

Baby's Baedeker

An International Guidebook *for the* Young of All Ages. Peculiarly Adapted to the Wants of
1st & 2nd Childhood

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Dedication

(To Lady Lytton)

THESE verses, written in the West,—
(That land of Progress and Unrest,)
Are offered, from the sun-scorched
South,
(This land of Bloodshed and of Drouth,)
To You in England, o'er the sea,—
(Land where my thoughts must ever be.)

Accept them, if You will ; and smile.
In yonder Northern Spring-kissed Isle,
Recalling days your presence blessed,
One sunlit Winter in the West ;
Then, gazing far across the sea.
Think kindly of the South—and me !

H. G.

South Africa,
April 3rd, 1902.

Proclamation

(By Way of Preface)

O LISTEN to the invitation
Which 't is my firm determination
To issue to the population
Of this and ev'ry other nation !

Come, boys and girls of ev'ry station,
Creed, colour, rank, denomination ;
Offspring of prince or poor relation,
I claim your kind consideration !
My temporary occupation
Is to advance your education,
And, with my strong imagination,
Increase your stock of information.
I disregard vituperation.
Insinuation, execration.
Aspersions, even accusation
Of madness or intoxication !
My conduct needs no explanation ;
I ask no human approbation,
Nor any bubble reputation ;
Nor do I seek remuneration,—
But only, from a grateful nation,
A hero's burial—or cremation !
(Will friends accept their invitation
From this, the only, intimation ?)

Invitation

MY children, will you come with
me,—
(In one more page my journey
starts),—
To speed across the sunlit sea
And bravely visit foreign parts ?
New scenes we'll meet at ev'ry turn,
And lots of lessons we may learn.

You won't require to pack your box
With anything that tourists take,
With toothbrushes or pairs of socks.
With guidebooks or with hunks of cake ;
For we abroad intend to roam
Without so much as leaving home.

Come, little ones, take heart ; be bold,
And follow me to distant lands ;
And, if you wish it, I will hold
Your damp and somewhat sticky hands.
Leap lightly up upon my lap,
And don't forget to bring your map.

Pray recollect, when worried by
The wondrous things I have to tell,
'T is *information* I supply,
I cannot give you *brains* as well ;

(For such 't were surely vain to look
In any reader of this book).

And if, upon this foreign tour,
Some country's mention I omit,
'T is that my memory is poor,
Or else I am reserving it ;
My future would be dull without
Some subjects still to write about.

Now, children, put your toys away ;
You will not find the journey long.
Stop sucking peppermint, I pray,
While visiting the continong !
Climb carefully upon my knee
And you shall tour the world with me !

United States of America

THIS is the Country of the Free,
The Cocktail and the Ten Cent
Chew ;
Where you're as good a man as me,
And I'm a better man than you !
(O Liberty, how free we make !
Freedom, what liberties we take !)

'T is here the startled tourist meets,
'Mid clanging of a thousand bells,
The railways running through the streets,
Skyscraping flats and vast hotels,
Where rest, on the resplendent floors,
The necessary cuspidors.

And here you may encounter too
The pauper immigrants in shoals,
The Swede, the German, and the Jew,
The Irishman, who rules the polls
And is employed to keep the peace,
A venal and corrupt police.

They are so busy here, you know,
They have no time at all for play ;
Each morning to their work they go
And stay there all the livelong day ;
Their dreams of happiness depend
On making more than they can spend.

If you are visiting New York,
Don't fail to see a Bow'ry " joint,"

Or, if Chicago, pack some pork,
And try the hazing at West Point ;
But if in need of rest you are
Just stay a week at Pittsburg (Pa.).

The ladies of this land are all
Developed to a pitch sublime,
Some inches over six foot tall,
With perfect figures all the time.
(For further notice of their looks
See Mr. Dana Gibson's books).

And, if they happen to possess
Sufficient balance at the bank,
They have the chance of saying " Yes !"
To needy foreigners of rank ;
The future dukes of all the earth
Are half American by birth.

MORAL

A " dot" combining cash with charms
Is worth a thousand coats-of-arms.

Great Britain

THE British are a chilly race.
The Englishman is thin and tall ;
He screws an eyeglass in his face
And talks with a reluctant drawl.
" Good Gwacious ! This is doosid slow !
By Jove ! Haw demmy ! Don't-cher-
know !"

The Englishwoman ev'ry where
A meed of admiration wins ;
She has a crown of silken hair
And quite the loveliest of skins.
(Go forth and seek an English maid,
Your trouble will be well repaid).

Where Britain's banner is unfurled
There's room for nothing else beside,
She owns one quarter of the world,
And still she is not satisfied.
The Briton thinks himself, by birth,
To be the lord of all the earth.

