

【 中文导读英文版 】



The Essays of Michel de Montaigne
Book the Second

蒙田随笔全集

[法] 蒙田 著
王勋 纪飞 等 编译

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内 容 简 介

《蒙田随笔》是文艺复兴后期法国著名作家、思想家蒙田的代表作，也是迄今为止世界上最有影响的散文作品之一。作者将自己的生活、阅读和旅游见闻等以随笔的形式记录下来，集结为随笔集。在随笔集中，蒙田以单个人为起点直至描写人的共性与本性，从日常生活、传统习俗到人生哲理等等无所不谈。蒙田以智者的眼光，旁征博引，鉴古知今，反思探索人与人生；他主张打破古典权威，张扬人性自由，崇尚科学精神。随笔语调平和、通俗易懂，论述深入浅出，是一部真正的“大众哲学”。该书问世 400 多年来，先后被译成世界上几十种语言，成为文学史上影响深远的经典之作。作者对人生、社会、宗教等的感想及感悟感染了一代又一代读者的心灵。

无论作为语言学习的课本，还是作为通俗的散文读本，本书对当代中国的读者，特别是青少年都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每章的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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米歇尔·德·蒙田（Michel de Montaigne, 1533—1592），文艺复兴后期法国著名的思想家、文学家。

蒙田 1533 年 2 月 18 日出生于法国南部佩里戈尔地区蒙田城堡的一个贵族家庭。他的父亲是一位继承了丰厚家产的商人，还多次被任命为波尔多市市长。1549 年，蒙田进入图卢兹大学学习法律，毕业后进入法院工作。1562 年，他在巴黎高等法院宣誓效忠天主教。之后，蒙田曾两次任波尔多市市长。1568 年，在父亲去世之后，蒙田成了蒙田城堡的领主。1571 年，蒙田回到蒙田城堡，开始隐居读书生活。

自 1571 年起一直到他逝世，蒙田在隐居阅读、游历和生活中随时写下了许多心得体会，并称之为随笔。1580 年，《随笔》第一卷和第二卷出版。1592 年 9 月 13 日，蒙田逝世。1595 年，在他去世三年后，《蒙田随笔》全集（共三卷）出版。蒙田以博学著称，在《蒙田随笔》全集中，日常生活、传统习俗、宗教、人生哲理等等无所不谈，特别是旁征博引了许多古希腊、罗马时代作家的论述。书中，作者还对自己作了大量的描写与剖析，使人阅读起来有娓娓而谈的亲切之感，增加了作品的文学趣味。《蒙田随笔》是 16 世纪各种思潮和各种知识经过分析的总汇，有“生活的哲学”之美称。书中语言平易通畅，富于生活情趣，在法国散文史上占有非常重要的地位。

1613 年，《蒙田随笔》被译成英语；1633 年，被译成意大利语……出版 400 多年来，《蒙田随笔》先后被译成世界上几十种语言，在世界各地拥有无数的忠实读者。蒙田是启蒙运动以前法国的知识权威和批评家，是一位人类感情冷峻的观察家，也是对各民族文化，特别是西方文化进行冷静研究的学者。启蒙运动时期一大批文学巨匠，像英国的培根、法国的卢梭等都吸收借鉴了蒙田随笔的风格，他因此被后人尊奉为随笔的鼻祖。从他的思想和感情来看，人们可以把他看成是那个时代出现的一个现代人。



该书曾入选英国作家毛姆开列的“真正杰作文学书”书目和美国学者唐斯开列的“塑造当代文明的 111 本书”书目。

在中国,《蒙田随笔》同样是广大读者喜爱的世界经典散文作品之一,该作品的版本数量有数十个。基于这个原因,我们决定编译该作品,并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中,我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓,也尽可能保留原作的叙述主线。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文文本之前,可以先阅读中文导读部分,这样有利于了解故事背景,从而加快阅读速度。我们相信,该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者,特别是青少年读者的科学素养和人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、熊金玉、李丽秀、熊红华、王婷婷、孟宪行、胡国平、李晓红、贡东兴、陈楠、邵舒丽、冯洁、王业伟、徐鑫、王晓旭、周丽萍、熊建国、徐平国、肖洁、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平,书中难免会有不当之处,衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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第一章 论行为的变化无常

