

# The Informal Education of British Children as Citizens: the Chinese Elements of the NSPCC's Propaganda (1884-1914)

Zhenzhen Zhou  
Department of History  
Hangzhou Normal University (China)  
zhouzhenzhen@hznu.edu.cn

**ABSTRACT:** This article assesses the representation of Chinese elements in the British children's world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It focuses on the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which explicitly stated that children were citizens with the same rights as adults. In its early years the NSPCC sought to develop children's sympathy for China, however, this was increasingly supplanted by reports of entertainments including Chinese items. This paper argues that the Chinese elements were not only part of the informal education that shaped children's identity as citizens, but demonstrated the inherent tension between the needs of the child and the needs of the state, and that the empire did not weaken, but rather strengthened the identity of children as national citizens.

**EET/TEE KEYWORDS:** NSPCC; Children; Informal education; China; XIX-XX Centuries.

## *Introduction*

The historiography of the informal education of children has increasingly brought attention to the ways in which informal education was linked to children's moral training and the fostering of 'character', especially in late nineteenth – and early twentieth-century Britain, a period that saw the coming together of a broad swathe of society as informal educators<sup>1</sup>, and that two discourses of citizenship and imperial citizenship converged<sup>2</sup>. As Brad Beaven

<sup>1</sup> S. Olsen, *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880-1914*, London, Bloomsbury, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> D. Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship: Empire and the Question of Belonging*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007.

argues, «during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, citizenship was perceived as a series of rights based on status with only limited obligations». Then the narratives of citizenship entered a new phase during the late nineteenth century, a period that was a turning point in how the concept of citizenship was disseminated since it was no longer confined to a small elite<sup>3</sup>. Educating children both as citizens and future citizens were important goals for informal educators, foregrounded among whom in this period were children's charities and their publications, which were discussed in detail by Shurlee Swain and Margot Hillel<sup>4</sup>. Also empire was ubiquitous in children's literature<sup>5</sup>. In Peter Hunt's and Karen Sands' words, «the importance of the Empire to British children's literature is taken as a truism by children's literature historians»<sup>6</sup>. However, besides settler colonies, «The vast majority of literary references to empire refer to only two of Britain's imperial outposts: India and Africa»<sup>7</sup>. China has been greatly overlooked in children's readings and publications.

Despite the fact that at the time Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, an aide to Queen Victoria and a sitting MP, and some others, insisted that «the maintenance of the Chinese Empire is essential to the honour as well as the interests of the Anglo-Saxon race»<sup>8</sup>, China had small presence in the British Empire. But recently scholars have paid increasing attention to China's influence on the British Empire. Ross G. Forman explores China's centrality to British imperial aspirations, underscoring the heterogeneous, interconnected nature of Britain's formal and informal empire<sup>9</sup>. Anne Witchard argues that «The desire for a certain idea of China and Chinese culture did not abate as contact with the country grew, it persisted throughout times of opium trade, war and colonialism»<sup>10</sup>. Elizabeth Chang believes that «China, for nineteenth-century Britons, was at once place, commodity, people, and, at the same time, something more than all of those»<sup>11</sup>. According to Said, modern European identity

<sup>3</sup> B. Beaven, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain 1850-1945*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2009, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> S. Swain, M. Hillel, *Child, Nation, Race and Empire: Child Rescue Discourse, England, Canada and Australia, 1850-1915*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> H. Sheeky Bird, *Class, Leisure and National Identity in British Children's Literature, 1918-1950*, Hampshire, Macmillan, 2014; M.J. Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880-1915*, Hampshire, Macmillan, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture*, cit., p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> M.D. Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> R.G. Forman, *China and the Victorian Imagination: Empires Entwined*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Id., *China and the Victorian Imagination: Empires Entwined*, cit.

<sup>10</sup> A. Witchard, *British Modernism and Chinoiserie*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> E. Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eye: Literature, Empire, and Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010, p. 1.

was the product of the 'othering' of colonized peoples<sup>12</sup>. So, what impact had China, as the «other», on the identity of British children.

Notably, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) was the first institution in the UK to explicitly state that children were citizens with the same rights as adults, and Chinese elements played quite a large role in its activities. Based on the NSPCC's publications, particularly the «Child's Guardian» and the «Children's League of Pity Paper», this article shows how the NSPCC initially tried to use accounts of China to promote sympathy for China among British children, but later gave way to presenting Chinese items as entertainment. Existing research on the NSPCC has focused on its domestic development and its dissemination in white British colonies, with little research on Chinese elements<sup>13</sup>. This paper argues that the Chinese element is not only part of the informal education that shaped British children's identity as citizens, but also demonstrates the inherent tension between the needs of the child and the needs of the state in this process, and that the empire did not weaken, but rather strengthened, the identity of children being as national citizens.

### 1. *The child as citizen in the UK*

For a long time, British children, as «sons of parents», had been legally regarded as the private property of their parents. From the eighteenth century, Romanticism considered that childhood, as the best time of life, should be protected. Children began to be seen as «child of God». But the Industrial Revolution led to the mass employment of children, and the exposure of children in slums raised people's anxieties. O.E. Buxton declared, «Save the childhood of three generations, and we shall have saved the world», and Dr Thomas Barnardo wrote «there is no work more fruitful than this», otherwise «Inaction would have an economic, intellectual and, most importantly, a moral cost, 'undermining the health and destroying the physique of a large proportion

<sup>12</sup> T. Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922-53*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2013, p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> L. Housden, *The Prevention of Cruelty to Children*, London, Cape, 1955; A. Allen, *This Is Your Child: The Story of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961; G.K. Behlmer, *Child Abuse and Moral Reform in England 1870-1908*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1982; C.A. Sherrington, *The NSPCC in Transition 1884-1983: A Study of Organisational Survival*, Doctoral Thesis, London, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1985; M. Flegel, *Conceptualizing Cruelty to Children in Nineteenth-Century England: Literature, Representation and the NSPCC*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2009; S. Swain, *An Imperial Mission? The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the International Dissemination of Ideas around Child Protection Prior to World War I*, «Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth», vol. 14, n. 2, 2021, pp. 191-210.

of the nation, demoralizing and ruining thousands, body and soul»<sup>14</sup>. Children became the «sons of the nation», with new social and moral significance, thus an increasing emphasis on child rescue and protection followed. Charity organizations represented by ragged schools, Barnardo's homes, and the NSPCC, played a core role in their education, parenting and protection from cruelty. At the same time, several British Education Acts from 1870 gradually separated childhood from the adult world, and reforms in 1867 and 1884-1885 extended the franchise to the majority of working-class men. Hence from the 1870s, the underlying concept of children as citizens was clearly articulated, however, Swain and Hillel argue that «the rights attached to this imagined child as citizen involved a limitation rather than an expansion of freedom or liberty, articulating what parents should do for children rather than what children could do for themselves»<sup>15</sup>.

