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培根论人生

FRANCIS BACON

【英】弗兰西斯·培根 著



中英对照

Francis Bacon



读史使人明智，读诗使人聪慧，演算使人精密，哲理使人深刻，伦理学使人有修养，逻辑修辞使人善辩。

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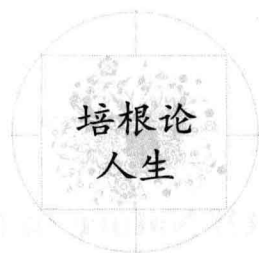


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培根论人生

Francis Bacon

[英] 弗兰西斯·培根 著



Of Nature In Men

Nature is often hidden; sometimes overcome; seldom extinguished. Force, makes nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse, makes nature less importune; but custom only does alter and subdue nature.

He that seeks victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great, nor too small tasks; for the first will make him dejected by often failings; and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings. And at the first let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders or rushes; but after a time let him practise with disadvantages, as dancers do with thick shoes. For it breeds great perfection, if the practice be harder than the use.

Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; like to him that would say over the four and twenty letters when he was angry; then to go less in quantity; as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths, to a draught at a meal; and lastly, to discontinue altogether.

But if a man have the fortitude, and resolution, to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:

He best asserts the soul's freedom, who snaps the fetters that gall his breast, and ceases once for all to suffer.

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature, as a wand, to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right, understanding it, where the contrary extreme is no vice.

论天性

人的天性虽然是隐而不露的，但却很难被压抑住，更很少能完全消除。即使勉强施以压力，也只会使它在压力消除后更加猛烈地爆发。只有经过长期养成的习惯才能多少改变人的天生气质和性格。

如果他想改变某种与生俱来的天性，那么，开始时，致力的目标既不要太高也不要太低。目标太高会由于难以达到而灰心；目标太小则会由于收效缓慢而进步不大。在开始的时候不妨做些能鼓励自己情绪的事情，犹如初学游泳者借助于漂筏一样。过一段时间以后，再从严从难要求自己，犹如舞蹈演员穿着笨重的鞋一样。这种苦练比实用还难，所以其效果更好。

如果某种天性太顽强，太难克服，就需要循序渐进：首先，要长时间地严格管束自己，比如说有的人每当生气时，就在心中暗诵24个字母以克制心中的怒气。从一点一滴逐渐做起，比如有人在戒酒时，采用每天比前一天少喝一点的办法，最后完全戒掉。

不过，如果一个人有毅力和决心，能断然强制自己、使自己脱胎换骨，那是最令人钦佩的人：

灵魂最自由的人，就是那种一举挣断铁锁的人，能挣脱那勒住胸膛的束缚。

还有一种古老的法则，矫枉不妨过正，用相反的习惯来改造天性，也是不错的。但要注意，那另一极端不要是又一种不良习惯才好。

Let not a man force a habit upon himself, with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission. For both the pause reinforces the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect, be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors, as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this, but by seasonable intermissions.

But let not a man trust his victory over his nature, too far; for nature will lay buried a great time, and yet revive, upon the occasion or temptation. Like as it was with Aesop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end, till a mouse ran before her. Therefore, let a man either avoid the occasion altogether; or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it.

A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that puts a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaves him.

They are happy men, whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, my soul has been a long sojourner; when they converse in those things, they do not affect.

In studies, whatsoever a man commands upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it, of themselves; so as the spaces of other business, or studies, will suffice.

A man's nature, runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

在培养某种好习惯的过程中，不必永远紧张，以便有机会经常回顾一下努力中的成绩和失误。一来因为稍事休整，会让新的进步得到巩固；二来设想一个并非完美的人，总是处于一味地练习状态，他会在强化了自己能力的同时，也助长了自己的缺点，而且这两者会并存于一种新的习惯中，如果不能在适当时加以调整，这种情形就会变得无法挽救。

人不能太信赖于克服他的天性。因为天性是狡猾的，它可以在他警惕时潜伏下来，放松时又再抬起头来。它就像伊索寓言中那只猫一样，虽然可以变成一个女人安安静静地坐在餐桌前，但当老鼠出现的时候，她就又情不自禁地要扑上去了。对于一个人来说，或者应该有自知之明地避免这种原形毕露的情况，或者干脆高度警惕地更多面对这种场合，利用这种机会考验自己。

