怎樣讀通英文 HOW TO MASTER ENGLISH WITHOUT A TEACHER

葛 傳 槼 著

上海競文書局即行

HOW TO MASTER ENGLISH WITHOUT A TEACHER

by

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開場白

我做這本書,告訴你怎樣讀通英文;我先得交代明白,怎樣纔算得[通]?

簡單說一句,我所說的「通」,便是能講,能讀,能寫;所以這本書分做「關於講」,「關於讀」,和「關於寫」三大部分。這三件事那件最重要? 那是「言人人殊」的;也可以說各人的需要不同。我祇得假定都重要。但雖然都重要,討論起來總得有先後。我先談「講」,再談「讀」,最後談「寫」,並沒有偏重那一件事的意思。不過我覺得既然學英文,總該先學正確的發音;在談「講」的時候談發音更適當些。

我所說的「能講,能讀,能寫」,究竟要「能」到什麼地步,也得交代明白。

我所說的「能講」,並不是說能用英文辯論或用英文演說,是說能應付普通的英語談話;祇要能在遇到英美人的時候,隨意談話,雙方了解意思,那便算「能講」了。(要雙方了解意思,在「講」以外還得「聽」,要聽得懂,所以我所說的「講」也包括「聽」)。

我所說的「能讀」,並不是說能讀一切文學名著或高深書本,是說能讀普通書報和普通文件; 祇要能讀傳記,能讀夢記,能讀小說,能讀新聞,能讀信札,能讀廣告,通告,招貼,傳單,西藥仿單,電影說明書,等,那便算「能讀」了.

我所說的「能寫」,並不是說能寫文藝作品,或長篇論著,或重大文件,是說能寫一切普通文字; 祇要能寫實用信札,日常記事,等,心裏要說什麽,筆下寫得出什麽,寫出來的東西,像英文,英美人讀得懂,那便算「能寫」了。

我所說的「通」,已經交代明白了;不過我還得嚕囌幾何^於 在下面,請你耐着看一下:

- 一:我做這本書,我假定你已經讀過一二年英文,識得二三千尋常字,懂得一些文法。(說得具體些,好好地讀完了初中二年級的讀本和文法。)倘若你英文一些也不會讀過,讀這本書是沒有用的。
- 二:我告訴你怎樣讀通英文。你必須實行我所講的種種,而且抱着恆心幹下去,幾有功效。別以為讀完了這本書, 英文便會通起來,也不要以為一年半載英文便會通起來。
- 三: 這本書所說的一切,都是我照着我自己的經驗所講的老實話。我自已所做不到的事,我都不講;例如我自己不很聽得懂有聲電影,我便不想教你怎樣聽法。(倘若我瞎說幾句,你也不見得會請我到電影院裏去考我;可是我不肯瞎說。至於爲什麼「不很聽得懂有聲電影」,請看第一章第一段。)

四:我所說的都是老實話,不擺架子,不賣關子,不賣關子,不賣野人頭;你讀這本書,信不信由你。倘若你引證了什麼教育專家或英文名家的主義,或原理,或學說,或科學方法,來和我辯論,我祇得不作一聲,卻仍舊守着我自己的意見。

關於講

原

书

空

白

第一章

聽和講

我在「開場白」裏說過,我所說的「講」也包括「聽」。談話是雙方的,不是自言自語的。要是聽不懂對方的話,那末所問非所答,便失去了談話的意義。可是「聽」實在是一件難事;誰也不能說「我聽得懂任何英美人的任何話。」。就內容說,字宙之大,原子之微,都有被英美人談起的可能。就字句說,英語有幾十萬個單字,幾萬個習語(idiom),各式各樣的口語(colloquialism)和俚語(slang),各處不同的方言(dialect)都有被英美人在談話裏用到的可能。就發音說,英美各處的口音不同,甲地的本地人也很會聽不懂乙地的本地人的話。(我時常聽人說中國的語言不統一,英美人的語言統一;其實英美人的語言何嘗統一?)我們讀現代的小說和劇本,有時為了一句半句,翻遍字典,想盡心思,還是不懂,難道會一聽就懂麽?(我在「開場白」裏說我不很聽得懂有聲電影;除了上面所說的原因以外,還有一個原因:便是影片裏的發音我覺得總不及當面的清爽。)

要聽懂任何英美人的任何話,那是不可能的。我不得不縮小範圍來說:不得不假定那英美人所談的事是非專門性的,所用的單字和語句是日常實用的,所發的音是標準的。(我說「句語」不但指 sentence [句],也指 phrase [片語]和 clause [子句]。)換句話說,假定英美人是「高等洋人」,談吐高尚,發音道地,和你在社交上或業務上談話,或者促膝談心,閒話家常。

可是你也有許多聽不懂的地方。為什麽?

我想問題大都在於發音;你不知道正確的發音,或者雖然知道而你的耳卻不行。 那洋八說的話,你聽不懂;他把那個話寫了下來,你便懂得,而且往往是幾個極尋常的字。不但這樣,洋人說了一串極尋常的字,往往比一串長些和生些的字難懂。(不但講話這樣,朗讀也是這樣;你看着一段英文,請洋人讀給你聽,除了讀得很慢以外,你會覺得好幾個轉常字滑了過去,一時跟不上。)

聽得懂了,也要講得出,而且要講得洋人聽得懂。雖然在某方面可以說「講」比「聽」容易(例如「聽」須得依賴別人,「講」儘可湊自己的便),「講」似乎比「聽」複雜些。聽得懂那個話的人不一定講得出那個話。要講須得自己揀字,造句語,發音,還得有「勇氣」。(不講慣的人,雖然知道講"Yes.", "Thank you.",等,卻往往不敢講 "Yes.", "Thank you.",等。)

所謂「講」,當然又是一個「宇宙之大,原子之微」的問題. 誰也不能說「我能用英語講任何東西。」或「我能用英語表達任何意思。」。我也得縮小範圍:不得不假定和「高等洋人」在社交上或業務上談話,或者促膝談心,問話家常。

你講得出麽?講出了那洋人聽得懂麽?

我在上面說過,不講慣的人,雖然知道 "Yes.", "Thank "you.",等,卻不敢講出。那是「勇氣」的問題。有了「勇氣」 也會講不出:講了出來,洋人竟會聽不懂。那是另有問題 了。

心裏要講什麼,卻不知道該怎樣講,最簡單的是單字問題;例如想講「書」而不知道"book",想講「去」而不知道.

"go"。其次是句語問題;例如想講「你好?」而不知道"How do you do ?",想講「現在你的錶上幾點鐘?」而不知道"What time is it by your watch?",想講「找頭我不要了。」而不知道"Keep the change.",想講「弗搖斷電話。」而不知道"Hold the line.",想講「讓我想一想。」而不知道"Let me see."。

你講了出來,洋人聽不懂,問題也許在於單字和句語。 除了用字用錯,句語造錯以外,也許因為你用的某個字雖然 不錯而太生僻,那句語雖然不錯而太複雜。(我們中國人很 容易有這個毛病,因為多讀書而少說話;那書本上的文字大 都文多語少。我說字眼生僻和句語複雜;往往在書本上並不 生僻或複雜的在談話裏便生僻或複雜了。)

字眼不生僻,句語不複雜,洋人也會聽不懂;那問題便在於發音。我在上面說過,你會因為發音問題而聽不懂洋人的話,也會因為你發音不正確而洋人聽不懂你的話。他聽不懂你的話;你把那個話寫下來,他便懂得。這便證明你的發音不正確。(要是你發音正確,即使你的句語不很正確,洋人也會懂得。)

要聽和講,我想最要緊的事是學得正確的發音。

在談發音以前,關於「聽得懂」我還有些話要說。我在上面說過,「聽」須得依賴別人,可以說是被動的。讀不懂可以反覆研究,聽不懂卻來不及研究,一研究便跟不上了。讀不懂可以查字典,聽不懂卻不能查字典。我說不能查字典,不但因為在時間上來不及,還有旁的原因。一般字典,必須先知道了拼法纔能找出發音,字義,用法,等,不能從發音找出拼法,意義,用法,等;例如看見了"book"的拼法可以查字典,聽到了"book"的發音卻不能查字典(當然那講話的

洋人決不會把每一個字的拼法說出)。我在好多年前早已想起為什麼沒有人編一本從發音查字的字典; 那字典並不依照字母排列,卻依照發音排列(至於發音該怎樣排列,那是另一問題); 為節省篇幅起見,那字典儘可以沒有字義,用法,等,祇要使人從發音找到拼法便行,找到了拼法去找字義,用法,等,那查普通字典便是了。 現在聽說有德國人 Hanover 城 Carl Michaelis 和英國人 Daniel Jones 合編德國 Hanover 城 Carl Meyer 出版家出版的這種字典,我沒有見過,不知道內容怎樣。不過這種字典的功用質在並不大;不消說一邊聽一邊查在時間上一定來不及,而且講話和念單字不同,有連讀,省讀,抑揚,等變化,假使你聽到的好像是一個字而實在不是一個字,便查不着;還有一點,你不一定能夠把洋人的發音聽得絲毫不差(決不像把拼法看得絲毫不差明樣容易)。對於「聽不懂」的臨時救急辦法似乎是沒有的。

我在上面說過,聽得懂那個話的人不一定講得出那個話。反轉來說,講得出那個話的人似乎該一定聽得懂那個話了。可是實在不一定這樣。假使你不知道正確的發音,聽到了正確的發音會不懂;即使你自己的發音是正確的,聽到了正確的發音也會不懂。這因為發音是口的能力,聽得懂是耳的能力。也有人雖然不能發音正確而聽得懂正確的發音。說得明白些:甲種人不知道正確的發音,自己發音不正確,也聽不懂正確的發音(也聽不懂不正確的發音,因為「不正確」的範圍很廣,西人的不正確又和中國人的不正確不同);乙種人知道正確的發音而不能發音正確(口不行),卻聽得懂正確的發音;丙種人發音正確而有時聽不懂正確的發音(耳不行);丁種人知道正確的發音而不能發音正確,也聽不

懂正確的發音(口和耳都不行)。(當然也有人發音正確而又聽得懂正確的發音;這種人沒有問題。) 我希望下面各章裏所講的對於「聽得懂」上也有些幫助。

第二章

正確的發音

在談正確的發音」以前,我先得聲明,別以為我能教你講英語講得和英美人完全一樣。不,我自己也不能做到這樣,怎樣教別人呢?而且中國人極少能這樣的;這些少數人是生長在英美(不是留學)或一向和英美人生活在一起的。除了這些英美式的中國人以外,幾乎沒有人能做到;譬如他們在講英語,你在隔壁聽了,總聽得出他們是中國人。我在十七八歲的時候,曾經有過這樣的志願:要想學得能講英語講得和英美人完全一樣,可是不得成功,現在早已不作此想了。(要是你問我為什麼我不能,我想主要的原因在於語調[intonation];我對於這件事也多少研究一些,可是實行起來總不滿意。)

什麼是「正確的發音」?「正確」有什麼「標準」?嚴格說來,沒有二個人的發音絕對相同。同一個人,也會在不同的場合有不同的發音。我所說的「正確的發音」,便是發出音來,英美人聽得懂,不會莫名其妙,也不會覺得奇怪觸耳。我所要說的發音,是一般受過教育的「高等」英美人談話裏用的發音,不是吟詩或唱歌裏所用的發音;是日常應用的發音,不是引經讓典,咬文嚼字的發音;是在句語裏的發音,不但是孤單單的單字的發音。我說「談話裏用的發音」,指careful conversational style; 這種發音,也可以用在一般的朗讀和演說。

我說「英美人」,好像說英國人和美國人的發音是一樣

的。實在不是。可是「高等」英國人和「高等」美國人的發音 比較「一樣」些。英國的「標準」發音是「高等」的英國南方 人的發音,便是所謂 Southern English, Southern Standard,或 Received Standard。美國的「標準」發音似乎是「高等」的美國 西方人的發音,便是所謂 Western American, Midwestern American,或 General American。

據我看來,我們中國人的發音,大都近於美國音;這大約有兩個原因: (一)在中國教英文的外國人,美國人多,英國人少; (二)中國人多用美國字典,少用英國字典。我個人是用英國音的;但我也不反對美國音;我以為我們中國人讀英文,自己可以認定學英國音或美國音;但學了一種,對於另一種也該知道些。

英國音和美國音的不同,可以分兩點來講:

- 一: 同一個字,英國音和美國音有完全不同的;最尋常的像"either"裏的"ei"在英國音裏和"idle"裏的"i"一樣,在美國音裏和"meet"裏的"ee"一樣; "clerk"裏的"er"在英國音裏和"art"裏的"ar"一樣,在美國音裏和"her"裏的"er"一樣。
- 二: 同一個音,英國人和美國人讀起來有不同的;最尋常的像 "ask" 裏的 "a" 在英國音惠和 "art" 裏的 "a" 一樣或稍長; "hero" 裏的 "e" 在英國音裏等於 "it" 裏的 "" 加上一些模糊的音, 在美國音裏等於 "meet" 裏的 "ce"。

你是自修英文的,要知道某字該怎樣讀,須**得查字典**; 我現在便談談幾本字典。

倘若你要學英國音,我勸你用下面的各種字典:(一)

Daniel Jones 編的 An English Pronouncing Dictionary (英國 J. M. Dent & Sons Limited 出版); (二) F. G. Fowler 和 H. W. Fowler (前者是弟,後者是兄)編的 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary (英國 Oxford University Press 出版,通常譯作 [袖珍牛津字典],簡稱"P. O. D."); (三) George Ostler 編的 The Little Oxford Dictionary (也是英國 Oxford University Press 出版,簡稱"L. O. D."); (四) Henry Cecil Wyld 編的 The Universal Dictionary (英國 George Routledge & Sons Ltd 出版)。此外 H. W. Fowler 和 F. G. Fowler 編的 The Concise Oxford Dictionary (也是 Oxford University Press 出版;通常譯作「簡明牛津字典」,簡稱"C. O. D.") 也可以用,不過注音很簡單,有許多地方編者認為大家都知道,便不注音;所以程度差一些的人用起來不很便利。(這字典現在1足國三十七年十二月1正任重排,注音改得和 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 一樣。)

An English Pronouncing Dictionary 所用的注音符號,是萬國語音學會(International Phonetic Association)的符號,就是我們中國人所說的「萬國音符」或「萬國音標」。「國際音符」或「國際音標」;每字注音,並且包括普通的地名,人名,等。The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 所用的注音符號是 Fowler 氏兄弟所創立;並不每字注音,注音的字也不一定全部注出;這字典的開首說明怎樣的拼法,該怎樣發音,字典裏不注音的地方,都是合於這說明的;例如說明裏說"g"在"e"前面該讀作[]](等於"just"裏的"j"的音),所以"gem"裏的"g"不注音,等於注了[],但"get"裏的"g"注作[g],因為這個"g"的發音,是不合於說明裏所講的。The Little

Oxford Dictionary 的注音符號和規則和 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 相同,也並不每字注音; 附錄裏有一千五百左右個比較難讀的地名,人名,等。 The Universal Dictionary 每字用二種符號注音:第一種是通俗的,不很科學化,第二種和萬國音符大半相同。

倘若你要學美國音,我勸你用下面的各種字典: (一) Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (美國 G. & C. Merriam Company 出版,通常譯作「韋氏大學字典」); (二) The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 的美國版,也叫 American Oxford Dictionary .(美國 New York 城的 Oxford University Press 和 Albert & Charles Boni 出版); (三) E. L. Thorndike 編的 Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary (美國 D. Appleton-Century Company 出版); (四) E. L. Thorndike 編的 Thorndike Century Junior Dictionary (也是美國 D. Appleton-Century Company 出版); (五) College "Standard" Dictionary (美國 Funk and Wagnalls Company 出版).

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 所用的注音符號,是在中國好多年前最通行的 Webster 制,便是「韋氏音符」;每字注音,附錄裏還有地名,人名,和教名 (Christian name),也都注音。The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 的美國版,大體和原書一樣,是美國人 George Van Santvoord 所修改編成的;注音符號和規則和原書一樣,也不每字注音,不過所注的音是根據美國音的。Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary 的注音符號和Thorndike Century Junior Dictionary 的注音符號和U而並不完全相同;二書都每字注音,也都有許多地名,人名,等。College "Standard" Dictionary 每字有二種符號注音:

第一種是「科學化」的,第二種是「教科書式」的;有許多地名,人名,等。

上面所舉的幾本字典裏的注音符號,每本書都有例解 (key),看了例解,便知道每個符號代表什麼音。常然,那編字 典的人做那例解的時候,假定查字典的人能夠讀那例解裏 所舉的字。也許你要問:「我對於例解裏所舉的字,不能讀得 正確,該怎樣辦呢?」。這一問卻把我難倒了。我不能在文字 上發出音來:倘若我馬馬虎虎,把幾個中國字注音,那是決 不會正確的;倘若我講些什麼爆發音,什麼磨擦音,那時候 舌部肌肉該寬,那時候舌部肌肉該緊,你也許說我很有些語 音學家 (phonetician) 的風度,可是你聽了我的話,仍舊不明 白,竟會得失之毫釐,差以千里呢。乾脆說一句,倘若你對於 字典的例解裏所舉的字,不能讀得正確(換句話說,就是你 對於基本各音,不能讀得正確),你祇有詩一位發音正確的 人當面教你一下,讀書是沒有用的。

我說「請一位發音正確的人當面教你一下」; 那個人必須發音正確(最好是英美人), 發音正確的人未必懂得那字典裏的注音符號; 那卻不妨, 祇要他能夠讀 那例解裏所舉的字便行. 你有了這種人, 即使不請他讀字典例解裏的字也可以, 祇要請他向你讀一些英文也行; 例如他讀了 "book"一字, 假定你用「萬國音符」, 你便知道 [b], [u], [k] 三個音怎樣讀. 依照這個辦法, 請他讀了一段英文, 幾乎全部的音可以學得. 而且竊聽英美人的談話也可以有效.

附帶說一句,一般「高等」英美人的發音是正確的,但他們不懂注音符號,也不懂語音學 (phonetics), 所以與其詩他們「教」,不如靜聽他們。(要懂注音符號並不難,在字典裏

看看就會明白;英美人沒有懂的必要,所以不去看。至於語音學是一種科學,不懂也能發音正確;正像不懂生理學也能 喫飯和呼吸。反轉來說,懂得語音學也會發音不正確;正像 懂得生理學也會消化不良或呼吸困難。還有一點該知道:發音正確的英美人往往不知道自己怎樣發音,他明明把某個字這樣讀,卻會不承認這樣讀;例如他把"a book"裏的"a" 讀作 [ə],卻自以為讀作 [ei]。所以我勸你靜聽,別發問;一發問那答語往往是靠不住的。

上面說的種種字典裏有種種不同的注音符號制度。該記着各制度中間有許多相同的符號, 那相同的符號所指的音有相同的,但也有不相同的,不可夾纏。 例如「萬國晉符」和「韋氏晉符」 裏都有 [b], 都指 "book" 裏的 "b" 晉; 「萬國晉符」和「韋氏晉符」 裏都有 [i],但所指的晉不同,在「萬國晉符」 裏指 "yes" 裏的 "y" 的晉,在「韋氏晉符」 裏指 "just" 裏的 "j" 的晉.(「萬國晉符」 裏的 [i] 相當於「韋氏晉符」 裏的 [y]; 「韋氏晉符」 裏的 [i] 相當於「萬國晉符」 裏的 [dʒ])。

自修者要發音正確,必須多查字典(其實即使在校學生也得查字典,決不能每一個字都請教師念一遍);怕查字典,必定不行.英文字的拼法和發音的關係很不規則,不能看了拼法便知道發音,也不能聽了發音便知道拼法。"book"和"boot"二字裏的"oo"拼法相同而發音不同;"book"和"put"二字裏的"oo"和"u"拼法不同而發音相同。"answer"裏有"w"而沒有音。"one"裏沒有"w"而有"w"通常有的音。下面的二十個字決不能從拼法知道發音:

any .	breakfast	bury	busy
come	do	enough	gone

have knowledge lose one said should southern there two water what work

我勸你多查字典,查了字典便知道某字該怎樣發音。可 是知道了怎樣發音還得多作練習,一遍一遍重複地練習,纔 能發音自然,脫口而出。

我在上面說過,我所說的發音是在句語裏的發音,不但是孤單單的單字的發音;不過要在句語裏發音正確,先得把單字發音正確;而且絕大多數的單字的發音在句語裏並不變化。

末了,你要養成正確的發音,我要提出基本的兩點,請你注意:

- 一: 英交發音和中交發音是絕不相關的。我想你不至於用中國字來注英文音,你也決不可把某個英文字和某個中國字聯想在一起。我覺得許多中國人講英語,很有些本土氣味;例如上海人的英語,北平人的英語,廣東人的英語,各不相同,這便證明他們的發音不好。
- 二: 讀書要讀出聲來, 口要張得大;讀英文, 下顎必須 比讀中文上下得厲害. 默讀或低聲的讀, 決不能養成正確的 發音.

我在開場白裏已經說過,我假定你讀過一二年英文,當然我假定你知道些關於發音的事;例如什麼叫做「輔音」(consonant),什麼叫做「元音」(vowel),什麼叫做「重讀」(accent),我假定你已經知道。在下面幾章裏,我祇把一般中國人所該特別注意的地方說說。(其實我也祇得這樣;倘若你一些英文也不會讀過,無論怎樣我不能在書本上教你正確的發音。)

第三章

音節和重讀

什麼叫做「音節」(syllable),什麼叫做「重讀」,我都假定你已經知道。我假定你知道"man"有一個音節,"woman"有二個音節,"relation"有三個音節,"pronunciation"有五個音節;"woman"的重讀在第一音節,"relation"的重讀在第二音節;"pronunciation"的主要重讀在第四音節,次要重讀在第二音節。

但我覺得許多中國人雖然知道音節和重讀,可是讀起來還有不對的地方,讓我說明一下。

一:一個字雖然有二個或二個以上的音節,但一個字 總是一個字,讀的時候,總該一氣讀完;例如讀"relation"不 該讀得像"re", "la", "tion"三個字一般;這點大約你也知 道。我覺得許多中國人所忽略的是:倘若一個音節的末音 是輔音而下面跟着的音節的首音是元音,那末這兩個香該 拼着讀;例如"reasonable"裏的"n"和"a"(指第二個"a") 在一般字典裏都被分在兩個音節裏,但讀起來卻該有"n" 和"a"拼成的音,決不可把"reasonable"讀得像"reason" 和"a"拼成的音,決不可把"reasonable"讀得像"reason" 和"able"兩個字一般。尤其該注意"r"這字母;例如 "bearable"裏的"r"和"a"(指第二個"a")在一般字典裏 被分在二個音節裏,但讀起來卻該有"r"和"a"拼成的音。 我想這種錯誤,那慣用 An English Pronouncing Dictionary 的 人是不會犯的,因為這字典裏並不畫出這種音節。(本來英 文裏音節的分法並沒有一成不變的規則。) 二:有二個音節或二個以上的音節的字,便有重讀,字的重讀,都有一定,不可隨意;這點大約你也知道。不過我覺得許多中國人對於重讀往往弄錯,尤其錯在把許多重讀 並不在第二音節的字,重讀在第二音節。我要你知道你自己是否犯這毛病,特地寫二十個字在下面,請你把它們逐一個讀一下:

ascertain	artificial	cigarette	character
circumstance	contact	excellent	forward
heroine	industry	invoice	mischief
narrative	opposite	politics	purpose
register	represent	rhetoric	synonym

這二十個字,重讀都不在第二音節。倘若你慣常把它們中間的一個或幾個重讀在第二音節,我要勸你以後對於重讀格外注意,最好把你慣常重讀在第二音節的一切字,都在字典上查一下;否則我敢說你的發音便要一直壞下去了。(因為弄錯了重讀,發音一定很壞。)

我在上面說過,字的重讀,都有一定,不可隨意,你也許要問「究竟有沒有規則?」。我說「有一些,但不完備。」。例如 "biology", "zoology", "physiology", 等把 "ology" 結尾的字的重讀都在那 "ology" 的第一個 "o",沒有例外; "station", "condition", "institution", "functional", "nationalism", "expeditionary",等有 "tion"的字重讀都在那 "tion"前面的音節,也沒有例外。有若干兼用作 noun (名辭) 和 verb (動辭)的有二音節的字, noun 的重讀在第一音節, verb 的重讀在第二音節,例如 "conflict"和 "produce"; 但有些例外,例如 "consent" 不論用作 noun 或 verb 重讀都在第二音

節, "purchase" 不論用作 noun 或 verb 重讀都在第一音 節。我制你多查字典, 弗作猜測。

關於重讀,我要附帶說一句:我覺得許多中國人把"W" 這字母讀錯;你要知道自己錯不錯,請你查字典,看一看重 讀在那裏。

第四章

該糊塗些!

你大約覺得這個標題太奇怪罷,我有我的道理,且聽我 慢慢說來。

發音該正確,那是當然的.不過正確並不等於清晰.應 該清晰的地方清晰,應該糊塗的地方糊塗,纔算得正確.我 看有許多中國人的發音的不正確,不壞在不能清晰而壞在 不能糊塗;換句話說,就是壞在應該糊塗的地方不糊塗.