The first organisation to explicitly state that children were citizens with rights was the NSPCC, which was founded in 1884 as the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. By 1889, the London Society had 32 branches in England, Scotland and Wales, and they united as the NSPCC, with Queen Victoria as Royal Patron and Benjamin Waugh as President. «Waugh made clear that 'the NSPCC is not just another children's charity. It is an organisation which will fight to obtain the citizenship of every child and justice for all children'»<sup>16</sup>. NSPCC effectively disseminated its views through its publications, and pointed out that «The design of it is chiefly educational», English children «are not only born into homes, they are also born into a country. Not only are they entitled to protection against their enemies from their parents-they are under the guardianship of the Crown»<sup>17</sup>. Waugh called for «a courageous assertion and honest enforcement of the principle that every child is a member of the State and subject of the Crown»<sup>18</sup>. The first Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act, 1889, commonly known as the Children's Charter enabled British law to intervene for the first time in family relationships between parents and children. Waugh wrote, «For the first time in English history, a new year has dawned on English children with civil rights, as real and as vital as the civil rights of grown people»<sup>19</sup>. «In the words of a supporter, because of the NSPCC and the 'Children's Charter' (1889), 'the child has as sacred rights as the parent'; children had become 'citizens of the State'»<sup>20</sup>. Children's identity as potential citizen was transformed into legal citizen in law.

<sup>14</sup> Swain, Hillel, *Child, Nation, Race and Empire*, cit., p. 70.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>16</sup> Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*, cit., p. 144.

<sup>17</sup> «The Child's Guardian», vol. 1, n. 1, 1887, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Sherrington, *NSPCC in Transition*, cit., p. 224.

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

<sup>20</sup> Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*, cit., p. 145.

The cultivation of qualified citizens became an important issue. The development of the British Empire in the late nineteenth century also put forward new requirements and challenges for children. The intensification of imperial rivalries, the rise of colonial nationalism, and the military and moral crises of the Boer War stimulated a rethinking of the empire. Many supporters of Empire argued that only education could promote imperial consciousness and emotions, which were the key to maintaining the unity of the empire. A growing number of thinkers and politicians, such as Haldane, Gibb, Sargent and others, hoped to begin imperial education to construct imperial citizenship and thereby defuse the crisis. As the future of the empire, children in particular needed to cultivate the necessary 'character', because «It was character [...] that was prized as the hallmark of the moral and manly individual», and «that was lauded as that particularly English quality that led inexorably to imperial predominance and the disciplined and chivalrous exercise of duty»<sup>21</sup>. Rashna B. Singh suggested that «The British character was associated with superior racial qualities that stood in stark contrast with the negative traits of those who ought to be colonised (the lazy, dishonest, chaotic, degenerate, effeminate, and childlike)»<sup>22</sup>. Courage, a sense of duty, patriotism and piety were important elements of good character.

Schools were important places to cultivate qualified citizens with "character". To make youths aware of their responsibilities as «citizens of the greatest Empire the world had ever seen», Lord Meath initiated Empire Day in 1903, «which was designed to 'arouse interest in the need for promoting imperial education and knowledge, particularly through schools'»<sup>23</sup>. As Marsden argues, «the major shift in late nineteenth century curricular and extra-curricular activities was from a fundamentalist religious to an imperialist justification of 'politicization'»<sup>24</sup>. But «English education was characterized by local diversity», and the school's educational «Content was largely British, or rather Southern English; Celts looked in to starve, emigrate or rebel; the North to invent looms or work in mills»<sup>25</sup>. Therefore, much education of 'character' took place in informal settings, such as organised philanthropy, which is the focus of this article. Children's institutions, represented by the NSPCC, were considered necessary for the survival of the nation. A range of children's charities were

<sup>21</sup> N. Roberts, *Character in the Mind: Citizenship, Education and Psychology in Britain, 1880-1914*, «History of Education», vol. 33, n. 2, 2004, pp. 177-197.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture*, cit., p. 16.

<sup>23</sup> Beaven, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain 1850-1945*, cit., p. 96.

<sup>24</sup> W.E. Marsden, 'All in a Good Cause': *Geography, History and the Politicization of the Curriculum in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century England*, «Journal of Curriculum Studies», vol. 21, n. 6, 1989, pp. 509-526.

<sup>25</sup> E. Yildirim, A. Erinc, D.A. Aslan, *Britain in the Imperial Age: History and National Identity*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 12, n. 2, 2017, pp. 133-150; J. Slater, *The Politics of History Teaching*, London, Institute of Education, 1989, p. 1.

established, such as Boy's Clubs for underprivileged delinquents, the Boy's Brigade with dummy rifles, drills and parades, the National Service League for the conscription and military training of young people, and the famous Boy Scouts which was designed to spread a concept of youthful citizenship imbued with patriotic duty. Many charities established children's auxiliary branches at this time, including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)'s Band of Mercy in 1875, the Waifs and Strays Society's Children's League (1889), Thomas Barnardo's Young Helpers' League (1891), and the NSPCC's Children's League of Pity. It can be argued that these children's organizations were an important part of a wider effort to support the development of citizenship.

