

红与黑

司汤达

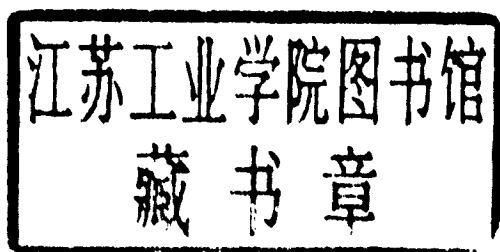


by Stendhal

The Red and the Black

红与黑

司汤达



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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.

The selection was made based on suggestions of many professional literature translators and literary scholars. And these selected translations were edited in accord with the original works. Making no abridgements or changes, we attempt to maintain the original style and flavor of these novels.

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This series of classics will lead you to the wonderful English world!

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，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，请教了专业的翻译人员，精选英文译本，不删节、不做任何人为改动，让读者能享受纯正的英文。

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。

送您一套经典，让您受益永远！

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BOOK ONE

The truth, the harsh truth

CHAPTER 1 A Small Town

Put thousands together
Less bad,
But the cage less gay.

HOBBS

The small town of Verrières may be regarded as one of the most attractive in the Franche-Comte. Its white houses with their high pitched roofs of red tiles are spread over the slope of a hill, the slightest contours of which are indicated by clumps of sturdy chestnuts. The Doubs runs some hundreds of feet below its fortifications, built in times past by the Spaniards, and now in ruins.

Verrières is sheltered on the north by a high mountain, a spur of the Jura. The jagged peaks of the Verra put on a mantle of snow in the first cold days of October. A torrent which comes tearing down from the mountain passes through Verrières before emptying its waters into the Doubs, and supplies power to a great number of sawmills; this is an extremely simple industry, and procures a certain degree of comfort for the majority of the inhabitants, who are of the peasant rather than of the burgess class. It is not, however, the sawmills that have made this little town rich. It is to the manufacture of printed calicoes, known as Mulhouse stuffs, that it owes the general prosperity which, since the fall of Napoleon, has led to the refacing of almost all the houses in Verrières.

No sooner has one entered the town than one is startled by the din of

a noisy machine of terrifying aspect. A score of weighty hammers, falling with a clang which makes the pavement tremble, are raised aloft by a wheel which the water of the torrent sets in motion. Each of these hammers turns out, daily, I cannot say how many thousands of nails. A bevy of fresh, pretty girls subject to the blows of these enormous hammers, the little scraps of iron which are rapidly transformed into nails. This work, so rough to the outward eye, is one of the industries that most astonish the traveler who ventures for the first time among the mountains that divide France from Switzerland. If, on entering Verrières, the traveler inquires to whom belongs that fine nail factory which deafens everybody who passes up the main street, he will be told in a drawling accent: 'Eh! It belongs to the Mayor.'

Provided the traveler halts for a few moments in this main street of Verrières, which runs from the bank of the Doubs nearly to the summit of the hill, it is a hundred to one that he will see a tall man appear, with a busy, important air.

At the sight of him every hat is quickly raised. His hair is turning grey, and he is dressed in grey. He is a Companion of several Orders, has a high forehead, an aquiline nose, and on the whole his face is not wanting in a certain regularity: indeed, the first impression formed of it may be that it combines with the dignity of a village mayor that sort of charm which may still be found in a man of forty-eight or fifty. But soon the visitor from Paris is annoyed by a certain air of self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency mingled with a suggestion of limitations and want of originality. One feels, finally, that this man's talent is confined to securing the exact payment of whatever is owed to him and to postponing payment till the last possible moment when he is the debtor.

Such is the Mayor of Verrières, M. de Rênal. Crossing the street with a solemn step, he enters the town hall and passes from the visitor's sight. But, a hundred yards higher up, if the visitor continues his stroll, he will notice a house of quite imposing appearance, and, through the

gaps in an iron railing belonging to the house, some splendid gardens. Beyond, there is a line of horizon formed by the hills of Burgundy, which seem to have been created on purpose to delight the eye. This view makes the visitor forget the pestilential atmosphere of small financial interests which was beginning to stifle him.

He is told that this house belongs to M. de Rênal. It is to the profits that he has made from his great nail factory that the Mayor of Verrières is indebted for this fine freestone house which he has just finished building. His family, they say, is Spanish, old, and was or claims to have been established in the country long before Louis XIV conquered it.

Since 1815 he has blushed at his connection with industry: 1815 made him Mayor of Verrières. The retaining walls that support the various sections of this splendid garden, which, in a succession of terraces, runs down to the Doubs, are also a reward of M. de Rênal's ability as a dealer in iron.

You must not for a moment expect to find in France those picturesque gardens which enclose the manufacturing towns of Germany; Leipsic, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, and the rest. In the Franche-Comte, the more walls a man builds, the more he makes his property bristle with stones piled one above another, the greater title he acquires to the respect of his neighbours. M. de Rênal's gardens, honeycombed with walls, are still further admired because he bought, for their weight in gold, certain minute scraps of ground which they cover. For instance that sawmill whose curious position on the bank of the Doubs struck you as you entered Verrières, and on which you noticed the name *Sorel*, inscribed in huge letters on a board which overtops the roof, occupied, six years ago, the ground on which at this moment they are building the wall of the fourth terrace of M. de Rênal's gardens.

