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Newspaper Coverage of Child Emigration through the Children's Emigration Homes from 1872 to 1895

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Abstract

From 1872 to 1895, the Children's Emigration Homes, under the care of Birmingham philanthropist Dr. John T. Middlemore, facilitated the emigration of children to a receiving home and sent them to live in Ontario as domestic servants and agricultural labourers. Newspapers played an important role in promoting child emigration as a viable solution to reduce poverty in Great Britain by rehabilitating the public perception of child emigrants from a drain on the taxpayer to a benefit to Canadian communities. Newspaper coverage focused on several key themes: the transformation of a child's character; the success of the organization's mission; organizational accountability; and the consequences of leaving these children in Birmingham. This thesis analyzes the CEH's presence in the public discourse through newspapers, alongside other child emigration advocates, to turn child emigration from a fringe policy into a mainstream practice during the Child Emigration Movement.

Keywords

Middlemore, Emigration, Ontario, Birmingham, Newspaper, Doyle Report, Children, Poverty

Summary for Lay Audience

Between the 1860s and the 1940s, child welfare organizations in Great Britain transported over 100,000 children to Canada as part of the Child Emigration Movement. From 1872 to 1895, the Children's Emigration Homes (CEH), under the care of Birmingham philanthropist Dr. John T. Middlemore, facilitated the emigration of children to a receiving home, the Guthrie House in London, Ontario, Canada and then in local communities as domestic servants or as agricultural labourers. Newspapers played a significant role in promoting child emigration as a viable solution to reduce poverty in Great Britain by rehabilitating the public perception of child emigrants from being a drain on the taxpayer to a benefit to Canadian communities. This thesis analyzes Middlemore's efforts to cultivate publicity, alongside other child emigration advocates, to turn child emigration from a fringe policy into a normalized part of the political discourse. Without friendly newspaper coverage the CEH would have failed, like many of its early nineteenth-century predecessors did, for a lack of public support. Newspaper coverage of the CEH focused on several key themes: the transformation of a child's character; the success of the organization's mission; organizational accountability; and the consequences of leaving such children in Birmingham. To further the goals of the CEH, the newspaper coverage needed to portray the lives of the lower classes in Birmingham as desperate enough that public opinion supported emigration efforts, but not so desperate that readers would imagine the "gutter children" as beyond hope or rehabilitation.

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Introduction

Between the 1860s and the 1940s, child welfare organizations in Great Britain transported over 100,000 children to Canada as part of the Child Emigration Movement.[1] Groups such as the Children's Emigration Homes (CEH)[2], under the care of Birmingham philanthropist and politician Dr. John T. Middlemore, facilitated the emigration of children to Canada as well as their placement in Canadian homes. These organizations emerged in response to the failure of the British government to address the historic and contemporary causes of poverty. Entrenched negative attitudes and stereotypes towards poverty contributed to rising social tensions which compounded the effects of the rising numbers of impoverished people, the cost of poor relief on local governments, and the declining standard of living in urban centres. By the nineteenth century, philanthropists and reformers began to explore private alternative options to the hopelessly outmatched and obsolete system of public poor relief.

Middlemore was born on June 9, 1844, and raised in Edgbaston, south of Birmingham.[3] His father, William Middlemore, made his fortune as a leather goods manufacturer who owned several patents for saddle and harness designs. He also held supply contracts with the British and foreign cavalry and developed a reputation as a savvy, honest businessman with a philanthropic nature.[4] William Middlemore married Mary Groom in 1832 and had thirteen children, of which

[1] "British Home Children in Canada" Home Children Canada, December 2011, https://canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com/.
[2] Dr. Middlemore's charity is referred to with several different variations of its name over the years it operated. The Children's Emigration Homes is used the most commonly and is used throughout.
[3] Patricia Roberts-Pichette, *Great Canadian Expectations: The Middlemore Experience,* (Carleton Place: Global Heritage Press, 2016), 22.
[4] *Ibid.*

John T. Middlemore was the tenth; however, only seven of their children survived to adulthood.[5] Mary was raised a strict Baptist and William, raised an Anglican, joined her congregation after their marriage. Both of John T. Middlemore's parents were involved in charitable organizations such as the Lying-In Hospital, a maternity ward, and the Birmingham Ragged School, as well as supported public projects such as public baths and parks, William and Mary were also politically active in causes such as the women's suffrage movement, abolition, and relief for Jews persecuted in Russia as well as international flood relief and famine relief.[6] William also served in several local political roles on the Birmingham Town Council and for the Borough.[7]

John T. Middlemore was educated alongside his brothers at the Birmingham and Edgbaston Proprietary School and enrolled at the University of London and received the University of Oxford certificate as a senior candidate, although he chose to work for his father instead of attending either school.[8] Around 1863, Middlemore went to live with his aunt and uncle in the Boston, Massachusetts and attended the Medical School of Maine, Brunswick. While living in the United States, he travelled throughout Ontario and the Midwestern states and observed the open spaces and idyllic rural lifestyle that he would later contrast with the heavily urbanized slums of Birmingham.[9] Despite earning his medical degree, Middlemore never practised medicine. Following his return to England in 1867, Middlemore spent some time on a walking tour of the Swiss Alps.[10]

[5] *Ibid*, 24.
[6] *Ibid, 23.*
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid, 25.*
[9] *Ibid, 26.*
[10] *Ibid*.

Middlemore established the CEH in 1872 after he returned from his travels and witnessed the worsening conditions of the urban poor in his hometown.[11] Middlemore's experiences in North America informed his philanthropic mission and, combined with the dire realities of life in the slums of Birmingham, convinced him that the impoverished and orphaned children of his home city would be better served with a fresh start in Canada.[12] Advocates of the Child Emigration Movement believed that rural homes in Canada were safer, healthier, and more productive for the children than the urban slums of British cities. The CEH removed children from their families, often with the consent of the parents or guardians, and after a period of preparation would send them to a receiving home in London, Ontario known as the Guthrie House. This preparation included the Evangelical religious teachings that inspired many child emigration advocates, including Middlemore. From the Guthrie House, children would be sent out to hosts to work as domestic servants or on farms as labour until they became adults. Ideally, the children would be adopted into the family and contribute to their local community. The CEH sent children to the Guthrie House until 1895 when Middlemore moved the receiving home to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Middlemore understood that negative attitudes and stereotypes featured prominently in newspaper coverage of the children that organizations such as the CEH sought to help. This thesis analyzes Middlemore's efforts to shape the discourse with newspaper publicity to counteract these attitudes and further his own mission. Contemporary newspaper sources show a concerted effort to rehabilitate the idea of child emigrants at the CEH from a drain on their communities to a benefit to Canada thereby helping the children gain acceptance in their new

[11] "Middlemore Homes," British Home Child International Group, https://britishhomechild.com/resources/sending-agencies-organizations/middlemore-homes/
[12] *Ibid*.

country. The efforts of Middlemore and other likeminded child emigration advocates over the course of the nineteenth century eventually succeeded in transforming organized child emigration schemes from an expensive fringe policy championed by a handful of activists, into a viable and reasonable option to reduce the effects of poverty and embraced by a wide segment of the population on both sides of the Atlantic. Without a carefully crafted message in the newspapers at home and in Canada, the CEH would have failed, like many of its early nineteenth-century predecessors did, for a lack of public support. For advocates of child emigration, who recognized that removing children from their homes and sending them to another continent could be deemed extreme and irreversible, the public's endorsement of the institution was vital to accomplishing their mission.

Public opinion of child emigration became particularly important in 1875 following the release of the Doyle Report, an investigation into the organizations sending child emigrants to Canada sponsored by the British government. The fallout from the Doyle Report left one of the early child emigration advocates, Maria Rye, unable to continue her mission for years because of accusations of negligence in the newspapers and the ensuing public backlash. Another prominent child emigration advocate, Annie MacPherson, received far less negative criticism from the Doyle Report and the corresponding attention from the newspapers led to less public backlash, allowing her to continue her charitable mission. Middlemore began the CEH in this environment of greater government oversight and amidst public demands for accountability stemming from the Doyle Report. Middlemore was acutely aware of the fallout of the Doyle Report for Rye and MacPherson, and he clearly understood that for the CEH to accomplish its mission, it needed to build and maintain a positive and consistent public presence, both to rehabilitate the public

discourse on the poor and to demonstrate accountability in the newspapers of Canada and Great Britain.

This analysis is based on a selection of newspaper articles written from the formation of the CEH in 1872 to the early twentieth century and found in online databases. Approximately 300 articles were found through a combination of keyword searches and by reviewing entire issues around dates of significance in the history of the CEH. Articles referring to Middlemore's work as a child emigration advocate or the CEH were then analysed for recurring themes in the coverage of child welfare stories. The articles featured in this thesis were selected out of a much larger body of news reports as representative of the common themes and modes of discourse that were put before the public. These articles were published in newspapers in Great Britain and Canada, with my analysis emphasizing newspapers from Birmingham and the West Midlands in England (Middlemore's home turf) and Ontario, Canada (where the CEH was most active). Without being able to access Middlemore's personal papers (his archive contains institutional records of the CEH and printed copies of some of his political speeches, but nothing of a personal nature), it is not possible to prove that his was a calculated and premeditated campaign to use the press to advance the causes of his organization. Instead, this analysis focuses on the profile of Middlemore and the CEH in these newspapers and the key themes that formed the basis of the messaging. Over more than twenty years, there is such consistency and constancy in that profile that it would be illogical not to conclude that there was some planning and direction at work. The fact that Middlemore used similar approaches in his later political career further suggests that he had some role in that planning and directing.

Newspapers such as *The Globe*, the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, and the *Birmingham Daily Post* provided favourable coverage of Middlemore and his operation as a way to support his

mission, a stance that required a careful balancing act. To be effective in furthering the goals of the CEH, the newspaper coverage needed to portray the lives of the lower classes in Birmingham as desperate enough that public opinion supported emigration efforts, but not so desperate that readers would imagine the "gutter children"[13] as beyond hope or rehabilitation. Without the potential for rehabilitation to turn child emigrants into productive members of society, the communities where Dr. Middlemore hoped to place his charges would never accept them. Middlemore believed that removing those children from their home environment was a key element to success for the CEH. Because public perception was so important in the acceptance of Middlemore's methods and organization, favourable newspaper coverage was essential for the CEH to gather support. Without favourable coverage by the press and support from both the community in Birmingham as well as in Canada, Middlemore knew his organization could never succeed. To this end, he encouraged newspaper coverage of the CEH to focus on themes that supported his goals and normalized child emigration as part of the mainstream political discourse.

Prejudice and stereotypes aimed at the poorest members of Victorian society posed a significant challenge for Middlemore as he promoted child emigration to reduce poverty and save children from a life of poverty in the slums of Birmingham. These deeply entrenched attitudes towards the poor were the culmination of hundreds of years of frustration with an inadequate poor relief system that placed the burden on the local parish. It is important to recognize that the roots of these attitudes go back much further than the Industrial Revolution, the traditional starting point for analysis. The stereotypes and prejudice addressed by Middlemore to rehabilitate the image of child emigrants, including laziness, criminality, and

[13] "The Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* December 10th, 1873.

delinquency, were entrenched in the public opinion of Great Britain, and by extension Canada, long before the Industrial Revolution.

The successful launch of the Child Emigration Movement in the 1860s came after several previous attempts at child emigration schemes had failed. These early schemes failed due to a lack of funding, the absence of public support, and the logistical impracticality of providing oversight to keep track of the children in Canada. Charities such as the Children's Friend Society, the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy, and the Royal Philanthropic School a few children to Canada, Australia, and other parts of the British Empire in the early 1800s.[14] The use of parish taxes to fund child emigration was legalized in 1834 but still required a vote of the taxpayers, who were often reluctant to support such initiatives.[15] The governments receiving children often supported these early child emigration efforts as they sought young, able bodied boys and girls as a source of labour and to build the population.[16] However, it was not until the 1860s that enough of the British public became comfortable with the idea of child emigration to make it a viable solution to address the worsening levels of poverty.

This analysis of the Children's Emigration Homes demonstrates the influence of national and local newspapers on public perceptions of child emigrants from the Birmingham area from the 1872 to the 1898, when the CEH moved their receiving home from London, Ontario to Halifax, Nova Scotia. It demonstrates a concerted effort by Middlemore to craft consistent messaging to be distributed to the public in Canada and Great Britain. As private charities received inconsistent public funding, the CEH relied on the financial support of its local

[14] Roy Parker, *Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2008) 3.
[15] *Ibid,* 4.
[16] *Ibid*.

communities and philanthropists to make up the difference. Negative public perception of the children and the organization's mission, due to media coverage, would make it difficult to promote the virtues of child emigration and raise funds. For the organization to be effective, the public needed to be convinced of two things: that there was need, and that the mission could succeed. Showing that there was a need for the Child Emigration Movement meant portraying the children as having little or no value to British society. However, to gain acceptance in the receiving community, a positive public perception of the children was essential. Newspapers covered the rehabilitation of the children under the care of the CEH and told stories of their progress. Predictably, the children began to show signs of promise and potential after being admitted to the charitable organization's care in Birmingham. By the time they departed for Canada, they were on their way to being "productive citizens," and once they had landed, the success stories, it was hoped, would begin to steadily filter back thorough the newspapers in Great Britain.

The historiography of the Child Emigration Movement neglects the significance of how the public viewed child emigrants and the important role of newspapers in changing this image from the "gutter child" suffering in urban slums to a happy and healthy child in rural Canada. While prominent philanthropists and critics of the Child Emigration Movement did much to shape public perception and the policy discourse through the newspapers, they did so against the backdrop of longstanding and deep-seated prejudice against the impoverished. The catalyst for the Child Emigration Movement's success proved to be a shift in attitudes brought on by desperation as the Industrial Revolution exacerbated the declining conditions of the poor in Great Britain. Government officials grasped at any means available to alleviate the burden of poor relief on the local government and child emigration advocates stepped forward to fill the role.

Newspapers played an essential role in convincing the public that child emigration was a reasonable, cost-effective, and safe alternative to the increasingly dire conditions of the Birmingham slums.

Joy Parr published the first scholarly monograph in Canada to focus on the Child Emigration Movement in 1980, *Labouring Children: British Apprentices in Canada, 1969-1924.* Her doctoral dissertation studied 80,000 children who emigrated with the assistance of charitable organizations. Before Parr's work, the Child Emigration Movement was a footnote in the boom-and-bust cycle of Canadian immigration during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Parr's analysis of the poverty cycle in working-class British families provides a starting point for understanding the realities of life in Victorian Britain towards the end of the nineteenth century. Child and teenage labour repaid the expense of bringing up children in the best of circumstances, but working-class families were only ever an accident or tragedy away from ruin.[17] Parr's economic analysis of working-class families frames the difficult decisions many families faced when confronted with unexpected tragedy, illness, or adverse events that might leave them unable to support a child until they could begin to earn wages. For members of the rapidly expanding working class during the Industrial Revolution, financial disaster was only a few missed days of wages away. The realities of working-class life inspired the desire for child emigration by organizations such as the Children's Emigration Homes and Parr's work emphasizes the economic impact of child emigration on working class families.

Parr's analysis of child emigrants from Barnardo's Homes, the largest and most prominent organization to promote child emigration, demonstrates the vulnerability of the

[17] Joy Parr, *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1980), 23.

children sent to Canada while also questioning claims of the stable, safe, and healthy lives in Canada that child emigrating charities made to parish authorities in Britain. Parr's statistical analysis of children taken in by Barnardo's refutes the idea, commonly expounded by emigration societies, that many of the child migrants were orphans who had little to keep them in their homeland.[18] Parr raised questions regarding the claims of "child saving" by charities in Victorian Britain and the quality of life they claimed to provide these children.[19] Parr challenged the conventional wisdom by raising the public's misconceptions of the work being done by child emigrating organizations and the corresponding effort made to present their charitable work to the public in a more favourable light. Furthermore, Parr's analysis shows that even the largest of these charities was aware of its reliance on public perception to succeed. On a national scale, child emigration organizations needed to encourage newspaper stories of successful integration into Canadian society to advertise the success of their operation. The CEH also used stories of successful integration; however, Middlemore expanded the message to appeal to the local community and publicized the rehabilitation of the child's character while in the organization's care.

In 1980, journalist Kenneth Bagnell published *The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada.* A surge in public interest during the 1970s encouraged people to speak frankly about immigration to Canada and many child emigrants became more willing to discuss their past in interviews with Bagnell.[20] While *The Little Immigrants* lacks a strong thesis and coherent argument, the book spurred genealogical interest in the Child Emigration Movement and

[18] *Ibid*, 110.
[19] *Ibid*.
[20] *Kenneth Bagnell, The Little Immigrants*: The Orphans Who Came to Canada, (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 18.

Bagnell's focus on individual experiences appealed to a wider audience. These stories of the discrimination and hardships endured by child emigrants provide insight into their lives after arriving in Canada.[21]

Bagnell related the stories of the children, not the organizations, and revealed anecdotal evidence of the Movement's impact on the formative years of child emigrants.[22] Bagnell's interviews with child emigrants demonstrate the need for charities like the CEH to encourage Canadian communities to accept these child emigrants, who might otherwise suffer rejection due to the discrimination rooted in the negative attitudes and prejudice surrounding poverty. These stories often contrasted with the public perception of child emigration, where organizations such as the CEH portrayed an image of diligent oversight when it became aware of abuse and acted quickly to address allegations of impropriety. The interviews conducted by Bagnell provide new evidence of abuse that went beyond the records of organizations such as Barnardo's or the CEH. Bagnell used these interviews to add the perspective of the children to the historiography of the Child Emigration Movement. Frequently, stories of abuse never made it to the newspapers as these stories represented a failure on the part of the organization to care for their charges. In the rare case where an article was written about the abuse of a child of the CEH, the organization was quick to remove the children, and the organization was often portrayed as being quick to act and having taken an active role in prosecuting the abuser. Bagnell's interviews show that abuse was far more pervasive than portrayed in the newspapers.

