

ENGLISH ESSAYS

英國小品文選

Translated with Notes

By

Liang Yuchuen

梁遇春譯註

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譯者序

把 Essay 這字譯做‘小品’，自然不甚妥當。但是 Essay 這字含義非常複雜，在中國文學裏，帶有 Essay 色彩的東西又很少，要找個確當的字眼來繙，真不容易。只好暫譯做‘小品’，拿來和 Bacon, Johnson, 以及 Edmund Gosse 所下 Essay 的定義比較一下，還大致不差。希望國內愛讀 Essay 的人，能够想出個更合式的譯法。

在大學時候，除詩歌外，我最喜歡念的是 Essay。對於小說，我自然也會到興趣，可是翻過最後一頁以後，我照例把牠好好地放在書架後面那一排，預備以後每星期用拂塵把書頂的灰塵掃一下，不敢再勞動牠在我手裏翻身打滾了。Hawthorne 的‘紅字’ (*The Scarlet Letter*)，Dostoevski 的‘罪與罰’ (*Crime and Punishment*)，Conrad 的 *Lord Jim*, *The Nigger of Narcissus* 都是我最愛念的小說，可是現在都安然地躺在家裏我父親的書架上面了。但是 Foe, Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, Keats 的詩集；Montaigne, Lamb, Goldsmith 的全集；Steele, Addison, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Dr. Brown, De Quincey, Smith, Thackeray, Stevenson, Lowell, Gissing, Belloc, Lewis, Lynd 這些作家的小品集卻總在我的身邊，流地佔我枕頭旁邊的地方。心裏煩悶的時候，順手拿來看看，總覺得好一些。其中有的由舊書攤上買來而曾經他人眉批目註過了，也有是貪一時便宜，板子壞到不能再壞的；自然，也有十幾本金邊大字印度紙印的。我卻一視同仁，讀慣了也不想再去換本好板子的來念。因為恐怕有忘恩背義的嫌疑。

常常當讀得入神時候，發些癡願。曾經想把 Montaigne 那一千多頁的小品全繙作中文，一回濁酒三杯後，和一位朋友說要繙 Lamb 全集，並且逐句加解釋，第二天澄心一思，若使做出來，豈不是

有些像‘皇清經解’，把頑皮萬分的 Lamb 這樣拘束起來，Lamb 的鬼晚上也會來口吃地和我吵架了。有時高興起來，也譯一二篇，但將譯文同原文一比較，免不了覺得失望。所以天天讀，天天想繙，二三年始終沒有辦到。前年冬天反麻麻糊糊地譯出一篇自己不十分愛護的屠格涅夫 (Turgenev) 的小說。回想起來，笑也不是，嘆氣也不是，只好不去想罷！

今年四五月的時候，心境沈悶，想作些繙譯解愁。到 [] 和 [] 商量，他說若使用英漢對照地出版，讀者會更感到有趣味些。我覺這法子很好，就每天伏案句斟字酌地把平時喜歡的譯出來。先譯十篇，做個試驗，譯好承他看一遍，這些事我都要感謝 [] 先生。

本來打算每一個作家，都加一篇評傳，但是試寫 Lamb 評傳，下筆不能自己，寫了一萬字，這樣算起六篇評傳就佔六萬字了，(當代小品文四篇，本不擬作評傳，只打算做一篇，況論當代的小品文，) 比繙譯還要多二萬字，道理說不過去，所以也就不做，等將來再說罷。

所加註釋，除原文困難的地方以外，許多是順便討論小品文的性質同別的零零碎碎的話，所以有不少贅言，不過也免得太乾燥，英文程度好，用不着註釋的人，也可以拿來看罷。

繙這書時，我是在北京馬神廟四齋；現在寫這些話時，人卻在暹羅了。而且北京也改作北平了。

繙得不妥的地方，希望讀者告訴我。

過 齋 十七年九月五日

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Mr. Bickerstaff* Visits a Friend

There are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession, which they do not enjoy. It is, therefore, a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune as they are apt to overlook. Persons in the married state often want such a monitor; and pass away their days, by looking upon the same condition in anguish and murmur, which carries with it in the opinion of others a complication of all the pleasures of life, and a retreat from its inquietudes.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an old friend, who was formerly my school-fellow. He

