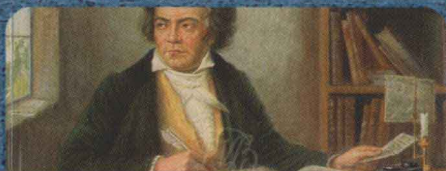


名人传

[法] 罗曼·罗兰 著

[英] 弗雷德里克·里斯,

B. 康斯坦斯·霍尔, 巴纳德·米亚尔 译



Romain Rolland

The Life of Beethoven

The Life of Michelangelo

The Life of Tolstoy

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世界图书出版公司

上海·西安·北京·广州

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

名人传: 英文/ (法) 罗曼·罗兰 (Rolland, R.) 著; (英) 里斯, (英) 霍尔, (英) 米亚尔译. —上海: 上海世界图书出版公司, 2011.4

ISBN 978-7-5100-3247-9

I. ①名… II. ①罗… ②里… ③霍… ④米… III. ①英语—语言读物 ②贝多芬, L.V. (1770~1827) —传记 ③米开朗基罗, B. (1475~1564) —传记 ④托尔斯泰, L.N. (1828~1910) —传记 IV. ①H319.4: K.

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2011)第 025664 号

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上海世界图书出版公司 出版发行

上海市广中路 88 号

邮政编码 200083

北京兴鹏印务有限公司印刷

如发现印刷质量问题, 请与印刷厂联系

(质检科电话: 010-84897777)

各地新华书店经销

开本: 787×1092 1/32 印张: 13.5 字数: 369 000

2011 年 4 月第 1 版 2011 年 4 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 978-7-5100-3247-9/H · 1113

定价: 22.80 元

<http://www.wpcsh.com.cn>

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Foreword

Literature masterpieces usually mirror the culture of a country or area in a specific period of time. By reading these masterpieces, we can enjoy the authors' fluent writing styles, vivid and detailed description, which will place us in that specific period's history and culture. For this purpose we present the series of world literature classics to the readers.

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前 言

世界文学名著表现了作者描述的特定时代的文化。阅读这些名著可以领略著者流畅的文笔、逼真的描述、详细的刻画，让读者如同置身当时的历史文化之中。为此，我们将这套精心编辑的“名著典藏”奉献给广大读者。

我们找来了专门研究西方历史、西方文化的专家学者，请教了专业的翻译人员，精心挑选了这些可以代表西方文学的著作，并听取了一些国外专门研究文学的朋友的建议，不删节、不做任何人为改动，严格按照原著的风格，提供原汁原味的西方名著，让读者能享受纯正的英文名著。

随着阅读的展开，你会发现自己的英语水平无形中有了大幅提高，并且对西方历史文化的了解也日益深入广阔。

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THE LIFE OF BEETHOVEN

TRANSLATED BY
B. CONSTANCE HULL

PREFACE

*"I want to prove that whoever acts rightly and
nobly, can by that alone bear misfortune"*

BEETHOVEN

(To the Municipality of Vienna, Feb. 1, 1819.)

THE air is heavy around us. The world is stifled by a thick and vitiated atmosphere – an undignified materialism which weighs on the mind and heart hindering the work of governments and individuals alike. We are being suffocated. Let us throw open the windows that God's free air may come in, and that we may breathe the breath of heroes.

Life is stern. It is a daily battle for those not content with an unattractive mediocrity of soul. And a sad battle it is, too, for many – a combat without grandeur, without happiness, fought in solitude and silence. Weighed down by poverty and domestic cares, by excessive and senseless tasks which waste the strength to no purpose, without a gleam of hope, many souls are separated from each other, without even the consolation of holding out a hand to their brothers in misfortune who ignore them and are ignored by them. They are forced to rely on themselves alone; and there are moments when even the strongest give way under their burden of trouble. They call out – for a friend.

Let them then gather around themselves the heroic friends of the past – the great souls who suffered for the good of universal humanity.

The lives of great men are not written for the proud or for the ambitious; they are dedicated rather to the unhappy. And who really is not? To those who suffer, we offer the balm of their sacred sufferings. No one is alone in the fight. The darkness of the world is made clear by the guiding light of the souls of the heroes.