The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939, written by Marjorie Kohli and published in 2003, begins its analysis of the Child Emigration Movement with the first

[21] *Ibid, 20.*
[22] *Ibid*, 63.

attempts at organized child emigration early in Queen Victoria's reign.[23] *The Golden Bridge* emphasizes the distinction between Protestant and Catholic organizations, as well as between the Poor Law (state-affiliated) child emigrants and private organizations.[24] Religious affiliation or state sponsorship added to the challenges of government oversight and the patchwork system that emerged from the Doyle Report to demand accountability from organizations seeking to send child emigrants abroad. Private organizations such as the CEH used their considerable influence on projecting accountability to the public in a system where negative attention in the news brought government scrutiny. Furthermore, the sectarian divide between Catholics and Protestants meant that the idea of a child emigrant from one denomination being brought up in another denomination was particularly contentious and could bring newspaper attention.

Kohli's account concluded that stereotypes of poverty remained pervasive amongst Canadians in the early nineteenth century and produced the stigma of laziness and shame that was attached to the poor and projected onto child emigration. The CEH maintained a consistent and positive presence in the newspapers of Birmingham and Canada to encourage applicants for the placement of children by combatting these stereotypes. However, the CEH was one organization of many competing for donations and support from a public with deeply rooted ideas regarding the causes and effects of poverty, such as laziness and criminal behaviour. Positive newspaper coverage of the CEH often included a list of supportive government officials and dignitaries to promote confidence in the organization and have it stand out amongst the many organizations involved in the Child Emigration Movement.

[23] Marjorie Kohli, *The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants To Canada, 1833-1939* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books. 2003) 1-11.
[24] *Ibid*.

Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917, Roy Parker's analysis of the Child Emigration Movement, explores both the Catholic charities and their Protestant Evangelical counterparts. The Catholic charities were founded to keep Catholic children out of the Protestant Evangelical charities and potential conversion from the faith of their birth.[25] This religious friction added a new dimension to the decision of each local government about whether to support child emigration. Parker also examines Victorian ideas of working-class legal parental rights and how child-saving charities sought to subvert these rights to remove children from their homes.[26] The increasing financial burden of welfare initiatives, compounded by the introduction of compulsory schooling at the end of the nineteenth century, incentivized some local governments to further subvert the parental rights of the impoverished and reduce public expenditure through child emigration schemes.[27]

The increasing cost of welfare in the nineteenth century led to changes in the Poor Law governance of poverty relief to allow for child emigration, albeit initially on strict grounds. Local support for child emigration became significant for child-emigrating organizations and local officials seized the opportunity to reduce the burden of poverty on the public. Parker's analysis of the structure of local government and its relationship with child emigration schemes explored an essential partnership for any child emigrating organization to achieve success. Without support from the local government, no child emigrant could have been sent to Canada. Meanwhile, public officials enjoyed exposure in the newspapers for taking action to reduce an unpopular public burden, poor relief.

[25] Parker, *Uprooted,* 91.
[26] *Ibid*, 80.
[27] *Ibid,* 88.

Ellen Boucher analyzes the Child Emigration Movement using an imperial, race-based approach. In *Empire's Children: Child Emigration, Welfare, and the Decline of the British World, 1869-1967*, Boucher includes other settler societies such as Australia and Great Britain's colonies in Africa to understand the racial aspects of the Child Emigration Movement. [28] Boucher analyses the Child Emigration Movement as part of Great Britain's colonial policy and how child emigrants fit the preference for white settlers.[29] The racial preference outweighed the supposed taint of poverty that these children carried with them. [30] Middlemore and his attempts to rehabilitate the image of child emigrants through the newspapers of Great Britain and Canada functioned as a privatized extension of the racial preference by providing a supply of young, white immigrants to Canada. Newspapers played an integral role in Middlemore's ability to change public opinion of poverty and facilitate the acceptance of child emigrants into the community by providing stories that emphasized their redemption once removed from the slums of Birmingham. Meeting the racial preferences of this imperial policy, combined with a Canadian government seeking to increase immigration was not enough. Middlemore needed to address local Canadian concerns that accepting the children of the poor into their community would not soil the morality of their society. Middlemore needed to show that these children were not the "dregs" of British society, and he could only communicate that message through articles featuring stories of child emigrants acting contrary to the stereotypes. Perceptions that these children were lazy freeloaders and criminals followed them as common stereotypes of the poor and made Middlemore's mission to send them to Canada significantly harder to accomplish.

[28] Ellen Boucher, *Empire's Children* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2014), 237.
[29] *Ibid*, 247.
[30] *Ibid*, 240.

In *Great Canadian Expectations: The Middlemore Experience,* Patricia Roberts-Pichette suggests that while other leaders of the Child Emigration Movement may have had ulterior motives, altruism drove Middlemore's mission to send children to Canada.[31] As a member of the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa, in 2001 Roberts-Pichette started the Middlemore Indexing Project to transfer copies of the Children's Emigration Homes files from microfilm at Library and Archives Canada to the society's website, thereby increasing their accessibility to the public.[32] Published in 2016, this monograph focuses on the CEH as an organization, whereas previous historical analysis focused on the larger Child Emigration Movement.

Roberts-Pichette provides a comprehensive account of Middlemore, the Children's Emigration Homes, and life in Birmingham during the Industrial Revolution. She follows the children's journey to their new homes in Ontario before the switch to operations in the Maritimes. Roberts-Pichette also comments on the growing influence of the eugenics movement in the public health and social policies, as well as the opposition of eugenicists to child emigration.[33] This is especially pertinent when combined with the strong anti-immigration stance of other prominent groups, such as organized labour, which opposed the use of child emigrants as free labour undercutting paid jobs. Eugenics and labour groups both encouraged public perceptions of the poor that relied on negative stereotypes, including physical deformities, lack of intelligence, a propensity for crime, and the corruption of Canadian society.[34] These stereotypes, which portrayed poverty as an inheritable disease, explain the public's hesitance to

[31] Roberts-Pichette, *Great Canadian Expectations,* 39.
[32] *Ibid*, 15.
[33] *Ibid*, 128.
[34] *Ibid*.

accept child emigrants. These labour and eugenics activists wrote in newspapers to discourage child emigration and countered efforts by Middlemore to convince communities that a child emigrant could be a productive and valuable member of society if given a fresh start. The theme of poverty as a disease that would corrupt Canadian society played off the prejudice that followed child emigrants across the Atlantic and emphasized newspapers as a battleground for this public debate. Middlemore needed newspaper articles to show Canadian communities that child emigrants from the CEH would not poison the community as labour activists and eugenics supporters claimed.

The historiography of the Child Emigration Movement has undergone several significant shifts since Joy Parr published *Labouring Children: British Apprentices in Canada, 1969-1924.* The first historians to address the Child Emigration Movement studied the major charities, such as Barnardo's Homes, or the major personalities of the era, such as Annie MacPherson and Maria Rye. These historians conducted quantitative analysis on the cost and of the child emigrants to Ontario. Opposition to the Child Emigration Movement and the religious divides between the various major child emigrating organizations feature prominently in these histories, as does the role of government in promoting and overseeing the child emigration and the organizations responsible for the welfare of the children. However, by the end of the twentieth century, interest broadened to include child emigration to different parts of the British Empire. The most recent historiographical contributions include a more nuanced look at a wider selection of charitable organizations, such as the Children's Emigration Homes, and involved with child emigration across all provinces, in contrast to the previous focus on Ontario. The later experiences of the children also attracted attention as digitized resources made it easier to trace their fate of many child emigrants. This in turn revealed the lack of accountability shown by

many of the charitable organizations, in contrast to the trustworthy and conscientious image presented by Middlemore through newspaper articles.

By the early twenty-first century, scholarly attention expanded in scope to reflect the diversity of the organizations and personalities involved in the Child Emigration Movement. The focus moved from children primarily living in the East End of London to other parts of Great Britain. Furthermore, through research on smaller charities outside of London, a diverse and varied account of the experiences of child emigrants emerged with outcomes ranging from abuse and mistreatment to adoption into their host's family and community.

The Children's Emigration Homes relied on friendly newspaper coverage in Birmingham and Canada to further its child-emigrating operations. The activities of the CEH and child emigrants became local news as reports on fundraising, notices of the children leaving, and their exploits once in Canada became a regular occurrence. The child emigrants from Birmingham came from some of the poorest, most impoverished backgrounds and suffered from many of the societal perceptions long associated with poverty in Great Britain, perceptions that followed them to their new homes in Canada, no matter how hard they tried to escape them. Friendly newspaper coverage used four major themes to project a positive public image and counteract the efforts of critics: the transformation of a child's character during their time at the CEH, the success of the organization's mission, organizational accountability, and the consequences of these children remaining in Birmingham.

Middlemore's work at the CEH came at a critical time in the Child Emigration Movement. After the movement's initial success in convincing the public of their charitable mission, in no small part due to pressure from the increasing cost of poor relief, public opinion

began to shift in favour of child emigration. However, public outcry over Inspector Doyle's parliamentary report on the systemic flaws in the work of early child emigration advocates Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson exposed both organizations to public backlash. The Doyle Report resulted in the sweeping halt of Rye's work for a decade and greatly increased public scrutiny over child emigration. With public support increasingly critical to success when Middlemore began the CEH, a shrewd media strategy became crucial for the continuation of his mission. As this thesis will show, the CEH and Middlemore worked assiduously to ensure that friendly newspapers promoted these key themes to boost public confidence in the CEH even as they encouraged donations to the cause.

Prejudicial Attitudes towards the Poor and the Implications for the Child Emigration Movement

The Child Emigration Movement emerged as a potential solution to a host of economic, political, and social problems in Great Britain during the Victorian era. However, one must go back much further to understand how public perception and the stigmatization of the poor created a context in which child emigration schemes flourished. Child emigration scholars often place the Industrial Revolution at the root of many of these problems. But, by isolating the Industrial Revolution, they disregard much of the historical context that allows us to understand how attitudes regarding poverty manifested in society, and consequently the newspaper coverage of the Child Emigration Movement. Middlemore recognized that the CEH needed the support of the public to avoid failings like the child emigration schemes of the early 1800s. First. stereotypes of the poor as lazy, criminal, and beyond redemption needed to be rehabilitated so that child emigrants were welcomed into Canadian communities. Second, the public needed to be convinced that supporting child emigration would reduce poverty and the cost of poor relief on local communities.

Despite playing a prominent role in promoting child emigrating organizations such as the CEH from the 1860s until the end of the Child Emigration Movement in the 1930s, the press also reinforced a disdain for, and in some cases a fear of, the working classes and the poor. Likewise, the Canadian labour movement furthered its own agenda of defending domestic jobs from the threat of unpaid foreign workers by protesting the influx of child emigrants.[35] Despite this opposition, the Canadian government countered newspaper narratives of child emigrants in its

[35] Roberts-Pichette, *Great Canadian Expectations*, 128.

defence of the Child Emigration Movement through positive investigations of the practice and reports of the child emigrants thriving in their new environment to encourage further population growth.

The emigration of children as a viable policy alternative to reduce poverty emerged from the inadequacy of an obsolete Poor Law system and the failure of subsequent attempts at poverty relief to help the poorest members of the working classes. While economic difficulties created the dire circumstances that mobilized child emigration advocates, supporters of child emigration still required political and economic support to realize their vision. This vision was often clouded by stereotypes such as idleness, wastefulness, and criminal behaviour. A fear of the working class and hopes of reducing their burden on British society drove this support as much as philanthropy, but this fear perpetuated often-marked vulnerable child emigrants as subversive, lazy troublemakers when they arrived in their new Canadian homes.

The attitudes that shaped public perceptions of the poor in Britain, and by extension the image of child emigrants from impoverished backgrounds, were rooted in the sixteenth century, as is the government's responsibility to care for the poor in England.[36] Following King Henry VIII's break with the Roman Catholic Church and the Act of Supremacy in 1534, many of the traditional institutions that provided relief to the poor ceased to exist.[37] The State's replacement welfare infrastructure, once settled, created the foundation for attitudes that demonized the poor as lazy and idle burdens on the community by making poor relief a local taxpayer responsibility with little to show for the financial outlay. The Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 relied on the local

[36] Anne Digby, *The Poor Law in Nineteenth Century England and Wales*, Great Britain Historical Association, 5.
[37] Gerald Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation: Third Edition*. (Cambridge: James Clarke Company, Limited: 2019).

government and the parish to levy taxes using what became known as the poor rate, thereby creating a direct, visual connection between taxation and those receiving poor relief in the community. [38] Policymakers designed the Elizabethan Poor Law for a largely rural population of approximately four million people and the system struggled to adapt to both urban migration and continued population growth. The Elizabethan Poor Law in 1601 was the culmination of a century of attempted Tudor reforms to address systemic poverty.[39] The resulting decentralized system for the distribution of the poor rates made the impoverished a directly linked burden on the local community and set a precedent for the welfare state over the next 300 years.

The public nature of poor relief led to the stigmatization of poverty and the attachment of shame to the label of pauper.[40] Negative perceptions, stereotypes, and reactions centred around accusing the poor of criminal behaviour, laziness, and exploiting the system.[41] Many parishes looked for ways to circumvent or lessen the local burden of the Poor Law through schemes that sought to apprentice poor children or billet them in the community. The large supply of pauper children quickly met demand for their services in parishes that implemented such schemes. The Whalley parish in Lancashire provides a prime example of pauper children as a readily available labour source and its initial popularity as a solution. The Poor Law overseers of Whalley parish placed over a hundred children in apprenticeships in 1631.[42] By 1632 the number of apprentices dropped to one-tenth of that number, a trend that continued until 1636 when the authorities only

[38] Alexander M. Zukas, Encyclopaedia of Social Action and Justice, edited by Gary L. Anderson and Kathryn G. Herr, "Elizabethan Poor Law" Zukas, Alexander M. "Elizabethan Poor Law." In *Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice*, edited by Gary L. Anderson and Kathryn G. Herr, 518-520.
[39] Jonathan Healey, *The First Century of Welfare: Poverty and Poor Relief in Lancashire, 1620-1730*. NED - New edition. (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2014) 56.
[40] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 17.
[41] Digby, *The Poor Law in Nineteenth Century England and Wales*, 5.
[42] Jonathan Healey, *The First Century of Welfare,* 64-65.

placed a few children.[43] The scale and feasibility of these schemes proved too ineffective at reducing the financial burden of the poor on the parish to be worth the effort at the time. With the Poor Law now a firmly established part of local government across England by the 1630s, Poor Law overseers had already begun searching for first ways to reduce the burden of raising poor rates while offloading their responsibility for the impoverished members of the community, especially children. Parishes such as Whalley continued to experiment with new ways of relieving this burden up into the nineteenth century and the Industrial Revolution. As this thesis will show, when the economics of child emigration schemes became sufficiently affordable and financially feasible to philanthropists, local politicians, and the voting public, it became an attractive policy alternative to traditional poor relief.

In the early years of the Poor Law, local authorities frequently attempted to attach shame to poverty and pauperism, with the assistance of Parliament. A statute passed by Parliament in 1697 required the "badging" of paupers to identify those considered deserving of relief and to reduce begging by reminding the population that they paid for the relief through the poor rates.[44] While the frequency and method of badging depended largely upon the Poor Law officer and the parish, the purpose of the badge quickly became clear: it was a symbol of humiliation.[45] The badging of the poor extended to the family of those receiving institutional relief.[46] Badging the family of those who accepted relief ensured that children would inherit the taint of poverty and its perceived social ills such as laziness, moral corruption, and willful dependence on the system. John Locke, in his role as a member of the Board of Trade in Great Britain, reported in 1697 that

[43] *Ibid, 64-65*.
[44] Steve Hindle, 'Dependency, Shame and Belonging: Badging the Deserving Poor, c. 1550 to 1750," Culture and Social History, 2004; 1-8.
[45] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 17.
[46] Hindle, *Badging the Poor*, 10.

the poor did not suffer from shortages or a lack of employment, but from "the relaxation of discipline and the corruption of manners."[47] Locke's report reflected growing public concern for the financial burden that the poor placed on the local community since the implementation of the Elizabethan Poor Law. Portraying children as inheritors of vice, social corruption, and poverty contributed to their public image as a drain on society before they even had an opportunity to establish themselves. While individual parishes applied badging inconsistently, Parliament clearly intended to attach social humiliation to those accepting institutional aid.

The creation of workhouses within the Poor Law system added a new dimension to the shame and punishment of poverty, while magnifying the alienation of the impoverished from the rest of society. Elected officials in local government found ways to reduce the burden of poor relief to be popular with voters and allow them to stay in power. Experiments, such as workhouses and later the Child Emigration Movement, received increasing support from the public as elected officials looked for a return on their investment in poor relief. For the city of Bristol, Parliament passed "(a)n Act for rendering more effectual the several acts passed for the erecting of hospitals and workhouses within the city of Bristol, for the better employing and maintaining of the poor thereof"[48] to raise "five thousand pounds, to be raised within the space of three years, or any longer time."[49] The purpose of these experimental workhouses was explicit: to lessen the burden of the poor on the parish by providing on opportunity for the parish to recoup some of the funds spent.

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[47] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution,* 17.
[48] Great Britain. An Act for rendering more effectual the several Acts passed for the erecting of hospitals and workhouses within the city of Bristol, for the better employing and maintaining of the poor thereof. [London], [1745]. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.
[49] *Ibid*.

While the Bristol Workhouse experiment failed, largely due to the unsustainable levels of work required to make it economically feasible, other parishes started their own workhouses. The *Act of 1723*, which allowed parishes to act together for poor relief efforts, made the economics of these workhouse schemes more financially feasible. While parish Poor Law officers did not necessarily expect them to become self-sufficient, they believed that the hard labour and separation from one's family could act as a deterrent to accepting relief from the state.[50] Disincentivizing the acceptance of state relief became the priority for these officers according to Matthew Marriott, an avid early supporter of workhouses.[51] Marriott claimed that the benefit of a workhouse "(d)oes not arise from what the poor people can do towards their own subsistence, but from the apprehensions the poor have of it. These prompt them to exert and do their utmost to keep themselves off the parish and render them exceedingly averse to submit to come into the house until extreme necessity compels them."[52]

The deterrence aspect of workhouses came to include the breakup of families. The separation of children from their families came about as a result of the child mortality rates in the workhouses. In 1766, philanthropist Jonas Hanway published "An Earnest Appeal for Mercy to the Children of the Poor" as part of his research into the children living in workhouses. He refuted Great Britain's status as a civilized nation if,

> As far as I can trace out the evil, there has been such devastation within the bills of mortality, for half a century part, that at a moderate computation 1000 or 1200 children have annually perished, under the direction of parish officers. I say under their direction, not that they ordered them to be killed; but that they did

[50] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 20.
[51] John Broad, "Housing the Rural Poor in Southern England, 1650-1850." *The Agricultural History Review* 48:2 (2000), 168.
[52] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 20.

