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编译: 齐筠

小品文



Short Essays
from Everyday Life
外文出版社

Short Essays from Everyday Life

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出版者的话

卡尔·马克思说: "外语是人生奋斗的一种武器。"(A foreign language is a weapon in the struggle of life.)英语是世界上应用最广的语言,如果能得心应手地使用这把利器,对于生活在生存竞争日益激烈环境中的国人来说,不啻具有十分重要的意义。然而,许多英语学习者却感觉学习英语太难,有的甚至因此而退却。学习贵在兴趣,学英语重在模仿和坚持,只要掌握一些有效的学习方法,比如广泛大量阅读、朗读英语材料,不断进行听力、英汉互译训练等,是可以增加学习兴趣、提高学习效果的。

我们本着为具有中级英语水平的英语爱好者提供一套进一步提高英语实力的实用型丛书之目的,邀请中国政法大学、北京大学、中国人民大学、北京外国语学院等单位的部分专家学者,编写了《21世纪英语沙龙丛书》,一套八册,即《名言荟萃》、《笑话集锦》、《名人轶事》、《寓言世界》、《妙语拾趣》、《生活小品文》、《西方风情录》、《名人掠影》。每册由一定数量的相应内容文章/名言组成,每篇文章包括英文原文、中文译文、注释三部分。英语力求信、达、雅,注释以英语原文中的生词为主、兼顾句式、语法。

《名言荟萃》中的名言出自 600 余位外国名人,全书内容涉及伦理、爱情、教育、遗言等 31 个方面,书中名言大都是我们学习、工作、生活中常被引用的,其中部分嘉言隽语则是首次与读者见面。

《笑话集锦》集中了计算机、求职者、师生、律师等 15 个方面的 200 多个捧腹笑话, 内容新颖, 具有强烈的时代感和生活气息。

《名人轶事》主要介绍政界、商界、文化界、科学界等100多位名

人的不大见于正式文献的轶闻趣事,名人的魅力跃然纸上。

《寓言世界》汇集了近百篇各类精彩寓言,有助于您在寓学于乐中感悟人生哲理,启迪智慧火花。

《妙语拾趣》记录了许多位身在英语国家的华人,因对英语理解不透而产生的歧义,闹出的种种误会,有助于您更准确地把握一些英语中俚语、习语、成语等的含义。

《生活小品文》选取了人生、亲情、道德、友谊等方面富于哲理的几十篇小品文、隽永的故事娓娓道来,让您不忍释卷。

《西方风情录》从休闲、饮食、人文、风俗等6个方面以全新的角度透视了西方主要国家的风土人情。

《名人掠影》从不同角度勾勒了科学家、企业家、运动员、演员等 10余个行业的34位名人风采,从一个侧面揭示出他们生活的丰富 多彩。

本丛书突出趣味隽永、精要新颖、难度适中、雅俗共赏的风格。读者既可以从中研习语言要点、琢磨互译妙处、扩大词汇量,也可以咏读华章亮段和点睛妙笔,在潜移默化中,还可以陶冶情操、增长见闻、丰富知识、增添生活乐趣。衷心希望《21世纪英语沙龙丛书》能在广大的英语爱好者中遇见知音,成为您的好朋友、好帮手。

参加丛书编写人员有游瑞云、齐筠、张清、王姝、马静、陈红薇、欧小琪、李昆岩等。北京大学外语系外籍专家 Mr. David Sitterley、美国新泽西州美国中远有限公司 Paralegal David P. Marcano 和台湾 Frobel 美语学校外籍专家 Mr. Andrew F. Comly 也给予了许多指导和宝贵建议,在此一并致谢。

由于编者经验不足,对一些文章的选取以及译文因作者水平有限尚不能做到尽善尽美。文中纰漏之处,敬请斧正,我们将在该套丛书的其他册编写和再版时,予以完善。

作者的话

常常有朋友这样问我: "平时读什么文章对英语学习最有帮助?"的确,现在新闻媒体的发展已经使人到了眼花缭乱的地步,再加上英特网的出现,更使人手忙脚乱,不知所措,于是使我萌发了把一些优美的文章汇集成书的想法。

本书所收集的 30 篇小品文, 我都非常喜欢。它们文笔优美, 内容生动, 意义深远。既有对往事的回忆、又有对历史的反思; 既有对自然景物的描写, 又有对人物心理的刻画。文章篇幅多为三五百字, 便于读者在茶余饭后信手拈来, 仔细咀嚼品味, 学习文章的遭词造句、布局谋篇, 提高英语的阅读能力和鉴赏水平, 同时对道德修养的培养和心灵的净化都会大有禅益。

书中的每一篇文章都配有中文译文和对文中一些单词或词组的注释,这样可以帮助读者扫除单词和词组的障碍,有利于对原文的正确理解。由于译者水平有限,书中若有不足之处,敬请读者批评指正。谢谢!

