



世界上最优美的散文

The Most Beautiful Essays
in the World

人的一生，就像一卷手稿那样，竟会如此轻易地被打开。
此时，一切早已尘封的往事，所有情感、力量，乃至灵魂全部涌上心头。

名家名篇·双语阅读
The Most Beautiful English

美丽英文

[法]蒙田等 / 著 张悦 / 译

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作者简介

1561—1626

弗兰西斯·培根

Francis Bacon

英国文艺复兴时期著名的哲学家、政治家、科学家。他12岁即入剑桥大学深造,受到了新思想的熏陶,萌发了质疑传统观念和信仰的思想。伊丽莎白去世后,培根得到詹姆斯一世的重用,官至法相,后因被指控受贿而遭免职。从此专心致力于学术著述。由于在哲学及科学领域的卓越成就,培根被尊为哲学史和科学史上划时代的人物。马克思曾称培根是“英国唯物主义和整个现代实验科学的真正始祖”。其处女作《论人生》与蒙田的《随笔》、帕斯卡尔的《思想录》并称为欧洲近代哲理散文史上的三大经典之作。

论美

美德好比宝石,在朴素背景的衬托下反而会显得更加华丽。同样,一个打扮并不华贵,却端庄、严肃且具有高尚美德的人是令人肃然起敬的,这与所谓的外表美毫无关系。

美貌的人并不见得在其他才能上也会显得出众,就仿佛天地在创造万事万物之时,只求无过,不求完美一样。因此,许多容貌出众的人往往一无所有,他们所追求的不过是外在的东西,而不是高尚的品德。但这种观点也并非绝对,比如罗马的奥古斯塔斯·凯撒、菲斯帕斯,法国俊美的菲利普,英王爱德华四世,雅典的阿尔西巴底斯,波斯王伊梅尔等,他们不但是品德高尚的人,而且,他们又是各自时期远近闻名的美男子。

就美而言,形体之美要胜于外貌之美,而端庄优雅的行为之美又胜于形体之美。最高境界的美是无法用图画表现出来的,也无法在生活中一眼看透。每种绝妙之美都有其独特之处。没有人可以告诉我们阿佩利斯与艾伯特·杜勒二人谁更玩世不恭,他们一个是按照几何比例描绘人像,另一个则通过选取不同人身上的最佳部位创造出最完美的画像。



这些画坛名人画出来的画恐怕只会取悦他们自身,而其他人是不会喜欢的。我并非认为画家无法画出一张更加美丽的脸,只是觉得他们应该用一种更加巧妙的绘画方式来做到这一点(就如同音乐家创作出一曲优美的歌一样),而不是只凭借呆板的公式。我们常会看到这样的面孔,如果只是从局部加以观察,是找不到什么优点的,但作为一个整体却非常美丽。

如果美的主体的确存在于端庄的举止之间,那么有些人在年老的时候反而会显得更加可爱就不足为奇了。人们常说:“美丽的人,即便是到了暮年也是美丽的。”美就像盛夏里的果实,很难保持长久。它通常会使得许多人在年轻的时候过着放荡不羁的生活,在年老的时候却悔恨不已。不过,毫无疑问,如果美能恰如其分地展现,那么就会使人们身上的美德昭然,恶行羞隐。

名篇释读

这是一篇关于“美”的经典之作,语言简洁,内涵深刻,富含哲理。本文着重论述了局部美与整体美、外在美和内在美的关系。作者认为,美的容貌不是完美器官的机械组合,而是整体所体现的生动神韵;真正的美丽也不是拥有娇好的容貌,而是体现于言谈举止间的端庄优雅;外在美就如“盛夏里的果实”,虽鲜美却短暂;而美好的德行所体现出的气质美,才经得起似水流年的磨砺。因此,我们不必因自己外在的缺陷而自伤自怜,而应追求内在美的永恒与完善。



of Beauty

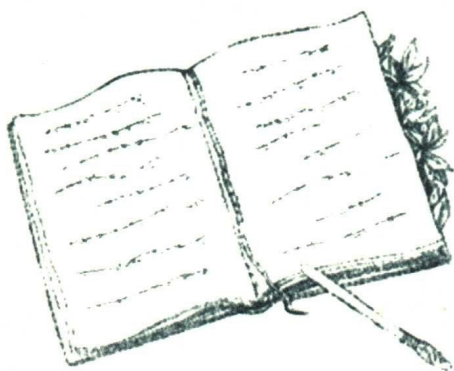
-----by Francis Bacon

Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best, in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features; and that hath rather dignity of presence, than beauty of aspect.

