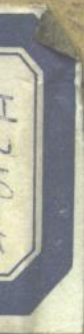


# 英语精读文选



## 译 注 说 明

本书系英国编辑出版的一本英语教材。所收集的二十篇文章，内容丰富，涉猎面广，体裁多样，题材新颖。尤为突出的是运用语言技巧之高超，为一般教材所不及。由于作者大多是当代名家，课文程度较深，难度较大，对一般的英语学习者来说，恐不易理解。为了减少读者在阅读时的困难，尤其是为广大自学者提供质疑参考，我们对每一课都配了译文，并就疑难之处作了注释。鉴于读者对象为具有一定英语基础的学生，因此注释的重点放在难以理解的地方或一些习惯用法上。

原书编者兼收并蓄，我们在学习语言的同时，亦当注意其中一些观点的局限性和片面性。

由于我们水平有限，译注中错误在所难免，恳切希望专家、学者及广大读者批评、指正。

译 注 者

一九八二年九月

## Introduction

2542/21

The twenty reading passages in this volume have been taken from modern English writings on a variety of topics—of scientific, literary and general interest. They are arranged in a graded series, the grading being based on an assessment of difficulty level in terms of vocabulary, syntax and thought-content. A quick comparison of the first passage with the last gives one an idea of the initial level assumed and the final level aimed at.

These passages are used for two main purposes: to increase the *complex skills* of reading and writing; and to offer remedial help on certain *elements of language*, viz., grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling and punctuation. Both these tasks have been attempted through a series of exercises. A basic assumption in writing these exercises has been that the subconscious process of learning a language is active when the learner's mind is consciously occupied with challenging tasks which call for the use of language.

The comprehension exercises seek to increase two kinds of reading ability: the 'global' questions of *Comprehension-I* are meant to make the student perceive the overall organization of matter—facts, ideas, arguments or experience—in the passage, while the 'local' questions of *Comprehension-II* direct attention to detail, including suggestions, implications and particular expressions.

The composition exercises range from highly controlled 'rewriting' tasks to a fairly free expression of the student's own views or arguments. They include writing

on a given model, writing with given facts, writing dialogues, letters, summaries and assessments. They provide a good deal of practice in organization, rearranging given sentences, and emphasizing parallelisms and contrasts.

The exercises on vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling and punctuation deal with items and features which are, by and large, common problems of learners of English at this level. In addition to providing controlled practice on such items, these exercises make the student go back to the passage again and again to observe details which he might otherwise miss. They also provide a model on which teachers can frame their own exercises in order to deal with the specific weaknesses of a particular set of students.

Apart from the pronunciation exercises, which call for the teacher's active guidance in the form of demonstration of the sound features concerned, most exercises are such that students can work more or less independently, the teacher coming in only to check, to clarify and to organize discussion on points of general interest or on matters in which different views are possible. Indeed, such student-centred teaching procedures are very necessary for an effective use of these materials: teacher-centred procedures, such as explication of the text by the teacher, will leave the class with no time to go through these exercises.

The kind of teaching procedures that we envisage and the kind of skill-based examinations which we recommend are outlined and exemplified in the *Teacher's Manual*.

原书引言

本书的二十篇阅读文章摘自各种题材的现代英语著作——有科学、文学和一般题材的文章。它们是依据词汇、句法和思想内容的难度循序渐进的。把第一篇和最后一篇作一粗略比较，就可以了解到本书原定的最初水平和预期的最终水平。

这些文章用于两个主要目的：提高读和写的综合技巧；在某些语言成分方面，即在语法、词汇、语音、拼写和标点符号方面，给予补习性的帮助。这两项任务试图通过一系列的练习来达到。编写这些练习的一个基本设想是，当学习者有意识地从事一些需要运用语言的棘手任务时，其学习语言的潜意识过程是积极的。

理解练习试图提高两种阅读能力：理解练习-I 的“综合性”问题意欲使学生领会到文章的总体构成（事实、观点、论据或经验），而综合练习-II 的“局部性”问题则让学生直接注意到细节，包括暗示、含蓄的地方和特殊的表达方式。

