

Francis Bacon

弗兰西斯·培根

【作者简介】

弗兰西斯·培根 (Francis Bacon, 1561—1626) 英国哲学家、自然科学家、文学家。《随笔录》(Essays 1597, 1612, 1625) 是培根在文学方面的主要著作。他的《随笔录》共收短文 58 篇, 涉及哲学、伦理、道德、治学、生活等方面, 文字隽永, 内容精悍, 结构紧凑, 论说透彻, 警句迭出, 耐人寻味, 颇似我国唐、宋时期的古文大师。在以后很长一段时间为后人无法比拟。对大多数读者来说, 培根的文名就是建筑在《随笔录》之上的。以下 6 篇文章均选自培根的《随笔录》。

Of Studies

Studies serve for delight, *for ornament*^①, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and *retiring*^②; 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*^③, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgement wholly by their rules, is the humour 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*^④, except they *be bounded in by experience*^⑤. 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 discourse; 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 of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else *distilled books*^⑥ are, like common distilled waters, flashy things.

Reading *maketh*^⑦ a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he *had need have*^⑧ a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he *doth*^⑨ not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics *subtile*^⑩; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores*^⑪. Nay there is no *stond*^⑫ or impediment in the wit, but may be *wrought out*^⑬ 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*^⑭ so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to

distinguish or find differences, let him study *the schoolmen*^⑩; for they are *cymini sectores*^⑪. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to 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*^⑫.

【注释】

1. for ornament 在本文中指旁征博引，显示才学。
2. retiring = retirement
3. the general counsels 意为“纵观全局 总体策划”。
4. too much at large 意为“太泛泛，太笼统”。
5. be bounded in by experience 意为“被经验所制约”。
6. distilled books 意为“别人的摘录”。
7. maketh[古] = makes
8. had need have = ought to have
9. doth[古] = does
10. subtile[古] = subtle 意为“微妙的 精细的”。
11. Abeunt studia in mores [拉丁]意为 Studies pass into the character. 凡有所学，皆成性格。指读书可以陶冶性格。
12. stond[古] = block; stoppage 意为“阻碍”。
13. wrought out[古] = work out 意为“解决”。
14. never = ever
15. the schoolmen 指欧洲中世纪的经院哲学家。
16. cymini sectores [拉丁]即 hari-splitters 意为“吹毛求疵的人”。
17. receipt = recipe 意为“药方”。

【参考译文】

谈 读 书

读书可以使人怡情养性，读书可以使人增光添彩，读书可以使人增长才智。在独处或幽居之时其更为怡情；在谈论或演讲之中更显现其光彩；在判断或处事之际更体现其才智。专家学者能逐一处理或判别事物细节，深思好学者更能纵观全局，统筹策划。读书耗时过多使人懒惰；文采过分藻饰使人做作；全凭清规戒律处世判事则是学究的荒唐可笑之处。读书可以完善性格，而经验又可以弥补、完善书本知识：因为天生的才能犹如天然的植物，通过读书才能知道如何修整；书本知识必须与实际经验结合才能做到使修整恰到好处。工匠轻视读书，头脑简单的人羡慕读书，而聪明的人则学以致用；因为书本不会教人如何应用；学以致用之明智之举不在书中，而在其外，全凭观察体会而理解书中的道理。读书不可抵触和刁难作者；也不可尽信书中所言；不可只为寻文摘句，而应该推敲深思。有些书只可浅尝，还有一些书只可吞食，只有少数的书则需要咀嚼消化。也就是说，有的书只需读其几部分；有的书只需浏览内容；只有少数的书则必须仔细认真地阅读。有些书可以请人代读并取其所做的摘要，但这种作法只限于题材不很重要或价值不很高的书籍；否则从这类书中提取的只会是淡而无味的蒸馏水。

读书使人内心充实，讨论使人思维敏捷，写作使人措词严谨。因此不常写作者必须有很强的记忆力，不常讨论者必须天生机敏，不常读书者要狡滑得无知似有知。读史书可以使人明智，读诗可以使人聪颖，学数学可以使人精细，自然科学可以使人深沉，伦理学可以使人庄重，逻辑和修辞学可以使人善辩。读书可以陶冶性