I do not give the name hero to those who have triumphed by infinite thought or by sheer physical strength – but only to those made great by goodness of heart. Beethoven wrote, “I recognise no sign of superiority in mankind other than goodness.” Where the character is not great, there is no great man, there is not even a great artist, nor a great man of action; there are only idols unearthed for the cheap and short-lived applause of the multitude; time will efface them altogether. Outward success matters little. The only thing is to be great, not to appear so.

The lives of the great heroes were lives of one long martyrdom; a tragic destiny willed their souls to be forged on the anvil of physical and moral grief, of misery and ill-health. They were made great through their misfortune. Because these mighty souls complained little of their unhappiness, the best of humanity is with them. Let us gather courage from them; for torrents of quiet strength and inspiring goodness issued from their great hearts. Without even consulting their works or hearing their voices, we read in their eyes the secret of their lives – that it is good to have been in trouble, for thence the character acquires even more greatness, happiness and fruition.

• • • • •

The strong and pure Beethoven himself hoped in the midst of his sufferings that his example would give help to other unfortunate ones... “that the unhappy being may be consoled in finding another as unfortunate as himself, who in face of all obstacles has done everything possible to become worthy of the name, MAN.” After years of battling

with almost superhuman efforts to rise superior to his sufferings and accomplish his life's work – to breathe a little more courage into poor weak humanity, this conquering Prometheus observed to a friend who called too much on God, "O man, help thyself! "May we be inspired by his noble words. Animated by the example of this man's faith in life and his quiet confidence in himself, let us again take heart.

ROMAIN ROLLAND.

INTRODUCTION

BY EDWARD CARPENTER

IT is not very generally recognised that Beethoven was not only a great musician, but a great leader and teacher. He freed the human spirit from innumerable petty bonds and conventions, he recorded the profoundest experiences of life, and gave form and utterance to emotions hardly guessed – certainly not definitely expressed – before his time. Personally I feel I owe much more to Beethoven in these respects than I do to Shakespeare: and though this, of course, may be a purely personal or accidental matter, yet I mention it in order to show that the music of such a man has, after all, the closest bearing on actual life.

M. Romain Rolland in his excellent little study has brought this prophetic and inspiring quality of Beethoven's life and music out very strongly. He has traced the tragedy of Beethoven's life and experience, and its culmination in a kind of liberation of his spirit from the bonds of mortality; he has shown how this connects up with the composer's strong sentiment of democracy and sympathy with the suffering masses; and how it leads to the utterance of that strange sense of joy which penetrates and suffuses his later work. In all these respects M. Rolland regards Beethoven as one of the greatest benefactors of humanity.

On the other hand our author builds in the picture of Beethoven's life and character with a great number of small touches derived from

all sorts of writers and biographers – and so succeeds in giving a life-like impression of his personality.

EDWARD CARPENTER.

As bearing on the subject of M. Remain Rolland's book, Mr. Carpenter has kindly given permission to insert the following few extracts from his own book, "Angels' Wings."

"Everything conspired in Beethoven to make his utterance authentic, strong, unqualified – like a gushing spring which leaps from the inaccessible depths of the mountain. His solitary habits kept his mind clear from the mud and sediment which the market-place and the forum mistake for thought; his deafness coming on at so early an age (twenty-eight), increased this effect, it left him fancy-free in the world of music; Wagner even mentions the excessive thickness of his skull (ascertained long after his death), as suggesting the special isolation of his brain. From a boy Beethoven was a great reader. He fed his mind in his own way. Unlike the musicians who went before him, he could brook no dependence upon condescending nobilities. He was not going to be a Court fool. The man who could rush into the courtyard of his really sincere friend and 'patron,' Prince Lobkowitz, and shout 'Lobkowitz donkey, Lobkowitz donkey,' for all the valets and chambermaids to hear; or who could leave his humble lodgings because the over-polite landlord of the house would insist on doffing his hat each time they passed on the stairs; must have had 'something of the devil in him!' (This was the verdict of Hummel, Vogler, Gelinck, and others when they first heard him improvise on his arrival at Vienna). In politics, in a quite general way, he evolved radicalism or republicanism as his creed; in religion, though nominally a Catholic, he was quite informal. A pantheist one might perhaps call him, or a mystic

after Eckhardt and Tauler. Finally, one may mention, as an indication of the great range and strength of his personality, its exceedingly slow growth. While Mozart at the age of twenty-three had written a great number of Operas, Symphonies, Cantatas and Masses – many of them of quite mature character – Beethoven at the same age had little or nothing to show. His first Symphony and his Septett, which he always looked back upon as childish productions, were not written till about the age of twenty-seven; and his first great Symphony (the Eroica) not till he was thirty-two.” – *Angels' Wings*, pp. 141-2.

