

[★英汉双语版★]

美国语文

5

[美] 威廉·H·麦加菲◎主编
赵燕飞◎译

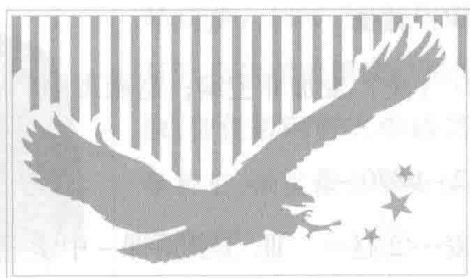
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关于威廉·H·麦加菲

威廉·H·麦加菲 (William Holmes McGuffey, 1800 年 9 月 23 日—1873 年 5 月 4 日), 出生于美国宾夕法尼亚州, 美国著名教育家, 曾任迈阿密大学语言学教授、辛辛那提大学校长、俄亥俄大学校长, 被誉为美国的“民族教育家”。

在迈阿密大学执教期间, 麦加菲开始为美国孩子编写教材, 这就是著名的《美国语文》(即《麦加菲读本》)。在《美国语文》这部作品上, 麦加菲教授倾注了 20 年的心血。而这部作品也为他带来了巨大的荣誉。为纪念麦加菲在教科书领域和儿童教育方面所做出的杰出贡献, 美国全国教科书大奖被命名为“麦加菲历久弥新奖”。

1873 年, 威廉·H·麦加菲去世, 安葬于弗吉尼亚大学墓地。

关于《美国语文》

作为一套经典的英语分级读本, 《美国语文》自 1836 年出版后就成为众多美国公立、私立学校的通用课本, 即便过了将近两百年, 到了 21 世纪, 西方一些私立学校和家庭学校仍把它作为教材, 足见这套书的价值与影响力。据估计, 这套书从问世至 1960 年, 至少发行了 1.22 亿册。它对美国中小学生的成长教育和人格塑造, 乃至“美国精神”的形成, 都产生了史无前例的影响。它已经影响了美国的数代人, 如果你能找到一个五世同堂的大家庭, 就

会惊奇地发现,从高祖到重孙,他们能异口同声地背诵其中的优秀篇章。

在内容上,《美国语文》汇集了狄更斯、莎士比亚、爱默生、梭罗等文豪的经典名篇,通过一篇篇短小精悍的故事,将道德教育的内容倾注于作品之中。既可以让孩子欣赏这些优美的文字,又能让他们从中感受到道德教育的力量,潜移默化地形成影响其一生的美德观念。诚如历史学家孔玛格所言:“它们为美国儿童提供了当今明显缺乏的东西,即普遍的引喻知识、普遍的经验 and 自制意识。”

《美国语文》被美国《出版周刊》评为“人类出版史上第三大畅销书”。应该说,没有哪一套个人主编的教材能超过此发行量了!

北京理工大学出版社出版的这套英汉双语版《美国语文》,完整保持了英文原版内容,共分为1~6级,从英语启蒙开始,循序渐进,是一套呈现美国文学与历史文化、体现美国精神与价值观念的优秀读本,对国内中小学生学习英语会有很大帮助。

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Lesson 1

出色的朗诵者

THE GOOD READER

It is told of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, that, as he was seated one day in his private room, a written petition^① was brought to him with the request that it should be immediately read. The King had just returned from hunting, and the glare of the sun, or some other cause, had so dazzled his eyes that he found it difficult to make out a single word of the writing.

His private secretary happened to be absent; and the soldier who brought the petition could not read. There was a page, or favorite boy servant, waiting in the hall, and upon him the King called. The page was a son of one of the noblemen of the court, but proved to be a very poor reader.

In the first place, he did not articulate^② distinctly. He huddled his words together in the utterance, as if they were syllables of one long word, which he must get through with as speedily as possible. His pronunciation was bad, and he did not modulate^③ his voice so as to bring out the meaning of what he read. Every sentence was uttered with a dismal monotony^④ of voice, as if it did not differ in any respect from that which preceded it.