> not order such means to be used, as are necessary to keep them alive. How will this stand recorded in our annals![53]

In his study of two of the more prosperous parishes in England, St. Giles in the Field and St. George's, Bloomsbury, Hanway recorded that only a tenth of the infants who entered the workhouses survived more than a year after they arrived.[54] These statistics are unsurprising in the notoriously appalling and horrific conditions of the workhouses. Hanway made significant progress in producing legislation that resulted in lower mortality rates of institutionalized pauper children while setting the stage for multiple inquiries to monitor the wellbeing of these impoverished children. The necessity of separating children from their families in workhouses, however good it was for the health of the children, set precedents that were later used to justify the removal of children from their homes in the nineteenth century during the Child Emigration Movement by organizations such as the CEH.

By separating family members when they arrived at the workhouse, the Poor Law overseers showed an increased willingness to punish those members of society who accepted institutional relief from poverty. The precedent set by workhouse policy inadvertently helped lay the groundwork for some of the more drastic methods of addressing poverty practised by charities and organizations during the Child Emigration Movement. These tactics, such as removing children from the country without the consent of their family, indicated an increasingly interventionist attitude in Local Government Boards, Parliament, and private charities that needed the government's blessing to encroach upon areas that once belonged to the private sphere of British life. Any charity that operated with the purpose of removing children from their

[53] Jonas Hanway, "An Earnest Appeal for Mercy to the Children of the Poor: Particularly Those Belonging to the Parishes Within the Bills of Mortality." *An Earnest Appeal for Mercy to the Children of the Poor.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[54] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 25.

families during the Victorian era undoubtedly capitalized on this development to complete its mission.

The Industrial Revolution exacerbated the shortcomings in the Poor Law System. The upheaval of society and the economy, coupled with increases in the number of working-class citizens, left many people only an illness or injury away from financial ruin and dependence upon the parish. As Parr argues in *Labouring Children*, the family economy became an even more important factor in the likelihood of a working-class Briton enjoying any prosperity.[55] Wages began to stagnate, and an oversaturated labour market allowed employers to offer jobs with wages that proved insufficient to meet their employee's basic needs. In many fields, the competitive wage in the labour market could not keep pace with the rising price of bread, especially as the price fluctuated in response to contemporary events such as the Napoleonic Wars.[56] The labour market forced families to increase their reliance on child labour, underpaid and dangerous as it was, for fear of falling further into destitution.

The transition from a primarily agrarian labour force to a rapidly industrializing and increasingly urban economy, exposed systemic flaws in the Poor Law system. The failure of the Poor Law to address poverty in Great Britain made the public more amenable to proposals that they once considered too radical and expensive, especially the work proposed by advocates of child emigration in the early nineteenth century. Child emigration advocates argued that the inadequacy of the Poor Law system when faced with the conditions of the Industrial Revolution required more drastic solutions to stem the increasing burden of the poor on the public purse. The shortcomings of the Poor Law system became even more obvious with the ensuing struggle

[55] Parr, "Labouring Children," 21.
[56] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 101.

to address the mobility of workers and the responsibility of their home parish to provide relief if they became unemployed and required institutional relief.[57] Further, the 1701 Act of Settlement limited the mobility of the poor and instead kept them in poverty when there was work available in other parts of the country.[58]

As the Poor Law struggled to handle the declining economic condition of the poor posed by the Industrial Revolution, the enclosure of commonly held plots of land began to complicate matters even further. These commonly held plots once allowed tenants in rural areas to grow their own food for times of economic hardship or famine. [59] When landlords began to enclose this land, in accordance with the *Inclosure Act of 1773* (sic), Parliament legalized the gradual removal of another one of the traditional means of survival relied upon by the rural poor. Consequently, hard times led to increased urban migration by agricultural wage workers without food.[60] Inevitably, this concentration of impoverished people during the Industrial Revolution created the crowded, unhealthy, and deplorable conditions of abject poverty that mobilized the first advocates of child emigration to seek a solution to these burgeoning social crises. Exposure to the consequences of urban migration inspired child emigration advocates such as Middlemore to offer their organizations as a solution that would reduce public expenditure on the poor, improve the conditions of urban slums, and slow the growth of the impoverished population in cities.

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[57] Taylor, *Poverty, Migration and Settlement in the Industrial Revolution*, 8.
[58] First Report from the Select Committee on Settlement, and Poor Removal, together with the minutes of evidence taken before them. 1847, House of Commons Papers volume page XI.1 Volume 11, Collection: 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 19-22 (1-90).
[59] United Kingdom, House of Commons, *First Report from the Select Committee on Settlement, and Poor Removal*, 672.
[60] Zach Fruit, "Enclosure," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 46, (2018) 672-675.

The responsibility for the poor remained at the parish level and gave local administrators the impetus to experiment with poor relief.[61] Many of these administrators, operating with little oversight and significant pressure from local ratepayers to reduce the expense of poor relief on the parish, abandoned their responsibilities to the poor when presented with solutions such as child emigration.[62] The literature on the Child Emigration Movement often limits the causes of such abject poverty and the dire economic circumstances of the lower classes in Great Britain to the Industrial Revolution and the societal developments of the late nineteenth century. However, it is the failure of the British government over centuries to address a systemically flawed system for the distribution of poor relief that fostered the apathy necessary for private charities to step in. Once given the opportunity, these charities developed child emigration from an obscure social experiment to an influential movement.

As the population of the lower classes increased in Britain during the nineteenth century, failure to adapt only compounded the parish's struggles to provide relief to the poor. Apart from reforms by Jonas Hanway that saved the lives of children formerly condemned to the workhouse, the Poor Law system remained incapable of meeting the needs of a rising population.[63] According to Jean Heywood, "inadequate and sometimes inhuman methods, which the poor law administrators used in order to fulfill their statutory obligations to the homeless and orphaned children were responsible for the development of alternative forms of care pioneered by humanitarians and philanthropists."[64] The apathy of British leaders in responding to the modern problems of poverty, combined with their paternalistic views of the poor, left them open to

[61] *Ibid*, 672-675.
[62] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution,* 54.
[63] *Ibid*, 76.
[64] Heywood, *Children in Care*, 34.

solutions that allowed them to shift responsibility of the poor to other private organizations and to colonial governments.

Broader international events played a role in stoking fear of the poor as well, heightening the consequences of failed poor relief and increasing the willingness of politicians to turn to drastic measures such as child emigration as a solution to poverty. The French Revolution, rebellions in Ireland, the Luddite revolts, and the rise of unionized labour groups all helped to foster a culture of distrust and fear towards those struggling with poverty in Britain. The Luddite revolts, where machine-breaking protestors rebelled against the capitalist infrastructure and technological advances that made their jobs obsolete, threatened their livelihood, and reduced their standard of living. These revolts showed a willingness of the poor to resort to domestic agitation to achieve political goals.[65] The British government suppressed the Luddites with shocking severity, using mass trials, executions, and penal transportation as a means to deter future revolts.[66] Furthermore, politicians and political economists had only to look as far as the French Revolution to have all their most dire fears of the poor validated. [67] As the economic condition of the poor in Britain continued to deteriorate, the Napoleonic Wars proved a temporary reprieve as the army provided employment for and led to the employment or death of many unemployed men.[68] The overarching goal of poor relief in Great Britain became as much to suppress any radical political dissent from gaining traction as to help the impoverished.[69]

[65] *The Luddites, and other essays*, edited by Lionel M. Munby (London: Michael Katanka Books Ltd., 1971) 33.
[66] *Ibid*, 242.
[67] Taylor, *Poverty and Migration in the Industrial Revolution*, 98.
[68] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 150.
[69] *Ibid*, 158.

Fear played an important role in the emergence of the Child Emigration Movement as a politically viable force. Britain remained both dependent on its working class for its economic prosperity, and in constant fear that this dependency might lead to too much power for the working class. International and domestic politics created the conditions that allowed the Child Emigration Movement to flourish. The political climate and entrenched attitudes towards the poor also created a need for a rehabilitated image of the poor so that the arrival of child emigrants would be more palatable to communities receiving them. This context also helps explains why child emigration failed at the start of the nineteenth century yet was able to flourish fifty years later, as the Child Emigration Movement gained in popularity as a viable solution to poverty throughout the nineteenth century.

The gradual acceptance of child emigration as a legitimate and even desirable policy option throughout the nineteenth century can also be explained by false economy, where an action taken to save money appears to do so but eventually wastes more resources. The combination of low spending by the British Parliament and the existence of willing private charities allowed many politicians, especially at the parish level, to abandon their traditional responsibility for the upkeep of the poor and avoid addressing the root causes of poverty. By the second half of the nineteenth century, charities such as the Children's Emigration Home run by Middlemore were operating in a political climate where poor relief became as much about suppressing the political power of the poor as it was helping them. The dysfunction and inflexibility of poor relief led to a reputation of wastefulness and an overreliance on parish support. Simultaneously, the rising popularity of unions and organized labour posed a threat to the established political order and increased the concern of domestic agitation by the lower

classes. The political challenges of the era, as much as the economic tumult of the Industrial Revolution, played an important role in the viability of the Child Emigration Movement.

Parish authorities consistently attempted to find solutions to reduce the burden of poor relief on the parish. The development of a culture of shame on parish dependency and the fiscal expense caused by this dependency motivated many Poor Law overseers to embrace child emigration to reduce their responsibility for the most vulnerable people in the community. The decentralized nature of the parish left a significant amount of room for, and even encouraged, experimentation to reduce expenses. It also allowed the government to keep the expense of poor relief largely on the local level, thereby preventing the comprehensive reform needed. In the wake of civil, economic, and political disruption, the earliest forms of the Child Emigration Movement emerged. By 1834, the evolution of legislation would allow Poor Law Unions to obtain loans to assist emigration of the poor from England.[70]

The stigmatization of the poor in England had far-reaching implications for the public's perceptions of the Child Emigration Movement. The emergence of attitudes towards the poor that were, at best, lacking empathy allowed legislators to approve interference in the private realm of British life and remove children from the care of their parents, a monumental development for the time.[71] The emergence of state intervention in private sphere was, somewhat ironically, the indirect result of Parliament's previous reluctance to intervene for fear of taking on added expenses or raising a new tax.[72] The debates on child migration often played out in the local and national newspapers, turning children into pawns whose success or failure was

[70] Parker, *Uprooted*, 3.
[71] Inglis, *Poverty and the Industrial Revolution*, 243.
[72] *Ibid.*

highlighted in the service of political agendas. The need for charitable organizations in the Child Emigration Movement to portray child emigrants as worthless to British society yet invaluable to Canadian society meant that newspapers sympathetic to the cause often switched between denigrating the children and promoting their rehabilitation, trading in longstanding centuries-old stereotypes and prejudicial tropes. Without these prejudicial attitudes ingrained in the psyche of Victorian society, the fear of the poor and the working class would not have led to such drastic measures as child emigration.

The Significance of Newspaper Coverage to Child Emigration Advocates

The newspaper industry, both in Britain and Canada, played a critical role in promoting the Child Emigration Movement in the late nineteenth century. First, it demonstrated the need for the public welfare programs by publishing stories on the dire living conditions of prospective child emigrants and endorsed the view that these children might not be a burden on the State given a fresh start. By capitalizing on negative perceptions of impoverished urban areas and the poor through stereotypes that promoted long held fears about the capacity of the lower classes to instigate civil unrest, newspapers promoted the mission of the Child Emigration Movement. Second, it provided a public platform where charities could organize support and rehabilitate the public's negative perception of the impoverished children they hoped to send to Canada in the late nineteenth century. These very public debates in the newspaper industry played a significant role in reforming how more recently established philanthropic organizations, such as the Children's Emigration Homes under Middlemore, carried out their operations.

Newspaper coverage revealed the ability of the press both to attack and to defend the Child Emigration Movement. Later, charities would use this power to influence public perceptions of child emigrants from future criminals in their local English communities to potentially upstanding citizens who would make a fine addition to the burgeoning Canadian labour force. Without the endorsement and support of newspapers in Great Britain as well as in Canada, organizations such as the CEH and philanthropists such as Middlemore would have failed to gain public support for the Child Emigration Movement as had past attempts at child emigration in the early nineteenth century. By using both the British and Canadian press to rehabilitate the public image of child emigrants, Middlemore raised funds for the expansion of

his operation and smoothed the way for future child emigrants as they sought acceptance in Canadian society.

Increased public debate on local issues gave previously unpopular ideas such as child emigration a new audience to win over. State and private institutions focused on improving literacy rates through an expanded government role in education, however it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that most working-class men and women in Britain could read and write. [73] Literacy rates increased with the introduction of legislation limiting child labour and the establishment of compulsory education laws and elementary schools that were accessible to the public.[74] "By the end of the nineteenth century, 70% of the English population could take advantage of subsidized schooling,"[75] representing a dramatic increase in a relatively short period of time. The rise in literacy enabled the working-class to communicate, organize, and inform itself on local issues such as rising crime and poverty, while the expansion of the newspaper industry made communicating, organizing, and educating more affordable.

The rapid growth of the newspaper industry in Great Britain presented an opportunity for child emigration advocates to make their case to the public. In 1800, there were 250 broadsheets in London but few outside of the capital. By the time Middlemore began sending children from Birmingham to Canada through the Children's Emigration Homes in 1873, there were approximately 1,585 newspapers across Great Britain that published a wide array of content from international and national current affairs to local interest pieces.[76] In the space of a few

[73] David Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016) 1.
[74] *Ibid*, 1-4.
[75] *Ibid,* 200-201.
[76] Allan Boughey, "The Victorian Barmaid and the British Press: How She was Defined and Represented in Late-Nineteenth Century Media, and How She Utilized the Press to Fight for Better Pay and Working Conditions, *Journalism History*, 45:1 (2019) 77-80.

generations, newspapers became accessible to all classes and gained significant political influence.

The rise in newspapers also promoted the development of journalism as a profession and its significance for a democratic system. The demand for information from an expanding population, especially in the major urban centres where many of the poorest citizens lived, was one reason for the huge growth in publications in the nineteenth century. Changes in taxation, particularly the end of the duty on stamps in 1855, also reduced publishing costs and made it economically feasible for more publishers to reach their audience.[77] This newly empowered newspaper industry, alongside its colonial counterpart in Canada, demonstrated an ability to drastically shape public opinion for or against a vulnerable group such as the child emigrants.

Journalism underwent sweeping changes during the late nineteenth century. Growing demand for media content from the working classes influenced changes in the topics covered, the language used, and the format to appeal to this growing audience.[78] "Columns replaced with paragraphs, long sentences with short ones, and sober words with sensational ones"[79] to appeal to a wider audience. The content "became less serious, focusing not merely on parliamentary politics but on human interest stories or features,"[80] indicating an increased interest in providing entertainment as well as information. The contemporary attraction of human interest stories made writing on the squalid and dangerous living conditions of children in the lower classes of Victorian society popular, highlighting the problem which philanthropists such as Middlemore hoped to solve through child emigration.

[77] *Ibid*, 82-83.
[78] Mark Hampton, "Newspapers in Victorian Britain," *History Compass* 2 (2004) 101, 2.
[79] *Ibid*.
[80] *Ibid*, 2.

The growing awareness that the working classes were becoming more politically aware of their sense of grievance exacerbated the fears of political and industrial elites as "social control or class hegemony may have motivated early Victorian Educational policymakers … the actual benefits the working class received from education inevitable assumed increasing weight."[81] The increasing political power of the working classes led elites to look for more drastic methods to control the population, such as endorsing child emigration schemes from local philanthropists. State endorsement of plans to separate children from their families represented a new and concerning form of interference in the private lives of British citizens. Furthermore, sending children abroad to the colonies reduced the population of potential troublemakers remaining in Great Britain.

The newspaper industry was as vulnerable to capitalist impulses as the rest of Victorian society. By attending court sessions, reporters could obtain, at little or no cost, material for stories that would shock readers and boost circulation:[82] "The appearance of crime reports in the newspaper columns was disproportionate to the incidence of crime in everyday life."[83] The resulting overabundance of reporting on crime, especially amongst the working classes, exacerbated upper- and middle-class fears of rising criminal activity. The selective use of the information provided in coroners' reports and court sessions by journalists made for compelling reading but presented an increasingly dire picture of crime in the working-class and impoverished urban centres such as Birmingham, where Middlemore's CEH operated. By presenting urban communities as crime-ridden dens of vice and lawlessness, journalists

[81] Mitch, *The Rise of Popular* Literacy, 212.
[82] Paul Atkinson and Ian N. Gregory, "Child Welfare in Victorian Newspapers: Corpus-Based Discourse Analysis." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 48, no. 2 (2017) muse.jhu.edu/article/669145. 170-172.
[83] *Ibid*, 170.

reinforced the idea that once radical policies such as child emigration were necessary to restore order and prevent the decline of cities into anarchy.

By framing the issue of crime and poverty to drive sales, newspapers such as the *Birmingham Daily Post* and the *Birmingham Daily Mail* stimulated demand for social solutions that philanthropists attempted to satisfy. As child emigration became an increasingly acceptable solution to rising fears of the working classes, overpopulation, and the deleterious effects of an urban environment on the physical and moral health of children, newspapers took on dual roles. First, they supported the Child Emigration Movement by promoting the experiences and success stories of the children sent abroad and advertising the most recent initiatives in Great Britain and Canada. Second, they provided a platform for critics concerned with the fiscal, physical, and ethical abuses of a system lacking in official oversight.

