LMS was released in 1925 (re-released as *Stanley* in 1933) and reportedly watched by 7000 schoolchildren in Leeds. In 1926 the Missionary Film Committee was established supported by the main missionary societies. A film *Africa Today* (1927) produced by Secretary T.H. Baxter reportedly ‘had an extraordinary successful four weeks’ run at the Polytechnic Cinema. Since then it has been shown in about 100 towns meeting with warm appreciation and encouraging results’.<sup>21</sup> Similarly to the written biographies, films continued to promote ideas of superiority and demarcated gender roles. Missionary Eric Liddell who became a household name through the 1981 film *Chariots of Fire* is also the subject of a current collection of children’s DVD’s – which also continues to promote very gendered messages:

Eric and his wife serve for the better part of 20 years. When the horrors of World War II reach them, they continue to follow God. While his wife cares for their children, Eric faces danger to rescue and help the wounded, sharing his faith all the while. Eric continues to bear a strong witness even as he is marched off to a concentration camp for ‘enemy nationals’. Eric Liddell is known around the

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intending to labour for Foreign Missions’; Royal Charter for St. Peter’s College, Oxford reproduced at; <http://www.spc.ox.ac.uk/uploads/Royal%20Charter.pdf> accessed 24 April 2012.

<sup>20</sup> MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.80.

<sup>21</sup> ‘The Missionary Film Committee’ as cited in Glenn Reynolds, *Colonial Cinema in Africa: Origins, Images, Audiences* (Jefferson, McFarland, 2015), p.82.



world as a man of conviction. His athletic achievements gained him recognition for his day, but his choice to put God first has made him a hero for all time.<sup>22</sup>

Certain missionary heroes remain topical. Mary Slessor, as an example, has recently been voted one of the first women to be commemorated in the Hall of Heroes at The National Wallace Monument in Stirling, in a campaign that ‘captured the hearts and minds of the public across the globe’.<sup>23</sup> Although the above examples provide snapshots of the continuing presence of the missionary and the missionary endeavour, it must be remembered that such representations did not always have the intended effect on the working-class children who encountered them. Emlyn Jones born in the 1950s, for example, recalled ‘a representative of the Church Missionary Society visiting our Sunday school and asking the children what CMS stood for. The quick reply from one little boy was not exactly what was expected - Crosville Motor Service! His father was a bus conductor’.<sup>24</sup>

### Looking forward

While this study has focused on an analysis of missionary biographies offered as prizes to working-class children between 1870 and 1917 broader contextual questions are

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<sup>22</sup> *The Eric Liddell Story* reproduced at <http://www.torchlighters.org/episodes/index.php?episode=liddell>; accessed 15 August 2017.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Scotland’s Heroines Revealed’ reproduced at <https://www.nationalwallacemonument.com/2017/04/scotlands-heroines-revealed/> accessed 13 May 2017; The article also included the following: ‘Described as “selfless” and “exceptionally unique”, the opportunity to see Mary Slessor recognised as a heroine prompted many voters to share their own stories of how she inspired them, with one writing how “I became a full-time missionary at the age of 21, after reading her biography”’.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Emlyn Jones: Transport in the mid-20th Century’ reproduced at <http://www.cymdeithasaberaeron.org/emlyn-jones-transport-in-the-mid-20th-century-2011/> accessed 4 March 2011.

raised. The fact that they continued (and continue) to be used in the same format initiates a variety of questions in respect of their durability, but also about the continuing appeal of imperial and gendered messages. It must also be asked if, like their earlier counterparts, continue today to provide children with an imagined community of fellow readers. In Catherine Mackenzie's *Mary Slessor: Servant to the Slave* (2001), for example, a copy of which was presented to Hannah Troughton in 2006, the reader is provided with the 'story of the life of an amazing woman [who] blazed a trail to the very tribes to which every other missionary had feared to go. Courageous, plucky, impulsive, Mary Slessor's temper was still notorious. It was said even the chief's trembled when her eyes flashed'.<sup>25</sup> It is suggestive that Mackenzie's text mirrors the format presented within Padwick's 1914 *White Heroines in Africa* by offering 'Further Thinking', with sections providing suggestions for moral lessons and guidance. For instance, 'A Midnight Adventure' asks 'Who does Mary rescue from the forest? The tribes people are very superstitious. Mary finds this difficult particularly when the people kill and harm young babies and children. It is not only in Africa that people are superstitious. Some people in the West read horoscopes'.<sup>26</sup> After a list of bible passages are suggested, children are provided with a fact about Africa which continues to promote attitudes of British and Christian superiority and dominance:

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<sup>25</sup> Catherine Mackenzie, *Mary Slessor: Servant to the Slave* (Fearn, Christian Focus Publications, 2001), Backmatter; This is part of the Trailblazer Series which includes biographies of Eric Liddell and a box set of 'Missionaries and Medics' that 'makes a perfect present that will delight young minds. Features some of the great Christian missionaries and medics who will inspire young and old alike. This edition includes the brave and adventurous story of Amy Carmichael in India and America's first overseas missionary Adoniram Judson'; 'Trailblazer Series' reproduced at <http://www.christianfocus.com/item/ais/1766/-> accessed 12 February 2017; For prize label see Appendix A.

<sup>26</sup> Mackenzie, *Mary Slessor*, p.176.

Africa Fact: In Africa there is still a large section of the population who follow traditional religions. These promote ancestor worship. Witchcraft and fear of evil spirits. People who follow this religion are living a life of fear. Pray that those people will be reached and freed from fear through the love of Jesus Christ.<sup>27</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Nine in relation to the status of martyrdom afforded to women missionaries, the representation of some aspects of missionary lives did evolve over the time period we have been looking at. It would, however, prove an interesting analysis to consider the extent of changes across the whole of the twentieth century, a period during which the imperial mission – and Britain’s wider relationship with the imperial world – has changed beyond recognition. In these circumstances, we might assume that the biographer would spend less time justifying separate gender roles or using imperialist language. However, from the small amount of research undertaken backed by Terrence Craig’s view that they ‘continued to write 19th century biography well into the 20th century, not so much oblivious to Modernism’s changes as solidly opposed to them on principle, expressing static reaction in their inflexibility’, this was not always the case.<sup>28</sup>

By providing a framework that has argued for the inclusion of the narratives within the wider context of working-class children and their imperial identity, this thesis has delivered a valuable and necessary foundation for future work. Studying the role of

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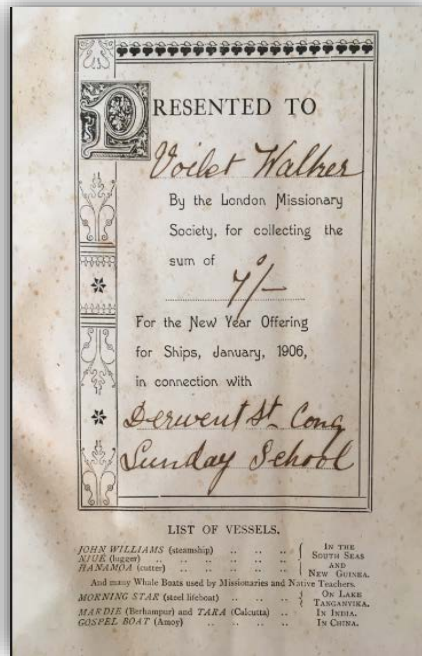
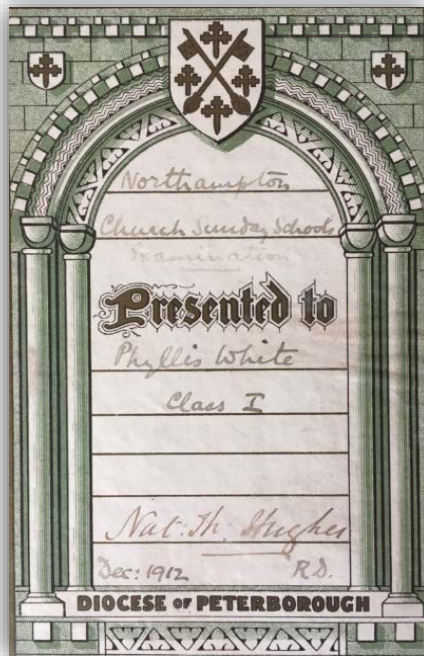
<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