*Mr. Bickerstaff: 這是 Steele 編 *Tatler* 時用的假名。這名字倒有一段很有趣味的歷史。在十八世紀開頭那幾年，倫敦有一位名氣很大的星相專家，名叫 John Partridge；他每年出版一本曆書，預言一年裏的大事情。不幸得很，在他正交好運的時節，偏來了一位刁鑽古怪，專愛搗亂的 Swift——做 *Gulliver's Travels* 和 *Tale of a Tub* 的 Swift——和他開玩笑。在 1707 年，Swift 用 Isaac Bickerstaff 這個假名，也印行一部曆書，叫做 *Bickerstaff Almanac* (畢克司達夫曆書)，書裏有照著天上星宿算出的關於 1708 年的預言。這章預言就是底下這幾句刻毒嘲笑的話：「我第一個預言是無關緊要的，但是我要說出來，證明那班自命爲星相專家的人對自己事情總是不明白的，我的預言是關於做曆書的 Partridge，我把他生時天上所照他的星宿拿來算了一下，算出他在三月二十九晚上十一時會發狂熱病而死；所以我勸他留心些，把一切事情先期安排好罷！」三月三十那天，Swift 在報上登出 Partridge 死的消息，將他死的情形說得詳詳細細；過了一天，又有一篇堂皇典雅的哀詩。這一來，誰也相信 Partridge 已經死了，自然沒有人再

畢克司達夫先生訪友記

有些人有許多快樂同玩意兒在他們的手頭，他們自己卻沒有享受。所以有誰把他們本有的幸福說給他們聽，使他們注意那容易忽略的好運氣事情，這倒是一件口實的好事。結婚了的人們常需要這麼一個教導者；他們看着自己的單調不變的生活情形，悲悶着喃喃埋怨，愁苦地度過他們的時光，但是由別人看來，他們的生活卻包含着人生上一切快樂的綜合，又是遠離人生各種苦痛的躲難所。

我所以想到這點是由於去拜會一個老朋友，他是我的舊同學。前星期他同家眷到城裏來過冬，昨天早上他打發

去算命。Partridge 趕緊登報否認；Swift 也作篇文章來辯護自己，說根據星相的原理算來，Partridge 是死了，現在登報聲明的這個人，是想冒名頂替的騙子，把 Partridge 弄得啞子喫黃連說不出苦來。Steele 的 *Tatler* 是在 1709 年發刊，正是 Isaac Bickerstaff 曆書這件事傳遍倫敦的時候，所以 *Swift* 把這個名字拿來做他的筆名。

to acquaint [通知]。to turn their attention to = to direct their attention to [使他們注意]。which (1. 10): 此字之 antecedent 是前行的 the same condition.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an old friend, who was formerly my school-fellow: 此句亦可譯作‘我去拜會一位老朋友——我從前的同學——因此我聯想起這種意思’（就是前一個 paragraph 的意思）。這樣譯可以把‘I am led into this thought’這句原文弄得容易懂些，但又未免失之拘泥生硬。

He came to town last week with his family for the winter, and yesterday morning sent me word his wife expected me to dinner. I am, as it were, at home at that house, and every member of it knows me for their well-wisher. I cannot indeed express the pleasure it is, to be met by the children with so much joy ^{and I am} when I go thither. The boys and girls strive who shall come first, when they think it is I that am knocking at the door; and that child which loses the race to me runs back again to tell the father it is Mr. Bickerstaff. This day I was led in by a pretty girl, that we all thought must have forgotten me; for the family has been out of town these two years. Her knowing me again was a mighty subject with us, and took up our discourse at the first entrance. After which, they began to rally me upon a thousand little stories they heard in the country, about my marriage to one of my neighbour's daughters. Upon which the gentleman, my friend, said, 'Nay, if Mr. Bickerstaff marries a child of any of his old companions, I hope mine shall have the preference; there is Mrs. Mary ^{五十二} is ^{五十六} sixteen, and would make him as fine a widow as the best of them.

