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LIFE AMONG
ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS

VOLUME I

JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS

THE WORLD BOOK CO., LTD.
SHANGHAI

1925

LIFE AMONG ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS

VOLUME ONE

JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS

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本書特點

- 一. 本書分甲乙兩編.甲編爲英國之部.乙編爲美國之部.均採用外國著作者原本.加以選擇修改.並附漢譯.藉便學者.
- 二. 目前各學校對於英文教學.均注重課外閱讀.顧普通所採取課外閱讀之書.多偏於神話故事之類.不甚切於實用.是書內容.則可令學者多獲實益.且亦饒有趣味.足爲課外閱讀之善本.
- 三. 近今所定新學制實施教學法.於外國語一科.「以引起對於外國日常生活狀況的研究興趣」爲一種重要之目的.此書甲乙兩編.於英美兩國風土人情.多所紀述.足合研究日常生活狀況之需要.
- 四. 本書甲編爲日記式兼對談式.乙編純取對談式.學者細加探討.不獨於文字上得有進步.且可藉以練習會話.
- 五. 本書於社交方面.論列綦詳.讀者可因以習知兩國社交狀況及禮俗.凡欲遊歷英美者.更足資借鏡.

PREFACE

The present work lays no claim to originality inasmuch as it is the abridged reproduction of a work entitled "My English Diary" or, as more fully described in the sub-title, "A Peep into Every Day Life in England" by Professor A. W. Medley. Several chapters which are not deemed to be of particular interest to the average Chinese reader have been omitted. In the original preface Professor Medley observes: "Englishmen, as a rule, do not talk like a book, but use the language adapted to express their meaning in the fewest possible words, and this ordinary colloquial language I have used I do claim that the book is written in the every day speech of my fellow countrymen in their social intercourse and in their business relations, and I trust it may be of some service to students in their practice of conversation"

The work though written for the benefit of Japanese students of English will not fail to commend itself to the favourable attention of Chinese students of English, for the plain reason that it possesses several very interesting features which are not often met with in books of this nature. In the first place, the book takes the form of a diary which gives the writer full liberty to describe freely conditions of social life and other subjects, and to record his impressions and observations. Secondly, every chapter contains an abundance of dialogue material covering a wide range of subjects. Then the material itself is well chosen so that what is presented to the reader will not fail to be of practical use to him. Finally, the experiences which the Oriental tourist has gone through are such as to make the trip full of pleasant memories which could not but convey the happy

impression that, in spite of all the talk of racial prejudice, the Easterner will not fail to command the respect and goodwill of his Occidental friends, provided he would only take the necessary pains of equipping himself with a knowledge of the Western people and learn their customs and manners before making the trip. Such knowledge is essential to mutual understanding, and mutual understanding is essential to solid friendship.

Whether the present manual will be introduced into the classroom as a text-book or whether it will be used by the students themselves as a form of supplementary reading, one thing is certain. The subject-matter in either case will be found very interesting and exceptionally instructive. In case we should at some future date get out a new revised edition, we trust that we shall be able to enrich the contents of the work by adding a number of appropriate references to Chinese customs and manners, a knowledge of which it should be the duty and privilege of the Chinese tourist abroad to impart to the foreign friends, with whom he should come into contact. Criticisms with which the kind reader may be pleased to favour us are welcome.

THE EDITORS.

Shanghai, November 1924.

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LIFE AMONG ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS

VOLUME I.—JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS

CHAPTER I.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

When I reached England, I disembarked at Liverpool. My first care was to present a letter of introduction with which I had been furnished by a Chinese friend in Peking. The envelope, in accordance with the usual custom, was left open, and I was able to read the letter, which was as follows:

Peking, May 8th, 1907.

Dear Brown:

This letter will serve to introduce to you Mr. Tan Yin of this city, whom I have known for many years. During his stay in England he is naturally anxious to see as much as he can, and any assistance you can render him in Liverpool will be much appreciated by me.

Yours faithfully,

B. Knox.

Armed with this letter, I sallied out from the hotel at 4 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon and made my way to

Mr. Brown's address. On reaching the house, I rang the bell marked "Visitors," there being another bell marked "Servants," for the use of tradespeople delivering food or taking orders from the cook. The door was opened by a smart parlour maid in black dress, and white linen cap, apron and cuffs. On the appearance of this domestic, I opened the ball by asking.

Self. Is Mr. Brown at home?

Maid. Yes, Sir.

Self. Will you kindly hand him this letter?

Maid. Please step this way.

With these words the maid ushered me into a room, somewhat plainly furnished, but fitted up with two comfortable arm chairs, and pervaded with the scent of tobacco. This I took to be Mr. Brown's own "sanctum," and learned afterwards that I had been shown in there as I had enquired for Mr. Brown personally. In a very few minutes I heard steps, and nerved myself for my first real plunge into English conversation on its native soil. Immediately on his entrance Mr. Brown came forward and shook hands with me.

