



步步高英语系列丛书

Level Five ★

英国戏剧

BRITISH THEATRE



翁燕珩

主编

北京理工大学出版社

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Level Five 1
British Theatre
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翁燕珩 主编

洪 革 刘 扬 谷新黎 曾晓俊
吴思斌 解 智 ~~朱慧花~~ 翁燕珩 编

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逐步提高英语系列丛书

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金燕新 主编

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——请读步步高英语系列丛书

《步步高英语系列丛书》是一套快速提高英语阅读能力, 扩大词汇量, 增强英语语感, 从而全面提高英语水平的好书。认真地阅读这套书, 一定会在短期内取得学习英语和使用英语的成功, 长期享用成功的快乐。

这套丛书具有大众性、普及性, 适用于各个不同水平层次的英语学习者。既适用于学生, 又适用于自学者。既适用于中学生, 又适用于大学生。水平偏低的可以用作学习材料, 水平较高的可以用作复习精品。作课内读物很好, 作课外读物亦佳。可精读, 可泛读, 可玩味英语语言之美, 也可领略人类体能和智能的奥妙。

这套丛书专门为非英语国家的人学英语而编, 又有针对中国人阅读理解难点而进行的注释。按照难易程度分为六级, 一级比一级增多 350 个新词和适量的新句型。一级接一级循序而读, 自然而然地由浅入深, 由简到繁, 不知不觉地由低水平上升到高水平, 体现了学习英语的最佳途径和方法。可使读者费力不多, 而收效甚大。

这套丛书内容信息性强, 知识层面广, 读来有趣, 引人入胜, 欲罢不能, 确实是同类书中的上品。因此我诚挚地向广大英语爱好者及有志于掌握英语这一工具的人推荐这套书。

北京师范大学外语系 胡春洞

致 读 者

随着不断的对外开放,人们越来越重视外语学习,各级各类学校对外语教学的要求也越来越高。但是,您是不是也同许多人一样遇到这么一个问题:英语学习多年,单词记了不少,语法也算熟悉,但每当需要用英语进行口头或文字表达时便不知所措,说出来的别人听不懂,写出来的别人看不懂。这主要是对常用词汇和语法缺乏具体感受,对英美文化缺乏一定了解的缘故。由此看来,多读英美国家的作品以增强语感和文化摄入,就显得十分必要了。可是,目前国内出版的选材合理、编排科学,集知识性、趣味性于一体的普及型英语读物实在是太少了。为解广大英语学习者之急需,我们选编了这套《步步高英语系列丛书》。这套丛书有以下几个特点:

取材广泛,内容新颖。这些英美作者的文章,短小精悍,妙趣横生。您从中既可以熟悉常用的词汇和语法,增强语感;又可以撷取大量的文化信息,提高您的阅读理解与表达能力。

分级编排,级级衔接。本丛书分为六级,词汇量分别为350、700……至2100。各级之间紧密衔接,成为一体,在一定程度上填补了目前我国高中与大学英语教学中存在的语言知识“断带”问题。

选词科学,难易适中。本书词汇均来源于《Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English》(《朗曼当代英语词汇》),是根据计算机统计的词频安排的。语法现象也是由易到难,精心设计。读者可以循序渐进,逐步提高。

略加注释,便于阅读。凡文中出现的个别难词、新词、俚

语、短语和比较复杂的语法现象,都略加注释,以免除读者查阅辞典之苦。每篇文章末尾配有练习题,可用以检测您的阅读与理解水平。

本书以国家教委颁布的《九年义务教育全日制初级中学英语教学大纲》初、高中学生应掌握的词汇量为依据,一、二级可供初中学生阅读;三、四级可供高中学生阅读;五、六级可供大专以上的学生阅读。全套书亦可用作英语教学的泛读辅助教材。

愿《步步高英语系列丛书》成为您的朋友!

编者

1993年3月

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1

Theatre in Britain

Although the Romans built theatres in Britain, such as the one at St Albans, these were not used once the Romans had left. In the Middle Ages people were entertained by clowns who made them laugh and singers whose songs told stories. The singers were perhaps the first step towards theatre in Britain.

The Church, however, was really responsible for bringing drama back into England. Stories from the Bible^① were acted out in the churches at times such as Christmas and Easter^②. By the 13th century the whole church was used to act out one of these 'plays' so that members of the audience were sitting among the actors while the play was happening. At this time the speeches were in Latin^③ but between the 13th and 14th centuries drama left the churches and the words were then spoken in English, although the plays still told stories from the Bible.

At this time the plays were acted on carts^④ which were brought to different places in the town for the play to be performed. These early religious plays are known as 'mystery' plays and many of them are very funny. They aimed to teach ordinary people, who could not read, about the Bible stories. Later came plays which were also lessons but this

time about good and evil. These are known as 'morality' plays[®].