格。如果有心理方面的障碍，通过读适当的书使之得以解决，正如人体的疾病都可以通过运动得以治疗。滚球有益于肾，射箭有益于胸肺，慢走有益于肠胃，骑术有益于头脑，诸如此类。如果精神不集中，可以让他学数学，因为在演算数学题时精神稍有偏差，就得重做；如果不善于解析辨异，可以让他学经院哲学，因为那些哲学家都过分讲究细节；如果不善于体察事物，不善于以一事物论证另一事物，可以让他读律师的案卷。由此可见，心理方面的种种障碍都有专门的治疗方法。

Of Boldness

It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration. Question was asked of *Demosthenes*^①, what was the chief part of an orator? *He answered, Action. What next? —Action. What next again? —Action*^②.

He said it that knew it best, and had, by nature, himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts of invention, *elocution*^③, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain.

Wonderful like is the case of boldness in civil business. What first? —Boldness; what second and third? —Boldness. And yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts; but, nevertheless, it doth fascinate, and bind hand and foot those that are either *shallow*^④ in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part, yea, and prevaleth with wise men at weak times. Surely, as there are mountebanks for the natural body,

so are there mountebanks for the politic body; men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out, nay, you shall see a bold fellow many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call a hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled; Mahomet called the hill to come to him again and again; and when the hill *stood still*^⑤, he was never a whit abashed, but said, *if the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill*^⑥. So these men, when they have promised great matters and failed most shamefully, yet if they have the perfection of boldness, they will but slight it over, and make a turn, and no more ado.

Certainly to men of great judgment, bold persons are a sport to behold; *nay*^⑦, and to the vulgar also boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous; for if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity; especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as needs' it must; for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come, but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay; like a stale at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir; but this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation. This is well to be weighed, that boldness is ever blind, for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences; therefore, it is ill in counsel, good in execution; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds and under the *direction*^⑧ of others; for in counsel it is good to see dangers; and in execution not to see them except

they[®] be very great.

【注释】

1. Demosthenes 迪莫斯森斯（公元前 385—322）古希腊演说家和政治家。
2. 这个故事是塞西罗（Cicero）口述 收入《论演说家》一书。故事中讲的是迪莫森斯口吃，不宜于演说，但他口含小石子练习克服口吃，对大海朗诵，终于成为大演说家。
3. elocution 本文中意为“雄辩的口才”。
4. shallow 意为“浅薄 肤浅”。
5. stood still 本文中意为“一动不动”。
6. ...if the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill.如果山不到穆罕默德这边来，穆罕默德就要到山那边去。
7. nay[古] *adv.*意为“不 否 不仅如此 而且”。
8. direction 意为“指导 指示”。
9. they 在本句中意为“危险”。

【参考译文】

谈 胆 量

这里讲一个中学课本中的常见课文，但很值得一个聪明人深思。曾有人向迪莫斯森斯提出过这样一个问题，问他：“当一名演说家主要应具备什么条件？”他回答说：“多说。”其次呢？”“多说。”“再次呢？”还是多说。”

他说这话是他体会最深的事。迪莫斯森斯是在他所做的事上没有天赋的人。“多说”作为演说要求的一部分不过是表面现象，

演说家把这条件摆得高于修养、创新、雄辩等其他条件，不但如此，还把它看作独一无二，似乎有了它就有了一切的条件，真是咄咄怪事，但是其中的道理也很明显。

与此非常相似的一件事是办事的胆量。“办事首要的条件是什么？”胆量。“其次再次呢？”还是胆量。然而胆大过分则是卑鄙和无知的产物——远比其他方面低劣。尽管如此，胆量真能鼓舞和牵制那些见识浅薄或缺乏勇气的人，而这种人又是非常多，甚至在聪明人不够坚强的时候胆量也能使他坚强。就像医治身体上的疾病有江湖医生一样，对政治上的疾病也有江湖医生，他们保证能医治大病，偶尔侥幸得手两三次，但缺乏科学根据，不能持久。确实行不通，你可看到这种狂人多次创造穆罕默德的“奇绩”。穆罕默德为叫人们相信他有呼山前来的本领，并从山顶上为遵奉他的教律的人祈祷。人们聚集过来，穆罕默德一遍又一遍呼山前来，但山依然一动不动，可他一点也不感到羞愧，反而说“如果山不到穆罕默德这边来，穆罕默德就必须到山那边去。”这些政治上的江湖骗子，一旦他们大胆预言的事可耻地失败时，如果尚有这种“完美的”胆量，他们就会轻轻滑掉，转移方向，不再那么说了。

