"A Taste for Reading": Edward Petherick's Lists of Selected Books for Children in *The Torch and Colonial Book Circular* (1887-92)

Arisa Nakagoe（中越亜理紗）

Introduction

The late nineteenth century was the time of a "Gold Rush" in the field of the international book trade, triggered by the increasing demands for English books in the British colonies. In 1887, an Australian bookseller, Edward Augustus Petherick, set up the Colonial Bookseller's Agency in London. In the same year, he established a journal that was a major project for his agency, titled *The Colonial Book Circular and Bibliographical Record* (soon renamed *The Torch and Colonial Book Circular*),[1] to guide others around the world of books. Most of the contents of the periodical were "Classified Lists of the more important of recent English publications – such in fact, as I [Petherick] have selected for Bookselling firms and Libraries in Australia and New Zealand" (*The Torch* 1:1) and compilations of books that he bought himself. It is rarely discussed nowadays, but a contemporary review in *The Spectator* has foretold its significance as follows: "This catalogue is, as far as we know, unique, and proportionately valuable" (*The Spectator* 208).

To study this burgeoning book business, one must see it as part of an intricate network rather than a series of hierarchical categorisations or a simple centre-periphery dichotomy. Although Petherick saw London as the pivotal hub of the book trade, simultaneously he was aware of newer colonial cities like Melbourne and Sydney transforming themselves into other important centres. Australians did have their own publishing companies too, with Angus & Robertson as the largest share; however, as a tendency, "the Australian trade was made up primarily of booksellers" like Petherick's agency who would "represent[] a range of British publishers and perhaps published occasionally" (Curtain 325). With assistance from improved transportation and communication,

their geographical distance from Britain was no longer a major concern. It was said that "what was available in the bookshops in Wellington was not different from the stock of British shops" (Liebich 209) and "[Australians] may have been living at the end of the earth but they remained keenly aware of the new books and ideas circulating during the last decade of the nineteenth century" (Webby 364). Altogether, a shared global culture was being created through the international book trade in the late nineteenth century. As Alison Rukavina notes, "every node is potentially a centre; in other words, there is no periphery in a network" (Rukavina, *Tangled Networks* 37), and this paper uses this premise as its starting-point.

The nineteenth century also witnessed the "Golden Age" for children's literature. As Martyn Lyons maintains, "[t]he emergence of a flourishing industry in children's literature was part of the process Philippe Ariés has called the 'invention of childhood' – the definition of childhood and adolescence as discrete phases of life with unique problems and needs" (Lyons 327). Children are often marginalized but they are undoubtedly crucial when looking at a society, and what they read and grow up with, or what adults write to nurture them, are important areas of study that give insights into their values, culture, and identity.

Edward Petherick's attention to children's books seems to have increased over time during the publication of *The Torch*. Initially, the lists for children were only published once a year in the periodical for the first two volumes under the title "Books for Presents and Prizes to Young People." However, in later years they appeared several times during a year with the title "Books for the Young."[2] From the change of title, it can be inferred that books for children were no longer special purchases for birthdays and Christmases. Instead, Petherick started to recommend them for everyday pleasure, and simultaneously, to employ strategies to promote sales.

This paper examines Petherick's choice of books for children and his unique marketing strategy in the pages of *The Torch*, comparing them with the lists for adults. *The Torch*, as a comprehensive periodical whose contents are solely dedicated to book catalogues, was indeed one of a kind in Australia at the time.[3] I will be closely looking at the page layout and arrangements, popular genres, books that make repeated appearances, and quotations used as advertisements. It is argued that, although the target audience of the suggested books are children,

the lists are designed in a way that convince adults to make purchases. Also, the selections are not merely reflections of bestselling books in Britain but also significant conveyors of Victorian values, especially imperialism, to be passed on to children in the colonies. The books were chosen carefully according to the interest of the adult readers (businesspersons in publishing industry and parents) of the periodical, including Petherick himself. Ultimately, the overarching argument is that the white British colonies like Petherick's Australia or New Zealand functioned as centres within the international book trade network in the late nineteenth century, and rather than passively imposing Victorian values through books, they could actively self-select what to take away from the homeland culture and pass on to the younger generation.

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Before analysing Petherick's periodical, we must turn to the contemporary context of book business in the nineteenth century, especially that of the homeland Britain. Although there are many limitations of evidence, because many of them are no longer existent, publication records and book catalogues were available in the Victorian era from both public and private sectors.[4] The British Museum Library kept copyright receipt books and published the *Annual Reports of the British Museum*. Also, there were *The Publishers' Circular and General Record of British and Foreign Literature*[5] (1837-1959), *The Bookseller* (1858-present) (*Bent's Monthly Literary Adviser* [pre-1805 to 1860] was integrated into this periodical in 1860), and *Bibliotheca Londinensis* (1814-46). Petherick's periodical was an Australian version of these book cataloguing endeavours.

