

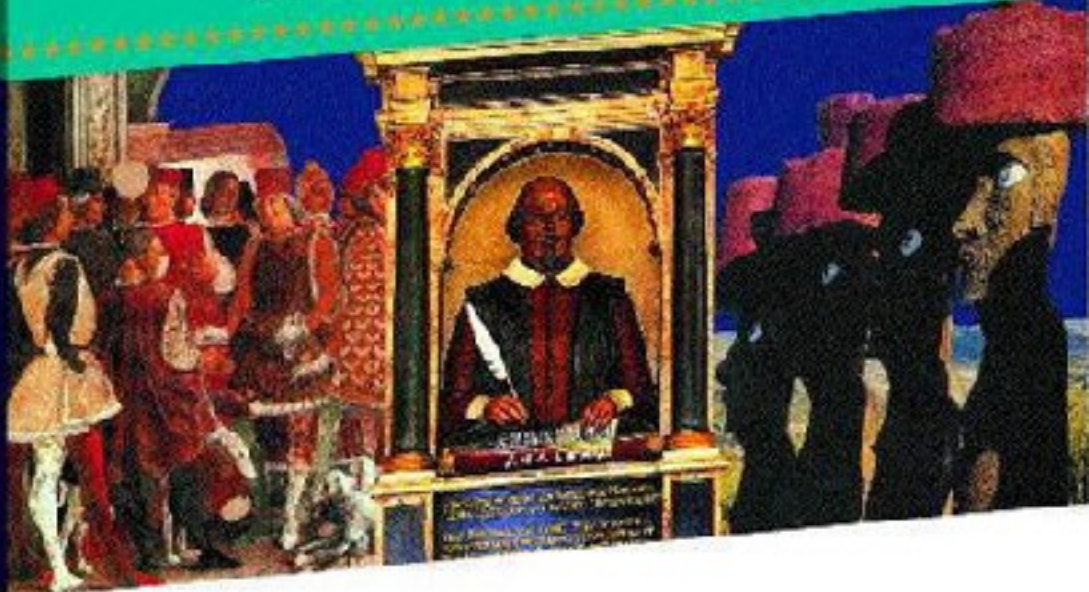


第一部获纽伯瑞奖的儿童经典作品

THE STORY OF MANKIND
美国学生
人类史

英汉双语版

Hendrik W. Van Loon (美) 亨德里克·W·洛伦 / 著 沈冰心 / 译



A CHILD'S HISTORY OF THE WORLD

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美国学生人类史

上

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FOREWORD



序 言

WHEN I was twelve or thirteen years old, an uncle of mine who gave me my love for books and pictures promised to take me upon a memorable expedition. I was to go with him to the top of the tower of Old Saint Lawrence in Rotterdam.

And so, one fine day, a sexton with a key as large as that of Saint Peter opened a mysterious door. “Ring the bell,” he said, “when you come back and want to get out,” and with a great grinding of rusty old hinges he separated us from the noise of the busy street and locked us into a world of new and strange experiences.

For the first time in my life I was confronted by the phenomenon of audible silence. When we had climbed the first flight of stairs, I added another discovery to my limited knowledge of natural phenomena—that of tangible darkness. A match showed us where the upward road continued. We went to the next floor and then to the next and the next until I had lost count and then there came still another floor, and suddenly we had plenty of light. This floor was on an even height with the roof of the church, and it was used as a storeroom. Covered with many inches of dust, there lay the abandoned symbols of a venerable faith which had been discarded by the good people of the city many years ago. That which had meant life and death to our ancestors was here reduced to junk and rubbish.

The industrious rat had built his nest among the carved images and the ever watchful spider had opened up shop between the outspread arms of a kindly saint.