On a local scale for the CEH, the *Birmingham Daily Post*, the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, and other local newspapers frequently juxtaposed an article featuring the organization or Middlemore with an article about local crime, gruesome deaths, or an unsolved murder. Whether this was accidental or intentional is less important than the connection it made in the mind of readers: that violence and misery might be mitigated by child emigration. For example, on 10 December, 1873, the *Birmingham Daily Post* reported on the Children's Emigration Homes' holiday bazaar at the Vestry Hall to raise funds for the "gutter children" being saved by Middlemore and his colleagues from the "career of vice and degradation which lay before them."[84] Located beside this article was an article detailing the deterioration of a labour dispute

[84] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, December 10th, 1873. See also "The Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 23rd, 1884.

between the Operative Tin-Plate workers of Wolverhampton and their employers, and a description of the ensuing civil strife.[85]

A similar article published on 19 February, 1878 in the *Birmingham Daily Mail* regarding the building of new facilities for the CEH was preceded by an article on the arrest of a widow with five children for obtaining outdoor relief from a local workhouse.[86] The news of the new child emigration facility was also under the same heading as an article detailing labour strikes in the colliers' union and their subsequent addition to the unemployment rolls, and across from an article detailing a "Supposed Infanticide" at Balsall Heath wherein the child suffered "marks of violence on the head and neck."[87]

These trends in reporting and the placement of articles continued throughout the 1880s. For example, On 8 April, 1881, an article asking the public for donations to help the CEH meet the demand on its resources resulting from housing six times the population it normally served[88] was preceded by an account of the "Fatal Leap From a Train" on the London and North-Western Line.[89] Similarly, on 2 June, 1881 an article in the Birmingham *Daily Mail* celebrating the departure of sixty to seventy children from the CEH with a speech from the Mayor of Birmingham, singled out the personal sacrifice of Dr. Middlemore and the success of his work settling pauper children in Canada. This uplifting article was immediately followed by a column reporting on the most recent case of alleged manslaughter in the city at the Birmingham Workhouse.[90]

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[85] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, December 10th, 1873.
[86] "Local and District News," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, February 19th, 1878.
[87] *Ibid*.
[88] "Children's Emigration Home," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 8th, 1881.
[89] "Fatal Leap From a Train," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 8th, 1881.
[90] "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, June 2nd, 1881.

Sending-off parties, where tea and cakes were served and the relatives of children said their goodbyes, became important social events for the elites of the city. Local newspapers published many accounts of these occasions from the 1870s to the 1890s, and the descriptions are so similar over the years that one can only conclude that there was a certain amount of stage-managing going on, or at least that the CEH worked to achieve consistency in the tone and messaging of the send-offs. According to press accounts, the assembled dignitaries invariably included local politicians, city counsellors, and business leaders. The mayor of Birmingham was frequently in attendance, and his speeches often praised child emigration for its positive effects on the city.[91]

With so many significant Birmingham dignitaries gathered, the sending-off parties naturally drew journalists, who produced articles that usually included excerpts of speeches (especially when the mayor of Birmingham spoke) and listed the local elites who were there to show support for Middlemore and the CEH.[92] In this way, the ritual of seeing the children off as they left for Liverpool to board a ship bound for Canada became more than just a ceremony of departure. It became a way for newspapers to gain access to people of interest to their readers, and to draw attention to the wide support for the CEH and its success at facilitating the emigration of yet another group of children to Canada. The sending-off parties also brought into the picture the families of many of these children, whose presence affirmed both their support for a child's emigration to Canada and their faith in Middlemore, faith enough to entrust him with the care and guardianship of the children. There were many parties that benefited from these

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[91] "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 26th, 1873. "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, June 2nd, 1881; "Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, June 5th, 1894. "Mr. Middlemore's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, June 4th, 1883. "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 25th, 1888; "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, June 18th, 1880.

[92] *Ibid.*

ceremonies, but none more than the CEH, which enjoyed very favourable press coverage wherein trusted local elites and journalists alike praised Middlemore, the CEH, and child emigration as a policy.[93]

Articles were the public's main source of information regarding the Child Emigration Movement and framed the narrative as a choice between child emigration to the clean air and open spaces of rural Canada and a life of degradation, crime, and violence. Readers were led to conclude that without the intervention of child emigrating organizations such as the Children's Emigration Homes, rates of crime would continue to rise as the pauper children who might have been rescued became criminals when they were forced to stay in Birmingham. In this way, newspapers played an important role in reinforcing the perception of increasing rates of crime and violence in the local community and identifying a potential solution in the mission of charities such as the Children's Emigration Homes.

The newspaper industry, both in Britain and Canada, played a critical role in promoting the Child Emigration Movement in the late nineteenth century. Philanthropists such as Dr. Middlemore took advantage of the rapid growth of literacy in Victorian society to make their case on the value of their mission directly to the public. They used local newspapers to demonstrate the need for the public welfare programs by publishing stories on the dire living conditions of prospective child emigrants and the increasing burden of poverty on the State. By capitalizing on negative perceptions of impoverished urban areas and the poor through stereotypes that promoted long held fears about the capacity of the lower classes to instigate civil unrest, newspapers promoted the mission of the Child Emigration Movement. Furthermore,

[93] *Ibid.*

newspapers provided a public platform for charities to organize support and rehabilitate the public's negative perception of the impoverished children they hoped to send to Canada in the late nineteenth century. By rehabilitating the image to remove the taint of poverty, charities such as the CEH hoped to ease their path into Canadian society.

The Importance of the Doyle Report in Shaping the Discourse of Child Emigration

The Evangelical Revival played a crucial role in turning the Child Emigration Movement from an experimental policy proposal into a fully-fledged charitable initiative with support from some factions in Parliament. the Evangelical Revival, bouts of renewed and reinvigorated religious piety and enthusiasm, reached across Protestant denominations in Great Britain and North America. Central to Victorian era Evangelism was conversion, activism, and bible study, which became central features of the CEH's mission.[94] Among the strongest bastions of support for the Child Emigration Movement were Evangelical charities, as activists went into impoverished communities seeking to save the poor from themselves. The lack of central organization behind these groups helps explain the patchwork of networks and diversity of tactics used during the Child Emigration Movement, once they took up the cause. Widespread dissemination of the accounts from activists sharing their experiences brought the stark realities of poverty to the forefront of the Victorian social conscience. Child emigrating operations gave these altruistic activists and philanthropists a youthful audience in which to promote both conversion and bible study as preparation for the journey to Canada.

Prominent early leaders of the Child Emigration Movement such as Annie MacPherson and Thomas Bowman Stephenson came into close contact with the urban poor and their living conditions through their local charitable works and their relationships in the community. Many of these future advocates of child emigration came from a middle-class (or higher) background.[95] This exposure to the plight of impoverished children made them especially sensitive to issues

[94] G.M. Ditchfield, *The Evangelical Revival*, (London: UCL Press, 1998) 26.
[95] *Ibid*, 88.

such as child labour and the perceived deterioration of morality amongst the working-class citizens of Great Britain. In response, rival Catholic affiliated organizations such as the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protection Society soon appeared in urban centres where a strong Irish Catholic population resided in the more impoverished parts of the city.[96] The emergence of a philanthropic group such as the advocates of child emigration allowed the government to extend its reach into the private sphere strategically, with a reduced cost to the taxpayer, a convenient solution for Parliament with its traditional reluctance to raise taxes to fund social programs.[97]

The Evangelical Revival also provided opportunities for women to take a more active role in advocating for reform, both through the writing of literature and the advancement of their values in the local community.[98] Through activism, evangelicalism came to take up humanitarian and moral causes such as the abolition of slavery, wherein they built a strong theological argument that mobilized a solid base of popular support in a petitioning campaign.[99] The application of Christian values to public life became a consistent theme in evangelical circles, where philanthropic evangelical activists and moral reformers mobilized this large base of support for other social, humanitarian, and moral causes such as the welfare of destitute children.[100] Women such as Annie MacPherson and Maria Rye used the opportunity for greater independence provided by the Evangelical Revival to push child emigration schemes as a solution to the social woes they witnessed while caring for the most destitute children in urban centres. In doing so, they developed the idealistic platform from which many future proponents

[96] John Briggs, "Children and Orphans: Some Nonconformist Responses to the Vulnerable in Victorian Britain" *Protestant Dissent and Philanthropy in Great Britain*, (London: Boydell & Brower, 2020) 169-170.
[97] Ditchfield, *The Evangelical Revival*, 90.
[98] *Ibid,* 108.
[99] *Ibid*, 109-111.
[100] Briggs, "Children and Orphans," 180-184.

of the Child Emigration Movement, such as Dr. John T. Middlemore, would launch their own organizations.

That same idealism motivated Evangelical moral reformers in Canada to take a more prominent role in shaping policy, as concerned citizens became more alarmed by what they considered to be the deterioration of values in society. Moral reformers in Canada struggled with the apparent contradictions of allowing the emigration of children. While they recognized the need to replace the labour lost to an increasingly concerning trend of urban migration and to allow the economy to grow, they struggled to see past perceptions of child emigrants as sickly, lazy, and generally of poor quality for their new Canadian homes.[101] Here, the Canadian self-image of healthy and hearty citizens of a still-wild country played an important role in differentiating locals from immigrants from urban centres.[102] These are the attitudes Middlemore was forced to overcome if the CEH was to succeed in their goal of facilitating child emigration.

While Canadians often stigmatized the cities from which child emigrants came as dirty and vice-ridden immoral dens, an equally strong connection was being made between cleanliness and morality in Canada.[103] Dr. Peter Bryce, Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Immigration in Canada, went so far as to argue that immigrants hailing from the British slums posed a more significant threat to Canadian national health and purity than any other unwanted racial immigrant group at the end of the nineteenth century.[104] In this context, child emigrants posed a threat to the moral purity of the white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant nation envisioned by these moral reformers. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, this view mirrored the initial

[101] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019) 5.
[102] *Ibid,* 17.
[103] *Ibid,* 45.
[104] *Ibid*, 49.

sentiments expressed by British newspapers such as the *Birmingham Daily Post* and the *Birmingham Daily Mail* before child emigrants underwent their media rehabilitation from the corrupting influence of urban centres and subsequent voyage to Canada. The ingrained perception of the poor stretched across the Atlantic Ocean to remain a blight upon the lives of child emigrants in their new homes in Canada.

Two prominent Evangelical leaders of the early Child Emigration Movement, Maria Rye and Anne MacPherson, faced a significant setback to their mission when reports of abuse and neglect of child emigrants to Canada began to circulate in England, moving the Local Government Board to set up an inquiry as part of its duty to provide oversight for the operation of organizations involved in child emigration.[105] This inquiry, conducted in 1874 by Senior Inspector Andrew Doyle, focused on the organizations run by Rye and MacPherson.[106] On February 8th, 1875, the British House of Commons published the "Report to the Right Honourable the President of the Local Government Board, by Andrew Doyle, Esquire, Local Government Inspector, as to the Emigration of Pauper Children to Canada." Commonly known as the Doyle Report, it documented the child immigration movement regarding:

> The circumstances under which pauper children came to be included in it;
> The mode in which children of both classes are collected and sent out to Canada;
> The arrangements for their conveyance from England to their destination and for their subsequent reception in the Dominion;
> The mode of placing them out in service;
> The conditions under which they are so placed;

[105] "Pauper Children in Canada," *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 30th, 1877.
[106] Home Children Canada "The Doyle Report on Pauper Children in Canada February 1875" British Home Children in Canada, May 15th, 2023, https://canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com/the-doyle-report-1875.html.

> The nature of the service and character of the Homes in which the children are placed;
> The character and extent of the supervision subsequently exercised over them;[107]

Inspector Doyle's tour of Canada included interviews with approximately 400 children from the "very young up to the age of fifteen,"[108] spread across Quebec and Ontario where he often drove forty to fifty miles a day to visit the remote farms employing child emigrants.[109] The inspector specifically noted the uncooperative stance of those individuals in charge, as well as the incomplete, and often incorrect, information provided by Maria Rye's and Annie MacPherson's organizations.[110]

Another major point of contention in the Doyle Report was the mixing of "semi-criminal" children with other young children, which the Manchester *Evening News* reported as having a negative influence on the more innocent children.[111] This kind of characterization furthered the reputation of these children as criminals, despite the more nuanced discussion of the issue in the Report. Doyle also criticized the financial records of Maria Rye's organization, claiming to have found a difference in the funding grants and the expenses incurred of £5 per child.[112] He concluded that there were significant defects in the emigration schemes administered by both women, especially regarding the supervision of children after they had been placed in homes across Ontario and Quebec.[113]

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[107] United Kingdom, House of Commons, *Emigration of Pauper Children to Canada*, Andrew Doyle, (February 8th, 1874) 3.
[108] *Ibid*, 12.
[109] *Ibid*, 3-4.
[110] *Ibid*, 4.
[111] "The Emigration of Pauper Children," *The Manchester Evening News*, Friday March 12th, 1875.
[112] *Ibid*.
[113] Doyle, *Emigration of Pauper Children*, 3-5.

The Canadian government defended the conduct of their inspectors and the work of Rye and MacPherson, as the need for new labour sources grew alongside the growing agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Canadian government officials were also keenly aware that the nation was losing significant numbers from the rural population to the growing allure of the United States as well as Canadian urban centres. Therefore, the government had a particular incentive to refute the allegations made in the Doyle Report, especially where he attributed significant blame to the Canadian government for failing to supervise adequately the welfare of its most vulnerable new citizens.[114] The Canadian government had partnered with both Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson from the beginning, to provide them with financial incentives and subsidized travel. The Canadian press largely approved of the Child Emigration Movement and at times used religious attacks on Inspector Doyle, a Catholic investigating two Protestant philanthropists in Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson, to discredit the Report with accusations of sectarianism.[115]

The government established "The Canadian Parliamentary Select Committee on Immigration" to respond to the Doyle Report in March of 1875 and provide Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson with an official platform to address the allegations made by Inspector Doyle. The Select Committee examined the actions of Rye, MacPherson, and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture John Lowe, amongst others, as interested parties in child emigration.[116] The committee gathered the testimony of a long list of supporters of their work including:

> The Hon. Senator Flint, the hon. Mr. Vail, the Hon. Malcolm Cameron, and Messrs. Gordon, White, Trow, Stephenson, Pete's, Thomson, Young, Norris, Haughton, Plum and Jones, Members of the House of Commons residing in the vicinity of vicinity of the

[114] Roberts-Pichette, *Great Canadian Expectations,* 115.
[115] *Ibid*, 114.
[116] Canada, House of Commons, "Report on Juvenile Immigration and the Doyle Report," volume 10, third session of the eighth Parliament of Canada, (1898), 58.

> several homes, who testified from their personal knowledge to the value of the work. The Hon. Mr. Justice Dunkin's, P.C., formerly Minister of Agriculture, appeared before the committee and spoke favourably of the great care taken of the children at the Knowlton Home, rebutting several of the more important statements of Mr. Doyle. The Lord Bishop of Toronto, the Bishop elect of Niagara, and the Rev. Dr. McMurray also gave favourable evidence as to the management and the results of the enterprise.[117]

The Select Committee included a secondary report from its own inspector to "ascertain their actual condition."[118] According to that inspector, "the condition of the children was found with very slight selection to be satisfactory." From the testimony of these supporters and the second inspector's report, the Select Committee concluded that "the encouragement of this class of immigration was worthy of the serious consideration of the government." The Committee gave the Canadian government a platform for a unified defence of child emigration to the public, even as it protected its own interest in bringing more young British emigrants to Canada, in competition with other British colonies that were also interested in adding to their labour forces.[119] The government response alongside the notable names and local dignitaries called upon to testify as to the value of child emigration to Canada demonstrates how important the government considered this source of labour to be in replacing the population drain from rural areas to urban centres.

The Select Committee also commented on the resulting media fallout, concluding that "the result on the public mind of Mr. Doyle's Report was to draw considerable attention and raise discussion in the press of the United Kingdom, and is thus alluded to in the report by Mr. E.

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[117] *Ibid*, 61.
[118] *Ibid*.
[119] "Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Immigration and Colonization" *The Globe*, April 13, 1876.

Jenkins, M.P., Canadian Agent General in England, in his annual report of the proceedings of the year 1875."[120] Jenkins' report includes this assertion: "It was clear that Mr. Doyle had visited Canada wearing the spectacles of a poor-law commissioner, and that he had expected to find children who had been snatched from English gutters, living in the comparative luxury of poor-houses organized and modelled in accordance with the latest improvements in philanthropic government."[121] The Canadian government's attempt to make a public refutation of concerns over the regulation and supervision of child emigration charities reveals the significance of newspaper coverage to the Child Emigration Movement. It demonstrates why it was so important for the public image of these children to be rehabilitated, so the local communities in Canada would not reject them as "semi-criminals" from the "English gutters."

The Doyle Report created an impediment to the child emigration advocated trying to raise funds and convince the British public of the value of child emigration both at home and across the Empire. The public reaction to the Doyle Report and its critique of Maria Rye's operation forced her temporarily to suspend the aspects of her operation involved in child emigration for two years. From 1875 to 1876, the organization brought no children to its receiving home in Niagara-on-the-Lake as Rye worked to repair public perceptions of her organization.[122] The reputational damage, especially for an organization entrusted with the welfare of children, also threatened Rye's ability to raise funds effectively. The Doyle Report provided significantly less of a scathing indictment of Annie MacPherson's organization, and she continued her operations following its release.

[120] Canada, "Report on Juvenile Immigration," 5.
[121] *Ibid*, 7.
[122] Home Children Canada, "The Doyle Report."