However, there are many differences between *The Torch* and other contemporary book recording sources, as the latter sections of this paper explore. But most importantly, the concept of the periodical must be mentioned. The presence of the editor is the strongest in *The Torch*, while other British periodicals are woven by a group whose personal opinions were not directly outspoken or reflected on the pages. In other words, Petherick could do whatever he liked with his periodical; he personally wrote the editor's notes, chose the layout and quotations to be included, selected books to be recorded, and declared himself to be the connoisseur. On the other hand, *The Publisher's Circular*, in its

first volume, clearly states that it is "not the speculation of an individual, but was planned by the principal Publishers of London, who were anxious to establish some authorized medium for the publication of their Advertisements" (*The Publisher's Circular* 1:iii). Moreover, "The Proprietors beg to state that they have no pecuniary interest in The CIRCULAR, but they retain the entire control of its management in their own hands, – a Committee having been appointed for the purpose" (*The Publisher's Circular* 1:iv), which is contrasting to Petherick's mercenary and personal characteristic of *The Torch*. Unlike Petherick's selection of books, in the preface of *Bibliotheca Londinensis*, the editor Thomas Hodgson emphasized that his genre-classified catalogue tried to undertake the task of "a complete list of the books published on particular subjects" (Hodgson iii). *The Bookseller*, though "classification is rough and sometimes unreliable" (Eliot 27), also made an effort to offer a comprehensive catalogue of publications. So, what was special about *The Torch* was the personal voice, commercial interest and self-branding of Petherick as a prominent figure in Australian book trade.

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With Petherick's strategy to convince the adult audiences to purchase children's books listed in *The Torch*, the most fundamental factor is money. As a reference, the revised version of *Cassell's Household Guide to Every Department of Practical Life*, published in the same era as Petherick's periodical, suggests annual expenditure plans for British middle-class families: "We will suppose that the family consists of the father, mother and three children, and commence with incomes of £500, £400, and £300 a year" (*Cassell's Household Guide* 1:3).[6] When translating money values, there are several ways to do it, such as RPI-based conversion, GDP-based conversion, earning-based conversion, and one must choose a way that is most suited for the research. This paper will utilise the help from "Currency converter: 1270–2017" by the National Archives, which shows the purchasing power of the money value at the time, because these may be considered adequate when discussing budgets of a household and what they can afford like in this case. As Petherick's periodical is mainly targeted at middle-class[7] readers who are at least educated enough to be an audience of the periodical and the books which it promoted, these numbers shall be kept in mind. Also, it may be even useful to consider the fact that living standards in late

nineteenth-century Australia were somewhat higher than in Britain (booming due to gold-mining and food refrigeration), and so were literacy rates[8]; in certain respects, the colonies were in advance of the metropolis, such as New Zealand introducing votes for women in 1893 and Australia in 1902, whereas Britain offered voting rights for women over 30 in 1918.

For his children's lists, notably, Petherick categorises books by their price range unlike other books (except for novels) listed in the periodical. Within each price range, he lists them up in alphabetical order by the last name of the author, thus making it easier for the parents to consult their budget or book dealers to think about their sales. Throughout all five volumes, the price bands are listed from the highest to the lowest, and typical classifications were "seven and sixpence[9] and upward," "six shillings,"[10] "four and five shillings,"[11] "three shillings and sixpence,"[12] "half-a-crown,"[13] "two shillings,"[14] "one shilling and sixpence,"[15] and "one shilling."[16] The range of prices is wide enough to cover different budgets according to each family. Also, it must be noted that *The Torch* itself was one shilling per issue after vol. 3, because Petherick was criticised for the expensiveness of the periodical by his readers. So, he announced that "future issues will soon be obtainable from not more than one shilling each number" (*The Torch* 3:66). It seems that one shilling was considered by Petherick to be the common affordable price for publications, whether for an issue of the periodical or a book for children.

