

Walden

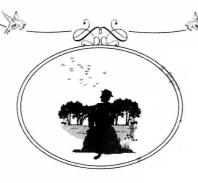
瓦尔登湖

插图注释全本

[美] 亨利·戴维·梭罗 著 Henry David Thoreau



WALDEN 瓦尔登湖



∞ 四季经典书屋 ∞

by Henry David Thoreau[美] 亨利·戴维·梭罗 著

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版式设计: 郭 晓

沿界图出出版公司

2013

Consideration of the second of

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

瓦尔登湖:插图注释全本:英文/(美)梭罗著;

孙怡等注释. —— 上海: 上海世界图书出版公司, 2013.5

(四季经典书屋)

ISBN 978-7-5100-5760-1

I. ①瓦… II. ①梭… ②孙… III. ①英语-语言读物②散文集-美国-近代 IV. ①H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2013)第 035666 号

瓦尔登湖

[美] 亨利·戴维·梭罗 著 孙怡 等 注释

上海 27 图14 1 版公司 出版发行

上海市广中路 88 号

邮政编码 200083

北京中科印刷有限公司印刷 如发现印刷质量问题,请与印刷厂联系

(质检科电话: 010-84897777)

各地新华书店经销

开本: 880×1230 1/32 印张: 10.75 字数: 288 000 2013 年 5 月第 1 版第 1 次印刷 ISBN 978-7-5100-5760-1/H·1229

定价: 25.80 元

http://www.wpcsh.com.cn

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前言

经典的英文名著因其历百世而不衰以及难以超越的特性,一直以来被一代又一代的读者传阅着。可是在这浩瀚无边的经典中徜徉,即便是如饥似渴地阅读,也很难将所有经典通读吸收。因此"四季经典书屋"系列通过调查研究,帮助读者从众多经典名著中精选出十二部经典中的经典。时光如白驹过隙,珍惜时光,把生命中宝贵的阅读时间用来阅读最值得品味、学习的作品,您的生命也将变得更加有价值!

与其说"四季经典书屋"系列将最经典的十二部原著贴上了"春夏秋冬"的标签,不如说文学本身是有灵魂的,就像四季——个性分明,没有好与坏,只是如"酸甜苦辣"般滋味万千,等待读者去体味,随着四季去畅想。

春,代表着清新的气息与温柔的力量,经历了一冬的压抑,终于将积聚的力量在春天绽放成各种美丽,仿佛一切都可以从头开始。爱情就好比是春天。无论是《简•爱》里那历经"严寒"的爱情,抑或是《傲慢与偏见》和《理智与情感》里那田园般的贵族爱情,都是让人无比期待与向往的,历经曲折与磨难也在所不惜。夏,代表着热情怒放,敢爱敢恨,轰轰烈烈。在这里有爱恨情仇、五味杂陈的《呼啸山庄》,有战火纷飞中的爱情故事《飘》,还有《双城记》——大革命中的为爱献身。秋,代表着恬静、喜悦与丰收。烈日骄阳渐渐减弱了自身的气势,万物又都重归平和。让我们跟随梭罗一起在《瓦尔登湖》湖畔体味湖光山色的美好,思索人生的真谛;从《欧•亨利短篇小说选》中阅尽小人物的生活,在平凡中发人深省;在《鲁滨逊漂流记》那"世外桃源"般的荒岛隐居,远离尘嚣,静观潮起潮落。冬,代表着凄凉,在凄凉中也蕴含着某种无法击倒的坚强和

坚韧不拔的毅力。像《老人与海》中的老人在恶劣环境下苦苦坚持,最后 用实际行动证明了"人可以被毁灭,但不可以被打败。";《了不起的盖茨 比》中描绘的梦想从璀璨走向幻灭;《1984》刻画的人类在集权主义下的 生存状态,为后世拉响了永世的警钟。

故事有读完的时候,但是感悟会随着四季更迭而愈加成熟,愈加深刻。 本系列丛书不会随时光流转而褪色,可以成为您品味一生的经典。我们除 了为您呈现上最原汁原味的内容,书内还附有精美的插图以及可能会辅助 您阅读的注释,力求将名著打造到极致,伴随您的成长。

四季更迭不停息,经典名著不厌品!

