



外语教学指导与学术研究系列丛书

Translation of the Selected Historical and
Cultural Masterworks by Celebrated
British and American Writers

英美名家历史文化 名篇选译

◎ 黄 吟 等 译著



北京理工大学出版社

BEIJING INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PRESS

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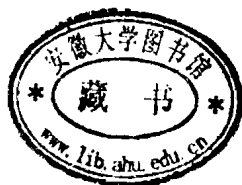
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黄 吟 王力思

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内 容 简 介

本书出版的主要目的是为了顺应国家大力发展文化产业国策的需要,提高广大读者的文化素养,增加他们的人文社会知识。本书主要选取了英美著名作家所撰写的历史文化名篇,如历史名人拿破仑、哥伦布、约翰王和狮心王理查等。同时还精选了英美著名作家的散文名篇,如华盛顿·欧文的《艾汶河畔的斯特拉特福德》《圣诞节》;美国20世纪初著名作家詹姆斯·鲍德温的《罗马城的建成》;丹尼尔·韦伯斯特的《约翰·亚当斯的假想演说》;罗伯特·格林·英格索尔的《战争的图景》等著名作品及英国著名的词典编撰家、著名散文作家塞缪尔·约翰生的《描绘诗人》等名篇,作为翻译的原语材料。全书本着“信、达、雅”的翻译原则,进行翻译以飨读者。

本书体裁多样,有散文、短篇小说和故事,难易适度,适用于各类读者。本书可以使读者通过阅读对西方历史文化有一定的了解,尤其对青年一代提高人文社会素养大有裨益。

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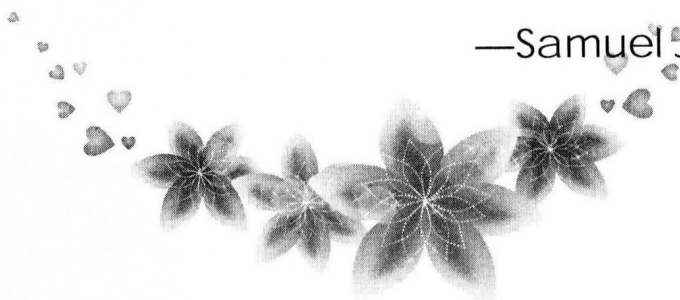
Contents

1	THE POET DESCRIBED	1
	描绘诗人	4
2	NAPOLEON BONAPARTE	8
	拿破仑·波拿巴	12
3	CHRISTMAS	16
	圣诞节	22
4	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS	28
	克里斯托夫·哥伦布	32
5	STRATFORD-ON-AVON	35
	艾汶河畔的斯特拉特福德	53
6	WASHINGTON'S ADDRESS TO HIS TROOPS	68
	华盛顿致军队出征演讲	69
7	AN OLD-FASHIONED SCHOOL	71
	老式学校	74
8	A LETTER TO HIS SON	77
	致儿子的信	78
9	A VISION OF WAR	80
	战争的图景	82
10	SUPPOSED SPEECH OF JOHN ADAMS	84
	约翰·亚当斯的假想演说	86

11	PENELOPE'S WEB	89
	佩内洛普之网	101
12	THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK	112
	铁面人	115
13	KING JOHN AND THE MAGNA CHARTER	118
	约翰王与大宪章	121
14	KING JOHN AND PRINCE ARTHUR	124
	约翰王和亚瑟王子	130
15	"EUREKA!"	136
	阿基米德与浮力原理	139
16	KING RICHARD AND BLONDEL	141
	狮心王理查与伯隆戴尔	148
17	WEBSTER AND THE WOODCHUCK	154
	韦伯斯特和土拨鼠	157
18	FREDERICK BARBAROSSA	160
	弗瑞得瑞克·巴巴罗西亚	166
19	HOW ROME WAS FOUNDED	171
	罗马城的建成	184
20	THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT VESUVIUS	195
	维苏威火山的喷发	198
	作家简介	202

