

“Zebros and elosphants”: Images of blacks in natural history adventure-empire tales read by young people in Wellington County, Ontario, 1880-1890

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Résumé: Cet article examine quatre récits d'aventures pour la jeunesse du XIXe siècle traitant des sciences naturelles, que l'on a lus aux enfants du comté de Wellington, en Ontario, dans les années 1880-1890. Ces aventures d'explorateurs-naturalistes prônaient l'expansion de l'Empire britannique en Afrique; elles laissaient entendre que les Noirs qui aidaient les héros étaient inférieurs aux Blancs.

Summary: This article examines four nineteenth-century children's stories dealing with natural sciences that were read to schoolchildren in Wellington County, Ontario, between 1880 and 1890. The adventures of explorers and naturalists championed the goals of the British Empire in Africa. They also gave readers the impression that the native Africans who assisted the heroes were inferior to White People.

In Victorian times, children's literature provided an important site for the transmission of cultural values. During that period, called “the Golden Age of print,” books provided the first and probably only information that impressionable children received about British subjects in other parts of the Empire—in the case of this study, black Africans.¹ Using the Ennotville Mechanics' Library (a nineteenth century pioneer library still in existence), the Wellington County Museum, various archives, and several private collections, I have researched a broad spectrum of reading material which was available to and read by boys and girls living in rural and small town Wellington County between 1880 and 1890.² Focussing on tales set in Africa, this article will explore the images of black Africans, as portrayed in four adventure-empire tales—*Sheer Pluck* by G.A. Henty, *The Gorilla Hunters* by R.M. Ballantyne, *Explorations of Equatorial Africa* by Paul Du Chaillu, and *The Farm on the Karoo* by Mrs. Carey Hobson.

The four books under study were all written in the second half of the nineteenth century. They represent a volume of literature written on one of the most popular subjects for children in the late Victorian age: natural history. Such books taught children about the flora, fauna, and the British subjects in far-away colonies, serving to transmit attitudes towards other races and countries. The expansion of the British Empire, the increasing interest in natural history which was fuelled by writings of Darwin and other scientists, and the development of middle class literacy—all converged to make natural history the subject of a vast number of factual and fictional works.

Children were especially enthralled by the stories of explorer-heroes. The tales of explorers provided the kind of detail that fed the natural scientific curiosity of children, while at the same time giving them more general informa-

tion about the far reaches of the expanding British empire. Thus, these books satiated the youngster's curiosity about the "geography, resources and people"³ in the empire, and, as well, they held romantic attraction for young readers. The names of Livingstone and Stanley, famous at the time, are still well-known today.⁴

White explorers went to Africa (and other places) with various goals, often interconnected: to have pure adventure, to find new resources, and to advance scientific knowledge. Many white explorers were naturalists in search of new species of plants and animals, and they hired native guides to help them in the work of collecting and labelling species which were new, at least, to British and other foreign eyes. These explorers often returned live specimens of flora and fauna. Animals brought back to "civilization" and zoos often achieved "star" status. One *Harper's Young People's* article recorded that "Jumbo the elephant" was more talked about than "the Queen or the Czar."⁵ The experiences of the white explorers became the stuff of fictionalized adventure. However, the black guides and trackers in Africa who assisted whites were presented in such a way as to convey the message that the white-skinned race was superior to the black one.

The "collection" practices of the explorers, written about in such detail in books distributed all over the British Empire, reinforced a more general Victorian mania for collecting, particularly with children. They not only enjoyed reading about naturalist procedures, but also they began studying and practising the art of collection themselves. Canadian educator David Boyle, the founder of the museum in Elora, Ontario, wrote about how children "long to own pets" and observed that their "minds are full of questions about nature" (Killan 62). The rise of the popular Elora School Museum in 1871, with its displays of "bric-a-brac," as well as of animal, plant and insect collections, attests to the students' interest.⁶ The minutia that might overwhelm today's child-readers apparently enthralled Victorian children (Asherton 29) who had less media and other distraction. Combined with gripping narrative, the newly discovered scientific knowledge made a very popular form of reading.

