

LITTLE CLASSICS

短篇英語文範

*Compiled and Edited With Biographical
Sketches, Introductory Notes, and
Helps to Study*

By TIENSON WEN, B.A.

聞天聲編

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聞天聲編

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- (1) Little Classics (短篇英語文範)
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LITTLE CLASSICS

短篇英語文範

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P R E F A C E

This series of English selections is compiled with the purpose to introduce some masterpieces for middle school students as English readings. It consists of the following volumes, which have been carefully graded to meet the advancing years.

Little Classics, (短篇英語文範)

Short Selections From English Masterpieces,
(英語名著選讀)

Advanced Literary Readings, (高級英語文選)

The material has been selected with attention to contents and literary dress. While majority of the readings are from a wide range of authors and types of literature, care has been taken to maintain some ethical standard inculcating kindness, courage, obedience, thrift, patriotism, and other duties and obligations which go to make a good citizen. As an end in itself, each selection is in its best literary form in its simplicity and beauty, which may appeal to the emotion and intelligence of an average reader.

Biographical Sketches of the author are briefly introduced before each selection so that the reader may have a more intimate appreciation of their works.

Introductory Notes to some selected passages are aimed to help the reader in the understanding of the whole story or essay, which is too long to be introduced in full. A synopsis is given so as to enable the reader to understand more intelligently the particular passage he is to read.

Helps to Study includes questions for review, annotations both in English and Chinese together with diacritical marks for pronouncing proper names, explanations of idioms and phrases, and model sentences to be studied and imitated. The object of these is to help the reader in the ready preparation and understanding of the reading material both for the class-room and for home study.

It is the hope of the compiler that these efforts so far as explained will meet with the approval of those who may use it. Any suggestions that may improve the present work may be sent through the Publisher and will be greatly appreciated.

June 6th, 1943.

TIENSON WEN

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CHOICE OF COMPANIONS

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THAYER

William Makepeace Thayer (1820-1898) was an American author, who wrote on a considerable variety of subjects.

This selection is taken from "Ethics of Success," which contains many moral lessons valuable to young readers.

A good companion is better than a fortune, for a fortune cannot purchase those elements of character which make companionship a blessing. The best companion is one who is wiser and better than ourselves, for we are inspired by his wisdom and virtue to do noble deeds. Greater wisdom and goodness than we possess lifts us higher mentally and morally. Says Felttham: "He that means to be a good limner will be sure to draw after the most excellent copies, and guide every stroke of his pencil by the better pattern that lies before him; so he who desires that the table of his life may be fair will be careful to propose the best examples, and will never be content till he equals or excels them."

"Keep good company, and you shall be one of the number," said George Herbert, "and nothing can be more certain." It is always true. Companionship of a higher order is powerful to develop character. Character makes character in the associations of life faster than anything else. Purity begets purity, like begets like; and this fact makes the choice of companions in early life more important, even than that of teachers and guardians.

It is true that we cannot always choose all of our companions. Some are thrust upon us by business and the social relations of life. We do not choose them, we do not enjoy them; and yet, we have to associate with them more or less. The experience is not altogether without compensation, if there be principle enough in us to bear the strain. Still, in the main, choice of companions *can* be made, and *must* be made. It is not best or necessary for a young person to associate with "Tom, Dick, and Henry," without fore-thought or purpose. Some fixed rules about the company he or she keeps should be observed. The subject should be uppermost in the thoughts, and canvassed often.

Companionship is education, good or bad; it develops manhood or womanhood, high or low; it lifts the soul upward or drags it downward; it ministers to virtue or vice. There is no half way work about its influence. If it ennobles, it does it grandly; if it demoralizes, it does it devilishly. It saves or destroys lustily. Nothing in the world is surer than this. Sow virtue, and the harvest will be virtue. Sow vice, and the harvest will be vice. Good companions help us to sow virtue; evil companions help us to sow vice.

The celebrated teacher, Dr. Arnold, was wont to make leaders of his best and brightest boys, by impressing upon them the elevating influence of good companionship. In this way a few of his most reliable pupils gave character to the whole school. It was a part of their curriculum to conduct so as to influence all to do well. By being good companions, they made the school a model.

