An A B C, for Baby Patriots

As British imperial power reached around the world in the late nineteenth century, it not only influenced the people whom the British conquered, it also affected how the British perceived themselves. In An A B C, for Baby Patriots, Mrs. Ernest Ames presents the British Empire and the Victorian World in a children’s book. These images were designed for children and reflect the values and ideals that Britons wanted their children to internalize.

As you read through this source, consider what messages are being suggested about Britons, other peoples around the world, and the relationship between them.

This source has been adapted from the University of Florida George A Smather Libraries’ website. The digitized images can be found at http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00086056/00001/citation. I have slightly rearranged the order in which the images are presented to make it easier to view.
An ABC, for Baby Patriots

By Mrs. Ernest Ames

London: Dean & Son Ltd. 160 Fleet Street E.C.
A is the Army
That dies for the Queen;
It's the very best Army
That ever was seen.
B, b.

B stands for Battles
By which England's name
Has for ever been covered
With glory and fame.

C, c.

C is for Colonies.
Rightly we boast,
That of all the great nations
Great Britain has most.
D, d.

Dd  D d

D is the Daring
We show on the Field
Which makes every enemy
Vanish or yield.
E, e.

E is our Empire
Where sun never sets;
The larger we make it
The bigger it gets.
F f

F is the flag
Which wherever you see
You know that beneath it
You’re happy and free.
G  is the Game
We preserve with such care
To shoot, as it gracefully
Flies through the air.
H, h.

H is for Hunting,
For this you've a box,
A thoro bred Hunter,
Some hounds and a fox.
I, i.

I is for India,
Our land in the East
Where everyone goes
To shoot tigers, and feast.
J's for our Judges
Who sit in a row
And send folks to prison
When naughty you know!
K is for Kings;
Once warlike and haughty,
Great Britain subdued them
Because they’d been naughty.
L, l.

L is the Lion
Who fights for the Crown
His smile when he's worried
Is changed to a frown.

M, m.

M is for Magnates
So great and so good,
They sit on gold chairs
And eat Turtle for food
Nn

N is the Navy
We keep at Spithead,
It's a sight that makes foreigners
Wish they were dead.
O is the Ocean
Where none but a fool
Would ever dare question
Our title to rule.
P p

P is our Parliament,
Commons and Peers.
They will talk if permitted
For months — nay for years.
Q is our Queen!

It fills us with pride

To see the Queen's coach

When the Queen is inside!
R, r.

R’s the Roast Beef
That has made England great;
You see it here pictured
Each piece on a plate.

S, s.

S is for Scotland
The home of the Scot!
It’s wetter than England
And isn’t so hot.
T, t.

U, u.

Tt

T is the Tub
That an Englishman takes
As a matter of course
Just as soon as he wakes.

Uu

U is our Unicorn,
Such a nice beast
His home is here now
Though he comes from the East.
V's Volunteers
Who can shoot very straight;
They are drilled now and then
Between seven and eight.
W is the Word
Of an Englishman true;
When given, it means
What he says, he will do.
X, x.

X, x. as a rule means
The London Police
Who are paid by the Country
For keeping the peace.

Y, y.

Y, y. is for youngsters
Gilded and gay,
The newspapers call them
The "Jeunesse dorée".
Z is the Zeal
Which is everywhere seen
When a family practices
“God save the Queen.”