However, for other book lists in the same periodical, prices are not quoted, and they are arranged only in alphabetical order by the name of the author, following a similar format as that for *The Publisher's Circular*, a trade journal for the publishing industry. Here is an example of book referencing from it: "Abbey (C.J.) – The English Church and Bishops, 1700–1800. 2vols. 8vo. pp.780, 24s ….. Longmans [1" (*The Publisher's Circular* 50:21). This style – the author's last name, first and middle name (sometimes abbreviated), title, format information, price, publisher – is also used in another contemporary periodical, *The Bookseller*, a magazine reporting news on the publishing industry. As for this periodical, the contents page shows the lists of publishers' names.[17] They do have genre categorisation like Petherick's periodical, but the children's books section is not listed according to the price. Also, *Bibliotheca Londinensis*, under the category called "Juvenile Works, Moral Tales," listed up titles (in an alphabetical order) and publishers only, with no details on prices and authors

(unless the author name was included in the title). Thus, Petherick's choice to list children's books alphabetically according to their respective price range in the catalogue was a unique decision but makes sense when taking into consideration factors such as the adults' budget.

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Another unique aspect of Petherick's periodical that is not found in other similar periodicals like *The Publisher's Circular* or *The Bookseller* is the significance of epigraphs printed at the beginning of every book list. These are often fashionable quotations from a wide range of poets, critics, or celebrities that Petherick has selected to promote sales. For the children' book list, they were to stimulate the parent's desire or inspire them to educate and nurture their children to a higher standard, or appeal to the book dealers who are also adults and thus may be motivated from those quotations. Again, the target audience of the lists is the parents rather than the children themselves. Moreover, importantly, the pedantic list of inspirational quotations can be interpreted as evidence of Petherick's desire to appear as a man of letters.

Of course, such quotations chosen for each list were strategically selected by Petherick. Since the publication of the first issue, he had often displayed his abundant literary knowledge and careful choice of words; in the first note, he quotes Sir Richard Steele, "Knowledge of books is like that sort of lantern which hides him who carries it, and serves only to pass through secret and gloomy paths of his own: but in the possession of a man of business, it is as a torch in the hand of one who is willing and able to show those who are bewildered the way which leads to their prosperity and welfare" (qtd. in *The Torch* 1:1). This summarises Petherick's own endeavour and motivation for the publication of his periodical. It is also known from his renaming of the journal, *The Torch and Colonial Book Circular*, that he picked "torch" because it is a "word of one syllable from the quotation placed at the head of our first number – a word simple, expressive, and we think not inappropriate to the publication" (*The Torch* 1:37). He also quotes "What's in a name? that which we call a rose/ By any other name would smell as sweet" (qtd. in *The Torch* 1:37), a phrase that is popular and eye-catching from *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), indicating that his periodical will retain its significance and characteristics regardless of what it might be called.

As for the quotations selected for the children's list in *The Torch*, these were ones that appealed to the adults, the potential buyers, rather than to entertain children, who are the original target audience. For the very first list of children's books in *The Torch* vol. 1 no.2, he quotes Sir F. W. Herschel:

> If I were to pray for a taste which should … be a source of happiness and cheerfulness through life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss, and the world frown upon me, it should be a taste for Reading. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history – with the wisest, the wittiest, with the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. (qtd. in *The Torch* 1:65)

It is evident that the main purpose of quoting this lengthy paragraph is to emphasize the value of education that is associated with children's future well-being, or "making a happy man." Such a direct connection between education and happiness may be controversial in reality, but Petherick chooses to present a positive image with this quotation. He is raising the awareness of adults about their responsibility to cultivate "a taste of reading" and "place [children] in contact with the best society." The undertone here is the attention to class consciousness, or the readers' potential desire to climb up the social ladder through culture.[18] In vol. 4 no. 16 as well, Petherick quotes a similar message by Lowell, "… Few men learn the highest use of books" (*The Torch* 4:154), presenting the concept that a taste for reading is a privilege. Petherick seems to suggest that the list of books he recommends in the periodical will help satisfy such demands for a higher taste.

It can be observed that Petherick considers literary culture as something masculine. As seen above, a child is often referred to as a "man" or "he," and most of the quotations selected are by male writers and philosophers. In vol. 2, an illustration by Grace Stebbing is featured. It is titled "That Bother of a Boy," and it is a picture of a boy on a ladder messing up the bookshelves with a smile. It comes with a caption, "Cataloguing his father's books: getting out all the 'A's first" (*The Torch* 2:75). Although the illustration is done by a woman, Petherick has selected an image that portrays literary culture as masculine heritage, from father to son. Furthermore, this picture is then followed by a quotation by Wordsworth on the next page where the children's book list begins.

Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,
Be these the daily strengtheners of their minds;
May books and nature be their early joy!
And knowledge, rightly honoured with that name –
Knowledge not purchased by the loss of power.
. . . . When … to my father's house
The holidays returned me, there to find
That golden store of books which I had left,
What joy was mine! (qtd. in *The Torch* 2:76).