作文练习的范围从高度控制的“改写”作业到由学生相当自由表达自己的观点和论点。它们包括按规定的模式写作，用规定的事实写作，写对话、信件、总结和评价等等。这些练习在组织结构、重新安排

所给的句子以及强调类比与对比等方面，提供了大量的实践。

词汇、语法、语音、拼写和标点符号等练习涉及到一些项目与要点，这些项目和要点大体上是这一水平的英语学生共同存在的问题，这些练习除了提供这些项目的控制性的实践外，还使学生一遍又一遍地回到文章上来观察细节，否则他们就可能遗漏这些细节。它们也提供了一个模式，教师为了加强某些学生的特别薄弱的环节，可以用这一模式来组织自己的练习。

只有语音练习需要教师就有关发音特点作积极的示范指导，除此之外，大多数都是那种或多或少可由学生自己独立完成的练习，教师到课堂只是为了检查，澄清疑难和就一般感兴趣的论点或有可能出现不同看法的问题组织讨论。的确，这种以学生为中心的教学方法对于有效地使用这些材料是十分必要的；而以教师为中心的方法（如由教师讲解课文）将没有时间在课堂上做完这些练习。

我们设想的这种教学方法和我们推荐的这种以技巧为基础的测验，在“教师手册”中有概略的叙述并附有实例说明。

# Pronunciation Key 语音说明

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Transcription of key word using IPA symbols</i>	<i>Key word</i>
<b>I Vowels and Diphthongs</b>		
1. i:	/ki:/	key
2. i	/pit/	pit
3. e	/pet/	pet
4. æ	/kæt/	cat
5. ɑ:	/kɑ:d/	card
6. ɔ:	/kɔ:t/	caught
7. ɒ	/kɒt/	cot
8. u	/put/	put
9. u:	/mu:n/	moon
10. ʌ	/sʌn/	sun
11. ə:	/bə:d/	bird
12. ə	/əbaut/	about
13. ei	/plei/	play
14. ou	/roud/	road
15. ai	/taim/	time
16. au	/haus/	house
17. ɔi	/bɔi/	boy
18. iə	/piə*/	peer
19. eə	/heə*/	hair
20. uə	/tuə*/	tour
<b>II Consonants</b>		
b	/bet/	bet
p	/pet/	pet
d	/din/	din
t	/tin/	tin
g	/giv/	give
k	/kʌm/	come
ð	/ðæt/	that
θ	/θin/	thin
v	/vain/	vine
f	/fain/	fine
z	/zu:/	zoo
s	/sin/	sin
ʒ	/meʒə*/	measure
ʃ	/ʃip/	ship
h	/hen/	hen
m	/men/	men
n	/nain/	nine
ŋ	/kiŋ/	king
r	/rʌn/	run
l	/lip/	lip
dʒ	/dʒʌmp/	jump
tʃ	/tʃip/	chip
j	/jes/	yes
w	/went/	went

\*An asterisk indicates that the 'r' is pronounced if the following word begins with a vowel sound.

# Contents

Page

Introduction 原书引言		
Pronunciation Key 语音说明		
1 Civilization and History 文明与历史	<i>C. E. M. Joad</i>	1
2 The Fun They Had 前人享有的乐趣	<i>Isaac Asimov</i>	10
3 Big Numbers and Infinities 大数和无穷数	<i>George Gamow</i>	20
4 Oil 油	<i>G. C. Thornley</i>	30
5 An Observation and an Explanation 观察与解释	<i>Desmond Morris</i>	41
6 A Robot about the House 家用机器人	<i>M. W. Thring</i>	51
7 A Wrong Man in Workers' Paradise 误入工人天堂的人	<i>Rabindranath Tagore</i>	62
8 Making Surgery Safe 保障外科手术安全	<i>Horace Shipp</i>	73
9 Using Land Wisely 合理地使用土地	<i>L. Dudley Stamp</i>	87
10 The Karburator 碳化装置	<i>Karel Čapek</i>	100
11 Work and Play 工作和娱乐	<i>Herbert Read</i>	113
12 Three Days to See 若能重见光明三日	<i>Helen Keller</i>	125
13 The Laws of Nature 自然法则	<i>J. B. S. Haldane</i>	138
14 Spaceship? 宇宙飞船?	<i>J. B. Priestley</i>	151
15 The Wisdom of Socrates 苏格拉第的智慧		168
16 Snapshot of a Dog 一只狗的快照	<i>James Thurber</i>	179
17 Individuals and Masses 个人和大众	<i>Aldous Huxley</i>	192
18 Children at Play 玩耍的孩子们	<i>Rumer Godden</i>	203
19 Symptoms 症状	<i>Jerome K. Jerome</i>	216
20 How to Avoid Foolish Opinions 如何避免愚蠢的见解	<i>Bertrand Russell</i>	227

