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最新英美小品文選



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尹讓敏

編

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# 新 最 選文小品美英

譯 編 轍 讓 尹

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# PART I. SHORT ESSAYS

## (1)

### We're Just Beginning

(Charles F. Kettering)

"We are reading the first verse <sup>1</sup> of the first chapter of a book whose pages are infinite. <sup>2</sup>" I do not know who wrote these words. But I have always liked them as a reminder <sup>3</sup> that the future can be anything we want to make it. We can take the mysterious <sup>4</sup> hazy future, and ~~carve out~~ <sup>carve out</sup> of it anything that we can imagine, just as a sculptor carves a statue from a shapeless <sup>5</sup> stone.

We are in the position <sup>6</sup> of the farmer. If we plant good clean seed, we reap a good harvest. If our seed is poor and full of weeds, we reap a useless crop. If we plant nothing at all, we harvest <sup>7</sup> nothing at all.

I want the future to be better than past. I don't want it contaminated <sup>8</sup> by the mistakes and errors with which history is filled. We should all be concerned about the future because that is where we will spend the remainder of our lives. <sup>9</sup>

The past is gone and static. <sup>10</sup> Nothing we do can change it. The future is before us and dynamic." Everything we do will affect it. Each day brings with it new frontiers, <sup>12</sup> in our homes and in our businesses, if we will only recognize them. We are just at the beginning of progress

in every field of human endeavour.

〔譯 文〕

## 我們正在開始

「我們正在讀一本書的第一章第一節，而這本書的頁數是無限的」。

我不知道這些話是誰寫的。可是我常時把它們當作提醒我們能在將來有所作為的暮鼓晨鐘，而喜歡它們。我們能够把神秘朦朧的未來，雕成我們想像的東西，正如一位雕刻家把一塊不像樣的石頭雕刻成一座石像一樣。

我們大家又像農夫。如果我們播下良好潔淨的種子，我們便可得到良好的收穫。如果我們的種子低劣而充滿雜草，我們便得到無用的收穫。如果我們不播種，我們便沒有收穫。

我希望未來比過去好。我不願未來沾染了歷史上充滿了的錯誤。我們都應該關心未來，因為我們在未來要度過我們的餘生。

過去的已過去了，是靜止的。我們沒法變更它。當前的未來是活動的。我們的任何作為都會影響它。只要我們都認識它們，每天在我們的家庭裏和事業上都帶來新的境界。在人類各種努力的領域內，我們都恰在進步的開始。

〔註 釋〕

1. verse: (n.) 詩，節。
2. infinite: (adj.) 無限的。
3. reminder: (n.) 提醒者。
4. mysterious: (adj.) 神秘的。
5. shapeless: (adj.) 不成形的。
6. in the position: 處於……地位。  
比較 in a position to……願；意欲。
7. harvest: (v.) 收穫。

8. contaminate: (v.) 染污；污損。
9. the remainder of our lives (=the rest of our lives): 餘生。
10. static: (adj.) 靜止的。
11. dynamic: (adj.) 活動的 *daɪˈnæmɪk*
12. frontiers: (n.) 境界；未開發的領域。

## (2)

### America's Responsibilities

(Theodore Roosevelt)

Toward all other nations, large and small, our attitude must be one of cordial<sup>1</sup> and sincere<sup>2</sup> friendship. We must show not only in our words but in our deeds that we are earnestly desirous of<sup>3</sup> securing their good will by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous<sup>4</sup> recognition<sup>5</sup> of all their rights. But justice and generosity<sup>6</sup> in a nation, as in an individual, count<sup>7</sup> most when shown not by the weak<sup>8</sup> but by the strong.<sup>9</sup> While ever careful to refrain from<sup>10</sup> wronging others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. We wish peace; but we wish the peace of justice, the peace of righteousness. We wish it because we think it is right and not because we are ~~not~~ afraid. No weak nation that acts manfully<sup>11</sup> and justly should ever have cause to fear us, and no strong power should ever be able to single us out<sup>12</sup> as a subject<sup>13</sup> for insolent aggression.<sup>14</sup>