HELPS TO STUDY

I. Vocabulary

Fortune: wealth, 財富.	任指一人, 任何人.
Felltham: Owen Felltham, an English author, 英作家.	Canvassed: examined, 精研.
Limner: one who draws pictures, 畫家.	Devilishly: extremely, 極度.
George Herbert (1593-1633): an English poet, 英詩人.	Dr. Arnold: Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby in England, 英國著名 Rugby 中學校長名.
Tom, Dick, and Henry: persons named at random, anybody;	Lustily: strongly, 堅強地.

II. Idioms and Phrases

To draw after: to copy, 模倣.	More or less: to a certain extent, 多少.
The table of his life may be fair: he may live a clean life, 終其身得以清白.	In the main: generally, 一般.
The company he keeps: his friends, 彼所交之友.	Ministers to: helps, 助益.
	Was wont: used, 慣于.

III. Questions

1. Why is a good companion better than a fortune?
2. Give the definition of a best companion?
3. What did Falltham say about good companions?
4. What did Herbert say?
5. "Companionship of a higher order is powerful to develop character." Why?
6. Can we enjoy all of our companions?
7. Explain "Companionship is education."
8. What was Dr. Arnold's method of teaching?

IV. Sentences to be Studied and Imitated

1. Greater wisdom and goodness than we possess lifts us higher mentally and morally.
2. He who desires that the table

of his life may be fair will be careful to propose the best examples. 3. Sow virtue, and the harvest will be virtue. 4. It was a part of their curriculum to conduct so as to influence all to do well.

NOTE TO READERS: *Sentences to be Studied and Imitated are*
examples of good usage which if carefully studied will help the

WHANG, THE MILLER

(71) OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas, Ireland in 1728. He received his education at several schools, at Trinity College, Dublin, at Edinburgh, and at Leyden. In 1756 he became a resident of London, where he made the acquaintance of several celebrated men, among whom were Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds. His writings are noted for their purity, grace, and fluency. He died in 1774.

This selection is taken from "The Citizen of the World," a series of letters by an alleged Chinese visitor, consisting of observations and comments upon English life.

Whang, the miller, was naturally avaricious. Nobody loved money better than he, or respected more those that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, Whang would say, "I know him very well; he and I have been long acquainted; he and I are intimate." But if a poor man was ever mentioned, he had not the least knowledge of the man; he might be very well for aught he knew; but he was not fond of many acquaintances, and loved to choose his company.

Whang, however, with all his eagerness for riches, was in reality poor. He had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him. But though these were small, they were certain. So long as his mill continued to run, he was surely of a living; and his frugality was such, that every day he laid by some money, which he would

at intervals count and contemplate with much satisfaction. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires. He found himself merely above want, whereas he desired to be rich.

One day, as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed that a neighbor of his had found a pan of money underground, having dreamed of it three nights in succession. These tidings were daggers to the heart of poor Whang "Here am I," says he, "toiling and moiling from morning till night for a few paltry farthings while neighbor Hunks goes quietly to bed and dreams himself into thousands before morning. Oh, that I could dream like him! With what pleasure I would dig around the pan! How slyly would I carry it home—not even my wife should see me! And then, oh, the pleasure of thrusting one's hands into a heap of gold up to the elbow!"

Such reflections only served to make the miller unhappy. He discontinued his former industry, he became quite disgusted with small gains, and his customers began to forsake him. Every day he repeated the wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream. Fortune, at last, however, seemed to smile upon his distresses, and indulged him with the wished-for vision.

He dreamed, that under a certain part of the foundation of his mill, there was concealed a monstrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground and covered with a large, flat stone. He rose up, thanked the stars that were at last pleased to take pity on his sufferings, and concealed his good luck from every person—as is

usual in money dreams,—in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its veracity. His wishes in this also were answered. He still dreamed of the same pan of money, in the very same place.

Now, therefore, it was beyond double that he was to become the possessor of a large sum of money. So getting up early the third morning, he repaired, alone, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall to which the vision directed. The first omen of success that he met was a broken mug. Digging still deeper, he turned up a house tile, quite new and entire. At last, after much digging, he came to the broad, flat stone, but so large that it was beyond one man's strength to remove it.

