Extensive Reading

大学基础阶段

英语泛读课本

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4

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前　言

本书是受湘、鄂、豫英语教学研究会委托，为大专院校英语专业基础阶段编写的泛读教材，也可供英语基础较好的其它专业学生或具有高中毕业程度以上自学者使用。

本书分八册，即每学期二册。前四册共25万字左右（不含注解和练习），后四册共30万字左右，在阅读数量上可基本满足基础阶段两年泛读课堂教学（不包括快速阅读训练）的需要。阅读速度与单元划分，由任课教师根据课时安排与学生实际能力自行规定。要求学完第八册以后，学生能基本看懂英语国家出版的中等难度文学原著（如 The Moon Is Down）、报刊文章和史地、科技等其他读物。为了培养学生良好阅读习惯和准确理解能力，并便于在阅读过程中吸收语言知识、全面打好语言基础，我们对前四册，特别是第一、二册的难度作了适当控制。

在选材方面，本书一律采用浅易或中等难度原文；除注意保留了一些多年实践证明教学效果较好的材料以外，力求做到题材与体裁的多样化，确保思想内容健康、语言现代化、规范化。第一至四册以反映一般生活的故事、小说为主，知识性材料为辅，第五册至第八册增加了国际政治、文化科技知识等材料的比例。

本书的注解，是以交代背景知识为主，包括人名、地名的注音和标准译名以及少量难句翻译。常用单词短语一般不注，由学生查阅字典，培养其独立工作能力。多数语言难点留给教师课堂讲解。

练习的目的是为了检查学生对所学内容的理解情况。练习形式有两种：即检查对课文大意、基本观点与基本事实理解情况的综合性问答题（Global questions）和检查对课文中某个具体事实、具体论点以及语言含义理解情况的局部性问答题（Local questions），后者分别采用正误题（True／false questions）或多项选择题（Multiple-choice questions）的形式。

本书的编写，受到了中国英语教学研究会秘书长丁往道教授、湘、鄂、豫英语教学研究会负责人武汉大学潘耀臬教授、洛阳外国语学院朱树飏教授和湖南师范大学周定之教授的热情支持和鼓励，谨致谢意。

编　者

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Contents

1. *Laying the First Sea Cables

Every month nearly one and a quarter million people in Britain communicate with friends or businessmen in the United States, Canada and the countries of Europe by means of cables under the sea.

Wherever we may live, we can telegraph messages to any part of the world, and receive a reply in a very short time. We can also speak to each other by telephone at any distance and in almost any conditions. But how did all this begin? Who were the men who made this possible?

Before the middle of the last century there were no telephones, and the electric telegraph was new and very simple. The telegraph was used in a few countries to send messages in *Morse Code between important towns along the railways, which then were also new; but it could be used only on land, and on water.

The only form of communication between countries separated by sea was still by ship. It was, therefore, very

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laying the first sea cables 铺设最早的海底电缆
Morse Code 莫尔斯电码
Samuel F. B. Morse 莫尔斯（1791—1872）：美国电报机发明者

difficult for the people of these countries to do business with each other when they had to make immediate decisions. For example a man in business in England could never ask a businessman in America a question needing a quick answer, as he can do today. It took the fastest ship at least four weeks to sail from England to America and back again.

It seemed unlikely that the telegraph would ever be used at sea. Most engineers thought that electricity would not 'work' under water. But an English electrician, *Charles Wheatstone, felt certain that they were wrong. In 1844, in order to find out the truth, he made some important experiments in a bay on the west coast of Britain.

Wheatstone placed a short land cable in a metal pipe, to protect it from the sea-water, and laid this in the bay between a boat and a building on shore. He then telegraphed signals from his boat to this building. His signals were received clearly. This proved for the first time that it was, in fact, possible to develop the telegraph for use at sea.