“Stop!” said the King, impatiently. “Is it an auctioneer’s list of goods to be sold that you are hurrying over? Send your companion to me.” Another page who stood at the door now entered, and to him the King gave the petition. The second page began by hemming and clearing his throat in such an affected^⑤ manner that the King jokingly asked him whether he had not slept in the public garden, with the gate open, the night before.

The second page had a good share of self-conceit, however, and so was not greatly confused by the King’s jest. He determined that he would avoid the mistake which his comrade had made. So he commenced reading the petition slowly and with great formality, emphasizing every word, and prolonging the articulation of every syllable. But his manner was so tedious that the King cried out,

① petition 请愿书

② articulate 清晰地发音

③ modulate 调整

④ monotony 单调乏味

⑤ affected 假装的

“Stop! Are you reciting a lesson in the elementary sounds? Out of the room! But no; stay! Send me that little girl who is sitting there by the fountain.”

The girl thus pointed out by the King was a daughter of one of the laborers employed by the royal gardener; and she had come to help her father weed the flower beds. It chanced that, like many of the poor people in Prussia, she had received a good education. She was somewhat alarmed when she found herself in the King's presence, but took courage when the King told her that he only wanted her to read for him, as his eyes were weak.



Now, Ernestine (for this was the name of the little girl) was fond of reading aloud, and often many of the neighbors would assemble at her father's house to hear her; those who could not read themselves would come to her, also, with their letters from distant friends or children, and she thus formed the habit of reading various sorts of handwriting promptly and well.

The King gave her the petition, and she rapidly glanced through the opening lines to get some idea of what it was about. As she read, her eyes began to glisten, and her breast to heave. “What is the matter?” asked the King; “Don't you know how to read?” “Oh, yes, sir,” she replied, addressing him with the title usually applied to him: “I will now read it, if you please.”

The two pages wore about to leave the room. “Remain,” said the King. The little girl began to read the petition. It was from a poor widow, whose only son had been drafted^① to serve in the army, although his health was delicate and his pursuits had been such as to unfit him for military life. His father had been killed in battle, and the son had a strong desire to become a portrait painter.

The writer told her story in a simple, concise^② manner, that carried to the

① drafted 征募

② concise 简明的

heart a belief of its truth; and Ernestine read it with so much feeling, and with an articulation so just, in tones so pure and distinct, that when she had finished, the King, into whose eyes the tears had started, exclaimed, "Oh! Now I understand what it is all about; but I might never have known, certainly I never should have felt, its meaning had I trusted to these young gentlemen, whom I now dismiss from my service for one year, advising them to occupy their time in learning to read."

"As for you, my young lady," continued the King, "I know you will ask no better reward for your trouble than the pleasure of carrying to this poor widow my order for her son's immediate discharge^①. Let me see whether you can write as well as you can read. Take this pen, and write as I dictate^②." He then dictated an order, which Ernestine wrote, and he signed. Calling one of his guards, he bade him go with the girl and see that the order was obeyed.

How much happiness was Ernestine the means of bestowing through her good elocution, united to the happy circumstance that brought it to the knowledge of the King! First, there were her poor neighbors, to whom she could give instruction and entertainment. Then, there was the poor widow who sent the petition, and who not only regained her son, but received through Ernestine an order for him to paint the King's likeness; so that the poor boy soon rose to great distinction^③, and had more orders than he could attend to. Words could not express^④ his gratitude, and that of his mother, to the little girl.

And Ernestine had, moreover, the satisfaction of aiding her father to rise in the world, so that he became the King's chief gardener. The King did not forget her, but had her well educated at his own expense. As for the two pages, she was indirectly the means of doing them good, also; for, ashamed of their bad reading, they commenced studying in earnest, till they overcame the faults that had offended the King. Both finally rose to distinction, one as a lawyer, and the other as a statesman; and they owed their advancement in life chiefly to their good elocution.