## 美國的責任

對於所有其他的國家，無論大小，我們的態度必須是真摯的，友善的。我們必須在言行上表現我們熱切地希望以公正慷慨的精神承認他們一切的權利，來獲取他們的善意。但國家的公正和慷慨，一如個人，表現於強者而非弱者時，才顯出其最大價值。我們一方面時時謹防誣害別人，一方面堅持我們自身的不受誣害。我們希望和平，但我們希望公正的和平，正義的和平。我們希望它，因為我們認為它是正當的，而並不因為我們有所畏懼。沒有一個以剛正立國的弱國有畏懼我們的原因，也沒有一個強國能挑選我們作為可侮的侵略對象。

### 〔註 釋〕

1. cordial: (adj.) 熱心的，熱誠的。 *n. 交情, 親密*
2. sincere: (adj.) 真實的，誠摯的。 *cordiality 親密*
3. desirous of: 切望。
4. generous: (adj.) 慷慨的。
5. recognition: (n.) 承認。
6. generosity: (n.) 慷慨。
7. count: (v. i.) 有價值；有用。
8. the weak: 弱者；強者（說明）The + adj. 表示……者，Ex. the rich, the poor, the aged, the living, the dead, 作複數用，動詞亦用複數。
9. the strong: 強者。
10. refrain: (v.) 禁止，其後接 from, 加 gerund. Ex. I cannot refrain from lamenting over his death.
11. manfully: (adv.) 剛毅地，有丈夫氣地。
12. single: (v.) out 連用，表挑選的意味。
13. subject: (n.) 題目；對象。

(3)

## Youth

(Samuel Ullman)

Youth is not entirely a time of life—it is a state of mind.<sup>1</sup> It is not wholly a matter of<sup>2</sup> rosy cheeks, red lips or supple knees. It is a temper<sup>3</sup> of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigour of the emotions. It is a freshness of the deepspring of life.<sup>4</sup>

Youth means temperamental predominance<sup>5</sup> of courage over timidity, of the appetite <sup>over the love</sup> of ease.<sup>6</sup> This often exists in a man of fifty more than a boy of twenty.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting other ideals. Years wrinkle<sup>7</sup> the skin, but to give up enthusiasm<sup>8</sup> wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust,<sup>9</sup> fear, and despair—these are the long, long years that low the head and turn the growing spirit back to the dust.

Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars and the starlike things and thoughts, the undaunted<sup>10</sup> challenge of events, the unfailing childlike appetite for what next and the joy and the game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your ~~as~~ self-confidence,<sup>11</sup> as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of every heart, there is a recording chamber, so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope,

cheer, and courage, so long are you young. When the wires are all down and your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism<sup>12</sup> and the ice of cynicism, then and then only, are you grown old.

〔譯 文〕

青 春

青春並不完全是人生的一段時日——它是一種心情。它並不完全是玫瑰頰，紅唇，或柔膝。它是意志的氣質，想像的能力，感情的活力。它是生命泉源的新機。

青春是勇敢超越怯懦，冒險超越逸樂。這一點常見於五十歲的人較多於二十歲的人。

祇活了若干歲月並不能算老。人們變老祇是由於他們拋棄他們的理想。年歲祇能使皮膚起皺紋，而拋棄熱情則使心靈起皺紋。煩惱，疑慮，喪失自信，恐懼，絕望——這些才使人彎腰屈背，使壯志轉入塵土。

無論七十歲或十六歲，每人總有好奇心，對星星與類似星星的事物的驚奇，向些事大膽挑戰，以及對未來和歡樂人生的永不消滅的童心。

你因有信心而年青，因疑慮而衰老；因自信而年青，因恐懼而衰老；因希望而年青，因絕望而衰老。

在內心深處，有一紀錄的的密室，祇要它接受美麗，希望，歡愉，勇氣，你就能永遠年青。一旦你心靈上覆着悲觀譏諷的冰雪，只有那時，你真正地老了。

〔註 釋〕

1. state of mind: 心情。
2. a matter of……—的問題。
3. temper: (n.) 氣質。硬度。
4. spring of life: 生命的源泉。