Neither is it almost seen, that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue; as if nature were rather busy, not to err, than in labor to produce excellency. And therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behavior, than virtue. But this holds not always: for Augustus Caesar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Belle of France, Edward the Fourth of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits; and yet the most beautiful men of their times.

In beauty, that of favor, is more than that of color; and that of decent and gracious motion, more than that of favor. That is the best part of beauty, which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty, that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles, or Albert Durer, were the more trifler; whereof the one, would make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces, to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody, but the painter that made them. Not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well.

If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel, though persons in years seem many times more amiable; pulchrorum autumnus pulcher; for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth, as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot last; and for the most part it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtue shine, and vices blush.



论学习

[英] 弗兰西斯·培根

学习可以为人提供乐趣、增添魅力并增长能力。在获得快乐这方面,学习能使人得到自己的空间,并不断地陶冶情操;在增添魅力上,学习可以使人出口成章;在增长能力上,学习能帮助人们判断和处理事务。因为经验丰富的人往往善于实践,多半能够把事情细微之处都一一加以分析。但是要做到全盘兼顾,对全局进行统筹安排,只有那些学问高深的人才能做得到。在学习上花费的时间过长,就是一种懈怠;把学习用在过分地显示才华上,则是在装腔作势;而完全以书本上的教条做事,那么就是学者的迂腐了。学习可以弥补天生才能不足的缺憾,但必须将学习付诸实践才能得到提高。就如同大自然中的植物需要修剪,人类需要通过学习使自身更加完善。而学习本身如果不去借鉴以往的实践经验,那么对未来的指导就会流于空泛。狡诈的人蔑视学习,头脑简单的人羡慕学习,而明智的人则能驾驭学习。然而,他们所学的知识并没有教他们如何去驾驭学习,能够得到这种本领,既是在学习之内,又是在学习之外的一种智慧,因此,只有善于观察的人才能在学习中受益匪浅。读书时不要带着鄙夷的目光去审视作品,但也不要对书中的内容全部相信,或只为学到一些只言片语,而是要在学习中多去字勘句酌、深思熟虑,汲取其中的精华。

有些书可以浏览,有些书可以通读,但为数不多的一部分书则需要你去

4

The Most Beautiful essays.....
.....in the World

细细品味并汲取书中的精华。换言之,有些书只需读其中的一些章节就可以了,而另一些书虽然可以通篇阅读,但却不必花费太多的心思,只有少数几本书不但需要你整本通读,而且在读的时候要勤于思考、专心研读。

有些书你可以请人代读,并由他为你做出摘要,但这种方法只适用于那些无关紧要或是价值不高的书,因为书籍若是做出摘要,就如同把水提纯,毫无味道可言。读书可以使人充实,交谈可以使人才思敏捷,而写作则可以使人思想缜密。因此,如果一个人不善于动笔,那么他就必须拥有极好的记忆力。如果一个人很少与他人交谈,那么他就必须机智果敢。如果一个人很少读书,那么他必须非常狡猾,才能掩饰他自身的无知。历史使人增长智慧,诗歌使人谈吐风趣,数学使人处事严谨,自然哲学使人学识渊博,伦理学使人更加庄重,逻辑学使人能言善辩。“学习可以形成一种气质并影响气质”,不仅如此,相应的学习可还对才智上的不足加以指导或弥补,就如同身体上的疾病可以通过适当的运动来加以治疗一样,例如:保龄球有益于肾,射击有益于胸肺,行走有益于胃,而骑马有益于大脑等等。如果一个人做事无法集中精神,那么他最好去学习数学,因为在数学的论证过程中,心思稍有不专,就不得不重新论证。如果一个人不善于辨别差异,那么他最好去学习经院学派的作品,因为这一派别的作者都是相当严谨的人。如果一个人不善于推论或旁征博引,那么他最好去学习律师的案卷。由此看来,人在智力上的任何不足或许都有其对症的良方。