Chapter 1 Of the Inconstancy of Our Actions



人的行为很少是连贯和一致的，其自相矛盾和复杂多变，简直让人难以相信是一人所为。据说伯尼费斯八世教皇获取权力时像只狐狸，做起事来像头狮子，死时却像条狗。

从一个人的日常行为举止来判断这个人是有道理的，但由于人的行为和观念的内在不稳定性，我总是觉得：即使最优秀的作家也会失误，他们倾向于把人塑造成始终如一的模式。尽管持久永恒被看作智慧的来源，但从历史中很难找到一些一生行为都恒久不变的人。我们像变色龙一样，随波逐流、随遇而安、翻来覆去、反复无常。我们对任何事情都不愿做出恒定决绝的选择。历史上小加图每前进一步都前后一致，像是和谐的乐章，而我们却与之相反。

以我之见，判断一个人要就事论事、具体问题具体分析才行，无须瞻前顾后，也不要借题发挥。听说一位少女为了拒绝一个下等兵的诱惑而跳楼自杀，但这个追求者并没有对她强求，她也不是那种拒人千里之外的少女。在战场上，很多士兵表现得异常勇敢，但将军派他去执行最危险的任务时他却拒绝了。其实，不管是被人激怒、形势所迫、酒意使然、朋友义气还是号角的引诱，都能激起人无畏的战斗精神：勇敢不是毫无缘由的，是由环境造就的。不能仅凭一次行为就断定他的精神，真正的勇士在任何场合都可以做出英勇的事迹。

无论是谁，只要从头到脚仔细地审查一遍自己，就会发现自己对外物的判断是前后不一的。我的心情也常常摇摆不定，如果我谈论自己时口吻

不一致，那是因为我当时就是那样认为自己的。没有人比亚历山大更勇敢，但那只是一时一地之勇，我们仍能发现他的脆弱之处。比如，他疑神疑鬼，还非常迷信。一位先贤说因为我们的出生是偶然的，所以我们的生活受偶然的支配也不足为奇。

我们所有的行为都是由个别的行动集合而成的。判断一个人，要看他长期的人生轨迹。美德一旦沁入人心，就会与心灵融为一体。只要读一下索福克勒斯写的悲剧，就可以驳倒他的儿子关于他治家无能的指控。应该从人的内心深处发现他的真正意图，但这项工作难度很大，还是少做为妙。

Such as make it their business to oversee human actions, do not find themselves in anything so much perplexed as to reconcile them and bring them into the world's eye with the same lustre and reputation; for they commonly so strangely contradict one another that it seems impossible they should proceed from one and the same person. We find the younger Marius one while a son of Mars and another a son of Venus. Pope Boniface VIII. entered, it is said, into his Papacy like a fox, behaved himself in it like a lion, and died like a dog; and who could believe it to be the same Nero, the perfect image of all cruelty, who, having the sentence of a condemned man brought to him to sign, as was the custom, cried out, "O that I had never been taught to write!" so much it went to his heart to condemn a man to death. All story is full of such examples, and every man is able to produce so many to himself, or out of his own practice or observation, that I sometimes wonder to see men of understanding give themselves the trouble of sorting these pieces, considering that irresolution appears to me to be the most common and manifest vice of our nature witness the famous verse of the player Publius:

"Malum consilium est, quod mutari non potest."

["'Tis evil counsel that will admit no change."

—Pub. Mim., ex Aul. Gell., xvii. 14.]

There seems some reason in forming a judgment of a man from the most usual methods of his life; but, considering the natural instability of our manners and opinions, I have often thought even the best authors a little out in so obstinately endeavouring to make of us any constant and solid contexture; they

choose a general air of a man, and according to that interpret all his actions, of which, if they cannot bend some to a uniformity with the rest, they are presently imputed to dissimulation. Augustus has escaped them, for there was in him so apparent, sudden, and continual variety of actions all the whole course of his life, that he has slipped away clear and undecided from the most daring critics. I can more hardly believe a man's constancy than any other virtue, and believe nothing sooner than the contrary. He that would judge of a man in detail and distinctly, bit by bit, would oftener be able to speak the truth. It is a hard matter, from all antiquity, to pick out a dozen men who have formed their lives to one certain and constant course, which is the principal design of wisdom; for to comprise it all in one word, says one of the ancients, and to contract all the rules of human life into one, "it is to will, and not to will, always one and the same thing: I will not vouchsafe," says he, "to add, provided the will be just, for if it be not just, it is impossible it should be always one." I have indeed formerly learned that vice is nothing but irregularity, and want of measure, and therefore 'tis impossible to fix constancy to it. 'Tis a saying of Demosthenes, "that the beginning oh all virtue is consultation and deliberation; the end and perfection, constancy." If we would resolve on any certain course by reason, we should pitch upon the best, but nobody has thought on't:

"Quod petit, spernit; repetit, quod nuper omisit;

AEstuat, et vitae disconvenit ordine toto."