在私生活中，人的天性是最容易显露的，因为那时人最不必掩饰。还有就是在一时冲动的情况下，冲动使人忘记了自制。另外就是在某种新的环境或试探状态中，因为这让他离开了旧的环境而不习惯。

有些人的天性与他的职业要求正相适合，这是很幸福的事。否则，当他们从事着自己并不热爱的事业时，就会埋怨道：“我的灵魂一直处于漂泊状态。”那些能强迫自己做与其天性不适合的事业的人，他们是不会受什么影响的。

比如在治学方面，对于最不喜欢的学科，就要强迫自己遵守固定的时间。但对于那喜欢的学科，时间就不必受任何限制，因为潜意识会自然带着你向前跑去的，只是在做其他事情或研究之余，时间就能被充分运用。

天性好比种子，它既能开出香花，也可能长成毒草。所以，人应当时时检查，以浇灌前者而拔除后者。

Of Goodness and Goodness of Nature

I take goodness in this sense, the affecting of the weal of men, which is that the Grecians call philanthropia; and the word humanity (as it is used) is a little too light to express it.

Goodness I call the habit, and goodness of nature, the inclination. This of all virtues, and dignities of the mind, is the greatest; being the character of the Deity. The desire of power in excess, caused the angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess, caused man to fall: but in charity there is no excess; neither can angel, nor man, come in danger by it.

The inclination to goodness, is imprinted deeply in the nature of man; insomuch, that if it issue not towards men, it will take unto other living creatures; as it is seen in the Turks, a cruel people, who nevertheless are kind to beasts, and give alms to dogs and birds: insomuch, as Busbechius reported, a Christian boy, in Constantinople, had like to have been stoned, for gagging in a waggishness a long-billed fowl.

Errors indeed in this virtue of goodness, or charity, may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb, *Tanto buon che val niente*: "so good, that he is good for nothing". And one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel, had the confidence to put in writing, almost in plain terms, "That the Christian faith, had given up good men, in prey to those that are tyrannical and unjust". Which he spoke, because indeed there was never law, or sect, or opinion, did so much magnify goodness, as the Christian religion does.

Seek the good of other men, but be not in bondage to their faces or fancies; for that is but facility, or softness; which takes an honest mind prisoner. Neither give thou Aesop's cock a gem, who would be better

论善良

我认为善良的定义就是对人类有益。古希腊人把它称为“博爱”或者“人道精神”，但相比“善良”一词，意义还是没有那么深。

善良还被称为是一种习惯，善的天性是一种倾向。善良是人类的一切精神和道德品格中最伟大的一种。因为上帝本身就是“善良”。过分地追求权势曾使得撒旦堕落成魔鬼，过分地求知也曾使人类的祖先失去乐园，但唯有善良的品格，无论对于天使还是人类，都永远不会因为过分而有危险。

善良的意愿根植于人的天性之中，如果这种仁爱之心不施于人，也会施之于其他生物的。人们都说土耳其是一个凶悍的民族，但他们对狗和鸟等动物却很仁善，还对狗和鸟常施予救助。据伯斯贝丘斯的记述，有一个基督教的男孩在君士坦丁堡，由于戏弄一只鸟，差点被当地人用石块打死。

这种善良的美德，有时也可能会犯错误。所以意大利有句嘲讽话：“过分善良，就是傻瓜。”学者马基雅弗利曾自信而直率地写道：“基督教的信仰使善良的人成为软弱的羔羊，以供那些残暴和非正义的人享用。”他之所以这样说，是因为的确没有哪个法律、宗教或学说，像基督教那样更鼓励对人类的博爱了。

我们要施善与人，但不要被有些人的假面具和私欲所欺弄，而变得太轻信或心肠太软。轻信和软心肠常常诱使诚实的人进入牢笼。比如我们就绝不应该把一颗珍珠赠给《伊索寓言》里的那只公鸡，因为一颗米粒更能让它感到快乐和幸福。

pleased, and happier, if he had had a barley-corn.

The example of God, teaches the lesson truly: "He sends his rain, and makes his sun to shine, upon the just and unjust".

