

英语人文读本

美国篇

封一函 主编

韩梅 沈素琴 范圣宇 吴学鲁 编注
刘晓红 封一函 颜可维 范铁英



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前言 PREFACE

汉语中的“人文”意指人类社会的各种文化现象，语出《易·贲》：“文明以止，人文也。观乎天文，以察看时变；观乎人文，以化成天下。”在拉丁语中 **humanities** 主要指人性和教养，但随着人类文明史的延绵，人文在广义上不仅涉指社会现象和文化艺术，而且生成了包括哲学、经济学、政治学、史学、法学、文艺学、伦理学、语言学、文学等相对于自然科学的学科领域，称为人文学科 (**humanities**)。《英语人文读本·美国篇》并不收录人文学科的研究著述，也不是罗列或展示当今社会中的万千气象。该书旨在引领读者避开当下喧嚣和浮躁的氛围，进入一种冷静的人文思考。

本书收录的文章主题重经典意义和收藏价值。内容涉及伦理道德、宗教习俗、婚姻家庭、人际关系、大众文化、人文修养、心理健康、语言文学、经济政治、哲学美学等。写作体裁不限，包括议论文、散文、短篇自传、随笔、短篇小说等。每篇选文读来或是温馨甜蜜，或是发人深思，或是深情隽永，或是诙谐幽默，具有驱恶趋善，规谏或激励人生的精神作用。

本书还特别推荐那一篇篇培育哲学思辨、引发历史思考和操练形而上思维的“宝文”。世界已经是一个真正意义上的“地球村”，不同文化和宗教的人群被麇集到一起，但也不禁使人们感到迷惘，

因而更愿意回顾往昔，探知未来的确定性，希望得到精神的慰藉和智慧的启迪，同时又不避讳现实。本书所收入的文章，有助于我们获取美国传统中与宇宙观、文化价值体系及文化精神相关联的部分，有助于我们了解西方文化传统及其独特的精神内涵，但文字的表达不求晦涩，皆具可读性和欣赏性。

当然，编者在强调精神渴求的同时没有忘记这本书的首要任务是帮助读者提高英语阅读水平，所以每篇文章都配以导读，以吸引读者的视线，并对个别生词难词及语言点加以注释，以扫除阅读中的语言和文化障碍。为了保证读者能欣赏到纯正的英语，所选的文章大多数都出自半个世纪以前的美国作家和思想家之手。文字难度设为中级以上，可作为大学英语阅读教材和个人阅读收藏品。

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1. Disintroductions

Ambrose Bierce^①

... to introduce me to one that I have not asked nor consented to know is an invasion of my rights. 未经我的请求或者同意，就把我引见给别人，这等于侵犯了我的权利。

... the chance introduction is beginning to devastate the social situation, and men of sense who wish to know as few persons as possible can no longer depend on the discretion of their friends. 随意引见之风正在逐渐破坏社交氛围，而对那些择人而友的明智之士来说，他们再也不能指望自己的朋友能有多少审慎了。

It is to be wished that some great social force, say a billionaire, would set up a system of disintroductions. 真希望某种社会力量，比如某个亿万富翁，能够建立一套拒绝引见的规则。

The devil^② is a citizen of every country, but only in our own are we in constant peril of^③ an introduction to him. That is democracy. All men are equal; the devil is a man; therefore, the devil is equal. If that is not a good and sufficient syllogism^④ I should be

① 安布罗斯·比尔斯 (1842~1914)：素有“辛辣的比尔斯”之称，是美国报刊专栏作家、讽刺家、评论家和小说家，专写以战争、死亡和恐怖为题材的讽刺小说。他最著名的作品有短篇小说集《士兵与平民的故事》(1891)，小说集《在人生中间》和《魔鬼词典》(1906)。本文标题“Disintroduction”是作者生造的词，根据文章意思，可理解为“拒绝引见”。

② devil：魔鬼，在文中指随意为他人引见的人。

③ in (constant) peril of：(经常)有……的危险

④ syllogism：[逻辑]三段论法，推论法，演绎

pleased to know what is the matter with it.

To write in riddles when one is not prophesying^① is too much trouble; what I am affirming is the horror of the characteristic American custom of promiscuous^②, unsought^③ and unauthorized^④ introduction.

You incautiously^⑤ meet your friend Smith in the street; if you had been prudent you would have remained indoors. Your helplessness makes you desperate and you plunge into conversation with him, knowing entirely well the disaster that is in cold storage for you.