Brown. Good afternoon, you are Mr. Tan Yin I presume, how is my old friend Mr. Knox getting on?

Self. He is getting on very well, and has asked me to be sure to remember him to you.

Mr. B. He has been a lifelong friend of mine, and a very good fellow he is. Do you propose to stay very long in Liverpool?

Self. I intend to follow your advice on this point; I

could stay for three or four days in Liverpool if you think it is worth while to do so.

Mr. B. Well, I was born and bred in Liverpool, and I think there are few places like the old city on the Mersey, but prejudices apart, there is a lot worth seeing here. The town is one of the doors into the country; her line of docks is a wonderful sight, and certainly no one should leave without seeing the arrival or departure of a big ocean liner from the floating stage, which is, I believe, the longest in the world. Then we have a most excellent art gallery containing one of the best collections in the country out of London. But don't let us stay in this room; will you come into the drawing room and let me introduce you to my wife and family? Leave your hat and stick in the hall.

Self. It is very good of you to show so much kindness to a total stranger.

Mr. B. (to Mrs. Brown) My dear, let me introduce to you Mr. Tan Yin from Peking who has brought me a letter from Knox.

Mrs. Brown greeted me with a smile, saying: "How do you do, Mr. Tan Yin?" We shook hands.

Mr. Brown then drew my attention to three children, whom he introduced as "my two little girls, Winnie and Marion, and my son Tom." Winnie and Marion wore short frocks down to the knee, covered with a white pinafore, and had black stockings on their legs, with shiny slippers. Their

hair hung down behind to their waists. Tom wore jacket and knickerbockers and Eton collar, with a red neck tie.

Mrs. B. I am really afraid to offer you English tea, Mr. Tan Yin. I have read that tea making is almost one of the esoteric arts with you.

Self. I often take tea made in foreign style which, I am glad to say, agrees with my taste. Might I have cream without sugar?

Mrs. B. Winnie, take this cup to Mr. Tan Yin, will you? And Marion, bring some cakes for Mr. Tan Yin.

Marion. Will you have brown bread or white, Mr. Tan Yin? It is thin bread and butter, but up in the nursery we have thick.

Self. Brown, please; may I place my cup on that little table?

Mrs. B. Yes, do, I always think a man looks so unhappy when he is balancing a cup and saucer on his knee.

Self. Your husband has been singing the praises of Liverpool to me, Mrs. Brown, and I feel as if I wanted to set out at once and see the sights.

Mrs. B. Then you could not find a better guide than Tom over there. I believe he knows every inch of the city, especially the docks, don't you, Master Tom?

Tom. I should be awfully proud to show Mr. Tan Yin round. Do you think I could get a whole holiday for it, father?

Mr. B. We'll see, but I don't know what the doctor would say?

Mrs. B. Winnie, Mr. Tan Yin has not yet tasted our hot buns.

Self. You have no idea, Mrs. Brown, as to how fond are all the Chinese of cakes.

Winnie. I should like to go to China, Mr. Tan Yin. Will you have another cup of tea?

Mr. B. You have not told us what sort of a voyage you had, Mr. Tan Yin.

Self. The ship was very comfortable, and my cabin mate turned out to be a man of high culture, who had read wisely and thought deeply. We used to lie awake till the most unearthly hours talking "on Man, on Nature and on Human Life" or rather, he did the talking, and I listened.

Mr. B. You quote Wordsworth, I observe; is he a favourite of yours?

Self. Yes, there is something in his musing genius and philosophy of landscape that appeals to me very much.

Mr. B. Well then, while you are so far North, you had better run up to the lakes and see Wordsworth's country. It is not a long journey from here, and you could be back in two days.

Self. It is a very tempting prospect, but I rather hope to go to Scotland later on, and then I could pass by that place on my way.

Mrs. B. Are you sure you won't have another cup of tea, Mr. Tan Yin? If you don't care for any more tea, I should like to show you my flowers.

Considering they are grown in the heart of a large city, they are not bad.

Mrs. Brown then showed me into a conservatory leading out of the drawing room. It was full of pretty flowering plants and delicate ferns.

Mrs. B. You see, I can always get flowers for the table, and drawing room, and am quite independent of the florist. I spend a great deal of my spare time here, though I know our old gardener does not think much of my efforts.

Winnie. Mother, may I pick Mr. Tan Yin a buttonhole? Mr. Tan Yin, what coloured flower would you like?

Self. That depends on the colour of my tie, does it not? If I have a green tie, I can't wear a red flower, can I? I think that purple orchid would just match my scarf.

Winnie. You are particular, Mr. Tan Yin. O I can't reach it. No, Tom, I want to get it myself. Would you mind lifting me up, Mr. Tan Yin?

Mr. B. When you have quite finished adorning Mr. Tan Yin, Winnie, perhaps he would like a smoke. Do you prefer a cigar or cigarettes?