The NSPCC desired to produce «useful citizens», as Robert Parr said, «If the rightful place of the child is secured, and his interests properly safeguarded, the nation will breed a race of strong, independent, self-reliant men who will have no need of pensions in old age»<sup>26</sup>. But it was not a purely domestic organization, and in 1898 the «Child's Guardian» published two articles urging the colonies to follow the example of the mother country in ensuring the viability of the Anglo-Saxon race, arguing that it was part of the imperial mission to disseminate the NSPCC message to the colonies<sup>27</sup>. Yet how to effectively shape and reconcile the dual identity of children as national citizens and imperial citizens was a challenge for the NSPCC. Whilst China was never formally part of the British Empire, it was becoming an area of serious concern for the Empire. The fact that Chinese elements continued to appear in NSPCC's publications suggests that it had entered the realm of children's identity moulding, which should be studied in relation to British children's pre-existing knowledge of China.

## 2. *British Children's Perceptions of China*

Despite the fact that «THE open-minded attitude to China in the West in the 17th and early 18th centuries was increasingly replaced after the end of the 18th century»<sup>28</sup>, commentators in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain insisted that China was «an untapped and potentially vast market». «Shortly after the Opium Wars,

<sup>26</sup> R.J. Parr, *Willful Waste: The Nation's Responsibility for Its Children*, London, NSPCC, 1910, p. 60.

<sup>27</sup> *From National to Imperial: An Appeal to British Colonies, Paper I*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 12, n. 10, 1898, pp. 117-118; *From National to Imperial: An Appeal to British Colonies, Paper II*, «The Child's Guardian», vol.12, n. 11, 1898, p. 129; Swain, *An Imperial Mission?*, cit.

<sup>28</sup> W. Framke, translated by R.A. Wilson, *China and the West*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1967, p. 140.

the China trade accounted for approximately one-third of the export economy of British India. By the end of the century, Friedrich Engels was citing China as a potential bulwark against capitalism's collapse. 'The last new market which could bring on a temporary revival of prosperity by its being thrown open to English commerce, is China.' China was figured as a site of almost infinite possibility»<sup>29</sup>. Meanwhile, «the British love of spectacle and display ensured the continued popularity of chinoiserie in places of public entertainment. A 'Chinese' pageant with fireworks was put on in London to celebrate the centenary of the Hanoverian succession in 1814. The Mall was lit up with Chinese lanterns and St James's Park transformed into a willow-pattern wonderland by the Prince Regent's architect, John Nash. Nash designed a Chinese-style bridge in the centre of which stood a seven-storied pagoda»<sup>30</sup>. At Vauxhall's Spring Gardens, there was a "Chinese Walk", illuminated with more than 15,000 coloured oil lamps. Goods from China filled British fairs and exhibitions. Discussions about the importance of China and the ubiquity of Chinese objects in Britain not only provided a favourable environment for British children to learn about China, but also inadvertently deepened their knowledge of China.

In schools, history was placed at the centre of civic education. While emphasizing «values such as responsibility to the state, spirit of duty, patriotism, moral truth, shaping character with appropriate attitudes», attempts were made everywhere to construct children's identity as citizens by emphasising the superiority of Britain. History and geography textbooks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, emphasized Britain's geographical greatness and represented the English as the 'chosen people', compared with many negative references to Asian and African people<sup>31</sup>. In this way, British children were inculcated with the glory of belonging to the "ruling nation" and «all early twentieth-century British schoolchildren knew, Great Britain presided over an Empire upon which the sun never set»<sup>32</sup>. But in general, there was little information about China in school education. In the first edition of Warner and Marten's *Groundwork of British History*, published in 1911, which remained a standard text-book in schools, the only descriptions of China were the Sino-British Opium War of 1840 which was seen as «policy of maintaining British trading interests» and «eventually forced her to cede us Hong-Kong and to open five other ports to British trade»<sup>33</sup>. Also «Gordon's most famous exploits» in China, where he commanded «the 'Ever-victorious Army', on behalf of the Chinese Government in the formidable Taiping rebellion", and

<sup>29</sup> Forman, *China and the Victorian Imagination*, cit., p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Witchard, *British Modernism and Chinoiserie*, cit., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Yıldırım, Erinc, Aslan, *Britain in the Imperial Age: History and National Identity*, cit.

<sup>32</sup> Gorman, *Imperial Citizenship*, cit., p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> G. Warner, C. Marten, D. Muir, *The New Groundwork of British History*, London, Blackie & Son Limited, 1911, p. 832, 796.

«won thirty-three engagements in under two years (1863-1864)»<sup>34</sup>. In Seeley's book, China remained excluded from intercourse with the rest of the world<sup>35</sup>. All above descriptions showed the failure of Chinese civilizations, arguing that it should become subject to British interests.

Informal education played a greater role in British children's acquisition of knowledge about China. The image of Chinese children was often used for missionary work within the UK: «The white baby has pretty and comfy things and can choose from a range of processed foods. The yellow baby has bound feet, and lives on rice using 'funny' implements. The matter of Chinese female infanticide was also often used to make British girls feel guilty for their own good fortune at being born British, instilling in them the missionary instinct through a kind of White Girl's Burden». Therefore, «when British girls dressed up as Chinese girls as part of their Christian education, an identification was made with a Chineseness of tragedy, oppression, idleness and exotic difference»<sup>36</sup>. The presence of Chinese items and the image of Chinese children both demonstrate the representation of China as the poor and backwards "other" to British children.

Various exhibitions in the UK were also full of Chinese elements. Both John Nash's painting of the Chinese Court, and John Absolon's watercolour painting *Part of the Chinese Court* (1851), showed Chinese objects at the London Exhibition of 1851 and British children in the midst of them. Whether in the London Exhibition of 1851 or the Children's Welfare Exhibition of 1913, British children were important participants, as evidenced by «some eighty or ninety boys and girls having lost their friends in the building» and «over 35,000 children visited with school groups and charity groups» in 1851, as well as the availability of children's tickets<sup>37</sup>. The popularity of child-centred object lessons in the Victorian era also led Samuel Prout Newcombe to write four books for children around the Exhibition after 1851, from which «they were able to see what items were made in what part of the world and even which parts of the world had been colonized by which European power... The child reader is encouraged to position herself as a consumer at the very heart of the British Empire, at the center of the world of goods»<sup>38</sup>. In this way, children were connected to the social relations revealed by the material world.