["That which he sought he despises; what he lately lost, he seeks again. He fluctuates, and is inconsistent in the whole order of life."

—Horace, Ep., i. l. 98.]

Our ordinary practice is to follow the inclinations of our appetite, be it to the left or right, upwards or downwards, according as we are wafted by the breath of occasion. We never meditate what we would have till the instant we have a mind to have it; and change like that little creature which receives its colour from what it is laid upon. What we but just now proposed to ourselves we immediately alter, and presently return again to it; 'tis nothing but shifting and inconsistency:

"Ducimur, ut nervis alienis mobile lignum."



["We are turned about like the top with the thong of others."

—Idem, Sat., ii. 7, 82.]

We do not go, we are driven; like things that float, now leisurely, then with violence, according to the gentleness or rapidity of the current:

"Nonne videmus,

Quid sibi quisque velit, nescire, et quaerere semper

Commutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit?"

["Do we not see them, uncertain what they want, and always asking for something new, as if they could get rid of the burthen."

—Lucretius, iii. 1070.]

Every day a new whimsy, and our humours keep motion with the time.

"Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse

Juppiter auctificas lustravit lumine terras."

["Such are the minds of men, that they change as the light with which father Jupiter himself has illumined the increasing earth."

—Cicero, Frag. Poet, lib. x.]

We fluctuate betwixt various inclinations; we will nothing freely, nothing absolutely, nothing constantly. In any one who had prescribed and established determinate laws and rules in his head for his own conduct, we should perceive an equality of manners, an order and an infallible relation of one thing or action to another, shine through his whole life; Empedocles observed this discrepancy in the Agrigentines, that they gave themselves up to delights, as if every day was their last, and built as if they had been to live for ever. The judgment would not be hard to make, as is very evident in the younger Cato; he who therein has found one step, it will lead him to all the rest; 'tis a harmony of very according sounds, that cannot jar. But with us 't is quite contrary; every particular action requires a particular judgment. The surest way to steer, in my opinion, would be to take our measures from the nearest allied circumstances, without engaging in a longer inquisition, or without concluding any other consequence. I was told, during the civil disorders of our poor kingdom, that a maid, hard by the place where I then was, had thrown herself out of a window to avoid being forced by a common soldier who was quartered in the house; she was not killed by the fall, and therefore, repeating her attempt would have cut

her own throat, had she not been prevented; but having, nevertheless, wounded herself to some show of danger, she voluntarily confessed that the soldier had not as yet importuned her otherwise; than by courtship, earnest solicitation, and presents; but that she was afraid that in the end he would have proceeded to violence, all which she delivered with such a countenance and accent, and withal embrued in her own blood, the highest testimony of her virtue, that she appeared another Lucretia; and yet I have since been very well assured that both before and after she was not so difficult a piece. And, according to my host's tale in Ariosto, be as handsome a man and as worthy a gentleman as you will, do not conclude too much upon your mistress's inviolable chastity for having been repulsed; you do not know but she may have a better stomach to your muleteer.

Antigonus, having taken one of his soldiers into a great degree of favour and esteem for his valour, gave his physicians strict charge to cure him of a long and inward disease under which he had a great while languished, and observing that, after his cure, he went much more coldly to work than before, he asked him what had so altered and cowed him: "Yourself, sir," replied the other, "by having eased me of the pains that made me weary of my life." Lucullus's soldier having been rifled by the enemy, performed upon them in revenge a brave exploit, by which having made himself a gainer, Lucullus, who had conceived a good opinion of him from that action, went about to engage him in some enterprise of very great danger, with all the plausible persuasions and promises he could think of;

"Verbis, quae timido quoque possent addere mentem"

["Words which might add courage to any timid man."

—Horace, Ep., ii. 2, 1, 2.]