Again, it is the "father's house" that keeps the "golden store of books" and the repeated message that continues on from the previous volume is that it is the parent's responsibility to provide children with "joy" and education. The emphasis on masculinity may be a reflection of patriarchal values in the Victorian period at the time, which were also passed down and prevalent in colonial Australia. It also may be that the main readership of *The Torch* was male, primarily tradesmen and businessmen who were interested in this periodical for the book industry.

Moreover, as Petherick was keen to persuade adults to make purchases, not only did he emphasize educational value, aspiration to join a higher class, and so on, but he also insisted on books as a way of fruitful investment through the voice of others quoted in his children's lists. For example, in vol. 3 no. 10, he quotes Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: "No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting" (qtd. in *The Torch* 3:57). Petherick, of course, is aware of the cost of books, but he effectively claims that their purchase would be worthwhile, or even cheap at the price considering its value and effect on its readers.

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Before examining the characteristic of the content of the children's lists by Petherick, his selections for adults must be looked at, in order to testify that the books for children on the catalogues were ones that the adult readers of the periodical would prefer, as well as Petherick himself. Particularly, along with other Victorian values that are passed on to the colonies through books, it is revealed that those listed for adults and those for children in *The Torch* have

a similar focus on the empire and beyond as genres. Petherick's strategy was to choose children's books that would be favoured by the adults reading his periodical because they are the ones who make the actual purchases, and how *The Torch* exemplifies Petherick's ideas on this issue is examined below.

One of the significant traits of the book lists in Petherick's periodical was its clear categorisation of books according to their genres.[19] For adults, typical categories in "Recent English Publications" consisted of "Dictionaries and Encyclopaedias," "History & biography," "economics, politics, and topics of the day," "law and jurisprudence," "religion and philosophy," "essays, criticism," "poetry and the drama," "fine arts, music," "education," "geography," "voyages and travels," "natural and physical science," "industrial arts, handicrafts, engineering, chemistry and manufactures," "agriculture and domestic economy," "games and sports," and "novels and works of fiction."

Simultaneously, Petherick established another larger section called "Recent colonial publications and books relating to the colonies," within which he categorised books by their target regions, except for ones that came under "Colonies in General." Typical regions include "Australasia" (usually occupying the largest quota, which is understandable considering Petherick's interest in Australia), "Dominion of Canada," "South African colonies," "West Africa" (generally only a handful), "West Indies" and "British Guinea." The focus was mainly on the British colonies.

Within the above colonial lists there existed a category called "Law Books," which especially handled legal issues in the colonies. These books included: expositions of legal procedures, such as *Manual for Coroners and Magistrates in New South Wales* by T. E. MacNevin: explanations of acts and regulations, such as *Collection of Real Estate Acts and Pastures* and *Stock Protection Acts* by Alex Oliver: missionary guides to religions and local languages, such as *Prayers and Scripture Readings in the Ysabel Language, Motu Grammar and Vocabulary* of New Guinea by W. G. Lawes, and *The Martyrs of Polynesia* by Rev. A. W. Murray: military reports, like *Australian Defences and New Guinea* by Admiral Scott, and *Report of Royal Commission* by Military Defences: accounts of colonial explorations, such as *Our Maoris: Notes Made During Thirty-Four Years' Residence in New Zealand* by Lady Martin and *Ten Years in Melanesia* by Rev. Alfred Penny (*The Torch* 1:29-31).

In short, *The Torch* was not only a guidebook for imported British books in

general. Even though it already had pages on categories such as "Geography" and "Voyages and Travels," it went so far as to create an additional major section dedicated to colonial issues. This was what made Petherick's periodical singular, which answered to the needs of his readers, who were particularly interested in these. Thus, the children's book lists reflected such adults' inclination, which will be discussed in detail below.

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To address the technical issues first, Petherick's job was to make it easier for the adults to choose children's books. His list was a category on its own and did not have further genre clarification, but the books contained there mostly had self-explanatory titles with obvious key words or a subordinate title describing the content or the moral. These examples include *Little Peter: a Christian Morality for Children of any Age, The Rover's Street: a Tale of the Pirate Cays and Lagoons of Cuba, Chivalric Days: Stories of Courtesy and Courage in the Olden Times* and so on. Because the list does not include synopses, such easy-to-guess titles were convenient choices. Also, Petherick listed books that address the target gender in the title, such as *Boy's Book of Sports and Outdoor Life in America* or *The Palace Beautiful: a Story for Girls*, and he also advertised several books or stories in a bundle, such as *By the Winter's Fire: A Collection of Stories suitable for Children*,[20] that would exempt parents from thinking about the assortment of books if they want to buy several for their children.

