

星火 5元 丛书

名人英语随笔

Essays of Elites



李广良 编著

中国对外经济贸易出版社

5 元丛书第三辑 英语名人名篇

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丛书主编 马德高 范希春

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

名人英语随笔/李广良编著 北京:中国对外经济贸易出版社, 2000. 8

(5 元丛书, 第三辑, 英语名人名篇/马德高, 范希春主编)
ISBN 7-80004-751-2

I. 名... II. 李... III. 英语-语言读物, 随笔
IV H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2000)第 41717 号

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中国对外经济贸易出版社出版

(北京安定门外大街东后巷 28 号)

邮政编码:100710

新华书店发行

山东省邹平县印刷厂印刷

787×1092 毫米 36 开本

印张:37.75 字数:880 千字

2000 年 8 月第 1 版

2000 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 7-80004-751-2

H · 110

全套定价:40.00 元

丛书致读者

腹中贮书一万卷，不肯低头在草莽。

这是中国历史上那位最为狂放的伟大诗人李白留下的最为令人怦然心动的诗句，也是每一位读书人的心里话。可以说，每一个人，从初涉人世起，就怀有一种渴望——那就是实现自身的价值。

本丛书所选的文章，全部出自名人之手，这些名人，不是一般意义上的 famous persons，而是严格意义上的 eminent，也就是说，这些人都是在人类文明发展史上做出过卓越贡献的人物——一群实现了自身价值的人物，属人中龙凤的那一类。

我们编辑出版这套丛书，目的就是要向读者提供最优秀的人创作的最经典的英文作品。

读其书而想见其人，只有读过了这些文章，你才能理解这些在不同领域做出了非凡成就的卓尔不群的人物，发现他们身上所折射出的人的光辉，明了人之所以为人的真谛。并体味他们成功的艰辛和快乐，失败时的沮丧和痛苦，从中汲取精神的力量，使自己变得深沉、积极、乐观起来，在人生的道路上奋然前行。

年轻的朋友们，学习最优秀的英文，学做最优秀的人，请自阅读本丛书始！

范希春

2000年6月18日

于中国社会科学院研究生院

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Of Studies
Francis Bacon

论学习

培根

【作者简介】

弗兰西斯·培根(Francis Bacon 1561—1626),英国哲学家、散文家。1573年入三一学院,由于对“不结果实的”亚里斯多德哲学感到厌恶,转而学习法律。1607年任副检查长,1613年任总检查长,1617年任掌玺大臣,1618年被封为大法官兼上院议长,1621年因受贿被解职。晚年从事著述。培根的道德品质虽颇为人所诟病,但在哲学史上,培根有十分重要的地位。重要著作有:《新大西岛》、《伟大的复兴》(未完成)和《随笔》等。

【作品原文】

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots^① and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is Affectation; to make judgement only

① plots=plans, 计划,非今日“阴谋”之意。

by their rules, is the humour^① of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large^②, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourses; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have^③ a great memory; if he confer little, he had need a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not^④. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtile^⑤; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic, and rhetoric, able to contend; *abeunt studia*

① Humour, 脾气(古义), 此处指怪癖。

② Too much at large, 不着边际。

③ Had need have = would require to have; ought to have.

④ doth not = does not.

⑤ subtile = subtle.

in mores ①. Nay, there is no stand nor impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen; for they are *cymini sectores* ②. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

【作品点评】

培根是“随笔”这一文学体裁在英国的创始人。他的《随笔》初版于1597年,经过1612年,1625年两次增补,最后共收短文58篇。在这些短小精练的随笔之中,培根以老辣的文笔,把自己毕生的经验和智慧贡献了出来,几百年来为人称道。本文谈读书的用处和方法,设想周到,见解圆融,平实可靠。文章以不容置辩的口气说话,显得非常自信,确是大家风范。

① *abeunt studia in mores*, 拉丁引语, 出处在古罗马诗人奥维德(公元前43—公元18)的《女英雄书信集》, 意为 *studies pass into the character*, 凡有所学, 皆成性格。

② *cymini sectores*, 拉丁引语, 意为过分讲究细节的人。

Of Wisdom for a Man's Self

Francis Bacon

论自私者的聪明

弗兰西斯·培根

【作品原文】

An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd^① thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society^②; and be so true to thy self, as thou be not false to others^③; specially to thy king and country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth^④. For that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens, move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince; because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to prince, or a citizen in republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands,

① shrewd, 阴险的, 有害的。

② divide with reason between self-love and society, 合理地兼顾自我与别人。Society 在此指与人来往或来往的人, 而不是近代意义的“社会”

③ as thou be not false to others, 此处 as 作 that 用, 与前文之 so 相接, 意为既忠实自己, 又忠实于别人。thou be=thou shalt be.

④ It is right earth, 意为 it is exactly like the earth. 就像地球一样。

he crooketh^① them to his own ends; which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state therefore let princes, or states, choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made but the accessory. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants which set a bias upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme selflovers, as they will set a house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them and profit themselves; and for either respect they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, is a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is that

① crooketh=crooks, 扭曲。

those which (as Cicero^① says of Pompey^②) are *sui amantes, sine rivali*^③, are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their time sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune; whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned^④.

