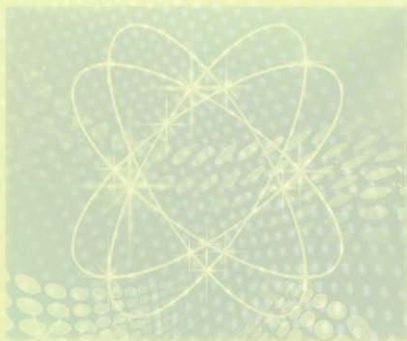


# 红字

The Scarlet Letter

(美) 霍桑 著



辽宁人民出版社



E CLASSIC • A BEDSIDE CLASSIC • A BEDSIDE CLASSIC • A BEDSIDE CLASSIC • A BEDSIDE CLASSIC •

# THE SCARLET LETTER

by Nathaniel Hawthorne



Liaoning People's Publishing House, China

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## Nathaniel Hawthorne

Nathaniel Hawthorne (July 4, 1804-May 19, 1864) was an American novelist and short story writer.

He was born in 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts, to Nathaniel Hawthorne and the former Elizabeth Clarke Manning. *The Scarlet Letter* was published in 1850, followed by a succession of other novels. A political appointment took Hawthorne and family to Europe before their return to The Wayside in 1860. Hawthorne died on May 19, 1864, and was survived by his wife and their three children.

Much of Hawthorne's writing centers on New England, many works featuring moral allegories with a Puritan inspiration. His fiction works are considered part of the Romantic movement and, more specifically, Dark romanticism. His themes often center on the inherent evil and sin of humanity, and his works often have moral messages and deep psychological complexity. His published works include novels, short stories, and a biography of his friend Franklin Pierce.

# Is This Book for You?

## 清教徒的罪与罚

——“最经典英语文库”第四辑之  
《红字》导读

姜楠

红色——这种在中国人眼里象征热闹喜庆的颜色，则被清教徒赋予了罪恶的含义。

提到清教徒，人们首先想到的是反对陈规陋习的卫道士、倡导宗教改革的实干家、坚持真理梦想的新教徒。在改革遭到传统权威的镇压后，他们横渡大西洋，来到美洲，依据上帝的召唤与心中的蓝图，建起了一片“新英格兰”理想国。除上述此优点外，清教徒既不矜功自伐，也不放纵恣肆，过着一种清心寡欲的生活。他们反对奢侈浪费，有的甚至反对一切形式的娱乐活动，连圣诞节都免了。

霍桑（1804-1864）就是纯正的清教徒后裔。祖上曾在新殖民地官居要职，其本人也曾在税关供职。清教徒的传统，给了霍桑家族显赫的荣耀，也给予霍桑本人难以抹去的羞惭。这种心理促成了《红字》的诞生，并贯穿本书始终。

《红字》取材于真实的历史事件，篇幅不长，内容可一言以蔽之：赫斯特·普林以有夫之妇的身份与他

人相爱，诞下女儿，被判为罪人，并须终生佩戴标志通奸的红字“A”（Adultery“通奸”之意）于胸前。

虽然赫斯特坚决不供出孩子的生父为何人，但其精于揣摩人心的丈夫却嗅出牧师丁美斯戴尔的异常，从此，她丈夫化名为齐林沃思，接近并伺机报复牧师。小说的最后，丁美斯戴尔不堪良心折磨，终于道明真相，死在赫斯特怀中，而齐林沃思不久也忧闷而死。

婚外情即便在自诩文明和法制的现代人看来，纵然算不上“罪”，也是种“过”，何况在故事发生的17世纪美国的马萨诸塞新殖民地，清教徒会公开惩罚婚外性行为。霍桑选中这一题材来写，并且赋予其厚重内涵，正是要抒发对清教徒自以为是的教义的不满，以及藉此提出对祖辈武断判决惩处“婚外性行为”所谓“犯罪行为”的异议。