So publications aimed at child consumers were another important way for British children to gain a perception of China. «Empire was everywhere

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 860.

<sup>35</sup> J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1905, p. 124.

<sup>36</sup> S. Cheang, *The ownership and collection of Chinese material culture by women in Britain, 1890-1935*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Sussex, Academic Year 2003-2004, p. 58.

<sup>37</sup> J.S. Carroll, *British Children's Literature and Material Culture: Commodities and Consumption 1850-1914*, London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021, p. 24, 26, 19, 21.

<sup>38</sup> Carroll, *British Children's Literature and Material Culture*, cit., pp. 42-43, p. 49.



in British culture of the period, playing an important role in everything from Christmas pantomimes to music hall songs to children's periodicals to advertising»<sup>39</sup>. These activities promoted national glorification and the English were positioned «at the pinnacle of the hierarchy of races and nations»<sup>40</sup>. The NSPCC's publications were not devoid of depictions of China. China-related propaganda and objects could draw readers' attention to China, making reasonable distinctions in a complex situation. The situation in China also affected the development of the NSPCC, especially its finances. The Society was faced with a deficit of £7,627, which could not be covered by an appeal to the general public: «Things in this respect were bad before the war in China broke out; they are worse now» stated *The Child's Guardian* in 1900<sup>41</sup>. China could also provide a certain positive contribution to UK culture. As the Lord Mayor of Manchester (Councillor Charles Behrens) said when presiding at a public meeting, «In spite of all we try to do to influence the East and to imbue them with our ideas I think there are many lessons which they can teach us, and above all we might follow their example in the treatment of our children. My family and I have been fortunate enough to visit China and Japan, and I shall never forget the smiling and sunny faces of the little people in that country, who seemed ever present in vast numbers in that land of children's delight»<sup>42</sup>.

Perceptions of China indicated that the Chinese deserved philanthropic sympathy. Following «the civilizing mission of the Anglo-Saxon race», many young British people either wanted to go to China or had already done so. Dr. Barnardo (1845-1905), a famous British child philanthropist, aspired to go to China early in his life. His youthful ambition was to qualify as a medical missionary for China, and to this end he became a student at the London Hospital in the mid-1860s. Although the great cholera pandemic of 1866 caused him ultimately to abandon this plan after learning the suffering of children in Britain, the ideal of his China trip illustrates the special place of China in the hearts of young British people. The NSPCC also posted tributes mourning the young people who went to China, including «Mr. J. W. Brooke, who was only twenty-eight, was a well-known explorer, having travelled extensively in Africa and Tibet. He was a member of the Geographical Society, and had the distinction of sending to the British Museum an animal previously unknown to science»<sup>43</sup>. But sadly he died in western China.

<sup>39</sup> Kutzer, *Empire's Children*, cit., p. XIV.

<sup>40</sup> Swain, Hillel, *Child, Nation, Race and Empire*, cit., p. 109.

<sup>41</sup> *Notes*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 14, n.7, 1900, p. 95.

<sup>42</sup> *Public Meeting at the Midland Hotel*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 14, n. 11, 1910, p. 131.

<sup>43</sup> *Obituary*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 23, n. 2, 1909, p. 21.

### 3. *Pity and sympathy for China*

Rather than simply imposing its will on children from the top down, the NSPCC sought to involve children and to mould competent citizens and ideal models through the activities of its offshoot, the Children's League of Pity, and its publication, «Children's League of Pity Paper», which began in 1893. The League of Pity was «open to boys and girls under sixteen years of age» from 1891<sup>44</sup>, and in 1910 extended the age of membership to 18. The *Paper* stated that «THE object of the League of Pity is to enlist the help of happy children of the land in the service of the unhappy; chiefly by their own personal savings and sacrifices»<sup>45</sup>. The NSPCC believed that much social change «must come from the co-operation of masses of the people themselves»<sup>46</sup>. Thus, the NSPCC sought to arouse children's sympathy with others and desire to serve the nation as a basic character of qualified citizens.

Sympathy from the 18<sup>th</sup> century became an important term in the field of morality and an area of intensive exploration by philosophers. Edmund Burke, for example, believed that sympathy was «to secure the bonds of human society»<sup>47</sup>, while Immanuel Kant argued that feeling sympathy for others helped in carrying out the human duty of beneficence<sup>48</sup>. Frances Power Cobbe, writing in 1888, asserted that emotions were «the chief springs of human conduct», and that the «contagion of sentiments» often spread «from one individual of a family or village to all the other members or inhabitants», thus «the sentiment of sympathy should be drawn forth by personal service to the suffering»<sup>49</sup>. It can be argued that sympathy, as a human instinct, serves will and reason as well as moral development, and can be accelerated by advances in public opinion or campaigns using images to convey emotion and moral perfection. In Nathan Roberts's words, «If sympathy and all the other benevolent emotions and virtues were correctly instilled, an individual could be said, in Victorian parlance, to have 'character'»<sup>50</sup>. Therefore, the primary objective of the NSPCC was to equip children with the ability to sympathise. The League of Pity was explicitly «based on the idea that education in suitable sympathy is as important as in reading, writing, and arithmetic»<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 1, n. 1, 1893, p. 8.

<sup>45</sup> *Object and Rules of the League*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 13, n. 1, 1913, p. 21.

<sup>46</sup> *The Progress of the Society*, «Child's Guardian», vol. 5, n. 6, 1891, p. 49.

<sup>47</sup> A. Richardson (ed.), *After Darwin: Animals, Emotions, and the Mind*, New York/Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2013, p. 120.

<sup>48</sup> M.B. Mathias, *Response: The Role of Sympathy in Kant's Philosophy of Moral Education*, «Philosophy of Education Archive», 1999, pp. 261-265.

<sup>49</sup> F. Power Cobbe, *The Education of the Emotions*, «Fortnightly Review», n. 43, 1888, pp. 223-236.