But he does not rain wealth, nor shine honour and virtues, upon men equally. Common benefits, are to be communicate with all; but peculiar benefits, with choice. And beware how in making the portraiture, you break the pattern. For divinity, makes the love of ourselves the pattern; the love of our neighbours, but the portraiture." Sell all you have, and give it to the poor, and follow me": but, sell not all you have, except you come and follow me; that is, except you have a vocation, wherein you may do as much good, with little means as with great; for otherwise, in feeding the streams, you dry the fountain.

Neither is there only a habit of goodness, directed by right reason; but there is in some men, even in nature, a disposition towards it; as on the other side, there is a natural malignity. For there be, that in their nature do not affect the good of others. The lighter sort of malignity, turns but to a crassness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficulties, or the like; but the deeper sort, to envy and mere mischief. Such dispositions, are the very errors of human nature; and yet they are the fittest timber, to make great politics of; like to knee timber, that is good for ships, that are ordained to be tossed; but not for building houses, that shall stand firm.

The parts and signs of goodness, are many. If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island, cut off from other lands, but a continent, that joins to them. If he be compassionate towards the afflictions of others, it shows that his heart is like the noble tree, that is wounded itself, when it gives the balm. If he easily pardons, and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries; so that he cannot be shot. If he be thankful for small benefits, it shows that he weighs men's minds, and not their trash. But above all, if he have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an anathema from Christ, for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.

上帝的所为给了我们真正的启示：“他使太阳照耀好人，也同样照耀坏人；降雨给行善的，也给作恶的。”

但上帝绝不把财富、荣誉和才能给每个人平均分配。泛泛的恩惠施与众人，但特殊的恩泽却有所选择。另外要小心，我们在做好事时，不要先毁了自己。神告诉我们：要像别人爱你那样爱别人——“去卖掉你所有的财产，赠给穷人，把财富积存在天上，然后跟我来。”但除非你已决意要跟我一道走，否则还是不要把你的一切都卖掉。也就是说，除非你有特殊的才能可以以一当十，用很少的资源做很多的事情，否则，你就等于以微泉去灌注大河，微泉干了，大河水却未见增加。

世间不是只有一种公正之理所引导善的习性。在某些人身上，甚至是天性中，既有一种向善的性格，也有天然向善的倾向。那种虚荣、急躁、固执的性格还不是最坏的，最可恶的乃是嫉妒和祸害他人。这些人在别人有难时幸灾乐祸，甚至永远都在落井下石。这种人也许是做政客的材料，他们犹如弯曲的木头，可以造船，因为船是注定要在海里颠簸的；但却不可以建造坚固的房子，因为那是必须能立定脚跟的。

善的内容和标志有很多。如果一个人能对陌生人也仁慈有礼，那么，他就可以被称作是一个“世界公民”。他的心并不是与大陆隔绝的孤岛，而是使岛屿相连的大陆。如果他对其他人的痛苦有同情之心，那他的心必定是非常美好的，犹如那流出汁液为人疗治伤痛的珍贵树木——宁可自己受伤也要帮助别人。如果他容易原谅和宽恕别人的罪过，证明他的心是植根于别人伤害不到的地方的，因此他不可能被击垮。如果他并不轻视别人对他的帮助，而是充满感激，那就证明他更重视的乃是善心而不是钱财。最后，他如果具有圣保罗的尽善尽美，他将有望成为一个为了拯救同胞而不惜被逐出教门的人，那么他就必定超越了凡世，而具有了主耶稣的品格。

Of Honour and Reputation

The winning of honour, is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth, without disadvantage. For some in their actions, do woo and affect honor and reputation, which sort of men, are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired. And some, contrariwise, darken their virtue in the show of it; so as they be undervalued in opinion.

If a man perform that, which has not been attempted before; or attempted and given over; or has been achieved, but not with so good circumstance; he shall purchase more honour, than by effecting a matter of greater difficulty or virtue, wherein he is but a follower. Honour that is gained and broken upon another, has the quickest reflection, like diamonds cut with facets. And therefore, let a man contend to excel any competitors of his in honour, in outshooting them, if he can, in their own bow. Discreet followers and servants, help much to reputation: "All reputation comes from those who are of a man's household."

Envy, which is the canker of honour, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends, rather to seek merit than fame; and by attributing a man's successes, rather to divine Providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy.

The true marshalling of the degrees of sovereign honour, are these: In the first place are founders of states and commonwealths; such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Caesar, Ottoman, Ismael. In the second place are lawgivers; which are also called second founders, or Princes in perpetuity, because they govern by