霍桑一开场就将赫斯特逼入了绝境——佩戴耻辱的红字“A”，并在刑台上曝晒三小时。这种经过总督和受人尊敬的牧师讨论后一致同意的“仁慈”的处罚，已经断绝了她为人的尊严与机会，使之置于无力反驳也无从解释的境地。此后，赫斯特虽然活着，却是人格缺失的残废。她呈现给世界的，则是一副不容侵犯的傲然态度。这虽表明她内心深处拒不认罪，但其身其心，都已被烙上了“罪妇”的印记，永无洗清的可能。她唯一的机会，就是用善行获得人们的认可，打消社会的敌意。在这样努力的过程中，赫斯特觉醒了，所以她愈加悲哀。如果说，从前的不幸来自于她不该开始的婚姻，后期的不幸，则来自于孤独——举世皆醉我独醒，举世皆浊我独清。她独特的经历，赋予了她超越时代的思想与要求——人格独立与妇女解放。一个社会对待女性的态度，反映了这个社会的文明程度；一个社会女性的追

求，则说明了这个社会普遍的追求。不幸的是，在书中描绘的清教徒社会里，这二者不约而同地让人失望了。

思考着的赫斯特看清了这一社会痼疾，同时也看清了这是一项希望渺茫的使命。于是，她把思维运用到另一项她认为自己义不容辞的任务上——拯救爱人丁美斯戴尔牧师。至此，书中二位主人公的对比——赫斯特的责任和勇气与丁美斯戴尔的软弱和神经质，达到空前鲜明的程度。

霍桑并不吝惜直接的批判与表态，但强烈的对比，更能激起读者共鸣，霍桑深谙此道。“罪妇”赫斯特与世无争的态度，与清教徒牧师们耽于享乐的对比；赫斯特对不断加深自己痛苦的同胞付出的怜悯和引发的思考，与社会对她们的隔离与好奇之间的对比，让人嗅到清教徒社会的陈腐，朽木不可雕，枯枝难为依。而小珍珠与生俱来的天真灵动，与社会歧视带来的怪癖暴戾之间的对比，更硬生生地验证了：在心智初开的世代，人们不是无法原谅罪犯，只是更喜欢站在审判者的高度。

《红字》另一伟大之处，在于它开创了心理分析小说的先河。霍桑不吝笔墨地进行了大段的心理分析，并通过环境描写与气氛渲染，或烘托人物性格，或阐明环境给人物心理带来的压力。尤其是丁美斯戴尔和齐林沃思之间你来我往的试探与防御，活像在打太极，一招一式步步紧逼，却都完美契合，读者似乎能从字里行间感受到丁美斯戴尔紧张的呼吸，看到齐林沃思魔鬼式的微笑。

《红字》为霍桑赢得了极高的文学地位。爱伦坡称其作品“属于艺术的最高层次，一种唯有最高级别的天才方能驾驭的艺术”。所谓经典，都经得起时间的考验，能够穿越时空感染读者，并催生更多的经典的诞生。

## General Preface

Millions of Chinese are learning English to acquire knowledge and skills for communication in a world where English has become the primary language for international discourse. Yet not many learners have come to realize that the command of the English language also enables them to have an easy access to the world literary classics such as Shakespeare's plays, Shelley's poems, mark Twain's novels and Nietzsche's works which are an important part of liberal-arts education. The most important goals of universities are not vocational, that is, not merely the giving of knowledge and the training of skills.

In a broad sense, education aims at broadening young people's mental horizon, cultivating virtues and shaping their character. Lincoln, Mao Zedong and many other great leaders and personages of distinction declared how they drew immense inspiration and strength from literary works. As a matter of fact, many of them had aspired to become writers in their young age. Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) is said to take along with him two things, waking or sleeping: a book and a dagger, and the book is *Iliad*, a literary classic, by Homer. He would put these two much treasured things under his pillow when he went to bed.