The expected occurs; another man comes along and is promptly halted by Smith and you are introduced! Now, you have not given to the Smith the right to enlarge your circle of acquaintance^⑥ and select the addition himself; why did he do this thing? The person whom he has condemned you to shake hands with may be an admirable person, though there is a strong numerical presumption against it; but for all that the Smith knows he may be your bitterest enemy. The Smith has never thought of that. Or you may have evidence (independent of the fact of the introduction) that he is some kind of thief — there are one thousand and fifty kinds of thieves. But the Smith has never thought of that. In short, the Smith has never thought. In a Smithocracy^⑦ all men, as aforesaid^⑧, being equal, all are equally agreeable to one another.

That is a logical extension of the Declaration of American Independence. If it is erroneous^⑨ the assumption that a man will be

① prophesy: 预言, 预示

② promiscuous: 缺乏选择的, 随意的, 随便的

③ unsought: 未经请求的

④ unauthorized: 未被授权的, 未经认可的

⑤ incautiously: 不慎地

⑥ acquaintance: 相识的人, 熟人

⑦ Smithocracy: 这是作者模仿 democracy 一词的杜撰词, 意思是“史(密斯)式民主”。

⑧ aforesaid: 之前的, 上述的

⑨ erroneous: 错误的, 不正确的

pleasing to me because he is pleasing to another is erroneous too, and to introduce me to one that I have not asked nor consented to know is an invasion of my right — a denial and limitation of my liberty to a voice in my own affairs. It is like determining what kind of clothing I shall wear, what books I shall read, or what my dinner shall be.

In calling promiscuous introducing an American custom I am not unaware that it obtains^① in other countries than ours. The difference is that in those it is mostly confined to persons of no consequence^② and no pretensions to respectability; here it is so nearly universal that there is no escaping it. Democracies are naturally and necessarily gregarious^③. Even the French of today are becoming so, and the time is apparently not distant when they will lose that fine distinctive social sense that has made them the most punctilious^④, because they are the most considerate, of all nations excepting the Spanish and Japanese. By those who have lived in Paris since I did I am told that the chance^⑤ introduction is beginning to devastate the social situation, and men of sense who wish to know as few persons as possible can no longer depend on the discretion^⑥ of their friends.

To say so is not the same thing as to say “Down with^⑦ the republic!” The republic has its advantages. Among these is the liberty to say, “Down with the republic!”

It is to be wished that some great social force, say a billion-

① obtain: 流行, 公认

② persons of no consequence: 无足轻重的人

③ gregarious: 群居(性)的, 集体性的

④ punctilious: 拘泥细节的, 谨小慎微的

⑤ chance: 恰巧的, 随意的

⑥ discretion: 判断(力), 辨别(力), 慎重, 谨慎

⑦ down with: 打倒

aire, would set up a system of disintroductions. It should work somewhat like this:

MR WHITE—Mr Black, knowing the low esteem in which you hold each other^①, I have the honour to disintroduce you from Mr Green.

MR BLACK (*bowing*)—Sir, I have long desired the advantage of your unacquaintance.

MR GREEN (*bowing*)—Charmed to unmeet^② you, sir. Our acquaintance (the work of a most inconsiderate and unworthy person) has distressed me beyond expression. We are greatly indebted to our good friend here for his tact in repairing the mischance^③.

MR WHITE—Thank you. I'm sure you will become very good strangers.

This is only the ghost of^④ a suggestion; of course the plan is capable of an infinite elaboration. Its capital^⑤ defect is that the persons who are now so liberal with their unwelcome introductions, will be equally lavish^⑥ with their disintroductions, and will estrange^⑦ the best of friends with as little ceremony as they now observe in their more fiendish^⑧ work.

(沈素琴 编注)

-
- ① hold sb. in low esteem: 不尊重某人
② unmeet: 作者的生造词, 可理解为“不使……相见”。
③ mischance: 不幸, 灾难
④ the ghost of a: 一点, 微量, 细微
⑤ capital: 首要的, 最主要的
⑥ lavish: 过分慷慨的, 过多的, 过度的
⑦ estrange: 使疏远
⑧ fiendish: 魔鬼似的, 极为糟糕的

2. The Road to Success

Andrew Carnegie^①

It is well that young men should begin at the beginning and occupy the most subordinate positions. 年轻人应该从头做起，从基层做起，这是大有裨益的事。

Say to yourself, "My place is at the top." Be king in your dreams. 对自己说：“我的位置在最高层。”要做自己梦想的主人。

I tell you "put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket" 我告诉你：“把所有的鸡蛋放在一个篮子里，然后看好这个篮子。”

It is well that young men should begin at the beginning^② and occupy the most subordinate^③ positions. Many of the leading businessmen of Pittsburgh^④ had a serious responsibility thrust upon them at the very threshold of^⑤ their career. They were introduced to the broom^⑥, and spent the first hours of their business lives sweeping out the office^⑦. I notice we have janitors and janitresses