什麼是應該糊塗的地方呢?便是許多不重讀的音節.重讀的音節,來不可糊塗,但不重讀的音節大半應該糊塗;例如下面十個字裏印作大寫字體的部分,都該糊涂:

About ChinA momEnt develOp sUppose scholAR sistER comfORt murmUR curiOUs 倘若你把"about"裏的"a"讀得和"ask"裏的"a"一樣,"moment"裏的"e"讀得和"cent"裏的"e"一樣,"develop"裏的"o"讀得和"not"裏的"o"一樣,"suppose"裏的"u"讀得和"supper"裏的"u"一樣,那便證明你犯了不能糊塗的毛病,也就證明你的發音不好。

我所說的糊塗,並沒有絕對的標準;英國音比較美國音糊塗的程度深些,例如 "about" 裏的 "a", "moment" 裏的 "e", "develop" 裏的 "o", "suppose" 裏的 "u", 在美國音裏雖然糊塗,似乎還保存些 "a", "e", "o", "u" 各音的意味,在英國音裏竟糊塗得分別不出來(換句話說,就是把 "a" "e", "o", "u" 諮得一樣)。

英國音裏有這糊塗音,An English Pronouncing Dictionary 有一個表示這糊塗音的符號,便是[5]。(這個符號有許多 語音學家用着;英國人談話裏用這個音的地方很多,你要學 英國音,必須學像這個音。) The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 並 沒有表示這糊塗音的符號;在該讀這個音的地方,或者不注 音,或者印作斜體,或者省略,看了這字典開首的說明便知 道。The Universal Dictionary 也用[5]。

我說了一套關於「糊塗」的話,我想你要問我:「該怎麽糊塗法?究竟[ə]代表什麼音?」。我又為難了;我不能使文字開口,我祇得約略說一說。[ə] 所代表的是一種極自然而極不費力的音,就是標準英國音裏 "mare", "mere", "mire", "moor", 等字的末音,也就是我們談話不十分流利的時候所夾着的音,就是我們說「今天——我——」的時候,「一。一」所代表的那個音,不過「——」所代表的音往往拖長,[ə] 所代表的音卻是短促的。

下面各字裏印作大寫字體的都是糊塗音:

actOR bettER cOnnect doctOR effORT famOUs grammAR humAm ideA joyOUs kingdOm labOUR methOd natURE orgAn paymEnt quiEt relAtive sUbmit thorOUGH umbrellA vitAmin womAn xylOphone yestERday zealOUs

第五章

幾個容易讀錯的音

我覺得英文裏有幾個音,許多中國人讀錯,而大家都讀 錯得一樣,現在把它們逐一解釋在下面:

- 一: "cake", "mate", "name", "tale", 等字裏的 "a", 許多中國人誤讀得像 "let" 裏的 "e" 拖長的音。實任是 "let" 裏的 "e" 加上 "主" 裏的 "" 的雙元音 (diphthong)。
- 二: "care", "mare", "pair", "wear", 等字裏的"a", "a", "ai", 和 "ca", 許多中國人誤讀得像 "cake", "mate", 等字: 裏的"a"一般。實征近於"let" 裏的"c" 而略長。
- 三: "mine", "isle", "sight", "wipe", 等字裏的"i",許多中國人把這雙元音的第二音誤讀得像"let" 裏的"e"。一般。實在這雙元音在美國音裏等於"art" 裏的"a" 加上"it" 裏的"i", 在英國音裏等於美國音"ask" 裏的"a" 加上"it" 裏的"i"。(注意:美國音"ask" 裏的"a", 在標準英國音裏沒有單獨用着的,但標準英國音裏的"mine", "isle", "sight", "wipe", 等字裏的"i"的第一音,卻是這個音。)

四: "oil", "boil", "coin", "moist" 等字裏的 "oi", 許多中國人把這雙元音的第二音誤讀得像 "let"中的 "e"一般。實在這雙元音在美國音裏等於 "order" 裏 "o" 加上 "it" 裏的 "i", 在英國音裏等於 "not" 裏的 "o" 加上 "it" 裏的 "i" (但也有讀得和美國音一樣的)。

五: "noun", "about", "mouth", "house", 等字裏的"ou", 許多中國人把這雙元音的第一音誤讀得像"not"裏

的"o"或"order"裏的"o"一般,把第二音誤讀得像"food"裏的 "oo"一般;而且把 "noun", "found", "mountain", "count",等字裏的 "oun" 誤讀得像 "fond" 裏的 "ou" 一般 (因而把 "fond" 和 "round", "don" 和 "down",讀得完全一樣)。實在這雙元音在美國音裏等於 "art" 裏的 "ar" 加上 "book" 裏的 "oo", 在英國音裏等於美國音 "ask" 裏的 "a" 加上 "book" 裏的 "oo" (但也有讀得和美國音一樣的)。

六: "fill", "table", "mile", "call" 等字裏的"I", 許多中國人捲舌而讀, 便錯了。實在該把舌尖抵住在上面牙肉上, 決不可捲舌。

七: "sing", "spring", "throng", "strength", 等字裏的 "ng", 許多中國人誤讀得像 "not" 裏的 "n" 一般 (因而把 "sin"和 "sing", "thin" 和 "thing", 讀得完全一樣)。實在該 把輕顎和舌背接觸。(讀 "n" 該把舌尖和上面的牙肉接觸。)

八: "think", "through", "thing", "three", 等字裏的"th", 許多中國人誤讀得像、"sit" 裏的"s" 一般(因而把"sin"和"thin", "sick"和"thick", 讀得完全一樣)。實在該把舌尖抵住在上下齒的中間。

九: "that", "those", "then", "though", 等字裏的"th", 許多中國人誤讀得像 "zero" 裏的 "z" 一般(因而把 "with" 讀得和 "wisdom" 裏的第一音節完全一樣)。實在也該把舌尖抵住在上下齒的中間。

十: "pleasure", "occasion", "mirage", "rouge", 等字裏的 "s"和"g"、許多中國人讀得像 "fish" 裏的 "sh" 一般。實在和 "sh" 不同; 那不同正像 "rise" 裏 "s"和 "promise" 裏的 "s"的不同。

第六章

加上的"s", "es", "d"和"ed"

你倘若讀過文法書,你當然知道些關於 singular (單數) 式和 plural (複數)式, present (現在)式和 past (過去)式的 事。你知道 "boy" 是 singular, "boys" 是 plural, "dish"是 singular, "dishes" 是 plural; 你也知道 "love" 是 present, "loved" 是 past, "work"是 present, "worked" 是 past。

但一般文法書祇教你什麽地方加"s",什麽地方加"es", 什麽地方加"d",什麽地方加"ed",卻不教你那加上的 "s","es","d"和"ed",該怎樣讀法。(我以為這是一般文 法書的一個缺點。)因而許多中國人把加上的"s"和"es" 都讀得像"sit"裏的"s"一般,把加上的"d"和"ed"都 讀得像"dog"裏的"d"一般。(這是發音的不好的一個原 因。)

加上的"s"和"es"的發音規則在下面:

- 一: 倘若一個字的末音是"sit"裏的"s"(例如"force"), "zero" 裏的 "z" (例如 "nose"), "she" 裏的 "sh" (例如 "dish"), "pleasure" 裏的 "s" (例如 "mirage"), "chat" 裏的 "ch" (例如 "peach"), 或 "just" 裏的 "j" (例如 "college"), 那末加上的 "s" 或 "es" 都該讀得和 "wisdom" 裏的 "is" — 樣,因而加上一個音節。
- 二: 倘若一個字的末音是"five"裏的"f"(例如"chief"; 那種末音雖然是這個音而變成 plural 式以後"f"變成"v"的字除外,例如"wife"變成"wives"), "kiss" 裏的"k" (例

如 "book"), "put" 裏的 "p" (例如 "hope"), 或 "ten" 裏的 "t" (例如 "hat"), 那未加上的 "s" (不會得 "es") 該讀作 "sit" 裏的 "s".

三: 倘若一個字的末音是 "think" 裹的 "th" (例如 "month"), 那末加上的 "s" (不會得 "es") 有的讀作 "sit" 襄 的"s",有的讀作"zero" 裏的 "z" (在該讀作 "zero" 裏的 "z"的時候,那 "think" 裏的 "th" 音該改讀作 "that" 裏的 "th")。至於那幾個字後面加上的 "s" 該讀作 "sit" 裏的 "s", 幾那個字後面加上的"s"該讀作"zero" 裏的"z",有下面幾 點該注意:(一)倘若一個字的末音是"think"裏的"th"而這 個音的前面一音是輔音(例如 "month" 和 "health"),那末加 上的"s"該讀作"sit"裏的"s";(二)倘若一個字的末音是 "think" 裏的"th"而這個音的前面是短的元音(例如"smith" <u>倘若一個字的末音是"think"</u>裏的"th"而這個音的前面 有二個 "了" (指拼法; 例如 "birth" 和 "hearth"), 那末加 上的"s"也該讀作"sit"裏的"s";(四)倘若一個字的末音 是 "think" 裏的 "th" 而這個音的前面是長的元音 (例如 "mouth"和"truth")、那末加上的"s"大都該讀作"zero" 稟 的"艺"、(注意:第四點裏我用「大都」兩個字,因為這裏所說 的是有例外的:例如 "growth" 後面加上的 "s" 讀作 "sit" 裏的"s",不讀作"zero" 裏的"z"。)

四:除了上面三條規則裏所講到的以外,加上的"s"或"es"都該讀作"zero"裏的"z"。

"宝" "house" 這個字倘若加上了"宝",不獨那加上的"s" 當然該讀得和"wisdom"裏的"is"一樣(照第一條規

則),那原來的"s"(原來讀作"sit" 裏的"s")。也該改讀作"zero"。裏的"2":據我所知道,英文裏祇有"house"。這一個字是這樣的。(當然"boarding-house"。"schoolhouse"、等也是這樣。)

上面所講的是 nour 的 plura 式裏的 "s" 和 "es" noun 的 possessive case (所有格) 惠的加上的 apostrophe "s" 也是這樣。verb 也有加 "s" 或 "es" 的 (例如 "He walks." 和 "It moves." 裏的 "walks" 和 "moves" 便是文法裏所說的 third person, singular number, present tense, indicative mood 「第三人稱,單數,現任時態,直陳語氣间 verb)。verb 後面加上的 "s" 或 "es" 的發音規則,和 noun 的 plural 式裏的 "s" 或 "es" 相同,不過有兩個特別的字該注意: (一) "say" 裏的 "ay" 原來讀作 "late" 裏的 "a",但 "says" 裏的 "ay" 該改讀作 "let" 裏的 "e": (二) "do" 裏的 "o" 原來讀作 "food" 裏的 "o",但 "does" 裏的 "o" 該改讀作 "but" 裏的 "u"

加上的"d"和"ed"的發音規則在下面:

三:除了上面兩條規則裏所講到的以外,加上的"d"或

"ed"都該讀作"day"裏的"d"。

(讀完了這一章,你也許要說:「你可算講得詳細了,可 是我還摸不着頭腦哩。」。這也難怪你;倘若我自己原來不 懂,看了這幾條規則,也要感覺摸不着頭腦的。我祇有勸你 把這章多看幾逼;而且要對你說一句話:這幾條規則雖然似 乎複雜,但都是合於自然的,不是什麼文法家或是語音學家 關着門杜造出來的;你照了這些規則讀,便是合於自然,就 覺得便當,倘若違反了這些規則讀,便是含於自然,就 覺得便當,倘若違反了這些規則讀,便是違反自然,就 覺得便當,倘若違反了這些規則讀,便是違反自然,就 覺得便當,倘若違反了這些規則讀,便是違反自然,就 覺得便當,倘若違反了這些規則讀,便是違反自然,就 覺得

第七章

句語裏的發音

你總還記得,我在第二章裏說過:我所要講的發音,是 在句語裏的發音,不但是孤單單的單字的發音。當然那單字 讀不正確的人,決不能把句語讀得正確,也就決不會講得一 口好英語。可是祇注意把單字讀得正確而不考究句語裏的 發音(這是許多人的錯誤),也不會講得一口好英語。我在 第二章到第六章裏所講,都是關於單字的,現在要講到句語 裏的發音了。

我所說的「句語」,不一定指全句,也包括一切 phrase 和 clause。我們講英語(其實講中國話也是這樣),決不祇用單字,但也決不祇用完全的句子。

我在第一章裏說過,洋人說了一串極尋常的字,往往比一串長些和生些的字難懂。倘若每個句語裏都是 "satisfaction", "responsibility", "perpendicular", "constitutionalism", 等長字(實在不可能),聽起來便容易懂(當然假定你融得這些字)。可是夾着 "a", "the", "for", "to", "us",等字就難懂了。講英語也是這樣:你說 "satisfaction", "responsibility",等字洋人大概懂得;你說 "a", "the",等字他也許不懂。

講到句語裏的發音,正是說來話長;一個 "yes",一個 "well",都有種種語調,表示種種意思。這裏我想祇講比較重要的幾點。

一: 單字有重讀,句語也有重讀;例如 "at once" 的重讀在 "once" 而不在 "at"; "I want it." 的重讀在 "want" 而

不在"I"或"it"。單字的重讀,有字典可以參考;句語的重讀,卻沒有絕對的標準。大概說來,重要的字該重讀,不重要的字不該重讀;"at once" 裏當然"once"比"at"重要;"I want it." 裏當然"want"比較地重要。(這句的尋常意思是「我要它。」;倘若有「我要它,並不是別人要它。」的意思,那末便該把"I"重讀了。)

二:長些的句語,讀起來自然有段落,這段落當然和文法有關係:例如"I want to go at once" 裏"I want to go"和"at once"自然分作兩段(但我並不說讀了"go"以後停着幾秒鐘再讀"at")。我所說的一「段」,不論它有一個字,二個字,或三個,四個,五個字,總該當作一個字般看待,該重讀的地方便重讀,不該重讀的地方便不重讀:例如"I want to go"的重讀在"want"和"go","at once"的重讀在"once"。再舉一例:"I saw him walking arm in arm with a fat lady yesterday."這句可以分作"I saw him walking","arm in arm", "with a fat lady",和"yesterday"四段;第一段的重讀在"saw"和"walking"(當然"ing"不能重讀),第二段的重讀在"arm"和"arm",第三段的重讀在"fat"和"lady"(當然"dy"不能重讀;"fat"比較"lady"輕讀些),第四段的重讀便是"yesterday"這字(當然重讀在"yes")。

三:我所說的一「段」,既然該當作一個字看待,便往往發生了連讀 (linking);例如 "arm in arm" 讀起來便有 "m" 和 "i" 拼成的音,也有 "n" 和 "ar" 拼成的音;"with a fat lady" 讀起來有 "th" 和 "a" 拼成的音。 倘若一個字的末 音是輔音,而下面跟着的字的第一音是元音,那末讀起來便 互相拼着。 英語裏有一件該特別注意的事: 在標準英國音

惠對於字尾的"r"(例如在"here","clear","brother", "carpenter" 各字)雖然不讀作輔音(這裏就是說不捲舌), 但倘若在同「段」裏下面跟着的字的第一音是元音,許多英 美人便把"r"和那元音拼着讀:例如"far apart"讀起來有 "r"和"a"拼成的音,"there is"讀起來有"r"和"i"拼成 的音,"dear uncle"讀起來有"r"和"u"拼成的音;"more ice"和"more rice"發音相同,"our aid"和"our raid" 發音相同。(這種連讀是自然而然的,不是什麽專家定的規 律,因而有人說我不必把它說給你聽;但我以為中國人若要 把英語講得好,必須注意這種[自然而然」的東西,對於英美 人雖然是「自然而然」,中國人卻須用心幕仿,纔能學得像。)

關於這件事,我有四點要請你注意:(一)我說「倘若在另一段 墨,那"r"極少和那元音拼着讀;(二)我說「許多英美人」, 不是「全體」,而且似乎這種人在逐漸少起來;(三)既然不 是「全體」,你不學這種「拼讀」也可以;可是你注意了這件 事,在「聽得懂」上往往有些幫助;(四)有許多英美人在沒 有"r"的地方竟然無中生有地弄出一個來,便是把末音是 [9] 的字都看作有"r"一般;例如在"China orange"裏讀 出"r"和"orange"的第一字母"o"拼成的音。

· 四:在第四章裏我講了一番關於「糊塗」的話,我說不 重讀的音節大半該糊塗。現在我要說的不是音節的糊塗, 是單字的糊塗;單字裏有音節的糊塗,句語裏也有單字的糊 塗。上面我所說的一「段」,除了重讀的字以外,都是不重讀 的字;不重讀的字,總是極尋常的字,有幾個因為常用作不 重讀的字,便有了糊塗讀法。我所說的「糊塗讀法」,像"a", "the", "as", "and", "for", "at", "of", "shall", "us", 等字都有 (An Enclish Pronouncing Dictionary 和 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 都兼注着);「糊塗讀法」裏用着那[ə] 所表示的糊塗音,例如"a", "the" 裹的"e", "as" 裹的"a", "and" 裹的"a", "of" 裹的"o", "at" 裹的"a", "of" 裹的"o", "shall" 裹的"a", "us" 裹的"u", 都是這個音。因而"a rest"和"arrest" 發音相同,"pity us"和"piteous" 發音相同。一「段」裏有了塗糊音,又有了連讀,在「聽得懂」上該更加注意;例如"more of it", "one or another", "for an answer", "either car or eve", "和"over and over again".

我在第一章裏說過,假定那向你談話的是「高等洋人」,假定他的發音是標準的.要是聽「低等洋人」的談話,單就發音一項而論,便有種種困難。下面的幾點,也許在「聽得懂」上有一些幫助:

- 一:不重讀的音節省去;例如把 "because" 裹的 "be" 省去,把 "enough" 裹的 "e" 省去,和把 "ordinary" 裹的 "di" 省去。
- 二:元音變讀;例如把"I"讀得和"are"一樣,把"no" 讀得和"gnaw"一樣,和把"oil"讀得和"isle"一樣。(尤 其是把不重讀的音節裏的元音讀作糊塗音;例如把"fellow" 讀得和"feller"一樣。)
- 三: 輔音變讀;例如把 "thank" 讀得和 "tank" 一樣, 把:"they" 讀得和 "day" 一樣, 和把 "fiver" 讀得和 "fibre" 一樣.

四: 輔音省去;例如把"hold"讀得和"hole"一樣,把"next"讀得和"necks"一樣,和把"sing"讀得和"sin"。

樣。(尤其是把"h"的音名去;例如把"hair" 讀得和"air"一樣,把"heat" 讀得和"eat"一樣,和把"hold" 讀得和"old"一樣。這種人卻往往在沒有"h"的音的地方反而無中生有地加上一個"h"的音;把"hair","heat",和"hold" 讀作"air","cat",和"old",卻把"air","cat",和"old"讀作"hair","heat",和"hold"。)

第八章

談話裏的單字和句語

我在二十歲以前,有一次和一位美國教士談話,我問他是否將長住在那新造的教堂裏;說到「住」,我用了"dwell"這個字,他似乎不懂我的意思;我把我的問句慢慢地重說了一遍,他纔懂得。他笑了一笑,告訴我說"dwell"這字在談話裏是不用的,說到「住」該用"live"。

我想你也有過這種經驗罷。我在第一章裏說過,洋人聽不懂你的話,問題也許在於單字和句語。我們中國人讀英文,大都注重在書本而少得和英美人接觸;但書本裏的英文,並不都可以用在談話裏,像上面所說的"dwell"這個字,便是一個例。不但單字這樣,句語也是這樣,書本裏的好句子,搬到談話裏竟會不像一句話。

究竟那個字可以用在談話裏?那個字不可用在談話裏?那種句語可以用?那種句語不可用?卻又一言難盡,而且也沒有絕對的標準。我祇能把我認為可靠的幾點講一下:

一: 字典惠注明 "archaic", "poetic", "literary", "rhetorical", 或 "obsolete" 的單字或習語都不用。(有許多字, 雖然在字典裏並不這樣注明,但也很少用; 例如 "conceal" 不如 "hide" 普通, "peruse" 不如 "read" 普通, "endeavour" 不如 "try" 普通, "sufficient" 不如 "enough" 普通。)

二: "come", "go", "get", "make", "put", "take", "turn", 等字用得很多;這些字後面加上 preposition (前置 辭),或 adverb (副辭),或 adverb 和 preposition 而成的

phrase 也用得很多。(我在競文書局出版的英文單字活用法 [Idiomatic Oses of Common Words] 和日用英文智語 [Everyday English Idioms] 裏所有的都用得着。)

三: 冗長或複雜的句子不用。

四: 所用的句語,不都是全句。

五: "I'm", "he's", "we'll", "can't", 等縮寫式用得很多。

你必定以為我這五點太空泛,不着邊際,我也承認;下 面我想講一些切實的話。

你要學得講一口好英語,先要念熟許多日常應用的句語,要做到口上念慣了,應用起來脫口而出。我以為會話會裏該有這種日常應用的句語,而且把每個句語的發音注出。(注意我說把每個句語的發音注出,是注重在句語,並不被注單字,我在競文書局出版的全句注音英語會話 [English Conversation: Principles and Practice] 是這樣的。)可是祕讀會證實沒是不夠;我勸你讀些現代的劇本,和現代小說等裏的對話;沒有一點,你遇到英美人的時候,細心聽他們用的句語,配在心上。現在我随便寫幾個日用句語在下面,減變你能把一二百個這種句語念上了口,談起話來就要感覺到便利些了(這些似乎都很簡單,但不注意便不知道,不純熟便讓不出):

- 1. Will you please...? (我可以請你...麼?)
- 2. Would you mind ...ing? (你反對...麽? [實在等於「你肯...麽?」; 但因為"mind"作「反對」解釋, 回答說「我
 青」不該說"Yes."而該說"Certainly not."或"Not at all."])

- 3. May I ...? (我可以... 麽?)
- 4. Don't trouble. (你不必費心。)
- 5. Many thanks. (多謝。)
- 6. Thank you for ...ing. (謝謝, 承你....)
- 7. I should think so. (我想也許是這樣的。)
- 8. I suppose so. (我想也許是這樣的。)
- 9. I hope so. (我希望這樣。)
- 10. I hope not. (我希望不是這樣。)
- 11. I can't quite see that. (我不很明白那個。)
- 12. Shall I ...? (你要我... 麽?)
- 13. I say, ... (請注意我的話...;卻說 ; 奇怪極了。)
- 14. I should like to... (我很喜歡....)
- 15. I am very glad to hear that ... (我聽到了 很覺快活。)
 - 16. I am sorry, but ... (我抱歉,但...)
- 17. I may as well ... (我不妨...[我還是 了罷]。[例如"I may as well tell you his address."。])
- 18. What do you mean by ...? (你所說的 是什麼意思?)
 - 19. Did you ever? (你竟有過這囘事麽?)
 - 20. What do you think? (你以為怎樣?)
- 21. What do you say to ...? (你對於 以為怎樣? [例

如"What do you say to seeing him this evening?"。])

- 22. I see. (我現在明白了.)
- 23. I am afraid ... (我恐怕...;我抱歉 .)
- 24. I don't care. (我不管。)

- 25. I thought as much. (我原來也這樣想。)
- 26. I had no idea... (我原來不知道..., |例如"I had no idea you would be here."」)
 - 27. What about ...? (你對於...以為怎樣?)
 - 28. Quite so. (是啊.)
 - 29. You see, ... (你當然明白,...;讓我講你聽,....)
 - 30. That's right. (那好極了。)
 - 31. How do you like ...? (你對於...喜歡不喜歡呢?)
 - 32. So much the better. (那更好了。).
 - 33. Well, what of it? (唔,那有什麽問題呢?) `
- 34. Why not ...? (你為什麼不...?[我以為你不妨...。] [例如"Why not try?"。])
 - 35. What does it all mean? (這究竟是怎麽一囘事?) ·
- 36. Here you are. (你所要的就在這兒;你到了你所要 到的地方了。)
 - 37. That will do. (那夠了;不必多勞了。)
- 38. What can I do for you? (我能替你做什麽?[你來 看我有什麼事?有何見教?])
- 39. You don't say so? (你不這樣說麽?[竟然這樣 麽?])
 - 40. You might ... (我請你...;你該....)
 - , 41. Fancy!; Fancy that! (試想 [竟有那樣的事]!)
 - 42. What a pity! (好不可歎![那壞極了!])
- 43. Good (Goodness) knows! (天曉得! [我不曉得]: 天曉得![的確。])
 - 44. Nothing of the sort (或 kind). (決不是這樣。)

- 45. Not that I know of. (我不知道。「我想沒有那囘事。])
- 46. Am I speaking to ...? (我正在向...說話麼? [你就是...麼?])
- 47. Beg pardon; Beg your pardon; I beg pardon; I beg your pardon. (請原諒我。 L表示自己對於對方的細微犯冒; 表示冒昧向原來不相識的人說話;表示異議或反對;或表示不會聽懂對方的話, 請他再說一遍。)
 - 48. You are welcome. (別說謝。)
- 49. This is ... speaking; ... speaking. ([這兒在電話裏]講話的是...。[我是...。])
- 50. Are you there? (你在[電話的] 那邊麼? [就是你麼?])

我有時聽人家說談話不必講究文法,儘可隨便。這話不確;談話也得有文法,有 number (數),有 gender (性),有 tense (時態),有 mood (語氣),有 voice (語態),決不可隨便。不受教育的英美人談話,往往有不合文法的句語;但所謂「不合文法」,是指不合標準的用法 (standard usage),也自成為一種「文法」或「用法」,並不是完全隨便。(順便說一句,即使那極不純正的所謂「洋涇浜」英語 [pidgin English或 pigeon English],也不是絕對「隨便」的;「錯」儘管「錯」,卻多少有一定的「錯」法,並不是任何錯誤的句語都可以算作「洋涇浜」英語。倘若你要講它,必須細心學習「英美人要講它,也得學習」。)

不過談話裏的文法有值得注意的若干點:

一: 句的 subject (主辭) 有時省去; 例如 "(I) got the

letter only this morning."和 "(It) must be done."。(有時 auxiliary verb [助動辭]也省去;例如 "[Did you] ever see such a boy?")

- 二: imperative sentence (祈使句)的 subject "you"有時不省去;例如 "You take this." 和 "Don't you touch it!".
- 三: "It's me!", "That's him.", 等句裏通常用 "me" 和 "him" 而很少用 "I" 和 "he"。
- 四: "Who do you mean?", "Who did he speak to?", 等句裏通常用"who"而很少用"whom"。

五: "He is being polite." 等句裏把 "being" 用在 progressive form (進行式)。

談話裏的句話,往往有好像平常而直譯成了中文卻不 很明白的,這對於「聽得懂」上是一個困難,該細心玩味。下 面幾個例子都先譯成中文,再加解釋(祇看那譯文不是有 些莫名其妙麼?):

- 1. I could do with another slice of bread. (我能夠應付另一片麵包。[我很想再喫一片麵包。])
- 2. I shall not expect you till I see you. (我將不盼望你, 直到我見你為止。[在你來以前我將不盼望你; 隨便你幾時來。])
- 3. I wouldn't take anything for this wonderful sight. (我不顧取任何東西和這個奇景交換。[我愛煞這個奇景,不肯不看。])
- 4. I will teach him to steal the sweets again. (我要教他再偷糖果。[我要給他些顏色看,使他不再偷糖果。])
 - 5. If this isn't the boy we saw last year! (假使這個不

是我們去年見過的那個男孩![這個大約竟然是我們去年見 過的那個男孩!])