<sup>50</sup> Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*, cit., p. 12.

<sup>51</sup> NSPCC, *The League of Pity*, «The Report for 1902-1903», 1903, p. 7.

The NSPCC actively fostered Leaguers' sympathy by conveying the unfortunate situation of children in need and the happy lives of children who had received help. The League of Pity did not focus exclusively on the UK, but had a world-wide perspective. Taking an event in Bournemouth on 30 November 1898 as an example, Mr. and Mrs. Kirmse, with the aid of their little daughters (Leaguers) and pupils, gave a charming musical and dramatic entertainment in aid of the funds of the NSPCC. The first scene was *Dame Europa's School*, in which appeared maidens dressed in various costumes designed to represent the different countries of Europe. In the center sat little 'Denmark', dressed as the grandmother of all the other countries; 'Russia', in a dress trimmed with beautiful Russian embroidery; 'Norway', attired as Nansen in his polar dress holding a model of the 'Fram'; 'Switzerland', in the prettiest peasant gear with a cow; 'England', with the 'Union Jack'; 'Scotland', with St. Andrew's Cross. First of all *God save the Queen* was sung, and then the countries conversed prettily in French about the various lessons to be learnt from the events of the past year. The moral of the lovely scene was «to learn to live in peace and harmony together-as an illustration of which China and Japan advanced and shook hands»<sup>52</sup>. Although not much was said about China, it was an important presence with others.

What was already taught and known about China provided strong support and important references for British children to understand the differences between the UK and China. The NSPCC began to convey the misery of Chinese children to British children through the written word, describing how the population explosion of the Qing Dynasty, coupled with a preference for sons over daughters, led to a high incidence of female infant drowning in China. One report was particularly shocking: «One afternoon we strolled round the summit of the city walls. At regular intervals round the wall were projections, with fetid pits of rubbish at their base. Here the bodies of hundreds of infants are thrown. A Chinaman only counts his sons. Girls are unnecessary incumbrances. And as Chao-tung-fu is a dismally poor city, and there is no Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, quite a large percentage of the daughters born are done to death. Girl babies, from a few days old to three years of age, are pitched over the ramparts»<sup>53</sup>. This made Chinese children very different from British children. They were told on female infanticide, «It is, of course, thanks to British influence, gradually decreasing in India»<sup>54</sup>. The NSPCC also expressed concern and attempted to condemn and correct this phenomenon in China. As the *Child's Guardian* reported, «THE progress of our kind of work in China is shown by recent news received from San Fran-

<sup>52</sup> *Musical and Dramatic Entertainment at Bournemouth*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 5, n. 6, 1898, p. 86.

<sup>53</sup> *Child Wrongs Abroad*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 16, n. 2, 1902, p. 17.

<sup>54</sup> *Liverpool Express*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 10, n. 5, 1896, p. 67.

cisco. The Viceroy of Fukien and Chekiang has issued a proclamation against the drowning of female children, which has been common of late. He notifies families that hereafter the penalty will be sixty blows of the bamboo and one year's banishment»<sup>55</sup>. Through similar reports, the NSPCC conveyed a message of sympathy to British children for Chinese children as the poor and backward Other. This not only emphasised British superiority in contrast with China, but gave British children a sense of responsibility as “citizens”.

The NSPCC was active in directing British children's attention to China and expanding their political horizons. Li Hung Chang, the Governor of Zhili and the Minister of Northern China, equivalent to China's foreign minister at that time, arrived in Britain on 2 August 1896, for a three-week visit. Li was awarded the Grand Cross of the Victoria Medal by Queen Victoria, met the Prime Minister, and visited the British Parliament, factories, and navy. British newspapers enthusiastically conveyed that this lord was very fond of children. China had been criticised by entire Western society, including Britain, for drowning female infants. As «The Child's Guardian» reported, «Those of our forefathers who were taught by missionary speeches to regard China as a hot-bed of cruelty to children will observe with interest the bearing of the great Chinese Statesman, Li, now on a visit to this country, to children»<sup>56</sup>. On 15 August 1896, Li went to St Paul's Cathedral to pay his respects to General Charles Gordon, his former comrade in arms, and had a friendly conversation with some of the boys from Gordon's family<sup>57</sup>. Gordon was also a child rescuer in England. Early in the 1860s, «he used to gather up boy ‘waifs and strays’ (whom he called ‘scuttlers’) from the streets around his home. They were scrubbed by either his housekeeper or himself and he then ran classes for them. He also taught at a local ragged school»<sup>58</sup>. The interesting blend of this iconic imperial hero and child rescuer links the British Empire with China. At Hatfield House, the residence of Li, the great personages introduced to him attracted his attention, said the *Standard*, far less than the children: «He made friends with the children of Lord Selborne and Lord Cranborne, and for a long time kept little Lord Wolmer by his side, affectionately holding his hand». Again, when visiting the Woolwich Dockyard, «as Li passed to his carriage», «in the front rank of the crowd stood a little girl who attracted the notice of the veteran Statesman. He paused and shook hands with her, at the same time inquiring her age»<sup>59</sup>. The NSPCC also said that «Everybody has been talking lately about Li Hung Chang, the great Chinese statesman, who has been over here and winning all hearts by his genial and simple ways, and specially win-

<sup>55</sup> *China and Child Drowning*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 3, n. 33, 1889, p. 162.

<sup>56</sup> *Notes*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 10, n. 10, 1896, p. 127.

<sup>57</sup> «Leeds Times», 15-8-1896.

<sup>58</sup> Swain, Hillel, *Child, Nation, Race and Empire*, cit., p. VI.

<sup>59</sup> *Notes*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 10, n. 10, 1896, p. 127.

ning the hearts of child lovers like all those of us who work day after day to make strong and powerful grown-up folks everywhere care for them too»<sup>60</sup>.