# CIVILIZATION & HISTORY

C.E.M. Joad



- 1 Most of the people who appear most often and most gloriously in the history books are great conquerors and generals and soldiers, whereas the people who really helped civilization forward<sup>1</sup> are often never mentioned at all. We do not know who first set a broken leg,<sup>2</sup> or launched a seaworthy boat, or calculated the length of the year, or manured a field, but we know all about the killers and destroyers. People think a great deal of them, so much so that on all the highest pillars in the great cities of the world you will find the figure of a conqueror or a general or a soldier. And I think most people believe that the greatest countries are those that have beaten (in battle) the greatest number of other countries and ruled over them as conquerors. It is just possible they are, but they are not the most civilized. Animals fight; so do savages; hence to be good at fighting is to be good in the way in which an animal or a

<sup>1</sup>helped civilization forward helped civilization to move forward, or make progress.

野蛮人 (savage) is good, but it is not to be civilized. Even being good at getting other people to fight for you and telling them how to do it most efficiently—this, after all, is what conquerors and generals have done—is not being civilized. People fight to settle quarrels. Fighting means killing, and civilized peoples ought to be able to find some way of settling their disputes other than by seeing which side can kill off the greater number of the other side, and then saying that that side which has killed most has won. And not only has won, but, because it has won, has been in the right. For that is (what going to war means) it means saying that might is right.

- 2 That is what the story of mankind has (on the whole) been like. Even our own age has fought the two greatest wars in history, in which millions of people were killed or mutilated. And while today it is true that people do not fight and kill each other in the streets—while, that is to

<sup>2</sup>set a broken leg correctly fixed the bone in a broken leg so that the bone healed properly.

say, we have got to the stage of keeping the rules and behaving properly to each other in daily life—nations and countries have not learnt to do this yet, and still behave like savages.

- 3 But we must not expect too much. After all, the race of men has only just started. From the point of view of evolution, human beings are very young children indeed, babies, in fact, of a few months old. Scientists reckon that there has been life of some sort on the earth in the form of jelly-fish and that kind of creature for about twelve hundred million years; but there have been men for only one million years, and there have been civilized men for about eight thousand years at the outside.<sup>3</sup> [These figures are difficult to grasp; so let us scale them down.<sup>4</sup> Suppose that we reckon the whole past of living creatures on the earth as one hundred years; then the whole past of man

works out at about one month, and during that month there have been civilizations for between seven and eight hours. So you see there has been little time to learn in, but there will be oceans of time<sup>5</sup> in which to learn better. Taking man's civilized past at about seven or eight hours,<sup>6</sup> we may estimate his future, that is to say, the whole period between now and when the sun grows too cold to maintain life any longer on the earth, at about one hundred thousand years. Thus mankind is only at the beginning of its civilized life, and as I say, we must not expect too much. (The past of man has been on the whole a pretty beastly business,) a business of fighting and bullying and gorging and grabbing and hurting. We must not expect even civilized peoples not to have done these things. All we can ask is that they will sometimes have done something else.