"Pray employ," answered he, "some miserable plundered soldier in that affair":

"Quantumvis rusticus, ibit,

Ibit eo, quo vis, qui zonam perdidit, inquit,"

["Some poor fellow, who has lost his purse, will go whither you

wish, said he."—Horace, Ep., ii. 2, 39.]

and flatly refused to go. When we read that Mahomet having furiously



rated Chasan, Bassa of the Janissaries, because he had seen the Hungarians break into his squadrons, and himself behave very ill in the business, and that Chasan, instead of any other answer, rushed furiously alone, scimitar in hand, into the first body of the enemy, where he was presently cut to pieces, we are not to look upon that action, peradventure, so much as vindication as a turn of mind, not so much natural valour as a sudden despite. The man you saw yesterday so adventurous and brave, you must not think it strange to see him as great a poltroon the next: anger, necessity, company, wine, or the sound of the trumpet had roused his spirits; this is no valour formed and established by reason, but accidentally created by such circumstances, and therefore it is no wonder if by contrary circumstances it appear quite another thing.

These supple variations and contradictions so manifest in us, have given occasion to some to believe that man has two souls; other two distinct powers that always accompany and incline us, the one towards good and the other towards ill, according to their own nature and propension; so abrupt a variety not being imaginable to flow from one and the same source.

For my part, the puff of every accident not only carries me along with it according to its own proclivity, but moreover I discompose and trouble myself by the instability of my own posture; and whoever will look narrowly into his own bosom, will hardly find himself twice in the same condition. I give to my soul sometimes one face and sometimes another, according to the side I turn her to. If I speak variously of myself, it is because I consider myself variously; all the contrarieties are there to be found in one corner or another; after one fashion or another: bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; prating, silent; laborious, delicate; ingenious, heavy; melancholic, pleasant; lying, true; knowing, ignorant; liberal, covetous, and prodigal: I find all this in myself, more or less, according as I turn myself about; and whoever will sift himself to the bottom, will find in himself, and even in his own judgment, this volubility and discordance. I have nothing to say of myself entirely, simply, and solidly without mixture and confusion. 'Distinguo' is the most universal member of my logic. Though I always intend to speak well of good things, and rather to interpret such things as fall out in the best sense than otherwise, yet such is the strangeness of our condition, that we are often pushed on to do well even by



vice itself, if well-doing were not judged by the intention only. One gallant action, therefore, ought not to conclude a man valiant; if a man were brave indeed, he would be always so, and upon all occasions. If it were a habit of valour and not a sally, it would render a man equally resolute in all accidents; the same alone as in company; the same in lists as in a battle: for, let them say what they will, there is not one valour for the pavement and another for the field; he would bear a sickness in his bed as bravely as a wound in the field, and no more fear death in his own house than at an assault. We should not then see the same man charge into a breach with a brave assurance, and afterwards torment himself like a woman for the loss of a trial at law or the death of a child; when, being an infamous coward, he is firm in the necessities of poverty; when he shrinks at the sight of a barber's razor, and rushes fearless upon the swords of the enemy, the action is commendable, not the man.

Many of the Greeks, says Cicero, [Cicero, Tusc. Quaes., ii. 27.] cannot endure the sight of an enemy, and yet are courageous in sickness; the Cimbrians and Celtiberians quite contrary;

“Nihil enim potest esse aequabile,
quod non a certa ratione proficiscatur.”

[“Nothing can be regular that does not proceed from a fixed ground of reason.”—Idem, *ibid.*, c. 26.]

No valour can be more extreme in its kind than that of Alexander: but it is of but one kind, nor full enough throughout, nor universal. Incomparable as it is, it has yet some blemishes; of which his being so often at his wits' end upon every light suspicion of his captains conspiring against his life, and the carrying himself in that inquisition with so much vehemence and indiscreet injustice, and with a fear that subverted his natural reason, is one pregnant instance. The superstition, also, with which he was so much tainted, carries along with it some image of pusillanimity; and the excess of his penitence for the murder of Clytus is also a testimony of the unevenness of his courage. All we perform is no other than a cento, as a man may say, of several pieces, and we would acquire honour by a false title. Virtue cannot be followed but for herself, and if one sometimes borrows her mask to some other purpose, she presently pulls it away again. 'Tis a vivid and strong tincture which, when the soul has once



thoroughly imbibed it, will not out but with the piece. And, therefore, to make a right judgment of a man, we are long and very observingly to follow his trace: if constancy does not there stand firm upon her own proper base,

“Cui vivendi via considerata atque provisa est,”

[“If the way of his life is thoroughly considered and traced out.”