1. THE POET DESCRIBED

—Samuel Johnson



Dr. Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield, on the 18th of September, 1709, in which city his father was a bookseller. He was placed at Pembroke College, Oxford, but the straitened circumstances of his father compelled him to leave the university without taking a degree. He became usher in a school at Market Bosworth, married in 1736, and with a little fortune that his wife brought him, set up a school, which was unsuccessful. In company with his pupil, David Garrick, he came to London. For many years he was a literary drudge for periodical works, ill-paid, neglected by the great, unknown to the small reading public whom he addressed. At length his great talents and acquirements forced their way into notice. He completed his English Dictionary in 1755. His *Rambler* and his *Imitations of Juvenal* had previously given him a high rank amongst the original writers of his day. In 1762 a pension of three hundred a year was bestowed upon him, and from that time to his death in 1784 his wife was a happy one as far as worldly circumstances were concerned. The following extract is from his *Rasselas*. It is one of the many examples which his writings present of the occasional largeness of his critical views when applied to the general principles of poetry — a

characteristic singularly in contrast with the narrowness with which he regards particular styles and individual authors.

Whenever I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which men would pay to the angelic nature. And it yet fills me with wonder, that in almost all countries the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent which it received by accident at first; or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing for those that followed them but transcriptions of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed, that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers, of art; that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors; I could never describe what I had not seen; I could not hope to move those with delight or terror whose interests and options I did not understand.

Being now resolved to be a poet, I was everything with a new purpose: my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified; no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for

images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination; he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, the meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety; for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

“All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study, and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers.” (Taken from *Rasselas*)

“In so wide a survey,” said the prince, “you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived, till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I never beheld before, or never heeded.” (Taken from *Rasselas*)

“The business of a poet,” said Imlac, “is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.”

But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet, he must

be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition, observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions, and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondency of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstract and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; condemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations, as a being superior to time and place.

His labor is not yet at an end: he must know many languages, and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony.

1. 描绘诗人

——塞缪尔·约翰生

塞缪尔·约翰生博士于1709年9月18日出生于里克菲尔德市。他父亲在此开了一家书店。他就读于牛津大学彭布罗克学院，然而家里的困顿境地使他未能获得学位就离开了学校。他做了与马克特勃斯沃斯一家学校的门房，并于1736年结婚，本打算依靠他妻子带来的一点财产办一所学校，但未能如愿。在他的学生戴维·盖

瑞克的陪伴下，他来到伦敦，在一家期刊社做单调乏味的工作多年，收入微薄。在很长一段时间内，他不仅被文坛大师所忽视，而且也不被他曾致过信的读者所知，而最终还是以自己的卓越天分引起了读者们的注意。他于 1755 年编撰了第一部英语词典。他的《漫谈者》和《仿罗马诗人朱维纳尔》早已使他位居同期原创作家之上。1762 年他获取了一年 300 镑的养老金。从那时起到 1784 年他离世为止，就普通人生活境况而言，他的妻子生活得就十分惬意。本文引自他的《雷塞拉斯》一文。该文是约翰生偶尔把他运用于泛泛诗歌创作的总体批评观与他所推崇的独特的诗歌风格及具有个性的诗人作以对照的范例之一。

无论我走到何处，都会发现诗歌总会被看做是最高的学问；也总会被看做是某种满怀敬意走近那些在其诗作中表达天使般圣洁的人们的学问。然而，使我为之惊叹的是几乎所有国家绝大多数古代诗人都被奉为最佳诗人；不是其他哪种知识都被认为是不断习得之物而只有诗歌是具有灵感的天赐之物。不管哪个国家的第一首诗都会为其国人惊为新奇事物，往往首先被看做是增光添色之物，时不时会受到赞誉。或是说描绘自然，描述激情皆属于诗歌的范畴，二者不尽相同。最初，作家掌握最典型的事物作为描述对象，充分利用最可能发生的事件。创作小说的素材不会为那些作者留下任何对同一素材改编及同一人物形象再塑的可能。无论是何原因，这一点是有目共睹的。最初作家拥有自然，而他们的效仿者拥有艺术。前者以气势和创造见长；后者则以优雅和精致为佳。