He came . . . for the winter: 英國有錢人家多半夏天到海邊或山上去避暑,冬天就到大都會去過冬,因為那時候城裏特別熱鬧。 expected me to dinner: 可以譯作 '等我去喫飯'。 as it were: 彷彿是。 to strive = to contend with one another: [競爭]。 to lose the race = to fail in the race. that (l. 12): 此字之 antecedent 是 a pretty girl. mighty = great. took up = occupied. a thousand little stories

人來，說他的妻子請我去列席宴會。我在他屋裏同在自己家裏一樣隨便，他們一家人都知道我心裏是希望他們好的。我到的時候，孩子們是那麽高興地來迎接，我當時的快樂真是說不出來。當他們猜出打門者是我的時候，他們爭先恐後跑出來；跑輸了的小孩趕緊回轉去告訴他的父親，說畢克司達夫先生來了。這回是一個美麗的小姑娘帶我進去，我們起初以為她一定不認識我了，因為他們一家不到城來已經有了兩年。她居然還認得我，這變做我們談天的一個大題目，我一進門就談這件事情。這說完了，他們和我開玩笑，說出成千成萬關於我同一個鄰人的女孩結婚的小故事，這些都是他們在鄉下聽到的。那位先生，我的朋友，就說，‘不對，若使畢克司達夫先生娶他朋友的女孩，我希望我的孩子會優先被選，這兒瑪利姑娘現在十六歲了，嫁給他將來定可做個再好不過的嬌婦。但是我十分知道他，我曉得他的

不過說有許多的小故事，所謂‘一千多個’自然是個‘藝術’。Mrs. Mary: 在十八世紀 Anne 女皇時代，只有十歲以下的小女孩纔叫做 miss，大些的姑娘都叫做 mistress 或 madam. Richardson, Fielding 小說裏面的稱呼也都是這樣。and would make... of them: 意即 Bickerstaff 年紀很大，嫁給他的人免不了會做嬌婦。

But I know him too well; he is so enamoured with the very memory of those who flourished in our youth, that he will not so much as look upon the modern beauties. I remember, old gentleman, how often you went home in a day to refresh your countenance and address when Teraminta reigned in your heart. As we came up in the coach, I repeated to my wife some of your verses on her.' With such reflections on little passages which happened long ago, we passed our time, during a cheerful and elegant night. After dinner, his lady left the room, as did also the children. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand; 'Well, my good friend,' says he, 'I am heartily glad to see thee; I was afraid you would never have seen all the company that dined with you to-day again. Do not you think the good woman of the house a little altered since you followed her from the play-house, to find out who she was, for me?' I perceived a tear fall down his cheek as he spoke, which moved me not a little. But to turn the discourse, I said, 'She is not indeed quite that creature she was, when she returned me the letter I carried from you; and told me, "she hoped, as I was a gentleman, I would be employed no more to trouble her, who had never offended me; but would be so much the gentleman's friend, as to dissuade him from a

those (l. 2): 指那時的美人 (those beauties)。Teraminta: 這是個意大利的名字。十七八世紀的文人愛用意大利名字來叫他們所喜歡的女子, 如 Swift 把常和他通信的二位女子 Miss Johnson 同 Miss Vanhomrigh

心給我們青年時節那班社會之花的影子迷住着呢。他對現在的美人連瞧一眼都不瞧。老朋友，我記得當宅拉敏達佔住你的心時，你一天中多麼常常回家去洗臉換衣服。當我們來城坐在車中，我還背誦出幾首你讚她的詩，給我妻子聽了。’ 這樣子回想些久已過去的零碎事情，我們快樂地喫了精美的大餐。喫完了後，他的太太同小孩們全都離開房子。他們一走去，只有我們兩個人在的時候，他就拉着我的手；說：‘我的好朋友，看見你，我心裏非常愉快；我曾擔憂你也許不能再和我們全家像今天喫飯這樣相會了。你覺得我們這好主婦同你從前由戲院出來跟着她走去，替我找出她的姓名的時候，有什麼變更沒有？’ 他說話時，我看見一滴眼淚由他的面頰流下，這很感動了我。因為要故意過話路，我認她同從前實在有些不同，那時她退還我代你送的信，口裏說：‘因為我是上等社會人，她希望我不要再被人利用來和她搗亂，她並未會得罪我過；請我好意勸那

4 做 Stella 同 Vanessa. passages = events that pass between persons or episodes (這個字作這樣解時，常用複數)。moved me = touched my heart.