The Society's conscious attention to Li's interactions with children inspired British children's concerns and benevolent action for others. Several members of the League of Pity, Gladys, Kenneth, Irene, and John made a garden on the sands at Hunstanton, and called it *Li Hung Chang's Garden*. Their garden was about three feet long and four to five feet in breadth. On one side was a terrace, on another side was a stone wall with a summer-house in the center. On each side was a bed of red sand filled with wild flowers. The garden also boasted a circular tent, a rockery, a fish pond, and a lake on which floated swans and boats with little sailors on the brink on the look-out for customers –these were Chinese ladies and gentlemen dotted about the garden, and no less great personages than Li Hung Chang and his retinue. Little children held money boxes carrying the Society's name and the result of this charming idea was £1 1s. 6d in donations<sup>61</sup>. The NSPCC actively encouraged other Leaguers to follow the example of these young folks at Hunstanton and to plant *Li Hung Chang's Garden* on the sands wherever they were holidaying. This would not only be enjoyable play for them, but also a demonstration of sympathy and responsibility.

It can be seen that the sympathy encouraged by the NSPCC went beyond the nation state. Sympathy for the 'other' China gave English children the emotions and vision of being imperial citizens and highlighted their own racial superiority. As Evan Gottlieb argued, in order to construct and promote a British identity that was acceptable to both the English and Scots after the merger of England and Scotland, both the English and Scots used sympathy «to try to construct a unified national citizenry», since the discourse of sympathy «naturalized the idea that people who coexist in proximity to one another instinctively feel each other's emotions, and are therefore predisposed to identify with one another»<sup>62</sup>. By the end of the nineteenth century, Britain was similarly drawing on sympathy in constructing its child citizens.

#### 4. *Entertainment for Chinese items*

However, the NSPCC's education in sympathy was less successful with children, and a glaring problem was the difficulty in maintaining the enthusiasm of League members in helping suffering children. Many children got

<sup>60</sup> *A Chinese Great Man*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. IV, n. 2, 1896, p. 14.

<sup>61</sup> *Li Hung Chang's Garden*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 4, n. 2, 1896, p. 10.

<sup>62</sup> E. Gottlieb, *Feeling British: Sympathy and National Identity in Scottish and English Writing, 1707-1832*, Bucknell University Press, 2007, p. 208.

bored after a few activities and asked their mothers to participate on their behalf: «Oh, mother, you write to Miss Bolton. Oh, mother, you go on with the League of Pity for me; I'm so tired of it. I've done all I want to»<sup>63</sup>. The NSPCC was finding it increasingly difficult to attract the attention of Leaguers. The main reason one of the boys lost interest in participating in the League was that «there have been no meetings or anything whatever to keep up the interest. There was a concert at first starting, in 1894, but since that nothing that we have heard of»<sup>64</sup>. Other activities in children's lives took them away from their contributions to the NSPCC: «Leaguers should not resign their Leaguership because they are going to school, the excuse of so many»<sup>65</sup>. It is impossible to know exactly how many children dropped out of the League over time, but the many references in the *Paper* indicate that this was a tricky issue. As it entered the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the NSPCC had to consider how to improve its appeal to potential and existing Leaguers.

Members of the League of Pity were mostly from the upper and middle classes, and a key element in attracting them was to make activities more participatory and entertaining. As Burke said, unless accompanied by some degree of pleasure, sympathy would not be efficacious, for otherwise they could be so overwhelmed by pain on witnessing a tragic scene that they would simply turn away or flee rather than offering assistance<sup>66</sup>. The *Paper* began to cater to suit the tastes of its child readers, reporting more on fundraising entertainments for Leaguers, rather than the suffering children in need. Children's self-fulfillment was increasingly valued, a change that can be seen in the photographs published in the newspaper: from August 1897 onwards (volume 5), the number of pictures increased significantly from the previous two to around seven or eight per issue, many of which showcased Leaguers' own fundraising activities, such as fancy-dress balls, entertainments and bazaars. In the September 1899 issue there were nine pictures, of which five showed the Leaguers, the League secretary, and a League garden fete. In August 1901 there were seven pictures, only one that showed a suffering child. In September 1901 there were six photographs, five of Leaguers' activities, and one of NSPCC shelter children enjoying a happy day out. Similarly, in the issue for August and September 1903, only one of the eight photographs featured the poor children helped by the League.

Among the entertainments, Chinese items were common in children's fundraising activities, appearing at costume balls, bazaars and oriental stalls. How-

<sup>63</sup> *Well-Doers*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 1, n. 4, 1893, pp. 25-26.

<sup>64</sup> *Notes*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 4, n. 1, 1896, p. 10.

<sup>65</sup> *Notes*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 7, n. 1, 1899, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> E. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958, pp.44-48; Richardson, *After Darwin*, cit., p. 120.

ever, the meaning of Chinese items to British people had changed dramatically by this time: while in the seventeenth century and before the preciousness of Chinese items meant that they could only be found in the luxurious castles of the aristocracy, from the nineteenth century they appeared in abundance in middle-class families. According to S. Cheang, «Whilst the China trade had declined by the mid-nineteenth century, Sino-British warfare appears to have sparked a renewed interest in Chinese things, with London exhibitions of Nathan Dunn's Chinese collection in 1842, and of a Chinese Junk on the Thames in 1848»<sup>67</sup>. In the 40 years after 1860, Britain dominated China's commerce, and accounted for two-thirds of China's foreign trade in 1895. «Britain increased its intensity of interaction with China, including trade, immigration and cultural exchange transforming British conceptions of Chinese and Chinoiserie»<sup>68</sup>. In his books, *Ideographia: The Chinese Cipher in Early Modern Europe*, and *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*, David Porter «reads chinoiserie itself as a primary component of shifts in attitudes towards China. By aestheticising the idea of Chinese cultural authority, chinoiserie 'effectively eviscerated it, transforming symbols of awe-inspiring cultural achievement into a motley collection of exotic ornamental motifs' serving to diminish China's value»<sup>69</sup>. Ownership of China items was therefore a sideways indication of the defeat of China and the imperial power of the British monarchy. By using machines of mass production without increasing spending on design, costs were reduced and demand was met. Chinese decorations could be purchased in various stores across the UK, so it was only natural that Chinese items would appear in many activities of the League of Pity.