A number of British engineers, excited by this important discovery, now wanted to lay a cable under the *English Channel and to start telegraph communication between England and France. A race began between the engineers

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Charles Wheatstone ['wi:tstəun] 惠斯顿(1802—1875)：英国物理学家及发明家

English Channel 英吉利海峡

for the honour of laying the world's first sea cable. But the engineers did not attempt this immediately; they first had to make a very much stronger cable than the kind used on land. They could not use metal pipes, as Wheatstone had done, as the distance between England and France was much too great; they had to find a new material for the *insulation of the cable that would itself be strong enough to bear the great pressure of water. This was very difficult.

The engineers, who made their experiments in secret, tested many kinds of material; but every one of them showed signs of damage after only a few weeks in seawater. The engineers began to doubt whether they would ever find a suitable *insulator; some, indeed, gave up the search. Then *Michael Faraday, one of the greatest names in the history of electricity, wrote a report about a rubber-like material called* *gutta percha*, which comes from trees grown in *Malaya. Several of the engineers who read Faraday's report immediately bought some of this material, and put it through the same tests. They found it satisfactory.

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insulation [insju'leiʃən] 绝缘
insulator ['insjuleitə] 绝缘体
Michael Faraday ['maikl'færədi] 法拉第（1791—1867）：英国化学家及物理学家
gutta percha ['gʌtə'pə:tʃə] 古达波胶（可作绝缘体）
Malaya [mə'leiə] 马来亚

But now they had another problem. How could they wind this *gutta percha* round the cable wire? It was not passible to cover the wire in the same way as with real rubber; and so they had to make a special machine to do this.

Two miles of cable, insulaled with *gutta percha,* were now laid and tested in the English Channel by an engineer from the railway telegraph. *Jacob Brett, one of the engineers in the race to lay the first Channel cable, watched this successful experiment with great interest, and decided to make his attempt without any more delay.

Jacob Brett had no money to buy a ship, cable, and the machines to lay it. But he had a rich brother, John; and so he asked John to provide the money. John, who had made his fortune by buying and selling valuable old furniture, knew nothing about electicity; but he agreed to give Jacob the money. He also offered to help Jacob to plan the work.

The two brothers now had to obtain permission from the Governments of both England and France to lay their cable. At first, neither government seemed very willing to give this permission; they did not think that the Bretts would succeed, and, therefore, they could see no purpose in their trying! But Jacob and John were not discouraged by this stupidity. They argued that it was most certainly worth try-

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Jacob Brett ['ʤeikəb bret] 雅各布·布雷特

ing because, if they did succeed, the Channel telegraph would give both countries many advantages. "It will help the English and the French to do business with each other," they said. "It will also improve relations between the two countries."

They argued their case to several members of the British Government, and then went to France and saw many important people in that country, including the Emperor himself. Finally, they obtained permission to lay a cable from *Dover, on the South Coast of England, to *Calais, on the French coast, a distance of about twenty-five miles.

Jacob and John Brett now worked out their plans with great care. They employed engineers with experience of the railway telegraph to help and advise them. They bought the most suitable ship they could find, and changed the shape of the deck so as to make room for the long cable and large machines. Then they sailed across the Channel and discussed, with the help of maps, the best course to take to the French coast.

In the early morning of August 28th, 1850, they connected one end of their cable to an instrument in an old railway building at Dover, and sailed from the port on their great adventure. Only the men in the railway building and

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Dover ['dəuvə] 多佛（英国东南部一海港）
Calais ['kælei] 加来（法国北部一海港）

a few fishermen watched them sail. No one else was there. As the engineers slowly dropped their cable into the sea, they fixed *weights every few yards to make it sink below the bottoms of ships in the Channel. This reduced the danger of damage. The work went well; better, indeed, than they had expected.

They reached the French coast late in the afternoon, connected the second end of their cable to a telegraph in another old building, and then anxiously signalled a message back to England. Almost immediately, they received a reply from the engineers at Dover telling them that their signals had come through perfectly.

Jocob and John Brett had won the race.