pursuit, which he could never succeed in." You may remember, I thought her in earnest; and you were forced to employ your cousin Will, who made his sister get acquainted with her, for you. You cannot expect her to be for ever fifteen.' 'Fifteen!' replied my good friend: 'Ah! you little understand, you that have lived a bachelor, how great, how exquisite a pleasure there is, in being really beloved! It is impossible, that the most beautiful face in nature should raise in me such pleasing ideas, as when I look upon that excellent woman. That fading in her countenance is chiefly caused by her watching with me in my fever. This was followed by a fit of sickness, which had liked to have carried her off last winter. I tell you sincerely, I have so many obligations to her, that I cannot, with any sort of moderation, think of her present state of health. But as to what you say of fifteen, she gives me every day pleasures beyond what I ever knew in the possession of her beauty, when I was in the vigour of youth. Every moment of her

in earnest=seriously [真真出乎本心的]。you were forced=you were compelled [逼得你不得不]。Will: William 的簡略叫法。英國人對於很熟的人,多半不說全名,而用名字的一部分(如 Elizabeth 叫做 Bessy, Thomas 叫做 Tom),所以此處譯做‘老威’。you that have lived a bachelor: 凡是做小品文章的人,多數都裝說自己是個單身漢,而且是飽經世故的老人,因為單身漢同老頭子對於一切事情常有種特別的觀察點,說起話來也饒風趣。以諷刺小說著名的 Thackeray 做他的小品 (essaykin) 時候,自稱是個老人 (oldster),是個鰥夫,說的話也謔然仁者之言,誰念他那本小品集 Roundabout Papers, 總感到‘虛榮市’和 Henry Esmond 的作者也有他溫和慈祥的時候。說也奇怪,愛做小品的人,許多卻真是單身漢,

位朋友不要再幹這萬不會成功的事情。”你或者還記得，那時我以爲她所說的是出於真心；你於是不得不找你表哥老威設法，他教他的姊妹爲了你同她結識。你不能希望她老是十五歲那麼年青。‘十五歲！’我朋友笑道：‘啊！你這過獨身生活的人簡直不能了解真真被人家愛的快樂是多麼廣大而甜蜜呀！天地間最美麗的臉貌，不能像我看到這好婦人的時候似的，在我心中引起同樣的快感。她臉上顏色的衰老多半是因爲我生熱病時她看護着勞苦了的緣故。跟着她也病倒了，這病去冬差一點就要把她帶走。我老實告訴你，我感激她的地方太多，我對她現在的康健免不了萬分關心。至於你所說的十五歲，她現在每天給我的快樂，是比她美麗還在我也年富力強的時候，我所沒有嘗到的。

Goldsmith, Cowper, Lamb, Irving 等都是沒有娶過親的。to raise in me = to give me. What fading in her countenance: Bickerstaff 的朋友是說他夫人病後體弱，形容憔悴，恐怕活不得多久；但 Bickerstaff 看見他那種愁心愁苦的樣子，所以故意裝作聽錯話，回答說，一個人免不了會老，青春是不能常留的。(fading = losing beauty and growing pale.) to have carried her off = to have been fatal to her. (就是‘她去冬害一場病，差一點病死’；因爲中國人說人死，也有用‘帶走’，所以此處按字直譯)。with any sort of moderation = with any kind of limitation.

life brings me fresh instances of her complacency to my inclinations, and her prudence in regard to my fortune. Her face is to me much more beautiful than when I first saw it; there is no decay in any feature, which I cannot trace, from the very instant it was occasioned by some anxious concern for my welfare and interests. Thus, at the same time, methinks, the love I conceived towards her for what she was, is heightened by my gratitude for what she is. The love of a wife is as much above the idle passion commonly called by that name, as the loud laughter of buffoons is inferior to the elegant mirth of gentlemen. Oh, she is an inestimable jewel. In her examination of her household affairs, she shows a certain fearfulness to find a fault, which makes her servants obey her like children, and the meanest we have has an ingenuous shame for an offence, not always to be seen in children in other families. I speak freely to you, my old friend; ever since her sickness, things that gave me the quickest joy before, turn now to a certain anxiety. As the children play in the next room, I know the poor things by their steps, and am considering what they must do, should they lose their mother in their tender years. The pleasure I used to take in telling my boy stories of battles, and asking my girl questions

complacency = the disposition to please; complaisance [慇懃]。

Oh! she is an inestimable jewel: 意即從前只顧看她的容貌美麗, 現在卻知道她對他情真意摯, 所以比從前更愛她了。To find a fault = to discover a fault [發現出錯處]。the meanest = the meanest servant-