译文 TRANSLATION

注：普鲁士腓特烈二世(1712—1788)，又称腓特烈大帝，是德国最伟大的统治者之一。他在军事征战、智慧公正的治国理念以及文学方面都颇有建树，他用法语写过很多著作。今天仍流传着这位国王的许多逸事，这篇课文便是一例。

一天，普鲁士国王腓特烈大帝在其私人房间里坐着，一位士兵向他呈上一封请

① discharge 释放

② dictate 口述

③ distinction 卓越

④ express 表达

愿信,恳请国王即刻审阅。此时,国王刚刚结束狩猎返回驻地,也许是阳光太刺眼,也许是其他的原因,他视力骤降,看不清纸上的任何一个字。

国王的私人秘书恰巧不在,呈递请愿书的士兵也不识字。国王便喊来一位当班男侍——一位乖巧的侍童。尽管他是宫廷贵族的儿子,人们还是很快发现,他也不善识文断字。

首先,他咬字不准,含混不清。听上去,有些词语应该是长音,他却急不可耐,偷工减料含糊了事。他的语调也不恰当,完全没有依据请愿信的意思而适当调整语气。所有的句子都读得单调乏味,毫无抑扬顿挫之感,罕见音调变化,似乎句子之间并不存在任何差异。

“别念了!”国王耐不住了,“难道你是拍卖师?急匆匆地公布清单、急着拍出拍卖品?念那么快干什么!叫你同伴来!”很快,守候在大厅门口的另一位侍童走上前来,接过国王递来的请愿书。侍童装模作样地清了清嗓子,国王诙谐地问他昨晚是不是在大门洞开的广场过的夜。

这个侍童自负得很,似乎不太在意国王的玩笑话,却决心不再蹈其同伴的覆辙。于是,他开始不疾不徐、庄重地朗读请愿书,突出一切重点,拉长该拉长的所有音节。然而,他读得依然乏味,甚至有点做作。国王禁不住大喝一声:“够了!你在按部就班,依据基本发音规则背诵课文啊!滚一边去!哦,不,等等。把坐在喷泉旁的那个小女孩给我喊来。”

国王钦定的那位姑娘是宫廷花匠雇来的帮工的女儿。那天,她过来帮她父亲在宫廷花圃里除草。像普鲁士的许多穷人一样,她碰巧接受过良好的教育。听到国王召唤自己,她多少有点忐忑不安。国王告诉她,自己眼神不好,由她代劳朗诵,她这才鼓起了勇气。

欧丝婷(这是她的名字)喜欢高声朗诵,邻居们也喜欢聚集在她家中听她读书。不识字的人还会拿来亲朋好友或孩子的来信找她帮忙。这样她便习惯于朗读各种各样手写的信件,读得既快捷又动听。

她接过国王递给她的请愿书,快速浏览开篇数行,获悉了文章的大体印象。不一会儿,她眼神炯炯有光,呼吸急促起来。“怎么回事?”国王问道,“读不下去了?”“不!陛下,”她以国王的尊称回答,“如果您乐意的话,我可以继续读下去。”

两名男侍想退下去。“留下。”国王下令。小女孩继续朗诵请愿信。这封信是一位穷苦的寡妇写来的,说她唯一的儿子被征募去服役,尽管他身虚体弱,尽管他志在军外。她说,孩子的父亲已经命丧疆场,她儿子梦寐以求的是成为一名肖像画家。

请愿书以质朴简洁的语言陈述了寡妇的悲惨遭遇,其真情实感让人动容。欧丝婷满怀深情地朗诵着,语音清晰,音调恰当,抑扬顿挫。朗诵结束了,国王热泪盈眶,高声叫道:“天呀!我现在算是醒悟了。假如听信那班年轻权贵的胡扯,我将压