- 6. Be sure to let me hear from you. (一定要讓我收到你的信。[千萬請你寫信給我。])
- 7. See if I'm not back in half an hour. (看我是否在 半小時以後不囘來。[我在半小時以後一定囘來。])
- 8. She disappeared on her birthday of all days. (她在一切的日子中間的她的生日失蹤了。[她不在旁的日子失蹤,偏在她的生日失蹤。])
- 9. They are anything from ten to twenty years older than I. (他們比我大從十年到二十年的任何一點。[他們幾個人,最小的比我大十年,最大的比我大二十年。])
- 10. The boy is taller than his father, if you please. (這 男孩比他的父親高,假使你樂意的話。[你可不得不承認,這 男孩倒比他的父親高。])

第九章

談話裏的俗語

有一次我和一個中學生在上海某路上走,見到兩個外國孩子互相遇到,一個說 "I've been looking for you all over the shop.",那中學生不懂這句話,我對他說: 「"all over the shop",是一句俗語,作「到處」解釋,也就是 "everywhere" 的意思。」

英美人的談話裹往往用俗語;例如說「死」不一定用 "die",卻有 "go west", "hand in his cheeks", "kick the bucket",等語,很像我們中國話裏說「死」也不一定說「死」,卻有「歸天」,「蹺辮子」,「來個路上去」,等語。我所說的「俗語」,包括口語和俚語,口語是多用在談話裏而不用在正式文字裏的,俚語比口語更俚俗些。究竟某個字或 phrase 是口語還是俚語,並沒有絕對的標準;同一個字或 phrase,也 許這本字典叫它口語而那本字典叫它俚語。

英美人談話裏往往用俗語,上面已經說過;大約教育程度高的人用俗語比較少,教育程度低的人用俗語比較多;和陌生人談話用俗語比較少,和熟朋友談話用俗語比較多。那不會受過教育的人和熟朋友談話起來,有時簡直滿口俚語,我們中國人聽了,竟要莫名其妙。

俗語(尤其是俚語)層出不窮,字典裏也載不完全,記也 記不勝記。不必說你自修英語的人,即使那在英美二國住 過幾年的人,請他去聽幾個水手或工人的談天,恐怕也難得 十分明白(反轉來說,請你不要因為自己聽不懂而自以為程 度特別不行)。我想我們中國人和英美人談話,不必求得能多用俗語(實在也辦不到),但對於常用的俗語,卻該知道些;這種俗語,現代劇本和小說等裏很多,雜誌和報紙裏也有。下面是幾個尋常的俗語:

- 1. awful. (這是一個加強語勢的字;例如 "awful fun" [十分有趣的事], "awful bore" [十分討厭的人或東西], "awful relief" [十分可慰的事], "awful time" [十分沒趣的時候]。)
- 2. beastly. (在英國作「可恨的」,「可厭的」,等解釋,也用作副辭作「十分」解釋;例如 "beastly weather" [可恨的天氣」,"beastly place" [可恨的地方],"beastly drunk" [大醉],"beastly wet" [極溼]。)
- 3. wretched. (作「不好的」,「蹩腳的」, 等解釋;例如"wretched health" 「不好的健康」, "wretched horse" [不好的馬], "wretched typewriter" [蹩腳的打字機]。)
- 4. simply. (作「竟然」,「簡直」,等解釋;例如"I simply don't like him." [我竟然不喜歡他。], "She is simply crazy." [她簡直發癡了。]。)
- 5. have got. ("have got" 和 "have" 意義相同, "got" 並沒有「得到」的意思;例如"I haven't got a coat.", "Have you got a fountain-pen?", "We have got to do it.", "What have you got to say?".)
 - 6. That gets my goat. (作「那使我惱了。」解釋,例如"The ticket is missing. That gets my goat." [那票子不見了。那使我惱了。]。)
 - `7. Catch me! (作「我決不!」解釋, 後面往往加上

present participle [現在分解];例如"Catch me writing letters this evening!" [我今天晚上決不寫信!]。直譯作「捉住我!」,就是「倘若我…,你儘可以捉住我。」,也就是「我決不!」的意思。)

- 8. a (或 the) devil of a... (作「很壞的」,「很厲害的」,等解釋;例如 "There was a devil of a fight." [有一場大打架。], "He has a devil of a temper." [他有很壞的脾氣。])
- 9. Not half. (作「一些也不」或「很」解釋;例如"Not half bad."[一些也不壞。]; "Did you have a good time?" [你曾快樂麽?], "No half!" [很快樂。]。這兩個意思是相反的,隨着語氣而不同。)
- 10. however, whatever, whoever, wherever 等。(這幾個字原來是極尋常的字, 但在談話裏往往用得像 "how" "what", "who", "where" 一般,不過語氣重些。)

教育程度差些的人的談話裏有下面幾點該注意:

- 一: 用雙重否定或三重否定當作單純的否定;例如 "I won't do nothing for him." 等於 "I won't do anything for him." 或 "I'll do nothing for him.", "I've never hardly done it." 等於 "I've never done it.", "You can't never trust no such person." 等於 "You can never trust such a person."
- 二: 用了 comparative degree (比較級) 式而前面加上 "more"; 例如 "more better" 等於 "better", "more braver" 等於 "braver.".
- 三: 用 superlative degree (最上級) 式指二個中的一個:例如 "I wonder which is the most intelligent, he or his

wife." 等於 "I wonder which is the more intelligent, he or his wife.".

四:在否定字的後面把 "as" 用作 conjunction "that" 一般;例如 "I don't think as he can do it." 等於 "I don't think that he can do it.".

五:用 relative pronoun (關係稱代辭)指人;例如"Is he the boy which called on you this morning?" 等於"Is he the boy who called on you this morning?"

第十章

從讀學習講

講和寫那件事難?實在是各有難易.拼法,標點,大小寫,分段落,這些都使寫比講難.可是「勇氣」,敏捷,發音,語調,這些都使講比寫難.我現在祇注意一點,就是句語的造成,那便講比寫難了:寫可以慢慢思想,寫錯了可以改正,講卻不能,一言既出,駟馬難追;要是字斟句酌,講了一二個字便停了三四秒鐘,那又要使對方不耐煩。

你是自修英語的人,除了偶然有機會和英美人談話和細聽他們自己的談話以外,不得不借重書本。讀會話書當然好,但不夠,還得讀些現代劇本和現代小說裏的對話。(我想選自成段落的這種材料做成的比較「活動」的會話書該是有益而有趣的。)讀了還得把一切句語朗讀得爛熟,再多作摹仿的練習。(要是把這種練習寫下來,也就是練習寫。)

例如讀下面的一段母子談話(原文見競文書局出版高中英文選[English Selections for Senior Middle Schools] 第二册第三十九課 "Rich Relations"):

His mother sat under a lamp in the drawing-room, embroidering. "So nice to have you back" she said; then, looking up, "Oh, not dressed? Where are your evening clothes?"

They were pawned long ago.

"I didn't bring them" he said. "Not for a short visit."

"A short visit? You're not going away again?"

"In a few days. I'm rather busy now."

"Well, I'm glad you can spare me a few days if you're so busy."

"My work..."

"Yes, tell me about your work. I hope you're not still seeing that dirty person."

"Who?" knowing who she meant from a chance meeting of hers. He could not say who this dirty person was.

"You know quite well who I mean: Mr Banner or something."

"Oh, Vanna, I do see him sometimes. He's very brilliant."

"He may be brilliant. It always pays to know decent people; you'll be sorry when you're older; I have tried my best."

"Vanna's taught me a great deal, he's a famous man."

"Famous? I've never met anyone who's ever heard of him."

現在把高中英文選裏關於這一段的注解抄在下面: dressed, 穿着禮服的。

Not=I did not bring them.

spare me a few days, 給我數天(來陪伴我)。

seeing, 會見.

dirty, 卑鄙的。

knowing, 這字形容省去的 "he asked" 裏的 "he".

who, 照文法該作"whom", 但談話裏常用"who" 而不用"whom".

chance meeting of hers, 她的偶然會見(那她所說的卑鄙的人)。

could not say, (雖然知道而)不能說。

Mr Banner or something, 像 Banner 先生那類的人。

Vanna, Banner 先生的名字。

do see, 的確會見。("do"加重 "see"的語氣。) pays, 值得;使人有益。

know decent people, 認識高尙的人們(而不認識卑鄙的人們)。

I have tried my best, 我已經盡過我的力了。(我已經盡力勸過你了。)

Vanna's = Vanna has.

who's = who has.

(原書因為上文已經注過 "evening clothes", 所以不再注; 這語指「晚上穿的禮服;夜會服」。)

假定你念熟了;現在我替你做些摹仿的例子:

- 1. (not dressed?) (1) Not satisfied? (2) Not agreed? (3) Not ready? (4) Not willing?
- 2. (Not for a short visit.) (1) Not for the present. (2) Not for you. (3) Not for the holidays. (4) Not for that purpose.
- 3. (A short visit?) (1) A short stay? (2) A small sum? (3) A long time? (4) A whole week?
- 4. (You're not going away again?) (1) You're not leaving this afternoon? (2) You won't come back? (3) He hasn't written? (4) She didn't tell you?
- 5. (In a few days.) (1) In a few hours. (2) In a few weeks. (3) In a few months. (4). In a few years.
 - 6. (I'm glad...) (1) I'm glad you've come. (2) I'm

glad you understand me. (3) I'm glad he'll call. (4) I'm glad she's met them.

- 7. (spare me a few days) (1) Spare me five minutes.
 (2) Spare me some time. (3) Spare me fifty dollars. (4) Spare me a little money.
- 8. (tell me about your work) (1) Tell me about your lessons. (2) Tell me about your school. (3) Tell me about your village. (4) Tell me about your marriage.
- 9. (I hope...) (1) I hope you are better. (2) I hope you are interested. (3) I hope he'll help you. (4) I hope they've got it.
- 10. (who I mean) (1) who I saw. (2) who I went with. (3) who you spoke of. (4) who they refer to.
- 11. (...or something) (1) He's a carpenter or something.
 (2) He's lost a pen or something. (3) She's studying atomic energy or something. (4) The baby is having a cold or something.
- 12. (I do see him sometimes.) (1) I do love you. (2) I do read it every day. (3) He does believe in you. (4) She did say so.
- 13. (It always pays to know decent people.) (1) It always pays to speak politely. (2) It pays to learn a foreign language. (3) Does it pay to study abroad? (4) I don't think it pays to try to teach such a stupid boy.
- 14. (I have tried my best.) (1) I haven't tried my best yet. (2) You ought to try your best. (3) He doesn't care to try his best. (4) Are they going to try their best?

- 15. (Vanna's taught me a great deal.) (1) You've taught me much. (2) I can't teach you much. (3) He'll teach us more. (4) I don't think she'll teach you anything.
- 16. (a great deal) (1) He's learnt a great deal. (2) I'm about to tell you a great deal. (3) A great deal has been said. (4) A great deal has to be added.
- 17. (who's ever heard of him) (1) Who's ever done it? (2) Nobody has ever tried. (3) Will anybody ever see it again? (4) I wonder where such things have ever happened.
- 18. (heard of him) (1) Have you ever heard of him? (2) They cannot have heard of us before. (3) He has not been heard of since he went away. (4) I'll write as soon as I hear of his return.

這種摹仿,當然沒有一定多少;但做做總是有益的。你 是自修者,沒有教師替你修改,我想字典是很好的教師。

還有一個方法:在你讀得似熟非熟的時候,你可以把一 段談話默寫出來,寫好了依照原文改正。那幾乎等於請那原 文的作者替你修改;不是很好麽?

為了要牢記在心,最好把相似的東西放在一起。例如你讀過了"It is kind of you to come.", 再讀過了"How cruel of you to say that!", 再讀過了"I call it thoughtless of him to ask her those awkward questions.", 就把這三句放在一起,以後讀到下面的一切都放在一起。

absurd of bad of careless of clever of considerate of dear of foolish of friendly of good of grand of horrid of inconsiderate of

mean of . naughty of odd of sensible of shabby of silly of small of smart of splendid of stupid of sweet of thoughtful of tiresome of unfriendly of weak of well done of wonderful of wrong of

原

书

空

白

關於讀

原

书

空

白

第十一章

讀些什麼?

待你已經讀通了英文以後,「讀些什麽?」是不成問題的;你喜歡讀什麽便讀什麽就是了。可是你還不會讀通英文(當然我假定你還不會做到我在「開場白」裏所說的「通」的地步),「讀些什麽?」卻是一個問題。倘若讀了不適當的東西,不但不能因而讀通英文,反而要阻礙你的進步。

說來奇怪,在這個壓登時代,樣樣講究壓登,但許多中國學校裏讀的英文書,卻並不壓登。四五十年前大家讀什麼 Tales from Shakespeare, The Vicar of Wakefield, Gulliver's Travels, Sir Roger de Coverley Papers, Ivanhoe, 現在大家還是讀這幾本書。為什麼服裝要壓登,頭髮要壓登,信箋,信封,要壓登,糖果,椅子,客堂,婚姻,走路,都要壓登,獨有讀的英文不要壓登呢? 其中也許有種種原因,這裏不必細說;可是許多人仍舊讀着四五十年前大家讀的英文書,這是事實。

你現在讀些什麼英文書,是不是第十八世紀或第十九世紀的什麼文學名著?倘若是的,我要勸你趕快停止。請你想一想,倘若我們要讀通中文,要能夠看報,看小說,看實用文件,寫信,記日記,作日用記事文,我們是否不必讀現代文而讀些唐,宋,元,明,淸的文章?讀了韓愈,歐陽修,是否便能看申報,新聞報?讀了方苞,姚鼐,歸有光,龔自珍,是否便能寫自薦信,寫徵求廣告,寫普通記事文字?讀了古文辭類簋,聊齋誌異,是否便懂得「噴射機(jet plane)」,「原子能(atomic energy)」,「大量生產 (mass production)」,「生活指

數 (cost of living index)」,「通貨膨脹 (inflation)」,等字面?當然不能!讀英文也是這樣。第十八世紀和第十九世紀的文學名著,不論它們在文學史上有什麽重要地位,不論它們的文體怎樣優美;可是它們所講的事情,所用的句語,都和現代不合;你讀了它們,有什麼應用?倘若盡量應用起來,那末寫出來的都是古色古香的東西,也許尋常的一封自薦信,套上李白上韓荆州書的句調,豈不可笑?

也許你要說:「我讀老書,目的在於欣賞文學,並不想把老書裏的句語,搬到我自己的文字裏來。」;我的答覆是:「你普通文字還不能讀,決不能欣賞文學;而且你程度還淺,讀書很費氣力,讀了一二本老書,恐怕就不能兼顧新書。」。

也許有人要說:「祇讀新書而不讀老書,一定不行。博覽 古今者纔是通人。而且不讀老書也不能徹底明瞭新書,新書 裏往往有引證老書的地方,而老書裏沒有引證新書的地方, 要徹底明瞭新書該先讀老書,但要徹底明瞭老書卻不必先 讀新書:所以該把老書先讀,越老越先讀。」。這番話也頗有 理由的。不論中文或英文,祇讀新書而不讀老書決不能做成 「通人」或「通儒」。書越「新」越可能引證「舊」書。就中文講, 唐宋的書可能引證秦漢的書,明清的書可能引證唐宋的書, 也可能引證秦漢的書,民國的書可能引證明清的書,也可能 引證唐宋和秦漢的書;就英文講,第十八世紀的書可能引證 第十七世紀的書,第十九世紀的書可能引證 第十七世紀的書,第二十世紀的書可能引證 第十九世紀的書,也可能引證第十八世紀的書 第十九世紀的書,也可能引證第十八世紀的書 第十九世紀的書,也可能引證第十八和第十七世紀的書。 「越老越先讀」好像可以算得讀書次序的原則。但是在事實 上越是老書不論在內容或文字上越和現代不同:雖然也有 些老的比新的容易懂,但就大體而論,新的比老的容易。而況一本書或一篇文決不會大部分是引證;並且有許多引證雖然不知道它們的出處也可以懂得。要做到我在「開場白」裏所說的「通」,總該讀新的。(即使要做成「通人」或「通儒」,也必須先做到我在「開場白」裏所說的通。)

我不必開一個不該讀的書的目錄,祇須總括的說一句:「倘若你眞想讀通英文,在讀通以前決不可讀任何出版了已滿一百年的老書。」。你若要問我為什麼我說「一百年」而不說「九十年」或「一百十年」,我卻沒有確切的答覆,總之我勸你不要讀老書就是了。

老書既然不該讀,那末新書都可以讀麼?卻又不然。我 覺得許多中國人喜歡讀難的書,也是一個毛病。讀書總該讀 和自己程度適合的書。倘若一本書翻開來一看便感覺莫名 其妙,便不該讀;總要不查字典不靠注解懂得十分之六七幾 可以讀。

說來說去,我不會介紹一本可讀的書。我卻以為不必要 我介紹;祇要不是老書,不是難書,都可以讀。我們因為要讀 通英文而讀書,所以所讀的書,不必要名家著作,不必要思 想高超,更不可揀什麼奇書。而且可讀的也不必是書,我以 為除了讀書以外,也該讀些其它的東西;例如報紙,廣告,招 貼,傳單,西藥仿單,公園規則,電影說明書,「閒人莫入」, 「油漆未乾」,「此地不可小便」,以及其它一切的一切,衹要 有英文字的地方,都該用心看看,研究它們的句語。

當然,我說「不是難書」並不是說必須是滿紙"I am a boy.", "You are a girl." 的書纔可以讀。太難不行,太容易也不行。我以為要練習了解,該讀我所說「不查字典不靠注解

懂得十分之六七」的書。(可是為了學習寫該讀得更淺些。)

在這章裏似乎祇說了些空話實在是完全填心話;我還有二句似乎空泛而實在緊要的話要說一說;(一)有些人請我介紹書本,而等我介紹了卻並不填正去讀,這種人是不會讀通的;(二)該好好地讀了一本再讀一本,不可貪多貪快.

第十二章

精讀和略讀

大約一般人的所謂精讀和略讀,是把文字的內容做標準的;例如看報,看到國際代表開會辯論的新聞便精讀,看到有頭相罵相打的新聞便略讀,看到文學家,哲學家,藝術家情死的新聞便精讀,看到小版,車夫,乞丐尋死的新聞便略讀.但我所說的略讀和精讀,卻是把文字的本身做標準的;約略說來,難些的便精讀,容易些的便略讀.(要從讀學習寫,即使極淺近的東西也值得精讀;這點在第二十九章裏討論.)

我所說的精讀,便是一字一語都細細研究的讀法;我所說的略讀,便是一直讀下去,祇求明白意思,不必字字考究,的讀法,但決不是不求甚解的讀法;略讀便是練習快讀,並不是練習馬虎。

其實對於程度淺些的人,竟極少略讀的材料;恐怕除了極淺近的文字(例如初中一年級讀本)以外,沒有可以略讀的東西。我在第十一章裏所說「該讀和自己程度適合的書」,是指精讀說話;我要勸你多精讀,愈多愈好,愈精愈好。該記着讀的目的是在於使你自己的英文進步,是「修」你的英文的「業」,不是「進」什麼「德」;儘有人說「讀書明理」,「讀書志在聖賢」,或「書中自有…」,你可以一概不管。既然注重文字,就不必注重內容;那讀物的記事是否「忠實」,議論是否「公正」,思想是否「前進」,你也可以一概不管。

精讀得多了,就漸漸養成略讀的能力.待到能夠略讀普

通書報,不發生困難,你的閱讀能力可算成功了。但略讀必須從精讀養成;我在以後幾章裏所講的,都指精讀說話。

在精讀的時候,總該讀出聲來;對於一個字或一個句語,讀出聲來比較容易明白,容易記得。一個句語或一篇文章,都是一個一個的單字組織成功的;但必須彼此連絡,纔有意義,所以總該連貫讀出聲來。

第十三章

爲什麼讀不懂

我們讀英文,往往有讀不懂的地方;究竟為什麼讀不懂,我要研究一下:

我所研究的範圍,也得說明一下。我所說的英文,是指和讀者程度適合的英文,而且假定所講的是普通的東西。教一個祇讀過半年英文的人去讀一篇時事論文,當然不懂;教一個完全不懂數學的人去讀一本高級代數,也當然不懂。但教一個已經讀過英文好久,識得一二千英文字,而且懂得些文法的人去讀一段新聞,一篇小說,一封實用信,也會有不懂的地方,究竟為什麽?這點是我所要研究的。

照理想說來,讀不懂的原因,似乎祇有下面所說的四種:

- 一: 不識單字;例如 "chrysanthemum",不知道是「菊花」,便要全句不懂。
- 二:不識習語;例如 "kill two birds with one stone", 不知道是「一舉兩得」的意思,便要全句不懂。
- 三:不懂法文;例如"We eat that we may live.",不知道"that...may..."是表示目的的 adverbial clause (副解子句),便要全句不懂。

四:不明事實;例如"When World War II broke out, he was a student at Oxford.",不知道"World War II"是指從一九三九年九月一日德國進攻波蘭 (Poland) 開始的那第二次世界大戰,也不知道 Oxford 是英國的著名大學,便要

全句不懂。

倘若一句英文裏沒有這四種情形的任何一種,似乎該一定讀得懂了. 但事實卻並不這樣;你大約往往有這種經驗罷;單字,習語,文法,和事實,完全知道,而對於全句的意思仍舊不懂;而且我想你讀不懂的地方, 屬於這一類的很多. 據我看來,有下面所說的幾種原因:

- 一:不懂英文裏所有的而中文裏所沒有的說法;例如"You cannot be too careful.",直譯作「你不能過分小心。」,意思很不明白,共實是「你無論怎樣小心,總不會過分。」的意思,簡單說來,便是「你愈小心愈好。」;不知道英文裏有這種說法,便要全句不懂。
- ,二: 認定某字作某某解釋而其實不是;例如"As we had no coffee, we had to substitute tea.",這句的意思是「因為我們沒有咖啡,祇得拿茶來代替。」;倘若認定"substitute"作「代替」解釋,便要全句不懂。
- 三:不知道習慣用法;例如 "During his absence in England, his wife used to send him letters in care of his friend Mr Brown, a merchant in London.",以為 "absence in England"作「不在英國」解釋,就要疑問那個人既然不在英國」解釋,就要疑問那個人既然不在英國」為什麽他的老婆寫信給他偏要由倫敦的商人轉交,其實"absence in England" 並不作「不在英國」解釋,是作「不在吃處而在英國」解釋,也就是「在英國」的意思,"absence from England" 纔作「不在英國」解釋;不知道 "absence in"和 "absence from"的不同,便要全句不懂。

四:不知道含義;例如"He was a rich man's son, but now lived in a garret.", 祇知道"garret"是房子的最高一層,

就要疑問富人的兒子住在那裏有什麼希罕,偏要用"but", 其實因為 garret 通常是窮人住的;那富人的兒子住在那裏, 當然因為自己也窮了;不知道 garret 通常是窮人住的地方, 便要全句不懂。

五:不知道典故;例如"He sold some of his ragged veterans",這"ragged veterans"直譯作「衣衫襤褸的老兵」,其實指舊書,這典故出在英國第十九世紀文豪 Charles Lamb 所作的小品文"Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading"裏;不知道這典故,便要全句不懂。

六:讀者的智力不及作者;例如"A sensible girl is one who is too sensible to look it.",這是一句俏皮話,直譯作「一個聰明的女子是一個聰明得在面貌上不像聰明的一個女子。」,也就說「裝出聰明面孔的女子,實在都是不聰明的。」;讀者想不出作者的用意,便要全句不懂。

在上面我說出了十個讀不懂的原因;在下面幾章裏我要說出解決這種種困難的方法。

第十四章

不識單字和習語

照理想說來,單字不識,祇須查字典便解決,習語不識,也祇須查字典便解決。但我看一般中國人的毛病,不在不能查單字和查習語,而在見了單字自以為已識而實在並不明白,和見了習語而不當它是習語。例如見到 "chrysanthemum", "extempore", "paraphernalia", "octogenarian", "hippopotamus", "metamorphosis",等字,自己知道不識,便查字典,但見到 "get", "take", "in", "for", "well", "thing",等字,自以為已識,便不查字典;見到 "kill two birds with one stone", "rain cats and dogs", "in cold blood", "have an oar in every man's boat", "curtain lecture", "lion's share",等智語,知道它們是習語,便查字典,但見到 "take to", "dispense with", "come of", "as well", "if anything", "all but",等,也許不當它們是習語,便不查字典。

其實字眼越生僻,意義越少,越尋常,意義越多;識得 "chrysanthemum"一字,知道它是「菊花」便是了;像"take" 這個字,似乎大家都知道,但那自以為識得它的人,未必懂 得它的種種意義。尋常字所生出的習語也最多;例如"take" 本身有種種意義,下面加上了種種 adverb, 或 preposition, 或 adverb 和 preposition, 又化出種種習語,各有各的意義。

尋常字有種種意義,也就是有種種活用法;所以決不可 把它們當作一字一義看待,決不可認定 "get"是「得」, "take"是「拿」,"in"是「在裏頭」,"for"是「因為」,"well', 是「好」,"thing"是「東西」。

我要勸你,當你遇到一句裏並沒有生字而不懂的時候, 細細想一想,你對於那些極尋常的字,是否完全明白?而且 句裏會不會有習語?現在舉幾個關於"take"的例在下面:

- 1. He takes pupils.
- 2. They take lessons in music.
- 3. Do you take any newspaper?
- 4. I don't take your meaning.
- 5. The novel did not take.
- 6. Don't take him for a fool.
- 7. He soon took to her.
- 8. He has taken out a licence for carrying a pistol.
- 9. I'll take down his name and address.
- 10. The lady began to take in typewriting.