From *The Story of Civilization*  
(A. D. Peters & Co. 1962)

## Glossary

bully (v) /'buli/ frighten or hurt those who are weak  
efficiently (adv) /e'fɪʃəntli/ in such a way as to get good results  
evolution (n) /i:və'l(j)u:ʃən/ the gradual development of living things from earlier forms (as stated in Darwin's famous 'Theory of Evolution')  
gloriously (adv) /'glɔ:riəsli/ with great

fame or honour  
gorge (v) /gɔ:dʒ/ eat a great deal  
grab (v) /græb/ take things by force  
launch (v) /lɔ:ntʃ/ start sailing a (new) ship or boat  
mutilate (v) /'mju:tileit/ injure seriously, e.g. make someone lose a hand or leg  
seaworthy (adj) /si:'wɔ:ði/ fit for sailing in the sea

## Comprehension—I

1. This essay can be divided into two main parts, although it has three paragraphs. Where do you think the second part begins—at the beginning of the second paragraph or of the third?
2. Which of the following sentences gives the best summary of the first part?  
✓ (a) Some of the people who helped civilization forward are not mentioned at all in history books.

\*at the outside at (the) most.  
\*scale them down put them on a smaller scale (as we do with maps).  
\*oceans of time plenty of time.

\*taking man's civilized past at about seven or eight hours if we imagine that man's civilized past (which is really about eight thousand years) is only about seven or eight hours. (This is an example of 'scaling down'.)

- (b) Conquerors and generals have been our most famous men, but they did not help civilization forward.
- (c) It is true that people today do not fight or kill each other in the streets.
- 3. Which of the following sentences best summarizes the second part of the essay?
  - (a) In order to understand the long periods of history, we have to scale them down to shorter periods.
  - (b) The past of man has been on the whole a pretty beastly business.
  - (c) Mankind is only at the beginning of civilized life; so we must not expect a great deal of civilization at this stage.
- 4. What examples does the author give of people who really helped civilization forward?
- 5. In what way are great soldiers similar to animals?
- 6. Are people today more civilized in any way than in the past? If so, in what way?
- 7. What were the earliest forms of life on this earth?
- 8. When will there be no life on this earth, according to the author?
- 9. The word 'figure' is used both in the first paragraph and in the third. Does it have the same meaning in both places? If not, what are its two different meanings?
- 10. Is the author hopeful about the future of civilization? How do you know?

## Comprehension—II

Answer these questions by choosing the best alternative (a, b, c or d) under each. Think carefully before you make your choice.

- 1. In the first sentence, the author says that
  - (a) most history books were written by conquerors, generals and soldiers.
  - (b) no one who really helped civilization forward is mentioned in any history book.
  - (c) history books tell us far more about conquerors and soldiers than about those who helped civilization forward.
  - (d) conquerors, generals and soldiers should not be mentioned in history books.
- 2. On all the highest pillars in the great cities of the world, we find
  - (a) the figure of the same conqueror or general or soldier.
  - (b) the figure of some conqueror or general or soldier.
  - (c) a figure representing the number of conquerors, generals and soldiers in that country.
  - (d) the figure of a person who helped civilization forward.
- 3. Most people believe that the greatest countries are
  - (a) those that built the highest pillars.
  - (b) those that were beaten in battle by the greatest number of other countries.
  - (c) those that were ruled by the greatest number of conquerors.
  - (d) those that won the greatest number of battles against other countries.
- 4. In the author's opinion, the countries that ruled over a large number of other countries are
  - (a) certainly not the greatest in any way.
  - (b) neither the greatest nor the most civilized.
  - (c) possibly the most civilized but not the greatest.
  - (d) possibly the greatest in some sense but not the most civilized.
- 5. The author says that civilized people
  - (a) should not have any quarrels to settle.
  - (b) should not fight when there are no quarrels to settle.
  - (c) should settle their quarrels without fighting.
  - (d) should settle their quarrels by seeing which side can kill off the greater number of the other side.
- 6. 'That is what going to war means; it means saying that might is right.' The meaning of this sentence is that
  - (a) those who fight believe that the winner is right and the loser wrong.
  - (b) only those who are powerful should go to war.

