

ENGLISH PARTY

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佩内洛普在爱尔兰的经历
Penelope's Irish Experiences

(美) Kate Douglas Wiggin 著

阳 程 王 莹 主编

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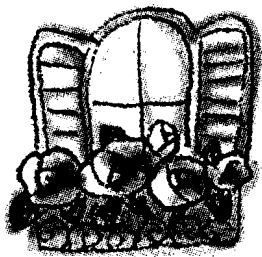
前 言

当今时代,英语已成为国际社会的标准语言,成为走向世界的通行证。英语阅读则是人们开阔眼界、及时获取信息、把握机会,甚至增添生活乐趣的手段。而对英语原版名著的阅读无疑是感受浓郁的异域文化,了解多姿多彩的风土人情,并掌握地道英语的最佳途径。

为此,我们精选了这一套英文原版名著,纯正地道的英语,将会带您进入一个绚丽多彩的世界。

读者在阅读英语原著时应该注意:

可以使用词典,但不要逢词必查。没有词典的帮助阅读会非常困难,但是,只有把心思用在意义的解读上时,读者才能摆脱词汇量的束缚,才会知道哪些词该查,哪些词不该查,哪些地方该详细地看,哪些地方该跳过去;也只



有在抛开了积累词汇学习英语等基本想法之后,才能够做到词汇的高度积累,语法体系的高度完善,英语水平的高度发展。

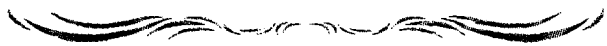
本丛书选文精心,可读性强,相信读者在阅读后英语水平一定会有大幅度的提高。

编 者



Contents.

Part First—Leinster.	(1)
I. We emulate the Rollo books.	(1)
II. Irish itineraries.	(9)
III. We sight a derelict.	(16)
IV. Enter Benella Dusenberry.	(27)
V. The Wearing of the Green.	(37)
VI. Dublin, then and now.	(46)
Part Second—Munster.	(54)
VII. A tour and a detour.	(54)
VIII. Romance and reality.	(63)
IX. The light of other days.	(73)
X. The belles of Shandon.	(83)
XI. 'The rale thing.'	(94)
XII. Life at Knockarney House.	(104)





XIII. 'O! the sound of the Kerry dancin'.' (114)
 XIV. 'Mrs. Mullarkey's iligant locks.' (122)
 XV. Penelope weaves a web. (134)
 XVI. Salemina has her chance. (145)

Part Third—Ulster. (155)

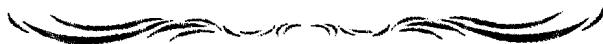
XVII. The glens of Antrim. (155)
 XVIII. Limavady love-letters. (167)
 XIX. 'In ould Donegal.' (182)
 XX. We evict a tenant. (191)
 XXI. Lachrymae Hibernicae. (206)

Part Fourth—Connaught. (215)

XXII. The weeping west. (215)
 XXIII. Beams and motes. (227)
 XXIV. Humours of the road. (240)
 XXV. The wee folk. (252)

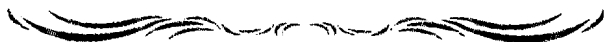
Part Fifth—Royal Meath. (262)

XXVI. Ireland's gold. (262)
 XXVII. The three chatelaines of Devorgilla. (273)
 XXVIII. Round towers and reflections. (282)
 XXIX. Aunt David's garden. (292)





XXX. The quest of the fair strangers. (299)
XXXI. Good-bye, dark Rosaleen! (310)
XXXII. 'As the sunflower turns.' (317)





Part First—Leinster.

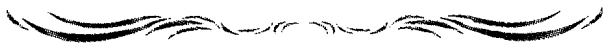
Chapter I. We emulate the Rollo books.

*'Sure a terrible time I was out o' the way,
Over the sea, over the sea,
Till I come to Ireland one sunny day,—
Betther for me, betther for me:
The first time me fut got the feel o' the ground
I was strollin' along in an Irish city
That hasn't its aquil the world around
For the air that is sweet an' the girls that are pretty.*

Moirá O'Neill.

Dublin, O'Carolan's Private Hotel.

It is the most absurd thing in the world that Salemina,





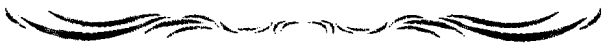
Francesca, and I should be in Ireland together.