這十句的意思是:

- 1. 他教授學生。
- 2. 他們從教師學習音樂。
- 3. 你慣常看什麼報麼?
- 4. 我不懂你的意思。
- 5. 這章囘小說不會風行。
- 6. 不要當他是呆子。
- 7. 他不久就愛上了她。
- 8. 他已經領得攜帶手鎗的照曾。
- 9. 我要記下他的名字和住址。
- 10. 這女人開始在家裏替人家打字。

從第六句到第十句裏的 "take for", "take to", "take out",

"take down", 和 "take in", 都是習語。

據我所知道,解釋尋常字的種種意義和種種智語的小字典,要算 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 和 The Concise Oxford Dictionary (我已經在第二章裏說起過)最好, The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 的美國版多載美國字和美國智語,也很好。

你當然知道,字典是預備查的,不是預備讀的;「讀字典」三個字聽上去多少笨! 但我卻要勸你讀字典; 我要勸你讀字典裏的尋常字的種種意義和種種習語。我在二十多年前自修英文,曾經把 The Concise Oxford Dictionary 裏的 "a", "the", "at", "in", "on", "for", "it", "there", "that", "book", "thing", "matter", "come", "take", "get", "see", 等尋常字,逐一細細讀過;我覺得這樣一來,在閱讀上很有幫助;我希望你也試一試。(但你得注意:我勸你讀尋常字,不勸你讀生字;我從來不在字典裏讀生字,我認為讀生字往往是勞而無功的。)

我勸你在字典裏讀尋常字,不勸你讀生字;可是別以為我主張生字不必識,或者識得愈少愈妙。多識字總是好的,不過尋常字比生字難懂,所以值得多注意罷了。

尋常字和生字的分別,沒有絕對的標準;把 "get"和 "chrysanthemum" 相比,當然 "chrysanthemum" 比 "get" 「生」得多,不過把 "get" 和 "take" 相比或把 "chrysanthemum" 和 "extempore",就難說那個比那個「生」。Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary 和 Thorndike Century Junior Dictionary 裹所载的字,有關於尋常的程度的說明,據說把美國一般中學生讀的書,雜誌,等的一千萬左右字的讀物做根據,計算

各字的「尋常」程度,凡最「尋常」的第一千個字的任何一字 注作"1",第二千個字的任何一字注作"2",第三千個字的 任何一個注作"3";第二十千個字(就是從第一萬九千零 零一個到第二萬個)的任何一字注作"20";從第二萬零零 零一個起的任何字都不注號碼。

習語的「尋常」程度,我不會見過在任何字典裏注明着。我的日用英文習語裏的六百六十二個習語是依照我讀了許多書報所得到的「尋常」程度排列的;例如第一個是"have to…",第二個是"a little",第三個是"whether…or…",第六百六十二個是"wash up"。

字的種種意義在字典裏往往被一,二,三,四地分開解釋着,好像是各不相關的;其實大都從原義逐漸化出來,互相有線索可尋;從廣義說,一個字在字典裏有好幾個意義,通常祇有一個是原義,其它都是轉義,就是假借而來的,有時字典裏的各個意義都是轉義,那原義卻因為已經作廢而不被載着;不過字典裏每字的種種意義的排列,不一定依照它們的轉變或假借的次序;例如 The Concise Oxford Dictionary 的序文裏說 "From the order in which the senses of a word are here given no inference must be drawn as to their historical or other relations, the arrangement being freely varied according to the requirements or possibilities of the particular word. Sense-development cannot always be convincingly presented without abundant quotation from authorities, and the historical order is further precluded by the uniform omission of obsolete senses."

習語在字典裏通常依照字母的次序排列; 例如 "take"

等等。不過某個用法是否智語,各字典的編者看法不同,也就述不一致;例如"Don't take him for a fool."裏的"take for",在 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary,The Universal Dictionary,和 Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary 裏都被看作智語,但在The Concise Oxford Dictionary 和 Thorndike Junior Dictionary 裏都不被看作智語。(我在日用英文智語的「例言」裏對於「智語」有很詳細的說明。)

不論單字或習語,機績不斷地任產生,沒有字典能趕得上,我和另外三位先生合編任競文書局出版的英文新字辭典 (A Dictionary of New English Words, Phrases, and Usages) 裏所載的「新」的材料,是我們在一九四七年七月認為"of common occurrence in current literature and yet not to be found in any popular English-Chinese dictionary" (序文第二段裏這樣說)。 (那序文的開首便說: "The English title of this dictionary, long as it is, is not inclusive enough, if quite descriptive. For the book includes (1) new words, (2) new phrases, (3) new senses of old words, (4) new uses of old words, (5) new senses of old phrases, and (6) new abbreviations"。) 第二次世界大戰以後的書報裏有很多縮語 [abbreviation],幸而除了普通的以外往往在全名用過以後幾用着。(例如一篇文裏說過了"Ching Wen Book Company"以後幾用"CWBC"代它。)

為了測驗你自己的理解力,請你把下面各句細讀一下, 每句問一問自己「我懂麽?不?不懂在什麽地方?」,且慢看 我的解釋。

- 1. Try to spring the joke on your mother directly she comes in.
- 2. I wonder what in the world she asked you to read to her for.
- 3. The last thing he will do is to fool away his time.
- 4. What you have to put up with is nothing to what I went through.
- 5. Incidentally, do you follow what he is saying?
- 6. He lived here for a year or so before he joined up.
- 7. She felt hurt at being told that she had no voice in the matter.
- 8. I did not turn in till eleven last night because I half expected you would come.
- 9. They say that he speaks English very well for a Chinese.
- 10. They owe him a good turn and will do everything for him short of murder.
- 11. When it comes to playing the piano, ask her advice by all means.
- 12. I happened to catch him calling you up the other day.
- 13. I for one insist that we look into the matter one of these days.
- 14. He expresses himself well because he makes a point of putting things plainly.
- 15. He had to cut the class since he was unequal to answering the teacher's questions.
- 16. Putting two and two together, he has made up his

- mind to set off early tomorrow morning.
- 17. There seems to have been nothing much the matter with the machine of late.
- 18. We dropped in on him just now, only to find ourselves in the way.
- 19. I take it that you got to town before rain set in.
- 20. As things stand, there is no telling what will become of them before long.

這二十句的意思是:

- 計 試試看一等到你的母親進來了便突然把這個笑話講給她聽。(spring, 突然說出。directly, 一經 立即。[是 conjunction (連接辭)。])
- 2. 我不知道她究竟為了什麼目的請你讀給她聽。(in the world, 究竟; 到底。| 加重 "what" 的語氣。| read to 讀給聽。)
- 3. 他最不肯做的事便是浪費他的光陰。(他決不肯浪費光陰。) (last, 最不近情的; 最少可能的。fool away. 浪費。)
- 4. 你不得不忍受的比起我經歷過的還算不得什麼。 (have to..., 不得不...。 put up with, 忍受。 is nothing to, 遠不及。 went through, 經歷[因苦]。)
- 5. 順便說一句,你連貫聽懂他正在說的話麽? (Incidentally,順便說起;卻說。follow,連貫聽懂。)
- 6. 他在從軍以前在這裏住過了一年左右。(...or so, 大約 ..; 左右。joined up. 從軍。)
 - 7. 她被人告訴她說她在那件事裏沒有發言權,便生

- 8. 昨天晚上我到十一點鐘纔去睡,因為我多少盼望你會來。(turn in, 去睡。half, 有一些;多少。)
- 9. 據說他就中國人而論講英語講得很好。(They say, 一般人說;大家說。for, 就一而論。)
- 10. 他們該向他報恩,除了殺人以外什麽事都肯替他做。(ggod turn,善意的行為;服務;恩惠. short of,不及… 厲害;不及。)
- 11. 至於彈鋼琴, 你當然可以向她請教。 (When it comes to, 至於; 關於。by all means, 必然; 儘可以。)
- 12. 不久以前的某天我恰巧發現他正在打電話給你。 (happened to..., 恰巧... catch him...ing, 發現他正在... calling up, 打電話給。the other day, 不久以前的某天。)
- 13. 我個人堅持我們不久便調查這件事。(for one, 就個人而論。look into, 查究。one of these days, 不久以後。)
- 14. 他表達意思好好地,因為他注意到明白地說話。 (expresses himself, 表達他自己的意思。 makes a point of ...ing, 留心做到 ... putting, 表達。)
- 15. 他不得不缺一課,因為他不能囘答教師的發問。 (cut,缺[課]。unequal to ...ing,不能...。)
- 16. 思考了一下,他已經決定明天清早動身。(Putting two and two together, 從各方面思考。made up his mind, 决定。set off, 動身。)
- 17. 近來這機器好像不曾有多大的毛病。 (nothing much, 很少。 the matter, 失常的。 of late, 近來。)

- 18. 我們剛才去訪他,竟然發現我們妨礙他。(不料他正忙着,我們去訪便打擾他了。)(dropped in on, 偶然訪問。only to..., 不料有...的結果。in the way, 妨礙的。)
- 19. 我想來在兩開始以前你已經到了城市。 (take it that..., 以為 ... got to, 到達 set in, 開始。)
- 20. 就現在情形而論,不能說不久以後他們將有什麼遭遇。(As things stand,就現在情形而論。there is no...ing,...是不可能的。what will become of, 什麼將臨到。before long,不久以後。)

不論單字和習語,常然不能全靠臨時翻查,還得多多記字。上面所說的「讀字典」,該讀了再有意和無意地記字;我的單字活用法和日用英文習語,也是預備給人讀了記字的。當然,倘若你能夠把幾本字典裏的單字和習語以及一切舉例全部記字,那是很好的。可是各人的記憶力有強有弱,即使最強的也未必能把幾本字典全部記字。(我不會嘗試過,我相信我不能。)

單字和習語記得愈多愈好。現在先說單字。

時常有人問我記單字有什麼方法。他們說英文的單字 眞多,簡直記不勝記。這是事實。英文的單字比中文的單字 多得多(有四十多萬),而且還在不斷地增加。多記單字,英 美人也感覺應接不暇,我們中國人日常生活和英文很少接 觸,當然格外困難。我提出若干方法在下面,希望對於你有 些幫助。

一: 強記。有許多字祇得強記;例如"dog"是「狗」, "leopard"是「豹」, "giraffe"是「長頸鹿」, "hippopotamus"是「河馬」。

- 二:和句語同記。例如競文高中英文選第二册第一課第三段第一句,第二句,和第三句是: "We all know that the mammoth was one of Nature's mistakes. It aimed at prodigious strength, and sacrificed to this end many virtues. Those who talk about a superman make the same mistake."; 這兒的"mammoth", "prodigious", "sacrificed", 和 "superman" 都 和句語同記容易記些。尋常字的各種意義都該和句語同記。
- 三: 把相關的字同記。例如關於"letter"(信)便可以記 牢 "write" (寫[信]), "receive" (收到[信]), "post" 或 "mail" (寄[信]), "send" (發出[信]), "answer" 或 "reply to" (答覆 [信]), "deliver" (送到[信]), "acknowledge" (報告收到 [信]), "address" (開[信]的信封), "date" (寫[信]的日期), "sign"(在[信]上簽名), "dictate" (口授[信]), "stamp" (在 [信]的信封上貼郵票), "fold" (摺[信]), "seal" (封[信]), ''open" (拆[信]),"file" (把[信]歸檔),"enclose" (把…封 入信裏), "miscarry" ([信]遺失), "registered" (掛號的), "express" (快遞的), "post-office" (郵局), "postage" (郵 費), "postage-stamp" (郵票), "postcard" (明信片), "postman"(郵差), "postmaster"(郵局長), "postmark"(郵戳), "pillar-box"或 "letter-box"(郵筒), "post-office box"(郵政 信箱), "postal order" 或 "money order" 或 "post-office order" 或 "postal money order" (郵政匯票), "post-paid" (已付郵費的), "mail telegram" (快郵代電), "letter-paper" (大信箋), "note-paper" (小信箋), "envelope" 或 "cover" (信封), "correspond" (通信), "correspondent" (通信者), "correspondence" (通信:所通的信們),"epistle" (長或正式

的信), "note" (便信), "epistolary" (對於信的),等。(把分類的相關的材料做根據的字典該很有用處,可是我不會見過這種字典。)

四:記 prefix (字頭)和 suffix (字尾)。例如 "un-"指「不」, "unable"是「不能的」, "uninteresting"是「不有趣的」; "inter"是「中間」, "international"是「國際間的」, "intermarriage"是「互通婚姻」; "-less"指「沒有」, "homeless"是「沒有家的」, "treeless"是「沒有樹的」; "-ness"指「性質」或「狀態」, "rudeness"是「粗暴性」, "tiredness"是「疲乏狀態」。在字前加上字頭和字後加上字尾而造成的字,幾乎沒有限制,字典裏不能完全載着。例如 "marriage"前面加上 "inter-"成 "intermarriage", 後面再加上 "-able"成"intermarriageable", 前面再加"un-"成"unintermarriageable", 後面再加 "ness"成 "unintermarriageableness"。 再舉個簡單的例, "-less"指「沒有」可以加在任何名辭的後面;"tadpoleless"(沒有蝌蚪的), "rhinocerosless"(沒有犀牛的), "parallelogramless"(沒有平行四邊形的), "extraterritorialityless"(沒有治外法權的),等字沒有字典完全載着。

智語相似的很多,一不小心,便要夾纏; 所以最好和句語同記。

我在上面說過,不論單字或習語,不能全靠臨時翻查。 實際上有許多字到處查不着,卻並不是什麽生字。作家為了 表示方言的發音,或教育程度很差的人們的發音,或這種人 的依照發音拼字,往往把很尋常的字拼得面目全非;例如第 七章末所說的四點裏所舉的一切竟然會拼作下面的樣子。

-: 'cos (=because) 'nuff (=enough) ornary (=ordinary)

=: ah (=1) naw (=no) ile (==oil) feller (==fellow)

: tank (=thank) day (=they) fiber (=fiver)

四: hole (=hold) nex' (=next) sin' (=sing) 'air (=hair) 'eat (=heat) 'old (=hold) hair (=air) heat (=eat) hold (=old) 其它像

bin (=been) canna (=cannot) dammit (=damn it) dat (=that) doan (=don't) don (=don't) dunno (=don't know) d'ye (=do you) 'e (=he) fer (=for) fergit (=forget) gel (=girl) gimme (=give me) git (=get) gonna (=going to...) gotto (=got to...) gwine (=going) ither (=other ix either) jist (=just) kep' (=kept) kinda (=kind of) kinder (=kind of) lemme (=let me) maist (=most) marse (=master) mebbe (=maybe) mair (=more) more'n (=more than) n (=and ix than) ole (=old) ort (=ought) otta (=ought to...) pore (=poor) puffick (=perfect) purty (=pretty) sez (=says) shore (=sure) spec' (=expect) suh (=sir) t (=to) tha (=the) think (=thing) tole (=told) 'un (=one) useter (=used to...) wanna (=want to...) weel (=well) whut (=what) wi' (=with) wid (=with) wiv (=with) yer (=you) yo (=your) yuh (=you)

這種字多得舉不勝舉,最困難的是那故意錯誤的拼法 恰巧確有其字;例如 "shore" 是一個很尋常的字,想不到竟 然是代表 "sure"。不論確有其字或並無其字,往往祇看不讀 不能解決,讀出音來便能解決;例如見到 "Be shore t lemme know." 不懂, 倘若讀出音來便會知道是 "Be sure to let me know".

有時那拼法代表的字根本是錯誤的;例如"dood"代

表 "do"的 past tense (過去時態)和 past participle。有時那拼法代表一個錯誤而它本身恰巧確有其字;例如 "seed" 代表 "see"的 past tense 和 past participle。要解決這些字,除了讀出音來以外還得多思想一下。

第十五章

不懂文法

我在第十三章裏把「不懂文法」算作讀不懂的一個原因。要懂得文法,必須讀文法書,那是當然的。關於這件事, 我有兩點要提出來請你注意:

一: 當你遇到一個文法不明白的句子的時候,不要便 以為那句子的文法構結特別,一定不會看懂。往往句子的文 法結構很平常,不過因為單字或習語生些或多些,一時弄不 明白罷了。大概文法書裏的例句,目的祗在例解那講到的一 點,所以總是淺顯而簡單的;例如要例解 defining relative clause 或 restrictive relative clause (限定關係子句), 舉 着 "I have received a letter from the man who lived here last year.", 要例解 non-defining relative clause 或 non-restrictive relative clause (不限定關係子句),舉着 "I have received. a letter from my father, who is now staying in town."。但文法 書以外的句子,結構雖然一樣,未必這樣淺顯和簡單:例如 My father, who is now staying in town, has received a letter from the man who lived here last year." 比上面二句複雜 些。下面各句都是 simple sentence (單純句), 祇因為單字 或習語生些或多些,粗看上去好像結構不很明白(各句都從 報紙抄下).

Jack Pinyan, found guilty in the U.S. Court for China of the crime of assault with a dangerous instrument, with intent to do bodily harm, yesterday was sentenced to the maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

Punctually at 10 o'clock yesterday morning, the white bearded, bushy eyebrowed figure of Santa Claus, resplendent in scarlet and ermine, appeared in one of the Nanking Road windows of Messrs Whiteaway Laidlaw's department store.

A protest demonstration against the retention of a percentage of their pensions, and demanding an improvement of the present material situation of ex-servicemen and war-maimed, was staged yesterday in Paris by a number of maimed war veterans.

The Duke of Gloucester left for New Zealand this afternoon after inaugurating the Australian end of the new Imperial Airways mail service by handing over a special mail bag with personal royal letters for England.

二:你因為要懂得文法結構而讀文法,不是要想做一個文法家。切不可迷戀着文法上的術語,分類,定義,分析,等,弄得頭昏腦脹,結果對於句子的構造,還是不懂。這些各書並不完全相同;你讀某本文法書,祇須知道那本文法書裏所說的什麼是什麼,別和旁的文法書比較,以免糾纏。"complement"(補辭)這名稱是很普通的,可是在甲書裏也許祇指 copulative verb (連結動辭),和 factitive verb (作為動辭)引起的 noun 或 adjective (形容辭) (例如"I am a good boy." 裏的"boy", "I feel happy." 裏的"happy", "I am called a good boy." 裏的 "boy", "I am thought happy". 裏的 "happy", "I call him a good boy." 裏的"boy", "I think him happy." 裏的 "happy"); 任乙書裏

也許兼指 direct object (直接受辭) (例如 'I know a good boy." 裏的"boy"); 在丙書裏也許兼指形容 verb 的 idverb (例如 "I know him well." 裏的 "well"); 在丁書裏也許 兼指 auxiliary verb 後面的 verb (例如 "I must go." 裏 的 "go")."I am a good boy." 裏的 "boy" 在甲書裏也許 叫做 "subjective complement" (主格補解); 在乙書裏也 許叫做 "subject complement" (主辭補辭); 在丙書裏也 許叫做 "predicate nominative" (述部主格); 在丁書裏也 許叫做 "attribute" (屬辭)。 "class", "family", "nation", 等 字可能用作 singular 和 plural。 在甲書裏也許把 singular 叫做 "collective noun", (集合名辭), 把 plural 叫做 "noun of multitude" (羣衆名解); 在乙書裏也許把二種都叫做 "collective noun";在丙書裏也許把二種都叫做 "noun of multitude"。有若干文法書裏借用拉丁文法的名稱;例如把 direct object 的 case (格)叫做 "accusative case" (對格), 把有"to"的 infinitive (不定辭)叫做"supine"(紅說不 定辭)。也有若干文法家創造的新名稱;例如丹麥人 Otto Jespersen 把 "I am happy." 裏 "happy" 和 "I" 的關係叫 做 "nexus" (繁語法), 把 "a happy man" 襄 "happy" 和 "man"的關係叫做"junction"(接合法)。這許多都容易擾 亂心思;你該注意句子各部分的結構,卻弗注意某個結構該 叫什麽名稱。

據我所知道,文法書很少適合自修的;淺些的大都是教 科書;深些的大都是研究或批評性質的,而且英美人編的往 往用艱深的例句來例證淺近的文法。(這些書假定是讀者 已經懂得英文的結構,不過沒有系統的文法知識,或者假定 讀者已經有系統的文法知識,不過對於某某若干點感覺特別與趣。)原來不懂文法的人讀了便自會懂得的書,我以為該有若干條件:(一)用中文或淺近英文寫;(二)舉例淺顯;(三)詳細講述文法的全部;(四)講到中國人特有的困難。這種書我不會見過;比較適合的有世界書局出版的自修英文文法大全(A Complete English Grammar Self-Taught)是日本人山崎真編的日文本的中文譯本。

不論那一本文法書,所講的是「正常」文法,而且舉例是各句獨立的。像下面的二段裏的英文(是美國現代作家Damon Runyon 所作短編小說 "A Call on the President"的第一段和第二段)是不「正常」的,還得細心研究(懂了「正常」的文法纔能懂不正常的文法):

When I got home from work the other night my wife Ethel ses O Joe, an awful thing has happened. Jim the mailman got fired. I ses who fired him? She ses why, the Government fired him. Somebody told the Government that they saw him take a letter out of his mail sack and burn it. The Government ses Jim, why did you do such a thing, and Jim would not tell so they fired him.

She ses Joe, you go and see some politicians and have them make the Government put Jim the mailman back to work right away because he is too old to do anything else but carry the mail and he would starve to death in no time. It is not justice to fire a man who has carried the mail for over thirty years, she ses. I see Ethel sweets, I do not know no politicians that have got anything to do with the Government or justice. I see anyway we are only little people and they are big people

Fand what is the use of talking to them? I ses they would only give me a pushing around because that is what big people always do to little people.

改寫成「正常」的英文,我想美國人要寫成:

When I got home from work the other night, my wife Ethel said: "O Joe, an awful thing has happened. Jim the mailman got fired". I said: "Who fired him?" She said: "Why, the Government fired him. Somebody told the Government that he had seen him take a letter out of his mail sack and burn it. The Government said 'Jim, why did you do such a thing?' Jim would not tell; so they fired him".

She said: "Joe, go and see some politicians and have them make the Government put Jim the mailman back to work right away, because he is too old to do anything else but carry the mail and he would starve to death in no time. It is not justice to fire a man who has carried the mail for over thirty years". I said: "Ethel sweet, I do not know any politicians who have anything to do with the Government or justice. Anyway we are only little people and they are big people. What is the use of talking to them? They would only give me a pushing around, because that is what big people always do to little people".

作者一不小心,有時寫了一個和他的原意不同的句語。 一個很普通的例是 dangling participle (搖盪分辭)或 unattached participle (遊離分辭);例如 "Sitting at the window, an aeroplane flew by." 裏的 "Sitting". 照字面解釋,這句說 「一架飛機坐在窗口而飛過。」;作者的意思是「(某人)坐在窗口,(看見)一架飛機飛過。」,所以該改作 "Sitting at the window, ... saw an aeroplane fly by." 纔對。可是讀者該體味到作者的錯誤而達到他的真意。(當然也得有個限度;錯在「情理之中」纔可以使人明白。否則作者自己寫了 "one" 硬要別人懂他的真意是「十」,作者自己寫了 "cat" 硬要別人懂他的真意是「狗」,那簡直荒唐了。)

說起 dangling participle 或 unattached participle, 我不妨講一個故事(也可以說笑話)。英國有一個商店把下面的一封信寫給一個老顧客:

Dear Sir,

We beg to enclose herewith statement of your account for goods supplied, and being desirous of clearing our books to end May, will you kindly favour us with cheque in settlement per return, and much oblige

Yours very truly,

那老顧客的囘信是:

Sirs,

You have been misinformed. I have no wish to clear your books.

Yours very truly,

我想那老顧客不至於「天真」得看不出那商店的真意,可是那囘信是夠幽默的,我不知道這件事有什麽「下文」。 倘若雙方曾經請我判斷,我想我將寫下面的二封信(第一封

信給商店,第二封給那老顧客):

1.

Gentlemen,

The customer has misunderstood you, but not your letter. For your letter had actually said that he was desirous of clearing your books.

Yours very truly,

2.

Dear Sir,

You have misunderstood the business house, though you have not misunderstood its letter. You are a grammarian, but you ought to have read enough ungrammatical English to understand that the business house really had meant it was desirous of clearing its books.

Yours very truly,

第十六章

不明事實

我在第十三章裏也把「不明事實」算作讀不懂的一個原因。「事實」兩字包括很廣,「不明事實」這句話也包括很廣。上至天文,下至地理,無所不知,無所不懂的人,恐怕全世界沒有。就除開一切專門的學問講,我所說的講普通的東西的英文裏,恐怕也沒有人能夠樣樣知道;尤其我們中國人讀外國人所寫的關於外國事物的英文,不知道的東西更多。

從不知道到知道有什麽路可以走?臨時的方法,祇有查 參考書。可是我所說的「不知道的東西」,範圍很廣,我祇能 把比較重要的幾項說一說。

- 一: 地名。可以查 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 的 "A Pronouncing Gazetteer"; 這裏有國名,城名,山名,河名,湖名,等。也可以查 Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary, Thorndike Century Junior Dictionary,和 College "Standard" Dictionary; 三書都把地名放在本部裏。
- 二: 人名。可以查 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 的 "A Pronouncing Biographical Dictionary"; 這裏有古今名人的姓名, 并注出生和死的年分。也可以查上面所說的其它三本字典; 三書都把人名放在本部裏。
- 三:聖經和神話裏的人名。可以查 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 和上面所說的其它三本字典。

四:科學名稱。可以查 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

和上面所說的其它三本字典。

五. 歷史事實。可以查 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, The Concise Oxford Dictionary, The Pocket Oxford Dictionary, The Pocket Oxford Dictionary, The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 的美國版,和上面所說的其它三本字典。

但除了臨時查參考書以外(當然各種參考書很多,而且 參考書不一定是字典,但我在這裏祇能介紹價錢比較不貴 而應用比較多些的書),我以為讀英文的人應該有下面幾項 知識:

- 一:世界地理的大概;例如世界各大洲和各大洋的名稱和位置,各大國的名稱,位置,政體,等,各大城,大山,大河,大湖,等的名稱和位置。
- 二:世界歷史的大概;例如羅馬的盛衰,第十六世紀的宗教改革,美國的獨立,法國的革命,第一次和第二次世界大戰。
- 三: 古今的最著名的人物; 例如希臘哲學家 Socrates (蘇格拉底),英國古今第一文豪 William Shakespeare (莎士比亞),發現美洲的 Christopher Columbus (哥侖布),稱維一世的法國皇帝 Napoleon Bonaparte (拿破崙),德國納粹(Nazi) 領袖 Adolf Hitler (希特勒)。
- 四:聖經裏最著名的人物和事蹟;例如 Adam (亞當)和 Eve (夏娃)的被逐出樂園, Cain (該隱)的殺弟, Solomon (所羅門)的審判, Joseph (約瑟)的被賣, Jesus Christ (耶穌基督)的誕生。

五:希臘和羅馬的神話裏最著名的人物和事蹟;例如 大力士 Hercules (赫邱利)的十二難事,國王 Midas (邁達 斯)的觸物成金,怪物 Sphinx (斯芬克士)的謎語,美少年 Narcissus (那息薩斯)的戀愛自己,音樂家 Orpheus (與缶斯)的入地獄尋妻。

六:一切關於外國事物的常識;這項包括很廣,例如Christmas (耶穌聖誕)是十二月二十五日,英國商店多用姓名作店名,外國人相見時握手,親密的人用小稱(diminutive)稱呼(例如"William"有"Will","Willy","Bill","Billy"各小稱),喫大菜用刀,义,和匙而不用筷,做親由牧書證婚,死了朋友送花圈,等都是。

這種種知識,該從那裏得來? 祗有從讀書得來;我介紹的下面各書,文字都淺近易懂,你讀了既可以增進知識,也可以練習閱讀:

- 1. James Baldwin 做的 Fifty Famous Stories Retold (秦 西五十執事)。
- 2. James Baldwin 做的 Thirty More Famous Stories Retold (泰西三十帙事)。
- 3. Hendrik Willem Van Loon (房龍)做的 The Story of Mankina.
- 4. Hendrik Willem Van Loon 做的 Geography of the World.
- 5. Hendrik Willem Van Loon 做的 The Story of the Bible.