5. predominance: (n.) 優越；支配。
6. love of ease: 貪圖逸樂。
7. wrinkle: (v.) 使皺。
8. enthusiasm: (n.) 熱情，熱誠。
9. self-distrust: (n.) 缺乏自信。
10. undaunted: (adj.) 大無畏的。
11. self-confidence: (n.) 自信。
12. pessimism: (n.) 悲觀。

#### (4)

### Labour Is Sweet

Wise men of ancient times<sup>1</sup> and successful men of to-day have told us that labour is sweet. Its reward is not material gain<sup>2</sup> but what one becomes by it. Work does much more for us than just giving us a living; it gives us our life and the reason for living. The real joys of life come from doing something and doing it well.

All of us hope for success, but it is illusive and hard to keep. It nearly always slips away<sup>4</sup> from one like sand through the finger, like water through a leaky<sup>5</sup> pail<sup>6</sup>, unless it is held tight by hard work, day by day, night by night, year in year out. Everyone who is not looking forward to going to seed<sup>7</sup> should look forward to working harder, harder and more faithfully<sup>8</sup> as long as he lasts.

May we all work for happiness and success to-day.

## 勞動的滋味是甜蜜的

古代的智者和現今的成功者都告訴我們說，勞動的滋味是甜蜜的。勞動的報酬並非物質的利益，而是使人有所成就。工作對吾人的貢獻，遠較給予我們的生活為多；它給予我們生命和生活的理由。人生的真樂來自做一任事而且把它做好。

我們大家都希望成功，但成功是飄渺而難以保持的。它差不多總是像指縫中的沙粒，或漏欄中的水，隨時從你身邊溜走，除非你日後一日，年德一年，以辛勤的工作把它牢牢地握住。不願示弱的人應加緊工作，在他有生之日，愈加勤奮而忠實地工作下去。

讓我們都為幸福和成功而工作。

〔註 釋〕

1. ancient times: 古代。
2. material gain: 物質的利益。
3. illusive: (adj.) 虛幻的。
4. slip away: 溜走。
5. leaky: (adj.) 漏的。
6. pail: (n.) 桶。
7. to go to seed: 衰頹。
8. faithfully: (adv.) 忠實地。

(5)

### Books

(Samuel Smiles)

Books possess an essence<sup>1</sup> of immortality.<sup>2</sup> They are



by far<sup>3</sup> the most lasting products of human effort. Temples and statues decay, but books survive. Time is of no account<sup>4</sup> with great thoughts, which are as fresh to-day as they first passed through their authors' minds, ages ago. What was said and thought still speak to us as vividly<sup>5</sup> as ever from the printed page. The only effect<sup>6</sup> of time has been to sift out the bad products; for nothing in literature can long survive but what is really good.

Books introduce us into the best society; they bring us into the presence of<sup>8</sup> the greatest minds that have ever lived. We hear what they said and did; we see them as if they were really alive; we sympathize with them, enjoy with them, grieve with them, their experience becomes ours, and we feel as if we were in a measure<sup>9</sup> with them in the scenes<sup>10</sup> which they describe.

## 〔譯 文〕

### 書 籍

書籍具有不朽的特質。它們是人類努力最能持久的產物。廟宇雕像都會毀朽，而書籍獨存。時間對偉大的思想是沒有關係的，偉大的思想從它們作者的心靈中出來，其新穎今昔無異。當年所說的，想的，依然活躍紙上。時間唯一的影響是汰去壞的作品；因為在文學上祇有好的東西才能長存。

書籍引導我們到上流社會，到最偉大的，思想家之前。我們聽到它們所說的，做的；我們看到他們，栩栩如生，我們同情它們，喜歡它們，為它們憂戚；它們的經歷變成我們的，我們覺得好像是它們描述的戲幕中一個角色。