“Beethoven came at the culmination of a long line of musical tradition. He also came at a moment when the foundations of society were breaking away for the preparation of something new. His great strength lay in the fact that he united the old and the new. He was epic and dramatic, and held firmly to the accepted outlines and broad evolution of his art, like the musicians who went before him; he was lyrical, like those who followed, and uttered to the full his own vast individuality. And so (like the greatest artists) he transformed rather than shattered the traditions into which he was born.

“Beethoven was always trying to express himself; yet not, be it said, so much any little phase of himself or of his feelings, as the total of his life-experience. He was always trying to reach down and get the fullest, deepest utterance of which his subject in hand was capable, and to relate it to the rest of his experience. But being such as he was, and a master-spirit of his age, when he reached into himself for his own expression, he reached to the expression also of others – to the expression of all the thoughts and feelings of that wonderful revolutionary time, seething with the legacy of the past and germinal with the hopes and aspirations of the future. Music came to him rich already with gathered voices; but he enlarged its language beyond all

precedent for the needs of a new humanity.” – *Ibid*, pp. 146-7.

“Bettina Brentano, writing to Goethe of Beethoven, says: ‘I am, indeed, only a child, but I am not on that account wrong in saying (what perhaps no one yet perceives and believes) that he far surpasses the measure of other men. Shall we ever attain to him? I doubt it. May he but live till the lofty problem of his spirit be fully solved; let him but reach his highest aim, and he will put into our hands the key to a glorious knowledge which shall bring us a stage nearer to true blessedness... He said himself, “I have no friend, I must live alone; but I know that in my heart God is nearer to me than to others. I approach him without fear, I have always known him. Neither am I anxious about my music, which no adverse fate can overtake, and which *will free him who understands it from the misery which afflicts others.*”’

“These are wonderful words which are put into Beethoven’s mouth. Though their authenticity has been doubted, it is difficult, almost impossible, to suppose that the ‘child’ or any one else invented them. On the other hand, they agree strangely with those authentic words of his already quoted, ‘Every day I come nearer to the object which I can feel though I cannot describe it.’

“Beethoven is the prophet of the new era which the nineteenth century ushers in for mankind. As things must be *felt* before they can be acted out; so they may be expressed in the indefinite emotional forms of music, before they can be uttered and definitely imaged forth in words or pictorial shapes. Beethoven is the forerunner of Shelley and Whitman among the poets, of J. W. Turner and J. F. Millet among the painters. He is the great poet who holds Nature by the one hand and Man by the other. Within that low-statured, rudely-outlined figure which a century ago walked hatless through the fields near Mödling or sat oblivious in some shabby restaurant at Vienna, dwelt an emotional

giant – a being who – though his outer life by deafness, disease, business-worries, poverty, was shattered as it were into a thousand squalid fragments – in his great heart embraced all mankind, with piercing insight penetrated intellectually through all falsehoods to the truth, and already in his art-work gave outline to the religious, the human, the democratic yearnings, the loves, the comradeship, the daring individualities, and all the heights and depths of feeling of a new dawning era of society. He was in fact, and he gave utterance to, a new type of Man. What that struggle must have been between his inner and outer conditions – of his real self with the lonely and mean surroundings in which it was embodied – we only know through his music. When we listen to it we can understand the world-old tradition that now and then a divine creature from far heavens takes mortal form and suffers in order that it may embrace and redeem mankind.” – *Ibid*, pp. 205-7.

BEETHOVEN

Woltuen, wo man kann
Freiheit über alles lieben,
Wahrheit nie, auch sogar am
Throne nicht verleugnen.

Beethoven
(Album-leaf, 1792)

To do all the good one can,
To love liberty above everything,
And even if it be for a kingdom,
Never to betray truth.