对于有远见卓识的人来说，胆大妄为是荒唐的，甚至在一般人看来也有几分可笑。既然荒唐是引人发笑的材料，那么胆大包天也就免不了会干出荒唐可笑的事来。最可笑的是在这种胆大妄为的人丢脸之时，因为这时他们必然处在一种最难堪、最尴尬的境地，而对胆小的人来说，反而有了迂回的余地，但大胆妄为的人碰到这种情况，就会不知所措了，就好比下棋陷入了僵局，分不出谁胜谁负，也使这盘棋无法下下去了。因此可以说，胆大妄为常常是盲目的，因为它既看不到危险也看不到困难。所以大胆不利于思考，只利于实干。因此，有勇无谋的人绝不能担任主要领导，只能让他们在别人的指导下当助手，因为在审议时要看出危险，除非危险特别大时在行动上要藐视危险。

Of Ceremonies and Respects

He that is only real had need have exceeding great parts of virtue; as the stone had need to be rich that is set without foil; but if a man mark it well, it is in praise and *commendation*^① of men. It is true that small matters win great commendation, because they are continually in use and in note; whereas the occasion of any great virtue *cometh*^② but *on festivals*^③; therefore it doth much add to a man's reputation, and is (as *Queen Isabella*^④ said) like *perpetual*^⑤ letters commendatory, to have good forms. To attain them, it almost sufficeth not to despise them; for so shall a man observe them in others; and let him trust himself with the rest; for if he labor too much to express them, he shall lose their grace, which is to be natural and unaffected. Some men's behavior is like a verse wherein every syllable is measured; how can a man comprehend great matters, that breaketh his mind too much to small observations?

Not to use ceremonies at all is to teach others not to use them again, and so diminisheth respect to himself; especially they be not to be omitted to strangers and formal *natures*^⑥; but the *dwelling upon*^⑦ them, and exalting them above the moon, is not noly *tedious*^⑧, but doth diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks; and certainly, there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting passages amongst compliments, which is of singular use, if a man can *hit upon*^⑨ it.

Amongst a man's peers, a man shall be sure of familiarity, and, therefore, it is good a little to keep state. Amongst a man's inferiors, one shall be sure of reverence, and therefore it is good a little to be

familiar. He that is too much in anything, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply oneself to others is good, so it be with demonstration that a man doth it upon regard, and not upon facility. It is a good precept generally in seconding another, yet to add somewhat of one's own; as, if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be with condition; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging further reason.

Men had need beware how they *be too perfect in*^⑩ compliments; for be they never so sufficient otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss, also, in business, to be too full of respects, or to be too curious in observing times and opportunities. *Solomon*^⑪ *saith*^⑫, *he that considereth the wind shall not sow, and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap*^⑬. A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behavior should be like their apparel, not too strait or point device, but free for exercise or motion.

【注释】

1. commendation 称赞 赞许
2. cometh[古] = comes
3. on festivals 原意指在节日期间, 本文中指很少有会。
4. Queen Isabella 伊莎贝拉一世 (1451—1504) 西班牙卡斯蒂莱的女王, 哥伦布的赞助者。
5. perpetual 本文中意为“永恒的”。
6. natures 本文中意为“有特性的人”。
7. dwelling upon 意为“详谈 细谈”。
8. tedious 意为“冗长乏味的, 令人讨厌的”。