Adults promoted this kind of reading because the study of natural history contained values that they hoped to foster (Bivona 36). Amateur collectors indulged in a pleasurable past-time, but one that also entailed hard work. One *Harper's Young People's* article urged "carefulness" in study and advised junior entomologists to "demand perfection" of themselves.⁷ Collecting developed the study of detail—"traits . . . necessary for success in business" and an appreciation of the minute work of the "Creator" explains historian Carl Berger in *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* (48, 38). Berger relates that one of the main strategies of Victorian authors' writing on natural scientific themes was to fix "upon a closely observed detail in nature, convey their own awe and wonder, and create a mood of veneration" (33). Adult Victorians had religious and moral reasons for promoting an interest in natural history in the next generation.

A strong link also existed between the work of naturalists and the advancement of the Empire. After mid-century, when slave trade economics had been

abandoned, capitalist manufacturing sought African resources. Naturalists and explorers to the interior played an important role in the “scramble for Africa.” They created maps that pointed out the locations of palm-oil, ebony, rubber, logwood and gold—maps which later aided colonization. Along the way explorer-naturalists “discovered” the “new” species that filled museums, became the substance of books, and captured the imagination of the public. Natural history served as an amusement which had the sanction of scientific, religious, educational, moral, patriotic, *and* economic interests. Naturalists’ work also satiated the late Victorian’s quest for scientific knowledge. The interest in science at Elora, Ontario, came to be expressed, not only through the establishment of the School Museum, but through the existence of the Elora Natural Science and Literary Society and the Mechanics’ Institute (Killam 57). Many of the books I have examined once graced the shelves of the Mechanics’ Institutes (MIs), forerunners to the public library.⁸ The MI, a Victorian male social organization, promoted “the diffusion of useful knowledge,” especially to the mechanic or working man, in part through the establishment of libraries.⁹ That so many advances were being made in medicine, agriculture and technology explains the Victorian attraction to science.

Every fictional boy hero in the works under study went to Africa to discover new species and to thereby advance scientific study. In *Farm on the Karoo: What Charles Vyvyan and His Friends Saw in South Africa*, little-known author Carey Hobson sends a trio of British boy heroes to the Cape Colony. By 1882 colonization had already depleted big game to such an extent that the junior naturalist “Fred” resorts to researching ferns to do his “best to develop the botanical resources of a comparatively unknown region scientifically” (17). Although kinder in tone towards blacks than the other authors of fiction, Hobson clearly approves of the race relations as she saw them while living in South Africa: as she depicts society, whites held the role of firm and judicious parents, guiding morally weak blacks who, if unsupervised, would slip into sloth, alcoholism and laziness.

The prolific writer G.A. Henty (1832-1902) influenced a large part of the English-reading world well into the first half of the twentieth century (Killam 24). In Henty’s 1884 novel, *Sheer Pluck*, young Frank seizes upon a “fine opening in a career as a naturalist” and ventures to Africa with naturalist Mr. Goodenough (167). They depart in “search of specimens of natural history,” “new” species to “take home ... and show ... to the white man beyond the sea” (166, 161). After Goodenough’s death of fever, half of the book is devoted to the topic of its subtitle, *A Tale of the Ashanti War*. Frank and his faithful black follower Ostik attempt to put down this “evil” tribe. Henty had witnessed the 1874 battle while serving as war correspondent (Arnold 9, 119). Frank’s experiences reflect Henty’s position as a confirmed imperialist.

Real-life American explorer, Paul Du Chaillu, wrote a non-fiction account of his 1855 voyage entitled *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa; With Accounts of the Manners and Customs of the People, the Chase of the Gorilla, the Crocodile, Leopard, Elephant, Hippopotamus, and Other Animals*.