As for the contents, though without a clear segregation on the pages by genres, the children's books listed in *The Torch* can be classified into several major categories (though some books may come under several): fairy tales and nursery rhymes, gender-oriented contents, history, science, religion, writings on foreign land and culture, and popular fiction. The sub-genre that dominates the last category is adventure stories typically featuring a foreign country or the British colonies. In a nutshell, Petherick's book list for children acted as a vessel that transported Victorian values to children in the colonies through shared literary culture, which complies with the interest of the adult readers of *The Torch* and Petherick himself, especially in terms of imperialism.

While attention to subjects such as history, science, and religion was clearly comparatively less in the children's lists, Petherick put much effort into

presenting books on fairy tales, books classified by target gender, and books with an imperial outlook. Some of these were repeatedly recommended, not just across different volumes of *The Torch* but also in the same list with different prices according to the fashion of the books. This meant that access to those particular titles was made easier for buyers with lower budgets as well. These titles will be mentioned in the closer analysis below.

Petherick's interest in fairy tales and classical fables was understandable, considering their immense popularity. In the nineteenth century, "[f]airy-tales underwent a constant process of transformation by authors and publishers, as they were rewritten, edited, cut or reinvented to suit readers of different ages and different moral standards" and "[p]ublishers sweetened the folk-tales they inherited for nineteenth-century children" (Lyons 328). Petherick's choices included stories by Andrew Lang, the Grimm brothers, Andersen, and Aesop. These common choices were almost never off the children's book list, and a variety of versions were offered for wider access moneywise. For example, in *The Torch* vol. 2, Andersen's fairy tale books appear four times in one list, each with different price depending on publishers or editions. The most luxurious version is "Andersen (Hans, C.) Stories for the Household. Translated by H. W. Ducken. Coloured illustrations by Nister, and 290 engravings by A. W. Bayes" published by Routledge for seven and six pence (*The Torch* 2:76) and the same content without illustrations and engravings is buyable for six shillings (*The Torch* 2:76). Similarly, "Andersen's Story of the Mermaiden. Adapted from the German by E. Ashe. Illust. By Laura Troubridge" from Griffith is sold at three shillings (*The Torch* 2:78), and half a crown is the price for a "bds" (abbreviation for "boards"; it means that the book is made from inexpensive paperboards, covered by cloth or other materials) version of the same content (*The Torch* 2:80).

As seen above, fairy tales chosen by Petherick for children were usually of Western origins. However, there was one volume of oriental literature that triggered Petherick's enthusiasm – *Arabian Nights*' *Entertainment* which he almost always listed. It is true that *Arabian Nights* was popular among the Victorian public to some extent, but Petherick's commercial interest in the work is noteworthy. The National Library of Australia holds some of the surviving letters by Petherick, which shows that he subscribed to Richard F. Burton's *Arabian Nights* instalments and helped the author advertise and sell them (Rukavina, "We Can All Meet, Be It Soon or Late" 1). On 2 November 1884,

Burton wrote to Petherick thanking him for his help about "the multi-volume *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, otherwise known as the *Arabian Nights*, which Burton would publish between 1885 and 1886" (Rukavina, "We Can All Meet, Be It Soon or Late" 1). Petherick's repeated choice of *Arabian Nights* for children's lists in *The Torch* may have been a reflection of his own interest in the subject.

Another type of Victorian publication that was characteristically prominent at the time was publications that announced the gender of their readers. Not only did they make the parents' choice easier, as mentioned previously, but they had strong educational power in shaping children's identities. Famous volumes such as *The Boy's Own Annual, The Girl's Own Annual, Every Girl's Annual*, and *Every Boy's Annual* appeared every year on Petherick's lists. Others were books imposing certain roles and virtues for children to embrace according to their gender, though it can be considered problematic today. For girls, there were *The Five Talents of Woman: A Book for Girls and Young Women* and importantly *The Girl's Own Indoor Book*, which was introduced with a short synopsis, which was rare in Petherick's list: "This book deals with all indoor occupations and amusements to which girls of all ages can devote their time, such as : Plain Sewing, Crewel Work, Knitting, Fancy Darning, Crochet, Music, Singing, Painting, Elocution, Health, Recreation, Physical Education, Etiquette, Cookery, Literature, Letter Writing, How to improve one's Education, Remunerative Work, Girl's Allowances" (*The Torch* 2:76). This contrasts with *Boy's Book of Sports and Outdoor Life in America*, which promotes boys' activity outside their home, and *Master Minds in Art*, *Science and Letters: A Book for Boys*, while science was generally not considered as something suitable for girls (*The Torch* 1:65-68). Also, foreign adventures were often associated with boys much more than girls, as imperialism was often connected to masculinity. An example for this is *Library for Boys* by W. H. G. Kingston which consisted of stories, such as "My First Voyage to Southern Seas," "A Voyage Round the World," "In the Wilds of Florida," and "The Young Rajah" (*The Torch* 1:66).