John Brett was so delighted that he ran out of the building, shouting: "We've succeeded! We've laid the cable!" He called people in from the street to listen to some more signals between the two countries. At first, they refused to believe that the signals they heard were coming from the other side of the Channel; they thought that the brothers were playing a trick on them!

The newspapers of both England and France described the laying of the Channel cable as one of the most important events for a hundred years. They said the same thing as the Bretts had said—that the telegraph would help the

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weight [weit] n. （铅球、铁块等）重物

English and French to understand each other better, and reduce the danger of any more wars between them. The British and French Governments, who had once felt so certain that the Bretts would fail, were also delighted at their success.

But their success lasted for only a few hours. Next morning, when the Bretts tried to telegraph some more messages across the Channel, they were unable to make a sound. Their cable had broken. They could find no reason for this, till a few days later a French fisherman landed a strange-looking object which he had pulled out of the sea with his anchor.

The fisherman said proudly: "I thought that it must be some kind of animal. So I attacked it with my knife and cut it from the anchor in case it should damage my boat."

But, of course, the "animal" was really part of the Channel cable. The Bretts' great work had been ruined, and they must start again.

About a year later, they laid a second and better cable between England and France; and this one was completely successful.

The new telegraph proved so useful that it was soon extended. The telegraph office on the French coast was connected to the nearest railway telegraph office, which made it possible to send messages from England to most of

Europe, instead of only to France. Then, in 1854, cables were laid in the *Mediterranean to join Europe with Africa.

By this time, the electric telegraph was also in use in America and Canada. Both America and Europe had the telegraph; but they still could not send messages to each other because of the wide and deep Atlantic Ocean.

Most engineers did not think it possible to lay a cable under the Atlantic; they consideded it a waste of time and money even to try. But in 1857 a rich American businessman, C.W. Field, surprised the world by planning to lay an Atlantic cable from a small island called *Valencia, near the west coast of Britain, to *Newfoundland, in Canada, a distance of nearly two thousand miles.

People said: "He will never succed. It cannot be done!"

But Field argued: "If cables can be laid in the English Channel and the Mediterranean, they can also be laid in the Atlantic. I know that this will be much more difficult; but it can and must be done."

Field formed a company of British and American businessmen and engineers (the Atlantic Telegraph Company), collected a large amount of money to pay for the adventure,

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Mediterranean [ˌmeditə'reinjən] 地中海
C. W. Field [fi:ld] 菲尔德
Valencia [və'lenʃiə] 瓦伦西亚
Newfoundland [ˌnju:fənd'lænd] 纽芬兰

and employed a young Englishman, * Charles Bright, as his Chief Engineer.

Field and Bright, who now planned the work together, ordered two thousand five hundred miles of cable (one hundred times longer than the Channel cable) to be made for them at a cost of nearly a quarter of a million pounds. They could find no ship large enough to carry this long cable; and so they decided to hire two ships and to cut their cable in half. Naturally, this added to their difficulties.

They could not, at first, make up their minds about the best way to lay their cable in two pieces. This is what they decided: the two ships would sail together, each carrying one half of the cable; the *Agamemnon would lay the first half from Valencia to the middle of the Atlantic; there, in mid-ocean, the engineers would join the two pieces together again; finally, when this had been done, the second ship, the *Niagara, would sail on to Newfoundland and lay the other half of the cable.

The two ships sailed from Valencia on the evening of August 5th, 1857. When they were in the Atlantic, the

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Charles Bright 查尔斯·布赖特

Agamemnon [ˌægə'memnən] 亚加米农（古希腊传说中美锡尼王，在特洛伊战争中为希腊军总司令）这里为船名

Niagara [nai'ægərə] 尼亚加拉瀑布（在美国与加拿大之间）这里作船名

Niagara's cable caught in the machinery, and was damaged. So they had to return and start again. Everything went well for the next three days, till suddenly the signals from the island stopped. Before the engineers could discover the cause of this, the signals began to come through again. The men sang and danced with joy. But soon the *Niagara* was in worse trouble. After she had sailed nearly three hundred and fifty miles in a gentle wind, the wind suddenly changed direction, and she ran into rough sea. Charles Bright thought it too dangerous to lay the cable in these conditions; and so he shouted to the men to stop the machine. Unluckily, they did this with such a quick and sudden action that they broke the cable again. All their work was wasted.