齐 笱 一九九九年十二月 子盖因

Contents 目 录

那曾是一座好谷仓
2. A Good Heart to Lean on
3. Companionship of Books ······(17) 与书结友
4. Rich as a King
5 . A Little at a Time
6. A Wounded Bee ······(37) 一只受伤的蜜蜂
7. Three Days to See
8 . A Lesson for Living
9. A Sunday in London (59) 伦敦的礼拜天
10. How to Read a Book?
11. Enormous Debt
12 . First Snow ······(81) 第一场雪
13. National Prejudices
14. Lilacs



15.	The Coyote
<i>16</i> .	Shelter for the Night ······(115) 夜宿
<i>17</i> .	A Good Teacher, a Good Luck ······(121) 好老师,好运气
18.	What is Happiness? ······ (127) 什么是幸福?
19.	The Farewell(135)分手
20.	Frozen Paradise ······(141) 冰雪乐园
21.	The Returning ······(147) 返乡
22.	The Development of Civilization ······(157) 文明的进步
23 .	Hair ····· (163 头发
24.	Eyeglasses ······(167) 眼镜
	Why Do We Study History? ····· (171 为什么学历史
	Dusk——The Magic Hour ······ (181 黄昏——神奇的时刻
27.	An Irish Wedding
28.	My First Poem ·····(197 我的第一首诗
29.	A Worn Path ·····(205 一条踏出的小径
<i>30</i> .	My Forever Valentine ······ (211) 我永远的情人节礼物

It Was a Good Barn

那曾是一座好谷仓





1. It Was a Good Barn 1 那曾是一座好谷仓

An old friendship had grown cold. Where once there had been closeness, there was only strain². Now pride kept me from picking up the phone.

Then one day I dropped in on another old friend, who's had a long career as a minister and counselor ³. We were seated in his study—surrounded by maybe a thousand books and fell into deep conversation about everything from small computers to the tormented⁴ life of Beethoven.

The subject finally turned to friendship and how perishable⁵ it seems to be these days. I mentioned my own experience as an example. "Relationships are mysteries," my friend said. "Some endure. Others fall apart."

Gazing out his window to the wooded Vermont hills, he pointed toward a neighboring farm, "Used to be a large barn over there." Next to a red-frame house were the footings⁶

旧时的友情已经变得冷漠, 曾经是亲密无间, 如今却只剩下了紧张的关系, 现在强烈的自尊阻止我拿起电话。

一天我去拜访另一位当了 多年外交公使和参赞的朋友, 在他摆放着上千本图书的书房 里,我们海阔天空地交谈者,从 小型计算机一直谈到贝多芬多 灾多难的一生。

最后,话题转到了友谊和现在友谊是多么经不起考验上,我提到了我的经历作为例子。"关系是一种神秘的东西,"我的朋友说。"有的能够持续下去,有的就破裂了。"

他向窗外那长满树木的弗蒙特山丘望去,指着附近的农场说"那里曾经是一个大谷仓。"一座红色结构的房子旁边是一个庞大建筑物的地基。



of what had been a sizable structure.

"It was solidly built, probably in the 1870s. But like so many of the places around here, it went down because people left for richer lands in the Midwest. No one took care of the barn. Its roof needed patching⁷; rainwater got under the eaves8 and dripped down inside the posts and beams9."

One day a high wind came along, and the whole barn began to tremble. "You could hear this creaking, first, like old sailing-ship timbers10, and then a sharp series of cracks and a tremendous roaring sound. Suddenly it was a heap of scrap¹¹ lumber¹²."

"After the storm blew over, I went down and saw these beautiful, old oak timbers, solid as could be. I asked the fellow who owns the place what had happened. He said he figured the rainwater had settled in where wooden the pinholes. dowels 13 held the joints together. Once those pins were rotted, there was nothing to link the giant beams together."

We both gazed down the hill. Now all that was left of the barn was | 见昔日的谷仓如今只剩下了它

"它本来建造得很结实,那 大概在十九世纪七十年代。但 是象这里的许多地方一样。由 于人们向中西部地区的较富饶 地区迁移的缘故而坍塌了。没 有人来照管这个谷仓了。它的 仓顶需要修补: 雨水流到屋檐 下,渗进柱子和横梁里。"

有一天, 刮起一场大风, 整 个粮仓开始摇晃。"开始是吱吱 嘎嘎的声音,就象旧船的船骨 发出的声音、继而是一连串尖 利的断裂声,然后是一声巨响, 顿时粮仓化为一堆碎劈柴"。

"风暴过后,我赶去看那些 漂亮的老橡木, 依然是那么结 实。我向现场的主人询问,他说 他想是因为雨水流进了钉子眼 儿、而那儿正是木榫的结合 处。一旦钉子腐烂了,就没有东 西来把那些巨大的横梁连接在 一起了。"

我们两人向山下望去,只

its cellar hole and its border of lilac 14 | 的一个地窖口和紫丁香树丛。 shrubs.

My friend said he had turned the incident over and over in his mind, and finally came to recognize some parallels¹⁵ between building a barn and building a friendship: no matter how strong you are, how notable¹⁶ your attainments¹⁷, you have enduring significance only in your relationship to others.