The contrasting outcomes of the Doyle Report for Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson demonstrate the importance of public relations for organizations involved in the Child Emigration Movement and brought increased government scrutiny of their practices. These outcomes provided a strong incentive for proponents of the Child Emigration Movement to use newspapers as a means of cultivating a positive image with the public to maintain support for their mission. Following the presentation of the Doyle Report to the House of Commons, Maria Rye launched a lawsuit for libel against Inspector Doyle.[123]The press reported on this lawsuit as a public defence of the Child Emigration Movement and Maria Rye's conduct. The British newspaper industry also followed Rye as she made appearances in front of the Board of Guardians in several areas where her organization had been active, such as Stoke-on Trent. She answered questions from the board members and provided photographic evidence of the welfare of many of the children placed in her care.[124] This public show of accountability to the local Board of Guardians was rewarded with a vote of thanks from the parish for her work with the local impoverished children, with the Vice-Chairman expressing dismay at how one-sided the Doyle Report appeared to the public.[125]

The Doyle Report and its aftermath held many lessons for individuals and groups that were considering a foray into child emigration. As people such as John Middlemore understood, the Doyle Report placed new emphasis on both accountability and the use of media sources to garner support. Following the Report's scandalous accusations of neglect, charities took great care to follow the recommendations for areas of their operation, such as the preparation and

[123] "The Emigration of Pauper Children," *Manchester Evening News*, March 12th, 1875.
[124] "Pauper Children in Canada" *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 30, 1877.
[125] *Ibid*.

supervision of the children for travel, training in England, the size of travelling parties, and regular visits to settled children.[126]

The fallout from the Doyle Report provided both a warning and a lesson for relative new organizations such as the Children's Emigration Homes. The considerable distance over which Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson placed children in Canada made adequate supervision with the available resources practically impossible. John Middlemore took a much more geographically focused approach to child emigration by placing children in Southern Ontario through his receiving home, the Guthrie Home, until it closed in 1892. This more focused approach to distributing children throughout the local communities after they left receiving homes provided at least some mitigation to the same risks that hampered Maria Rye's operation. The subsequent damage to Rye's reputation from losing track of almost one-third of the children placed in her care cost her two years of operations, despite a vociferous defence from the Canadian government.

Middlemore's use of the newspaper industry to portray the Children's Emigration Homes so favourably paid dividends as the organization rapidly expanded, building three new facilities in Birmingham in the first two years of operations. The ability of the Children's Emigration Homes to fundraise effectively through public events and bazaars was dependent upon their positive public image within the Birmingham community. The Children's Emigration Homes focused the newspapers covering their mission upon the transformation of the children's character, their success stories, the efficient and effective organizational structure supporting child emigrants, and the consequences for those children who returned to their life of "vice and

[126] Roberts-Pichette, *Great Canadian Expectations,* 115.

degradation."[127] These themes presented effective messaging to the public, showing how seriously Middlemore took the lessons learned from the fallout of the Doyle Report. By participating in the public discourse through both the Canadian and British press to rehabilitate the image of child emigrants, Middlemore also smoothed the way for future child emigrants as they sought acceptance in Canadian society. The use of newspaper articles to maintain a public presence enabled the Children's Emigration Homes to rapidly expand its operation throughout the next decade, helping larger parties of children to emigrate to Canada every year.

The public defence of child emigration following the Doyle Report on juvenile migration through Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson's charities came at a crucial time. Many new charitable organizations, such as the Children's Emigration Homes, began to establish their own operations in the image of Annie MacPherson's organization. As Maria Rye found out, despite the Canadian government's support of her organization, bad publicity could negatively affect charitable operations to the point where Rye was forced to halt sending children to Canada for several years. The newspaper industry also informed the public on measures of accountability, thereby helping to maintain public confidence in the system. A lack of transparency and poor accountability forced Rye to halt her child emigrating operations for years following the Doyle Report. If the CEH was to succeed in its own mission to send child emigrants overseas, Middlemore needed to learn from Rye's mistakes and maintain the support of the public in Great Britain as well as Canada.

More recently established charities such as the Children's Emigration Homes benefited from the stricter accountability to government regulation. The Doyle Report made them aware of

[127] "Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 26th, 1873.

the risk posed by a public backlash stemming from a lack of accountability, and the importance of the public perception regarding the Child Emigration Movement both in Canada and Great Britain. While it was agreed that these charities had the children's interest at heart, the Doyle Report proved that was no longer sufficient to operate a child-emigrating charity dependent on solely private support. The CEH and John Middlemore would feature prominently in newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean following the Doyle Report as they sought to change the perception of child emigrants once funding had been secured to send them to Canada.

Themes in Newspaper Coverage of the Children's Emigration Homes

On 26 April 1873, the *Birmingham Daily Post* featured an article on the foundation of the new Children's Emigration Homes in Birmingham under the care of Dr. John T. Middlemore. The object of this charity was to shelter and train "neglected gutter children in habits of morality and cleanliness prior to sending them to Canada to be adopted or apprenticed to persons of good character in agricultural districts."[128] Specifically, this article promoted the first shipment of children to Canada under the auspices of Middlemore. This first voyage consisted of 29 children, 13 girls and 16 boys, all between the ages of 6 and 17, who set sail from Liverpool aboard the *S.S Sarmatian* on 1 May, 1873.[129] They arrived in Québec and were taken by rail to Toronto, Ontario where local dignitaries and clergy members had already arranged to find the children homes. The CEH hosted a farewell party attended by local Birmingham dignitaries who praised the Child Emigration Movement and encouraged the children to avoid alcohol. Reporters and journalists often attended these farewell parties and provided first-hand accounts of the children's excitement and demeanour before they left. On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the children's journey to Ontario was also followed closely by local newspapers and their arrival was widely reported. Frequently, Middlemore took out classified ads in newspapers to announce the arrival of a travelling party of children in Canada.[130] The content of these ads was repeated word for word annually in May before Middlemore and his party of children were set to arrive.

[128] "Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* April 26th, 1873; "Boys for Adoption," *The Globe*, May 27th, 1873.
[129] *Ibid*.
[130] "Classifieds" *The Globe*, May 27th, 1873; "Classified," *The Globe,* May 17th, 1876; "Classified," *The Globe,* May 17th, 1875.

This had the dual effect of creating interest in the voyage and notifying farmers and other potential hosts of the availability of more incoming child emigrants.

Dr. Middlemore himself spoke to the group and their families, encouraging them to stay in touch while claiming that the children would be better off in Canada, free of their "old associates" in England.[131] The *Birmingham Daily Post* also praised the discipline that the Children's Emigration Homes instilled in their charges through the most minor of regulations: "Each boy and girl had a receptacle for their things, and any of them leaving their things out of place had to suffer a halfpenny fine."[132] Religious services closed out the event, and the children appeared to be in high spirits with a "complete transformation" having been brought about by their training under Middlemore's care at the CEH.[133] By the time they had arrived in Canada aboard the *S.S Sarmatian,* the *Globe* described them as "bright, intelligent children"[134] looking for work as farmers or mechanics.

This article from the *Birmingham Daily Post* demonstrates four of the key themes of Middlemore's pleas for support from the public: the transformation of a child's character, the success of the Children's Emigration Homes, the well-organized process of providing successful placements in Canada, and the consequences for the children if they stayed in Birmingham. Middlemore recognized the significance of participating in the public discourse through newspapers to craft his charity's messaging to promote the success and accountability of the CEH. Following the public backlash to Maria Rye's failure to defend adequately her child

[131] "Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* April 26th, 1873; "Mr. Middlemore's Birmingham Waifs Expected This Afternoon," The Free Press, May 13th, 1875; D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882.
[132] *Ibid*.
[133] *Ibid*.
[134] "Classifieds" *The Globe*, May 27th, 1873; "Classified," *The Globe,* May 17th, 1876; "Classified," *The Globe,* May 17th, 1875.

emigrating operation following the Doyle Report, the effective use of the newspaper industry became even more significant to the success of the CEH. Middlemore witnessed the harm suffered by Rye's organization when it was forced to halt their child emigrating activities, compared to the way Annie MacPherson's organization survived the Doyle Report. During the period of stricter government oversight following the Doyle Report, Middlemore recognized the value of public support to a child emigrating organization. By inserting the four themes of transformation of character, successful operations, organizational planning, and the consequences of the children remaining, in the newspaper industry's coverage of the CEH, Middlemore successfully rehabilitated the impoverished image of these children. The Children's Emigration Homes used the newspaper industry to protect and promote Middlemore's mission to rescue some of the gutter children in Birmingham from the "career of vice and degradation which lay before them."[135]

The poor and lower classes of England suffered from the historic stigma associated with their poverty, as described in previous chapters. To make their voyage across the Atlantic Ocean more palatable to Canadians, who were always concerned about taking the dregs of British society and their potential to corrupt the morality of the receiving society, the Children's Emigration Homes needed to rehabilitate the public image of child emigrants. References to "gutter children," "Street arabs," and "Street urchins" are found throughout the articles in reference to the Children's Emigration Homes and other articles addressing societal fears regarding crime.[136] These children were often "distinguished by an utter absence of everything

[135] "Children's Emigration Home" *Birmingham Daily Post*, December 10th, 1873.
[136] "The Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 26th, 1882. See also "Local and District News," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 28th, 1874. "Mr. Middlemore's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 30th, 1874; "Birmingham Children's Emigration Home" *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 27th, 1875; "Mr. Middlemore's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 26th, 1876; "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* June 18th, 1880; "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham*

that was ameliorating and good" [137] and presented to readers as a drain on public resources as well as representing an increasingly concerning a burden on society.

This portrayal made it more palatable for the public in Birmingham to let these children go. However, for Canadian society to embrace child emigrants, Middlemore recognized that the newspaper coverage of his charity had to reflect a transformation in the character of these children brought on by their removal from a criminal environment and the instilled discipline of their training for life in Canada. This message became more refined in later years as the CEH adjusted their messaging when they became more established in the local community.[138]

Children's early struggles often became the basis for inspirational stories in the local newspapers of Birmingham. A number of articles from the 1870s and 1880s show Middlemore using the platform provided by a newspaper to communicate with the public directly. These first-hand accounts of his experience working with the children as they underwent a transformation of their character, made possible by the structured environment of the CEH, calls attention to the balance that had to be struck in newspaper coverage of child emigrants. On one hand, the children entering a CEH facility had to be portrayed in a situation that was dire enough for public opinion supported their emigration. At the same time, the reading public had to be reassured that the character of these children remained malleable, and that they could still be molded into productive future citizens. Most of the newspaper articles from this period appeared without an author's name, so the focus on a trusted public figure like Middlemore added greater authenticity

Daily Post, February 22nd, 1895; "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* March 6th, 1894; "Middlemore Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 13th, 1893; "The Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 23rd, 1884; "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 25th, 1882.

[137] *Ibid*.

[138] *Ibid*.

to the message than could be achieved with an unsigned article. Furthermore, these articles are prime examples of Middlemore's tactic of using the story of a single child, told in great detail, to highlight the CEH's success at transforming these waifs from "gutter children" into hardworking and honest children with the potential to be productive future citizens.

As Middlemore recounts in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, he had "(n)ever so much difficulty reaching our boys hearts, never so many run aways" and that he had " (f)or months felt they were not doing great works for the boys, not fitting them for Canada, not bringing them to God."[139] Often the implication in these stories was that removing children from the criminal environment allowed future child emigrants to escape these evil influences, as "(a)fter long waiting for God's blessing, a great change came upon them. Their manners and their behaviour changed. Their hearts were touched."[140] While the Children's Emigration Homes did not include the same religious fervor of other child emigrating charities, religion still played an important role in preparing the children for life in Canadian society. The children themselves were often the source of their own rehabilitation, as in that same article Middlemore claims that the children wrote out "amusing but very good bedtime rules which they agreed to observe," as well as asking for the gas to be left on for an extra half of an hour at night "so they could read the bible after family prayers were over."[141] As the character of the children transformed before they left

[139] John T. Middlemore, "The Children's Emigration Homes, Beatrice Crescent, St. Luke's Road, Birmingham," *The Globe*, May 21st, 1877. See also "The Children's Emigration Homes – To the Editor of the Birmingham Daily Mail*," Birmingham Daily Mail*, December 7th, 1886; "Certain 'Gutter Children,'" *The Birmingham Daily Gazette*, September 9th, 1875; "The Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 23rd, 1884.
[140] *Ibid*.
[141] *Ibid*.

for Canada, "their neutrality of feeling was turned into warm and heartwarming affection" and "all disappointments forgotten, thank God."[142]

In this same article from May 21st, 1877, Middlemore provided a stirring example of this transformation in the character of a boy named Edward, who entered the CEH on 25 December 1876. As Middlemore described in an article published in the *Birmingham Daily Post,* Edward was a fifteen-year-old boy had been living by himself "in a miserable lodging home for 3 years."[143] Although Middlemore considered him too old, he could not refuse him on Christmas day,[144] emphasizing the benevolence of his work despite the lack of resources to help everyone. The staff of the Children's Emigration Homes recognized that Edward had a "fierce and sullen temper, and was difficult to manage." Despite this, the staff found "much to love and admire in the boy."[145] After an attempt to run away in January of 1877, a change occurred wherein Middlemore and his staff recognized that Edward's temper had softened when he took more interest in his prayers and religious talks. Edward seemed to be smiling, having more fun, and showing more kindness than before.[146] From this point on, Edward appeared well on his way to becoming a successfully reformed "street urchin."

Three weeks before Edward's group left for Canada, Edward received some of the weekly household chores given to all the children and refused. Middlemore told Edward what he thought of his refusal to help and in the evening they prayed together.[147] According to Middlemore, "(t)he next morning Edward came to my room to carry my bible and hymn books

[142] *Ibid*.
[143] *Ibid*.
[144] *Ibid*.
[145] *Ibid*.
[146] *Ibid.*
[147] *Ibid*.

into the school room for early prayers, instead of taking the bible he walked slowly to me, placed his hand on my shoulder, dropped his head there and broke into sobs. 'I did wrong' he sobbed 'last night, and I have asked God to forgive me' Edward is now in a happy, Christian home in Canada."[148]

The story of Edward shows a number of key elements in the transformation of the "gutter child" to the bright, intelligent child promised to Canadian farmers: the early fall from grace in his escape, his redemption to become a good child as he embraced the religious aspects of life at the Children's Emigration Homes, and his recognition of the evil impulses that led to his anger when given household chores. As Middlemore concluded, "thus this poor, dishonoured Birmingham waif been led from a life in which he was without hope and without God in the world, to a life of prayer and faith and self-conquest. Oh, thus may God lead many, many, such as he!"[149] Publishing stories such as Edward's gave the public concrete examples that promoted removing children from their environment to save them. The local newspapers portrayed the training at the CEH to fight the impulsive, violent anger associated with poverty and the criminal classes in poor, urban slums.

The emphasis on the transformation of the "gutter child" was an important feature for advertisements in Canada. According to Mr. W.J. Wills, an Immigration Agent in Ottawa, "none are brought to Canada except such as are honestly believed will be acquisitions to their families." The advertisement noted that "in the event for demand for them, 25 children from age five to eleven years of age, to be placed out with families who will undertake to provide for them and

[148] *Ibid.*
[149] *Ibid*.

bring them up in a Christian manner."[150] Training at the Children's Emigration Homes and the wholesome character of the families where children were placed was a significant feature of advertising child emigration in Canada. It also confirmed to Middlemore and other advocates of child emigration that environment was one of the most important factors in the successful rehabilitation of the children sent to Canada. This promise to the Canadian public of well-trained children countered public criticism that they would become a burden on the state, or a means to dump the troublemakers of the "most wretched class" into Canadian society. [151]

The occupational training that children received once they had arrived in Canada also contributed to the rehabilitated image of the child emigrant in Birmingham. For the Children's Emigration Homes, "two important objectives are thus attained, namely, variety of life, of discipline, and of association for our children." [152] The *Birmingham Daily Post* promoted the benefits of the agricultural lifestyle for these young children, as "the effect of that training was that the children were so completely changed that when they saw the exact reproduction of their former selves they were astonished, and could not believe they had ever been in such a condition themselves."[153]

In a short period of time, Middlemore claimed that the fresh air and the agricultural lifestyle of Canada would clean these former "street arabs" of the reputation and trappings brought on by poverty. It followed that these children "were under the greatest obligations to Mr.

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[150] *Ibid*.
[151] *Ibid*.
[152] "VII- Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 19th, 1886. See also "Salus Populi Lex Suprema," *Liverpool Mercury,* August 21st, 1882; D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882; "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 25th, 1882.
[153] "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 25th, 1882. See also "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 26th, 1882; D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882.

Middlemore… for the wonderful regeneration he had secured for those who would have been destined to a life of misery and shame."[154] The continued transformation of these children served two purposes as it reassured the families of future potential child emigrants that they would have a better life in a rural Canadian home and signaled that they could provide value to Canadian farmers looking for a cheap source of labour.[155] On-the-job learning at the farms of their Canadian hosts was portrayed as an invaluable part of the process to turn these former "gutter children" into productive members of Canadian society.

As the Children's Emigration Home grew in stature as a Birmingham institution, Middlemore wrote letters of his experiences with child emigrants to be published in newspapers. These letters often highlighted the stories of individual children and sought to demystify the experience of a transatlantic voyage for the public. The status updates of successful child emigrants also provided markers of success for Middlemore and his charity. While the children suffered trials such as sea sickness, home sickness, and the uncertainty of what a future in Canada entailed, they also took comfort in spending time with Mr. Middlemore as he spent "many happy hours with them at and after evening prayers."[156]

Religious routines such as these helped the children to discuss their worries about life in Canada and to voice their concerns in a communal fashion, as "(n)ight after night we stood by their bunks or shelves which they slept at night and talked to them about their Canadian future and of our anxiety that they should lead Christian lives we prayed that god would go before us to

[154] *Ibid.*
[155] Immigrant Children," The Ingersoll Chronicle and Canadian Dairyman, June 19, 1884; "Notes of the Week," The Canada Presbyterian, May 9th, 1888; "Local and District" *The Free Press,* July 4th, 1885; D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882.
[156] Middlemore, "The Children's Emigration Homes," *The Globe*, May 21st, 1877.

Canada and that he would open the hearts of Christians there to receive us."[157] The voyage became a rite of passage for child emigrants and often provided the children's guardians with moments that were evocative of the dramatic transformation to their circumstances and character:

> One incident that occurred during our voyage to illustrate the vigour of some of the little fellows, who outlive their ill treatment. I took with me to Canada a little boy who had been driven from and had been made a complete Arab of by the almost incredible cruelty of his step-father. When we were about in (the) mid-Atlantic, a ventilator was blown away from the deck, leaving a large and dangerous hole in the place where it stood. Fearing that some child might fall through this hole, I told Froggy – for so the little fellow was called both by his playmates and teachers - to stand by it and watch till I gave him leave to go. "Mind," I said on leaving him, "don't turn your back on your duty." I left him proud of his charge. But engagements, which I had in my room, drove the little watcher entirely out of my mind. Hour after hour I wrote and hour after hour poor Froggy watched. At last I heard a rap at my door. It was opened by little Froggy. "Mr. Middlemore," he said, "I have been without my dinner and I have not once left my watch, can I go now?" I answered "yes, that you can, you are a good and faithful boy. you have done well."[158]

The voyage proved to be a turning point for many children in the eyes of Middlemore as he recorded accounts of children such as Froggy beginning to take on desirable traits like reliability, hardiness, and a sense of duty he considered absent from their previous lives. The Children's Emigration Homes valued these characteristics both as an example to future candidates for child emigration and as proof of their success reforming these children by removing them from the evils of their impoverished, evil, or criminal environment back home. Cases such as these were

[157] *Ibid*.
[158] *Ibid*.

emphasized in the newspapers as evidence of the transformation of character that could be accomplished if the children could be saved from the poverty of Birmingham.