For all his pride, the Mayor was obliged to make many overtures to old Sorel, a dour and obstinate peasant; he was obliged to pay him in

fine golden louis before he would consent to remove his mill elsewhere. As for the *public* lade which supplied power to the saw, M. de Rênal, thanks to the influence he wielded in Paris, obtained leave to divert it. This favour was conferred upon him after the 182— elections.

He gave Sorel four acres in exchange for one, five hundred yards lower down by the bank of the Doubs. And, albeit this site was a great deal more advantageous for his trade in planks of firwood, Père Sorel, as they have begun to call him now that he is rich, contrived to screw out of the impatience and *landowning mania* which animated his neighbour a sum of 6,000 francs.

It is true that this arrangement was adversely criticised by the local wiseacres. On one occasion, it was a Sunday, four years later, M. de Rênal, as he walked home from church in his mayoral attire, saw at a distance old Sorel, supported by his three sons, watching him with a smile. That smile cast a destroying ray of light into the Mayor's soul; ever since then he has been thinking that he might have brought about the exchange at less cost to himself.

To win popular esteem at Verrières, the essential thing is not to adopt (while still building plenty of walls) any plan of construction brought from Italy by those masons who in spring pass through the gorges of the Jura on their way to Paris. Such an innovation would earn the rash builder an undying reputation for wrong-headedness, and he would be lost forever among the sober and moderate folk who create reputations in the Franche-Comte.

As a matter of fact, these sober folk wield there the most irritating form of *despotism*; it is owing to that vile word that residence in small towns is intolerable to anyone who has lived in that great republic which we call Paris. The tyranny of public opinion (and what an opinion!) is as fatuous in the small towns of France as it is in the United States of America.

CHAPTER 2 A Mayor

Prestige! Sir, is it nothing? To be revered by fools, gaped at by children, envied by the rich and scorned by the wise.

BARNAVE

Fortunately for M. de Rênal's reputation as an administrator, a huge retaining wall was required for the public avenue which skirts the hillside a hundred feet above the bed of the Doubs. To this admirable position it is indebted for one of the most picturesque views in France. But, every spring, torrents of rainwater made channels across the avenue, carved deep gullies in it and left it impassable. This nuisance, which affected everybody alike, placed M. de Rênal under the fortunate obligation to immortalise his administration by a wall twenty feet in height and seventy or eighty yards long.

The parapet of this wall, to securé which M. de Rênal was obliged to make three journeys to Paris, for the Minister of the Interior before last had sworn a deadly enmity to the Verrières avenue; the parapet of this wall now rises four feet above the ground. And, as though to defy all Ministers past and present, it is being finished off at this moment with slabs of dressed stone.

How often, my thoughts straying back to the ball-rooms of Paris, which I had forsaken overnight, my elbows leaning upon those great blocks of stone of a fine grey with a shade of blue in it, have I swept with my gaze the vale of the Doubs! Over there, on the left bank, are five or six winding valleys, along the folds of which the eye can make out quite plainly a number of little streams. After leaping from rock to rock, they may be seen falling into the Doubs. The sun is extremely hot in these mountains; when it is directly overhead, the traveler's rest is sheltered on this terrace by a row of magnificent planes. Their rapid growth, and handsome foliage of a bluish tint are due to the artificial soil with which the Mayor has filled in the space behind his immense

retaining wall, for, despite the opposition of the town council, he has widened the avenue by more than six feet (although he is a True-Blue and I myself a Liberal, I give him credit for it), that is why, in his opinion and in that of M. Valenod, the fortunate governor of the Verrières poorhouse, this terrace is worthy to be compared with that of Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

For my part, I have only one fault to find with the *Cours de la Fidélité*; one reads this, its official title, in fifteen or twenty places, on marble slabs which have won M. de Rênal yet another Cross; what I should be inclined to condemn in the Cours de la Fidelite is the barbarous manner in which the authorities keep these sturdy plane trees trimmed and pollarded. Instead of suggesting, with their low, rounded, flattened heads, the commonest of kitchen garden vegetables, they would like nothing better than to assume those magnificent forms which one sees them wear in England. But the Mayor's will is despotic, and twice a year every tree belonging to the commune is pitilessly lopped. The Liberals of the place maintain, but they exaggerate, that the hand of the official gardener has grown much more severe since the Reverend Vicar Maslon formed the habit of appropriating the clippings.

This young cleric was sent from Besancon, some years ago, to keep an eye upon the Abbé Chélan and certain parish priests of the district. An old Surgeon-Major of the Army of Italy, in retirement at Verrières, who in his time had been simultaneously, according to the Mayor, a Jacobin and a Bonapartist, actually ventured one day to complain to him of the periodical mutilation of these fine trees.