"To make your life a sound structure that will serve others and fulfill your own potential," he said, "you to have remember that strength, however massive, can't endure unless it has the interlocking¹⁸ support of others. Go it alone and you'll inevitably tumble¹⁹."

"Relationships have to be cared for," he added, "like the roof of a unwritten. barn. Letters thanks unsaid, confidences violated, quarrels unsettled---all this acts like rainwater seeping into the weakening the link between the beams, "

My friend shook his head. " It was a good barn. And it would have 好谷仓,而且本应不费什么力 taken very little to keep it in good | 气就能维护得很好, 可是现在

我的朋友说他反复地思考 过这件事,最后终于明白了建 造谷仓与建立友谊之间存在着 一些相似的地方。那就是,无论 你多么强壮、无论你多么功绩 显赫,只有在与别人的交往中, 你的生存价值才能长久体现。

"为了使你的生活成为一 个坚固的框架,既为别人服务, 又能发挥你的潜能,"他说,"你 必须记住力量不管它有多大。 如果没有别人的支持,都不会 持续长久。只依靠自己的力量、 不可避免地只有失败。

"关系需要维护、"他又说、 "就象谷仓的仓顶。不写信,不 感谢,信任遭受了破坏,争执不 予解决 ---- 所有这些行为就 如同雨水渗进了木钉里,削弱 了梁与梁之间的结合力量。"

朋友摇摇头说,"那是一个



repair. Now it will probably never 大概永远不会再建了。" be rebuilt."

Later that afternoon I got ready to leave. "You wouldn't like to borrow 准备告辞。"我想,你一定想借 my phone to make a call, I don't , 我的电话打个电话吧?"朋友 suppose?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, "I think I would. Very much."

那个下午的晚些时候、我

是的,"我说,"我想是的。

Notes

- 1. barn /bain/ n. 谷仓
- 2. strain /strein/ n. 紧张状态
- 3. minister and counselor 外交公使和参赞
- 4. tormented /to: mentid/ adj. 痛苦的
- 5. perishable / peri [əbl/ adj. 易毁灭的,易消亡的
- 6. footings / futtinz/ n. 立足点,立脚点
- 7. patch /pætʃ/ v. 修补
- 8. eaves /i:vz/ [复] n. 屋檐
- 9. beam /bi:m/ n. 梁
- 10. timber /'timbə/ n. 木材,栋材
- 11. scrap /skræp/ n. 碎片,小块
- 12. lumber / lambə/ n. 破烂的东西,无用的杂物、木料
- 13. dowel /dauəl/ n. 木钉,暗榫
- 14. lilac /ˈlailək/ n. 紫丁香
- 15. parallel / pærəlel/ n. 类似的人(或事物),可相比拟的人(或事物)
- 16. notable / noutəbl/ adi. 显要的,值得注意的
- 17. attainment /ə'teinmənt/ n. 成就
- 18. interlocking /intəˈlɔkiη/ adj. 连接的
- 19. tumble / tʌmbl/ v. 被倾覆;匆匆茫茫地做;跌跌撞撞地走
- 20. peg / peg/ n. 木栓,木钉

A Good Heart to Lean on

可以依靠的"善良的心"



Many years later, the author felt sorry for what he had done to his father. He realixed how strong his father was. So he said to his father: "You set the pace, Twill try to adjust to you."

许多年后, 他幡然悔悟, 认识到父亲是如此的高大, 他对父亲说: "你走你的, 我想法儿跟上你"。

2. A Good Heart to Lean on

"善良的心

When I was growing up, I was | embarrassed to be seen with my father. He was severely crippled1 and very short, and when we would walk together, his hand on my arm for balance, people would stare. I would inwardly² squirm³ at the unwanted attention. If he ever noticed or was bothered, he never let on4.

It was difficult to coordinate5 our steps —— his halting, mine impatient — and because of that. we didn't say much as we went along. But as we started out, he always said, "You set the pace. I will try to adjust to6 you."

Our usual walk was to or from the subway, which was how he got to work. He went to work sick, and despite nasty⁷ weather. He almost never missed a day, and would make it to the office even if others could not. A matter of pride.

When snow or ice was on the ground, it was impossible for him to | 的时候,若是没有帮助,他简直

在我成长的过程中,我一直 羞于让别人看见我和父亲在一 起。我的父亲身材矮小,腿上有严 重的残疾。当我们一起走路时,他 总是挽着我以保持身体平衡。这 时总招来一些异样的目光, 令我 无地自容。可是如果他注意到了 这些,不管他内心多么痛苦,也从 不表现出来。

走路时,我们很难相互协 调起来——他的步子慢慢腾 腾,我的步子焦躁不安。所以一 路上我们交谈得很少。但是每 次出行前,他总是说,"你走你 的,我想法儿跟上你。

我们常常往返于从家到他 上班乘坐的地铁站的那段路 上。他有病也要上班,哪怕天气 恶劣。他几乎从未误过一天工, 就是在别人不能去的情况下, 他也要设法去上班。实在值得 骄傲!

每当冰封大地、雪花飘飘