A few of the many groups of mystery plays have remained with us and are still acted. These are the mystery plays of the towns Wakefield[®], York[®], Chester[®] and Coventry[®]. The group produced at York are the most complete. Of the morality plays, the most famous is the play called *Everyman* which dates back to about 1500[®].

Then professional actors (who were paid to act) began to put on plays all through the year and not just at holiday times. These plays were usually farces[®] or 'low' (simple) comedy. The woman's roles were acted by men or boys and often the settings were very realistic.

These professional actors wandered from place to place putting on their plays and they began to use the open court-yards[®] of inns[®]. The inns usually had an open gallery[®] round the building overlooking the courtyard from the first floor and the richer people watched the play from the gallery. The poor people stood in the open courtyard. By this time the plays had become more interesting and intelligent because they had also to please the richer, more educated people. It was at this time that audiences began to pay to see plays.

Plays became very popular at the Royal Court[®] and Queen Elizabeth I[®] spent a lot of money on expensive and beautiful productions or 'spectacles'.[®]

The first public theater built in England for the production of plays was the wooden theatre that James Burbage built in Shoreditch in London in 1576. Others were built in London during the following 30 years but the inns also continued to be used. The famous Globe Theatre, where William Shakespeare[®] (1564—1616) worked, was built in London in 1599, also by Burbage. Like all public theatres of the time, it was round and open to the sky. These open-air public theatres were attended by all kinds of people whereas[®] the private theatres had roofs, were lit by candles and attended by audiences from the upper classes[®].

At all the public theatres, the acting was done by men but at Queen Elizabeth's Court plays were more often performed by boys. At this time children also performed in the private theatres to paying audiences but theatres soon began to use more adult actors. William Shakespeare was one of the group of actors who formed the first company of adult players to perform regularly in a private theatre.

When Shakespeare acted at the Globe Theatre, he stood on a stage which came out into the auditorium[®] where the audience sat. In fact some members of the audience even sat on the edge of the stage. The actors were under the same lighting as the audience—the light from the sky—and their costumes were very similar to the clothes worn by the people who watched them.

By the 17th century, the stage had a proscenium arch[®]

and a curtain to separate the actors from the audience! However, the acting area still came out into the audience, the curtain was not often used and there were special seats level with the stage, known as 'boxes', which brought some members of the audience very close to the actors. The whole theatre was still evenly lit so that audience and actors were under the same lighting. It was only when gas lighting and, later, electric lighting came along in the 19th century that actors and audience were separated by lighting, with the actors brightly lit and the audience in semi-darkness. The 'picture' stage with splendid scenery was introduced in the early 17th century by the famous architect, Inigo Jones.

During the period of the Civil War in England, theatres were closed down and many theatre buildings were knocked down. But theatre itself and the plays lived on as people continued to put on private performances.

King Charles II loved the theatre and when he became King of England in 1660, the theatre returned. Theatres now all had roofs and the first theatre in Drury Lane, London was built at this time. Also women began to appear on the stage as actresses.

In the early years of the 18th century, all the theatres in the City of Westminster were placed under the control of the Lord Chamberlain and he had to decide whether every play was suitable to be performed. he had to censor the plays and had the power to remove speeches or actions from

the play. Originally this was to stop plays being written which were against the Government. The Lord Chamberlain's power was later to include all plays throughout the country and this lasted until 1968.

In 1737, all theatres except the theatres in Drury Lane and Covent Garden in London were meant to close. However some theatres did, in fact, remain and the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket was sometimes allowed to put on plays. Drury Lane and Covent Garden were made the official theatres and they were made larger whenever they were rebuilt. By 1809, Covent Garden Theatre was able to seat 3,000 people and when Drury Lane was rebuilt in 1812, it could seat 3,200. After 1843, these two theatres were no longer the only official ones and many of the theatres which are still in use in London today were built between 1843 and 1870.

These theatres were designed to be visited by different classes of society and different areas of seating were part of the design of the buildings. For example the seats in the dress circle[®], which were the best for viewing the play, were expensive and so only the richer people sat there.

Today people choose the seats they can afford which no longer necessarily shows which social class they come from. But, of course, audiences are still made up of people who both want and get different things from a play. It is, therefore, those plays which provide for many levels of meaning

which last through the years. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*^⑧, for example, can be watched simply for the story alone or for its deeper meanings and it is still very popular with audiences.

In 1860, the painted backcloth^⑨ (the cloth at the back of the stage with scenery, including furniture, painted on it) was replaced by the 'box-set' which looks like a real room with walls, doors and a ceiling. Machines were also introduced to make stages turn and to change the scenery quickly.