'I like shade,' replied M. de Rênal with the touch of arrogance appropriate when one is addressing a surgeon, a Member of the Legion of Honour; 'I like shade, I have my trees cut so as to give shade, and I do not consider that a tree is made for any other purpose, unless, like the useful walnut, it *yields a return*.'

There you have the great phrase that decides everything at Verrières:

YIELD A RETURN; it by itself represents the habitual thought of more than three fourths of the inhabitants.

Yielding a return is the consideration that settles everything in this little town which seemed to you, just now, so attractive. The stranger arriving there, beguiled by the beauty of the cool, deep valleys on every side, imagines at first that the inhabitants are influenced by the idea of beauty; they are always talking about the beauty of their scenery: no one can deny that they make a great to-do about it; but this is because it attracts a certain number of visitors whose money goes to enrich the innkeepers, and thus, through the channel of the rate-collector, *yields a return* to the town.

It was a fine day in autumn and M. de Rênal was strolling along the Cours de la Fidelite, his lady on his arm. While she listened to her husband, who was speaking with an air of gravity, Madame de Rênal's eye was anxiously following the movements of three little boys. The eldest, who might be about eleven, was continually running to the parapet as though about to climb on top. A gentle voice then uttered the name Adolphe, and the child abandoned his ambitious project. Madame de Rênal looked like a woman of thirty, but was still extremely pretty.

'He may live to rue the day, that fine gentleman from Paris,' M. de Rênal was saying in a tone of annoyance, his cheek paler even than was its wont. 'I myself am not entirely without friends at Court....'

But albeit I mean to speak to you of provincial life for two hundred pages, I shall not be so barbarous as to inflict upon you the tedium and all the clever turns of a provincial dialogue.

This fine gentleman from Paris, so odious to the Mayor of Verrières, was none other than M. Appert, who, a couple of days earlier, had contrived to make his way not only into the prison and the poorhouse of Verrières, but also into the hospital, administered gratuitously by the Mayor and the principal landowners of the neighbourhood.

'But,' Madame de Rênal put in timidly, 'what harm can this

gentleman from Paris do you, since you provide for the welfare of the poor with the most scrupulous honesty?’

‘He has only come to cast blame, and then he’ll go back and have articles put in the Liberal papers.’

‘You never read them, my dear.’

‘But people tell us about those Jacobin articles; all that distracts us, and hinders us from doing good. As for me, I shall never forgive the curé.’

CHAPTER 3 The Bread of the Poor

A virtuous priest who does not involve himself in intrigue is a blessing for the village.

FLEURY

It should be explained that the curé of Verrières, an old man of eighty, but blessed by the keen air of his mountains with an iron character and strength, had the right to visit at any hour of the day the prison, the hospital, and even the poorhouse. It was at six o’clock in the morning precisely that M. Appert, who was armed with an introduction to the curé from Paris, had had the good sense to arrive in an inquisitive little town. He had gone at once to the presbytery.

As he read the letter addressed to him by M. le Marquis de La Mole, a Peer of France, and the wealthiest landowner in the province, the curé Chélan sat lost in thought.

‘I am old and liked here,’ he murmured to himself at length, ‘they would never dare!’ Turning at once to the gentleman from Paris, with eyes in which, despite his great age, there burned that sacred fire which betokens the pleasure of performing a fine action which is slightly dangerous:

‘Come with me, Sir, and, in the presence of the gaoler and especially of the superintendents of the poorhouse, be so good as not to express

any opinion of the things we shall see.' M. Appert realised that he had to deal with a man of feeling; he accompanied the venerable curé, visited the prison, the hospital, the poorhouse, asked many questions and, notwithstanding strange answers, did not allow himself to utter the least word of reproach.

This visit lasted for some hours. The curé invited M. Appert to dine with him, but was told that his guest had some letters to write: he did not wish to compromise his kind friend any further. About three o'clock, the gentlemen went back to complete their inspection of the poorhouse, after which they returned to the prison. There they found the gaoler standing in the doorway; a giant six feet tall, with bandy legs; terror had made his mean face hideous.

'Ah, Sir,' he said to the curé, on catching sight of him, 'is not this gentleman, that I see with you, M. Appert?'

'What if he is?' said the curé.

'Because yesterday I received the most definite instructions, which the Prefect sent down by a gendarme who had to gallop all night long, not to allow M. Appert into the prison.'

'I declare to you, M. Noiroud,' said the curé, 'that this visitor, who is in my company, is M. Appert. Do you admit that I have the right to enter the prison at any hour of the day or night, bringing with me whom I please?'

'Yes, M. le curé,' the gaoler murmured in a subdued tone, lowering his head like a bulldog brought reluctantly to obedience by fear of the stick. 'Only, M. le curé, I have a wife and children, if I am reported I shall be dismissed; I have only my place here to live on.'

'I too should be very sorry to lose mine,' replied the worthy curé, in a voice swayed by ever increasing emotion.

'What a difference!' the gaoler answered promptly; 'why you, M. le curé, we know that you have an income of 800 livres, a fine place in the sun ...'

Such are the events which, commented upon, exaggerated in twenty