名篇释读

《论学习》是培根散文中脍炙人口的杰作。作者从学习的态度、学习的方法以及学习的功用等方面做了精辟的剖析与阐述。学习虽是我们每个人都必须面对的问题,但学习本身也是一门学问。作者认为,学习不但可以弥补我们智力上的不足,还可以塑造我们的气质及至影响我们的人生。但真正的学人,不是整天钻在书堆中的书呆子,也不是把学问挂在嘴上的“装腔作势”者,而是一个能在快乐中“驾驭学习”的智者。

Of Studies

----- by Francis Bacon

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment, and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best, from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning, by study; and studies themselves, do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.

Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know, that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. Abeunt studia in mores. Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body, may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen; for they are cymini sectores. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind, may have a special receipt.



论爱情

[英] 弗兰西斯·培根

舞台上的爱情,看起来要比生活中的爱情美好得多。因为在舞台上,爱情总是以喜剧或悲剧为蓝本;而现实生活中,爱情却总是为人们带来不幸。它时而像诱惑人的魔女,时而又像复仇的女神。或许你会发现,所有的伟大人物之中(不论他们生活在古代还是现代,只要是把英名留在我们记忆之中的人),很少有人对爱情达到痴狂的程度,这说明他们的伟大灵魂与事业心,使他们抑制了这种脆弱的情感。然而,在这一点上你必须将两个人除外,那就是:马库斯安东尼——罗马帝国的半个当家人,还有克劳迪亚斯——罗马的行政长官与立法者。前者贪图享乐,穷奢极欲;后者则是个严谨而足智多谋的人(很罕见)。可见,如果你不小心谨慎的话,爱情不但可以侵占一颗脆弱的心,而且也会闯入一颗疏于防范的心。

古希腊杰出的唯物主义和无神论者伊壁鸠鲁曾说过这样一句乏味至极的话:“人生在彼此的眼中,只不过是一个大舞台。”比如人类,生来就应该去追寻崇高的思想境界,但这些高贵的人啊,却只会跪在一尊小小的雕像前顶礼膜拜,甘愿成为爱情的奴隶,尽管这种奴隶并不同于那些供人吃喝的禽兽,但上帝赐予人类眼睛,本来是有着更高尚的用途啊!

过度地注重爱这种激情以及对事物本性及其价值的违背,就会让人觉得莫名其妙。那些恋爱中的甜言蜜语在别的场合会被认为是阿谀奉承,而且不

仅仅表现在言辞上,在思想上也是如此。有句话说得好:“奉承者,总是把最中听的话留给自己。”但对情人则另当别论。因为没有一个人对自己的重视程度会超过对其所爱之人的重视程度。所以说:“爱与理智很难共存。”这种爱情的弱点旁观者及被追求者都能一目了然,但双双坠入爱河的人却对此一无所知。所以,爱情的真相是:若不能得到所爱者的爱,就会得到一种隐秘的轻蔑。还不只是这些,人类要对这种情感加强警惕了,它不仅会使人失去身外之物,还会使人丧失自我!至于其它失去的东西,诗人之言非常恰当地指了出来:“喜欢海伦的人,是放弃朱诺和帕拉斯的馈赠之人。”因为不论是谁,只要他(她)深深地沉溺在爱情之中,就必须放弃财富与智慧。

这种情感上的泛滥,往往就是产生于你自身过于脆弱或身处逆境之时;虽说后者总会让人忽略不计,但这两种时刻更易于燃起爱的火焰,并会变得异常地炽热,因此,它就会像无知的孩子一样做出荒唐事。一些人一旦心生爱意,却又得不到爱情的时候,就要对它加以约束,使它从人生的重大事件或行动之中剥离开来;如果把爱情当作一种交易,那么它既可能损害人们的幸福,又会使人们永远无法实现心中既定的目标。

