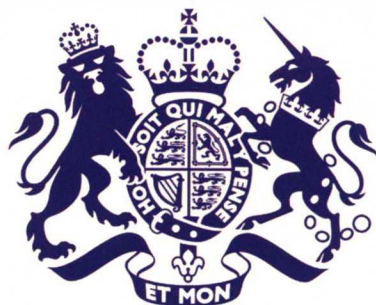


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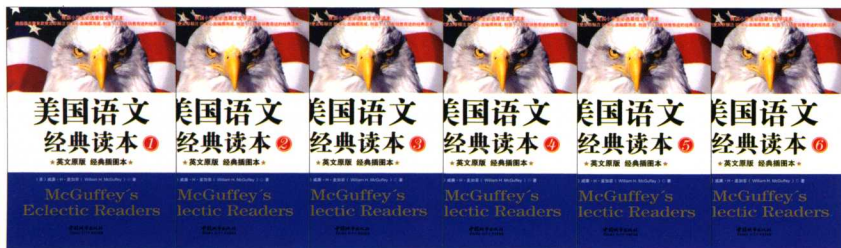
英国语文

3

THOMAS NELSON

(英) 托马斯-尼尔森公司 编

中国城市出版社
CHINA CITY PRESS



选题策划: 网人内文化传媒(北京)有限公司

责任编辑: 陈夕涛 华 风

封面设计: 网人内文化传媒 · 书装设计

优惠团购邮购: 15811345577

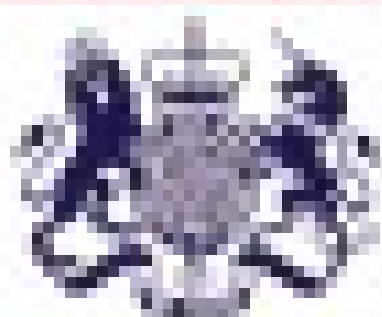
投稿邮箱: 1902704455@qq.com

QQ: 1902704455



www.citypress.cn

THE ROYAL READERS 英国语文



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THOMAS NELSON

1891-1998 100 Years of Learning





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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

英国语文. 3 / 英国托马斯-尼尔森公司编. —北京:
中国城市出版社, 2014.11

ISBN 978-7-5074-2995-4

I. ①英… II. ①英… III. ①英语-教材
IV. ①H31

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2015) 第006840号

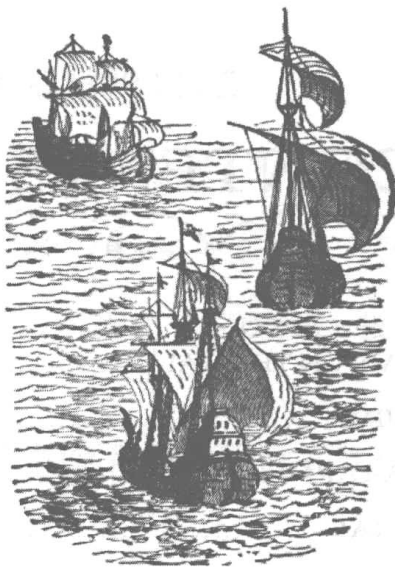
责任编辑	陈夕涛 华 风
装帧设计	 同人内 (北京) 有限公司
责任技术编辑	张建军
出版发行	中国城市出版社
地 址	北京市西城区广安门南街甲 30 号 (邮编 100053)
网 址	www.citypress.cn
发行部电话	(010) 63454857 63289949
发行部传真	(010) 63421417 63400635
总编室电话	(010) 68171928
总编室信箱	citypress@sina.com
经 销	新华书店
印 刷	北京亚通印刷有限责任公司
字 数	145 千字 印张 7.5
开 本	880 × 1230 (毫米) 1/32
版 次	2015 年 5 月第 1 版
印 次	2015 年 5 月第 1 次印刷
定 价	100.00 元 (全六册)

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Lesson 1 THE SNAIL ON THE WALL

“WHAT ails¹ you, lad?” said Dame² Bell to a little boy, who sat near a wall at the back of her house. He had a book in his hand, and tears were in his eyes.

