



*Selected Readings  
From Stephen Leacock*

**利科克幽默作品选读**

李弃疾 主编 程建华 审订

中南工业大学出版社



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斯蒂芬·巴特勒·利科克

Stephen Butler Leacock, (1869—1944)

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## 序 言

斯蒂芬·利科克(Stephen Leacock)是加拿大一位享有国际声誉的幽默作家。由于他的幽默讽刺作品题材广泛,内容深刻,文笔风趣,语言生动,风格自成一派,饱含哲理,发人深省,而被誉为“加拿大的马克·吐温”。

利科克出生于英国,从小随父母移居加拿大。1891年毕业于多伦多大学。1903年获美国芝加哥大学政治经济博士学位。此后,一直在加拿大麦吉尔大学执教,长期担任该校教授兼政治经济系主任,直到1936年被迫退休。1944年,他以七十五岁高龄溘然长逝。

利科克是位多产作家,共出版政治、经济、文学著作近六十部,其中幽默作品多达二十七部。主要作品有《政治学要素》(Elements of Political Science, 1906);《文学上的失误》(Literary Lapses, 1910);《诙谐小说》(Nonsense Novels, 1911);《小镇艳阳录》(Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town, 1912);《闹老历险记》(Archdian Adventures with the Idle Rich, 1914);《我的一位了不起的叔叔》(My Remarkable Uncle, 1942);等等。《小镇艳阳录》是其代表作,并被公认为加拿大文学史上的一部经典著作。

利科克始终坚持做一个严肃的幽默家。他善于运用文学的各种形式,以笑的语言表达自己的人生哲学和个人感受。他的幽默固然使你发笑,但更重要的是发人深省。他的幽默饱含哲

理，他提醒人们去注意社会，认识社会，了解社会，提醒人们保持人性的尊严，他用辛酸的讽刺揭露现实社会的丑态，并对人间的悲剧给予深切的同情。他在《我的幽默观》一文中，比较全面地总结了自己对幽默的看法：一是它的善意性，二是它的严肃性。他反复强调：“我认为好的幽默的本质就在于它必须不加害于人，不怀歹意。”“就我——我想就大多数人而言，幽默的首要条件是不伤害人，不存歹意，同时也不带来任何悲哀、痛苦或死亡的真实图景。”他猛烈地抨击了在西红柿里放沥青、在椅子上涂黄腊、在被子里放蒺藜、或往人家靴子里放活蛇那一类恶作剧。他也痛心疾首地谴责了那“像原罪一样粘在身上”的原始人的那种“幸灾乐祸的恶魔性幽默感和苏格兰幽默中所渲染的宁愿过苦难生活、在死亡的阴影中心甘情愿地承受可怖的事物的成分。”他认为幽默不应该是幸灾乐祸，而是对人间疾苦怀有惻隐之心。幽默应该是热的。幽默家只是把生活中的矛盾和极端用笑的语言把它揭示出来，使读者发出会心的笑。关于幽默的严肃性，利科克指出：“真正的幽默是很有价值、极为庄严、而又很难做到的。”他鄙视那些以名门贵冑为中心的空洞无物的“英国掌故”和围绕韦林顿公爵而大量编造出来的、内容单调、只剩骨架的打趣故事。他认为欧文·西曼所写的一首在《笨拙》(Punch)杂志上发表的幽默诗比坎特伯雷大主教写的一篇布道词要困难得多；马克·吐温的《哈克贝利·费恩历险记》要比康德的《纯粹理性批判》要伟大；狄更斯所作的匹克威克先生要比写出“光呵！仁慈地引导我，冲破周围的黑暗”这首颂诗的纽曼主教贡献更大，因为纽曼主教仅仅在悲惨世界的黑暗中叫喊着要光明，而狄更斯却给予了光明。因此，利科克认为，“就其最好及其最伟大的意义来说，幽默也许是我们人类文明最崇高的产物。”所有这些，都使他的幽默具有深刻的思想

性和严肃性。这是他的幽默作品赢得了国内外广大读者、并使他受到加拿大人民崇敬的原因。

利科克在他的作品中描写了各式各样的小人物,有小职员、出纳员、房东、演员、理发师、摄影师、魔术师…。这些都是加拿大社会生活中的小人物。复杂的社会环境使他们感到困惑,但他们继续按常规办事,努力保持自己的个性和尊严。作者通过这些小人物来揭露社会上种种不公道、不合理的现象,并对这些小人物寄予了深切的同情。《我的金融生涯》(My Financial Career)中的那位小职员便是一个典型的例子。银行的气氛使这位单纯胆怯的小职员神情紧张,以致弄巧成拙,大出洋相,狼狈不堪。但他竭力保持自己的个性和尊严。事过之后,干脆采取储藏的办法,避免再上银行,保存了自我。作品中小职员的慎重其事与银行职员、经理的轻蔑态度形成了强烈的反差,在某种程度上反映了当时的社会现实,使读者窥见了下层人民生活的困窘。利科克笔下的小人物是加拿大式的,既不是英国的,也不是美国的。他们是加拿大社会环境的产物,体现了加拿大人的一种自我保存的特性。