- (c) those who are right should fight against those who are wrong.  
 (d) in a war only those who are powerful will win.
7. 'Even our own age has fought the two greatest wars in history.' The author says this in order to show that our own age is  
 (a) different from those of the past.  
 (b) not much better than those of the past.  
 (c) much better than those of the past. ✓  
 (d) not so civilized as those of the past.
8. 'From the point of view of evolution, human beings are very young children indeed.' The author says this in order to show that  
 (a) very young children are not civilized.  
 (b) evolution does not help civilization forward.  
 (c) human beings have learnt very little in a very long time.  
 (d) human beings are still at the beginning of their life on this earth. ✓
9. The scale which the author uses for representing time is  
 (a) one month = one million years.  
 (b) one hundred years = eight thousand years.  
 (c) one year = one million years.  
 (d) one month = twelve hundred million years.
10. 'We must not expect even civilized peoples not to have done these things.' This suggests that  
 (a) those who have done any fighting and bullying cannot be considered civilized.  
 (b) there is nothing wrong if civilized people do some fighting and bullying. ✓  
 (c) even civilized people have done some fighting and bullying. ✓  
 (d) civilized people have never done any fighting and bullying.

### Spelling

Copy and complete the following words by filling in the blanks with the correct letter(s).

- |                 |                     |               |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. evolu..ion   | 5. forw <u>l</u> rd | 9. sav..ge    |
| 2. ap...ar      | 6. pill <u>l</u> r  | 10. cr...ture |
| 3. bel...ve     | 7. gen <u>l</u> ral | 11. d...pute  |
| 4. conquer...rs | 8. ci.vi.lized      | 12. quar...el |

### Pronunciation

Practise saying the following words with the correct stress. You must stress the syllable immediately after the stress mark (').

- |                |               |               |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. 'calculate  | 5. 'possible  | 9. e'fficient |
| 2. 'gloriously | 6. 'scientist | 10. man'kind  |
| 3. 'mutilate   | 7. ma'nure    | 11. be'have   |
| 4. 'estimate   | 8. des'troyer | 12. main'tain |

### Vocabulary—I

Find single words in this essay which have roughly the meanings given below.

Example: senior officer in the army = general.

1. uncivilized person
2. fertilized
- ③ image of a person made from stone, metal etc. *pillar*
4. quarrel or difference of opinion *dispute*
5. strength or power *bully*

6. all human beings considered together *human*
7. boneless sea-animal which evolved very early on *jelly-fish*
8. count or estimate
9. as bad as animals in behaviour
10. causing pain

## Vocabulary—II

Match the words given under A with the meanings given under B. List B has some extra items.

- | A             | B  |
|---------------|--|
| 1. grab       | (a) gradual development                        |
| 2. mutilate   | (b) honourable, famous                         |
| 3. seaworthy  | (c) a straight, tall support                   |
| 4. reckon     | (d) good at producing results                  |
| 5. conqueror  | (e) fit to sail in the sea                     |
| 6. glorious   | (f) think (on the basis of a calculation)      |
| 7. bully      | (g) get hold of                                |
| 8. pillar     | (h) one who defeats another country            |
| 9. evolution  | (i) be cruel to someone weaker                 |
| 10. efficient | (j) destroy or injure an important part        |
|               | (k) one who gets other people to fight for him |
|               | (l) put things on a smaller scale              |
|               | (m) an officer of the navy                     |

## Vocabulary—III

Copy out the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with suitable words or phrases from the passage. All the missing words appear in paragraph 3.

Example: *From . . . . . view of evolution, human beings are very young children.*

From the point of view of evolution, human beings are very young children.

Scientists believe that there has been life of some . . . . . on the earth . . . . . about twelve hundred million years. Such a large figure is difficult . . . . . , so let us scale it . . . . . and reckon it . . . . . one hundred years. We then find that man has been . . . . . the earth for about a month, and civilized man for only seven or eight hours. So you . . . . . mankind is only at the . . . . . of its civilized life, and we must not expect . . . . . much.

## Grammar—I

Observe the following two sentences:

- (a) Many people are mentioned in our history books.
  - (b) The people who are mentioned most often in our history books are great soldiers and conquerors.
- The first sentence is about people in general. The second sentence, on the other hand, speaks of a particular group of people—those who are mentioned most often in our history books. When we refer to particular things or persons, we use the definite article, 'the'.

Some sentences like (a) are given below. Rewrite them in the form of (b), using the hints given in brackets.