The last topic to explore is the books with an imperial outlook, like travel writing, exploration accounts, and adventure stories, which are most of the time associated with masculinity or boyhood as explained in the above paragraph. Travels and adventures abroad were by far the most popular topic for both fiction and non-fiction in the children's book list in *The Torch*. Keywords in

such titles were “adventure,” “frontier,” “pioneer,” “travel,” “captain,” “abroad,” “exile,” “world,” “sea,” “ship,” “sailors,” “cruise,” “voyage,” “journey,” foreign place names, and terms that implies encounter with foreign culture or racial otherness or missionary work in the colonies. Also, the lists interestingly show anthropological interest towards people’s lives abroad, such as *A Tale of Canadian Life* and *Among the Mongols* and sometimes that of children too, like *Child-Life in Japan* (*The Torch* 2:76-84). Statistically speaking, the children’s book list in *The Torch* vol. 1 contains approximately 400 books, and out of that number, more than 100 books come under this foreign-focused, adventurous, or explorative category. In *The Torch* vol. 2, the total number of books on the children’s list is roughly around 500, and more than one-fifth of these can be judged as one of the discussed types, just by looking at the title.

Among these world-conscious books, place names that are stated explicitly in the titles are frequently members of the British Empire or the Commonwealth, such as non-English but British (e.g. *Romance of Scottish History* [*The Torch* 3:57], *Irish Story* [*The Torch* 1:68]), North American (e.g. *Life and Adventures among the Red Indians* [*The Torch* 1:68], *A Story of American Life* [*The Torch* 2:80]), African (e.g. *A Little Dutch Maiden: A South African Sketch, Hot Work in Soudan* [*The Torch* 2:77]), Oceanian (e.g. *Australian Story* [*The Torch* 3:21], *Maori and Settler* [*The Torch* 4:13]), or Polynesian (e.g. *Cruise in the South Pacific* [*The Torch* 3:19]). Books on other European countries appear in moderate frequency (e.g. *Drake and Dons: Armada Times, A Tale of the Crimea* [*The Torch* 2:79]), especially featuring France (e.g. *A True Tale of the French Revolution, A Story of Old France* [*The Torch* 3:20]), while there are much less on Asian countries (e.g. *A Nineteenth Century Romance of Life in China* [*The T*orch 3:58]) other than India (*Bryda: A Story of the Indian Mutiny, Vashti Savage* [*The Torch* 2: 79, 80]), Central and South America (e.g. *The Aztec Treasure House* [*The Torch* 4:155]), and Middle East (e.g. *The Heroines of Harlem* [*The Torch* 2:78]). This may be a reflection of the level of diplomatic relationships between Britain and the other parts of the world; the same symptom can be observed in the colonial book lists for adults in *The Torch*. On the other hand, there are only a few books on Britain itself recommended in the lists.

Of course, one may argue that these interests towards foreign lands may not have been underpinned by imperialistic ambitions. What could be said without looking at the actual contents of the suggested books? However, it must be kept

in mind that the parents and adults looking at the children's book lists had only their titles to refer to when making choices after all, because Petherick did not offer any synopsis. Again, the titles had to be self-explanatory to be selected (unless the titles of the books were too famous not to be known). Many of them, in regard to the colonial regions, included key words such as "savage," "pioneer," "frontier," "conquest," "treasure," which arguably represents the stance of the books as pro-imperialist, striking a similar parallel to the books recommended for adults in *The Torch*, as discussed in the previous section of this paper.

Furthermore, *The Torch* constantly advertised famous adventure stories from classics like *Gulliver's Travels* and *Robinson Crusoe* to contemporary fiction by authors like Verne, Stevenson, and Ballantyne. As Lyons notes, even in the nineteenth century, *Robinson Crusoe*, often considered as an epitome of imperialism in fiction, "enjoyed a global popularity, and was produced in various versions adapted to the needs of children of different ages" (Lyons 327), a claim which is supported by the fact that Petherick introduced a variety of different versions of this book to spread it among a wider readership. Likewise, others too were often repetitively presented, which proves both their popularity and Petherick's intention to highlight them. As John M. MacKenzie says, literature for young people mirrors the leading ideas of an age, and "[t]he values and fantasies of adult authors are dressed up in fictional garb for youthful consumption, and the works thereby become instrumental in the dissemination and perpetuation of particular clusters of ideals, assumptions and ambitions" (MacKenzie vii). In the case of *The Torch*, the strongest idea was imperialism, for not only the adult authors but also for the editor Petherick and his readers of all ages.