現在她每時刻給我新例子，證明她是多麼順從我的癖好，對我家產是多麼節儉留心。由我的眼睛看來，她的容貌比我頭一次看她時還美；她臉上的衰老處，我都能由現出那時候起，說出這是那一回她對我的安寧上的大關心所引起的。所以同時我覺得從前對那過去的她的愛情是被我對現在的她的感謝增加熱度了。妻子的愛和平常一般叫做愛的無聊情緒一比較，有雅人的秀美微笑與小丑的粗聲狂笑的不同。啊！她是無價之寶。她管理家事，只怕找到別人的錯處；這樣子她使僕人像小孩一樣地順從她；我們最低級的僕人做錯了事，都有自覺羞恥之心，那在別家小孩子裏有時還找不出。我坦白地對你說，老朋友，從她那回病後，以前給我極端快樂的東西，現在倒使我煩惱。譬如小孩子在隔壁房子玩的時候，我由那腳步的聲音，認出是這班可憐的小孩，心裏就盤算，若他們在穉年失去了母親，他們怎樣辦呢。以後我講打仗故事給男孩聽，問女孩洋囡囡的現狀，同牠和

ingenuous=sincere [出乎本心的]。quickest=keenest. to turn to=to become. poor things=the children. tender years: 指身體未完全發達，尚需人照顧的時候

about the disposal of her baby, and the gossiping of it, is turned into inward reflection and melancholy.'

He would have gone on in this tender way, when the good lady entered, and with an inexpressible sweetness in her countenance told us, 'she had been searching her closet for something very good, to treat such an old friend as I was.' Her husband's eyes sparkled with pleasure at the cheerfulness of her countenance; and I saw all his fear vanish in an instant. The lady observing something in our looks which showed we had been more serious than ordinary, and seeing her husband receive her with great concern under a forced cheerfulness, immediately guessed at what we had been talking of; and applying herself to me, said, with a smile, 'Mr. Bickerstaff, do not believe a word of what he tells you; I shall still live to have you for my second, as I have often promised you, unless he takes more care of himself than he has done since his coming to town. You must know, he tells me that he finds London is a much more healthy place than the country; for he sees several of his old acquaintances and school-fellows are here, young fellows with fair full-bottomed periwigs. I could scarce keep him in this morning from going out open-breasted.' My friend, who is always extremely delighted with

her baby = her doll. inward reflection: 肚裏自己思念盤想。

would have gone on = would have continued to talk. something: 一種神氣。a forced cheerfulness = an unnatural cheerfulness. applying herself to me = putting herself close to me.

她談了什麼話沒有等各種快樂全變作心裏的思慮同愁悶了。

他正要這麼悱惻地往下說，我們的好太太進來了，面上現着說不出的甜蜜告訴我們：‘她剛在自己屋裏找些非常好的東西，來招待像我這樣子的一個老朋友。’她丈夫看她笑容滿面，喜歡得眼睛發光；我看見他的恐懼立刻煙消雲散了。這位太太由我們臉上的神情覺察出剛纔我們有特別嚴重的談論，看了她丈夫的強爲歡笑，很擔心地同她招呼的樣子，就立刻猜出我們談的是什麼東西；微笑地向我說：‘畢克司達夫先生，他告訴你的話，一點也信不得，若使他對身體只管像到城以後這麼不小心，我真是常常允許你似的，可以活到再嫁給你。你要知道，他對我說他覺得倫敦這地方比鄉下更衛生得多；因爲他看見有好幾位老朋友舊同學在這裏還是很年青，美麗的假髮後面有着滿頭的眞髮。今早我差不多不能阻止他打開着胸扣到街上去。’我的朋友一向

second=second husband. fair full-bottomed periwigs: 十八世紀上等社會的人，都戴着假髮 (periwig)，所謂 full-bottomed，就是在假髮裏面有着滿頭的眞髮。per-breasted: 胸前沒有扣緊，故意學年青人的樣子。