我渴望把我的名字加在这个卓越的兄弟会——诗歌界。我拜读了波斯和阿拉伯的诗作，我对悬挂在麦加清真寺的宗卷开口能诵。但我很快发现无人能借助效仿他人而伟大。我那追求卓越的愿望迫使我把注意力转向自然、转向生活。自然是我的主题，人们是我的听众，我只把我用心看到的一切加以描述。我未曾打算把因兴奋或恐惧而带来的兴趣和选择舍弃，无论我对其理解如何。

现在决心做一位诗人，带着这个新目标去体验一切。我关注的范畴突然扩大了；我不会忽略任何一种知识。我漫游于群山荒漠之间去寻找意象和外貌的特征，我在脑海里描绘森林中的每棵树；山谷里的每朵花；我同样留意观察峭崖的石块；宫殿的小尖塔。时而，我沿着曲折蜿蜒的溪流漫步；时而，我凝望夏季云朵的变幻。对于诗人来说，万物皆可入诗。无论是美还是可怕都会活跃于诗人的想象之中。诗人必须熟知万物，大到宏伟，小到优雅。花园中的植物，林中的动物，土壤中的矿藏，天上的陨星都需与不枯竭的万物贮存于诗人的脑海之中。因为每个观点都会对道德或宗教教义的诠释或实施大有裨益，拥有最大意愿的诗人就会具有最大力量，把他的场景多样化，同时使用最悠久的典故和意想不到的教诲来满足读者。

因此我要悉心研究大自然的所有风貌，我环视的每个国家都为我的诗作增添了力量。

你环视的地域如此之广，王子说道，你一定会遗漏很多尚未观察的东西。直到现在我还一直生活在这群山的怀抱。然而我可以走到山外看一看我前所未见或未曾留意的东西。

虚构的哲学家说：“诗人的职责就是去探查。探查的对象不是个体，而是总体，就是评论事物的根本属性和基本特征。诗人不会去查数郁金香的条纹或者描绘苍郁森林的浓淡，诗人是要在他描绘的大自然画卷中展示这些如此显著而引人注目的基本特征，作为唤起每个人脑海中新颖独特的记忆，那么他就要忽略事物属性中的被一些人强调过的而又被另一些人所忽略的细微差别，而这些细微差别同万物的基本属性相比，俨然就像戒备森严与漫不经心。”

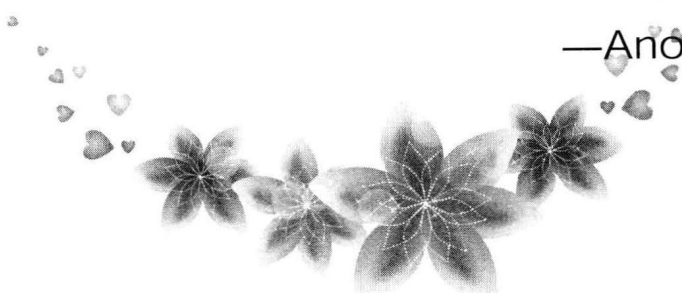
然而把握自然知识只是诗人职责的一半。诗人必须要照样了解各种各样的生活方式。诗人的特性要求他去体味每种场合的幸福与痛苦，去观察它们结合中迸发的力量和激情，去捕捉人类的思想偶尔因受各种社会制度、习惯风气的影响所发生的变化，从孩童的活

泼到垂垂老矣的无奈。诗人必须摒弃他对不同时代和国家的偏见；诗人必须考虑在他们那抽象不变的状态下的是非曲直；诗人必须漠视现有法令和世俗观点，增进自己对普通与超自然永不改变真理的认识。因此，诗人必须耐于自己声名建立的缓慢，表明他不接受他那个时代人们对他的颂扬，主张子孙后裔的正义。诗人必须作为自然的解说者，人类的立法者而创作，作为一个凌驾于时空之上的长者设身处地地为子孙后代思想和行为负责。