1. (a) Many people are glorified in history books.  
(b) (. . . who are glorified . . . are not the most civilized.)
2. (a) Statues are often found on tall pillars.

- (b) (... which are found ... are usually of conquerors and generals.)
- 3. (a) Nations still fight each other to settle disputes.  
(b) (... which still fight ... are behaving like savages.)
- 4. (a) A few important people helped civilization forward.  
(b) (The people who helped ... are often not mentioned in history books at all.)
- 5. (a) Some countries defeated others in war and ruled over them.  
(b) (The countries which defeated ... were considered great.)
- 6. (a) Many people fight to settle quarrels.  
(b) (... who fight ... are not much better than animals and savages.)
- 7. (a) Someone first set a broken leg.  
(b) (The man or woman who ... was more civilized than the person who first mutilated an enemy.)
- 8. (a) Someone launched a seaworthy boat for the first time.  
(b) (The man who ... made all the world's great navies possible.)
- 9. (a) Some man first calculated the length of the year.  
(b) (... really helped civilization forward.)
- 10. (a) Some farmer first manured his field.  
(b) (... taught us how to produce better crops.)

## Grammar—II

Observe these two sentences:

- (a) Those who fight try to kill.
- (b) Fighting means trying to kill.

These are two different ways of saying roughly the same thing. Any sentence which is in the form of (a) can be rewritten in the form of (b).

Here are some sentences like (a); rewrite them in the form of (b), using the hints given in brackets.

- 1. (a) Those who go to war believe that might is right.  
(b) (Going to war means believing ...)
- 2. (a) Those who fight in order to settle quarrels are behaving like animals and savages.  
(b) (Fighting in order to settle ... means behaving ...)
- 3. (a) Those who bully and grab hurt other people.  
(b) (Bullying and grabbing ... hurting ...)
- 4. (a) Those who are civilized find other ways of settling disputes.  
(b) (Being civilized ...)
- 5. (a) Those who are good at getting other people to fight in battles are not civilized.  
(b) (Being good ... not mean being ...)

Now observe the following two sentences:

- (a) Those who fight try to kill.
- (c) To fight is to try to kill.

This is a third way of saying roughly the same thing. The five sentences given above which are like (a) can also be rewritten in the form of (c). Rewrite them in that form, using the hints given in brackets.

- 1. (c) (To go to war is to believe ...)
- 2. (c) (To fight in order to settle ... to behave ...)
- 3. (c) (To bully and grab ... to hurt ...)
- 4. (c) (To be civilized is ...)
- 5. (c) (To be good at ... not to be ...)

## Composition—I

Here is an example of how the author scales down the long periods of history:

	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Scaled down to</i>
(a) The whole past of living creatures	1,200 million years	100 years
(b) The whole past of man		1 month

We can write a three-sentence paragraph on this, as follows:

Scientists believe that the whole past of living creatures on this earth is about twelve hundred million years. Let a hundred years represent this period. Then the whole past of man on this earth works out to one month.

Now write two more paragraphs of three sentences each, using the following facts.

	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Scaled down to</i>
1. (a) The whole past of man	1 million years	1 month
(b) The history of civilization		7 or 8 hours
2. (a) The history of civilization	8,000 years	7 or 8 hours
(b) The whole future of living creatures		100 thousand years

## Composition—II

Good composition requires the ability to build up good paragraphs. You can build a good paragraph only if you have a good plan for it. One kind of paragraph-plan is this: the main point is expressed in a general statement at the beginning, and then supported with one or more facts, as examples or evidence. Here is such a plan:

**Main point** Most people think that greatness consists of being good at fighting.

**Evidence**

1. History books (conquerors, not people who helped civilization forward).
2. Figures on pillars.
3. Belief about the greatest countries.

Here is a short paragraph which is based on this plan. Study it to see how the plan has been used:

Most people believe that greatness consists of being good at fighting. Our history books, for example, glorify conquerors, generals and soldiers. They tell us very little about the people who really helped civilization forward. Secondly, on the highest pillars in our great cities, we find the figures of conquerors and generals. Thirdly, certain countries are considered to be great because they built up empires by defeating many other countries and ruling over them.