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do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer¹ in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond², in Concord, Massachusetts³, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner⁴ in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to

¹ chanticleer (n.) 公鸡

² Walden Pond 瓦尔登湖,在美国马萨诸塞州康科德附近,因为本文而著名,并成为 原始自然风景的象征。

³ Massachusetts (n.) 马萨诸塞州,位于美国东北的新英格兰地区,沿东西走向成条 状,长约 170 英里,东临大西洋。

⁴ sojourner (n.) 寄居者

learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the I, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my readers, they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may do good service to him whom it fits.

I would fain say something, not so much concerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders¹ as you who read these pages, who are said to live in New England; something about your condition, especially your outward condition or circumstances in this world, in this town, what it is, whether it is necessary that it be as bad as it is, whether it cannot be improved as well as not. I have travelled a good deal in Concord; and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Brahmins sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging

¹ Sandwich Islander 桑威奇岛人。桑威奇岛,也叫三明治群岛,是英国航海家詹姆斯•库克在 1778 年 1 月 18 日发现夏威夷时,对当地所起的名称,以纪念时任第一海军大臣、他的上司兼他的赞助者第四代三明治伯爵。在 19 世纪晚期开始,这个名称不再被广泛使用。

suspended, with their heads downward, over flames; or looking at the heavens over their shoulders "until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach"; or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree; or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars¹, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars – even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness. The twelve labors of Hercules were trifling in comparison with those which my neighbors have undertaken; for they were only twelve, and had an end; but I could never see that these men slew or captured any monster or finished any labor. They have no friend Iolas to burn with a hot iron the root of the hydra's head, but as soon as one head is crushed, two spring up.

I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in. Who made them serfs of the soil? Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born? They have got to live a man's life, pushing all these things before them, and get on as well as they can. How many a poor immortal soul have I met well nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables² never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land, tillage, mowing,

¹ caterpillar (n.) 毛毛虫

² Augean stable 奥吉亚斯国王的牛舍,用来比喻极其肮脏的地方。古希腊传说中,奥吉亚斯养牛 3000 头,牛圈有 30 年未曾打扫。赫拉克勒斯完成的 12 项英雄事迹之一,便是引阿尔甫斯河水在一天之内将牛圈冲洗干净。奥吉亚斯曾许诺事成之后以牛群的十分之一作为报酬,后因食言被赫拉克勒斯杀死。

pasture, and woodlot! The portionless, who struggle with no such unnecessary inherited encumbrances, find it labor enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh.

But men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon plowed into the soil for compost. By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal. It is a fool's life, as they will find when they get to the end of it, if not before. It is said that Deucalion¹ and Pyrrha² created men by throwing stones over their heads behind them: —

Inde genus durum sumus, experiensque laborum, Et documenta damus qua simus origine nati.

Or, as Raleigh rhymes it in his sonorous way, -

"From thence our kind hard-hearted is, enduring pain and care, Approving that our bodies of a stony nature are."

So much for a blind obedience to a blundering oracle, throwing the stones over their heads behind them, and not seeing where they fell.

Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously⁴ coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked

¹ Deucalion 〈n.〉杜卡利翁,古希腊传说中普罗米修斯的儿子。是在天神惩罚人类的大洪水里,少数生存下来的古希腊人之一。赫尔墨斯要他们把"地母之骨"抛向背后以复兴人类,他们悟出"地母之骨"指的就是石头,便遵教而行。丈夫抛出的石头变成了男子,妻子抛出的石头变成了女子,这些人便成了希腊人的祖先。

² Pyrrha (n.) 希腊神话中杜卡利翁的妻子皮拉

³ sonorous 〈adj.〉响亮的

⁴ superfluously〈adv.〉过分地

by them. Their fingers, from excessive toil, are too clumsy and tremble too much for that. Actually, the laboring man has not leisure for a true integrity day by day; he cannot afford to sustain the manliest relations to men; his labor would be depreciated in the market. He has no time to be anything but a machine. How can he remember well his ignorance – which his growth requires – who has so often to use his knowledge? We should feed and clothe him gratuitously sometimes, and recruit him with our cordials, before we judge of him. The finest qualities of our nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the most delicate handling. Yet we do not treat ourselves nor one another thus tenderly.

Some of you, we all know, are poor, find it hard to live, are sometimes. as it were, gasping for breath. I have no doubt that some of you who read this book are unable to pay for all the dinners which you have actually eaten, or for the coats and shoes which are fast wearing or are already worn out, and have come to this page to spend borrowed or stolen time, robbing your creditors of an hour. It is very evident what mean and sneaking lives many of you live, for my sight has been whetted by experience; always on the limits, trying to get into business and trying to get out of debt, a very ancient slough, called by the Latins aes alienum, another's brass, for some of their coins were made of brass; still living, and dying, and buried by this other's brass; always promising to pay, promising to pay, tomorrow, and dying today, insolvent1; seeking to curry favor, to get custom, by how many modes, only not state-prison offenses; lying, flattering, voting, contracting yourselves into a nutshell of civility or dilating into an atmosphere of thin and vaporous generosity, that you may persuade your neighbor to let you make his shoes, or his hat, or his coat, or his carriage, or import his groceries for him; making yourselves sick, that you may lay up something against a sick day, something to be tucked away

¹ insolvent (adj.) 无力偿还的

in an old chest, or in a stocking behind the plastering, or, more safely, in the brick bank; no matter where, no matter how much or how little.

I sometimes wonder that we can be so frivolous¹. I may almost say, as to attend to the gross but somewhat foreign form of servitude called Negro Slavery, there are so many keen and subtle masters that enslave both north and south. It is hard to have a southern overseer; it is worse to have a Northern one; but worst of all when you are the slave-driver of yourself. Talk of a divinity in man! Look at the teamster on the highway, wending to market by day or night; does any divinity stir within him? His highest duty to fodder and water his horses! What is his destiny to him compared with the shipping interests? Does not he drive for Squire Make-a-stir?² How godlike, how immortal, is he? See how he cowers and sneaks, how vaguely all the day he fears, not being immortal nor divine, but the slave and prisoner of his own opinion of himself, a fame won by his own deeds. Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with our own private opinion. What a man thinks of himself, that it is which determines, or rather indicates, his fate. Self-emancipation even in the West Indian provinces of the fancy and imagination - what Wilberforce³ is there to bring that about? Think, also, of the ladies of the land weaving toilet cushions against the last day, not to betray too green an interest in their fates! As if you could kill time without injuring eternity.

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation. From the desperate city you go into the desperate country, and have to console yourself with the bravery of minks and muskrats⁴. A stereotyped but unconscious despair is concealed



¹ frivolous 〈adj.〉轻率的

² 他们还不是在给一位繁忙的绅士赶驴马?

³ Wilberforce ⟨n.⟩ 威尔伯福斯 (William Wilberforce, 1759 – 1833), 英国国会下议 院议员 (1780 – 1825)、慈善家、废奴主义者。

⁴ muskrat (n.) 麝鼠

even under what are called the games and amusements of mankind. There is no play in them, for this comes after work. But it is a characteristic of wisdom not to do desperate things.