利科克的作品中,大量的幽默表现为语言幽默,即通过语言要素的变异使用和各种修辞方式的创造运用而造成的幽默。在这方面,利科克最常用的手法是比喻、荒诞、对照和夸张,使情节、性格和语言熔为一体,造成喜剧性的效果。例如,在《我的幽默观》(Humour As I See It)一文中,在回答英国一位评论家的“利科克教授所写的幽默,充其量也不过是夸张术和缩小术的结合而已”的评论时说,“这位仁兄说对了,他究竟是怎样摸索到这行当的,我不得而知。但是秘诀既然被人戳穿了,我就甘愿承认我长期的做法是:每逢写一篇幽默文章,我就跑到地窖里去,在半加仑的缩小剂中兑上一品脱的夸张剂。倘若



想叫文章带上显赫的文学味道，我发现最好再加上约摸半品脱局部麻醉剂，整个生产过程简便得惊人。”在这里，利科克把复杂的幽默创作比喻成简单的生产过程。采用“半加仑缩小剂”、“一品脱夸张剂”、“半品脱局部麻醉剂”的精细荒诞的夸张，再加上作者慎重其事的“招认”的讽刺手法，使整个情节产生了极大的幽默的效果，使人不禁为之捧腹。

利科克还强调，幽默具有民族特性。他坚信一个民族的社会环境、民族特点、和语言研究对幽默的重大影响。尽管他的幽默深受英国的狄更斯和美国的马克·吐温的影响，他多次表明，他的幽默既不同于英国的幽默，也不同于美国的幽默。他认为英国的幽默是以事实为基础的，而美国的幽默是以理想、有时甚至是幻想为前提。在英国《笨拙》杂志上，欧文·西曼爵士称利科克的幽默“本质上是英国的，但又吸收了美国式幽默的营养，因而融汇了大西洋两岸幽默的精华。”这未免有点夸大其词。但加拿大著名文学评论家瓦特兹的评论听起来不无道理：“利科克写的是加拿大式的幽默，是我们的民族特点形成了这种幽默，反过来，这种幽默又反映了我们民族的特点。正如美国幽默不同于英国幽默那样，利科克的幽默也不同于英国和美国的幽默。”那么，什么是加拿大幽默？瓦特兹先生在“斯蒂芬·利科克的加拿大幽默”一文中写道：“一种基于现实和理想之间的不调和，并且这种理想不断地遭到现实的反抗但又永远不会被消灭。这种幽默就是加拿大幽默。”利科克的幽默正是这种加拿大幽默。

利科克不仅是一位幽默的作家，而且是一位幽默的讲演家。他在去世前曾多次去英美各国作巡回式讲演，获得了巨大的成功。他曾很有风趣地说：“如果听众更加扩大，我恐怕非学中不可了。”如今，我们的幽默大师不必担心，他虽然没能来到

中国讲演，他的作品已在中国流传，他的声音已在中国传播，他的听众无疑将会更加扩大。

## 编者的话

随着我国对外开放，我国与世界各国之间在教育、文化、科技等方面的学术交流日益频繁。近年来，我国对加拿大的研究工作迅速开展，在全国各地涌现了一批加拿大研究中心。湖南加拿大研究中心正是在此情况下于一九九〇年一月正式成立的。中心的任务之一是开展对加拿大文学的学习和研究。这方面，我们得到了中南工业大学的大力支持，在外语系英语专业87级毕业班试开了加拿大文学课程。

加拿大英语文学是世界文学中较年青的部分，虽然才有二百年的历史，但它是加拿大自己的文学。研究、学习加拿大英语文学，必然要研究作家和作品。作为具有世界影响的幽默作家斯蒂芬·利科克及其作品自然是首屈一指。为此，经过一年来的教学实践和探索，我们选编了这本 Selected Readings From Stephen Leacock 《利科克幽默作品选读》。

本书共选编利科克一九一〇年至一九四二年的作品十七篇，按年代先后排列，题材多样，文体各异。其中如《我的金融生涯》、《怎样发大财》、《马里波莎银行之谜》、《我的一位了不起的叔叔》等等，都是利科克各个时期具有代表性的作品。在每篇文章之后，我们都附有内容提要与作品简析，并加了注释，便于阅读。此书可作为开设加拿大文学这门课程的教材之一，同时也可供加拿大文学、特别是利科克幽默文学的爱好者学习参

考。

在编写过程中，我们参阅了 Canadian Anthology (Carl. klinc); A Reader's Guide to the Canadian Novel (John Moss); Canadian Literature In English (W. J. Keith); The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature (William Joye); 《里科克幽默小品选》(肖乾); 《里科克和他的幽默创作》(兰仁哲); 《加拿大文学作品选讲》(黄仲文); 《加拿大幽默大师利科克》(张德中); 《加拿大研究第一期》(湖南加拿大研究中心)，在此谨深表谢忱。