Now, here is another paragraph which has the same kind of plan. Read it carefully and then write out the plan on which it is based:

A proper history of civilization should tell us more about those who really helped civilization forward. For example, it should tell us about the man who first set a broken leg, the man who first launched a seaworthy boat and the man who manured a field for the first time. Secondly, it should tell us how we have today reached the stage of keeping the rules of civilized life and not fighting with each other in our daily life. Thirdly, it should tell us about those who have tried to find ways of settling disputes between nations other than by fighting.

Now write out the plan of the above paragraph, listing its main point and three examples.

# 文明与历史

1 在历史书上出现得最为经常和最为显耀者，大多是一些伟大的征服者、将军和军人，而真正推动文明前进的人，却往往不见经传。我们不知道是谁最先接上折断的腿骨，是谁最先造出适于航海的船只，是谁最先计算出一年长度，又是谁最先给田地施肥，但是我们对那些杀人者和破坏者却知之甚详。人们对他们的敬重达到这样的程度①，以致在世界上一些大城市里的所有最高的柱石上，你都会发现一位征服者，或一位将军，或一位军人的雕像。我想，大多数人都会认为，最伟大的国家是那些在战斗中打败其他国家最多，并作为征服者统治他们的国家。他们很可能是伟大的，然而他们并不是最文明的。动物搏斗，野蛮人也搏斗，因而善于搏斗仅是动物或野蛮人择优的标准②，但绝非文明的表现③。即使善于驱使别人为自己打仗，并且告诉他们怎样打才最有效——这毕竟是征服者和将军们干过的事——也称不上是文明的作为。人们为解决争执而打仗。打仗意味着残杀，文明的民族应当能够找到某种解决争端的办法，而不是看哪一方能消灭另一方更多的人，而后说杀人最多的一方获胜。胜者不仅胜了，而且还因为胜而有了理。这就是进行战争的意义，它意味着强权就是公理④。

2 人类的经历大体上就是如此。甚至在我们这个时代也打了两次历史上规模最大的战争，在那两次大战中数以百万计的人惨遭屠杀或致残。尽管今天人们确实不在街上打仗并互相残杀了，也就是说，我们在日常生活中已经做到循规蹈矩，举止有仪，然而民族和国家却还没有学会这一点，仍然表现得象野蛮人一样⑤。

3 可是，我们不应期望过高，人类的出现毕竟还不久。从进化的观点来看，人类的确还是非常年幼的儿童，事实上，是只有几个月的婴儿。科学家们推断，地球上有着某种水母类的生物，这种生物已经存在十二亿年了；而人类仅仅存在一百多万年，开化的人的存在充其量不过八千年来。这些数字难以掌握，还是让我们把这些数字按比例缩小吧。我们姑且把地球上生物生存的历史算作一百年吧，那么我们可以算出人类生存的历史大约为一个月，而在这一个月中，文明的历史则为七至八个小时。你瞧，我们不曾有多少时间学习，但是，来日方长，我们可以学得更好些。假定把人类文明的历史看作七或八个小时，我们可以由此来预计人类的未来，也就是说，从现今到太阳变得非常之冷、以致地球上不再有生命的这段时期大概是十万年左右。这样说来，人类还处于文明生活的开始，象我所说的，我们不应期望过高。人类的过去基本上是一场相当残酷的争斗过程：厮杀角逐，恃强凌弱，吞并掠夺，蹂躏作践。我们也不必苛求即使是文明的民族不曾干过那些事情。我们所要求的只是，他们也可能在某些时候还做过某些其它的事⑥。

## Notes:

① People think a great deal of them 中 think a great deal of = think much (highly) of 意为“觉得……不错；对……评价很高”。如：

a, We think highly of their research in this field.

(我们对他们这方面的研究评价很高。)

b, They think a great deal of you and so do I.

(他们对你印象很好，我也是这样。)

注意，a great deal 在此处为名词短语，作状语，修饰 think of。这与 a great deal of (+不可数名词) 不同，后者意为“大量的……”。

② ... in the way in which an animal or a savage is good 此处译文为意译，原句 in the way in which ... = in the manner in which..., 意为“用……(同样)的方式”，in which 引出的定语从句修饰 the way。如：

I fixed things in the way in which he did.