When we consider what, to use the words of the catechism¹, is the chief end of man, and what are the true necessaries and means of life, it appears as if men had deliberately chosen the common mode of living because they preferred it to any other. Yet they honestly think there is no choice left. But alert and healthy natures remember that the sun rose clear. It is never too late to give up our prejudices. No way of thinking or doing, however ancient, can be trusted without proof. What everybody echoes or in silence passes by as true to-day may turn out to be falsehood to-morrow, mere smoke of opinion, which some had trusted for a cloud that would sprinkle fertilizing rain on their fields. What old people say you cannot do, you try and find that you can. Old deeds for old people, and new deeds for new. Old people did not know enough once, perchance, to fetch fresh fuel to keep the fire a-going; new people put a little dry wood under a pot, and are whirled round the globe with the speed of birds, in a way to kill old people, as the phrase is. Age is no better, hardly so well, qualified for an instructor as youth, for it has not profited so much as it has lost. One may almost doubt if the wisest man has learned anything of absolute value by living. Practically, the old have no very important advice to give the young, their own experience has been so partial, and their lives have been such miserable failures, for private reasons, as they must believe; and it may be that they have some faith left which belies that experience, and they are only less young than they were. I have lived some thirty years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable² of valuable or even earnest advice from my seniors. They have told me nothing, and probably cannot

¹ catechism (n.) 教义问答书

² syllable (n.) 音节

tell me anything, to the purpose. Here is life, an experiment to a great extent untried by me; but it does not avail me that they have tried it. If I have any experience which I think valuable, I am sure to reflect that this my Mentors said nothing about.

One farmer says to me, "You cannot live on vegetable food solely, for it furnishes nothing to make bones with"; and so he religiously devotes a part of his day to supplying his system with the raw material of bones; walking all the while he talks behind his oxen, which, with vegetable-made bones, jerk him and his lumbering plow along in spite of every obstacle. Some things are really necessaries of life in some circles, the most helpless and diseased, which in others are luxuries merely, and in others still are entirely unknown.

The whole ground of human life seems to some to have been gone over by their predecessors, both the heights and the valleys, and all things to have been cared for. According to Evelyn, "the wise Solomon¹ prescribed ordinances for the very distances of trees; and the Roman prætors have decided how often you may go into your neighbor's land to gather the acorns which fall on it without trespass, and what share belongs to that neighbor." Hippocrates² has even left directions how we should cut our nails; that is, even with the ends of the fingers, neither shorter nor longer. Undoubtedly the very tedium and ennui which presume to have exhausted the variety and the joys of life are as old as Adam. But man's capacities have never been measured; nor are we to judge of what he can do by any precedents, so little has been tried. Whatever have been thy failures

¹ Solomon (n.) 古代以色列王国第三任国王所罗门(1000BC-930BC)。是大卫王朝的第二任国王、大卫王朝创始人大卫王的爱子,《圣经·旧约全书》中《箴言》、《传道书》、《雅歌》的作者。所罗门以向神求智慧被神所喜爱,是智慧之王。

² Hippocrates (n.) 希波克拉底(约 460BC – 377BC), 希腊名医, 医药之父。他的医学论文极度客观, 他对每一病例的诊断都以客观观察为根据, 避免将疾病的起因或治疗与巫术混为一谈。

hitherto, "be not afflicted, my child, for who shall assign to thee what thou hast left undone?"

We might try our lives by a thousand simple tests; as, for instance, that the same sun which ripens my beans illumines at once a system of earths like ours. If I had remembered this it would have prevented some mistakes. This was not the light in which I hoed them. The stars are the apexes of what wonderful triangles! What distant and different beings in the various mansions of the universe are contemplating the same one at the same moment! Nature and human life are as various as our several constitutions. Who shall say what prospect life offers to another? Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other? Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant? We should live in all the ages of the world in an hour; ay, in all the worlds of the ages. History, Poetry, Mythology! — I know of no reading of another's experience so startling and informing as this would be.

The greater part of what my neighbors call good I believe in my soul to be bad, and if I repent of anything, it is very likely to be my good behavior. What demon possessed me that I behaved so well? You may say the wisest thing you can, old man – you who have lived seventy years, not without honor of a kind – I hear an irresistible voice which invites me away from all that. One generation abandons the enterprises of another like stranded vessels.