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It is known that Edward Petherick was a businessman who fully utilised his network of connections. Choosing which publisher's books to advertise in his periodical was one of the major concerns for him. As Rukavina claims, "[a] number of the books listed for sale in the *Circular* [*The Torch*] were by members of the various learned societies Petherick belong[ed] to, and he made a point to try and include any books published by the societies in his journal and for sale through the Agency. … Petherick made use of his personal, business,

and scholarly contacts to launch and ensure the success of the Agency and the *Circular* [*The Torch*]" (Rukavina, "We Can All Meet, Be It Soon or Late" 16). Then, how was it so for the books in Petherick's lists for children? What was the tactic behind them to promote sales effectively?

While Petherick recommended books from his own company for adult's lists, because he did not publish children's books himself, he advertised suitable items from other British publishers. He had close relationships with Bentley, MacMillan, George Robertson, Murrays and others[21] – he even featured special sections for cheap colonial books published by George Robertson, Murrays and MacMillan[22] – but products from these publishers, except for MacMillan (e.g. *A Christmas Posy* [*The Torch* 2:78]), were hardly recorded in the children's lists, simply because they hardly produced books for children at the time. It was easier and more profitable to import children's books from British publishers such as Warne (e.g. *Arabian Nights' Entertainment, Boy's Book of Sports and Outdoor Life in America*), Low (e.g. *Harper's Young People, Andersen's Fairy Tales and Stories*), Routledge (e.g. *Every Boy's Annual*), Cassell (e.g. *Aesop's Fables*), Griffith (e.g. *New Canterbury Tales, Perils in the Transvaal and Zululand*), Blackie (e.g. *In the Reign of Terror: Adventures of a Westminster Boy, The Rover's Secret: a Tale of the Pirate Cays and Lagoons of Cuba*), and so on (*The Torch* 1:65-66).

In fact, the children's books were not only advertised on the pages of "Books for the Young," but they were also making appearances in the publishers' advertisements in appendices of *The Torch*.[23] This means that these companies, many of which are mentioned in the children's book lists, had actually paid Petherick to have these few pages dedicated to their sales promotion. So, for the adult readers, they had several chances in a single catalogue to encounter the same children's books, which would potentially increase the probability of their purchase because of their longer exposure to the advertisements. For Petherick, on the other hand, advertisements were lucrative business agreements with the publishers. For example, the advertisement page for Routledge mentions the same books recommended on the children's list in *The Torch*.[24] Selections such as *The Little Savage* by Captain Marryat, *Little Wideawake*, and *Robinson Crusoe* overlap. Sampson Low advertises "Standard Books for Boys," "Dick Cheveley," and "Heir of Kilfinnan" by W. H. G. Kingston and "Off to the Wild" by G. M. Fenn in their own pages too,[25] as if to remind the readers of what

they recommended in the list for children. Other publishers such as Warne,[26] Hodder,[27] Blackie & Sons,[28] and Longman & Co.[29] have their own advertisement pages too, which shows their close connection with Petherick.

Conclusion

As discussed above, unlike its contemporary book cataloguing periodicals whose purpose was often to offer non-personal comprehensive guidance, with the use of personal voice and commercial interest, *The Torch* also functioned as the editor Petherick's advertisement of himself as a literary guru in the Australian book trade. His children's book lists in *The Torch* were a product of his unique strategy to promote the sales of books in the contemporary context, especially making purchases easier from adults' point of view. He employed quotations from acclaimed writers to convince adults to buy children's books to fulfil their responsibility to educate them and invite them to attain a higher intellectual class in society, therefore arguing that it is a meaningful investment for children's future in the relatively flexible class system of the colonial cities. Although Petherick could not afford the space in the periodical to offer synopsis for each book, their self-explanatory titles often revealed their genre, content, and sometimes target gender. The children's books were classified firstly according to their price range and were then ordered alphabetically. As for the popular topics of the books on the list, some of the most dominant were: classical Western fairy tales with an exception of *Arabian Nights*, which was partly Petherick's personal interest: typically Victorian gender-classified contents that defined activities and behaviour of children according to their sex: and most outstandingly, narratives about travels and adventure in some foreign land or sea, which reflect the adult readers' interest. The readers of *The Torch* are attentive to such pro-imperialist issues, as may be observed in the lists of books for adults, and thus would be likely to make their children read similar things.