That any three spinsters should be fellow-travellers is not in itself extraordinary, and so our former journeyings in England and Scotland could hardly be described as eccentric in any way; but now that I am a matron and Francesca is shortly to be married, it is odd, to say the least, to see us cosily ensconced in a private sitting-room of a Dublin hotel, the table laid for three, and not a vestige of a man anywhere to be seen. Where, one might ask, if he knew the antecedent circumstances, are Miss Hamilton's American spouse and Miss Monroe's Scottish lover?

2

Francesca had passed most of the winter in Scotland. Her indulgent parent had given his consent to her marriage with a Scotsman, but insisted that she take a year to make up her mind as to which particular one. Memories of her past flirtations, divagations, plans for a life of single blessedness, all conspired to make him incredulous, and the loyal Salemina, feeling some responsibility in the matter, had elected to remain by Francesca's side during the time when her affections were supposed to be crystallising into some permanent form.

It was natural enough that my husband and I should spend the first summer of our married life abroad, for we had been accustomed to do this before we met, a period that we always allude to as the Dark Ages; but no sooner had we arrived in Edinburgh, and



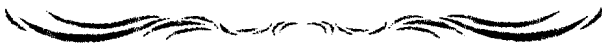


no sooner had my husband persuaded our two friends to join us in a long, delicious Irish holiday, than he was compelled to return to America for a month or so.

I think you must number among your acquaintances such a man as Mr. William Beresford, whose wife I have the honour to be. Physically the type is vigorous, or has the appearance and gives the impression of being vigorous, because it has never the time to be otherwise, since it is always engaged in nursing its ailing or decrepit relatives. Intellectually it is full of vitality; any mind grows when it is exercised, and the brain that has to settle all its own affairs and all the affairs of its friends and acquaintances could never lack energy. Spiritually it is almost too good for earth, and any woman who lives in the house with it has moments of despondency and self-chastisement, in which she fears that heaven may prove all too small to contain the perfect being and its unregenerate family as well.

3

Financially it has at least a moderate bank account; that is, it is never penniless, indeed it can never afford to be, because it is peremptory that it should possess funds in order to disburse them to needier brothers. There is never an hour when Mr. William Beresford is not signing notes and bonds and drafts for less fortunate men; giving small loans just to 'help a fellow over a hard place'; educating friends' children, starting them in business, or



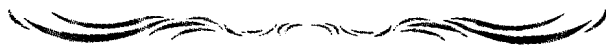


securing appointments for them. The widow and the fatherless have worn such an obvious path to his office and residence that no bereaved person could possibly lose his way, and as a matter of fact no one of them ever does. This special journey of his to America has been made necessary because, first, his cousin's widow has been defrauded of a large sum by her man of business; and second, his college chum and dearest friend has just died in Chicago after appointing him executor of his estate and guardian of his only child. The wording of the will is, 'as a sacred charge and with full power.' Incidentally, as it were, one of his junior partners has been ordered a long sea voyage, and another has to go somewhere for mud baths. The junior partners were my idea, and were suggested solely that their senior might be left more or less free from business care, but it was impossible that Willie should have selected sound, robust partners—his tastes do not incline him in the direction of selfish ease; accordingly he chose two delightful, estimable, frail gentlemen who needed comfortable incomes in conjunction with light duties.

4

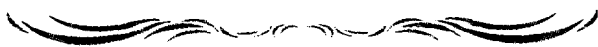
I am railing at my husband for all this, but I love him for it just the same, and it shows why the table is laid for three.

"Salemina," I said, extending my slipper toe to the glowing peat, which by extraordinary effort had been brought up from the hotel kitchen, as a bit of local colour, "it is ridiculous that we





three women should be in Ireland together; it's the sort of thing that happens in a book, and of which we say that it could never occur in real life. Three persons do not spend successive seasons in England, Scotland and Ireland unless they are writing an Itinerary of the British Isles. The situation is possible, certainly, but it isn't simple, or natural, or probable. We are behaving precisely like characters in fiction, who, having been popular in the first volume, are exploited again and again until their popularity wanes. We are like the Trotty books or the Elsie Dinmore series. England was our first volume, Scotland our second, and here we are, if you please, about to live a third volume in Ireland. We fall in love, we marry and are given in marriage, we promote and take part in international alliances, but when the curtain goes up again, our accumulations, acquisitions—whatever you choose to call them—have disappeared. We are not to the superficial eye the spinster—philanthropist, the bride to be, the wife of a year; we are the same old Salemina, Francesca and Penelope. It is so dramatic that my husband should be called to America; as a woman I miss him and need him; as a character I am much better single. I don't suppose publishers like married heroines any more than managers like married leading ladies. Then how entirely proper it is that Ronald Macdonald cannot leave his new parish in the Highlands. The one, my husband, belongs to the first vol-