【作品点评】

读完此篇，确有不寒而栗之感。培根对人性的认识如此冷峻，也许与自己的体验有关。当时统治阶级内部的倾轧和争夺已经到了白热化的程度，培根对此当然有深刻的体会。所以他用了许多昆虫和动物的形象来写出自私者的为害之烈。培根冷静地劝告人们：不可过分谋求一己私利，最好是公私兼顾，如此方能自我保全。也许这真是“向魔鬼的王国献的妙计”。但今天的贪得无厌者们，若能静心思考一下培根的教诲，当会悬崖勒马，吏治也许会变得清廉些。

① Cicero, 西奥罗(公元前106—43), 古罗马政治家, 演说家。

② Pompey(公元前106—48), 古罗马大将。

③ *sui amantes, sine rivali*, 拉丁引语, 出处在西塞罗的《书信集》(Cicero, Letters, III, 8), 意为 lovers of themselves, without a rival, 无人匹敌的自爱者。

④ pinioned, 割断。

Too Dear for the Whistle

Benjamin Franklin

得不偿失

本杰明·富兰克林

【作者简介】

本杰明·富兰克林(Benjamin Franklin 1706—1790),美国政治家、科学家和文学家。富兰克林没有受过多少正规教育,但经过刻苦自学,终于成为一代英才,为美国政治和文化的各方面作出了重大贡献,一直被作为美国精神的象征之一。普雷色浮·史密斯(Preseved Smith)在《现代文化史》(A History of Modern Culture)一书中总结富兰克林的成就如下:“在欧洲人的眼里,这位苦学自修、白手成家、多才多艺、乐观、现实、仁慈和孜孜不倦的富兰克林,就是第一个包容美国人个性的具体代表。他也是当代启蒙运动之民主面与功利面的典型人物。在一个提倡科学的世纪,他对科学有重要的贡献。在那个时代,当报刊杂志开始吸引大众的阅读兴趣时,他是一位优秀的撰稿者。在那崇尚唯理主义和人道主义的伟大时代,他曾孜孜不倦地宣讲理性、节制和博爱的意义。在那创办民众教育的世纪,他曾为它出过许多力。在那现代民主的形成期,他是个典型的民主人士。在美国的青年时代,他是美国人的代表。”

【作品原文】

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went at once to a shop

where they sold toys for children. Being charmed with the sound of a whistle that I had seen by the way, in the hands of another boy, I handed over all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my whistle, but disturbing all the family. My brothers and sisters and cousins, when I told of the bargain I had made, said I had given four times as much as the whistle was worth. They put me in mind of^① what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money, and laughed at me so much for my folly that I cried with vexation. Thinking about the matter gave me more chagrin than the whistle gave me pleasure.

This, however, was afterwards of use to me, for the impression continued on my mind, so that often, when I was tempted to buy something I did not need, I said to myself, "Don't give too much for the whistle," and I saved my money. As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who "gave too much for the whistle." When I saw some men too eager for court favour^②, wasting his time at court gathering, giving up his rest, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, for royal favour, I said to myself—"This is man gives too much for the whistle." When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly taking part in *political affairs, neglecting his own business, and ruining it by neglect*, "He pays, indeed," said I - "too dear for his whistle."

If I knew a miser who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow citizens and the joys of friendship, for the sake of gathering and keeping wealth—"Poor man," said I, "you pay too dear

① put me in mind of,提醒我……

② court: favour, 朝廷的恩宠。

for your whistle.” When I met a man of pleasure^①, who did not try to improve his mind^② or his fortune but merely devoted himself to having a good time, perhaps neglecting his health, “Mistaken man,” said I, “you are providing pain for yourself^③, instead of pleasure; you are paying too dear for your whistle.” If I saw someone fond of appearance who had fine clothes, fine house, fine furniture, fine earrings, all above his fortune^④, and for which he had run into debt, “Alas,” said I, “he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.” In short the miseries of mankind are largely due to their putting a false value on things—to^⑤ giving “too much for their whistle”.

【作品点评】

富兰克林的散文,优美流畅,充满着纯真的智慧,广泛的兴趣,冷靜的理智和慈祥的幽默,表现了启蒙时代明朗而清新的理性精神。本篇“因小见大”,充分说明了勿做得不偿失之事的道理。作者从童年时代一件天真而愚蠢的小事说起,说明他从中吸取了教训,并发觉世上形形色色的人都在做着得不偿失之事,影响了一生。其实,世人并非不懂得这一简单道理,只是他们每每惑于得失之间而已。

① a man of pleasure,浪荡子。

② improve his mind,增长才智。

③ you are providing pain for yourself,你在自讨苦吃。

④ above his fortune,超过他的财产;他的财力所不及。

⑤ to,这里是 due to 之略,故后接动名词。

The Pyramids

Samuel Johnson

金字塔

塞缪尔·约翰逊

【作者简介】

塞缪尔·约翰逊(Samuel Johnson 1709—1784)，英国文学家、文学批评家、辞书编纂家。父亲是书商，1731 年去世，家庭陷于贫困。约翰逊受雇于爱德华·凯夫创办的《绅士》杂志，并为这份杂志写诗歌、散文和传记。1749 年他发表了他的最佳长诗《人类愿望之徒劳》，1750 年创办了一份几乎完全由他个人撰稿的杂志《漫谈者》。1755 年，约翰逊历经七年辛勤劳动编纂的《英语辞典》出版。这部辞典主要以词义解释精当以及说明词的用法的例句皆有出处而著名。他的著名作品还有《诗人传》(1779—1781)，评价了 52 位诗人，巧妙地熔文学批评和传记文学于一炉。

【作品原文】

Of the wall [of China] it is very easy to assign the motives. It secured a wealthy and timorous^① nation from the incursions of Barbarians, whose unskillfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from

① timorous, 懦弱的。