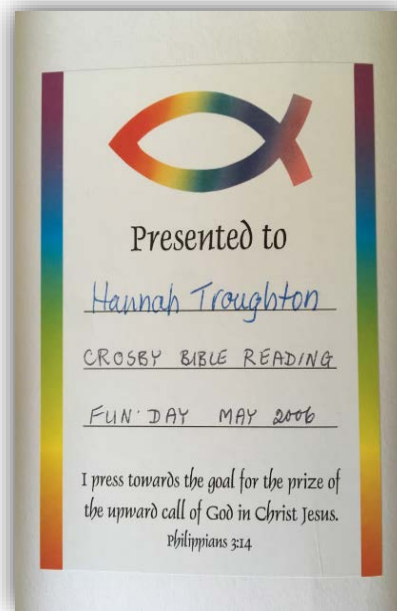
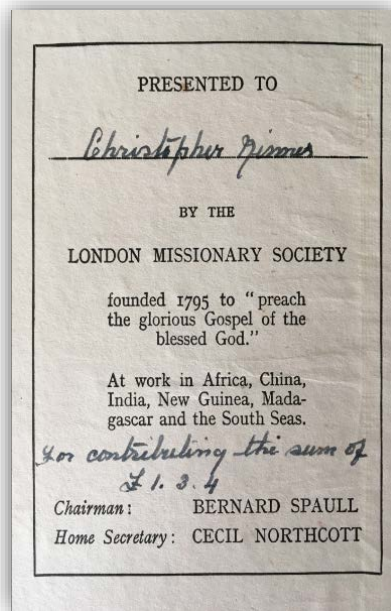
<sup>28</sup> Craig, *The Missionary Lives*, p.83; Craig continues to argue that ‘Missionary biography triumphantly constructs sub-mythologies in support of a central mythology, and are seldom deconstructive in themselves. Whereas the early 20th century experimental biographies recognized instability and chaos in individual lives as in society at large, missionary biographies represented a comforting stability extending itself over alien chaos. Whereas 20th century biographers have concentrated on the psychological impulses, especially the sexual, missionary biographers sought to show by example how such impulses could be disciplined into beneficial order’; p.87.

the narratives in terms of their cultural contribution has illustrated how they became instrumental in drawing attention to working-class readers as members of a distinct audience. By focusing on common themes found in the biographies that contributed to the understanding of imperial ideologies and gender roles this study has shown how biographers and publishers, aided by the Sunday school network, provided children with examples of socialisation, moral training and character formation, but allowed them to participate in a shared community of readers.