Du Chaillu sought the gorilla, "an animal scarce known to the civilized world and which no white man before had hunted" (84). Du Chaillu (1831-1903) grew up as the son of an African trader and later travelled extensively into the West African interior (St. John 802). He became a fairly well-known author, writing several books on his African and other expeditions for a general readership, including children.¹⁰ Du Chaillu and Hobson, with their longer experience living in Africa, portray a more balanced picture of African life than do Ballantyne and Henty. To a degree, lone travellers in Africa, such as Du Chaillu, Mungo Park and David Livingstone, respected Africans' use of their environment. A reprint edition of *Explorations* came out over a century later. However, long before its reprint, *Explorations* had become popular in a fiction form, *The Gorilla Hunters*, written by children's author R.M. Ballantyne.

British imperialist R.M. Ballantyne (1825-1894) had a secure reputation as an author of adventure-empire tales. Readers had already encountered the *Gorilla Hunters* (Jack, Peterkin and Ralph) in an earlier work before they set out to Africa (Demers 311). The fictional naturalist Ralph, who has already made "one or two not unimportant discoveries" that "added a few mites to the sum of human knowledge," hopes to confirm the existence of the gorilla (12). The lads shoot close to forty gorillas for the "cause of science" (243). As in Henty's book, the plot soon deviates from its beginnings as the story of some young naturalists. The boys embark on paramilitary adventures in order to rescue their Christian guide's fiancée from the clutches of the "evil" witch doctor. The sub-plot brings to the forefront Ballantyne's belief that the superstitious blacks needed Christianity to improve their lives—and, as it so happens, also to improve the system of trade.

The fact that Ballantyne "fictionalizes" a non-fiction book underlines the social importance of the white naturalist-explorer. Authors of these books advanced the work of the empire in Africa by linking the study of natural science to the arms of imperialism, religion, trade and colonization.

In these nineteenth-century books, blacks are shown to lack an appreciation for the beauty of nature. Whites, according to Hobson, brought beauty to South Africa. The irrigation projects create stately farms which impress Hobson's heroes. Hobson informs her readers that "Karoo in the language of the aboriginal Hottentots ... signified a dry barren desert," a name which she notes no longer seems to fit since the arrival of the white man. The colonists have altered the African landscape so that it becomes "naturally" beautiful, something it appears that the original inhabitants could not do. The author overlooks, among other things, the fact that black labour made white agricultural success possible.

Like Hobson, Ballantyne depicts blacks as incapable of understanding the beauty of the world. On one occasion, the boys leave the black guide in charge of the camp while they go sighting wildlife because Ralph reasons that their black assistant "had been too long accustomed to see wild animals to understand the pleasure we enjoyed merely at staring at them" (232). Elsewhere, when Ralph is enjoying a "magnificent view," he remarks that his African employees "seemed to

have no appreciation of the beauty of nature" (128). Throughout the text Ralph expresses Ballantyne's view that because blacks were "sunk in gross and cruel superstitions" they could not "appreciate the blessing by which they were surrounded" (177, 61)—unlike, of course, the white Christians who could benefit from beauty.

Henty illustrates his view that the Africans were unable to understand abstract ideas. The reader learns that African's world view consisted of the belief that Europeans "live at the bottom of the sea" and although wealthy, must "come to land" to trade for items that they do not have such as "palm-oil and logwood" (161). Trade, the exchange of concrete items for tangible goods, the giving of "trinkets useful to men in a savage state," is something Goodenough believes simplistic Africans can understand. The collection of species for natural history lies so far beyond their ken that Goodenough does not disclose that their "objective was to shoot birds and beasts" or the Africans "would suspect us of all sorts of hidden designs." He disguises himself as a trader, hires a guard of Houssas which he arms and dresses in uniforms in order to suggest the strength of the Imperial armed forces (128, 131). Ironically, he goes to great lengths to protect the "birds' skins and insects, items of no consequence to Africans" (202).