Middlemore often wrote to the newspapers in both Canada and Birmingham of his admiration for the way "these Birmingham street Arabs took to life in Canada."[159] During visits to the homes of children placed with Canadian homes in previous years, Middlemore reported that the time spent in Canada "has replaced recollections of stifling courts they once lived, their old street and prison life, have been replaced by thoughts of their own farms, their day or Sunday school."[160] During this transformation in character, the children's previous "(t)hriftlessness [was] replaced by thriftiness."[161] This assertion was backed up by accounts of economic productivity and honest labour. In Middlemore's account of his tour of placements made by the Children's Emigration Homes in 1877, he recounts one boy claiming he knew how to harrow and cultivate crops, and that he would soon learn how to plow a field. Another boy showed off his ability to "drive a span of horses and hitch them up."[162] The next boy showed Middlemore his flock of sheep and explained his plan to sell the wool for $2 per fleece.[163] Finally, another boy was making his own clothing to be able to save more money.[164]

Middlemore proudly reported that many of the boys were building up their savings in contrast to the behaviour in England where he observed "the wastefulness and extravagance of the most wretched class."[165] Middlemore wrote of a visit to a house in Dale End, Birmingham, where he noted the filthy, miserable house had "a large block of ice with which to cool their

[159] *Ibid.*
[160] *Ibid*.
[161] *Ibid*.
[162] *Ibid*.
[163] *Ibid*.
[164] *Ibid*.
[165] *Ibid*.

Brandy."[166] The ice to cool their brandy showed the wastefulness of the poor in Birmingham as well as the reckless spending habits that Middlemore sought to prevent from spreading to future generations by sending children to Canada. Middlemore concluded that "(t)emptation in regard to money is opposite of their former temptation in England."[167] These examples of economic productivity and fiscal responsibility in Canada supported the Children's Emigration Homes assertion that removing these children from their home environment would result in a transformation of their character benefitting both the individual and their new communities. The wasteful, vice-ridden portrayal of those who remained in Birmingham only compounded the effect of these stories in the newspapers and provided a stark contrast to the rehabilitated image of child emigrants in Canada.

Newspapers featuring the Children's Emigration Homes often emphasized its success, with any failures placed in the context of the overall success of the mission. This effectively mitigated the effect of any failures such as runaway or lost children on public opinion by placing it in the scale of the larger operation. The gradual increase in the number of children taken to Canada each year showed the public the successful scaling of a model that was working both to relieve the strains of poverty in Birmingham and to fill a need for labour in Canada. The media's portrayal of success, with passing mentions of the hardships suffered by children isolated in a foreign land, promoted future child emigration efforts withhold alleviating pressure placed by the expanding population of the lower classes and the resulting pressure on the government.

On 10 December, 1873 the *Birmingham Daily Post* advertised a three-day bazaar of needlework and fancy goods at the Vestry Hall to help build a new emigration home for "gutter

[166] *Ibid.*
[167] *Ibid.*

children."[168] An update on the Children's Emigration Homes mission to rescue gutter children from the "career of vice and degradation which lay before them" included a report on the previous group of children to emigrate which claimed that they had mostly largely been adopted as sons and daughters to the farmers hosting them in Canada. These hosts had sent back positive reports of their conduct and progress, especially praising their industry. The report on the previous group of children reinforced the idea of the deleterious effects of the urban environment in Birmingham and the potential for improvement of children within a very short time of arriving in Canada. This was a common theme of many articles and was promoted by Middlemore as one of the keys to the organization's success. If the CEH could remove the children from Britain, it could prevent them from falling into a life of crime that would cause trouble for the authorities. When asked why he refused to settle children in England, Middlemore replied that he would not repeat the "ineffectual and disastrous experiment of merely interrupting for a year or two the children's iniquitous associations," and quoted many instances of children in England returning to a life of crime to back up his point. [169]

In 1874, Middlemore organized a larger traveling party of forty-eight children in what would be his second voyage to Canada. The *Birmingham Daily Post* reported on 30 April, 1874 that the twenty-nine children sent to Canada in the first voyage under the care of Middlemore had settled successfully with only one or two exceptions.[170] The children were reportedly not sorry to be leaving their native land, because Middlemore could "release them from the state they

[168] "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* December 10th, 1873.
[169] "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 11th, 1875. See also D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882.
[170] "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 30th, 1874. See also "An Exodus of Birmingham Children," *Birmingham Evening Mail*, May 30th, 1878; "Juvenile Emigrants," *The Lichfield Mercury*, June 7th, 1878; "Juvenile Emigrants," *Widnes Weekly* News, June 8, 1878.

were found owing to the poverty of their parents."[171] While the *Birmingham Daily Post* pointed out that there were critics of the activities of the Children's Emigration Homes who believed that the children could be reformed in Birmingham, or at least in England, the press did not identify these detractors.[172]

Instead, newspaper accounts focused on the successes. While several children taken in 1873 disliked their first placement, the *Birmingham Daily Post* claimed there was not a single failed placement of the forty-nine children sent to Canada in 1874.[173] From his visits to the children in Canada, Middlemore returned with stories of their success to pass on to local newspapers. One little girl, sent to the Children's Emigration Homes by her mother after living as an outcast in "The Gullet" of Birmingham, was adopted by a Christian lady in Canada and was being raised as her daughter.[174] Another little girl told Middlemore that she now had "a nice new hat and a new pair of shoes," and was having "her picture taken Friday."[175] Another boy placed by the Children's Emigration happily claimed he had "a fife, a Jew's harp, and everything to amuse him.[176]" These stories of happy children in their new Canadian homes helped temper concern back home. Since the article did not name the children, it also allowed the parents of child emigrants to believe this was their child thriving in their new environment far from the streets of Birmingham.

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[171] *Ibid*.
[172] *Ibid*.
[173] "Birmingham Children's Immigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* February 11th, 1875, See also "News of the Day," *The Birmingham Post*, November 4th, 1875.
[174] *Ibid.*
[175] *Ibid.*
[176] *Ibid*.

In 1876, the *SS Sardinian* carried a large party consisting of sixty-nine children[177] from the Children's Emigration Homes, fifty-eight children under the care of Annie MacPherson, and 150 emigrating families "of a respectable and industrious class."[178] The *Birmingham Daily Post* described Middlemore's contingent of children as having "just arrived in Canada with upwards of 80 nice healthy boys and girls to add to the rising population of Canada"[179] and the *Globe* echoed these sentiments in Canada.[180] Even though the exact numbers of children heading to Canada differed in the articles reporting on the arrival of Middlemore and his traveling party, the exact numbers gave an impression of accountability to the public. The *Birmingham Daily Post* recognized the need for young and healthy immigrants in Canada to supplement the population, despite previous descriptions of their condition as "gutter children." The growing number of children accompanying Middlemore also showed the public a steady scaling of the organization's activities as well as a partnership with Annie MacPherson. This relationship continued long into the future and would be especially important to the organization when the Children's Emigration Homes moved its receiving home to Halifax, Nova Scotia, as MacPherson would take over responsibility for checking in on the children placed by the Children's Emigration Homes in Ontario.

Newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean celebrated the claim that, as of 1876, Middlemore had settled nine of every ten children who came through the CEH in the country,

[177] There is some dispute over the number of children in the press, ranging from 67-80 children. Shipping passenger lists and Sir John T. Middlemore's own accounts suggest 69 is most likely the number of children in the traveling party.
[178] "City News: Immigration Returns" *The Globe*, May 15th, 1876.
[179] "English Boys and Girls," *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 19th, 1876. See also "Immigrant Children," *The Free Press,* May 24th, 1878.
[180] "English Boys and Girls," *The Globe*, May 17th, 1876; "English Boys and Girls," *The Globe*, May 19th, 1876; "Latest from London" *The Globe,* May 10th, 1876.

with some "quite in the backwoods."[181] Since the last party left, 109 children belonging to the "criminal class" had been received at the homes in Birmingham, having been "in prison or leading such lives as must inevitably have brought them to Gaol."[182] The attempt to draw a contrast between a life in the backwoods of Canada and the crime-filled streets of Birmingham could not be more clear. Assertions that not one child sent to Canada ended up in jail supplemented these claims of success and confirmed the purifying properties of a rural environment.[183]

As the children in the traveling party of 1876 prepared themselves to embark on the *SS Sardinian*, a public plea asked the public to show up to the farewell party "to sympathize and help Middlemore in his noble-hearted enterprise, and to bid god speed to the little ones who are leaving homes of squalor and wretchedness to seek happiness, independence, and usefulness in a colonial life."[184] The success portrayed by the Children's Emigration Homes in removing these children from Birmingham served both a social and political purpose. It relieved societal fears of crime and the lower classes spiraling out control and reduced the number of people depending on government support, at little cost to the government. Maintaining public support became an essential part of Middlemore's operation, and trumpeting success in the newspapers was the preferred method for maintaining that support.

In attempting to generate community support, the Children's Emigration Homes took every opportunity to highlight instances of charity. Often, a church parish or other organization

[181] "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes'" *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 29th, 1876. See also "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes." *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 22nd, 1878; "Juvenile Emigrants," *The Tewkesbury Register and Agricultural Gazette*, June 8th, 1878.
[182] *Ibid*.
[183] *Ibid*.
[184] *Ibid*.

took a personal interest in sponsoring a specific child by collecting enough money to cover the annual expenses for that child. The *Globe* estimated that with 100 boys and girls passing through Middlemore's care every year, each child cost £12 while in England and another £4 in emigration expenses.[185] Community groups were asked to take a special interest in the child by praying for them and learning about them, making the community a part of this success in a tangible way.

Newspapers in Canada and Britain often emphasized extraordinary instances of giving to encourage the rest of the community to give more. In May of 1877, the *Globe* featured a story under the headline "The Widow's Mite"[186] where Middlemore claimed that "twelve ragged street boys sent me half a crown as their contribution to help their still more wretched Arab associates."[187] Meanwhile, a poor woman unable to make a financial contribution to their mission offered the Children's Emigration Homes a day of her labour instead.[188] Stories such as these encouraged the community to increase its support for the Children's Emigration Homes, because if the most impoverished of the community could afford to donate, so could others. Involving the community by emphasizing tangible results constantly being met proved to be an excellent way to maintain support for the Middlemore's mission and having those results published in the newspapers allowed the Children's Emigration Homes to garner support and raise funds.

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[185] Middlemore, "The Children's Emigration Homes," *The Globe*, May 21st, 1877. See also "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 6th, 1894; "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 22nd, 1895; "Birmingham Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 9th, 1888.
[186] The Widow's Mite is a biblical reference to a story encouraging generous giving, the mite being the smallest and least valuable coin in circulation in Judea during the life of Jesus Christ.
[187] Middlemore, "The Children's Emigration Homes," *The Globe*, May 21st, 1877.
[188] *Ibid*.

Middlemore often published accounts of his personal efforts to place children in homes during his annual voyages to Canada. These accounts focused on the hope and success of the children as the communities in Canada welcomed them.[189] Smaller parties of children left Guthrie House under the care of Middlemore or another guardian to travel to smaller communities for the purposes of introducing them to potential hosts or for adoption.[190] In one example of these journeys, recounted in the *Globe* in May of 1877, Middlemore, and a party of six children embarked on a six-hour train journey followed by a five-hour drive to Lucknow, Ontario.[191] While observing the children's reactions to the rural landscape and the farm animals they passed, Middlemore commented: "How happy and full of hope these once shoeless Arabs were!"[192]

Upon reaching the village of Dungannon, near Lucknow, Middlemore heard of a "Mr. K" who wished to adopt a child. After stopping by Mr. K's store and meeting his wife, he learned that their daughter was dying of consumption and the couple wanted to "bring life and brightness to a very sad home."[193] Middlemore selected a seven-year-old boy named Willie, who had entered the home after being found in "one of the most miserable courts in Birmingham"[194] with no jacket and having been turned out of his family home in the middle of winter. Willie was reluctant to be placed with Mr. and Mrs. K and began to cry, but when Middlemore called upon the family a few days later he found the boy healthy and at home in his new environment.[195]

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[189] "Latest from London," *The Globe*, June 12th, 1878; "Arrival of English Immigrants" *The Globe,* June 24th, 1879; "Latest from London," *The Globe* July 1st, 1879. D. Smith, "Canadian Homes for Destitute Children," *The Birmingham Post,* August 18th, 1882.
[190] "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes." *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 22nd, 1878.
[191] "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes'" *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 29th, 1876.
[192] *Ibid*.
[193] *Ibid*.
[194] *Ibid*.
[195] *Ibid*.

Similar tales, in which children were placed in homes and families to replace a dead child, are repeated in different newspapers but share the theme of successfully replicating a loving family environment for the children in Canada.[196] While tales such as Willie's touched on the transformation of their character through the child's adaptation to their new surroundings, these tales most notably demonstrated to the public how quick the rehabilitation of a child emigrant was once they were removed from their home environment. Newspaper reports such as the one found in the *Globe* also presented a solution to the problem of overpopulation in the lower class: children deemed to be in at-risk situations could simply and easily be transplanted into other families in Canada.

In the ninth annual report of the Children's Emigration Homes, the organization admitted to several failures in their placement of children with hosts. However, so few of these failures were reported in the newspapers that in the context of the operation, readers could only conclude that Middlemore's work was an overwhelming success. According to the committee's observations published in the *Birmingham Daily Post*:

> Our experience in Canada includes the observation of the careers of the 561 children whom we have taken there… We have to acknowledge a certain number of failures. One boy has been committed to prison for theft, several have been accused of dishonesty, while three or four dozen have been idle, unreliable, and preferred play to work. Again, six girls have disgraced themselves. But it is a cheering circumstance in regard to most of these failures that they are rarely final and absolute. Thus three of our fallen girls are now doing well, and with one exception, we have hope of all of them. One imprisoned boy will be released this summer, and we do not believe in the likelihood of his second fall.[197]

[196] "News of the Day," *The Birmingham Post*, November 4th, 1875; "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes'" *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 29th, 1876.
[197] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 17th, 1882.

Despite these failures, the article afforded greater prominence to instances of successfully reformed children. One boy taken in by the Children's Emigration Homes in September of 1872 after having been imprisoned three times was now the owner of a farm in Ontario.[198] Another boy, again imprisoned three times, was a schoolmaster while one girl from a "criminal home" now owned land. Another former inmate of a Birmingham prison was now happily married in Canada and wrote Middlemore to update him and send photographs of her children.[199] By acknowledging the occasional failure to reform a child yet surrounding it with stories of success, the CEH left a significantly more positive impression on the population when considering the historic discourse that condemned the lower classes to a life of crime, poverty, and trouble for society.

Success, as defined by the Children's Emigration Homes, meant saving every child they could from a life of poverty and crime, not saving every child. According to the *Birmingham Daily Mail,* "probably the saddest duty which the general manager of the Home has to discharge is that of refusing admission to unsuitable applicants."[200] Careful selection of those deemed fit to emigrate to Canada improved the likelihood that a child would benefit from a successful placement. Careful selection of children for emigration, in response to the indiscriminate efforts of previous child emigration efforts by those criticized in the Doyle Report, created a more positive record for the CEH.

On Middlemore's sixteenth visit to Canada, he arrived aboard the *S.S. Lake Ontario* with 150 children between the ages of three years old and twenty years old. By 1887, the Children's

[198] *Ibid*.
[199] *Ibid*.
[200] "VII- Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 19th, 1886.

Emigration Homes had established a strong record of success that brought it significant credibility and publicity through their relationship with newspapers in Britain and Canada.[201] Middlemore's network of contacts now extended so far that he had placed children with farmers in Muskoka, past Bracebridge.[202] As the reputation of the CEH grew, Middlemore was able to expand the area in which he operated to find suitable homes for child emigrants. Several newspaper articles claimed that some children, swayed by stories of success from their friends who emigrated through the CEH, applied for admission by themselves, as "in the extremity of their need – without homes, without without (sic) food, almost without clothes – they come out and plead for admission."[203] The successful image of Middlemore and the Children's Emigration Homes presented by the newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean served many functions. Most significantly, it reinforced community support, helped to raise funds, and supported the contention that saving these children required as little as removing them from the evils of their current environment in the urban courts and slums of Birmingham.

The Children's Emigration Homes pre-empted many of the problems encountered by Maria Rye following the release of the Doyle Report by publicizing precise statistics and details in articles that suggested an accountable and responsible organization. The use of precise figures, even if they differed between articles, presented the CEH as a professional and well-run organization that could respond quickly and effectively to any issues. Perceived failures, such as allegations of child abuse after placement, were addressed promptly and publicly. Often, the newspaper articles about instances of abuse of child emigrants included reports of a prompt

[201] "The Guthrie Home," *The Northern Advance,* June 16th, 1887.
[202] "Local Briefs" *The Globe,* May 22nd, 1888.
[203] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 7th, 1888; "Birmingham Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 9th, 1888; "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* April 25th, 1888.

investigation or removal of the child from their situation by the manager of the Guthrie House. The Children's Emigration Homes also used local newspapers to publicize the success of its fundraising activities as a demonstration of the community's support for their mission.[204] The reputation of the Children's Emigration Homes in the newspapers assisted its ability to raise funds, made the public more comfortable with its mission, and prevented the same mistakes that had been revealed by the Doyle Report.