“We have all got a poem called *Little Jim* to learn³,” said the boy, whose name was Tom Blair; “and the one who says it best is to get a prize from the master. But I don’t think I can learn it.”

“Why not?” said the dame.

“The boys say that I can’t, and that I need not try,” said Tom in a sad tone.

“Don’t mind what the boys say. Let them see that you can learn it,” said his friend.

“But I don’t think I can,” said Tom; “it is so long, and some of the words are so hard⁴. I know I need not try for the prize. But I should like to learn the poem as well as I can; for the boys laugh at me, and call me ‘Slow Tom.’”

“Well, dear,” said the dame, in a kind voice, “if you are slow, and can’t help it, try to be ‘slow and sure,’ as they say. Look at that snail on the wall; how slow it is! And yet, if you watch it, you will see it will get to the top in time. So just try to learn a few lines each day, and you may gain⁵ the prize in the end. And when you are like to lose heart, think of the snail on the wall.”

When Dame Bell had said this, she went on her way. And Tom thought that (though he could not keep up with the boys) he might

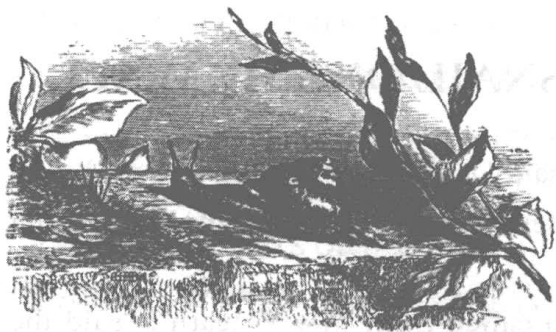
1 Ails, *is wrong with*.

2 Dame, *an old woman*.

3 Learn, *to get by heart*.

4 Hard, *not easy to learn*.

5 Gain, *win*.



run a race with the snail. So he resolved¹ to try to learn his task², by the time the snail got to the top of the wall.

At last, the day came on which the master was to give the prize, and he called up the boys to repeat the poem.

When five or six had recited³, it came to Tom's turn. There was a laugh when he got up; for most of the boys thought he would fail. But he did not miss a word; and his heart was full of joy when the master said, "Well done. Tom Blair!"

When the rest of the class had tried, the master said Tom had done best; and he gave him the prize.

"And now tell me," said the master, "how you learned the poem so well."

"Please, sir, it was the snail on the wall that taught me how to do it," said Tom.

There was a loud laugh when Tom said this. But the master said, "You need not laugh, boys; for we may learn much from such things as snails. — How did the snail teach you, Tom?"

"Please, sir, I saw it crawl up the wall bit by bit. It did not stop, nor turn back, but went on, and on. And I thought I would do the same with my task. So I learned it bit by bit, and did not give up. And by the time the snail had got to the top of the wall, I had learned it all."

1 Resolved, *made up his mind*.

2 Task, *lesson*.

3 Recited, *repeated aloud*.

“Well done, Tom!” said the master. — “Now, boys, let us give a good cheer for Tom Blair and the snail on the wall.” And the old house rang with a loud, long cheer. For all were glad that “Slow Tom” had got a prize at last.

Questions

Why did Tom cry? What did the other boys call him? What did Dame Bell tell him to watch? What did Tom then make up his mind to do? Who got the prize? When was there a loud laugh? Why did the boys at last give a loud cheer?

Pronunciation

lit'-tle	po'-em	mas'-ter	laugh	re-peat'	crawl
eyes	friend	thought	prize	please	learned

Write

eyes
poem
little

prize
friend
master

crawl
please
learned

Lesson 2 LITTLE JIM

THE cottage was a thatched¹ one,

The outside old and mean;

Yet everything within that cot

Was wondrous² neat and clean.

The night was dark and stormy,

The wind was howling³ wild;

A patient⁴ mother knelt beside

The deathbed of her child:

A little worn-out creature —

His once bright eyes grown dim;

He was a collier's only child —

They called him little Jim.