① 安德鲁·卡耐基（1835~1919）：美国著名实业家，慈善家。出生于苏格兰，后移居美国，依靠个人奋斗成为当时美国钢铁业巨头，堪称“美国梦”的代表人物。

② begin at the beginning: 从头做起

③ subordinate: 次要的，从属的

④ Pittsburgh: 匹兹堡，美国宾夕法尼亚州西南部城市，是美国钢铁工业中心。

⑤ at the very threshold of: 在一开始的时候

⑥ were introduced to the broom: 从扫地做起

⑦ out the office: 在办公室外边

now in offices, and our young men unfortunately miss that salutary branch of a business education^①. But if by chance the professional sweeper is absent any morning, the boy who has the genius of the future partner in him^② will not hesitate to try his hand at the broom. The other day^③ a fond^④ fashionable mother in Michigan asked a young man whether he had even seen a young lady sweep in a room so grandly^⑤ as her Priscilla. He said so, he never had, and the mother was gratified beyond measure^⑥, but then said he, after a pause, "What I should like to see her do is sweep out a room." It does not hurt the newest comer to sweep out the office if necessary. I was one of those sweepers myself.

Assuming that you have all obtained employment and are fairly started, my advice to you is "aim high". I would not give a fig for^⑦ the young man who has not already seen himself the partner or the head of an important firm. Do not rest^⑧ content for a moment in your thoughts as head clerk^⑨, or foreman^⑩, or general manager in any concern^⑪, no matter how extensive^⑫. Say to yourself, "My

① miss that salutary branch of a business education: 失去了一次受到有益的商业教育的机会

salutary: 有益处的; branch: (学科的) 分科, 分支, 在这里指从基层工作做起这一课

② have the genius in sb: 有某方面的才能。本句指某人有能力成为未来的经济合伙人

③ the other day: (表示过去时间的) 某一天

④ fond: 温柔的, 对孩子宠爱的

⑤ grandly: 宏伟地, 盛大地。这里指姿态潇洒的

⑥ was gratified beyond measure: 非常满意; be gratified by: 满足于; beyond measure: 非常, 极其

⑦ not care/not give a fig (for sth): 对某事毫不在乎; not worth a fig 毫无价值

⑧ rest: 保持某种状态, 在上下文中相当于半系动词 remain

⑨ head clerk: 主要职员。head: (形容词) 主要的, 关键角色的

⑩ foreman: 领班, 部门负责人

⑪ concern: 业务, 事物

⑫ extensive: 广泛的, 广大的。在上下文中指业务的规模。

place is at the top.” Be king in your dreams.

And here is the prime condition^① of success, the great secret; concentrate your energy, thought, and capital exclusively^② upon the business in which you are engaged. Having begun in one line^③, resolve to fight it out^④ on that line, to lead in it^⑤, adopt every improvement, have the best machinery, and know the most about it.

The concerns which fail are those which have scattered their capital^⑥, which means that they have scattered their brains^⑦ also. They have investments in this, or that, or the other, here, there, and everywhere. “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket” is all wrong. ^⑧ I tell you “put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket”. Look round you and take notice; men who do that do not often fail. It is easy to watch and carry the one basket. It is trying to carry too many baskets that breaks most eggs in this country. ^⑨ He who carries three baskets must put one on his head, which is apt to^⑩ tumble^⑪ and trip him up^⑫. One fault of the American businessman is lack of concentration.

To summarize what I have said: Aim for the highest, never

① prime condition: 首要条件。prime: 主要的, 根本的

② exclusively: 单独地, 专一地

③ line: 指某一行业

④ fight sth out: 原意为“直到争论解决为止”, 这里指事业取得成就

⑤ to be a leader in that line: 在这一行中成为领导人物。

⑥ scattered their capital: 分散而没有集中使用资金

⑦ brains: 智力, 精力

⑧ “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket” is all wrong: “不要孤注一掷”的说法是完全错误的。

⑨ 本句使用强调句式: it is... that...

⑩ is apt to: 有……的倾向, 易于

⑪ tumble: 滚落, 跌落

⑫ trip sb up: 使某人绊倒或失足

enter a bar room; do not touch liquor^①, or if at all only at meals; never speculate^②; never indorse beyond your surplus cash fund^③; make the firm's interest yours^④; break orders^⑤ always to save owners^⑥; concentrate; put all your eggs in one basket, and watch that basket; expenditure always within revenue^⑦; lastly be not impatient, for, as Emerson says, "no one can cheat you out of ultimate success but yourselves."

(于中华 编注)

① liquor: 酒精饮料

② speculate: 做投机买卖

③ never indorse beyond your surplus cash fund: 签发支票的金额不要超出你的盈余现金的数额。

④ make the firm's interest yours: 把公司的利益当成自己的利益。

⑤ break orders: 取消订单

⑥ save owners: 保全货主的利益

⑦ expenditure always within revenue: 花销永远不超出收入。