As a result, it can be said that Petherick's lists of children's books offered an active self-selection of homeland culture, by which core Victorian values were passed on to children of the white colonies, such as Australia and New Zealand, that had also become new centres of the book trading network. As observed from the children's book list of *The Torch*, popular contents of the recommended books, namely folk traditions, gender roles, and imperialism, were

characteristically Victorian. This can be attributed to the fact that the readers of *The Torch* and Petherick himself are members of the white or British sides of the colony. Then, a new set of questions open up. How would non-white or non-British members of the colony choose books to import from Britain? How much autonomy did they have to be able to self-select the culture of their colonisers? To what extent is it adequate to establish a dichotomy between white or British colonial book culture and that of non-white/non-British? These topics require further investigation.

Notes

1 In this paper, the abbreviation for this periodical is *The Torch*.

2 The children's books list did not appear in vol. 5, which consisted of only two issues, due to the failure in Petherick's business and the abrupt discontinuance of the publication. If he had kept his pace, the children's books list would have come out around no. 3 of the volume.

3 Petherick did publish *Monthly Catalogue: Literary, Artistic, Scientific* as well, but he recommended *The Torch* over them, claiming that *The Torch* is more "comprehensive" (*Monthly Catalogue* 1:iv).

4 See Simon Eliot's "Some trends in British book production, 1800-1919."

5 The abbreviation for this periodical is *The Publishers' Circular* in this paper.

6 These numbers, £500, £400, and £300, when converted to current equivalent (1880 rate), approximately equals £33,092.35, £26,473.88, and £19,855.41 respectively in 2017. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter. [accessed on 13 March 2019]

7 The "middle-class" in the nineteenth century Australian sense needs some explanation. Many of the immigrants, except for former convicts who were mostly from the working class, who came to settle in Australia were from the British middle-class hoping to make a better living (Russell 434). However, in Australia, there hardly existed the "upper-class" (for example, aristocrats and nobility) in the British sense. In this paper, they are referred to as the "middle-class" for convenience's sake; "In the larger focus of transnationalism, the culture of the international middle class was neither 'British', 'American' nor 'Australian' but characteristic of 'Greater' Britain" (Young 7).

8 See Susan K. Martin, "Reading Culture and Reading in 19th-Century Australia."

9 £30.77 (1890 rate)

10 £24.61

11 £16.41 and £20.51 respectively.

12 £14.36

13 £10.26

14 £8.20

15 £6.15

16 £4.10

17 For example, see *Bookseller*, no. 350, p.1.

18 In contrast to the relatively static class structure of Victorian Britain, Australian society was "changing and fluid," offering chances to "break into a higher social class" and one of the means was a good education, along with other options such as business and marriage (Selzer 41). One relevant case study is the Hume family of Queensland in the late nineteenth century, who gained membership of the social elite from their struggling middle-class origins (Davies 291); to improve the family's social status, Walter and Katie Hume sent their children to British boarding schools to "ensure that the children obtained an education suitable for membership of the British upper-middle classes" (Davies 305). Like "any middle-class parents could aspire to, especially those living in one of Britain's colonies," the Humes invested in their children's education, and achieved an entry into the colonial elite society while it was still open for new admission (Davies 306).

19 For example, *The Publisher's Circular* did not have genre categorisations except for some special cases, such as the "Educational Books Maps and Atlases" category in vol. 50 in 1887. Usually, the periodical only offered simple lists of American and British books that were published recently.

20 The examples in this paragraph up to this item are all taken from Petherick, "Books for Presents and Prizes to Young People" (*The Torch* 1:65-67).

21 For more information about Petherick and his publisher's network, see Alison Rukavina's "A Victorian Amazon.com: Edward Petherick and His Colonial Booksellers' Agency" and "'This Is a Wonderfully Comprehensive Business': The Development of the British-Australian and International Book Trades, 1870-1887."

22 Booksellers and book-trade importers including Petherick, George Robertson and Mullens created their own cheap colonial versions of books "by coming to special arrangements with British firms from the 1870s" (Eggert 137), but these were mainly targeted at adult audiences.

23 The page numbers for the appendix are marked with square brackets on the original, so this paper will follow the system.

24 See *The Torch*, vol. 1, p. [28], vol. 2, p. [22], p. [42], p. [43], vol. 3, p. [27] for their advertisements.

25 For Sampson Low, Marston & Co's list, see *The Torch* vol. 1, p. [29], vol. 2, p. [25], and vol. 3, p. [8].

26 *The Torch*, vol. 1, p. [34] has "A List of some Important Series" issued by Messrs. Fredrick Warne & Co.

27 *The Torch*, vol. 2, p. [19] has a page of "Hodder and Stoughton's Gift Books and

Prizes."

28 Blackie & Sons has an advertisement page in *The Torch*, vol. 3, p. [9].

29 Messrs. Longman & Co's List is in *The Torch*, vol. 3, p. [13]

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