诗人的劳作尚未结束：他必须通晓多种语言，多门学科；他的诗作风格需与他的思想匹配；他必须通过不断的训练使自己熟谙每种言辞的精妙，每种和谐的雅致。

2. NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

—Anonymous



To trace the wild and irregular grandeur of his career, to mark the splendor of his rise or the gloom of his declension would be to record those extraordinary events which have rendered the last thirty years the most important period in the history of the world. The memory of these occurrences comes upon us as the remembrance of a fearful vision. It is scarcely of the earth. It is like the dim legend of a fabulous generation. We might almost doubt of the important part which this man has acted on the great stage of the world because the last act of his “strange, eventful history” has been one of oblivion and obscurity; because he has lain down, like the commonest amongst us, pining with despondency and wasting with disease, to die in silence and solitude, with not a recollection of his glory about him. But his career has been one which can never be forgotten, either in its power or in its guilt. He will be the great mark of the age. For this is the man that carried revolutionary France in triumph through Europe — this is he that raised himself to the consular chair — this is he that sat down on the throne of the ancient kings of France, and put the iron crown of Italy upon his brow — this is he that kings and emperors bowed before, and that held queens captive,

and gave princesses in dower — this is he that conquered at Jena and Austerlitz — this is he that seized upon the crown of Spain — this is he that defied the frosts, as well as the hardy soldiers of the north, and fell before their united fury — this is he that the power of England drove out of Spain — this is he that abdicated the throne to which the revolution had raised him — this is he that leapt a second time into the seat of his usurpation, and whose power crumbled into dust on the day of Waterloo.

The character of Bonaparte was in itself remarkable, but it is probable under ordinary circumstances, and in a tranquil state of society, he would have acquired only a secondary distinction. He naturally possessed talents of a superior order, but they were not the talents of a man who would have made himself great in any situation. He was ready in expedients, acute, and penetrating. He understood the human heart, and knew how to assail mankind through their passions, their vanities, or their prejudices; above all, he was intensely selfish, and when possessed of power, that selfishness stood him in the place of solid principles and consistent modes of action, by setting up his own will as his infallible guide, and determining him to act up to its dictates, however warned by the common obligations of humanity or justice, by the fear of God, or, what is more important to a selfish mind, by an apprehension for his own security. But Bonaparte was not a great man in the proper acceptation of greatness. He possessed no heart and no imagination; he was ignorant in some of the commonest branches of human knowledge; he wanted eloquence to sway individuals and bodies of men to his purposes; he was cunning and calculating, but his prudence did not grasp any wide extent of action; he was almost ridiculously tenacious of his personal safety; he was as imbecile in adversity, as he was tyrannous in prosperity.

Bonaparte was a man that could not have succeeded except in a revolutionary period, amongst a people led away by pretence and

arrogance, and in a state of society where there was no great strength of moral perception. Had he appeared in England, he would probably have died a captain of artillery. His morose habits — his reserve — his contempt of the decencies of life, would have been an infallible bar to his advancement. Amongst a moral people the post of honor is not to be taken by storm. But Bonaparte rose in France by the very force of those qualities which, under ordinary circumstances, would have kept him down. In the revolutionary war he soon acquired opportunities of distinguishing himself, and he soon contrived to render services to the republic which any other than one sacrificing everything to ambition would willingly have avoided. He obtained the command of the army of Italy; his own character of the revolution led him on to success. The secret of his triumphs is now easily understood. He fought against commanders conducting the great game of warfare upon a regular and formal system of tactics, at the least expense, at the least possible waste of human life, and with a prudence which, if it did not insure victory, did not render retreat hopeless. Bonaparte always set his fortune “upon a cast.” He won everything by risking everything; he would assign thousands and tens of thousands of his own men to certain destruction, to insure the safety of the remainder; where other generals paid for the subsistence of their forces, Bonaparte plundered. Such a system was new, and was therefore terrific. The world saw the activity with which he moved great masses of men, the fearlessness with which he attacked superior force, his contempt of the elements and of the barriers opposed by rivers and mountains to military movements — and whilst they wondered they were lost. He continued this practice from the commencement of his career to its close — from the passage of the Alps to the flight from Moscow. We may form some idea of the wholesale destruction of human life which this system induced, by knowing that the