我不知道是什么缘故使军人更易于坠入爱河,我想这也许正如他们喜爱饮酒一样,是因为充满着危险的生活更需要用欢愉来补偿。

在人的本性之中,有一种潜在的爱他人的意识与倾向,这种倾向如果没有被花费在某一个或几个人身上时,他就会很自然地将这份爱给予更广泛的大众,使人们拥有慈爱与宽容之心,就如同我们偶尔会看到的修行之人。

夫妻间的爱使人类繁衍;朋友间的爱使人类变得更加完美;但荒唐而淫乱的爱,只会使人堕落沉沦。



《论爱情》是培根随笔中最广为流传的佳作之一。格言式的语句精辟而警醒,可谓字字珠玑,而又不乏幽默、风趣。文章以辩证的方式,引经据典,剖析了沉迷于爱情中的人们的种种心理和表现,揭示了爱的复杂性和盲目性,旨在提醒人们不要盲目沉溺于爱情,更不要因为爱情而“玩物丧志”。



Of Love

----- by Francis Bacon

The stage is more **beholding**¹ to love, than the life of man. For **as to**² the stage, **love is ever matter of comedies**³, and **now and then**⁴ of tragedies; but in life it does much mischief; sometimes like a **siren**⁵, sometimes like a fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent) there is not one, that has been transported to the mad degree of love: which shows that great spirits, and great business, do **keep out**⁶ this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the **decemvir**⁷ and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept.

It is a poor saying of **Epicurus**⁸, Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus; as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven, and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little **idol**⁹, and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye; which was given him for higher purposes.

It is a strange thing, to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature, and value of things, by this; that the speaking in a perpetual **hyperbole**¹⁰, is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, that the arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self; certainly the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so **absurdly**¹¹ well of himself, as the lover does of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, That it is impossible to love, and to be wise. Neither does this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved; but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciproque. For it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded, either with the reciproque, or with an **inward**¹² and secret contempt. By how much the more, men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself! As for the other losses, the poet's relation does well figure them: that he that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas. For whosoever esteems too much of amorous affection, quits both riches and wisdom.

This passion has his floods, in very times of weakness; which are great prosperity, and great adversity; though this latter has been less observed: both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best, who if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarters; and sever it wholly from their serious affairs, and actions, of life; for if it check once with business, it troubles men's fortunes, and makes men, that they can no ways be true to their own ends.

I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think, it is but as they are given to wine; for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures.

There is in man's nature, a secret inclination and motion, towards love of others, which if it be not spent upon some one or a few, does naturally spread itself towards many, and makes men become humane and charitable; as it is seen sometime in friars.

Nuptial love makes mankind; friendly love perfects it; but **wanton**¹³ love corrupts, and embases it.

热词空间

1. behold [bi'həʊd] *vt.* 把……视为
2. as to 关于,至于
3. love it ever matter of comedies 该句中 ever 为“永远”之爱。该句意为“爱情总是以喜剧……”
4. now and then 偶尔
5. siren ['saɪərɪn] *n.* 妖妇,文中指魔女塞壬,她是希腊神话中人首鸟身的怪物,经常降落在海中礁石或船舶之上,又被称为海妖,她用自己的歌喉使过往的水手听得入迷,最终触礁沉没。
6. keep out 使在外
7. decemvir [di'semvə:] *n.* 古罗马十大的行政官之一
8. Epicurus [ˌepɪ'kjuərəs] *n.* 伊壁鸠鲁(公元前 342? ——270,古希腊杰出唯物论者和神论者)
9. idol ['aɪdl] *n.* 偶像
10. hyperbole [haɪ'pəbəli] *n.* [修辞]夸张法
11. absurd [əb'sɜ:d] *adj.* 荒谬的,可笑的
12. inward ['ɪnwəd] *adv.* 向内的,在內的
13. wanton ['wɒntən] *adj.* 荒唐的