I think that we may safely trust a good deal more than we do. We may waive just so much care of ourselves as we honestly bestow elsewhere. Nature is as well adapted to our weakness as to our strength. The incessant anxiety and strain of some is a well-night incurable form of disease. We are made to exaggerate the importance of what work we do; and yet how much is not done by us! or, what if we had been taken sick? How vigilant²

¹ stranded 〈adj.〉搁浅的

² vigilant 〈adj.〉谨慎的

we are! determined not to live by faith if we can avoid it; all the day long on the alert, at night we unwillingly say our prayers and commit ourselves to uncertainties. So thoroughly and sincerely are we compelled to live, reverencing our life, and denying the possibility of change. This is the only way, we say; but there are as many ways as there can be drawn radii¹ from one centre. All change is a miracle to contemplate; but it is a miracle which is taking place every instant. Confucius said, "To know that we know what we know, and that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge." When one man has reduced a fact of the imagination to be a fact to his understanding, I foresee that all men at length establish their lives on that basis.

Let us consider for a moment what most of the trouble and anxiety which I have referred to is about, and how much it is necessary that we be troubled, or at least, careful. It would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to learn what are the gross necessaries of life and what methods have been taken to obtain them; or even to look over the old day-books of the merchants, to see what it was that men most commonly bought at the stores, what they stored, that is, what are the grossest groceries. For the improvements of ages have had but little influence on the essential laws of man's existence; as our skeletons, probably, are not to be distinguished from those of our ancestors.

By the words, *necessary of life*, I mean whatever, of all that man obtains by his own exertions³, has been from the first, or from long use has become, so important to human life that few, if any, whether from savageness, or poverty, or philosophy, ever attempt to do without it. To many creatures

¹ radii (n.) 半径 (radius 的复数)

² 出自孔子《论语》:"知之为知之,不知为不知,是知也。"

³ exertion (n.) 努力

there is in this sense but one necessary of life. Food. To the bison of the prairie it is a few inches of palatable grass, with water to drink; unless he seeks the Shelter of the forest or the mountain's shadow. None of the brute creation requires more than Food and Shelter. The necessaries of life for man in this climate may, accurately enough, be distributed under the several heads of Food, Shelter, Clothing, and Fuel; for not till we have secured these are we prepared to entertain the true problems of life with freedom and a prospect of success. Man has invented, not only houses, but clothes and cooked food; and possibly from the accidental discovery of the warmth of fire, and the consequent use of it, at first a luxury, arose the present necessity to sit by it. We observe cats and dogs acquiring the same second nature. By proper Shelter and Clothing we legitimately retain our own internal heat; but with an excess of these, or of Fuel, that is, with an external heat greater than our own internal, may not cookery properly be said to begin? Darwin, the naturalist, says of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego², that while his own party, who were well clothed and sitting close to a fire, were far from too warm, these naked savages, who were farther off, were observed, to his great surprise, "to be streaming with perspiration at undergoing such a roasting." So, we are told, the New Hollander goes naked with impunity, while the European shivers in his clothes. Is it impossible to combine the hardiness of these savages with the intellectualness of the civilized man? According to Liebig³, man's body is a stove, and food the fuel which keeps up the internal combustion in the lungs. In cold weather we eat more, in warm less. The animal heat is the result of a slow combustion, and disease and death take place when this is

¹ bison (n.) 欧洲野牛

² Tierra del Fuego 火地岛,火地岛位于南美洲的最南端,旅游胜地之一。1881 年智利和阿根廷划定边界,东部属阿根廷,西部属智利。

³ Liebig (*n.*) 尤斯图斯•冯•李比希男爵(Justus von Liebig, 1803 – 1873), 德国化学家,创立了有机化学,被称为"化学之父"。