Today, we face an unprecedented complex and changing world. To cope with this rapid changing world requires not only communication skills, but also adequate knowledge of cultures other than our own home culture. Among the most important developments in present-day global culture is the ever increasing cultural exchanges and understanding between different nations and peoples. And one of the best ways to know foreign cultures is to read their literary works, particularly their literary classics, the soul of a country's culture. They also give you the best language and the feeling of sublimity.

Liaoning People's Publishing House is to be congratulated for its foresight and courage in making a new series of world literary classics available to the reading public. It is hoped that people with an adequate command of the English language will read them, like them and keep them as their lifetime companions.

I am convinced that the series will make an important contribution to the literary education of the young people in china. At a time when the whole country is emphasizing "spiritual civilization", it is certainly a very timely venture to put out the series of literary classics for literary and cultural education.

Zhang Zhongzai

Professor

Beijing Foreign Studies University

July, 2013 Beijing

## 总 序

经典名著的语言无疑是最凝练、最优美、最有审美价值的。雪莱的那句“如冬已来临，春天还会远吗？”让多少陷于绝望的人重新燃起希望之火，鼓起勇气，迎接严冬过后的春天。徐志摩一句“悄悄的我走了，正如我悄悄的来；我挥一挥衣袖，不带走一片云彩”又让多少人陶醉。尼采的那句“上帝死了”，又给多少人以振聋发聩的启迪作用。

读经典名著，尤其阅读原汁原味作品，可以怡情养性，增长知识，加添才干，丰富情感，开阔视野。所谓“经典”，其实就是作者所属的那个民族的文化积淀，是那个民族的灵魂缩影。英国戏剧泰斗莎士比亚的《哈姆雷特》和《麦克白》等、“意大利语言之父”的但丁的《神曲》之《地狱篇》《炼狱篇》及《天堂篇》、爱尔兰世界一流作家詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《尤利西斯》及《一个艺术家的肖像》等、美国风趣而笔法超一流的著名小说家马克·吐温的《哈克历险记》以及《汤姆索亚历险记》等，德国著名哲学家尼采的《查拉图斯特拉如是说》及《快乐的科学》等等，都为塑造自己民族的文化积淀，做出了永恒的贡献，也同时向世界展示了他们所属的民族的优秀剪影。

很多著名领袖如林肯、毛泽东等伟大人物，也都曾从经典名著中汲取力量，甚至获得治国理念。耶鲁大学教授查尔斯·希尔曾在题为《经典与治国理念》的文章，阐述了读书与治国之间的绝妙关系。他这样写道：“在几乎所有经典名著中，都可以找到让人叹为观止、深藏其中的治国艺术原则。”

经典名著，不仅仅有治国理念，更具提升读者审美情趣的功能。世界上不同时代、不同地域的优秀经典作品，都存在一个共同属性：歌颂赞美人间的真善美，揭露抨击世间的假恶丑。

读欧美自但丁以来的经典名著，你会看到，西方无论是在漫长的黑暗时期，抑或进入现代进程时期，总有经典作品问世，对世间的负面，进行冷峻的批判。与此同时，也有更多的大家作品问世，热情讴歌人间的真诚与善良，使读者不由自主地沉浸于经典作品的审美情感之中。

英语经典名著，显然是除了汉语经典名著以外，人类整个进程中至关重要的文化遗产的一部分。从历史上看，英语是全世界经典阅读作品中，使用得最广泛的国际性语言。这一事实，没有产生根本性变化。本世纪相当长一段时间，这一事实也似乎不会发生任何变化。而要更深入地了解并切身感受英语经典名著的风采，阅读原汁原味的英语经典作品的过程，显然是必不可少的。