ume; Francesca's lover to the second; and good gracious, Salemina, don't you see the inference?"

"I may be dull," she replied, "but I confess I do not."

"We are three?"

"Who is three?"

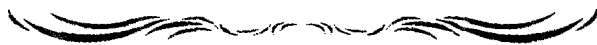
"That is not good English, but I repeat with different emphasis WE are three. I fell in love in England, Francesca fell in love in Scotland." And here I paused, watching the blush mount rosily to Salemina's grey hair; pink is very becoming to grey, and that, we always say, accounts more satisfactorily for Salemina's frequent blushes than her modesty, which is about of the usual sort.

6

"Your argument is interesting, and even ingenious," she replied, "but I fail to see my responsibility. If you persist in thinking of me as a character in fiction, I shall rebel. I am not the stuff of which heroines are made; besides, I would never appear in anything so cheap and obvious as a series, and the three-volume novel is as much out of fashion as the Rollo books."

"But we are unconscious heroines, you understand," I explained. "While we were experiencing our experiences we did not notice them, but they have attained by degrees a sufficient bulk so that they are visible to the naked eye. We can look back now and perceive the path we have travelled."

"It isn't retrospect I object to, but anticipation," she retor-



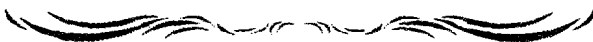


ted; "not history, but prophecy. It is one thing to gaze sentimentally at the road you have travelled, quite another to conjure up impossible pictures of the future."

Salemina calls herself a trifle over forty, but I am not certain of her age, and think perhaps that she is uncertain herself. She has good reason to forget it, and so have we. Of course she could consult the Bible family record daily, but if she consulted her looking-glass afterward the one impression would always nullify the other. Her hair is silvered, it is true, but that is so clearly a trick of Nature that it makes her look younger rather than older.

Francesca came into the room just here. I said a moment ago that she was the same old Francesca, but I was wrong; she is softening, sweetening, expanding; in a word, blooming. Not only this, but Ronald Macdonald's likeness has been stamped upon her in some magical way, so that, although she has not lost her own personality, she seems to have added a reflection of his. In the glimpses of herself, her views, feelings, opinions, convictions, which she gives us in a kind of solution, as it were, there are always traces of Ronald Macdonald; or, to be more poetical, he seems to have bent over the crystal pool, and his image is reflected there.

You remember in New England they allude to a bride as 'she that was' a so-and-so. In my private interviews with Salemina I



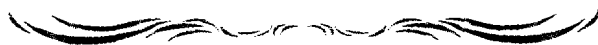


now habitually allude to Francesca as ‘she that was a Monroe’; it is so significant of her present state of absorption. Several times this week I have been obliged to inquire, “Was I, by any chance, as absent-minded and dull in Pettybaw as Francesca is under the same circumstances in Dublin?”

“Quite.”

“Duller if anything.”

These candid replies being uttered in cheerful unison I change the subject, but cannot resist telling them both casually that the building of the Royal Dublin Society is in Kildare Street, just three minutes’ from O’Carolan’s, and that I have noticed it is for the promotion of Husbandry and other useful arts and sciences.





Chapter II. Irish itineraries.

'And I will make my journey, if life and health but stand,

Unto that pleasant country, that fresh and fragrant strand,

And leave your boasted braveries, your wealth and high command,

For the fair hills of holy Ireland.'

Sir Samuel Ferguson.

Our mutual relations have changed little, notwithstanding that betrothals and marriages have intervened, and in spite of the fact that Salemina has grown a year younger; a mysterious feat that she has accomplished on each anniversary of her birth since the forming of our alliance.

It is many months since we travelled together in Scotland, but on entering this very room in Dublin, the other day, we pro-