The next floor showed us from where we had derived our light. Enormous open windows with heavy iron bars made the high and barren room the roosting place of hundreds of pigeons. The wind blew through the iron bars and the air was filled with a weird and pleasing music. It was

the noise of the town below us, but a noise which had been purified and cleansed by the distance. The rumbling of heavy carts and the clinking of horses' hoofs, the winding of cranes and pulleys, the hissing sound of the patient steam which had been set to do the work of man in a thousand different ways—they had all been blended into a softly rustling whisper which provided a beautiful background for the trembling cooing of the pigeons.

Here the stairs came to an end and the ladders began. And after the first ladder (a slippery old thing which made one feel his way with a cautious foot) there was a new and even greater wonder, the town-clock. I saw the heart of time. I could hear the heavy pulsebeats of the rapid seconds—one—two—three—up to sixty. Then a sudden quivering noise when all the wheels seemed to stop and another minute had been chopped off eternity. Without pause it began again—one—two—three—until at last after a warning rumble and the scraping of many wheels a thunderous voice, high above us, told the world that it was the hour of noon.

On the next floor were the bells. The nice little bells and their terrible sisters. In the centre the big bell, which made me turn stiff with fright when I heard it in the middle of the night telling a story of fire or flood. In solitary grandeur it seemed to reflect upon those six hundred years during which it had shared the joys and the sorrows of the good people of Rotterdam. Around it, neatly arranged like the blue jars in an old-fashioned apothecary shop, hung the little fellows, who twice each week played a merry tune for the benefit of the country-folk who had come to market to buy and sell and hear what the big world had been doing. But in a corner—all alone and shunned by the others—a big black bell, silent and stern, the bell of death.

Then darkness once more and other ladders, steeper and even more dangerous than those we had climbed before, and suddenly the fresh air of the wide heavens. We had reached the highest gallery. Above us the sky. Below us the city—a little toy-town, where busy ants were hastily crawling hither and thither, each one intent upon his or her particular business, and beyond the jumble of stones, the wide greenness of the open country.

It was my first glimpse of the big world.

Since then, whenever I have had the opportunity, I have gone to the top of the tower and enjoyed myself. It was hard work, but it repaid in full the mere physical exertion of climbing a few stairs.

Besides, I knew what my reward would be. I would see the land and the sky, and I would listen to the stories of my kind friend the watchman, who lived in a small shack, built in a sheltered corner of the gallery. He looked after the clock and was a father to the bells, and he warned of fires, but he enjoyed many free hours and then he smoked a pipe and thought his own peaceful thoughts. He had gone to school almost fifty years before and he had rarely read a book, but he had lived on the top of his tower for so many years that he had absorbed the wisdom of that wide world which surrounded him on all sides.

History he knew well, for it was a living thing with him. "There," he would say, pointing to a bend of the river, "there, my boy, do you see those trees? That is where the Prince of Orange cut the dikes to drown the land and save Leyden." Or he would tell me the tale of the old Meuse, until the broad river ceased to be a convenient harbour and became a wonderful highroad, carrying the ships of De Ruyter and Tromp upon that famous last voyage, when they gave their lives that the sea might be free to all.

Then there were the little villages, clustering around the protecting church which once, many years ago, had been the home of their Patron Saints. In the distance we could see the leaning tower of Delft. Within sight of its high arches, William the Silent had been murdered and there Grotius had learned to construe his first Latin sentences. And still further away, the long low body of the church of Gouda, the early home of the man whose wit had proved mightier than the armies of many an emperor, the charity-boy whom the world came to know as Erasmus.

Finally the silver line of the endless sea and as a contrast, immediately below us, the patchwork of roofs and chimneys and houses and gardens and hospitals and schools and railways, which we called our home. But the tower showed us the old home in a new light. The confused commotion of the streets and the market-place, of the factories and the workshop, became the well-ordered expression of human energy and purpose. Best of all, the wide view of the glorious past, which surrounded us on all sides,

gave us new courage to face the problems of the future when we had gone back to our daily tasks.

History is the mighty Tower of Experience, which Time has built amidst the endless fields of bygone ages. It is no easy task to reach the top of this ancient structure and get the benefit of the full view. There is no elevator, but young feet are strong and it can be done.