And oh, to see the briny⁵ tears

Fast hurrying down her cheek,

As she offered up a prayer in thought⁶;

She was afraid to speak,

Lest she might waken one she loved

Far better than her life;

1 Thatched, *with a straw roof.*

2 Wondrous, *causing wonder; more than you would look for.*

3 Howling, *making a loud, dreary sound.*

4 Patient, *bearing much without a grumble.*

5 Briny, *salt, like sea-water.*

6 In thought, *in the mind, without speaking.*

For there was all a mother's love
In that poor collier's wife.

With hands uplifted, see, she kneels
Beside the suff'rer's bed;
And prays that He will spare her boy
And take herself instead!

She gets her answer from the child;
Soft fell these words from him:

"Mother, the angels do so smile,
And beckon¹ little Jim!

"I have no pain, dear mother, now;
But oh, I am so dry!
Just moisten² poor Jim's lips again;
And, mother, don't you cry."

With gentle, trembling haste she held
The tea-cup to his lips;
He smiled, to thank her, as he took
Three tiny little sips.

"Tell father, when he comes from work,
I said good-night to him;
And, mother, now I'll go to sleep" —
Alas! poor little Jim!

1 Beckon, *call by a wave of the hand*.

2 Moisten, *make wet*.

She saw that he was dying —
The child she loved so dear
Had uttered the last words that she
Might ever hope to hear.

The cottage door was opened,
The collier's step was heard;
The mother and the father met,
Yet neither spoke a word!

He knew that all was over —
He knew his child was dead;
He took the candle in his hand,
And walked towards the bed.

His quivering¹ lips gave token²
Of grief he'd fain³ conceal⁴;
And see! his wife has joined him —
The stricken⁵ couple kneel!

With hearts bowed down with sadness,
They humbly ask of Him,
In heaven once more to meet again
Their own poor little Jim.

— Edward Farmer

1 Quivering, *shaking; trembling with strong feeling.*

2 Token, *sign, or proof.*

3 Fain, *gladly.*

4 Conceal, *hide.*

5 Stricken, *bowed down with grief.*

Questions

Where was the mother kneeling? In what state was the boy? Why did she offer up her prayer in thought? From whom did she get her answer? What were Jim's last words? What did his mother do when he came in? What did both father and mother then do?

Pronunciation

cot'-tage	col'-lier	an'-swer	ut'-tered	coup'-le
ev'-er-y-thing	hur'-ry-ing	trem'-bling	nei'-ther	up-lift'-ed
storm'-y	pray'-er	dy'-ing	hum'-bly	an'-gels

Write

patient

uttered

couple

moisten

neither

stricken

hurrying

trembling

quivering

Lesson 3 THE TEA-FARMER

ONCE upon a time there was no tea at all in our country. In England, in the olden time, people used to drink ale, and a sweet kind of wine called mead¹. Great tankards² of ale stood on the breakfast table. Now we use tea and coffee.

When tea was first brought to England, an old man and woman had some sent to them as a great treat. But when they got it, they did not know how it ought to be used. At length they boiled the leaves, and strewed³ them on a piece of bacon which they were going to have for dinner. They ate the leaves, and threw the tea away!

In those days, a pound of tea cost so much money that only the rich could buy it. Now it is so cheap that even the poorest can enjoy it.

Tea is the leaf of a plant which grows plentifully⁴ in China, Japan, and other Eastern lands. The Chinese drink their tea without either milk or sugar. Whenever a visitor comes into a house, a servant always brings him a cup of tea.

Every cottager in China has his little tea-garden. He sells what he does not use, and can thus buy food and clothing for his family.

When a man has a large piece of ground, and grows a great many tea-plants, he is called a tea farmer. When the tea-leaves are ready to be gathered, the farmer and his family are very

1 Mead, a sweet kind of wine, made of honey and water.

2 Tankards, a large drinking-can.

3 Strewed, spread, or scattered loosely.

4 Plentifully, in great abundance.