Similarly, Ballantyne creates blacks who cannot fathom the intellectual motivation behind collecting. In one instance, an African "king" wonders if the heroes have "no meat at home" that they have come "so far merely to hunt" (67). This king "cannot understand the idea of sporting," a British pastime, and he appears equally naive in the eyes of the white reader for not being able to grasp the idea of collection. For whites "a familiarity with natural science and a sensitivity to scenery formed a part of the intellectual equipment of every educated person" (Berger xii).

Du Chaillu departs slightly from the view that Africans could not understand collection. He understands that Africans thought he must be "out of [his] senses" to come to Africa merely to "hunt for new species" and that he looked "remarkably foolish" when stuffing birds (27, 135). Yet, a degree of respect for Africans, who often in fact kept him alive, tempers Du Chaillu's account. He describes his black companions as "intelligent," calls them "friend" and is deemed by one chief to love "his black hunters" (216, 271, 300). Once, after hunting and collecting at such a great pace that he became ill, Du Chaillu decides to respect and follow the Africans' "rule" and, like them, rest between hunts (325). Du Chaillu, to some degree, recognized the important role of the skilful hunter in the Africans' way of life.

However, Du Chaillu believed, like other writers, that whites would bring Africa "civilization," or in other words the best religious, agricultural and trade practices, and a properly refined view of the natural world. On occasions, Du Chaillu, like the other writers, belittles the blacks' work in collection. In *Sheer Pluck*, for instance, Frank complains that the Fans capture too many butterflies and spoil them "irreparably with their rough handling." He finds them better at the primitive activity of "grubbing about for beetles and larvae" which enables him "to devote himself entirely" to the more esteemed task of shooting birds

(167). Du Chaillu does not always find his black companions helpful when it comes to collecting. He writes that his hunters sometimes concealed the kill, “slyly” ate the meat and ruined the skin (103, 47). Du Chaillu gives an account of how his hunters tried to imitate him skinning a gorilla. Unfortunately,

the fellows did not know what a value I placed upon the bones, and, to save themselves time and labour, they broke the bones and the pelvis. (346)

An outraged Du Chaillu gave the men such a severe tongue-lashing that they ran into the woods to escape.

Du Chaillu, like the authors of fiction, reinforces the heroic image that places him above Africa’s inhabitants. Like Goodenough in *Sheer Pluck*, Du Chaillu uses scientific “magic” to impress the natives. He simply strikes a match, a “trick ... [which] has never failed to get me a great reputation” amongst the natives of the interior who had little contact with whites. Du Chaillu’s account leaves the reader supposing that because Africans are apparently mystified by acts which white children take for granted the Africans are therefore exceptionally naive. Henty bluntly declares that “the intelligence of an average negro is about equal to that of a European child of ten years old,” although Patrick Dunae point out that “undoubtedly young Britons did not equate the African’s childishness with their own.”¹¹ In this literature, clearly Africans did not exercise the sort of rational thought needed to understand the British scientific phenomena.

Authors of these works naturally depicted the whites as courageous hunters, superior marksmen and generous providers. The drawings in *Explorations*, perhaps by the author himself, show Du Chaillu as the victorious hunter, and blacks as the hapless victims of animals. In an oft-repeated situation, Henty writes how white hunters kill a hippopotamus, eliciting joy amongst “natives of equatorial Africa” who are apparently not often “able to indulge in meat” (139).

Whites also become great heroes when *they* “save” blacks. In one episode Ballantyne liberally recreates a more factual account by Du Chaillu. The hero, Jack, saves an African king from a charging elephant, in the style typical of fictional white males—with just one shot (84). A hunting story in *Farm on the Karoo* outlines the deliberate creation of the great white hunter myth. A Hottentot servant recounts how he had killed an elephant to save his former master’s life. However, the young Dutchman later claims the honour of the kill. The boy’s father and the others perpetuate the lie as “it wouldn’t have done to let the neighbours know that the only black man in the party had the luck to kill the biggest elephant.” The black man, Hendrick, complies, reasoning that the Dutch lad was “young, and not used to pain” (126). He concludes that he had been amply rewarded for his “luck” with elephant meat, tusks and brandy. Hendrick’s comments underline black faithfulness and bolster white superiority.