"Here," cried he, in raptures, to himself, "here it is! Under this stone there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed! I must go home to my wife and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up."

Away, therefore, he went, and acquainted his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her delight on this occasion may be easily imagined. She flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy. But these raptures, however, did not delay their eagerness to know the exact sum. Returning speedily together to the place where Whang had been digging, they found there, not, indeed, the expected treasure, but the mill, their only support, undermined and fallen.

HELPS TO STUDY

I. Vocabulary

Avaricious: greedy, 貪.

Intimate: familiar, 知己.

Aught: anything, 任何物.

Frugality: economy, 節儉.

Contemplate: to meditate on, 默想.

Acquisition: gain, 利益, 所得.

Indulging: giving one's self up to, 放縱.

Toiling: working with painful effort, 苦作.

Paltry: mean, worthless, 無價值.

Farthing: the fourth of a penny, 英幣名(值便士之四分之一).

Assiduity: diligence, 勤勉.

To disgust: to distaste, 厭惡.

Veracity: truth, honesty, 誠實.

To repair to: to go to, 走, 去.

Mattock: a kind of pickax, 鋤.

To undermine: to dig beneath 挖掘.

Omen: foreboding, 預兆.

II. Idioms and Phrases

Laid some money by: saved some money, 儲蓄若干.

In succession: one following another, 接續.

Agony of joy: keen emotion of joy, 喜極.

Dreams himself into thousand before morning: dreams that

he has become very rich, 夢想已發財.

To take pity on: to feel pity 憐惜.

III. Questions

1. What kind of a person was Whang, the miller? 2. How did his mill support him? 3. Was he satisfied with his acquisitions? 4. What made the miller unhappy? 5. Then what did he do day and night? 6. What did he dream of? 7. After much digging what did he find? 8. Tell the result of his adventure.

IV. Sentences to be Studied and Imitated

1. Nobody loved money better *than* he. 2. His frugality was such, that he, every day, laid some money by; which he would, *at intervals*, count and *contemplate with* much satisfaction. 3. His acquisitions were not *equal to* his desires. 4. These tidings were *daggers to* the heart of poor Whang.

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM.

JANE TAYLOR

Jane Taylor, an English writer, was born at London in 1783. She wrote numerous stories and poems for children—all now very old-fashioned—and was the author of a volume of essays on morals and manners. She died in 1824.

An old clock that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen, without giving its owner any cause of complaint, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped. Upon this, the dial plate (if we may credit the fable) changed countenance with alarm; the hands made a vain effort to continue their course; the wheels remained motionless with surprise; the weights hung speechless; and each member felt disposed to lay the blame on the others. At length the dial instituted a formal inquiry as to the cause of the stagnation, when hands, wheels, weights, with one voice, protested their innocence.

But now a faint tick was heard below from the pendulum, who spoke thus: "I confess myself to be the sole cause of the present stoppage; and I am willing, for the general satisfaction, to assign my reasons. The truth is, that I am tired of ticking." Upon hearing this, the old clock became so enraged that it was upon the very point of striking.

"Lazy wire!" exclaimed the dial plate, holding up its hands.

"Very good!" replied the pendulum; "it is vastly easy for you, Mistress Dial, who have always, as everybody knows, set yourself up above me,—it is vastly easy for you, I say, to accuse other people of laziness! you who have had nothing to do all your life but to stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself with watching all that goes on in the kitchen. Think, I beseech you, how you would like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and to wag backward and forward year after year, as I do."

"As to that," said the dial, "is there not a window in your house on purpose for you to look through?"

"For all that," resumed the pendulum, "it is very dark here; and, although there is a window, I dare not stop even for an instant to look out at it. Besides, I am really tired of my way of life; and, if you wish, I'll tell you how I took this disgust at my employment. I happened, this morning, to be calculating how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty-four hours; perhaps some one of you above there can give me the exact sum."

The minute hand, being very quick at figures, presently replied, "Eighty-six thousand four hundred times."

"Exactly so," replied the pendulum. "Well, I appeal to you all, if the very thought of this was not enough to fatigue any one; and when I began to multiply the strokes of one day by those of months and years, really it was no wonder if I felt discouraged at the prospect. So, after a great deal of reasoning and hesitation, thinks I to myself, I'll stop."