The early success of the Children's Emigration Homes in fundraising and building a reputation led to the construction began on a home for boys on St. Luke's Road in Birmingham and the acquisition of a home for girls that would accommodate approximately sixty children. The new home that the CEH hoped to build with an "industrial character" would house approximately 100 of the older boys.[205] The bazaar of December 1873 was held to raise funds to build the new home on St. Luke's Road.[206] This bazaar became a fundraising success for the of Children's Emigration Homes as the article notes that while bazaars were a common fundraising event in Birmingham, the size, scale, and success of this event surpassed other charities competing for fundraising.[207] The article congratulated the organizers for raising more than £250 to help build the new home.[208] This portrayal of the Children's Emigration Homes as an effectively run and properly managed child emigration operation was in stark contrast to the failings of Maria Rye's organization as presented in the Doyle Report.

In the two years since Middlemore began sending children to Canada, the Children's Emigration Homes established a receiving home for girls and two receiving homes for boys in

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[204] "Orphan and Destitute Children's Emigration Home," *Glasgow Herald,* April 9th, 1872.
[205] "Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* December 10th, 1873.
[206] *Ibid*.
[207] *Ibid.*
[208] *Ibid*. See also "Local and District News," *Birmingham Evening Mail*, December 21st, 1878.

Birmingham, demonstrating the success of local fundraising initiatives such as the bazaar from the previous December. The benevolent public image of Middlemore was supplemented by the boast that he kept up correspondence with all the children, and so the families of child emigrants could gain information by applying to him.[209] This process of having the family of child emigrants apply to Middlemore for news of their children centralized the flow of information through him, which enabled him to address unfavorable narratives before they became public. It also allowed the organization to dispatch resources on the ground in Canada to address any potentially problematic situation as promptly as possible.

In 1875 as the CEH released its second annual report, the organization reported placing eighty children in "Christian Homes" in the space of two years.[210] The recent successes of Middlemore and his organization included receiving and training 100 children in the Birmingham homes, building another receiving home in Birmingham and acquiring the Guthrie House, a reception and distribution home in London, Ontario.[211] The report also announced the formation of a committee to oversee the work being done in Canada.[212] The children placed the previous year were all reported to be happy in their new homes, with the exception of two who had run away and could no longer be located and two girls who had been "very great trouble."[213] The *Birmingham Daily Post* claimed that this positive record was the result of good settlement and effective organization. An increasing number of children, rescued from the "squalor and

[209] *Ibid*.
[210] "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 11th, 1875. See also "News of the Day," *Birmingham Daily Post*, November 4th, 1875; "Certain 'Gutter Children,'" *The Birmingham Daily Gazette*, September 9th, 1875; "The Emigration of Birmingham Children," *The Birmingham Daily Mail*, February 26th, 1875; "Emigration of Children to Canada," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 29th, 1875.
[211] *Ibid.*
[212] "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 11th, 1875.
[213] *Ibid*.

crime in Birmingham," were passing through the Children's Emigration Homes every year. In 1875, more children from the slums of Birmingham passed through Middlemore's facilities than passed through all the industrial schools administered by the Borough.[214] The success of the CEH program was buttressed by positive reviews in the letters section of the *Birmingham Morning News* in 1875 from consistent supporters such as W.B. Heath, who argued that the city should do everything in its power to support Middlemore and the CEH as they reduced the number of the poor dependent on the parish to survive. [215]

As the Children's Emigration Homes grew, its fundraising efforts became more elaborate and extravagant. In December of 1877, the *Birmingham Daily Post* claimed that "Notwithstanding that bazaars had long since been overdone in Birmingham, this one possesses special attractions, and has every promise of success." [216] The bazaar included nine stalls presided over by prominent ladies of the city, two of which were devoted to stationery and art.[217] Collingwood Smith presented several paintings by himself and other artists alongside a contribution by the Young Men's Christian Association's art class. The wares on display also included 100 puddings donated by ladies in support of the Children's Emigration Homes.[218] The bazaar included two side galleries, one of original sketches of the Great Eastern Crisis in the Balkans by war correspondents of the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*. The other gallery presented a collection of fifty microscopes and experiments in fluorescence and electricity, were available to the public attending the bazaar. A string orchestra played for their

[214] *Ibid*.
[215] W.B Heath, "Letter to the Editor," *Birmingham Morning News*, April 2nd, 1875. See also A.T.L., "Emigration of Workhouse Children," *Birmingham Morning News*, March 5th, 1875; "Mr. Middlemore's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Mail,* March 15, 1876.
[216] "Children's Emigration Homes Bazaar," *Birmingham Daily Post*, December 12th, 1877.
[217] *Ibid*.
[218] *Ibid*.

entertainment.[219] The *Birmingham Daily Post* reported a large attendance throughout the afternoon and evening and declared the success of another fundraising effort for the impoverished children of the city.

The local Birmingham newspapers also regularly published the names of high-profile donors to encourage others to donate and have their names published alongside prominent names in Birmingham society. In 1886, the efforts to fundraise included a theatre night put on by the local Amateur Dramatic Society at the Harbone and Edgbaston Institute. The programme included a "a farce, 'April Fool's;' the trial scene, 'Bardell v. Pickwick,' and 'Freezing a Mother-in-Law.'"[220] Over the years, the Children's Emigration Homes refined its fundraising methods and undertook increasingly elaborate and public efforts to raise money while drawing attention to the prominent figures supporting to their mission.[221]

Newspapers in Canada and Birmingham often published details of the travel arrangements for children emigrating under the care of the Children's Emigration Homes. In preparation for the arrival of Middlemore and his party, the *Daily Free Press*, a predecessor of the *London Free Press*, noted the party's upcoming arrival and the updates to the Guthrie Home, which now presented a "cheerful and inviting appearance."[222] The party was assisted in Canada by Professor Wilson and Mr. Arthur Bracey who acted as a medical attendant for the children.[223]

> The 9:15 train on the Grand Trunk last evening, had two additional cars containing the emigrant children brought by Mr. J.T. Middlemore from his "Home" in Birmingham to fill situations in

[219] *Ibid*.
[220] "Local News" *Birmingham Daily Mail*, January 18th, 1886.
[221] "Orphan and Destitute Children's Emigration Home," *Glasgow Herald,* April 9th, 1872.
[222] "Guthrie Home" *The Daily Free Press*, May 13th, 1875; "City News" *The Globe,* June 10th, 1875; "Immigrant Children," *Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine,* May 1888; "Emigration of Children to Canada," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 29th, 1875.
[223] "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* February 11th, 1875..

> this country. The cars were brought down to the Great Western Station and from then de sent on by special engine to the "Guthrie Home" better known as Ross Farm, the children have not changed cars since leaving the ship. At the station, Mr. Middlemore was met by… Messrs. Heath, Finnemore, and Cleghorn, with their wives and quite a number of other ladies who accompanied the party to the "Home". Our reporter visited the institution this morning, and found the children disporting themselves as merry as crickets… (the) boys all dressed in similar suits of corduroy, with a cap fashioned after the shape of a Highland "bonnet," manufactured from tweed… the girls form perhaps a more interesting sight, and it would be difficult to select more pretty faces and intelligent heads in the same number of children selected at random… The avidity with which the children are sought proves the need for them, and certainly no scheme of emigration affords such an effectual means of peopling our continent with a class of persons, who, when they arrive at man's estate, will be fitted with sufficient knowledge of our country to battle their way amongst men on equal terms.[224]

Articles recounting parts of the voyage reassured the public that child emigrants received adequate care and supervision on the voyage to Canada. It also made a first impression for the locals who would soon be meeting these child emigrants, portraying them as well dressed and attractive young children who would become valued members of Canadian society. By making note of the demand for the children, child emigration could be presented as a viable way to address the shortage of agricultural labour in Canada.

When a child placed by the Children's Emigration Homes was accused of committing a crime, Middlemore and his staff responded promptly to show accountability and their responsibility for the children brought to Canada. This response was evident in the case of William Hutchins, charged with stealing $8 from the house of Allen Hadley while he stayed at

[224] "The Guthrie Home," *The London Daily Advertiser*, May 14th, 1875. From Great Canadian Expectations, the Middlemore Experience by Patricia Roberts Pichette. See also "Children's Emigration," *The Free Press,* April 13th, 1875.

his home overnight. Hutchins pled guilty and elected to be tried summarily.[225] During William Hutchins' appearance in front of the judge, "Mr. Gibbons, of the Middlemore Home, appeared on his behalf, and asked that his trial be postponed, and the boy be handed over to his charge."[226] Gibbons entered into a recognizance guaranteeing Hutchins would return to appear before the court, and he was released into the care of the CEH.[227] The staff presence at the trial, and the fact that it was so newsworthy as to appear in a short article on local crime, sheds a positive light on the Children's Emigration Homes. The presence of Gibbons conveyed a sense of accountability when the fears of child emigration skeptics were realized and ensured that blame was not placed on the organization for the misdeeds of its charges. The public expected a certain amount of recidivism when trying to save children from the assumed criminality of their past lives, and quick reaction of Middlemore and his staff did much to forestall criticism that the children would revert to their former ways and become a criminal burden on Canada.

When the authorities discovered cases of abuse of children placed by the Children's Emigration Homes, Middlemore and his associates ensured it was prosecuted vigorously. Upon the discovery of the abuse suffered by Emily Tranter, 5 years old, and George Underhill, 6 years old, in February of 1883 by the man who had adopted them from the CEH, Thomas R. Strange of Petrolia. The article reports that "he indulged in a drunken spree, and while intoxicated abused the children to such an extent that their screams aroused the neighbours."[228] In Canada, this story was published in newspapers as far away from Petrolia and the *Daily Colonist* in Victoria, British Columbia, although corresponding articles could not be found in any of the local

[225] "The Lobo thief" *The Globe*, January 20th, 1881.
[226] *Ibid.*
[227] *Ibid*.
[228] "Brutality punished: Fiendish Cruelty to Orphan Children." *The Globe,* February 3rd, 1883.

Birmingham newspapers.[229] The article goes on to describe the evidence gathered against Mr. Strange after he was before the mayor of Petrolea on charges of drunkenness, ill treatment, and assault.

> Mr. Henry Gibbons, manager of the Guthrie Home, was the first witness. He said when he removed the boy from Strange, he had every appearance of being starved, both feet had been frozen, and his back was covered with scars, apparently the result of a severe thrashing. Dr. G.P. Jones of Piccadilly Street, London, who attended the boy, said Underhill's feet had been frozen to such an extent as to necessitate the loss of two toes of the right foot. He had found his back covered with bruises and scars in every stage, some partially healed and others recently inflicted. The beatings had evidently been received from a heavy whip or something equally as effective. He had found the abdomen distended to such an extent as to show plainly the boy had been starved. Mr. Swain testified to the boy being both starved and ill-treated, and relates that he used to come to his house for food. Mrs. Swain's evidence was to the same effect, with the addition that Mrs. Strange had told her that they kept the boy tied up by the thumbs for hours so that his feet would barely touch the floor.[230]

Emily Tranter had not suffered injuries to the same extent as George Underhill, however, there was evidence she had been starved and beaten.[231] The process of gathering evidence promoted a sense of accountability by the CEH. The manager of the Guthrie House, Gibbons, was one of the first to testify about how he rescued the children from the Strange house and after recounting their condition ensured they received medical treatment. When instances of abuse were in the newspapers, the CEH would be forgiven and treated favourably if they took prompt care of the matter by prosecuting the abuser and recovering the children. No questions were asked as to why a labourer such as Strange was allowed to adopt these children, and any inquiry into the matter was kept private by the CEH. The abuse suffered by these two children was covered in

[229] "London, Feb 2," *The Daily British Colonist*, February 22nd, 1883.
[230] "Brutality punished: Fiendish Cruelty to Orphan Children." *The Globe,* February 3rd, 1883.
[231] *Ibid*.

detail by several newspapers, but the organizational response to the matter absolved the CEH of any criticism and the newspaper portrayed Middlemore's representative favourably. The CEH and Middlemore's representatives took an active and public role in the prosecution of abuse when it involved a child emigrant:

> Both children are now at the Home in this city undergoing medical treatment. Strange is a labourer who was supposed to make a living by anything that came his way. In regard to this charge of assault, Mr. Pitkins, of Petrolea, testified that a few nights after the arrival of the Strange family, he heard terrible screams coming from the house. He went across and saw Strange lifting the boy up above his head and dashing him to the floor. He informed the Chief of Police and Strange was arrested and subsequently fined for drunkenness…[232]

This article shows how an accountable staff on the ground could mitigate the reputational damage of abuse for the CEH in Canada. The blame is attached to Strange, while the article praises Gibbons as the man rescuing these children from their fate instead of receiving criticism for placing them there in the first place. The legal process publicly played out with the confidence of the community and concluded with the trial of Strange the following Spring.[233] The organizational accountability shown by Gibbons in situations such as the one experienced by Emily Tranter and George Underhill played an important role in convincing the public that the CEH could continue to care for child emigrants even after they left the Guthrie Home and were placed in the community.

Overall, there was no blame attributed to the organization for the placement of these children in dangerous situations, and no questions of how often the staff of the Children's Emigration Homes checked on the children's welfare. Nor did the press raise questions as to the

[232] *Ibid*.
[233] *Ibid*.

process the CEH used to screen Thomas Strange before placing the children in his home. Meanwhile, the Children's Emigration Homes took an active role in helping to prosecute the crimes of Thomas Strange. By taking the children back into their care, like in the case of Emily Tranter and George Underhill, the Children's Emigration Homes demonstrated its continued responsibility for these children to the public. Even when there were negative stories involving child emigrants, the media coverage of the situation rarely cast a negative light on the Children's Emigration Homes.[234]

Local Canadian newspapers also investigated alleged instances of child abuse when children placed by the Children's Emigration Homes were involved. In "The Alleged Brutal Treatment of a Girl at Kinburn," the reporter of the *New Era* followed up on abuse allegations and eventually refuted them publicly in coordination with Mrs. Gibbons of the Guthrie House. The abuse allegations concerned a young girl adopted by James Snell three years prior.[235] The immediate actions of the CEH to follow up on the welfare of their wards contrasts starkly with the criticism of Maria Rye in the Doyle Report that prevented her organization from sending children overseas for years:

> On Monday night, a report reached Clinton that a girl residing with a party at Kinburn had been brutally beaten by her adopted father, and on Tuesday the story had been exaggerated to the extent that she had died through the injuries received. In order to find out what truth there was in the report a New Era reporter went to Kinburn to make investigations and found that there was no truth in the reports of her death that had gone abroad.[236]

[234] "London Locals," *The Globe*, August 6th, 1896. See also "The History of Annie Sparks," *The Free Press,* March 13th, 1878; "A Correction," *The Free Press,* November 23rd, 1880.
[235] "The Alleged Brutal Treatment of a Girl at Kinburn" *The New Era,* June 6th, 1884.
[236] *Ibid.*

Several letters sent to the Guthrie Home prompted the reporter's investigation of the situation at Kinburn.[237] These letters alarmed the caretakers at the CEH as they alleged that the girl would die, half-starved and beaten, unless she was removed from her placement. Articles such as these reassured the public that Middlemore and his staff would follow up on all allegations of abuse to ensure the safety of their former wards.

The investigation by the wife of Gibbons, acting as the matron of the Guthrie House, reported of her making the journey up to Clinton and then over to Kinburn as she also followed up on the allegations of abuse and mistreatment.[238]

> She made known her business to Mr. and Mrs. Snell, and, according to their statement to our reporter, was perfectly satisfied that the girl had not been abused; she examined her person, but found no marks of violence, and failed to discover any reason for complaint on the part of the girl, who appeared to be satisfied to remain with Mr. Snell; she returned to London satisfied to leave the girl in their care, so they said. When our reporter called on Mr. Snell the girl, about 12 years of age, was present, and heard the questions asked, so that the replies had been contrary to the facts she could have so intimated, but did not take exception to any statement made by Mr. or Mrs. Snell, when stated that the girl had no reason whatever for being dissatisfied, and was not as they gave her the choice of going back to the Home, if she was not content to remain, and as she remains, it is but just to assume that her treatment has been nothing like what was reported. [239]

After a thorough investigation, the story was attributed to the malicious actions by neighbours and the allegations had no merit. Constable Davis of Blyth, who went to Kinburn to follow up on the case, also gave testimony that the treatment of the girl was "all that she could expect or desire."[240] This example of the careful investigation of alleged abuse by the Children's

[237] *Ibid*.
[238] *Ibid*.
[239] *Ibid*.
[240] *Ibid.*

Emigration Homes presented the public image of a responsible, accountable, and proactive organization that was raising the standard of care expected of child emigrating organizations of the time.

By 1886, the Children's Emigration Homes demonstrated its organizational success by receiving and training 1,218 boys in fourteen years of operation.[241] Arriving each summer in groups led by Middlemore. The children became the subject of frequent reports in local newspapers that conveyed a consistent message with a familiar formula.[242] Details of the group, the ship on which they left England, and their itinerary and a brief recap of their mission would be followed by the call for more applications, as "(a)lready many good applications but more needed, furthers to be obtained by Mr. H. Gibbons, manager of the Guthrie Home, London.[243] Finally, a running tally of Middlemore's annual trips to Canada completed the template of a typical announcement of their arrival. [244] The consistent messaging around and planning of Middlemore's voyage presented an image of stability and reliability valuable to an organization dealing with child emigration, a controversial enterprise with many critical and skeptics. Though effective fundraising, organizational accountability, and their continuing responsibility for the welfare of their charges, Middlemore and his organization avoided many of the complaints regarding the disorganization of Maria Rye's efforts that prevented her from operating as a child emigrating organization following the Doyle Report.

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[241] "VII- Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 19th, 1886.
[242] "Immigrant Children" *The Daily British Whig*, June 7th, 1886; "Immigrant Children," *The Guelph Daily Mercury and Advertiser,* June 13th, 1883; "Immigrant Children," The Ingersoll Chronicle And Canadian Dairyman, June 19, 1884; "Notes of the Week," The Canada Presbyterian, May 9th, 1888; "Immigrant Children," Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine, May 1888.
[243] "Immigrant Children," *The Gazette,* June 27th, 1885.
[244] "Immigrant Children" *The Markdale Standard*, July 2nd, 1885; "Wednesday Eve'g." *Daily Mercury*, June 20th, 1883; "Canadian Items," *The Weekly Mail,* June 27th, 1879; "The Guthrie Home," *The Free Press*, July 1st, 1879.