The faithful black companion in the works of fiction invariably looks foolish compared to the intelligent, brave white hero. Ballantyne’s Makarooroo typifies this “faithful” character whose mission education gives him the tools to advance trade and Christianity, a knowledge of mathematics, English, religion and

respect for whites. Although Makarooroo had the reputation of being a “stout, sturdy hunter,” he quickly becomes a comic coward once he enters the employ of Ralph, Jack and Peterkin (68). For example, while approaching their first gorilla Frank must take charge of Makarooroo who is “apt to get excited and act rashly, so he required looking after” (186). Du Chaillu also writes of the Africans’ “genuine and never-failing cowardice” (227). He believes that “contact with whites” will remedy this and teach blacks something about warfare (56). Warfare and hunting on collecting missions are closely linked in these works. In *Sheer Pluck* and the *Gorilla Hunters*, the heroes first demonstrate their prowess in hunting and then defeat tribes who dispute white desires. John M. MacKenzie concludes in his essay “Hunting and the natural world in juvenile literature” that hunting “was at the same time a mark of the fitness of the dominant race ... and an emblem of imperial rule and an allegory of human affairs” (170).

Another important aspect of collecting was learning to label and to identify the species. The skill of observing details and the level of knowledge required become apparent in the “reasonably sophisticated way” in which the “natural science portion” of the Elora School Museum “was labelled and displayed,” earning prizes at the Provincial Exhibition of 1881 (Killan 55, 61). Elora MPP, Charles Clarke, declared that “the names of rocks, fossils, flowers and birds had become as familiar as household words” to local youth (Killan 58). By the late 1800s all genders and levels of English-speaking western society received a general education that looked favourably upon science and gave an understanding of the Latin and English terms that today might be considered the jargon of specialists.¹²

When referring to man or beast in these books, the authors almost always use English or Latin designations. The texts demonstrate that whites refused to use African terminology. Du Chaillu indicates that whites had a knowledge of African names, calling his hunters by the names they were given at birth such as Igala, who shoots a tiger and Mbele, who fells a gorilla (288, 286). He sometimes refers to the African words for plants and animals as when he notes one ape, known as “*koola-kamba* by the Goumbi people” (314). Several fictional heroes speak African languages so well that when disguised, as Frank is in one episode, they can escape from enemy tribes without being detected by natives.¹³ As the whites supposedly *can* use African names for both the species they collect and for the people who assist them, one must look for the reason why they *choose* not to use them.

The use of English or Latin terms by white authors furthered the attempts of Europeans to entrench their position over Africans. Du Chaillu never objected to renaming a species, especially when the new designation honoured him. For instance, a bird he “discovered” became known as *Barbatula du Chaillu* (161). The changing of plant and animal names not only served to create a standardized terminology for English speakers but also bestowed personal honour upon the “discoverers,” a thrill hoped for by all natural historians (Berger 22).

The Anglicizing of the first names of fictional black individuals made the use of the English language mandatory. The Ballantyne trio nickname a black child “Puggy,” the same name they use when referring to gorillas, although they claim

this was not done in a “contemptuous spirit” (317). Missionary Samuel Griffiths, in his 1878 *Trip in the Tropics*, gives the excuse that whites renamed Africans as they found their birth names difficult to pronounce.¹⁴ Goodenough’s fictional Houssas—“Moses,” “Firewater,” “Ugly Tom,” “Bacon,” “Tatters” and “King John”—evidently “rejoiced in names which had been given them by sailors” (127). In *The Gorilla Hunters* Jack decides that “Makarooroo” “had too many rooroos about it” (25). He not only shortens the name to “Mak,” but insists on that usage by all, including the Africans. A greater injustice occurs when white scholars ignore proper tribal names. The South African tribes the *Khoikhoi* and the *San* are constantly referred to as the “Hottentots” and “Bushmen” (Magubane 22). Through the Anglicizing of names of the renaming of black individuals and tribes, whites claimed power over the plants, animals and the inhabitants of Africa.