Notes

- ① Bible 圣经。
- ② Easter (基督教)复活节(纪念耶稣复活的节日)。
- ③ Latin 拉丁语。
- ④ cart 二轮拉货马车,二轮轻便马车。
- ⑤ morality play 道德剧(西方中世纪末一种灌输善恶观念的宗教戏剧,又称寓意剧)。
- ⑥ Wakefield (英格兰北部城市)。
- ⑦ York (英国郡名)。
- ⑧ Chester (英格兰西北部城市)。
- ⑨ Coventry (英国城市)。
- ⑩ date back to about 1500 追溯到1500年前。
- ⑪ farce 笑剧,滑稽戏。
- ⑫ courtyard 院子,庭院。
- ⑬ inn 客栈。

- ⑭ gallery 长廊。
- ⑮ the Royal Court 皇宫。
- ⑯ Elizabeth I 伊里莎白一世(1533—1603), 1558—1603 年为英国女王。
- ⑰ spectacle 演出, 场面。
- ⑱ William Shakespeare 莎士比亚(1564—1616)。英国剧作家、诗人。著有 37 部戏剧、154 首十四行诗和两首长诗。
- ⑲ whereas 而, 却, 反之。
- ⑳ the upper class 上流社会。
- ㉑ auditorium 观众席。
- ㉒ proscenium arch 台口。
- ㉓ box (戏院中)包厢。
- ㉔ semi-darkness 半黑暗。
- ㉕ splendid 有光彩的, 灿烂的。
- ㉖ architect 建筑师。
- ㉗ the Civil War (英国)查理一世与议会之间的战争(1642—1649)。
- ㉘ Charles I 查理二世(1630—1685)。英国斯图亚特王朝国王, 1660—1685 年在位。
- ㉙ Westminster 威斯敏斯特(英国伦敦西部贵族居住区。区内有白金汉宫、议会大厦、首相官邸、政府各部门和威斯敏斯特教堂等)。
- ㉚ Lord Chamberlain (英国王室的)官务大臣(过去还负责审批在英国上演的戏剧)。
- ㉛ censor 审查(新闻、电影、书刊等)。

③② dress circle (戏院、音乐厅等供穿夜礼服观众的)第一层楼厅的前排座位。

③③ backcloth=backdrop (舞台后部的)彩画幕布,背景。

Exercises

Give the definition to the following.

1. Plays which tell the stories from the Bible are called ____.
2. Plays which were lessons of good and evil are called ____.
3. The theatre in which Shakespeare once worked was ____.
4. The man who had to censor the plays and had the power to remove speeches or actions from the play was ____.
5. Seats which were the best for viewing the play were called ____.

2

The Golden Age

Drama made a great step forward somewhere between 1530 and 1580. This is when tragedy^① was introduced into English drama. At the same time the history play began. We think of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *Macbeth* as tragedies but to the audiences of that time, these were history plays. It was Christopher Marlowe^② who, with his *Edward III* (1594), turned a history play into a tragedy.

One of the most popular of the early tragedies was *The Spanish Tragedy* (1592) by Thomas Kyd^③ (1558—94). It included a ghost and a play-within-a-play as did Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and, indeed, Kyd may have written a play about Hamlet before Shakespeare did.

Christopher Marlowe (1564—93) is considered the next best dramatist to Shakespeare in the Elizabethan theatre. He was educated at King's School, Canterbury^④ and Cambridge^⑤ University. When he arrived in London he was working for the Government; perhaps he was selling secret information to the Government. He was wanted by the police in 1593 for having certain official papers but on 30th May he was in Eleanor Bull's Tavern (an inn) when a fight broke out and he was killed. Some people believed it may

have been a political murder. However, during his short life he wrote several great plays including *Tamburlaine*, *Dr Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta* and *Edward II*.

William Shakespeare (1564—1616) is, of course, the greatest of all British dramatists and every English schoolchild has to study at least one of his plays. This is, however, difficult for most children as the language Shakespeare uses is sometimes hard to understand; even for English people. Some of the words he uses have different meanings today. For example when one of his characters uses the word 'presently', they mean 'immediately' whereas the meaning of the word today is 'in a little while'. Shakespeare's 'humorous' man is not a funny man but a sad, moody man.

Shakespeare was an actor himself and he wrote plays to be acted rather than read. Also, he wrote his plays to be acted by the company of players to which he belonged. He could not, therefore, include a character if the company had no suitable actor to play the part.

One reason why Shakespeare is such a great writer is that his work covers a wide range of human experience. He wrote comedies, histories and tragedies and had a deep understanding of people. It is difficult to know what he actually felt about life himself as the ideas and views given in his plays are so various. He did, however, believe there was a natural order in the world; an order created by God. So