The most compelling newspaper coverage for the Children's Emigration Homes centred on the consequences of the children staying in Birmingham. The newspaper industry's previously established interest in printing stories with an element of violence and crime emphasized the desperate consequences if child emigration advocates and organizations such as Middlemore and the Children's Emigration Homes did not secure support in their mission. Middlemore consistently stressed the importance of removing children from the evils of their home environment to improve their chances of saving them and turning them into productive members of society.

On 10 December, 1873 in an article promoting the CEH's fundraising needlework bazaar, the *Birmingham Daily Post* noted that those children, where "old evil influences are not so strong as to imperil their chances of leading an honest life will be apprenticed in this country, while the others will be taken across the Atlantic."[245] Middlemore often preferred emigration to Canada, to remove completely the lure of home and a relapse into the criminal life. However, the option of keeping some children in England assured newspaper readers that the most promising children would remain in England, while those might be more easily corrupted would no longer trouble the local community. However, these sentiments exhibited many of the fears that Canadians initially held about the feasibility of child emigration to the colonies: that Canada would receive and be held responsible for children who were of no value to their local community in Birmingham. The *Birmingham Daily Post* article on 30 April 1874, described two such boys who were deemed to be "absolute and irrevocable failures."[246] One boy had collected enough money to return to England, where he had since been in prison. This case emphasized the necessity of

[245] "Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* December 10th, 1873.
[246] "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 30th, 1874.

removing the children from their previous environment, despite the emphasis that the children were "expatriated but not lost."[247]

Reports of runaways from the Children's Emigration Homes published in the newspapers of Birmingham reinforced dire predictions for the future of these children if they remained in the slums. Articles on the second annual report of the Children's Emigration Homes included a section on eight of the boys who had run away. Two of those boys were imprisoned for larceny, one for burglary, and one for manslaughter; two of the others had committed crimes after running away but had evaded custody.[248] In another story, a woman removed two little girls from the Children's Emigration Homes facility at Spring Home Street in Birmingham and took them back to her own "pestilential and vicious quarters," where the youngest died of cholera and "the elder was in such a bad state that they could only kindly wish she might soon be laid by her sister's side."[249] Middlemore claimed in this article that he had "never received into the homes any class of children who such needed help as those received at present, as the record of their homes tell of tragedies and infantine suffering and neglect, which surpass even the revolting details of many of the police cases."[250] Highlighting the tragic circumstances of these children, as well as the potential for their dismal futures, reinforced negative public perceptions of the poor in Birmingham. These narratives also reiterated the need for organizations such as the Children's Emigration Homes to improve the perceived negative character of the lower classes. In this stereotypical attitude towards the poor, "it was a very wise and very thoughtful idea to take

[247] *Ibid*.
[248] "Birmingham Children's Emigration Homes," *The Birmingham Daily Post*, February 11th, 1875.
[249] *Ibid*.
[250] "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes" *The Birmingham Daily Post*, May 29th, 1876.

children connected with the criminal classes away from their original surroundings and place them beyond their reach."[251]

The Children's Emigration Homes became a path to a new life in Canada for children already suffering abuse in Birmingham. Middlemore claimed that the CEH had taken in "not a few children whom ill-usage has made sullen and fearful that if we move towards them they fear being struck."[252] The abuse and condition of these children before their admittance to Middlemore's charity drew supporters to believe in the significance and value of their mission. Adjacent to the 12 December 1877, article advertising the CEH's Christmas bazaar, the *Birmingham Daily Post* featured an article on the burial of paupers who died in the Union workhouses at Erdington Church in Birmingham, highlighting the bleak future that many children of the lower classes might expect if they stayed in Birmingham. [253] Some children suffered from a nomadic lifestyle before finding their way to the Children's Emigration Homes:

> Two brothers, aged eleven and twelve years, were received. Their mother was dead, and the father a tramp. The children were found in a common lodging house in Suffolk Street where they had been living for three weeks. Previous to that, they had spent upwards of a year tramping through England from Middlesex to Northumberland, and in that time of wandering they had lived in upwards of twenty-five different towns and villages, besides staying in two or three villages whose names they had forgotten. [254]

In similar articles, a three-year-old child was left in the Children's Emigration Homes' care after his mother died or deserted him while his father lived an idle, drunken life found a living Christian home with a lady in Canada whose own child had died.[255] Upon his return to England

[251] "Children's Emigration Homes Bazaar," *The Birmingham Daily Post,* December 12th, 1877. See also "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 22nd, 1878.
[252] *Ibid*.
[253] *Ibid*.
[254] "Birmingham Charities VII – Children's Emigration Homes," *The Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 19th, 1886.
[255] Middlemore, "The Children's Emigration Homes," *The Globe*, May 21st, 1877.

in 1877, Middlemore saw the mother of the young boy Froggy, whose story was told earlier in this chapter. According to Middlemore's account in the *Globe,* Froggy's stepfather was driving his sister into the streets and "the other day he struck her savagely and threatened to take her life."[256] The circumstances suffered by many of these children became an advertising tool of Middlemore in the newspapers of England and Canada as "the old sad story was told again in them."[257]

Reports of the neglect suffered by children before entering the Children's Emigration Homes became a consistent message in many articles. The sheer quantity of examples made a compelling case for Middlemore and his mission to help remove children from their homes in Birmingham and send them to Canada. An article published in the *Birmingham Daily Post* in March of 1882 presented a bleak case for many of the incoming children:

> April 12, 1881: H.B., eight years old; the father and mother are drunkards; the boy is a truant. April 27, 1881: M.J., eight years old; the father has been four times to prison; the mother has twice deserted her children. October 13, 1881: L.W., eight years old; the father has deserted his family; the mother is suffering from a frightful chronic bronchitis; the family is starving. December, 1881: A.D., twelve years old; the father has been twelve times to prison. The mother is an abandoned woman. [258]

Using the background of these children in the newspapers underscored the dire need for organizations such as the Children's Emigration Homes. Moreover, the children brought into Middlemore's organization struggled with truancy and their removal from the streets helped the school boards in what the *Birmingham Daily Post* described as "an important social fact which

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[256] *Ibid.*
[257] *Ibid*.
[258] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* March 17th, 1882. See also; "Birmingham Emigration Homes," *The Birmingham Daily Post,* April 9th, 1888; "Prosecution by the Children's Emigration Society," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* November 11th, 1874. "Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* Apri1 25th*,* 1888*;* "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 17th, 1882; "Mr. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 22nd, 1878.

deserves recognition."[259] One woman, in response to her son's truancy "has tried kindness, and she has tried beating – she has beat him until she is ashamed of the way she has beat him"[260] but he would not go to school, instead spending his school money on sweetmeats. These were the children whom many supporters of child emigration felt would benefit from a new life in Canada far from the slums of Birmingham. When comparing reports of children in Birmingham after entering the CEH and after they arrived in Canada, the committee that oversaw the Children's Emigration Homes claimed: "The former tell of every circumstance of crime and profligacy, of early death, and of distorted development, while the Canadian reports tell of steady farm work during the summer, of schooling during the winter, of increasing savings, happy marriages, and final independence."[261]

Public institutions in Birmingham proved inadequate to deal with the increasing cases of children such as the ones taken in by the Children's Emigration Homes. By 1882, "Of late years there have been a great number of institutions endeavouring to struggle with that great evil. There were industrial schools, which admitted children in large numbers, who were surrounded by very evil circumstances, but who knew no evil and had committed no crime."[262] These schools, supported by the Poor Law rates, became an expensive and unpopular burden on the local government while they struggled to handle the increasing numbers of children passing through.

Reformatory schools, which combined social training and industrial habits with strict punishment for mistakes and misconduct, were also struggling. They were supported by a

[259] *Ibid.*
[260] *Ibid.*
[261] "The Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* March 17th, 1882.
[262] "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 26th, 1882.

combination of voluntary subscriptions, the public rates, and government subsidies.[263] In comparison to the CEH, they completed good work, but were not as successful as "gentlemen like Mr. Middlemore, who were inspired with a noble desire of doing good at personal sacrifice, and who made special efforts to rescue the class of persons to whom he referred, from the unfortunate circumstances in which they were placed, by removing them altogether from the bad old influences, and transplanting them to another country where they were taught the delights, the happiness, and the rewards of honesty industry."[264] The Children's Emigration Homes provided a convenient solution to ease the pressure on these public institutions. Private charities such as they CEH reduced the number of children passing through the public institutions while reducing the financial burden on the local parish as Middlemore relied on donations and fundraising events to fund their operation. Newspaper coverage of public institutions as they became overwhelmed placed even more emphasis on child emigration as a viable option to reduce the financial strain of poor relief on local governments.

The presence of street children amongst the ranks of the criminal class in Birmingham raised fears that their activity was "continually increasing in activity, force, and volume."[265] Newspaper reports present the rise of children committing crimes as a pressing problem for the public. R.W. Dale, a local clergyman who supported Middlemore's mission, compared the condition of the children had they remained in Birmingham with what became of them in Canada. Dale claimed, "it would be hard to calculate what the material advantage had been to the community from the removal of all those children from the circumstances in which they were

[263] *Ibid*. See also "The Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail,* April 23rd, 1884; "Local and District News" *Birmingham Evening Mail,* May 25th, 1882; "Birmingham Charities – VII. Children's Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Mail*, April 19th, 1886.
[264] *Ibid.*
[265] *Ibid.*

born."[266] He believed that a third of the child emigrants, had they remained, would have grown up to be "habitual thieves."[267] Dale went on to claim that "every thief in Birmingham cost the community at least £200 a year in the loss and destruction of property occasioned by his predatory habits. A thief who lived for twenty years carrying on his profession would cost the community about £4,000."[268] He estimated that if 200 would be thieves were saved from their fate in Birmingham and sent to Canada to become productive members of society, it would save the community £1,200,000. [269]

While Dale's math is clearly wrong, there was an underlying intent to shock newspaper readers when stories like this were published with little scrutiny. The assumption that all these children were thieves, and that their continued presence would cost the local economy vast sums of money. These assumptions only increased public concern over what would become of these children if they stayed in Birmingham and the rise in criminal activity continued. Middlemore's solution, to remove them entirely from the city, suited those people who were worried about the rise in crime.

The consequences of these children staying in Birmingham, both for their sake and the sake of society, was a constant in newspaper coverage of the Children's Emigration Homes. Painting the dire circumstances of many children entering Middlemore's care for the public to internalize helped to perpetuate increasingly negative attitudes towards the lower classes. Middlemore used the tragic stories of many of his wards to strengthen support for the Children's Emigration Homes and its mission to remove the children from England. These efforts received

[266] "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 26th, 1882.
[267] *Ibid.*
[268] *Ibid.*
[269] *Ibid.*

widespread support from a public that feared crime and a government faced with overwhelmed institutions becoming a rapidly growing drain on the public purse. The newspaper coverage of the Children's Emigration Homes situated the organization favorably as a philanthropic solution to a societal issue that the government had repeatedly failed to address.

Newspaper coverage of the Children's Emigration Homes presented four key themes in a coherent and consistent message to the public: the transformation of a child's character; the success of the Children's Emigration Homes; the well-organized process of providing successful placements in Canada; and the consequences for the children if they stayed in Birmingham. Newspapers added to the public discourse through the articles published in Canada and England and crafted narratives meant to inspire pity and philanthropy for the children to garner community support but most importantly to raise funds. Following the failures of earlier organizations outlined by the Doyle Report, child emigration advocates such as Middlemore recognized the need to maintain support and to acknowledge publicly problems but to highlight the organization's response. By emphasizing the success of the Children's Emigration Homes, the transformation of the child's character, the well-organized process and organization, and the consequences for the children if they stayed in Birmingham, Middlemore smoothed the transition for child emigrants moving to Canada. To accomplish the philanthropic goals of the Children's Emigration Homes, Middlemore sought out journalists sympathetic to his cause to influence public perceptions of child emigration and provide child emigrants with a fresh start in Canada. Middlmore also published ads in the classified section of newspapers and wrote articles himself when necessary to provide even more coverage of his charitable work.

Conclusion

The lessons learned from the Doyle Report served Dr. John T. Middlemore and the Children's Emigration Homes in their efforts to become a successful example of a child emigration organization. Middlemore's experience in entering the public discourse on the CEH with well-considered and coherent messaging also served him well when he became a politician, serving on the Birmingham City Council from 1882 to 1892.[270] In 1899, he continued his political career after seeking election to the House of Commons as the Unionist candidate for North Birmingham.[271] Middlemore had learned how to develop an effective media presence, capable of influencing public opinion, by penning letters to newspapers detailing his trips and the impact of the CEH mission. As the face of a charitable organization, Middlemore presented a steady, responsible, and trustworthy image which served him well in his future as a Birmingham City Council member and as a Member of Parliament.[272] He contributed to the public discourse through newspaper as a way to maintain public support and publicize the work. In the process, the CEH became a celebrated institution in Birmingham with a successful fundraising operation and the endorsement of local politicians and civic leaders.

From 1872 to 1895, the years when the CEH operated a receiving home in London, Ontario, Middlemore's organization was the focus of literally hundreds of newspaper articles that combated negative perceptions and discourse surrounding poverty , in order to convince Canadians that they were not receiving the "dregs" of British society.[273] Newspaper articles on

[270] "Election Intelligence - North Birmingham Return" *The Morning Post*, February 15th, 1899.
[271] *Ibid*.
[272] "Tramway By-Law" *Birmingham Daily Mail, June 2nd, 1886.*
[273] "The Middlemore Emigration Homes," *Birmingham Daily Post,* May 25th, 1882; "The Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post*, May 26th, 1882.

the CEH used stories of child emigrants embracing the Christian faith and showing an inherent goodness to counter the fear that these children would travel to Canada only to become a burden on society. Furthermore, the appeal to evangelical communities in Birmingham, which emphasized saving children from the slums of urban centers and the perceived moral corruption of the poor, proved to be critical in the fundraising efforts of the CEH. Stories of child emigrants that highlighted piety and moral strength became an important way for Middlemore to convince Canadians that child emigrants would benefit the homes they joined and not corrupt the morality of their new communities.

Middlemore and the CEH had to work within, and respond to, contemporary understandings of childhood and poverty during the nineteenth century. Middlemore continually returned to the idea that children were moldable even after their exposure to poverty and the urban environment and could therefore be redeemed. By removing the children from their home environment, child emigrants could be rehabilitated to become productive future citizens, rather than continuing to be a drain on public finances should they remain in Birmingham. However, the "saving" of these children in some ways contradicted the Victorian discourse on poverty as a corrupting disease that passed from parent to child. That discourse marked these children, to the degree that Middlemore had to respond with his insistence that the cycle could be broken; the acceptance of child emigrants would not have a corrupting or deleterious effect on their community. On the contrary, Middlemore shifted the discourse by attempting to convince Canadians of the inherent innocence of these children and the fact that they could be redeemed into productive members of society and future citizens of Canada.

The CEH became a successful and popular solution to public concerns with rising poverty and crime in Birmingham. In an article in the *Globe* published in 1905 titled "England as

Grateful to, as Canada is proud of Her Noble Peers - Police Commissioner Would Send a Youthful Criminal to Canada," the local Birmingham Police Court Commissioner suggested the only course of action for a fifteen year old thief named Alfred Smith "was to send young Smith to Canada through the Middlemore homes."[274] Child emigration was not only an option for handling youthful criminals in Birmingham, but the preferred option in many cases. Through careful and consistent messaging in the newspapers of Great Britain and Canada, Middlemore was able to rehabilitate the image of children previously thought of as "street Arabs" and "gutter children" from the "criminal classes."[275] He addressed the historic discourse on poverty and the lower classes in Birmingham to advance his goals as a staunch advocate of child emigration. Press coverage that argued against the traditional discourse around the laziness, idleness, and moral corruption of the poor was intended to overcome the resistance in his mission to settle child emigrants in Canadian homes.

The impact of the Doyle Report forced advocates of child emigration to reevaluate how their organizations appealed to, and were perceived by, the public. The newspaper industry served a vital function in ensuring that the CEH never suffered the same critiques found in Inspector Doyle's scathing indictment of Maria Rye's organization. Middlemore learned from the well-publicized fallout of the Doyle report (as well as the resulting struggles of earlier child emigration organizations) to mitigate the risk of a similar public relations disaster happening to the CEH. The addition of newspaper articles to the discourse surrounding child emigration communicated transparency and trustworthiness to the British and Canadian public. This trust

[274] "England as Grateful to, as Canada is proud of Her Noble Peers - Police Commissioner Would Send a Youthful Criminal to Canada," *The Globe*, January 5th, 1905.
[275] "The Children's Emigration Homes" *Birmingham Daily Post,* December 10th, 1873.

prevented the Children's Emigration Homes from experiencing the public backlash that prevented Rye from sending children overseas for years after the Doyle Report was published.

Positive newspaper coverage of the CEH was both a cause of improving public perceptions of the Child Emigration Movement and an effect of Middlemore's institutional success. While the Doyle Report presented a problem for child emigration advocates, it also represented a turning point as the public demanded increased accountability for child emigration schemes if they were to continue in operation. The rising popularity of Middlemore and the CEH as a solution to reducing the effects of systemic poverty in Birmingham brought positive attention to the Child Emigration Movement. Without positive exposure through the newspapers, the child emigration project might have continued to bear the burden of traditional discourses of poverty and childhood; it might have struggled to enter the mainstream political conversations of the day, instead being condemned to the extreme fringes of policy alternatives.

Middlemore developed a consistent and effective message to the public by seeking out newspapers in Great Britain and Canada willing to help him present an image of child emigrants that highlighted the transformation of a child's character, the success of the organization's mission, organizational accountability, and the consequences for both society and the child if they remained in Birmingham. The depictions of child emigrants thriving in Canada, coupled with desperate stories of crime and suffering in Birmingham, gained the Children's Emigration Homes endorsement on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Through the newspaper industry, Middlemore and the CEH, alongside other child emigration advocates, supported a public discourse that helped transform child emigration from an extreme and expensive fringe policy championed by only a handful of passionate activists at the beginning of the nineteenth century, into a mainstream option embraced by wider segments of the population on both sides of the

Atlantic by the end of the nineteenth century. Dr. John T. Middlemore, founder of the Children's Emigration Homes, used this public support to rehabilitate the image of the poor children under his care, and to fund his philanthropic mission to secure a better future for them in Canada.

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