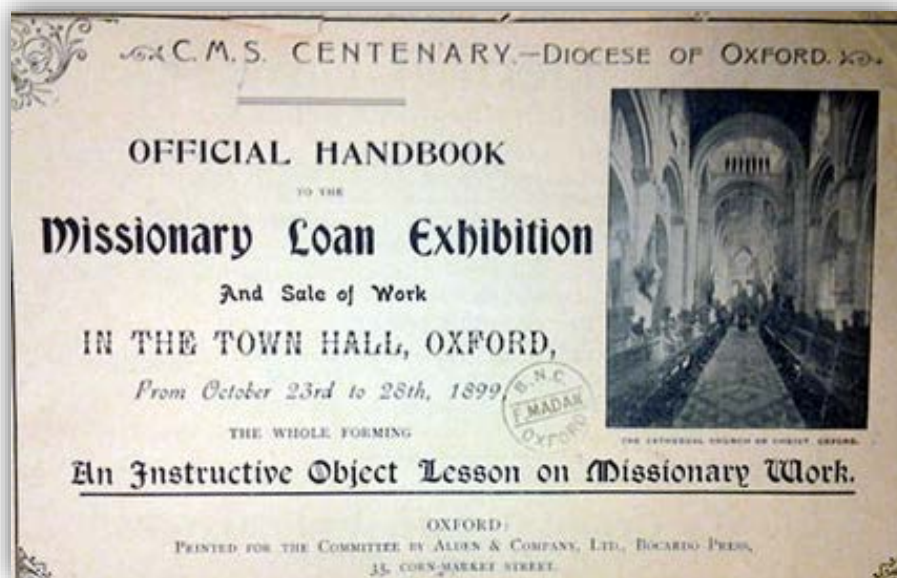
## APPENDIX A: Ephemera

Prize Labels: Labels: A convention established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the prize label often appeared as highly coloured chromolithographed productions often with gold or silver embellishments. Widely used by Sunday schools they often given for good behaviour, attendance or for collecting for missionary causes.





Missionary Loan Exhibitions: Exhibitions could range from a selection of curios, similar to the 'display of exotic creatures in glass jars' described by Robert Roberts to elaborate well-scheduled exposition which included 'Not only lantern slides, but also maps, pictures, curios, costumes, are constantly being sent all over the country; and there are typed lectures on the different subjects to help the local exhibitor and lecturer. The catalogue is a pamphlet of 64 pages'.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Stock, *History of the CMS*, p.504.

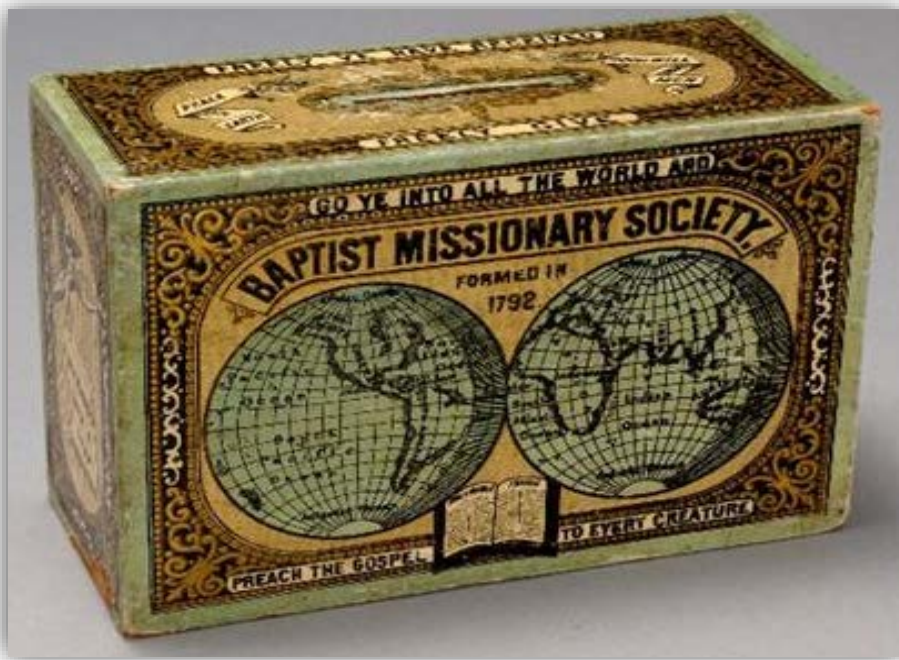


Official Handbook to the Missionary Loan Exhibition, Oxford 1899.

Missionary Society Collection Boxes: Most missionary societies encouraged their supporters to keep a collection box in their home. The attractively labelled boxes came in many different guises, the LMS, for example, favoured a replica of its missionary ship the *John Williams*.



CMS Collection Box.



Baptist Missionary Collection Box

Magic Lantern Slides: These were used to encourage and interest children in missions. The use of the magic lantern was nicely described in the biography of Dr. Pennell 'When [he] decided to go to India as a missionary, he told his boys at the Working Lads' Club all about the new country he was going to, and interested them in mission work, with magic lantern pictures, and by owing them curiosities from foreign countries'.<sup>2</sup>



Lantern slides of David Livingstone.



Early 20<sup>th</sup> century slide of Mary Slessor.

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<sup>2</sup> Alice Pennell, *Pennell of the Afghan Frontier* (London, Seeley, 1914), p.26.



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