—Cicero, Paradox, v. 1.]

if the variety of occurrences makes him alter his pace (his path, I mean, for the pace may be faster or slower) let him go; such an one runs before the wind, “Avau le dent,” as the motto of our Talebot has it.

’Tis no wonder, says one of the ancients, that chance has so great a dominion over us, since it is by chance we live. It is not possible for any one who has not designed his life for some certain end, it is impossible for any one to arrange the pieces, who has not the whole form already contrived in his imagination. Of what use are colours to him that knows not what he is to paint? No one lays down a certain design for his life, and we only deliberate thereof by pieces. The archer ought first to know at what he is to aim, and then accommodate his arm, bow, string, shaft, and motion to it; our counsels deviate and wander, because not levelled to any determinate end. No wind serves him who addresses his voyage to no certain, port. I cannot acquiesce in the judgment given by one in the behalf of Sophocles, who concluded him capable of the management of domestic affairs, against the accusation of his son, from having read one of his tragedies.

Neither do I allow of the conjecture of the Parians, sent to regulate the Milesians sufficient for such a consequence as they from thence derived coming to visit the island, they took notice of such grounds as were best husbanded, and such country-houses as were best governed; and having taken the names of the owners, when they had assembled the citizens, they appointed these farmers for new governors and magistrates; concluding that they, who had been so provident in their own private concerns, would be so of the public too. We are all lumps, and of so various and inform a contexture, that every piece plays, every moment, its own game, and there is as much difference betwixt us and ourselves as betwixt us and others:

“Magnam rem puta, unum hominem agere.”

["Esteem it a great thing always to act as one and the same man."

—Seneca, Ep., 150.]

Since ambition can teach man valour, temperance, and liberality, and even justice too; seeing that avarice can inspire the courage of a shop-boy, bred and nursed up in obscurity and ease, with the assurance to expose himself so far from the fireside to the mercy of the waves and angry Neptune in a frail boat; that she further teaches discretion and prudence; and that even Venus can inflate boys under the discipline of the rod with boldness and resolution, and infuse masculine courage into the heart of tender virgins in their mothers' arms:

"Hac duce, custodes furtim transgressa jacentes,

Ad juvenem tenebris sola puella venit:"

["She leading, the maiden, furtively passing by the recumbent guards, goes alone in the darkness to the youth."

—Tibullus, ii. 2, 75.]

'Tis not all the understanding has to do, simply to judge us by our outward actions; it must penetrate the very soul, and there discover by what springs the motion is guided. But that being a high and hazardous undertaking, I could wish that fewer would attempt it.

第二章 论 饮 酒

Chapter 2 Of Drunkenness



罪恶虽然在本质上大同小异，但也有轻重之分。人人都会苛求别人，对自己十分宽容。不能因为别人懒惰、好色或不够虔诚，就有理由减轻自己良心上的负担。苏格拉底说：智慧的主要责任是区分善与恶。我们还要会区分不同的罪恶。

酗酒应该说是一种严重且粗暴的罪恶。这种罪恶摧残智力，损伤身体。人在失去理智不能自控时，会做出最丑恶的事。葡萄汁发酵时会使桶底的杂质往上漂浮，饮酒过度也会使心里的秘密不知不觉吐露。古代对这种罪恶似乎没有大声斥责，许多哲学家在著作中提到它时也是轻描淡写，但为人师表的加图就因爱酒而受人指责。

一切恶习都给我们带来快乐，也使我们遭受损失。我认为喝酒是一种无聊愚蠢的罪恶。比起染上其他恶习，染上这种恶习可以在良心上少受责备。我们一生追求的欢乐，必须有更大的时空来容纳，可以像工匠一样，念念不忘痛饮这个欲望，但这个习俗将一天天衰弱。

柏拉图告诫孩子在十八岁前不要喝酒，四十岁前不要喝醉，其后便可以尽情享用。好心的酒神迪奥尼修斯，给青年人带来欢乐，给老年人恢复青春，使灵魂的情欲变得温婉，像火使钢铁软化。醉酒对每个人都是一次积极的考验，对老年人来说又可以鼓起他们的勇气。酒可以调节心灵，增强体质，但是战争或公务时须禁止饮酒。

圣贤不论智慧如何，终究会在酒面前投降。人只能控制和压抑天性，却无力消灭天性。斯多葛说：“我宁可愤怒，也不愿沉湎。”只有灵魂摆脱常情向上升华时，才能指导人振奋腾飞。