Self. Well, if you have a medium strength cigar, I should like one very much.

Mr. B. I have just got the very thing. Marion, run into my study and bring the matches. Let me cut the end for you. I really don't know how man could exist in these days of bustle without the

solace of tobacco. There is something about an Habana cigar that soothes the most troubled breast. "Blessed be Sir Walter Raleigh" say I, though I very much doubt whether he ever anticipated the extraordinary way in which his weed has insinuated itself into the hearts of his fellow countrymen, and that future Chancellors of the Exchequer would call down blessings on his name. Chinese also smoke cigars, don't they?

Self. The Chinese have certainly taken to the habit. This is a very good cigar; it makes me happy that my smoking helps to fumigate your conservatory.

Mrs. B. I am sure it is very thoughtful of you, Mr. Tan Yin. My husband is always trying to claim merit for the same thing.

Self. I fear I ought to be going now; your kindness has led me into paying an unconscionably long visit.

Mrs. B. We hope to see more of you before you leave for Liverpool. Good bye (*shaking hands*). Children, come and say good bye to Mr. Tan Yin.

As we passed through the drawing room I noticed Mrs. Brown touched the bell, and by the time I reached the hall door, the servant was ready to open it for me and let me out.

CHAPTER II.

TRAVELLING TO TOWN

After a few more days of hard work I exhausted the sights of Liverpool, and sighing for new worlds to conquer, determined to set out for town—as the English always call London. Accordingly I discharged my bill at the hotel, and, leaving one or two tips behind, had myself and my baggage driven to Lime Street station, from which it was my purpose to travel to Euston on the luncheon car express, which makes the run of 200 miles in 3 hours and 45 minutes. In England third class is good enough for any one and all ranks travel by it, so I determined to do in Rome as Rome does, and took a third class ticket. Booking is a very simple matter. Stepping up to the window labelled third class, I ejaculated only one word, “Euston,” at the same time laying down a golden sovereign, which I must confess I was somewhat loath to part with on account of its plump beauty and pleasant ring. The ticket and change were passed out to me with great promptness, and I calculated from the price that third class travel in England costs a penny per mile. I also gathered that unless the traveller actually asks for a return ticket, the booking clerk will always issue a single, and I was confirmed in this by the next man to me saying “Euston return.” Stowing my ticket away in my ticket pocket, I next strolled over to the book stall, a large booth stocked with all kinds of newspapers, magazines and light literature. Thinking “The

"Times" would consort properly with my dignity, I asked for it and was a trifle staggered at the price, viz. 3d. When, however, I came to unfold the majestic and crackling sheet finely printed on thick paper, I began to think it was worth the money. Opening "The Times," one feels that no mushroom country could support such an institution—for an institution it is, and has behind it a career of over 100 years. A newspaper that had a correspondent at Waterloo, and wrote a leading article on the death of Nelson is one that should at least inspire respect. The train by which I was to travel was of the corridor type with the seats arranged across the carriage, and a narrow corridor running the whole length of one side of the coach. As, however, I intended to lunch on board, I took my seat in the dining car, down each side of which are tables to seat two, sitting opposite to each other. After passing the outskirts of Liverpool, and a deep and long cutting in the solid rock, the train quickly attained a high rate of speed, but, as it ran with perfect smoothness, we could eat and drink in comfort. As soon as I entered the car, the attendant asked me my name and showed me to my place, which I found reserved for me as I had booked my seat beforehand.

My fellow diner, or rather "luncher," was already in his place and engaged with a large and serious looking newspaper, which I afterwards discovered to be the "Manchester Guardian," generally considered the best paper in the provinces. After luncheon was over and we had both lit cigars to smoke over our coffee, I opened my "Times" and began to dip into it, while my companion

looked steadily and musingly at the flying landscape with its glimpses of contented cattle, browsing sheep, and a distant church tower, or comfortable farm house cosily surrounded by hay stacks and corn ricks. I shortly began to feel somewhat somnolent, when my companion suddenly addressed me.

I am obliged to call him Mr. X as he did not favour me with his name. Indeed, I found that Englishmen as a rule feel that their names concern nobody but themselves, and would never dream of imparting them to a mere travelling companion. I have been told that the same men travel up to London from a suburb every day for years, and yet never know one another's names. Interchange of cards, except among business men, is almost unheard of. However, let me return to the subject of the conversation I had with this interesting gentleman.

Mr. X. Anything in "The Times" this morning, Sir?

Self. My difficulty, Sir, is that there is too much. In telling about the news, I don't know where to begin. There are so many trees that I find a difficulty in seeing the wood.

Mr. X. I should advise you to consult the index, and select what seems to you the most interesting item. I admit "The Times" is as full of news as an egg is full of meat, and I admire it for that, but its policy is one I distrust and dislike exceedingly.

Self. Why, what is there in it that evokes your disapproval?