The Chinese lantern was the most common decoration. It was not confined to the homes of the aristocracy, it was also present in the children's shelters of the NSPCC. «For more than a week before the 25<sup>th</sup> the pleasures of Christmas time began among the little folks at the Shelter. The beautiful, frosted angels, Santa Claus and Father Christmas to say nothing of the silver and golden balls, gay flowers, and big Chinese lanterns, brought forth many admiring 'Oh! Ohs!」<sup>70</sup>. The children were also amazed by many activity halls decorated with Chinese lanterns, as well as Chinese porcelain. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century approached, Chinese lanterns appeared more frequently in decorations and lighting for various events. Chinese works of art were also frequently exhibited. At the Warrington Art Exhibition of 1898, the 20<sup>th</sup> in the catalogue was, *Ruins in China* from Miss Happe<sup>71</sup>. In the Fine Art Exhibition at Mid-

<sup>67</sup> S. Cheang, *Dragons in the Drawing Room: Chinese Embroideries in British Homes, 1860–1949*, «Textile History», vol. 39, n. 2, 2008, pp. 223–249.

<sup>68</sup> Chou, *Re-Imagining Chineseness: Chinese People, Chinatown, and British Masculine Chinoiserie 1850–1920*, Doctoral Thesis, Warwick, University of Warwick, 2019, p. 19.

<sup>69</sup> Witchard, *British Modernism and Chinoiserie*, cit., p. 6.

<sup>70</sup> *Christmas in the Shelter*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 2, n. 7, 1895, p. 56.

<sup>71</sup> *Sale of Work at Warrington*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 4, n. 3, 1896, p. 23.

dlesboro, people saw the «domestic songster», as represented by a kettle, and the empty cup, entitled, «Views in the interior of China»<sup>72</sup>. There were also paintings of Chinese poppies showing images of China<sup>73</sup>.

Chinese clothing, arguably, was one of the most popular items and was regularly featured at balls and even rated as award-winning costume (see pic.1 and 2). In 1899, a ball was held at Exeter, at which about 270 folk were present: «All kinds of characters figured in the gathering, little boys representing for the time policemen, officers in the Army and Navy, Japs, Chinese, &c.; and little girls posing as great ladies, others as fairies and in the many characters of our loved fairy tales, the colours of the pretty dresses making, with the decorations, a charming sight [...]. This gathering has given us the means, to the extent of £36 8s. 11d.»<sup>74</sup>. At a Children's Fancy Dress Ball in Doncaster, the prize for the most original adult costume (gentleman) went to Mr. Guy Wilson's *Chinese Mandarin* (see pic. 3), and the League received £10<sup>75</sup>. The Fancy Dress Ball held in Derby on 9 January 1908 was particularly successful: «The company numbered over 400, and the large room in which the dance took place was charmingly decorated. The children's dances commenced at five o'clock, and prizes were awarded for the prettiest costumes [...]. For the boys, the first prize went to Master Ronald Greenfield, who took the character of Robin Hood, while the second was awarded to Master N. Hughes-Hallett, who impersonated a Chinaman». The gathering resulted in a cheque for £61 being forwarded<sup>76</sup>.

In addition, Chinese dances, Chinese songs and Chinese shadow puppets were often featured at concerts. In Ramsgate, for example, a successful show sent the Society a cheque for £50: «The proceedings opened to a packed house with a performance of the farce 'Box and Cox'. Afterwards Miss Palgrave Turner (of the Brighton Green Room Club) gave a short recital [...] As an encore song she gave a vivacious rendering of 'The Chinese Love Song'»<sup>77</sup>. Another successful entertainment included «'The Chinese Umbrella' action song, performed by girls dressed in white and gracefully manipulating Chinese umbrellas»<sup>78</sup>. There were Chinese fables in the *Paper*, such as *The Frog and The Geese*<sup>79</sup>. These varied Chinese elements not only served entertainment

<sup>72</sup> *Middlesboro' Leaguers Very Busy*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 6, n. 1, 1898, p. 13.

<sup>73</sup> «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 12, 1907, p. 270.

<sup>74</sup> *Exeter's Fancy Dress Ball*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 6, n. 7, 1899, p. 109.

<sup>75</sup> *Busy Branches*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 14, n. 9, 1911, p. 261.

<sup>76</sup> *Derby*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 2, 1908, p. 29.

<sup>77</sup> «*Living Whist*» at Ramsgate: *A Highly Successful Display*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 9, n. 6, 1902, p. 78.

<sup>78</sup> Trowbridge, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 2, 1906, p. 42.

<sup>79</sup> *The Frog and The Geese*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 11, n. 8, 1905, p. 133.



purposes but had good fundraising effects, as evidenced by the cheques sent to the NSPCC on each occasion.

The popularity of Chinese elements was not limited to England, but popular in other regions. For example, at an entertainment in Ireland, after tea the audience was charmed by some pretty fancy dances given by Monica and Debora Durnford, who were dressed as old China figures<sup>80</sup>. «As the result of a course of Lectures held during the winter at Bellevue House, Sutton, Miss McAlister sends a cheque for £2 18s. The Lectures, which were illustrated by limelight, were on the following interesting subjects: 'Iceland and its Geysers,' 'Old Dublin,' 'Things Chinese,' and 'Matters Electrical'»<sup>81</sup>. «In a picturesque and realistic Wigwam Tent [...] the Eastern attraction was the centre of great admiration. In the background the Golden Sun, symbolical of the East, shone out on a stall resplendent with Japanese, Chinese, Indian and African curios prettily arranged under the shelter of a large Japanese umbrella [...] Leaguers as Japs, Peruvians, Indian maids, etc., [...] drove bargains with Eastern suavity and cuteness». £28 18s. 11d. was raised<sup>82</sup>. At a Children's Fancy Dress Ball in Kingstown, «The best costume in the room were adjudged to be worn by the Misses Annie and Kathleen Wade, the former being a perfectly-turned-out Chinese Mandarin. Her little sister was an aristocratic Shanghai girlie»<sup>83</sup>.