They sailed the long distance back to Valencia for some more cable. By the time they reached home, it was nearly winter, and the weather was getting bad. So Bright deciedd to wait till the spring or early summer for his next voyage. He also decided to use a different plan of action on his next attempt: instead of trying to lay the cable from Valencia, he planned to start work in the middle of the ocean. The two ships would meet in mid-Atlantic, and then lay the cable in opposite directions, one ship returning to Valencia and the other ship sailing on to Newfoundland.

They sailed for their starting-place in the Atlantic in

June 1858. The weather was perfect, with the sun shining in a clear blue sky; but, after three days at sea, the weather changed. and the *Agamemnon* ran into one of the worst Atlantic storms in history. The wind, rain and waves beat against the ship with great force for seven days. The cable machines were nearly thrown into the sea; much damage was done; and several of the men were badly hurt. They were lucky not to be drowned. But every man stayed at his post; and, by their great courage, they managed to save the ship from sinking.

About a week afterthe storm ended, the *Agamemnon* met the *Niagara* at the deepest part of the Atlantic. There, the engineers joined the cable, and dropped it into the sea with heavy weights to make it sink. The two ships then turned and sailed in opposite directions (one towards Valencia, and the other towards Newfoundland), with each ship slowly letting out her half of the cable.

After sailing only about three miles, the *Niagara* signalled to the *Agamemnon* that her end of the cable had got caught in the machinery and broken. So they had to go back again. They next laid forty miles of cable; but then a fault of a different kind developed, and they went back to their starting-point for the second time. On their third attempt, they made excellent progress for two hundred miles, when suddenly, for no reason that they could ex-

plain, the cable broke once more.

Some of the men now began to lose hope. They said: "We shall never do it. It isn't possible!"

But Charles Bright refused to give in. He told the men: "We can and must do it!"

They returned to Valencia for some more cable, and for fresh stocks of food and coal, and then went back to mid-Atlantic to make one more attempt.

The engineers joined the cable and dropped it into the sea; and the two ships then sailed in opposite directions, as before. The *Niagara* had a surprisingly easy passage, but the *Agamemnon*, less lucky, ran into another severe storm, and again nearly lost her cable. For several days, it seemed that they must fail again. Then slowly the wind dropped; and they were safe.

On the morning of August 5th, 1858, the *Niagara* reached Newfoundland; and a few hours later the *Agamemnon* arrived at Valencia. The Atlantic cable had been laid.

This great news caused wild excitement on both sides of the Atlantic. *Queen Victoria of Englaind and the President of the United States of America telegraphed each other friendly messages, praising the engineers of their two countries.

Queen Victoria 维多利亚女王（1819—1901）：在位期间1837—1901

Messages were now telegraphed across the Atlantic every day, from early in the morning till late at night. At first, the signals were loud and clear, but, after a few weeks, they became quieter and less easy to understand. The engineers tried to increase their strength, but the signals continued to weaken. In October, they became so weak that it was only just possible to hear them. Then they stopped altogether. The first Atlantic cable, like the first Channel cable, had failed.

Charles Bright never discovered why this happened. Probably the reason was simply that the cable was still not strong enough to bear the pressure of the sea for longer than a few weeks. An engineer of our own time has since said: "It is not surprising that the telegraph failed; it is a wonder that it ever worked!"

The Telegraph Company had by now spent more than half a million pounds. They could not afford to buy and lay another cable immediately; but Field was still determined to succeed one day. With the help of his company directors, he collected another large amount of money, and seven years later, in 1865, they tried again, using a very much stronger cable.

This time, they were able to hire a ship large enough to carry the whole of their cable, which meant that they could now sail straight from Valencia to Newfoundland and lay