(我象他那样把东西搞好了。)

③ ... but it is not to be civilized 中动词不定式 to be civilized 是表语成分，是说明主语的。过去分词 civilized 实际上已经成为形容词了，作 to be 的表语。这和 be + to + inf. 表示计划、安排或约定将要实行的行为不同，不要混淆。

④ For that is what going to war means ... 中 for 为连词，what 引出表语从句，从句的主语是动名词短语 going to war，连接代词 what 作 means 的宾语。

⑤ And while today it is true that ..., and still behave like savages 中 while 引出的为让步状语从句，主句是 nations and countries ... like savages。在引号后面的 while 引出的也是让步状语从句。它进一步说明前个句子的具体含义。

⑥ ... that they will sometimes have done something else 在现代英语中，will 有时已不含有未来的意思，而只是用来表示一种推测。如：

a, He will have gone back to Sian.

(他也许回西安去了。)

b, They will have arrived by now.

(他们大概已经到了。)



# THE FUN THEY HAD

Isaac Asimov

1 Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed May 17, 2155, she wrote: 'Today Tommy found a real book!'

2 It was a very old book. Margie's grandfather once said that when he was a little boy *his* grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper.

3 They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to —on a screen, you know. And then, when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had when they read it the first time.

4 'Gee,' said Tommy, 'what a waste. When you're through with the book, you just throw it away, I guess. Our television screen must have had a million books on it and it's good for plenty more. I wouldn't throw *it* away.'

5 'Same with mine,' said Margie. She was eleven and hadn't seen as many tele-books as Tommy had. He was thirteen.

6 She said, 'Where did you find it?'

7 'In my house.' He pointed without looking, because he was busy reading. 'In the attic.'

8 'What's it about?'

9 'School.'

10 Margie was scornful. 'School? What's there to write about school? I hate school.' Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the County Inspector.

11 He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at her and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn't know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part she hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always

had to write them out in a punch code<sup>1</sup> they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the mark in no time.

12 The inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted her head. He said to her mother, 'It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quick. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten-year level. Actually, the over-all pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory.' And he patted Margie's head again.

13 Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out<sup>2</sup> completely.

14 So she said to Tommy, 'Why would anyone write about school?'

15 Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. 'Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago.' He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, 'Centuries ago.'

16 Margie was hurt. 'Well, I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago.' She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, 'Anyway, they had a teacher.'

17 'Sure they had a teacher, but it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man.'

18 'A man? How could a man be a teacher?'

19 'Well, he just told the boys and girls things and gave them homework and asked them questions.'

20 'A man isn't smart enough.'

21 'Sure he is. My father knows as much as my teacher.'

22 'He can't. A man can't know as much as a teacher.'

23 'He knows almost as much, I betcha.'<sup>3</sup>

24 Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, 'I wouldn't want a strange man in my house to teach me.'

25 Tommy screamed with laughter. 'You

don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there.'

26 'And all the kids learned the same thing?'

27 'Sure, if they were the same age.'

28 'But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.'

29 'Just the same, they didn't do it that way then. If you don't like it, you don't have to read the book.'

30 'I didn't say I didn't like it,' Margie said quickly. She wanted to read about those funny schools.

31 They weren't even half finished when Margie's mother called, 'Margie! School!'

32 Margie looked up. 'Not yet, mamma.'

33 'Now,' said Mrs Jones. 'And it's probably time for Tommy, too.'

34 Margie said to Tommy. 'Can I read the book some more with you after school?'

35 'Maybe,' he said, *nonchalantly*. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm.

36 Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday, because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

37 The screen was lit up, and it said: 'Today's arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday's homework in the proper slot.'

38 Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things so they could help one another on the homework and talk about it.

39 And the teachers were people....

<sup>1</sup>in a punch code the homework had to be done using a system of signs to enable the machine to correct it.

<sup>2</sup>blanked out nothing appeared on the screen.  
<sup>3</sup>I betcha I bet you.