辽宁人民出版社及时并隆重推出“最经典英语文库”系列丛书，是具有远见与卓识的出版行为。我相信，这套既可供阅读，同时也具收藏价值的英语原版经

典作品系列丛书，在帮助人们了解什么才是经典作品的同时，也一定会成为广大英语爱好者、大中学生以及学生家长们的挚爱的“最经典英语文库”。

北京外国语大学英语学院  
北外公共外交研究中心  
欧美文学研究中心主任  
全国英国文学学会名誉会长

张中载 教授  
2013年7月于北京



## THE CUSTOM-HOUSE: INTRODUCTORY TO THE SCARLET LETTER

*I*t is a little remarkable, that—though disinclined to talk overmuch of myself and my affairs at the fireside, and to my personal friends—an autobiographical impulse should twice in my life have taken possession of me, in addressing the public. The first time was three or four years since, when I favoured the reader—inexcusably, and for no earthly reason that either the indulgent reader or the intrusive author could imagine—with a description of my way of life in the deep quietude of an Old Manse. And now—because, beyond my deserts, I was happy enough to find a listener or two on the former occasion—I again seize the public by the button, and talk of my three years' experience in a Custom-House. The example of the famous "P. P., Clerk of this Parish," was never more faithfully followed. The truth seems to be, however, that when he casts his leaves forth upon the wind, the author addresses, not the many who will fling aside his volume, or never take it up, but the few who will understand him better than most of his schoolmates or lifemates. Some authors, indeed, do far more than this, and indulge themselves in such confidential depths of revelation as could fittingly be addressed only and exclusively to the one heart and mind of perfect sympathy; as if the printed book, thrown at large on the wide world, were certain to find

out the divided segment of the writer's own nature, and complete his circle of existence by bringing him into communion with it. It is scarcely decorous, however, to speak all, even where we speak impersonally. But, as thoughts are frozen and utterance benumbed, unless the speaker stand in some true relation with his audience, it may be pardonable to imagine that a friend, a kind and apprehensive, though not the closest friend, is listening to our talk; and then, a native reserve being thawed by this genial consciousness, we may prate of the circumstances that lie around us, and even of ourself, but still keep the inmost Me behind its veil. To this extent, and within these limits, an author, methinks, may be autobiographical, without violating either the reader's rights or his own.

It will be seen, likewise, that this Custom-House sketch has a certain propriety, of a kind always recognised in literature, as explaining how a large portion of the following pages came into my possession, and as offering proofs of the authenticity of a narrative therein contained. This, in fact—a desire to put myself in my true position as editor, or very little more, of the most prolix among the tales that make up my volume—this, and no other, is my true reason for assuming a personal relation with the public. In accomplishing the main purpose, it has appeared allowable, by a few extra touches, to give a faint representation of a mode of life not heretofore described, together with some of the characters that move in it, among whom the author happened to make one.

In my native town of Salem, at the head of what, half a century ago, in the days of old King Derby, was a bustling wharf—but which is now burdened with decayed wooden warehouses, and exhibits few or no symptoms of commercial life; except, perhaps, a bark or brig, half-way down its melancholy length, discharging hides; or, nearer at hand, a Nova Scotia

schooner, pitching out her cargo of firewood—at the head, I say, of this dilapidated wharf, which the tide often overflows, and along which, at the base and in the rear of the row of buildings, the track of many languid years is seen in a border of unthrifty grass—here, with a view from its front windows adown this not very enlivening prospect, and thence across the harbour, stands a spacious edifice of brick. From the loftiest point of its roof, during precisely three and a half hours of each forenoon, floats or droops, in breeze or calm, the banner of the republic; but with the thirteen stripes turned vertically, instead of horizontally, and thus indicating that a civil, and not a military, post of Uncle Sam's government is here established. Its front is ornamented with a portico of half-a-dozen wooden pillars, supporting a balcony, beneath which a flight of wide granite steps descends towards the street. Over the entrance hovers an enormous specimen of the American eagle, with outspread wings, a shield before her breast, and, if I recollect aright, a bunch of intermingled thunderbolts and barbed arrows in each claw. With the customary infirmity of temper that characterizes this unhappy fowl, she appears by the fierceness of her beak and eye, and the general truculency of her attitude, to threaten mischief to the inoffensive community; and especially to warn all citizens careful of their safety against intruding on the premises which she overshadows with her wings. Nevertheless, vixenly as she looks, many people are seeking at this very moment to shelter themselves under the wing of the federal eagle; imagining, I presume, that her bosom has all the softness and snugness of an eiderdown pillow. But she has no great tenderness even in her best of moods, and, sooner or later—oftener soon than late—is apt to fling off her nestlings with a scratch of her claw, a dab of her beak, or a rankling wound from her barbed arrows.