Here I give you the key that will open the door.

When you return, you too will understand the reason for my enthusiasm.



我在十二三岁时，那位使我对于书籍图画发生兴趣的叔父，允许带我作一个值得纪念的探险。我须随他上罗特丹姆^①的老圣洛仑斯教堂^②的塔巅。

于是，在一个天气明媚的日子，一个管理教堂的人拿着一把极大的钥匙，开了一扇神秘的门。他对我们说：“你们回来时，想要出来，便按这个铃。”一声生了锈的铁钮响，他已将我们两人隔绝了闹市的扰攘，将我们锁进在一个经验新奇的世界里了。

这是我生平第一次遇到的可以听得见的寂静。我们登上第一层楼梯时，在我的对于自然现象的有限知识上增加了一个新发见——就是可以摸得出的黑暗。一根火柴的光辉指示了我们向上的路径。我们登上第二层，于是一层又一层的直至数不清的层数，后来又上一层，忽然我们面前大放了光明。这一层与教堂的屋顶一样高，一向当作一间储藏室。室内积起几寸厚的灰尘，陈列着几尊在许多年前被良善市民所遗弃的信仰的标帜。从前我们的祖宗视为性命交关的东西，如今在这里已然贬为垃圾废物了。而这些偶像堆里甚至于筑满着老鼠窠与蜘蛛网。

再上的一层，指示我们眼前的光明的来处。几扇有铁栏的敞开的大窗，使这间高而且空的屋子变成数百鸽子栖宿的地方。风从铁栏缝中吹过，空气里充满怪异的愉悦的音乐。这是我们脚下的都市里的声音，不过已被距离滤清、涤净了的。载重的大车的辘辘，马蹄的得得，起重机与滑车的辘辘，以及使人们演出千百样工作的蒸气的滋滋——这些嘈杂的声音融成一片轻柔的沙沙声，给了鸽子的战栗的咕咕声一个美丽的背景。

楼梯到此地为止，梯子从这里起首。登上了第一梯（这是一件光滑的老古董，你得小心用脚去探索你的路）又有一个新的更大的怪物，就是那只

大市钟。我看见了时间的核心。我可以听到急速的秒针的沉重的跳动——一——二——三——一直到六十。于是来了一个突然的震动，那时仿佛一切的齿轮戛然停止，这是又一分钟从无穷上被切下了。并不间断的重新开始它的——一——二——三——直到最后，在一个警告的轰声与许多齿轮的磨擦之后，高高在我们头顶之上，一声震耳的雷鸣，报告世上的人们此时已是正午了。

再上的一层是几只吊钟。正中间是一只大吊钟，它在半夜里报告火警或水警时，可以把我吓呆的。这钟的孤高，仿佛反映过去的六百年间它与罗特丹姆人民共受甘苦的情景。大钟的周围，挂着一些像是旧式药铺里排列齐整的蓝色罐子似的小把戏，它们每星期奏两次悦耳的曲子，给进城来作买卖的，或来听新闻的乡下人一点消遣。但在一个犄角上——独自一个，为别的吊钟所远避的——有一只寂静而且严肃的大黑钟，那是报丧钟。

于是又经过黑暗，又登上几条梯子，这些比我们先前登过的更陡更危险，忽然吸着了无边天空中的新鲜空气。我们已然达到最高一层的行廊了。这时在我们的头顶是天空。我们的脚下是都市——一个玩具式的小都市，一些蚂蚁在那里匆忙的爬来爬去，每个都在注意他的或她的各自的职业。在一堆乱石的那边，乃是城外的一大片绿野。