And he is usually born
With a desire to be alone ;
He looks in pity mixt with scorn

On any country but his own ;
And deems the foreigner to be
An object for his sympathy.

Some call his manners wanting, or
His sense of humour poor, and yet
Whatever he is striving for
He as a rule contrives to get ;
His methods may be much to blame.
But he arrives there just the same.

MORAL

If you can get your wish, you bet it
Doesn't much matter *how* you get it !

Scotland

IN Scotland all the people wear
Red hair and freckles, and one sees
The men in women's dresses there,
With stout, décolleté, low-necked knees.
(" Eblins ye dinna ken, I doot,
We're unco guid, so hoot mon, hoot !")

They love " ta whuskey" and " ta Kirk."
I don't know which they like the most ;
They aren't the least afraid of work ;
No sense of humour can they boast ;
And you require an axe to coax
The canny Scot to see your jokes.

They play an instrument they call
The bagpipes, and the sound of these
Is reminiscent of the squall
Of infant pigs attacked by bees ;
Music that might drive cats away
Or make reluctant chickens lay.

MORAL

Wear kilts, and, tho' men look askance.
Go out and give your knees a chance.

Ireland

THE Irishman is never quite
Contented with his little lot ;
He's ever thirsting for a fight,
A grievance he has always got ;
And all his energy is bent
On trying not to pay his rent.

He lives upon a frugal fare,
The few potatoes that he digs.
And hospitably loves to share
His bedroom with his wife and pigs.
But cannot settle even here
And gets evicted once a year.

In order to amuse himself
At any time when things are slack.
He takes his gun down from the shelf
And shoots a landlord in the back ;
If he is lucky in the chase
He may contrive to bag a brace.

MORAL

Procure a grievance and a gun
And you can have no end of fun.

Wales

THE natives of the land of Wales
Are not a very truthful lot,
And the imagination fails
To paint the language they have got ;
Bettws-y-coed-llan-dud-nod-
Dolgelly-rhiwlas-cwm-wm-dod !

MORAL

If you *must* talk, then do it, pray,
In an intelligible way.

China

THE Chinaman from early youth
Is by his wise preceptors taught
To have no dealings with the Truth ;
In fact, romancing is his “ forte.”
In juggling words he takes the prize
By the sheer beauty of his lies.

But when he leaves his home to go
In search of wealth to western climes,
The little boys annoy him so.
He has the very worst of times.
They call him ev’ry sort of name
And pull his pigtail,—what a shame!

For laundrywork he has a knack ;
He takes in shirts and makes them blue ;

When he omits to send them back
He takes his customers in too.
He must be ranked in the “ élite”
Of those whose hobby is deceit.

For ladies't is the fashion here
To pinch their feet and make them
small,
Which, to the civilized idea.
Is not a proper thing at all.
Our modern western woman's taste
In pinching leans towards the waist.
The Chinese Empire is the field
Where foreign missionaries go ;
A poor result their labours yield,
And they have little fruit to show ;
For, if you would convert Wun Lung,
You have to catch him very young.

The Chinaman has got a creed
And a religion of his own,
And would be much obliged indeed
If you would leave his soul alone ;
And he prefers, which may seem odd,
His own to other people's god.

Yet still the missionary tries
To point him out his wickedness,
Until the badgered natives rise,—
And there's one missionary less !
Then foreign Pow'rs step in, you see.
And ask for an indemnity.

MORAL

Adhere to facts, avoid romance.
And you a clergyman may be ;
To lie is wrong, except perchance
In matters of Diplomacy.
And, when you start out to convert.
Make certain that you don't get hurt !

Dreamland

HERE you will see strange hap-
penings
With absolutely placid eyes ;
If all your uncles sprouted wings
You would not feel the least surprise ;
The oddest things that you can do
Don't seem a bit absurd to you.

You go (in Dreamland) to a ball,
And suddenly are shocked to find
That you have nothing on at all,—
But somehow no one seems to mind ;
And naturally *you* don't care
If they can bear what you can bare !

Then, in a moment, you're pursued
By engines on a railway track !
Your legs are tied, your feet are glued.
The train comes snorting down your
back !
One last attempt at flight you make
And so (in bed) perspiring wake.

You feel so free from weight of cares
That, if the staircase you should climb,
You gaily mount, not single stairs,
But whole battalions at a time ;
My metaphor is mixed, may be,
I quote from Shakespeare (William P.)

If you should eat too much, you pay
(In dreams) the penalty for this ;
A nightmare carries you away
And drops you down a precipice !
Down ! down ! until, with sudden smack,
You strike the mattress with your back.