It appears in the work of Henty and Ballantyne that blacks had little command of the English language. Although Hobson’s blacks Hendrick and Yonge speak English as well as their employers, Ostik’s and Markarooroo’s speeches serve as a basis for satire. Makarooroo’s explanation of native methods of hunting leaves the reader with the impression that blacks could not describe even the simplest devices intelligently. Makarooroo explains that one trap ensnares such “beasties” as “zebros, elosphants, eelands, buff los, affs, nocirces, noos, an’ great more noder ob which me forgit de names” (307). A boy hero quips that “it wouldn’t be a great loss, Mak, if you were to forget the names of those you remember.” For the reader’s benefit, the author rephrases Makarooroo’s description in precise English since it had “not been remarkable for lucidity.” Ballantyne conceals Makarooroo’s talent in observing, tracking, and hunting by couching his words in the gibberish that Guy Arnold describes as “respectful pidgen” (120).

The Africans in the *Farm on the Karoo* emerge unfavourably as a people unable or uninterested in assigning names to some plants. The fictional Fred’s Anglo-African companion didn’t “think the coloured people have any particular name” for one flower of the *arum* family (42). Another time Fred finds that blacks have lumped several species together under the same name, simply calling edible berries “mum-mum,” an error Fred corrects when he identifies the plant he is looking at as “arwirea” (141). In *The Gorilla Hunter*, Peterkin listens to accounts of gorilla-sighting but has trouble believing the “nonsense that the niggers have been telling me” (142). Whites considered that blacks had such little knowledge of species that they couldn’t properly sight and identify them, let alone distinguish between species.

“Knowledge is power,” Jack affirms in *The Gorilla Hunters* (44). Clearly, Victorians were unable to recognize the value of what Jean-François Lyotard refers to as “customary knowledge” in primarily oral-based societies (Ashcroft 165). Nor did whites intend to close the technological gap between the two cultures. Westernized education in Africa emphasized areas useful to empire: religion, English, mathematics and obedience. The power of scientific knowledge stayed firmly under Western control.

These natural history tales of adventure justify the role of blacks as labourers by

showing black men lacking many of the talents needed for scientific study. To facilitate the work of the naturalist, blacks were needed to care for his personal needs, interpret, carry his gear and specimens while remaining “jolly, though groaning under their burdens” (Du Chaillu 211). The authors judge that the white man should take up the more important work of discovering and cataloguing the many African species. Martin Green points out in *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* that “the literary question is inseparable from the political and the economic” (25). One should not forget that the work of the explorer-naturalist assisted white goals of resource exploitation and colonization. The portrayal of race relations in these stories condones the image of blacks as non-intelligent children who could complete manual tasks only with guidance. The reader is shown that because blacks were unaware of the complexity of their surroundings, they needed white men to uncover the natural wonders of the continent.

The condescending attitude varies only slightly in degree in these works. Perhaps Hobson and Du Chaillu’s long experience in Africa inspired these authors to include the details that make their works more authentic when compared to the picture of nineteenth-century black life uncovered by modern historical and anthropological research. Henty and Ballantyne may have magnified the differences between the races in order to intensify the conflict in their stories, thereby validating the heroic image of their white protagonists. There can be no doubt in the mind of the reader that whites held the dominant position in these four books, based on white understanding of religion, economics, politics and science.

This juvenile literature I have surveyed shows how Westerners viewed themselves in relation to Africans. Edward Said, in his book *Orientalism*, looks at such a composite of works written about the East. He posits that the West, in a sense, “made the Orient by “creat[ing] a body of theory and practise in which, for many generations there has been a considerable material investment” (12). Through literature, a certain image of the past becomes part of Western culture, influencing, as it was influenced by, important areas such as politics, study, and cultural perceptions. In a manner parallel to Said’s Eastern example, the negative images of blacks, as portrayed through the white ideal of natural history in juvenile literature, affected generations around the world. Africans had to relearn the names of the flora and fauna of their continent, and sometimes their *own* names. Blacks exposed to such writing may have possibly asked themselves why the actions of white man were glorified, while the deeds of the numerous blacks in the whites’ entourage were belittled or ignored. They would see plants and animals installed in botanical gardens and parks in Africa, and given their Latin names, such as those visited by the Karoo boys. Some of the white children who read these works would later come to Africa as missionaries, traders or educators. The opinions they brought would inevitably influence international relations. It was impossible for children, such as those young readers in Wellington County, not to be affected by the racial images represented in works such as those under study. Such ideas became part of their cultural baggage at a young age and would be difficult to change. The same themes and ideas