其它像中學英文讀本,史地教科書,等也可以讀得:倘若能 夠不時看看英文報紙更好。

有了參考書,有時也會自以為懂得而不去查它。我編高中英文選第二册的時候,對於第二十三課 "The People's

Palace" (指美國 Boston [波士頓] 城的公共圖書館)的第四段第二句"I spent rapt hours studying the Abbey pictures." 裏的"Abbey pictures" 起初以為指「從英京倫敦大教堂 Westminster Abbey 移到美國的若干幅畫」,後來因為找不到證據便疑到那 Abbey 不是 Westminster Abbey 而是另一個 Abbey, 但也找不到證據,不過總不疑到 Abbey 竟是一個姓(問了一位英國人纔知道);後來我把 "Abbey pictures" 注作「Abbey 指 Edwin Austin Abbey, 美國畫家,生於一八五二年,死在一九一一年;他替那公共圖書館畫的幾幅木板油畫叫"Quest of the Holy Grail".」。

第十七章

不懂英文裏所有而中文裏所沒有的說法

我任第十三章裏把「不懂英文裏所有面中文裏所沒有的說法」算作讀不懂的一個原因。我所說的「英文裏所有面中文裏所沒有的說法」,便是那種祇可以意會而不能直譯作中文的說法(倘若一定要直譯作中文,文字必不流利,意思也不明白)。 在第十三章裏已經舉了"You cannot be too careful."一個例,在第八章末尾舉的十句也是;現在再舉幾個例在下面:

- 1. I cannot read French any more than I can read Greek.
- 2. I would as soon marry my dog as I would marry my cousin.
- 3. He found the story as interesting as his brother found it dull.
 - 4. She is sixteen years old, if a day.
 - 5. They will not return for a long time to come.
 - 6. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.
 - 7. This is all I remember about him.
 - 8. There are few troubles that might not be worse.
 - 9. I found him lying on his back.
- 10. Looking over my shoulder, I saw a boy running. 現在把這十句直譯在下面:
 - 1. 我不能讀法文比較我能讀希臘文多些。
 - 2. 我願和我的狗結婚和我願和我的表兄結婚一樣。

- 3. 他覺得這故事有趣到他的哥哥覺得這故事不有趣的程度。
 - 4. 她是十六歲,假使有了一天。
 - 5. 他們在以後的一個長時間裏不回來。
 - 6. 吹得沒有人受利益的是惡風。
 - 7. 這是我關於他記得的全部。
 - 8. 很少有不可能更壞的困難。
 - 9. 我發現他躺在他的背上。
- 10. 過着我的肩上望着,我看見一個男孩在跑。 這十句譯文算得忠實了,但你看流利不流利? 明白不明白? 現在再把各句原文的意思解釋一下:
- 1. 我不能讀希臘文是事實,這句說「我不能讀法文比較我能讀希臘文多些。」,意思便是「我不能讀法文,和我不能讀希臘文一樣。」,也就是「我不能讀法文。」。
- 2. 我當然不願和我的狗結婚,這句說「我願和我的狗結婚和我願和我的表兄結婚一樣。」,意思便是「倘若我願和我的表兄結婚,那末我也願和我的狗結婚。」,也就是「我不願和我的表兄結婚。」。
- 3. 這句細講起來是「他的哥哥覺得這故事不有趣到某種程度,他卻覺得這故事有趣到那同樣的程度。」,其實什麼程度不程度不過是句子裏的一種說法,這句的意思是「他的哥哥覺得這故事不有趣,他卻覺得這故事有趣。」。
- 4. "if a day" 等於 "if she is a day old"; 她當然生了已滿一天,這句說「倘若她有一天的年齡,她是十六歲。」, 意思便是「她確然是十六歲。」。
 - 5. 這句說「他們在以後的一個長時間裏不囘來。」, 意

思是「從此刻起的一個長時間裏他們還不回來。」,也就是「他們必須在好久以後纔囘來。」。

- 6. 這句說「吹得沒有人受利益的是惡風。」,意思是「除了惡風以外,它種風吹得總會使某種人受利益的。」,也就是「災禍很少使人人都受害的。」。
- 7. 既然說「全部」,那就沒有旁的了,所以這句的意思是「關於他我祇記得這一些,其它都忘記了。」。
- 8. 「可能更壞」便是「還不算頂壞」,「很少有不可能更壞的困難。」便是「很少有不是還不算頂壞的困難。」,也就是「世界上的一切困難,大都還不算頂壞。」。
- 9. 「躺在他的背上」便是「靠着他的背躺着」,也就是「朝天躺着」。
 - 10. 自己「過着我的肩上望」便是「囘頭望」。

有時遇到顯然不近人情的句語,會疑到有印錯的字。例如 "Tears came into her eyes." 似乎不近人情,在悲傷的時候祇有從眼睛落出淚滴,那會反而有淚滴進去?其實指淚的湧到眼裏,並不說從外面進去而說從淚管流進去。

這種英文裏所有而中文裏所沒有的說法,讀到了便該連同上下文細細玩味,研究它的意思;你懂了一句,下次看讀到同樣的說法,也會懂得;例如你現在已經懂了"You cannot be too careful."一句,以後讀到像下面的句子,就會懂得:

- 1. We cannot be too thankful for these favours.
- 2. You cannot be too much in the open air.
- 3. We cannot pay too much attention to our personal appearance.

- 4. I cannot see enough of you.
- 5. No day could be long enough for her.
- 6. It is impossible to recommend him too strongly.
- 7. We can hardly overemphasize this point.
- 8. In winter she finds it very difficult to have too big a fire.
- 9. They do not think it possible to attach too much importance to the matter.
 - 10. You cannot exaggerate his mistortune.

我在上面說過,這種英文裏所有而中文裏所沒有的說法,讀到了該連同上下文細細玩味,研究它的意思;你也許要說:「我細細玩味了好人,還是不懂,有什麼辦法?」。我在沒有辦法裏有一個辦法:便是把那句子連上下文抄下來,等到下次讀到同樣說法的句子的時候,把兩句連同兩句的上下文細細玩味,也許可以懂得。倘若仍舊不懂,可以等到再讀到同樣說法的句子的時候,把三句連同三句的上下文細細玩味;總要有不怕煩和不灰心的精神纔是。(這種種說法,英美人不以為奇,所以在字典裏並不特別提出;我以為英漢字典裏該注意到。)

第十八章

認定某字作某某解釋而其實不是

「認定某字作某某解釋而其實不是」,這也是我在第十三章裏所說的讀不懂的一個原因。我在那裏舉了 "substitute"一個字做例;這個字(指用作 transitive verb [及物動解])的意思是「把 用作代替物」,不是「代替」,但有許多中國人當它是「代替」。

我覺得有許多中國人,對於許多英文字的認識,把某字 當作和中文某某相等,實在大錯,也就誤解了英文字的意 義; "substitute" 是一個例,現在再舉幾個例在下面:

- 1. "astonish"是「使喫驚」,往往誤解作「喫驚」。
- 2. "add"是「把…加上去」,往往誤解作「增加」。
- 3. "inhabit" 是「住在」,往往誤解作「居住」。
- 4. "object" (transitive verb) 是「提出…作為反對的理由」,往往誤解作「反對」。
- 5. "pleasant" 是「使人愉快的」, 往往誤解作「愉快的」。
 - 6. "respectable"是「可敬的」,往往誤解作「恭敬的」。
 - 7. "staff"是「職員的全體」,往往誤解作「職員」。
- 8. "dictation" 是「口述使他人筆錄」,往往誤解作「默書」。
- 9. "nevertheless" 是「並不因而較不」或「但是」,往往 誤解作「雖然」。
 - 10. "until" 是「直到...的時候纔停止」,往往誤解作「直

到一

既然有了這種誤解, 在閱讀的時候便把這種誤解的意 義湊上去,結果便是不懂,或者自以為懂得而把全句的意思 卻誤解了.

怎樣纔能避免這種誤解? 我的答覆是:「多查用英文解 釋的字典。」。--般英漢字典的解釋(有許多與其說「解釋」, 不如說「翻譯」),往往因為顧到中文的簡潔而失去英文字的 真義, 看了便要誤解。理想中的英漢字典, 一切解釋總該不 失去英文字的真意,例如 "object" 便該注作「提出…作為反 對的理由」;但這樣一來,不錯雖然不錯,解釋往往嫌累墜, 有時越是忠實越是不明白,越是記不牢(我對於把英文字譯 成中文那件事,曾經做過一副對聯,叫做「自己力求忠實,他 人越覺糊塗。」); 而且有許多字的意義,極難用中文表達得 絕對沒有誤解的可能;例如 "I shall be glad to have you call on me often." 裏的 "have", "He offered to lend me his book." 裏的 "offered", "She managed to lose all her property." 裏的 "managed", "He made me a virtual promise." 裏的 "virtual", 我想都極難用中文解釋得絕對 沒有誤解的可能。又如把 "complain" 解釋作「訴苦」,「出 怨言」,和「控告」都不能算錯,但總不能把原字的意義十分 適當地達出(原字的意義是可重可輕的;老子說兒子不孝 是 "complain", 兒子說鞋子太緊也是 "complain")。又如 "spring", "summer", "autumn", 和 "winter" 四字被看作 和「春」,「夏」,「秋」,「冬」相等;其實不相等,「春」,「夏」, 「秋」,「冬」是從立春,立夏,立秋,立冬算起的,"spring", "summer", "autumn", "winter" 是從春分,夏至,秋分,冬至

算起的。又如"laugh"(名辭)和"laughter"都被看作和「笑」相等;其實"laugh"是「一笑」,「二笑」,「三笑」的「笑」,"laughter"是統指「笑」的行為或「笑」的聲音,"laugh"好比"dollar"或"chair","laughter"好比"money"或"furniture"。又如"million"譯作「百萬」不能算錯;可是英美人沒有「百萬」的觀念,祇有「千千」的觀念。又如"good-bye"因為被用任中國人說「再會」的時候而往往被譯作「再會」;實在沒有「再會」的意思。

查慣了用英文解釋的字典,誤解可以漸漸減少(請你隨便揀幾個字在英文字典裏查一下,看看它們的解釋,也許你要發現你以前誤解的字正不少哩);而且以後看見了某字便知道是什麼意思,不必在腦筋裏用一番翻譯的工夫;例如見到 "object" (transitive verb) 便知道是 "object" 的意思,既不會誤解作「反對」,也不必轉着「提出一作為反對的理由」的念頭。倘若對於幾千個普通英文字,都能這樣,閱讀能力必定大有進步,而且也能夠讀得快了。你不要以為這件事難於辦到;你讀普通的中文,不是這樣的麼?你見到「人生於世」這一句,立刻懂得,不必在腦筋裏逐字想它的意思。其實你讀極淺近的英文,也是這樣的;例如你見到 "This is a cat." 這一句,也立刻懂得,不必在腦筋裏逐字譯成中文。現在讀 "This is a cat." 能夠這樣,以後讀複雜或艱深些的句子也能夠這樣。

。單字有誤解的可能,習語也有誤解的可能。例如"common sense"通常譯作「常識」,實在不是「家庭常識」,「科學常識」,等語裏所說的「常識」,卻是「普通的見識」,是「對於日常時務的識別力」,是「多數人從經驗得到的實用智慧」;

你知道現在是第二十世紀,美國在北美洲,水是氫氧二原素化合而成,三角形的三隻角的和是一百八十度,掛號信的封面上該寫明寄信人的姓名和地址,這都是「常識」,是"general knowledge",卻不是"common sense";你不想靠賭博發財,不相信交淺言深者的說話,那是"common sense"了;深通「世故」的人們,說他們「老奸巨猾」他們是不承認的,說他們「富於 common sense」大概是樂於接受的。又如"eat his(或 her 等)words"通常譯作「食言」,實在是「聲明取消前言」:某人昨天說你讀書不用功,今天聲明昨天說錯了,那便是他"cat his words"了,卻不是中文裏的「食言」。要避免誤解智語,也該多查用英文解釋的字典。

嚴格說來,即使用英文解釋英文,也往往不能恰到好處。把 "two" 解釋作 "one and one" 或 "one more than one" 是絕對不錯的,但究竟不能用 "one and one" 或 "one more than one" 代表 "two"。字的本身好比一個人,那解釋好比一張照片;照片拍得不像當然不好,即使拍得極像也不過是照片而已。字典裏的正確解釋,幫助我們不少,但要真正懂得英文,還得神而明之。(順便說起二個尋常字:"essay" 和 "personality"。有一位美國人因為 "essay"一字很難下定義,說它 "may be anything, and everything, provided only that it is not definitely something else";這樣說法,似乎有些「取巧」,我卻以為頗有道理。 生長在英國的美國現代女小說家 Susan Ertz 所作的章囘小說 Madame Claire 第二十五章裏有 "She believed that his personality—that indefinable emanation that makes each one of us different from any other one—would be unchanged." 一句;我以為 "that

indefinable emanation that makes each one of us different from any other one" 這語把 "personality" 解釋得入木三 分。)

第十九章

不知道習慣用法

每字本身的真意雖然懂得,但有時也會因為不知道智慣用法而全句不懂。我在第十三章裏已經舉過 "absence in England" 一個例;這三個字的本身極其明白,但 "absence in England" 是「不在它處而在英國」,"absence from England" 幾是「不在英國」,這點卻必須知道了習慣用法幾會懂得。現在再舉幾個例在下面:

- 1. "cease" 和 "stop" 兩字的意義相同,"cease" 後面接一個 gerund (動名解) 和 "stop" 後面接一個 gerund 意思也相同,但 "cease" 後面接一個 infinitive 和 "stop" 後面接一個 infinitive 意思卻大不相同;例如 "cease thinking" 和 "stop thinking" 都是「停止思想」,"cease to think" 也是「停止思想」,但 "stop to think" 卻是「停而思想」,就是「停止了它種動作而專心思想」。
- 2. "remember to do it" 是「記着去做它」; "remember doing it" 是「記得會經做它」。
- 3. "a little" 和 "a bit" 意義相同,但 "not a little" 和 "not a bit" 卻大不相同; 例如 "not a little surprised" 是「大大地驚奇」, "not a bit surprised" 是「完全不驚奇」。 ("not in the least" 和 "not a bit" 相同。)
- 4. "disappointed in..." 是「因為...不及預料所想的那樣好而覺得失望」; "disappointed of..." 是「因為得不到... 而覺得失望」。

- 5. "impatient of..." 是「因為...而不耐煩」;就是「耐不住...」, "impatient for..." 是「因為等待...而不耐煩」,就是「急切地等待...」。 "sick of" 和 "sick for" 有同樣的分別。
- 6. "I do not care to go." 是「我不肯去。」, "I do not care if I go." 是「我肯去。」。
- 7. "I insist that he goes there every day." 是「我堅持地說他的確每天到那兒去。」;"I insist that he go there every day." 是「我堅持他必須每天到那兒去。」。
- 8. "need" (verb) 和 "want" (verb) 後面接了 gerund, 那 gerund 在形式上雖然主動 (active) 而在意思上卻是被動 (passive); 例如 "He does not need advising." 和 "He does not want advising." 都是「他不需要被人物告。」。
- 9. "sleep late" 指「睡到過時還不醒」(例如日上三竿了還睡着),不指「晚上睡着得晚」。
- 10. "not once" 是「一次也沒有」; "not once or twice" 是「不止一二次」, 便是「多次」。

這種種不同,都不是祇知道了單字本身的意義就能明白的,必須知道習慣用法,纔能明白。

還有一種句語,照字面解釋和實際解釋不同,倘若不知 道習慣用法,很容易不懂或誤解;例如:

1. All my brothers are not at home. (這句的意思似乎總是「我的弟兄們都不在家裏。」,其實不是,卻是「我的弟兄們不是都在家裏。」,也就是「我的弟兄們有的在家,有的不在家。」;也許你以為這種解釋不合理,我也覺得不合理,但英文的習慣是這樣的,你學習英文,必須懂英文的習慣,不容你評論它合理不合理;其它像 "Both of them are not

clever." 並不是「他們倆都不聰明。」,卻是「他們倆並不都聰明。」,便是「他們倆一個聰明,一個不聰明。」,"Everybody should not enter this room." 並不是「大家都不該進入這房間。」,卻是「不是大家都可以進入這房間。」。)

- 2. I do not go to Shanghai three times a year. (這句的意思並不是「我每年到上海去不是三次而是一次,二次,四次,五次,六次…。」,卻是「我每年到上海去不滿三次。」;其它像"My monthly income is not eight hundred dollars."是「我每月的進款不滿八百圓。」,"I did not read a quarter of the book." 的意思是「我不會讀滿這書的四分之一。」。)
- 3. He did not come because he wanted to see my library. (這句似乎不通, 因為照字面解釋, 意思是「他不會來, 因為他要看我的藏書。」, 他既然要看我的藏書, 為什麼反而不來呢?; 其實這句的意思是「他不是因為要看我的藏書而來的。」, 也就是「他為了旁的原因而來, 不是因為要看我的藏書而來。」。)
- 4. It is time that we started. (這句的意思似乎是「這是我們以前所動身的時候。」,例如我們在昨天早上八點鐘動身,今天早上八點鐘,就可以用這句;其實不是,卻是「這是我們該動身的時候了。」; 其它像 "It is time that you studied hard." 是「這是你該用功的時候了。」,"It is time that the problem of unemployment was discussed." 是「現在該討論失業問題了。」。)

其它像 "maiter" 是「一件事」, "matters" 是「多件事」, "letter" 是「一封信」, "letters" 是「多封信」, "reason" 是

「一個理由」,"reasons"是「多個理由」,似乎都是沒有疑問 的;可是指一件事也說 "improve matters", "simplify matters", "complicate matters",等,法律上或公事上的一封信也用 "letters" (例如 "letters patent" [專利特許狀]),指一個理由 也說"business reasons", "health reasons", 等。又如"just now" 照字面講當然指「現在」,但實在往往指「片刻以前」(例如 "I saw her just now."); "none too" 照字面講當然是「不 太」,但實在是「很不」(例如 "none too large" 是「很不 大」,就是「小」,不是「不太大」)。至於 "Don't be longer than you can help." 等於 "Don't be longer than you cannot help.", 也就等於 "Don't be longer than you must." (「別比你不可 避免的多躭擱時間。」,就是「越快越好。」), 館直是講不通 的。第九章裏所舉的 "I won't do nothing for him.", "I've never hardly done it.", 和 "You can't never trust no such person." 也是「不合情理」的。英國滑稽智語 "as sure as eggs is eggs" (一定地)又是不合文法的。

我所說的「習慣用法」,和我所說的「英文裏所有而中文裏所沒有的說法」一樣,必須連同上下文細細玩味,研究它的意思。大概獨立的句子,難於明白,連同上下文在一起研究,便容易些:倘若有了兩句同樣的句子,連同兩句的上下文比較研究,更容易些。

第二十章

不知道含義

關於「不知道含義」,我在第十三章裏舉了"garret"一個字;garret 通常是窮人住的,所以說某人住在 garret 裏,也就說他窮。要懂得字的含義,有難有易;大概那個字所表示的意思,倘若在中文裏也有那種含義,便容易懂得,倘若在中文裏並沒有那種含義,便難於懂得了;例如"fox"(狐)在英文和中文裏都有「狡猾」的含義,所以容易懂得;"cat"(貓)在英文裏有「有九條生命,很難死去。」的含義,在中文裏卻沒有,所以不容易懂得。(成語"Care killed the cat."相當於中文「憂能傷身。」;貓有九條生命,衍且被憂慮弄死,人祇有一條生命,當然更容易死,所以千萬不可憂慮。)要懂得這種含義,惟有多讀外國書,多玩味,多研究。

我所說的「含義」,也包括字的譬喻 (figurative) 用法;例如說老年時代用 "evening", "autumn", "sunset", 等字, 說硬心腸用 "stone", "flint", 等字, 形容流水的聲音用 "prattle", 形容辯論的激烈用"stormy", 說某人好久不寫信用 "silent", 說物價上升得高而且快用 "skyrocket"。這種含義, 祇須稍為玩味一下, 就能懂得, 而且常用的含義, 字典裏也有載着的。

現在舉幾個「含義」的例:

1. Victorian, 英國女王 Victoria (維多利亞) 時代 (一八三七年到一九〇一年)的。(含義:舊派的;拘謹的;不合時的。)

- 2. courtesan, ·妓女。(含義:「高尚」或「文雅」的妓女。)
- 3. affect, 發生影響於。(含義:發生不良影響於。[這字的本義並不有「不良」的意思,但通常指不良影響;正像中文「調整」二字並沒有「增加」的意思,但在某種情形說「調整價格」通常指「加價」而不指「減價」。])
- 4. always ...ing, 常常...。(含義: 老是..., 好不可厭。 [He is always talking about his new friend.])
- 5. least, 最小的。(含義;即使最小的。[She wishes to know the least detail of your home life.])
 - 6. portly, 肥大的. (含義: 魁梧的.)
 - 7. slender, 瘦長的. (含義: 苗條的.)
- 8. under his (或 your 等) roof, 在你 (或他等) 的家 裏。(含義: 受你[或他等]供養。)
- 9. ... is not the word ... 不是那適當的字。(含義:說... 遺嫌語氣太輕。["Careless" is not the word.])
- 10. There is room for impovement. 有改良的餘地。 (含義: 情形不很好。)

其它像 'I wonder whether you know him." 有「我想你不認識他。」的含意,"I wonder whether you do not know him." 有「我想你認識他。」的含意;"I am not sure that he saw us." 有「我想他不曾見我們。」的含意,"I am not sure that he did not see us." 是「我想他曾經見我們。」的含意;"She wished the earth would open under her feet.","She felt as if she would sink through the floor.",和"She felt the bottom dropping out of her world." 都有「她大

喫一驚。」或「她羞極。」的含意。

這兒我想起 "Chinaman" (中國人); 這個字原來沒有什麼含義,但現在往往含着看輕中國人的意思。

我覺得有二個字實在不含看輕的意思而許多中國人以為它們含着,就是"bookworm"和"pigtail"。"bookworm"是「專心讀書的人」,沒有「書獃」的意思;"pigtail"是「髮辮」,沒有「豚尾」二字的侮辱意思。

說到「含義」,不妨談起若干種辭藻 (figure of speech):

- 一: interrogation (疑問法);例如"Who does not know it?"等於"Everybody knows it."。這種問句叫做 rhetorical question (修辭問句)。(比較中文裏的「誰不知道?」。)
- 二: irony (反語法);例如 "He made a nice mess of the work." 裏的 "nice" 含着「不好」的意思。其它像 "my fine fellow" 裏的 "fine", "a precious friend" 裏的 "precious", 和 "a pretty trick" 裏的 "pretty" 都是這樣。(比較中文裏的「你那個好女兒」。)
- 三: hyperbole (誇張法);例如 "a thousand apologies" 等於 "an apology". 其它像 "a world of troubles" (許多煩惱) 和 "oceans of tears" (大量的淚滴)。(比較中文裏的「萬分抱歉」。)

四: meiosis 或 litotes (輕說法); 例如 "He is rather a good poet." 等於 "He is a good poet."。往往用相反的字的否定指正的意義;例如 "I shan't be sorry." 等於 "I shall be very glad.", "It is not bad." 等於 "It is very good.", 和 "not without" 等於 "with"。(比較中文裏的「不壞」和「不無」。)

五: euphemism (婉曲法); 例如用 "pass away" 或 "pass on" 代 "die", 用 "mistress" 代 "concubine", 和用 "incorrect" 代 "false"。(比較中文裏的「逝世」和「作古」。)

六: aposiopesis (頓絕格); 例如向老年人說 "Be sure to visit the place before—but you hate the thought of that and I won't say the words." 含着 "before you die" 的意思。其它像 "If we should fail—" 含着「不得了」的意思,"When I looked into the room, I—well, I must not describe the scene."含着「醜惡」或「可怕」的意思。

英文裹往往有不直說的句語,卻並沒有 euphemism 的 性質:例如用 "John Bull" 指典型的英國人或英國民族,用 "Uncle Sam" 指美國政府或民族,用"Bard of Avon"指 Shakespeare, 用 "Man of Destiny" 指 Napoleon, 用 "Christian General"指馮玉祥,用"lake-side city"指杭州,用"king of beasts"指獅子,用"staff of bread"指麵包,用"weaker sex" 指女子們, 有些在字典裏找得到; 有些看了上下文可以懂 得;但有些必須知道了「事實」纔能懂得。我在不久以前讀到 "...fifty thousand men turned the Atlantic Ocean into the Pacific.",不會立刻明白,後來想到把大西洋和太平洋貫通 的是巴拿馬運河 (Panama Canal), 便懂得那句語實在指巴馬 運河的開鑿完成:倘若我原來不知道那事實,簡實沒有方法 懂得那句語。有些祇知道事實還不夠;例如 "on both sides of the Atlantic" 在表面上看來不一定指英美二國(指南 北美洲,歐洲,和非洲),但英美人用這語總是指英美二國。 又如"Waterloo"是比利時 (Belgium) 的一村,一八一五年 六月十八日英國 Wellington (威靈吞)公爵在那兒大敗法國