The pavement round about the above-described edifice—which we may as well name at once as the Custom-House of the port—has grass enough growing in its chinks to show that it has not, of late days, been worn by any multitudinous resort of business. In some months of the year, however, there often chances a forenoon when affairs move onward with a livelier tread. Such occasions might remind the elderly citizen of that period, before the last war with England, when Salem was a port by itself; not scorned, as she is now, by her own merchants and ship-owners, who permit her wharves to crumble to ruin while their ventures go to swell, needlessly and imperceptibly, the mighty flood of commerce at New York or Boston. On some such morning, when three or four vessels happen to have arrived at once usually from Africa or South America—or to be on the verge of their departure thitherward, there is a sound of frequent feet passing briskly up and down the granite steps. Here, before his own wife has greeted him, you may greet the sea-flushed ship-master, just in port, with his vessel's papers under his arm in a tarnished tin box. Here, too, comes his owner, cheerful, sombre, gracious or in the sulks, accordingly as his scheme of the now accomplished voyage has been realized in merchandise that will readily be turned to gold, or has buried him under a bulk of incommodities such as nobody will care to rid him of. Here, likewise—the germ of the wrinkle-browed, grizzly-bearded, careworn merchant—we have the smart young clerk, who gets the taste of traffic as a wolf-cub does of blood, and already sends adventures in his master's ships, when he had better be sailing mimic boats upon a mill-pond. Another figure in the scene is the outward-bound sailor, in quest of a protection; or the recently arrived one, pale and feeble, seeking a passport to the hospital. Nor must we forget the captains of the rusty little schooners that bring firewood from the British provinces; a rough-



looking set of tarpaulins, without the alertness of the Yankee aspect, but contributing an item of no slight importance to our decaying trade.

Cluster all these individuals together, as they sometimes were, with other miscellaneous ones to diversify the group, and, for the time being, it made the Custom-House a stirring scene. More frequently, however, on ascending the steps, you would discern—in the entry if it were summer time, or in their appropriate rooms if wintry or inclement weathers—a row of venerable figures, sitting in old-fashioned chairs, which were tipped on their hind legs back against the wall. Oftentimes they were asleep, but occasionally might be heard talking together, in voices between a speech and a snore, and with that lack of energy that distinguishes the occupants of alms-houses, and all other human beings who depend for subsistence on charity, on monopolized labour, or anything else but their own independent exertions. These old gentlemen—seated, like Matthew at the receipt of custom, but not very liable to be summoned thence, like him, for apostolic errands—were Custom-House officers.

Furthermore, on the left hand as you enter the front door, is a certain room or office, about fifteen feet square, and of a lofty height, with two of its arched windows commanding a view of the aforesaid dilapidated wharf, and the third looking across a narrow lane, and along a portion of Derby Street. All three give glimpses of the shops of grocers, block-makers, slop-sellers, and ship-chandlers, around the doors of which are generally to be seen, laughing and gossiping, clusters of old salts, and such other wharf-rats as haunt the Wapping of a seaport. The room itself is cobwebbed, and dingy with old paint; its floor is strewn with grey sand, in a fashion that has elsewhere fallen into long disuse; and it is easy to conclude, from the general slovenliness of the place, that this