reappear even today, when environmentalism has become a popular interest. One children's television cartoon revolves around a young white girl, whose duty, it appears, is to save and protect wildlife in Africa. A dutiful, discharged black soldier became her companion on one recent episode of "The Bush Baby." The adult white male held the knowledgeable and authoritative role of chief game warden. Though modified somewhat from the children's literature of a hundred years ago, the messages of race have changed very little.

NOTES

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- 1 Patrick Dunae ("Boy's Literature and the Idea of Race" 84). Census Material indicates that only a handful of blacks lived in centre or north Wellington County between 1880 and 1950. White children, knowing few blacks, probably formed their opinions about blacks based on the images in literature. *Census of Canada*. Ottawa: Federal Government of Canada, 1880-81, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951.
- 2 This article is derived from a two part undergraduate English thesis completed at the University of Guelph in 1994. The half of the project entitled "'I red this': a study of reading material available to children in North and Centre Wellington County, 1880-1890," made use of magazines (such as the *Farmer's Advocate*), Mechanics' Institute Collections (such as the ones in Fergus, Elora and Ennotville) and prize books awarded in schools and Sunday Schools and now found in private collections. The Ennotville Mechanics' Library, established in 1847, is still housed in its nineteenth century building and is still open for local use.
- 3 Patrick Dunae ("Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire" 121).
- 4 The Elora Mechanics' Institute had several works with references to Livingstone. "Stanley on the Congo" served as the theme for one article in *Boy's Own Paper*(650).
- 5 Mrs. Zadel B. Gustafason, *Harper's Young People* VII (April 1882): 373.
- 6 Elora School Museum Exhibit, March 5th, 1994, to January 20, 1995, Wellington County Museum, Elora, Ontario.
- 7 Rev. Geo. D. Hulst, "Hints on Insects," "the Young Collector." *Harper's Young People* V (June, 1885): 544.
- 8 Lorne Bruce traces the evolution of the public library movement in *Free Books for All: The Public Library Movement in Ontario, 1850-1930*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press) 1994.
- 9 *Constitution and by-laws of the Elora Mechanics' Institute and Library Association and Catalogue of Books in the Library*, Orangeville; Rastell and Brownell, 1881, Elora Library Collection, Subseries 1, Wellington County Archives, Elora, 4.
- 10 The Elora Mechanics' Institute carried Du Chaillu's book on Scandinavian countries, *The Land of the Midnight Sun: Summer and Winter Journeys through Sweden, Norway, Lapland, and Northern Finland, with descriptions of the inner life of the people, their manners and customs, the primitive antiquities, etc.* (London: John Murray, 1881). *Harper's Young People* refers to this work and ran pictures from it in "The Home of the Reindeer," *HYP* III (Nov. 1, 1881): 3-5.
- 11 Henty, *Sheer Pluck*, 118. Patrick Dunae ("Children's Literature and the Idea of Race" 84).
- 12 White women from Queen Victoria to "Charles Vyvyaan's" sister, the future "Mrs. Dalrymple," professed an interest in collection (Berger 33).
- 13 Europeans in other works often quickly mastered African dialects so well that they could pass as natives. W.H.G. Kingdon uses this ploy in *My First Voyage to Southern Seas*.
- 14 Griffiths gives blacks such uncomplimentary designations as Bottle-of-beer, Upside-down and (Mr.) Jackass (91).

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