皇帝 Napoleon, 在法國看來是大敗, 在英國看來是大勝;但英國人用"Waterloo"這字總是指「大敗」而不指「大勝」。(說到這裏, 我想着"landslide"這字, 它原來指「山崩」或「從山上崩下的大塊」[照字面直譯是「地滑」或「地瀉」]; 它的譬喻用法, 照理該是「崩潰」或「大敗」, 可是美國人用這字指選舉裏某政黨或某人的「大勝」, 決不指「大敗」, "a Democratic landslide"是「民主黨在選舉裏的一個大勝」。[這個意思的來源,是在於那崩下的大塊的所向無敵: The Concise Oxford Dictionary 和 The Pocket Oxford Dictionary 都注作"overwhelming political defeat",是錯誤的。])

不知道「含義」,往往原因在於誤解「原義」和不參照上下文:明白了「原義」,再和上下文細細研究,往往可以解決。

第二十一章

不知道典故

關於「不知道典故」,我在第十三章裏舉了"ragged veterans"一語;這語的典故出在 Charles Lamb 的小品文裏面,是指「舊書」。我所說的「典故」,不但指書本上的典故;拿中文來講,例如「緣木求魚」出在孟子上,是典故,「狗嘴裏落不出象牙來」是一句俗語,並沒有書本的根據,但我也把它當作典故。我們中國人要懂得英文裏的典故,實在不容易,有時竟然不可能;因為上至聖經賢傳,名山著作,下至街談巷議,市井俗俚,都生出無數的典故。但典故也有種種,有難有易,現在且讓我約略說一說:

一:有許多典故,讀者隨便讀下去,完全懂得,也許竟不當它是典故;例如 "To that gentleman the uses of adversity were by no means sweet.",這句的意思很明白,倘若讀者不會讀過 William Shakespeare 所做喜劇 As You Like It 裏的 "Sweet are the uses of adversity." 一句,決不想作者用字是有根據的。但不知道這種典故的出處,往往意思雖然懂得,對於文句的妙處,卻不能看出;例如 "To marry or not to marry: that is the question.",這句的意思很明白,但倘若不知道這句脫胎於 William Shakespeare 所做悲劇 Hamlet 裏的 "To be or not to be: that is the question.",就看不出句子的妙處;又如 "The children seem to lisp in grumbles, for the grumbles come.",這句說人們困苦,即使兒童們也似乎在不由自主地訴苦,意思也還明白,但倘若不知道這句脫

胎於英國第十八世紀詩人 Alexander Pope 的名句 "I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.", 就看不出句子的妙處。

- 二:有許多典故,作者明白說出,當然不成問題;例如"As the poet Pope said, 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.",這裏作者已經把所引句子的作者說出來了。
- 三:有許多典故,雖然不知道它的出處,也可以懂得它的意思;例如 "cast pearls before swine" 一語,出在聖經裏,和中文裏「對牛彈琴」一語的意思相仿,倘若不知道這語的出處,也還可以懂得。

四:有許多典故,雖然不知道它的出處,也不知道它的意思,但有了上下文也會懂得;例如上面已經舉過的"ragged veterans",單看了一句,倘若不知道它的出處,便不知道它的意思,但倘若連同上下文一起看,也會懂得。

五:有許多典故,作者既不說明是典故,所引的句語又不能每字照字面解譯,那與難懂極了;我還記得在二十多年前讀英國小品文家 Gilbert Keith Chesterton 所做 "On Running After One's Hat"一文,那裏有一段寫逗留在火車站上的與趣,有 "They also serve who only stand and wait for the two fifteen."一句,我連同上下文想了幾天,到底想不出 "serve" 這個字的意思,而且查了許多字典(查過全世界最大的英文字典 A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles,就是 The Oxford English Dictionary)也找不出這個字有什麼特別解釋,直到後來我讀了英國第十七世紀大詩人 John Milton 所做 "On His Blindness"一詩的末行 "They also serve who only stand and wait", 總知道原來 Chesterton 那句子是引用 Milton 的句語,那 "serve"一字

是不可以照字面解釋的。(那篇文編作我在競文書局出版的現代英文選注 [Present-Day English Prose] 第二集的第四篇。我把 "They also serve who only stand and wait" 注作 "This is the last line of John Milton's famous sonnet "On His Blindness". It is in a humorous way that the line is quoted here. 'Serve' is not to be taken literally.". "the two fifteen" 的注解是 "the train that starts at fifteen minutes past two:"。)

我在上面已經說過,要懂得英文裏的典故,實在不容 易,有時竟然不可能.那最多被人引用的書,幾乎都是老書, 你讀起來必定覺得困難; 況且我在第十一章裏也竭力勸你 弗讀老書。至於專查典故的參考書,我也見過多種,但都不 很該細,價錢卻不賤。(其實要編一本完善的典故參考書,確 然極其困難,我在上面說過,上至聖經賢傳,名山著作,下至 街談巷議,市井俚俗,都生出無數的典故。)我祇有勸你多讀 外國書,多查外國字典,可以在無意中知道些。(我所說的 「典故」和在第十六章裏所說的「事實」,沒有分明的界限。 可以說多知道「事實」便多了解典故;例如一九三八年九月 二十九日英,法,德,意四國在德國的 Munich [慕尼黑] 城訂 立協定,把 Czechoslovakia [捷克] 的 Sudeten [蘇台德區] 割讓 給德國,希望避免戰爭;這是可恥的「綏靖」辦法,是事實;你 知道了這事實,見了"We must not have another Munich." 便懂得這句的意思是「我們不可再有可恥的「綏靖」事件 了....)

第二十二章

讀者的智力不及作者

沒有以前說的任何原因而竟然讀不懂,我以為除了原文本身不通(不一定在文字上)以外,就是因為讀者智力不及作者。(我記得某位先生曾經說過:「做書的是人,讀書的。也是人,要不是做得不通,讀不懂是不會有的。」: 我想這個論調祇可以算做讀書人的「解嘲」方法。同樣地,做書人也可以說:「做書的是人,讀書的也是人,要不是讀得不通,讀不懂是不會有的。」。我以為讀者該虛心些,別一碰到困難便怨作者。)

關於「讀者的智力不及作者」,我在第十三章裏舉了"A sensible girl is one who is too sensible to look it.";這句的意思是「裝出聰明面孔的女子,實在都是不聰明的。」。智力的高下,人人不同,不能勉強;有一種智力不行的人,儘量用功讀英文,能夠懂得頭頭是道的文字,卻不能懂得三言兩語的幽默文字。往往文字不難而似乎「妙處不傳」。請你在讀下面各段的時候暫時弗看我的解釋:

- 1. In a certain town there is a women's secret society which has been in existence for thirty-five years. It has been the talk of the place since 1913.
- 2. "Aids to beauty, such as lipsticks, rouge, and so on, cost the women of this country £40,000,000 last year", we are told. Cost the women of this country, if you please!
 - 3. Of science I know nothing; I have not even taught it.

- 4. A prose writer gets tired of writing prose, and wants to be a poet. So he begins every line with a capital letter and keeps on writing prose.
- 5. An expert is one who knows more and more about less and less, and less and less about more and more.
- 6. In a marvellous new talking picture, when a character uses the telephone, the voice at the other end of the wire is also audible. This is going one better than real life.
 - 7. A film actress declares that her next picture will be the story of her own life. The orchestra will get very tired of playing "The Wedding March".
 - 8. Bright red costumes, with hats, shoes, and stockings to match, are to be all the craze in the spring. Smart women will have to be careful not to yawn in the streets in case some short-sighted person is on his way to post a letter.
 - 9. "What is it that makes a man popular?" asks a writer. Perpetual bad luck at cards, among other things.
 - 10. An early-rising cook surprised burglars in a suburban house recently. It would surprise anybody.

現在把這十段解釋在下面:

- 1. 那婦女秘密會社,自以為秘密,實在是大家早已知道的。
- 2. 據報告說去年在英國化裝品使婦女化去四千萬鎊; 其實化錢的何嘗是婦女,還不是男人化了錢給女人打扮麽?
- 3. 這句話是英國學者 Arthur Sidgwik 說的;他諷刺當時英國一般學校注重文學而不注重科學,懂得一些科學的皮毛便可以做科學教師。

- 4. 散文作家祇會作散文,不會作詩,可是偏要作詩;弄得每行用大寫字母開首,自以為在作詩,其實作出來的還是散文.
 - 5. 專家的「專」的程度越高,懂的事物越少。
- 6. 有聲電影裏把對方的電話也被聽衆聽得,比實際情形進步了;可是也失真了呢。
- 7. 某電影女明星將把她的一生攝成電影。說樂隊當然 要把結婚進行曲奏得發厭了,可見女明星的結婚次數不少。
- 8. 時髦女子們穿了鮮紅色的時裝打不得呵欠,提防近視眼朋友誤認她們是郵筒,把信件投進她們的嘴裏。
- 9. 門牌運氣老是不好,把錢輸給人家,這種人當然受人歡迎。
- 10. 早起的廚司驚動了梁上君子,其實誰也會被他(或她)驚動,因為廚司很少肯早起的。

有一種句語妙在文字的滑稽用法;例如:

- 1. In parts of the country farm labourers are paid in vegetables. Occasionally a workman will ask for an increase in his celery. (妙在 "celery" 和 "salary" 發音相仿。)
- 2. Because the man in charge at an Irish fair couldn't stop the roundabouts several passengers were carried round and round for nearly three hours. It is thought that this establishes a whirled record. (妙在"whirled"和"world" 發音相同或相仿。)
- 3. A noted preacher says nothing helps a man so much as feeling he is wanted. The C. I. D. ought to be flattered. (妙在"is wanted"可以作「被人需要」和「被人緝拿」解釋。

[C. I. D.=Criminal Investigation Department.])

- 4. A recently-published novel is the first literary effort of a bank cashier. Critics may therefore be justified in finding that some of his characters are overdrawn. (妙在"are overdrawn"可以作「被過分描寫」和「(存款)被透支」解釋。)
- 5. An antique collector who died recently has left over one hundred clocks. The executor will have a busy time winding up the estate. (妙在"winding up"可以作「結束」和「開(鐘)」解釋。)
- 6. Patrons of a London restaurant voted against a proposal to have music with meals. They didn't want any more din in the dinner. (炒任 "din" 和 "dinner" 的前半字相同。)
- 7. A woman has been granted a divorce on the grounds that her husband insisted on keeping a pet catfish in the bath. As a rule it is just a case of carp, carp, carp. (妙在 "carp" 指「鯉魚」,也作「作無意識的指摘」解釋 [夫妻中間往往有這情形]。)
- 8. Someone was recently stated to have pawned a rifle on twenty-two separate occasions. He may justifiably refer to it as a pop-gun. (妙在"pop-gun" [孩子玩的氣鎗] 裏的"pop" 在俚語裏也作「抵押」解釋。)
- 9. It is stated that 20,000,000 people use automatic weighing-machines in this country every year. The Weigh of all Flesh. (妙在"weigh"和"way"發音相同。["The Way of all Flesh"指「衆生的路」。])

10. "Necessity is the mother of invention" a critic reminds us. On the other hand, when small children ask awkward questions invention is the necessity of Mother. ("Necessity is the mother of invention." 是成語,「作急需是發明的母親。」解釋,就是說「有了急需,自會想出辦法。」;"invention is the necessity of Mother"說「(孩子向母親發出難答覆的問題)母親祇得瞎說一陣來搪塞了。」。)

這種「妙語」有時有杜造的字,有時竟妙在「不通」;例如:

- 1. Quick wooings are now the fashion. Blisskriegs. ("Blisskriegs" 摹仿 "blitzkrieg" [閃電戰]; "Quick wooings" 不是「幸福上的閃電戰」麼?)
- 2. American Women Feel War Horrors—Perfumes Scarce.—Headline in American newspaper.

Scentimentalists. ("Scentimentalists" 是在 "Sentimentalists" 上加了一個 "c" 而成; "scent" 指「香味」,女人們因 為戰事缺少香水,不是為了「香味」那問題而感傷麼?)

3. I had to put my foot down when my husband insisted that his mother should superintend the cooking of the Sunday dinner.—Wife at police-court.

No joint effort for her. She prefers ma-rid life. ("ma-rid" 作「除去了 ma 的」解釋,就是「沒有媽的」,也就是「不受丈夫的母親管束的」; 妙在 "ma-rid" 和 "married" 發音相仿。 [put my boot down,表示決心;表示不屈服。])

4. Anti-aircraft fire killed and wounded a considerable number of people in Rome recently. It was afterwards dis-

covered that there had been no British planes overhead.

In other words, somebody made a "Muss" of it. ("Muss" 和 "mess" 發音相仿, "make a mess of it" 作「弄糟」解釋。 "Muss" 暗指意大利法西斯蒂領袖 Benito Mussolini [墨索里尼]。)

- 5. You may have noticed in the Press recently a considerable Herlie-berlie. In spite of world affairs, international conferences, and the spate of political and economic crises, most papers devoted an unusual amount of space to herald the rise of a new star of the theatre. ("Herlie" 是新與舞臺明星的姓, "berlie" 這字是沒有的; "Herlie" 的發音和 "hurly-burly" 的前半字的發音相同,加上了"berlie" 和 "burly-burly" 全字的發音相同; "burly-burly" 指「喧擾」或「熱鬧」。"Herlieberlie" 便指「因 Herlie而起的一番熱鬧」。)
- 6. Dip it in sulphide, bromide, oxide, cowhide, anything you like. ("cowhide" 是「雌牛皮」, 怎能和「硫化物」, 「溴化物」, 「氧化物」, 等相提並論? 實在故意把它用進去,和"oxide"相映成趣 ["ox"是「雄牛」]。)

我竟想不出增進智力的方法。大概文字可以教, 聰明卻不可以教;我祇有希望你是個聰明人,卻不能教你學做聰明人。

第二十三章

困難重重

從第十四章到第二十二章裏我對於「讀不懂」的各種原因舉了許多實例;除了「讀者的智力不及作者」以外,還提出 若干解決各種困難的方法。

你大概有過這個經驗罷:你讀中國人寫的英文,用字儘管生僻,句語儘管複雜,倒比英美人寫的用字尋常,句語簡單的英文容易懂。這是因為那中國人寫的英文,雖然不一定先寫了中文再譯成英文,但在無意間多少有中文的意思;你也是中國人,讀了當然容易懂。但該注意英文是英美人的英文,我所說的「讀得懂」是指讀得懂英美人寫的英文。

「讀不懂」的各種困難,往往在一句裏有不止一種;往往在一小段裏便困難重重。你是自修者,你要練習閱讀,我想該讀些有詳細注解的書。當然英中對照的文字也有幫助。但我總覺得譯文不及注解的多幫助;因為譯文祗能表達全句的意思,不能表達每字,每 phrase,每習語的意思,也不能表達單字的確義,用字的巧妙,句語的結構,事實的真相,典故的出處,等;而且譯文越流利,越像中文,在文字上往往對於原文越不忠實。(理想中的自修讀本,該是分級而有詳細注解的。)

請你把下面的十篇細讀一下,且慢看解釋:

1.

Committee: A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

"And did I make myself plain?"

"No; Nature did that for you."

3.

During their rest-period in the "dug-out", two A.R.P. wardens were having a chat.

"You look very chirpy this morning" said the first. "Had a stroke of luck lately?"

"You bet!" was the smiling reply. "I got a fine parrot for the missus this morning."

"Give me the address" exclaimed the first. "I wouldn't mind making a change like that myself."

4.

Grimly humorous is this notice, displayed by a trader in Abbeydale Road, Sheffield.

"To Our Customers

"A slight dispute in Europe has brought about a slight curtailment in our service, but we hasten to assure you that this will be put right again as soon as Himmler's widow tells Ribbentrop on his death-bed how Goebbels poisoned himself on hearing that Goering had fallen down dead at Hitler's funeral."

5.\

A few days ago, when I passed through the shopping centre of a large provincial town which had recently been bombed, I was highly amused to see the novel ways in which enterprising proprietors of damaged shops had turned their misfortune into excellent business propaganda.

One place that had suffered a direct hit and was completely

demolished displayed a Union Jack from a pole erected in the centre of the debris. Beneath it was a card which read: "Closed for renovation. Business as usual at—" and there followed the address where the business of the shop was to be continued.

But the effort which won first prize in my opinion was one hanging outside a badly battered shop where business nevertheless was still going on. It read rather nonchalantly:

"Bombs dropped in here. Why don't you?"

6.

How many readers know that a Birmingham commercial traveller helped to win the Battle of Waterloo, and so saved England from the threat of invasion?

It happened that the Duke of Wellington found himself alone during the height of the battle, and could not find a single aide-de-camp to take an urgent message to General Kempt, commanding one of the English brigades. The whole course of the battle was imperilled, and the only man in sight was a Birmingham traveller, a despised "bagman" who had rushed from Brussels to see the fighting and had strayed into the English lines.

Taking a supreme chance, Wellington asked the man to take the message "for the sake of old England". Nothing loth, the bagman dashed into the thick of the battle and disappeared.

Anxiously Wellington waited, and then, when he hadalmost given up hope, he saw that General Kempt was conforming to

his new instructions. Waterloo was won, and as a reward the traveller was given an important post as an Excise commissioner in the West of England.

7.

Jock started on his morning round of the dustbins which had been put out on the pavement to be collected.

Jock liked pails the best. They were so easy to knock over if his sharp nose scented some hidden treasure.

As he turned a corner he saw two people he detested—rag-pickers, who often drove him away that they might look over the dustbins.

About midway was a dustbin larger than the rest. They both set off running, each eager to get there first. Immediately Jock was fired with the desire to outrun them. He did.

He snatched up the first thing handy, and sped home. Up the stairs he panted. At his sharp bark the door opened. He rushed in and laid his find at his mistress's feet.

She was getting ready for school.

"You've been routing in dustbins, Jock" she said severely.

Jock only looked pleased. She took up his offering, a much-twisted envelope. She felt something hard in one corner, and gave a startled exclamation as she pulled out a quaint, old-fashioned ring.

"Alec, look!" she cried to her brother. "This must have been thrown away by accident. Jock, where did you get it? Come along, Alec, perhaps he will show us."

Jock rushed downstairs barking. Master and mistress

were coming to hunt dustbins too. Hurrah!

On he raced, back to the same dustbin. A boy was bending over it, searching frantically. He exclaimed in French: "Where is it? My ring! I have lost it!"

"Is this it?" asked Phoebe, holding out the grubby envelope.

The boy was so excited that he almost snatched it out of her hand.

It was a pity that Jock could not read the letter which Phoebe wrote to her mother that night, telling about their new friend. In it she said:

"His name is Jean, and he has come over to England to go to school here, just as we have. He is dreadfully lonely, just living in lodgings. The ring belonged to his mother, and it wanted mending. So he screwed it up in an old envelope—a silly thing to do—to take somewhere. The landlady thought it rubbish and tidied it away. He was in a fearful stew and rushed down to the dustbin to try to recover it. But Jock had been before him! Alec has asked him to share rooms with us. Won't my French improve with a real live French boy to talk to!"

8.

We met in the train, quite by accident. I asked him how he was going on. He gave me a cheery smile and said: "Oh, I'm keeping my pecker up!" and the following conversation was so cheerful that I left him quite refreshed.

It wasn't until later in the day that I heard from another

friend that the first man had struck a bad patch. His house had been bombed and he was having trouble in business. But you'd never have guessed it; he was "keeping his pecker up", and wasn't going round with a long face and a tale of woe.

I admired him for that; I admire any man or woman who refuses to be pushed down by the wheel of circumstance.

Some years ago a man in perfect health went for a swim on a hot afternoon. The cool water looked inviting to him—but it was too cool, and as a result of that bathe he caught a chill. It was so severe that it took a turn for the worse, and he discovered that he couldn't move his legs.

The doctors shook their heads. Some kind of paralysis, they said it was. And so the man who had been very fit had to hobble around on crutches and sit in a special chair. It would have seemed the end of a useful life to some folk, but not to this man. He carried on for a few years, and in the end overcame his handicap to such an extent that he became one of the most important men in the world. His name is Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Keeping your pecker up, or, in other words, putting a bold and cheerful front on Life, is a task that calls for an effort these days, but few things in this world that are got without effort are worth anything at all.

A well-known boxer once told me that he won one of his earlier contests with a smile.

"My face was a bit battered," he said "but every time I came out of my corner I managed a grin. And that so worried my opponent that his boxing suffered. My smile shook his confidence".

Your smile, too, will shake the confidence of Old Man Worry; so keep your pecker up.

·9.

One morning in late March the telephone rang in New York police headquarters and a man who called himself "Charles Smith" said there was a dead body in the Collyer house. Promptly the police converged on the once fashionable but now decaying brick-and-brownstone on Fifth Avenue, where two strange brothers, Homer and Langley Collyer, had lived for 38 years. But the doors were locked and the lower windows were covered by rusty, iron grills. So the police took an axe to the front door, chopped out a panel, and peered inside. The front hallway was filled to the ceiling with trash. They ran a ladder up to a second-storey window. A patrolman climbed in and disappeared into another mass of refuse. There he found the body of 70-year-old Homer Collyer, skinny and grotesque as a plucked sparrow, sitting on the littered floor. Homer wore a tattered grey bathrobe, had been dead (of natural causes) for at least 10 hours. The police put Homer in a khaki bag and carried him down the ladder. A crowd across the street, standing in a cold March drizzle, snuffled appreciatively and commenced to murmur "Where's Langley?"

Homer and Langley Collyer were gentlemen, the sons of physician. Homer was once an admiralty lawyer, but blindness overtook him and then paralysis. He retreated to the brownstone house many years ago and never came out again. Langley, a tender and talented man five years younger than Homer, took care of him. People saw Langley peeping from a window, or, at night, scurrying to and from a grocery store, sometimes pausing to rummage in a garbage can. He was frail, wore a 1910 boating cap, old clothes held together by pins, a celluloid collar, and a floppy, black bow tie. When he spoke he was polite and rational, but people said he was crazy. He had money ("in six figures" said his lawyer) but preferred not to go to the bank and collect his interest. He lived largely on buns, peanut butter, and oranges. "Homer eats oranges, too" Langley once said. "Sometimes he eats 100 a week. They will cure his blindness. Remember, we are the sons of a doctor."

After removing Homer's body, police started a manhunt for Langley. They looked for him in the junk-filled home. There they found 14 pianos, two organs, thousands of empty bottles and cans, dressmaker's dummies, tree trunks, and parts of a Model-T Ford. After two weeks they had removed 51 tons of trash but they had not found Langley. Most people thought he, too, was dead. Some wondered if the faint, cultured voice that tipped off the police had really been that of Langley. Some still expected to see his peaked face appear suddenly at a dusty window or hear him crying "Homer! Homer!" amidst the trash.

"Can I help you to another slice of the beef, Veronica?" esaid old Mr Savage.

He spoke to his daughter as if she were still a small girl, although she was in reality a grey-haired spinster of fifty.

"Thank you, papa" said Veronica deferentially.

Five of them sat round the Sunday supper-table, on which was a joint of cold beef, a tureen of cold potatoes, and two small glass jars of pickle. The family were hardly more interesting than the food.

Old Mr Savage was eighty-four, a bewhiskered and stupid old man who still lived as far as possible as though the twentieth century had not dawned. Veronica was his youngest child. Percy and Peter and Agnes were older, but they knew little more of the world than if they had been children. They had lived their lives in the big old-fashioned villa, standing in large grounds in one of the outer London suburbs.

Peter acted as secretary to his father, whose income was derived from investments. It was an easy job and suited Peter, who was content to spend most of his time dozing in a big arm-chair.

Percy was not quite "all there", and spent most of his time in his room, playing with toy trains.

Agnes was the housekeeper, a grim, silent woman, the only one of the children that the old man recognized as "grown up"._

Veronica was the only one of the family who could be

regarded as really a human being. Though middle-aged, she still had much charm, and to this charm the local grocer had recently fallen a victim. He was a jolly man, well educated and prosperous and about Veronica's own age, and when he asked her to marry him she had agreed, on condition that papa would consent.

He had smilingly called on "papa", amused at the old-fashioned farce, but his smile had soon faded, for the old man had solemnly told him never to darken his doors again.

"My daughters" he had said frigidly "must marry in their own class".

* * *

Inspector Daily, called hurriedly from the Yard by the local police, called in at the police-station on his way to the scene of the crime.

"It's a queer case;" said the local inspector, a wiry little man named Gringer, "the last sort of family you would expect to murder one another, but it seems a clear case against Miss Veronica. They were all having their Sunday supper when an air-raid alarm sounded, but they went on with the meal as though nothing had happened. Old Savage was an obstinate man. Wouldn't let Hitler's name be mentioned in the house, and refused to have a shelter, or even gas-masks.

"A high-explosive bomb dropped in the grounds, and the front wall caved in. The family were buried under the debris, but three of the five were rescued unhurt except for a few scratches. Old Savage was dead when we got him out, and

the second son; Percy, was badly burnt. It's doubtful if he will live.

"At first, of course, we thought that Savage had been killed by the falling masonry, but it was nothing of the sort. He was stabbed in the back of the neck with a dinner-knife. I found out from the servants that Miss Veronica had had a terrible scene with her father the same morning. She wanted to marry our local grocer, and he wouldn't hear of it. It looks as though Veronica found her father unconscious after the crash and finished him off".

* * *

The rear part of the villa was quite undamaged, and the surviving members of the family had taken up residence in the kitchen quarters, sharing them with the two elderly maids who constituted the domestic staff. Percy had been taken to hospital and the old man to the mortuary. Veronica had not been arrested but was being closely watched.

Daily began by interviewing Agnes, the daughter who acted as housekeeper.

"Can we go somewhere where we will not be interrupted?" he asked.

She beckoned to him to follow her, and presently took a bunch of keys from her pocket and unlocked a door. She paused in the entrance.

"Be careful" she said "not to tread on the lines-"

Daily saw with astonishment that the floor of the room was a perfect network of miniature railway lines, with stations,

signal-boxes, and all the usual accessories. Several trains stood at rest in various stations, and one was lying on its side as if it had just "crashed". He noticed that it was badly bent and broken.