### *Conclusion*

Evan Gottlieb argues that «from the Victorian period until the dissolution of the British Empire in the middle of the twentieth century, Britishness was primarily defined in relation to its colonial Others» and the sense of Britishness relies, not on sameness, but on difference<sup>84</sup>. The continued presence of the Chinese elements in the activities of the League of Pity illustrates this point. More noteworthy is that China, as the 'other', was included in children's sympathy training by the NSPCC, which extended children's civic horizons to the empire. Thus, the shaping of children's dual identity as citizens of empire and citizens of the state was mutually reinforced, as vividly demonstrated in the entertainments of the League of Pity. Taking, for example, the entertainment organised by the branch of League of Pity in Folkestone in 1906, it opened with a group, «The United Kingdom, and children performed excellently a

<sup>80</sup> *Irish Notes*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 14, n. 1, 1910, p. 8.

<sup>81</sup> *Irish Notes*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 4, 1908, p. 83.

<sup>82</sup> *Dublin's "Coming of Age"*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 16, n. 1, 1913-1914, p. 18.

<sup>83</sup> *Busy Branches in Ireland*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 16, n. 1, 1913-1914, p. 21.

<sup>84</sup> Gottlieb, *Feeling British*, cit., p. 213.

very smart military dance, a hornpipe, a Scotch reel, an Irish jig and a Welsh dance. Part II was an 'Eastern Group', comprising India, China, Egypt, Turkey, Japan, and Persia, and graceful dances were performed. Part III., 'Western Group', was particularly pretty and represented a street in Italy<sup>85</sup>. At a charming Children's Fancy Dress Dance in Walsall attended by over 100 children, there were Red Indians, Early Victorian ladies, several ladies and gentlemen from Japan and China, tiny little Swiss maidens, Dutch children and Arabs from the Far East<sup>86</sup>. In dressing up in different national costumes and taking on different national roles in these entertainments, children further deepened their imperial perceptions of Britain as the «dominant nation» correspondingly deepening nation-state awareness. This could be seen in the responses of British children to different groups: «When a Chinese Prince stood on the screen they 'booed'; when a Boer flashed on it they groaned; when some British General was the picture they struck up 'Soldiers of the Queen', and filled the vast Hall with thrilling music»<sup>87</sup>.

Being a citizen required children to serve the status. In Brad Beaven's words, «citizenship was not the embodiment of a series of rights or an indication of status; rather it was a dynamic entity which cemented real moral and spiritual bonds between the individual and the state». Similarly R. H. Tawney and Samuel Barnett «saw 'social' citizenship as an activity that obliged the individual to engage in 'public spiritedness' and carry out wider social and civic duties»<sup>88</sup>. The NSPCC advocated sympathy and hoped every boy and girl in the country would try to do something for the country because only «the practical man, and the true patriot» could do good<sup>89</sup>. The Society was always happy to report on services, including a British girl far away in China who had sent the Society 10 shillings<sup>90</sup>. Mr. R.H. Dunn, of the Chinese Maritime Customs at Wuhu, had sent a cheque for £30 in aid of the Society's funds<sup>91</sup>. Sympathy and service were the basic character requirements of children as citizens, and were the ties that bound the child to the nation and to the empire as a whole. The NSPCC's desire to inspire service by fostering sympathy in children led to the decline of the League of Pity, until, as a result, the entertainments of Leaguers replaced early sympathy training as a staple of the *Paper*, which was also a manifestation of children's subjectivity. Although children still raised a great deal of funds to serve the Society through these entertainments, it exemplified

<sup>85</sup> Folkestone, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 4, 1906, p. 87.

<sup>86</sup> *Busy Branches*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 14, n. 3, 1910, p. 78.

<sup>87</sup> *Mr. Waugh's Impressions*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», August 1901, vol. 8, n. 6, p. 131.

<sup>88</sup> Beaven, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain*, cit., p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> R. Parr, *My Dear Leaguers*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», vol. 12, n. 9, 1907, p. 197.

<sup>90</sup> Id., *My Dear Leaguers*, «Children's League of Pity Paper», 1908, vol. 13, n. 3, p. 53.

<sup>91</sup> *£30 from China*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 30, n. 5, 1920, p. 37.

the profound contradiction between the needs of children and the needs of the nation in the cultivation of citizens.

The Chinese elements in the propaganda of the NSPCC also shaped perceptions of China's subordination, in need of Britain's benevolence and civilizing influence. In the process of shaping child citizens, Britain defined the 'other' China, in its own rather than Chinese terms. The British empire was a racial empire based on language, custom, and history, and people recognized as its citizens were limited to the white race; China was believed to deserve the mercy of the empire, but in return should serve it. Just as British adults tried to impose their cultural ideals on children, Britain attempted to impose its thoughts and behaviors on China indirectly through Hong Kong. So the NSPCC extended its work to the colonial Hong Kong in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At a meeting of the Church of England Men's Society held in Hong Kong in 1920, Mr. F. B. L. Bowley read a paper on suggested reforms and made the following recommendations: «That an Industrial Settlement for destitute unprotected, blind and crippled women and children should be provided in Kowloon City or elsewhere, under the control of the local missionary societies» and «That all adopted or purchased Chinese female children and servants under 21 residing in the Colony should be registered at the Secretariat of Chinese Affairs». In the cause of protecting children in China, «Hong Kong should give a lead to China and not follow upon her heels»<sup>92</sup>. In another article, the NSPCC explicitly stated that the practice of buying and selling children in China should be banned,<sup>93</sup> and in others suggested that «in any British colony all children should be assured of protection»<sup>94</sup>. It could be argued that children's citizenship education within the UK had been extended to China to a certain extent, as the *Child's Guardian* continued to report on the situation and work in progress in Hong Kong.

<sup>92</sup> *Children in Hong Kong*, «Child's Guardian», vol. 30, n. 5, 1920, p. 33.

<sup>93</sup> *Does Child Slavery exist in a British Colony?*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 30, n. 4, 1920, p. 25.

<sup>94</sup> *A Colony*, «The Child's Guardian», vol. 31, n. 5, 1921, p. 38.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3