9. hit upon 意为“想出 找到”。

10. be perfect in 善于，精通。

11. Solomon 本文中指《圣经》中所记的所罗门国王。

12. saith[古] = says

13. 这段引文出自《旧约·传道书》。

【参考译文】

谈礼节和礼貌

一个真正的伟大人物必须有超人的道德，就像一块没有镶嵌的宝石，必须是很名贵的一样。但如果一个人行为端正，也能得到人们的称赞和颂扬。确实，小事能得到大赞扬，因为小事常有并常见，而行大善大德的机会很少，所以有礼貌能大大提高自己的声誉，并像伊莎贝拉女王所说，有着良好的礼貌就像有着永恒的推荐信。要做到有礼貌并不难，不轻视它就可以了，因为人们可从观察别人的礼貌行动而学得，其余就让他自己相信自己去做吧。因为他要是为了表示有礼貌而过于做作，他就将失去自然而朴实的礼貌的真谛。有些人的举止像一首诗，其中每一个音节都几经推敲。这样一个对小事分心太多的人如何能成就大事业呢？

自己全然不顾礼仪，就等于教别人也不顾礼仪，因而别人对自己就会失敬了。特别是对于陌生人和刻板的人，礼仪不可简省。但是，一味侈谈礼仪，把它捧上了天，不仅令人讨厌，而且使人感到说话者虚伪而对他的信任打折扣了。诚然，在礼貌语言中有一种切实的、发人深省的话，如果一个人能掌握它，就会有神奇的效果。

和同辈人相处，必然会随便，因而要保持庄严一点才好。和下级相处，必然受到尊敬，因而亲切一点才好。什么事情都做得过分，必然使人讨厌，那是自我作践。尽力帮助别人是好的，但要表

明 所以这样做 是出于尊敬 而不是附和。最好是 ,一般在赞同别人的看法时 ,要有一些自己的看法。如果你同意他的意见 ,也要给它增添色彩。如果你服从他的动机 ,也要给它以条件。如果你同意他的议论 ,也要使它的理由更加充足。

人们应该注意 ,不可过于恭维别人 ,要不然无论他们怎么完美无缺 ,妒嫉他们的人也必定会给他们以阿谀奉承的臭名 ,对他们的德行不利。礼仪太多或太注意时间和机会 ,也有损于事业。所罗门说 :“ 看风者不能播种 望云者不能收割。”智者会自己去创造机会 ,而不去找现成的机会。人的行为如同他们的衣服 ,不可太小 ,也不要刚好能穿下 ,而需稍宽一点 ,以利于运动和活动。

Of Innovations

As the births of living creatures at first are *ill-shaped*^① ,so are all innovations, which are *the births of time*^② ; yet *notwithstanding*^③ ,as those that first bring honor into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed,so the first precedent(if it be good) *is seldom attained by imitation*^④ for ill,to man's nature as it stands perverted,hath a natural motion strongest in continuance,but good,as a forced motion,strongest *at first*^⑤ .

Surely every medicine is an innovation,and he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils,for time is the greatest innovator;and if time,of course,alter things to the worse,and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better,what shall be the end?

It is true,that what is settled by custom,though it be not good,yet at least it is fit;and those things which have long gone together,are,as it were,*confederate*^⑥ within themselves;whereas new things piece not so well;but,though they help by their utility,yet they

trouble by their inconformity; besides, they are like strangers, more admired and less favored. All this is true, if time stood still, which, contrariwise, moveth so *round*^⑦ that a *forward retention of custom*^⑧ is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new. It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and *by degrees*^⑨ *scare to be perceived*^⑩; for otherwise, whatsoever is new is *unlooked for*^⑪, and ever it mends some and *pairs*^⑫ other; and he that is helped, takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author.

It is good also not to try experiments in states, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desired change that pretendeth the reformation.

And lastly, that the *novelty*^⑬, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect, and, as the Scripture saith, *That we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us, and discover what is the straight and right way, and so to walk in it*^⑭.