这是我生平第一次对于这大千世界的一瞥。

从这日起，我每遇机会，就到塔顶去消遣。虽说这是件艰难的工作，但只须费登几级楼梯的力，就可以得到心满意足的报酬。

何况我又知道我的报酬是什么。我会看见天空与陆地，我会听到我的慈祥的朋友讲的故事。他是塔的看守人，住在走廊一角的一间小茅棚里。他的职务是照管市钟与吊钟，并负报告火警的责任，但他也享受不少闲暇的时间，有时抽一筒烟，想想他个人的宁静的思想。差不多在五十年之前，他也进过学校，他很少读书，但在这塔顶上住过这许多年，也就吸收了他周围大世界里的不少知识。

他对于历史知道的很清楚，因为历史对于他是一件活东西。“那里，”他指着河的曲折处说，“那里，我的孩子，你不看见那些树吗！那就是奥伦治^③公爵掘堤灌水以救莱顿的所在。”或者他告诉我老谬司河^④的故事。他说，在这条宽广的河不再作便利的港口，而变成很好的交通要道之先，得垒特^⑤与特纶普^⑥的著名的末一次航行是从这里经过的，那一次他们两人为争海洋的自由，而牺牲了性命。

还有许多小的村子，丛集在那座保卫教堂——就是在许多年前那些保佑圣僧住的地方——的周围。在远远的地方，我们可以望见德佛特^⑦的斜塔。在它的高穹的视线之内，就是那位沉默的威廉被刺的地方，也就是格老秀司^⑧初学拉丁文的地方。再远一点，是高达教堂的一长条矮的建筑，就是那个幼年受人抚养的伊拉斯莫斯^⑨的家乡，这人的智慧大家认为比多少皇帝的军队的势力还大。

最后是那无边的大海的银色线，与它对照的，正在我们脚下的，是一大片充满了屋顶、烟突、房屋、花园、病院、学校以及铁路等的补缀物，我们称之为我们的家乡。这塔使我们对这老家有一个新的看法：那些街道、市场、工厂的扰攘变为人类的精力与目的的有秩序的表现了。最好之点，是在看过这周围的光荣的过去之后，回到我们每日的工作时，我们可以得到新的勇气，以应付将来的问题。

历史是一个经验的巨塔，由时间在以往的无限的方面造成的。要达到这座古代建筑的顶尖纵览全景，不是件容易的工作。因为此地没有升降机可乘，但是幼年人的脚劲是强的，是可以做到的。

现在我把那个开门的钥匙给你。

等你回来的时候，你也就会明白我所以如此热心的缘故了。

Hendrik Willem Van Loon

亨特利克·威廉·房龙

编者注

- ① 罗特丹姆：今译为鹿特丹，荷兰第二大城市。
- ② 圣洛仑斯教堂：今译为圣劳伦斯教堂。
- ③ 奥伦治：今译为奥兰治。
- ④ 缪司河：今译为默兹河，发源于法国朗格勒。
- ⑤ 得垒特：今译为德鲁伊特。
- ⑥ 特伦普：今译为特龙普，与德鲁伊特均为历史上著名的海军大将。
- ⑦ 德佛特：今译为德尔夫。
- ⑧ 格老秀司：今译为格罗西斯。
- ⑨ 伊拉斯莫斯：今译为伊拉斯谟，荷兰著名学者、政治家。

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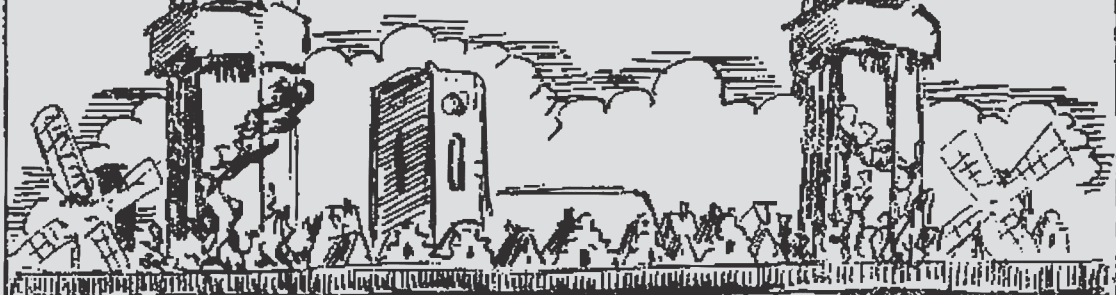
THE STORY OF MANKIND



美国学生 人类史



〔美〕亨德里克·W·房龙 / 著
沈性仁 / 译



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01

THE SETTING OF THE STAGE

人类舞台的起始



WE live under the shadow of a gigantic question mark.