"My brother Percy's room" explained Agnes briefly.
"He spent hundreds of pounds on his hobby, and poor papa humoured him. Percy was his favourite, and he gave him much more rope than he gave the rest of us. If we had run up bills, even for clothes, without papa's permission, he would get very angry and even make us return the clothes. But Percy used to order new engines and platforms and lines, and papa always paid. Lately he had begged Percy to spend less, because money has been very tight, but Percy took no notice, so papa just went on paying."

"Tell me" said Daily "exactly how you were seated at the table".

"Papa was at the head, of course," said Agnes "and I was at the foot. Next to papa were Percy and Veronica, and Peter was between Veronica and me. When the crash came we had nearly finished the meal. Papa, Peter, Veronica, and myself were eating raspberry jelly and custard, and Percy was still eating his beef and pickles. Percy did not like sweet things; so, when we had all finished except him, we always rang for the maid to remove the meat plates, except his. He was a slow eater. We always had a simple Sunday meal, just the two courses. Since the war we had even given up cheese".

Daily next interviewed Peter, a bloated, lazy man.

"If you ask me," he said "it was Agnes who did it. The old man had been nagging her about the housekeeping accounts, as I happen to know, and she has a temper like the devil".

Daily coughed deprecatingly and asked Peter to confine himself to facts. He could add little to what Agnes had said. So Daily went back to the kitchen and had a few words with Veronica.

"Do you happen to know" he said "of any quarrel between Agnes and your father about the housekeeping accounts?"

Veronica hesitated.

"They certainly had disagreements," she said "but there was nothing in that. To tell the truth, we were not a very happy family. Living so much together all our tempers were soured, but there was no real hate among us. I can't remember any really bad quarrel lately, except the one I had with papa about my getting married. I just told him that I was of age," she smiled "and a great deal over age, and that I would take no notice of his ban. I was going to leave home this very morning and I told him so quite openly".

Daily was going to ask some more questions, when a servant came in and announced that a Mr Beringer wished to see him.

Veronica went out and Beringer entered. A tired-looking man, prim and neat.

"I am the late Mr Savage's bank manager," he said "and, after consulting my head office, I have decided to tell you at once something that would have to be revealed very soon, in any case. Last week Mr Peter Savage forged a cheque on his father's account for a hundred pounds—he had been gambling, I think. We suspected that the signature was not genuine, and on Saturday morning I called round and asked Mr Savage if he had drawn the cheque. He tackled Mr Peter with it on the spot and there was an unpleasant scene. In the end he said that he would make up his mind by today whether or not he would prosecute".

* * *

Daily went back to the police-station to report progress to Gringer, and Gringer listened to what he had to say with growing bewilderment.

"It looks to me" he said "as if we could arrest at least three of the family, if we could find just a little more actual proof. Veronica, driven mad by thwarted love, for I doubt if she would really have disobeyed her father, habit was too strong; Agnes, a naturally sour and embittered woman, tired of the old man's meanness, as it would seem to her; and then Peter, threatened with imprisonment for forgery"

Daily shook his head.

"None of those three was guilty," he said "because though in each case the motive looks superficially good, when you really look into it, it falls to pieces. Veronica, if she had will enough to murder her father, would have had will enough just to slip away and join her lover. Only respect for her father could have restrained her, and if she respected him she would not drive a knife into his neck.

"Agnes was the least likely of all to kill him, because while he lived she was the best off of the family. I could tell from the superiority of her dress that she had been using housekeeping money for her own purposes, making a nice little addition to her meagre allowance. Her father's death must have been a real blow to her.

"As for Peter, the case is even more absurd. It is most unlikely that his father would have prosecuted, but now Mr Savage is dead, the bank will prosecute, in all likelihood, because they paid the cheque and the loss falls on them, since only Mr Savage could reimburse them".

"Then who did it?" asked Gringer.

"Percy" began Daily, lighting his pipe. But at that moment a constable entered and whispered in Gringer's ear.

"You're right," said Gringer admiringly "but I don't see how you guessed. Percy died ten minutes ago in the hospital, but before he passed out he confessed that he killed his father".

Daily sighed with relief.

"A bit of luck for us," he said "because it would have been a very difficult case to prove. It was the sight of that broken toy train that gave me the idea. It had obviously been hurled right across the room. Percy loved his trains like children, so be hadn't smashed it. The only reasonable explanation was that somebody had gone into Percy's room and

quarrelled violently with him, and then, in hot anger, kicked one of his precious trains. And who could have quarrelled with him but his father? No doubt Percy had been running up more bills and at last the old man's patience was exhausted".

Gringer nodded.

"Plausible," he said "but not sufficiently convincing, taken by itself".

"I had two other reasons for fixing on Percy" said Daily quietly. "Firstly, if we absolved the other three, he must have done it; and, secondly, he was the only one with a weapon. The family did not take cheese, and knives are not used in decent society for eating jelly and custard. The crime must have been done on the spur of the moment, because nobody could have foreseen the air-raid, and Percy was the only one eating beef, and thus the only one with a knife. It isn't difficult to imagine how his half-mad brain would brood over the destruction of one of his precious trains."

下面是我的解釋.

1

妙在"minutes"可以指「(時間上的)分」和「開會記錄」。 2.

"plain"作「(說話)明白的」解釋,但也可以作「(面貌)不好看的」解釋;那說第一句話的人說「我說得明白了麽?」;對方卻誤解了,以為他說「是我自己使自己面貌不好看麽?」,所以囘答說「不;天然為你做了那個」」,就是說「你天生面貌、不好看的。」。

dug-out, (防空)壕。 A.R.P. wardens, 民間防空員。 (A.R.P.=Air-Raid Precautions.) chirpy, 高與的; 愉快的。 Had a stroke of luck lately?, (你) 近來有了一陣好運麼? You bet!, 你可以確定了!是啊!(是俚語。) I got a fine parrot for the missus this morning, 今天早上我得到(也許指買到)了一隻好的鸚鵡給我的妻。("missus"是"mistress"的轉訛, "the missus"指「妻」是低級的滑稽語。) the address, 指得到鸚鵡的那處所。I wouldn't mind making a change like that myself, 我自已將不反對做一個那樣的變換; 我也想那樣變換一下。(說這句話的人誤解了"I got a fine parrot for the missus this morning."那句話:那句話也可能作「今天早上我把我的妻調換得一隻鸚鵡。」解釋,原來這個防空員對於他的妻威覺厭倦了,想不妨把她調一隻鸚鵡來玩玩。)

4.

Sheffield, 英國城。 To Our Customers, 致我們的顧客們。 (請顧客們注意。) slight dispute in Europe, 歐洲的小爭執。 (指第二次世界大戰爆發,用 "slight" 是第二十章裹所說的 meiosis.) has brought about a slight curtailment in our service, 致成了我們的服務裏的一個小減削。 (使我們業務減少了一些。用 "slight" 是第二十章裏所說的 meiosis.) this will be put right, 這個將被矯正。 (事態將恢復。) Himmler's Himmler (希姆萊)是德國祕密警察的首領。 Ribbentrop, 黎 賓特洛夫,德國外交部長。 his death-bed, 他(指 Ribbentrop)的臨終的床。 Goebbels, 郭培爾,德國宣傳部長。 on, 在…以後立刻。 Goering, 戈林,德國陸軍元帥。 fallen down dead,

跌倒而死。Hitler's funeral, 希特勒的葬禮。(當時這五個人都是德國的戰時要人;這個告白是很有趣的。)

5.

shopping centre, 到商店去買物的中心;商業區。provincial, 京城以外的;地方的(而不是京城的)。 novel, 新奇的。 enterprising proprietors of damaged shops had turned their misfortunes into excellent business propaganda, (被炸)受損的商店的有進取心的主人們曾經把他的不幸變成很好的營業宣傳。place, (店的)房子。direct hit, 直接中彈。Union Jack, 英國國旗。 read, 有…的文字;上面寫着…。 Closed for renovation, (這兒)為了飾新而閉着。 Business as usual at, 在…照常營業。 effort, 成績;作品。(指告白。) won first prize in my opinion, 在我看來得到頭獎;我以為最好。 going on, 進行。nonchalantly, 淡漠地。 Why don't you? Why don't you drop in here?, 妙在 "drop in" 可以作「落進」和「(偶然) 進來(買東西)」解釋。

6.

How many readers know that...?, 有多少讀者知道...? (很少讀者知道...。) Birmingham, 英國城。 commercial traveller, 旅行推銷員。 Battle of Waterloo, 滑鐵盧之戰。 (Waterloo 是比利時 [Belgium] 的村,法國皇帝 Napoleon 在一八一五年六月十八日在那兒大奧敗仗。) Duke of Wellington 威靈敦公爵, 英國大將。 height, 高潮; 最激烈的時候。 aide-de-camp, 副官。 General Kempt, Kempt 大將。 in sight, 被人見得到的。 traveller=commercial traveller。 bagman=commercial traveller。 Brussels, 比利時京城。 English

lines, 英軍的陣線。Taking a supreme chance, 冒絕大的險。for the sake of, 為了 (拯救或幫助)。Nothing loth, 並不不願的;願意的。thick of the battle, 戰事的密集;激戰。disappeared, 不見了。(送信去了。) given up hope, 放棄希望;絕望。instructions, 訓令。Excise commissioner, 土貨稅局長。

7.

Jock, 狗名。round, 巡行。pavement, (路邊的)人行 道。turned a corner, 在轉角上轉灣。rag-pickers, 拾破布者。 that they might, 使得他們可以。look over, 檢查。set off running, 動身跑着;發腳跑。 was fired with the desire to outrun them, 被追出他們的欲望所激勵;忽然想去追出他 們。did=outran them. snatched up the first thing handy, 搶 着第一件近在手邊的東西。sped home, 奔囘家去。his find, 被他找到的東西。getting ready for school, 預備上學去。 routing, 搜尋東西。only looked pleased, 在面容上(並不表示 不快活)卻表示快活。his offering, 他 (指狗) 獻奉的東西。 felt, 摸着。gave a startled exclamation, 發出一個因為受熱而 起的呼聲。by accident, 偶然(不是故意)地。On he raced= He raced on, 他跑上去。Phoebe, 上面所說的女孩的名字。 grubby, 汚穢的。pity, 可歎的事。their new friend, 指上面 所說的法國男孩。we have—we have come over to England to go to school. dreadfully, 很。 lodgings, 寄宿的寓所。 wanted mending, 需要(被)修理。screwed it up, 把它扭掩 起來。a silly thing to do, 做起來是一件愚事。take somewhere, 拿到某處去(修理)。 tidied it away, 把它清理掉。

stew, 恐懼。(是俚義。) recover, 收囘;再得。 been before him, 比他先到那兒。 share rooms with us, 和我們一同住。 live, 真有的(不是假的)。

8.

We, 指本文作者和他的朋友。going on, 進行;過日 子。 keeping my pecker up, 提起精神;不悲觀。(是俚語。) following, 隨着而來的。I left him quite refreshed, 我離開 他的時候精神十分爽快。 It wasn't until later in the day that...,到了那天的後來纔...。 struck a bad patch,經過一個 時期的惡運。business, 營業。you'd (=you would) never have guessed it, (假使你曾經見他) 你決不會猜想到這個。going round, 來來去去。long face, 憂愁的面容。tale of woe, 困苦 的訴說. refuses to be pushed down by the wheel of circumstance, 拒絕被環境的輪推倒。(不肯被環境屈服。) went for a swim, 出去作一次游泳。inviting, 引動人心的。as a result of that bathe, 作為那次游泳浴的結果。chill, 寒馥症。took a turn for the worse, 變成更壞;轉劇。 shook their heads, 搖 頭。(表示沒有辦法。) Some kind of paralysis, they said it was = They said it was some kind of paralysis. fit, 健康的. hobble around on crutches, 靠着拐杖跛行着。It would have seemed the end of a useful life to some folk, 對於若干人(倘 若遭到了這種疾病)這情形將曾經好像是有用的一生的終 It]. not to this man = it did not seem the end of a useful life to this man. carried on, 繼續進行;照常辦事. in the end, 最後地。Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 羅斯福,美國第三十二 任大總統。in other words, 換句話說。putting a bold and cheerful front on Life, 使人生有大膽和愉快的面容:對於人生表示勇氣而快樂。 calls for an effort, 需要努力.(不努力便得不到。) these days, 現今。 few things in this world that are got without effort are worth anything at all, 在今世很少不努力而得到的東西是有任何價值的。(有價值的東西通常努力了總能得到。) was a bit battered, 有一些受损。 every time I came out of my corner, 每次我從我的角隅出來。 managed a grin, 勉強作露齒笑。 shook his confidence, 搖動了他的自信心。 Old Man Worry, 憂愁老人。(把「憂愁」比擬作人。)

9.

rang, 發響聲。 the Colliver house, 姓 Collyer 的人的 住宅。converged on, 集中到。brick-and-brownstone, 磚和紅 褐色沙石造的房子。(是富人住的。) Fifth Avenue, 五號街。 (紐約的街,那兒多華美的商店和住宅。) hallway, 門廊、was filled to the ceiling with trash, 直到天花板有廢物充塞着。 ran a ladder up, 把一張梯在…往上放着。 second-storey, 在 第二層的。patrolman, 巡視某區的警察。disappeared into, 進 入…而不見了。refuse, 廢物(的總稱)。body, 屍體。plucked, 被执去了羽毛的。littered, 有雜亂的東西的。of natural causes, 爲了天然的原因。(不是爲了被殺或自殺。) across, 在…的另一邊。snuffled appreciatively, 領略眞相似地用鼻 音說話。admiralty lawyer, 海事法庭的律師。blindness overtook him, 失明忽然臨到了他; 他忽然失明了。 paralysis= paralysis overtook him. tender, 慈愛的。 took care of, 照顧。 People, 人們。 pausing to rummage in a garbage can, 停下來 在一個食物殘屑罐裏搜尋。1910 boating cap, 一九一〇年式

的划船用的便帽。held together, 被弄牢。floppy, 容易起落的;不穩固的。bow tie, 蝶形領結。in six figures, 有六位。(指幾十萬圓。) collect his interest, 收取他的利息。lived largely on buns, 大部分靠着小甜餅生活。peanut butter, 花生醬。we are the sons of a doctor, 我們是醫生的子。(所以知道橋子能夠醫治失明。) manhunt, 找人;搜緝。looked for, 找。junk-filled, 被廢物充塞的。dressmaker's dummies, 女衫縫工所用的假人型。Model-T Ford, T型福特汽車。(Ford 是美國的汽車製造家。) cultured, 文雅的。 tipped off, 向…供給秘密消息。(是俚語。) that—the voice。 peaked, 瘦削的;有病容的。

10.

Can I help you to another slice of the beef, Veronica?, Veronica (女子名),我可以再給你一片牛肉麼? Mr Savage, Veronica 的父親。 in reality,實在。 deferentially,表示順從地。Five of them,指全家五人。 a joint of cold beef,一大塊冷牛肉。 tureen,深盆。The family were hardly more interesting than the food,全家的人幾乎不比那食品有趣些。(那食品是乏味的,那些人也是乏味的。) bewhiskered,有類鬚(whisker)的。 as far as possible, 儘可能地。 as though the twentieth century had not dawned,好像二十世紀不曾出現。(好像那時候還是十九世紀。) knew little more of the world than if they had been children,比假使他們是孩子知道關於世界的事幾乎並不多些。(對於世界上的一切,知道得很少,幾乎和孩子一般。) grounds, 圍地。 all there, 清醒的:腦筋正常的。(是俚語。) toy trains, 玩具的火車。

grown up, 長大成人的。 human being, 人。 to this charm the local grocer had recently fallen a victim, 對於這美態那本 地的雜貨商人近來變成了受害人。(那本地的雜貨商人近 來戀愛了 Veronica.) about Veronica's own age, 和 Veronica .年齡相仿。on condition that..., 以...為條件。。consent, 同意 (於這個婚事)。 called on, 訪問。 "papa", 指 Veronica 所 說的 "papa". Amused at the old-fashioned farce, 對於這個 老式的趣劇感覺好笑。(結婚是自身的事,要徵求父親的 同意是老式的。"amused"是 past participle [過去分解]。) never to darken his doors again, 勿再訪問他。(當然不允 准他的女兒嫁給那雜貨商人。) marry in their own class, 和跟她們同階級的人結婚。(不嫁給小商人。) Daily, 姓。 called, 召。(是 past participle.) the Yard=Scotland Yard, 倫敦的警察總局。called in at, 來到;進。on his way to, 在 他到…去的路程上。scene of the crime, 犯罪的出事地點。 (指 Savage 家, Savage 先生被人謀殺了。) case, 案件。wiry, 筋力強健的。the last sort of family you would expect to murder one another, 你(指任何人)最不會想到會互相謀殺 的家庭。(共有一父二子二女,在情理上决不會有謀殺的 事。) seems a clear case against Miss Veronica, 似乎是 不利於 Veronica 小姐的一個明白的案件。(似乎一定是 Veronica 小姐謀殺了她的父親。) air-raid alarm, 空襲警報。 went on with, 進行。 Wouldn't (=He wouldn't) let Hitler's name be mentioned in the house, 不願讓希特勒的名字被在 屋裏說着:不許家裏人說起希特勒。 shelter, 防空壕。 gasmasks, 防毒面具。high-explosive, 高爆性的。caved in, 向裏

陷落。 were rescued unhurt except for a few scratches, 除了 有一些被擦破以外,被救出而未受傷。got him out, 把他拖 出。It's doubtful if he willlive,他是否將活着是可疑的。(也 許他就要死了。) it was nothing of the sort, 它不是那樣的 事;事實大不相同。scene, 爭吵。wouldn't hear of it, 不允 准這件事。It looks as though...,事實好像是...。crash,(牆 的)倒下。finished him off, 结果了他; 殺了他。taken up residence, 開始住。quarters, 處所。maids, 女僕。domestic staff, 家僕的全體。mortuary, 暫時陳屍所。watched, 監視。 will=shall. Be careful not to..., 當心別...。 lines, 鐵路線。 miniature railway lines, 小型的(假的) 鐵路線。 stations, 火 車站。signal-boxes, 信號亭。accessories, 附件們。stood at rest, 停着。lying on its side, 侧躺着。crashed, 打倒。bent, 歪 曲的。his hobby, 他的嗜好。(指玩假火車。) poor, 可憐的。 humoured, 放縱;順從. gave him much more rope than he gave the rest of us, 讓他自由行動遠過於讓我們其他各 人。run up bills, (因為多買了東西而)增加欠帳。get,變成。 return, (買了以後)退還。engines, (假的)火車頭。platforms, (假的)月臺。lines,(假的)軌道。tight,不容易被借到的。 (指錄。) took no notice, 不注意;不關心。(仍舊買假火車 頭等。) just went on paying, 祇是繼續付錢。(不再勸 Percy 節省些了。) head, (食桌的)上端。 foot, (食桌的)末端。 raspberry jelly, 覆盆子果醬. ring for, 掛鈴喚...來. his=his meat plate. two courses, 二道菜。given up, 放棄。bloated, 肥滿的。it was Agnes who did it, 那幹它的人是 Agnes. (Agnes 謀殺了父親。) accounts, 帳目。 happen to..., 恰巧...。 has a

temper like the devil, 有極壞的脾氣。deprecatingly, 表示很 不贊成地。(不贊成 Percy 說 Agnes 的脾氣不好。) confine himself to facts, 自限於事實。(祗說事實,不加評論。) could add little to, 能夠加很少在…上。(幾乎不能在…以外多說 什麽。) had a few words with, 和... 略談幾句。 there was nothing in that, 那是不重要的。To tell the truth, 老實說。 Living so much together all our tempers were soured, 我 們這般多地住在一起,大家的脾氣都被弄得乖戾了。bad,厲 害的。getting married, 結婚。of age, 成年的。a great deal over age, 超過成年許多的。 take no notice of his ban, 不 顧他的禁止(我的結婚)。 was going to leave home, (原來) 將離開家庭。(後來不會實行。) this very morning, 就在今 天早上. the late Mr Savage's bank manager, 已放的 Savage 先生(存款)的那銀行的經理。head office, 總行。would have to be revealed very soon, in any case, (即使我現在不說)不論 怎樣,不久不得不被發表。forged a cheque on his father's account, 在他的父親的存款上偽造一張支票。 came round, 來到這裏。 drawn the cheque, 開立那支票。 tackled, 對付。 on the spot, 立刻。 make up his mind, 決定。 prosecute, 控 訴 (Percy)。progress, (偵查案件的)進行。 driven mad by thwarted love, 被受阻的戀愛迫而發癡。 I doubt if she would really have disobeyed her father, habit was too strong, 我疑惑 她是否將會經達背她的父親(假使她不會發癡),習慣太強 了。(她倘若不發癡,她不會曾經違背她的父親而預備離開 家庭,因為她原來是服從父親的。) sour,性情乖戾的。embittered, 被激怒了的。 as it would seem to her, 在她看

來是這樣的。look into, 審查。falls to pieces, 不成立。Only respect for her father could have restrained her, 祇有對於 她的父親的尊敬可能曾經阻止她(的溜走)。 best off, 處境 最好的。tell from, 從 ... 看出。As for, 至於。now, 既然。 in all likelihood, 大約。they, 指銀行。the loss falls on them, 那損失臨到他們。whispered in Gringer's ear, 向 Gringer 耳語。(說 Percy 死了,死前承認殺了父親。) You're right, 你(指 Daily) 是對的。guessed, 猜着 (Percy 殺了他的父親)。 passed out, 死。(是俚語。) it would have been a very difficult case to prove, (假使 Percy 自已不曾承認)這個將要會經是 一個很難證明的案件。It was the sight of that broken toy train that gave me the idea, 見了那破壞的玩具火車使我想 到 (Percy 殺了他的父親)。 he hadn't, 他不曾。(必定另有其 人.) who could have quarrelled with him but his father? 除了他的父親以外,誰可能曾經和他爭吵? No doubt,諒 必;當然。 the old man's patience was exhausted, 那老人的 忍耐心被用竭了;那老人不再忍耐了。 Plausible, 表面上可 信的。convincing, 使人深信不疑的。taken by itself, (這個 解釋)獨自被取着(而沒有旁的證據)。fixing on, 認定(是兇 手)。absolved, 認為沒有罪。on the spur of the moment, 出於一時的刺激。would, 自會;不免。brood over, 因…而 煩悶:因…而含怒。

第二十四章

讀慣那種文字

前幾章裏所說的「讀」,並不會說讀那種文字。不讀慣那種文字,便對於那種文字難讀懂;例如讀慣小說而不讀慣商業信札的人,讀商業信札感覺困難些,讀慣商業信札而不讀慣小說的人讀小說也感覺困難些。每種文字有它的「文體」,也往往有它的慣用語。舉一個最簡單的例,讀過許多書本的人見到下面的各語也許會讀不懂:

- 1. Pull. (拉這門[別它推]。)
- 2. Push. (推這門[別拉它]。)
- 3. Gentlemen. (男廁所。)
- 4. Ladies. (女廁所。)
- 5. No admittance. (閒人莫入。)
- 6. No thoroughfare. (此路不通。)
- 7. No smoking. (禁止吸煙。)
- 8. Inquire within. (欲問請進。)
- 9. Commit no nuisance. (禁止便溺。)
- 10. Stick (或 Post) no bills. (禁止招貼。)

理想中的自修讀本,包含種種通常不被選作讀物的東西;上面所舉的各語,可以選入,其它像新聞,信札,廣告,通告,證書,等也該選入;高深些的像條約,合同,章程,公文,社論,序文,書評,等也該選入。理想中的字典,也載着各種文字的慣用語。

可是各種文字雖然有不同的「文體」和慣用語,英文總

是英文,總逃不了文法,習語,等。"I am a boy." 裹的"I"是 subject, "am a boy"是 predicate (述部);聯合國憲章緒言 (Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations) 的第一句 有一百七十六個字,可以算得長句了,結構可以算得複雜了,但主要的部分也是 subject 和 predicate, 那 subject 是句首的"We", 那 predicate 是句尾的"have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims"。讀懂任何句語,對於讀懂任何種文字上都有多少幫助。

關於寫

原

书

空

白

第二十五章

一通百通

時常有讀者問我怎樣學習寫英文;有的要學寫信,有的要學寫論文,有的要學寫故事,有的要學寫小品文,有的竟要學寫戲劇和詩歌。我自己不是一個樣樣都會的英文文學家;讀者樣樣來請教我,實在是問道於盲(不是客氣話)。不過我對於這種讀者,卻有一句忠告,便是:「不論你要學寫什麼,你必須先學寫通順的英文。」。

其實任何文藝性質的文字,並不是個個人能寫的;不必 說小說,戲劇,和詩歌,就是像我所寫的不很高明的小品文, 也不是人人能寫的。而且能寫的人,也不能教別人寫:拆穿 西洋鏡說一句,那些板起面孔教人怎樣寫小說,怎樣寫戲 劇,怎樣寫詩歌的人,他們自己也寫不來的。我在二十多年 前很想學寫英文短篇小說,讀了幾冊關於寫作短篇小說的 書(都是美國出版的),結果還是不會寫。其實那幾冊的書的 作者,自己也不會寫。我現在仍舊不能寫短篇小說,但倘若 有人請我做一本書教別人寫短篇小說,我想我卻能夠做。

倘若你沒有文藝天才,我勸你不要想學寫任何文藝作品。但不論你有沒有文藝天才,不論你要學寫什麼,你必須 先學寫通順的英文,你必須先學心裏要說什麼,筆下便寫得 出什麼。你做到了這地步,除了文藝作品以外,祇要有意思, 什麼都學得會;那種文字該怎樣寫法,那種文字有什麼特別 格式,那都是枝節問題。你倘若做不到這地步,隨便什麼都 學不會。這就是我所說的「一通百通」;反轉來說,一不通也 就百不通。

所以我在下面幾章裏所說的一切,目的都在教你學寫 通順的英文,並不教你那種文字該怎樣寫法。(但請注意第 三十二章裏所說的話。)

這裏我先有一個要點請你注意;我教你該這樣,該那樣,不過給你一些指導;教你寫的是我,實行寫的是你.你必須多練習,纔有進步. 我想最好的練習是每天寫日記;寫一二句也不嫌少,寫三四十句也不嫌多,要寫什麼便寫什麼就是了. 有種人練習寫英文,先寫出了「救濟農村」,「改良教育」,「聯合國的重要」,等大題目,想做整篇的大文章,結果無話可說,仍舊不能練習寫作;我希望你避免這個弊病。

第二十六章

什麼是「通」?