【注释】

1. ill-shaped 意为“样子不好看 怪模怪样的”。
2. the births of time 在本文中意为“时代的新生儿”。
3. notwithstanding *adv.* 意为“虽然 虽然如此”。
4. is attained by imitation 意为“通过模仿得到”。
5. at first 意为“起初 开始时”。
6. confederate 在本文中意为“适应 联合”。
7. round 在本文中意为“快速 (fast)”。

8. a forward retention of custom 在本文中意为“墨守成规”。

9. by degrees 意为“逐渐地 逐步地”。

10. scare to be perceived 在本文中意为“几乎觉察不出来”。

11. unlooked for 意为“意想不到”。

12. pairs 在本文中意为“impair” 损害 损伤”。

13. novelty 意为“新颖 革新”。

14. 这句话引自《圣经·耶利米书》第 6 章第 16 节。

【参考译文】

谈 改 革

新生儿并不是很美的，一切革新也是这样，因为革新是时代的新生儿。尽管如此，最初的创业者通常总比大多数后继者高明，一个好的先例总是难以开创的。当一个人的本质变坏时，“恶”有着一一种自然的走下坡路的冲力，越来越坏。而“善”像走上坡路一样是一种强力，在开始时最强。

的确，每一种改革都是一种用于除恶的药物。因此，不服新药，就要得新病，因为时间是最大的改革者。当然，如果时间将某些事物淘汰，而人的智慧和计谋又不能使之好转，最终会怎么样？

确实，习惯成自然的东西，虽然是不好的，但至少是使人适应的。因而那些长期在一起的事物看来是彼此适应了，而新事物却不那么默契，虽然它有用，但因不适应而引起麻烦。此外，新事物像个陌生人使人惊异，而不受人欢迎。如果时间是静止不动的，这一切就都对了。实际上正好相反，时间在飞速前进，墨守成规所引起的麻烦不亚于革新。过分看重旧时者，必然轻视现世。时间本身就是一个改革者，它静悄悄地、逐渐地、令人不知不觉地，但实际上是进行着巨大的改革，因而立志改革者要以时间为榜样！否则，

一切改革都会被视为异物。改革会使一部分人受益，也会损害一部分人。受益者认为幸运，因而感谢时间；被损害者认为谬误，因而归罪于革新者。

除非很必要或效果很明显，不可轻易在国事上作试验也是对的。还必须注意，我们所说的改革是能引起变革的改革，而不是假冒改革之名来满足个人欲望的所谓改革。

革新不可抗拒 但可以持审慎态度 正如《圣经》上说的：“我们站在古道上，要环视四周，寻找一条笔直的康庄大道，然后走在其上。”

Of Travel

Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do: let him carry with him also some *card*^① or book describing the country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry; let him keep also a diary; let him not stay long in one city or town, more or less, as the place *deserveth*^②, but not long; nay, when he stayth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great *adamant*^③ of acquaintance; let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth; let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided; they are commonly for mistresses, healths, places, and words; and let a man beware how he keepeth company with *choleric*^④ and quarrelsome persons, for they will engage him into their own quarrels.

When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him. but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth; and let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture, and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories.

【注释】

1. card 本文中意为“地图或航海图”。
2. deserveth[古] = deserve 意为“值得”。
3. adamant 原意为“铁石”本文中指像磁石一样有吸引力。
4. choleric 意为“易怒的”。

【参考译文】

谈 旅 游

旅游对年轻人是一种教育，对老年人是一种体验。如果你把一个年轻人的旅游仅限于一个小天地里，而又要他在短时间内得到更多的教益，那你就必须让他随身带上地图或关于他所要去旅游的地方的书。这对他所要询问的事将是一把好钥匙，还要叫他写日记，叫他不要老呆在一个城市或城镇。时间的长短，要视这个地方是否值得而定，但不要太长。不但如此，当他呆在一个城镇里，也要叫他把住处由城里的这一区移到那一区去，这样就能多认

识一些人。在他从一个地方搬到另一个地方以后，能够得到引荐，认识住在他搬去的地方的优秀人物，能在他所想见或想知道的事情上得到他们的帮助。这样就可以缩短旅游的时间，而又获益更多。

对于争吵，应该小心谨慎避免。争吵通常是因为祝酒、抢座和出言不逊。与易怒的、爱吵的人往来，要提防，因为他们会把你卷入他们的争吵之中。

一个旅游者返回家以后，不要把他游历过的地方置于脑后，而要与最值得交往的朋友保持通信联系，而且不要把他的旅游收获反映在衣着和举止上，而要在言谈时说说观感。而在言谈中，也最好在回答问题时谈观感，而不是抢先说自己的旅游经历。