Who are we?

Where do we come from?

Whither are we bound?

Slowly, but with persistent courage, we have been pushing this question mark further and further towards that distant line, beyond the horizon, where we hope to find our answer.

We have not gone very far.

We still know very little but we have reached the point where (with a fair degree of accuracy) we can guess at many things.



In this chapter I shall tell you how (according to our best belief) the stage was set for the first appearance of man.

If we represent the time during which it has been possible for animal life to exist upon our planet by a line of this length, then the tiny line just below indicates the age during which man (or a creature more or less resembling man) has lived upon this earth.

Man was the last to come but the first to use his brain for the purpose of conquering the forces of nature. That is the reason why we are going to study him, rather than cats or dogs or horses or any of the other animals, who, all in their own way, have a very interesting historical development behind them.

In the beginning, the planet upon which we live was (as far as we now know) a large ball of flaming matter, a tiny cloud of smoke in the endless ocean of space. Gradually, in the course of millions of years, the surface burned itself out, and was covered with a thin layer of rocks. Upon these lifeless rocks the rain descended in endless torrents, wearing out the hard



IT RAINED INCESSANTLY
(不断地下雨)

granite and carrying the dust to the valleys that lay hidden between the high cliffs of the steaming earth.

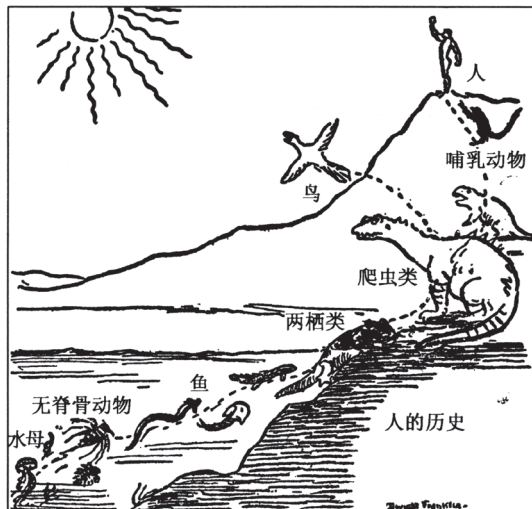
Finally the hour came when the sun broke through the clouds and saw how this little planet was covered with a few small puddles which were to develop into the mighty oceans of the eastern and western hemispheres.

Then one day the great wonder happened. What had been dead, gave birth to life.

The first living cell floated upon the waters of the sea.

For millions of years it drifted aimlessly with the currents. But during all that time it was developing certain habits that it might survive more easily upon the inhospitable earth. Some of these cells were happiest in the dark depths of the lakes and the pools. They took root in the slimy sediments which had been carried down from the tops of the hills and they became plants. Others preferred to move about and they grew strange jointed legs, like scorpions and began to crawl along the bottom of the sea amidst the plants and the pale green things that looked like jelly-fishes. Still others (covered with scales) depended upon a swimming motion to go from place to place in their search for food, and gradually they populated the ocean with myriads of fishes.

Meanwhile the plants had increased in number and they had to search for new dwelling places. There was no more room for them at the bottom of the sea. Reluctantly they left the water and made a new home in the marshes and on the mud-banks that lay at the foot of the mountains. Twice a day the tides of the ocean covered them with their brine. For the rest of the time, the plants made the best of their uncomfortable situation



THE ASCENT OF MAN (人的进化)