在本书完成之际，我们首先感谢加拿大政府、加拿大驻华大使馆为本书之出版提供了赞助；感谢使馆文化处一秘 Ruth Hayhoe 博士为本书提供的帮助；感谢湖南加拿大研究会、湖南加拿大研究中心的一切支持。原中国驻加拿大大使馆一秘、现湖南加拿大研究中心程建华主任担任本书审订并作序。我们还要特别感谢中南工业大学校长王淀佐教授、周定之教授、外语系领导、以及中南工业大学出版社和国防科技大学印刷厂对加拿大文学课程之开设和本书之出版给予的大力支持和关照。此外，我们还在本课程第一期学员中选拔了优秀生贺敬葵、连昌日、杨晓岙在离校前夕参加本书的部分资料选编工作，这对他们无疑是个很好的实践和锻炼。

限于编者水平，时间匆促，疏漏或不当之处在所难免，恳请各位专家和读者不吝指正。

编者

一九九一年七月于长沙

## 1. My Financial Career [1]

When I go into a bank I get rattled. [2] The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank [3] and attempt to transact business [4] there, I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in [5] and looked timidly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account [6] must needs [7] consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked "Accountant." [8] The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added solemnly,

"alone." I don't know why I said "alone."

"Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket. [9]

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

"Yes," he said.

"Can I see you," I asked, "alone?" I didn't want to say "alone" again but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

---

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal. [10]

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock.

"We are safe from interruption here," he said, "sit down."

We both sat down and looked at each other. I found no voice to speak.

"You are one of Pinkerton's men, [11] I presume," he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

"No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seeming to imply that I came from a rival agency. [12]

"To tell the truth," I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it, [13] "I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank."

The manager looked relieved but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild [14] or a young Gould. [15]

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered, "I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly."

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account, he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning."

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good morning," I said, and stooped into the safe.

---

" Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him [16] with a quick convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick. [17]

My face was ghastly pale. [18]

" Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean, "Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us." [19]

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

" Is it deposited?" I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice. [20]

" It is," said the accountant.

Then I want to draw a cheque. "

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a cheque book through a wicket and someone else began telling me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. [21] I wrote something on the cheque and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

" What! Are you drawing it all out again?" he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. [22] I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with miser, I made a plunge. [23]

" Yes, the whole thing. "

---

" You withdraw your money from the bank?"

" Every cent of it. "

" Are you not going to deposit any more?" said the clerk, astonished.

" Never. "

" An idiot hope struck me [24] that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the cheque and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearful quick temper. [25]

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

" How will you have it?" he asked.

" What?"

" How will you have it?" [26]

" Oh, " — I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think — "in fifties. "

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

" And the six?" he asked dryly.

" In sixes, " I said.

He gave it to me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me I caught the echo of [27] a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. [28] I keep my money in cash [29] in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars [30] in a sock.

#### 内容提要与作品简析：

一位小职员怀揣五十六元的大款子，欲将其存入银行。他慎重其事地去找银行经理。银行的紧张气氛弄得他晕头转向、失去了自我控制而大出



洋相、狼狈不堪。他刚把钱存了进去，由于一时口误，又只好把钱如数取出，引起了满堂哄笑。为了维护自己的尊严，从此他不再迈入银行大门，把钱存在一只袜子里。

作者切取社会生活中的一个小断面，以漫画的形式勾画了一个单纯、胆怯，但又竭力维护自己尊严的小职员的形象。通过其荒诞的行为表象，揭示出作者对人性尊严的追求，提醒人们保持人的价值和尊严，也唤起了读者对小职员的同情。

**注释：**

1. My Financial Career: 我的金融生涯。
2. to get rattled: 神情紧张。
3. to cross the threshold of a bank: 踏入银行的大门。
4. to transact business: 打打交道；办点事。
5. to shamle in: 蹒跚地走了进去。
6. to open an account 开一往来户头。
7. must needs: 必须；不得不。(must needs = must; must 在此作副词)。
8. wicket marked "Accountant": 标着“会计”二字的(银行柜台的)小窗口。
9. I held ... in my pocket: 五十六元钱已经在我的口袋里捏成了一团。
10. an awful secret to reveal: 有一个了不得的机密要透露。
11. Pinkerton's: 平克顿(美国一著名私营侦探公司)。
12. seeming to imply ... rival agency: 仿佛在暗示我来自一家(与平克顿相竞争的)私营侦探公司。
13. as if I had been prompted to lie: 仿佛我刚才不得不撒个谎似的。
14. Baron Rothschild: 罗斯柴尔德男爵(德国银行家，其子是伦敦、维也纳银行家)。
15. Gould: 古尔德(美国金融家)。
16. to poke the ball of money at him: 把那团钞票朝他一掷。
17. doing a conjuring trick: 变戏法，玩魔术。
18. ghastly pale: 脸色苍白可怕。