MORAL

At meals decline to be a beast.
Too much is better than a feast.

Stageland

THE customs of this land have all
Been published in a bulky tome.
The author is a man they call
Jerome K. Jerome K, Jerome,
So, lest on his preserves I poach,
This subject I refuse to broach.

MORAL

The Moral here is plain to see.
If true the hackneyed witticism
Which stamps Originality
As “undetected plagiarism,”
What a vocation I have miss'd
As undetected plagiarist !

Loverland

THIS is the land where minor bards
And other lunatics repair,
To live in houses made of cards,
Or build their castles in the air ;
To feed on hope and idly dream
That things are really what they seem.
The natives are a motley lot.
Of ev'ry age and creed and race.
But each inhabitant has got
The same expression on his face ;
They look, when this their features fills.
Like angels with internal chills.

The lover sits, the livelong day.
Quite inarticulate of speech ;
He simply brims with things to say.
Alas ! The words he cannot reach,
And, silent, lets occasion pass.
Feeling a fulminating ass.

It is the lady lover's wont
To blush and look demure or coy,
To say " You mustn't !" and " Oh ! Don't !"
Or " Please leave off, you naughty boy !"
But this, of course, is just her way,
She wouldn't wish you to obey.

The lover, in a trembling voice.
Demands the hand of his lovee.
And begs the lady of his choice
To share some cottage-by-the-sea ;
With *her* a prison would be nice,
A coal-cellar a Paradise !

" Love in a Cottage" sounds so well ;
But oh, my too impatient bride.
No drainage and a constant smell
Of something being over-fried
Is not the sort of atmosphere
That makes for wedded bliss, I fear.

And, when the bills are rather high,
And when the money's rather low,
See poor Virginia sit and sigh,
And ask why Paul *must* grumble so !
He slams the door and strides about,
And, through the window, Love creeps out.

'Tis said that Cupid blinds men's sight
With fire of passion from above,

Nor ever bids them see aright
The many faults in those they love.
Ah no ! I deem it otherwise.
For lovers have the clearest eyes.

They see the faults, the failures, and
The great temptations, and they know,
Although they cannot understand,
That they would have the loved one so.
Believe me. Love is never blind.
But oh ! his eyes are wise and kind.

Tho' lovers quarrel, yet I ween
'Tis but to make it up again ;
The sunshine seems the more serene
That follows after April rain ;
And love should lead, if love be true,
To perfect understanding too.

If in our hearts this love beat strong,
We shall not ever seek to earn
Forgiveness for some fancied wrong,
Nor need to pardon in return ;
But learn this lesson as we live,
“ To understand is to forgive.”

And all you little girls and boys
Will find this out yourselves, some day.
When you have done with childish toys
And put your infant books away.
Ah ! then I pray that hand-in-hand
You tread the paths of Loverland.

MORAL

Don't fall in love, but, when you do.
Take care that he (or she) does too ;
And, lastly, to misquote the bard.
If you *must* love, don't love too hard.

Finale

THE tour is over! We must part !
Our mutual journey at an end.
O bid farewell, with aching heart,
To guide, philosopher and friend ;
And note, as you remark “ Good-bye !”
The kindly tear that dims his eye.

The tour is ended ! Sad but true !
No more together may we roam !
We turn our lonely footsteps to
The spot that's known as Home, Sweet
Home.

Nor time nor temper can afford
A more protracted trip abroad.

O Home ! Where we must always be
So hopelessly misunderstood ;
Where waits a tactless family
To tells us things “ for our own good” ;
where relatives, with searchlight eyes,
Can penetrate our choicest lies.

Where all our kith and kin combine
To prove that we are worse than rude.
If we should criticise the wine
Or make complaints about the food.
Thank Goodness, then (to quote the pome),
Thank Goodness, there’s “ no place like
Home.”

The tour is ended ! (Once again
I make this somewhat trite remark.)
My lonely heart is full of pain
And all my world is bare and dark.
Because, my friends, I watch you go
Before I’ve told you half I know.

My style, as no one will deny.
Is one that thoroughly attracts,
Then, also, I rely on my
Imagination for my facts ;
And this is (in the Author’s trade)
The way that History is made.

O gentle maid, O happy boy,
This copy of my book is done ;
But don’t forget that I enjoy
A royalty on ev’ry one;
Just think how wealthy I should be
If you would purchase two or three !

MORAL

No moral that I ever took
Seemed quite so ob-vi-ous before.
If purchasing an author’s book
Will keep the wolf from his back-door,
It evidently is our mission
To buy up the entire edition.

Finis

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