什麽是「通」的英文? 就是正確的英文 (correct English)。 所謂「正確」受着時和地的限制,也受着「用場」和「社會」的 限制,三百年以前正確的英文現在不一定正確,在美國正確 的英文在英國不一定正確,談話裏正確的英文在文字裏不 一定正確,「下等」人的正確的英文在「上等」人看來不一定 正確。英國的「上等」人心目中的 correct English 就是所謂 the king's English (在女王在位的時候便叫做 the queen's English),是現代的(不是好久以前的),是英格蘭 (England) 的(不是美國的,蘇格蘭 [Scotland] 的,愛爾蘭 [Ireland] 的, 澳大利亞 [Australia] 的,加拿大 [Canada] 的),是「上等」人 的(不是「下等」人的)。美國的「上等」人心目中的 correct English 也是這樣,不過美國人的用字和句語有些和英國人 不同的地方能了。關於英美的不同,我在競文書局出版的英 文作文教本 (A Text-Book of English Composition) 的第四章 裏立着一張表,舉了一百八十多個例。但在那張表的前面我 說着:

This is not the place to go into the subject of local peculiarities of English. I must content myself with giving a list of common instances of American as distinguished from English usage; for English and American English are the two chief kinds, all the others being negligible so far as students of English composition are concerned. As to the question which

usage is to be preferred, all I can say is that perhaps neither is in itself better or worse than the other, and that being Chinese as you are, you need not follow either exclusively. After all, though there are so many differences, there are far, far more expressions that are in current use on both sides of the Atlantic, especially in the written language. Besides, in view of the three following considerations, the question is not such a serious one as I may have led you to think:

- 1. Many expressions given as English as differentiated from their American equivalents are really also common in America.
- 2. Many expressions given as Americanisms are becoming naturalized in England, so that in a few years scarcely any Englishman will think of them as originally American. (Many expressions commonly used in England today are of American origin, though the average Englishman may not even suspect it.)
- 3. It is not always possible to find out whether a certain expression is English or American.

所以我說「通」的英文或正確的英文,就是現代「上等」 英美人的英文。不過現在談到「寫」,還得注意是現代「上等」 英美人「寫」的英文。注意要「現代」,要「英美人」,要「上等 人」,要「寫的」。寫一個句語來表達一個意思,倘若那句語是 現代英美「上等」人在表達那個意思的時候寫的句語,便是 「通」,否則便是「不通」。換句話說,合於現代「上等」英美人 寫作的習慣的句語纔算得「通」。 要「現代」。這點必須注意。我在第十一章裏說過與其讀老書不如讀新書。假使祇讀老書而不讀新書,寫出來的英文即使正確也是「老」而非「新」的。我想要現代,這一點對於英美人不很重要,因為英美人每天講英語,看報紙,決沒有寫「老」英文的危險(故意「仿古」,那是另一問題)。可是我們中國人對於這點該特別注意。

要「英美人」。英文是英美人的英文,當然該把英美人做標準,不該把任何非英美人做標準。這點是很明顯的。我把它特別提出,有二個原因:(一)有些人太信任了幾位寫英文的同胞,以為他們在英文界有聲譽,一切都可靠;實在不一定。(二)有些人以為該「從俗」,以為既然有許多同胞這樣寫,不妨依照他們;其實國文也許可以從俗(例如「股分」寫作「股份」,「每下愈況」寫作「每況愈下」)而英文決不可從中國的俗,即使要從俗也該從英美人的俗。

要「上等人」,要「寫的」。這二點雖然重要,你卻不必十分注意;因為中國人讀英文,接觸的大都是書本,書本裏的文字大都是「上等人」寫的。而且中國人很少或者竟然沒有和「下等人」來往,所以極少傳染「下等」的危險。至於自修者讀得多而聽得少(實在在校學生也是這樣),也不會寫出口語似的英文。我時常說一般中國人寫英文,即使寫得極壞,卻不會壞在「下等」或「俚俗」。還有一點得聲明;所謂「寫的」並不和「說的」完全不同,很多的英文是「說寫兩用」的。

我說要「現代」,要「英美人」,要「上等人」,要「寫的」;要什麼,要什麼,好像條件太多,難於應付。其實你在書本,報紙,和雜誌上讀到的英文,大都符合這些條件。是你所熟識的,不是陌生的,是平常的,不是希奇的。

第二十七章

文 法 問 題

我在第二十六章裏說明了什麽是「通」的英文。我覺得有許多人以為「通」便是合於文法,「不通」便是不合文法。其實「通」和「合於文法」並不完全是一件事。合於文法的句語不一定「通」;在另一方面,竟有在文法上講不過去而實在是「通」的。換句話說:一個句語,也許雖然合於文法而不合習慣用法,所以不「通」;一個句語,也許雖然不合文法而合於習慣用法,所以「通」。(這裏所說的習慣用法是很廣義的;第十九章裏所說的習慣用法是狹義的。)

照這樣說來,似乎要學會寫「通」的英文不必讀文法,祗要研究習慣用法就是了。這句話很對:儘有不懂文法而能夠寫得「通」的人。(英國文學家 Joseph Conrad [原來是波蘭人,二十七歲纔入英國籍]自己說過 "I've never opened an English grammar in my life.".) 假使你能夠很仔細地閱讀,研究,模仿,不懂文法也不妨; 假使你祇會在文法裏鑽研而沒有旁的工夫,便沒有多大益處。

不過文法還值得讀。文法是依據習慣用法的條理製成的規則,可以說是習慣用法的一大部分。既然有現成的文法書,落得利用它,可以節省不少時間和精力。一個句語,可能合於文法而不合習慣用法,也可能不合文法而合於習慣用法。那可以說因為現在的英文文法還不夠精密。理想中的文法,要把一切英文字的可能的用法和結構都講到,二個或二個以上的相同的用法或結構成立一個規則,獨一無二 (uni-

que) 的用法或結構也該說起;不過這種文法書也許要比世界上最大的英文字典還大,現在還沒有,將來也未必會有。現在有的文法書,即使最詳細的也遠不及這個理想。現在的文法規則太廣泛,所以會有合於文法而不合習慣用法的句語;例如文法裏說 transitive verb 可以把 infinitive 做 direct object,可是有許多 transitive verb 卻不可把 infinitive 做 direct object. 現在的文法很少說到規則的例外或獨一無二的用法或結構,所以會有不合文法而合於習慣的句語;例如 "It is they that want to see you." 這句裏的 "It" 是 subject, 是 singular, "that" 是 relative pronoun, 指 "It", 所以也是 singular, 照文法那 verb "want" 該改作 singular 式 "wants", 可是習慣上這種 relative clause 裏的 verb 的 number 不依照那 relative pronoun 所指的字的 number 而依照那 subjective complement 的 number.

不過合於文法而不合習慣用法的句語雖然可能多到沒有止境,合於習慣用法而不合文法的句語卻很少。 祇是合於文法的句語未必「通」,不合文法的句語卻幾乎都不「通」。 所以文法還得遵守。

關於研究文法,我在第十五章裏說過許多話,現在不用重複。可是為了學習「寫」而研究文法,比為了學習「讀」而研究文法,又多一些麻煩。要是你細心研究,文法並不難懂;要是你記憶力不太壞,文法也並不難記。可是「懂」和「記」是一件事,要應用得不錯卻是另一件事。讀過一本淺近文法書的人都懂得 third person, singular number, present tense, indicative mood 的 verb 該加 "s",都玩過 "I go.", "You go.", "He goes." 這一套,但寫起來遇到 third person,

singular number, present tense, indicative mood 的 verb, 也會忘記加 "s"。文法裏的各種表,都該記憶。但記牢了即使能夠默出來一字不錯也還不行,必須應用不錯纔行。你能夠把幾百個 irregular verb (不規則動解)的各式完全默出,正像你能夠把五胡十六國的每國的國號,建國者,種族,都地,滅它的國,和年數完全默出一樣;可是知道五胡十六國的種種知道了就是了,無所謂應用,irregular verb 卻有無窮的用處。要文法不錯,不在於多讀文法,卻在於在寫的時候顧到文法。

做文法練習當然有益。但每個文法練習祗着重一點,容易辦。寫英文的時候可能涉及許多點,不容易辦;往往顧此失彼,捉衿肘見。

除了「懂」和「記」和多做練習以外,最好把許多基本的類似的簡單句語在口頭上不斷念着,念得爛熟。但更要緊的是在寫的時候謹慎小心,面面俱到,寫好了再仔細研究,搜尋錯誤。一個極尋常的錯誤,往往不能一看便發覺;一經別人指出,緩怪自己為什麼沒有看出,可是自己的確沒有看出。

我在上面說過,「往往顧此失彼,捉於肘見」。 交法上的錯誤,誰也不敢說絕對沒有。 英美新舊著作,大都經不起吹毛求疵,一吹求便有錯誤發現;即使交法大家自己寫的文字裏也不免有錯。 我說這些話,目的並不在於說大家都有錯,錯些也不妨;卻在於說有經驗的人尚且有錯,初學的人該格外細心。

下面的五十句每句裏有一個文法錯誤,你尋得出麼?(且慢看下面改正的句子。)

- 1. His knowledge of English and French are remarkable.
- 2. If she came a few minutes earlier yesterday, she would have met me.
- 3. Your brother, whom I had thought would attend the meeting, did not turn up.
- 4. She is one of those who cannot describe what she sees.
- 5. The part of the house that they occupy it is on the third floor.
- 6. Looking back, the happiness of his youth came into his mind.
 - 7. All these children must be tried to be cared for.
- 8. They left the village soon after their mother was died.
- 9. We have very little to say regarding to our new acquaintance.
- 10. If a boy who does not like school, he may yet like study.
 - 11. Do you think will he call on you again?
- 12. I asked him that whether he had ever heard of the incident.
 - 13. Never I shall see them.
- 14. If you are interesting in the matter, I will tell you more.
 - 15. To his father belongs all the books in the room.
 - 16. You ought never make the same mistakes again.
 - 17. Desks are a piece of furniture at which one writes.

- 18. His story, appeared in the lastest issue of the magagine, has already been translated into Chinese
 - 19. How was the wedding taken place?
- 20. We have for acknowledgement of your letter of August 24
 - 21. The play is dealt with a social problem.
- 22. Though he has not sent me a word since he left, but I believe he still leves me
 - 23. The mother is watching the baby sleeps.
 - 24. I have written to him the day before vesterday.
 - 25. A little gill has told me your new house.
 - 26. I wish I can write better.
 - 27. There leaves only a sum of forty-two cents.
- 28. Whatever help that you may give us will be highly appreciated.
 - 29. They talked each other for hours
 - 30. No matter what you do, do it with all one's might.
 - 31. You must not offend him even he offends you.
 - 32. He is as good a man as me
 - 33. The letter as well as the bills have been received.
- 34. Neither his father nor his brother have given their consent.
 - 35. They gave advice one another.
 - 36. I have only a few money in my pocket.
 - 37. Do they believe that atomic bomb can secure peace?
 - 38. She said that: "I am glad of it".
 - 39. They are lack of rice.

- 40 You, not us, should pav
- 41 Your uncle, not you, are expected to do it
- 42 They did not tell us the details, nor even mentioning the matter.
 - 43. Neither has she seen him or does she wish to see him.
- 44 The girl disappeared, and nobody scarcely knew where she had gone
- 45. Because of our supplies have been exhausted, we have to close down.
- 46. All the members, four of whom being foreigners, were present.
- 47. Had I have bought the book, I should have lent it to you.
- 48. The man whom we saw this morning but did not speak to us is going to be our teacher.
 - 49. What was supposed had happened had not happened.
 - 50. You do not know what we have consulted him.

上面的五十句改正在下面:

- 1. His knowledge of English and French is remarkable.
- 2. If she had come a few minutes earlier yesterday, she would have met me.
- 3. Your brother, who I had thought would attend the meeting, did not turn up.
- 4. She is one of those who cannot describe what they see.
- 5. The part of the house that they occupy is on the third floor.

- 6. Looking back, he thought of the happiness of his youth.
 - 7. We must try to care for all these children.
 - 8. They left the village soon after their mother died.
- 9 We have very little to say regarding our new acquaintance
- 10 If a boy does not like school, he may yet like study. (也可以改作 "A boy who does not like school may yet like, study.".)
 - 11 Do you think he will call on you again?
 - 12 I asked him whether he had ever heard of the incident.
 - 13. Never shall I see them
 - 14. If you are interested in the matter, I will tell you more.
 - 15. To his father belong all the books in the room.
 - 16. You ought never to make the same mistakes again.
 - 17. A desk is a piece of furniture at which one writes.
- 18. His story, appearing in the latest issue of the magazine, has already been translated into Chinese. ("appearing" 可以 "如此 "which appeared".)
 - 19. How did the wedding take place?
- 20. We have for acknowledgement your letter of August 24.
 - 21. The play deals with a social problem.
- 22. Though he has not sent me a word since he left, yet I believe he still loves me. ("yet" 可以省去。)
 - 23. The mother is watching the baby sleeping.
 - 24. I wrote to him the day before yesterday.

- 25. A little girl has told me of your new house.
- 26. I wish I could write better.
- 27. Only a sum of forty-two cents is left.
- 28. Whatever help you may give us will be highly appreciated.
 - 29. They talked to each other for hours.
 - 30. No matter what you do, do it with all your might.
 - 31. You must not offend him even if he offends you.
 - 32. He is as good a man as I.
 - 33. The letter as well as the bills has been received.
- 34. Neither his father nor his brother has given his consent.
 - 35. They gave advice to one another.
 - 36. I have only a little money in my pocket.
- 37. Do they believe that the atomic bomb can secure peace?
 - 38. She said: "I am glad of it".
 - 39. They lack rice.
 - 40. You, not we, should pay.
 - 41. Your uncle, not you, is expected to do it.
- 42. They did not tell us the details, nor even mention the matter.
- 43. Neither has she seen him nor does she wish to see him. (也可以改作 "She neither has seen him nor wishes to see him.".)
- 44. The girl disappeared, and nobody knew where she had gone.

- 45. Because our supplies have been exhausted, we have to close down.
- 46. All the members, four of whom were foreigners, were present. ("four of whom were foreigners" 可以改作"four of them being foreigners".)
 - 47. Had I bought the book, I should have lent it to you.
- 48. The man whom we saw this morning but who did not speak to us is going to be our teacher.
 - 49. What it was supposed had happened had not happened.
 - 50. You do not know what we have consulted him about.

第二十八章

習慣用法問題

我在第二十七章裏說過,交法可以說是習慣用法的一大部分。在這章裏祇講文法以外的習慣用法。

我們想像可能有人(不是英美人)識得英文全部的單字,而且懂得每一個字的意義,卻不能寫出一個「通」的句語。這種人當然是不懂文法的。但我們也想像可能有人識得英文全部的單字而且懂得每一個字的意義,也懂文法,寫的時候也顧到文法,卻寫出許多不通的句語。這種人不懂習慣用法。

下面的一段對語可以當作笑話看,但也很可能確有其事的:

Teacher: The difference is that the simple present tense expresses habitual actions but the present continuous tense actions that are going on now while you speak.

Tiresome child. Please sir, why are you saying "while you speak"?

Teacher: I'm sorry. It would have been better to say "while you are speaking".

Tiresome child · Was what you said wrong, sir?

Teacher: No.

Tiresome child. I'm sorry. I am not understanding.

Teacher. Look. There are some verbs that are exceptions. We never use the present continuous of the verbs "to under-

stand", "to see", "to hear", and so on. Now you really must go away. I'm seeing the headmaster in five minutes and it's time I started.

Tiresome child: You are seeing the headmaster, sir?

Teacher: Go away!

(教師說 "while you speak", 違反了自己的規則,卻合於習慣用法。孩子說 "are you saying",守着教師的規則,卻不合習慣用法; "I am not understanding" 也是這樣。教師說"I'm seeing",違反了自己的規則,卻合於習慣用法。)

從這段對話看來,死守文法規則還不行。

合於文法而不合習慣用法的例,多得沒有止境,實在不勝枚舉. 我在第二十七章裏說過,有些 transitive verb 可以把 infinitive 做 object, 但也有 transitive verb 不可把 infinitive 做 object. 下面各句裏都有 transitive verb 把 infinitive 做 object:

- 1. He asks to see you.
- 2. He chooses to stay where he is.
- 3. He has decided to go.
- 4. He has demanded to enter the room.
- 5. He desires to make your acquaintance.
- 6. He expects to return tomorrow.
- 7. He hopes to hear from you.
- 8. He has offered to help us.
- 9. He pretends to be ill.
- 10. He has promised to lend me the pen.
- 11. He has refused to pay.

12 He miles to ment the school

但下面各句裏的 transitive veib 後面的 infinitive 都是錯的,都該改作 gerund

- 1. He admit to know her.
- 2 He advocates to revise the jules
- 3 He anticipalis to receive it next week.
- 4. He tries to aroud to ment me
- 5. He considers to employ him.
- 6. He contemplates to nuite a book
- 7. He denies to be in the secret
- 8. He enjoys to read with you
- 9. He has finished to cut the grass
- 10. He mentions to think of us every day.
- 11. He has postponed to start
- 12. He resents to hear such stories.

同樣地,上面 "He asks to see you" 等一二句裏的 transitive yerb 後面的 infinitive 都不可改作 gerund.

也有 transitive verb 後面接 infinitive 或 gerund 都可以;在意思上有的相同,有的略有不同,有的大不相同。

1. attempt

He has attempted to open the door He has attempted opening the door

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。)

2. bear

He cannot bear to see his cat in distress.

He cannot bear seeing his cat in distress.

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。)

3. begin

He has begun to learn English.

He has begun learning English.

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。假使那 verb 是沒有意志 [volition] 的,通常用 infinitive.)

4. cease

He has ceased to write to me.

He has ceased uriting to me.

(第一句有「漸漸停止」的含意;第二句有「突然停止」的含意。)

5. continue

He continues to call on her.

He continues calling on her.

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。)

6. dislike

He disliker to talk to strangers.

He dislikes talking to strangers.

(意思相同。)

7. dread

He dreads to think of his failing health.

He dreads thinking of his failing health.

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。)

8. forget

He may forget to shut the window.

He may forget shutting the window.

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(第一句是「他也許忘記關窗(不關窗)。」;第二句是「他也許忘記會經關了窗。」。)

9. hate

He hates to go out at night.

He hates going out at night.

(意思相同。)

10. help

He cannot help to do so.

He cannot help doing so.

(第一句是「他不能幫助別人這樣做。」;第二句是「他不能避免這樣做(不得不這樣做)。」)

11. intend

He intends to build a house.

He intends building a house.

(意思相同。)

12. like

He likes to read in bed.

He likes reading in bed.

(意思相同,但"I should like", "You would like",等 語後面必須用 infinitive.)

13. love

He loves to nalk under the trees.

He loves walking under the trees.

(意思相同。但 "I should love", "You would love", 等語後面必須接 infinitive.)

14. need

He needs to tell the truth.

He needs telling the truth

(第一句是「他必須把填相告訴別人。」;第二句是「他 需要被別人告訴填相(我們必須把填相告訴他)。」,等於 "He needs to be told the truth."和第二句相仿的例:"The work needs doing.","The rules need explaining.")

15. neglect

He often neglects to answer my letters.

He often neglects answering my letters.

(意思相同。)

16. omit

He has omitted to translate the phrase.

He has omitted translating the phrase.

(意思相同。)

17. prefer

He prefers to stay at home.

He prefers staying at home.

(意思相同。第一句比第二句普通。當然不可說 "He prefers to stay at home to to go to school.", 也不可說 "He prefers to stay at home to going to school.", 卻可以說 "He prefers to stay at home rather than go to school." [注意有 "rather", 並不是單用 "than"], 也可以說 "He prefers staying at home to going to school.".)

18. propose

He proposes to do so.

He proposes doing so.

(二句都可能有二個意思:(1)「他提議這樣做。」:(2)「他要想這樣做。」)

19. purpose

He purposes to try again.

He purposes trying again

(意思相同。)

20 regret

He regrets to be unable to help us.

He regrets being unable to help us.

(意思相同。但"I regret to inform you of my mother's death."和"I regret informing you of my mother's death."意思不同:第一句是「我感覺惋惜,向你報告我的母親的死。」;第二句是「我懊悔我會經向你報告我的母親的死。」。信札裏"I regret to say...","I regret to tell ..",等語裏的 infinitive 不可改作 gerund。)

21. remember

He must remember to tell her his new address.

He must remember telling her his new address.

(第一句是「他必須記着該把他的新地址告訴她。」; 第二句是「他一定記得會經把他的新地址告訴她。」。)

22. start

He has started to make a desk.

He has started making a desk.

(意思相同。第二句似乎比第一句正式些。)

23. try

He has tried to pull the rope.

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He has tried pulling the rope.

(意思相同,但第二句可能有「拉繩以達到某個目的」的含意。)

24. want

He wants to wash.

He wants washing.

(第一句是「他要想洗澡。」,那"wash"是 intransitive verb;第二句是「他需要洗澡(他身體上髒了)。」,那"washing"是 transitive verb。和第二句相仿的例:"The house wants painting."; "The shoes want mending.")

所謂「智慣」,沒有規則,沒有公式;必須逐字研究纔行。 上面所舉的關於 transitive verb 後面接 infinitive 或 gerund 的一切例,祇看每個 transitive verb的「意義」,決不能看出它 後面該接 infinitive 或 gerund。要寫得「通」,祇懂文法當然 還不夠,懂得文法也懂得字的「意義」也還不夠。

懂得文法也懂得字的「意義」還不夠。 誤解了字的意義 當然更不行。可是中國人對於英文字可能的誤解實在太多 了。不必說抽象的字(不一定 abstract noun [抽象名解])容易 被誤解,即使指物件的字也有人誤解。我會經見過有人把 "bive"([人造的]蜜蜂房)誤解作「胡蜂(自己造的)窠」,也有 人把 "awl" ([蘇秦用來「自刺其股」的]錐)誤解作「(張良使 力士在博浪沙狙擊秦始皇所用的)椎」。很平常的 verb, 也有 許多人誤解。例如 "live" 是「生活」,"die" 是「死亡」,似乎不 會誤解;其實這二個字的性質不同:"live" 是繼續的,就是 「繼續生活着」;"die"是一時的,就是「死去」,不是「繼續死 亡着」。 說「他死了三年。」不可說 "He has died for three years.", 該說 "He died three years ago." 或 "It is three years since he died."。同樣地,下面各句都不對,該改作 "He...three years ago." 或 "It is three years since he...":

- 1. He has arrived here for three years.
- 2. He has become rich for three years.
- 3. He has bought the car for three years.
- 4. He has disappeared for three years.
- 5. He has entered the school for three years.
- 6. He has finished the task for three years.
- 7. He has graduated for three years.
- 8. He has joined the club for three years.
- 9. He has married for three years.
- 10. He has returned to China for three years.
- 11. He has sold the house for three years.
- 12. He has started his business for three years.

有時寫了一個句語,就作者的意思而論是錯的,卻恰巧 有一個不同的(往往是勉強的)意思,英美人看了不當它錯, 卻誤解了作者的意思;例如下面各句:

- 2. He has black hairs. (他有幾根黑頭髮 [大部分的頭髮不是黑的]。[不是「他的頭髮是黑的。」。])
- 3. He will not live with them for ever. (他將並不永久和他們住在一起。[不是「他將永久不和他們住在一起。」。])
- 4. He got up on Sunday morning lately. (他近來在星期日早上起身。「不是「他在星期日起身得晏。」。])

- 5. He has taken his photograph. (他已經替他自己拍了照。[不是[他已經請別人替他拍了照。]。])
- 6. He considers it out of the question to go out in such fine weather. (他認為在這樣時期的天氣裏出去是不可能的[他認為必須在惡劣的天氣裏出去]。[不是「他認為在這樣時期的天氣裏出去是沒有問題的。」。])
- 7. He has gone by tram to send for the doctor. (他已經坐了電車去叫別人去請醫生。[不是「他已經坐了電車去請醫生。」。])
- 8. He is sick for the tedious work. (他渴望着要做那 討厭的工作。「不是「他對於那討厭的工作厭倦了。」。])
- 9. He goes to sleep at nine o'clock every evening. (他每天晚上在九點鐘睡着。「不是「他每天晚上在九點鐘上牀去睡。」。])
- 10. He is wonderful about it. (關於這件事他是好得使人驚歎的。「不是「他對於這件事感覺奇怪。」。])

任何字都有被人誤用的可能。而且各人有各人的錯誤: 甲的錯誤甲自己看不出來,乙看見了認為「豈有此理」,可 是乙也會有錯誤,乙自己看不出來,甲看見了認為「荒謬絕 偷」。不過雖然各人有各人的錯誤,也有不少錯誤是許多人 共有的。英美人有英美人的錯誤;中國人有中國人的錯誤。 上面"I feel difficult."等十句用在我所說的「不是」的那意思 是錯誤的;我想這種錯誤英美人不會有。

為了幫助中國人研究英文習慣用法而避免中國人容易 犯的錯誤,我做了英文用法大字典 (A Dictionary of English Usage)和正則英文簡明字典 (A Concise Dictionary of Correct English) (都是競文書局出版)。英國人 H. W. Fowler 做的 英國 Oxford University Press 出版的 A Dictionary of Modern English Usage 是世界聞名的權威著作;它當然不是專門給中國人用的,而且材料大都高深,但也值得翻查。英國人 H. A. Treble 和 G. H. Vallins 一同做的 An A.B.C. of English Usage (也是 Oxford University Press 出版) 材料比較少,也比較淺近(當然也不是專門給中國人用的)。不過任何書決不能完全代替普通字典。我在第二章裏說起過的幾本字典都是值得參考的。

第二十九章

從讀學習寫

要寫得「通」既然必須依照習慣用法,習慣用法又沒有規則,沒有公式;所以我要勸你寫了每一個句語便問自己「我見過沒有?」。倘若自己見過的,就可以用;倘若自己不會見過,就不可用;倘若說不定見過或不會見過,還是不用的妥當。

也許你要說:「我領教了;不過言之非艱,行之維艱.我 讀過的東西不算少;可是簡直記不得什麼見過,什麼沒有見 過。即使注意過若干字的若干用法,怎能記得牢這許多!不 照你做便要動輒得咎,照你做又要左右為難;我不是竟要不 敢動筆了麼?」。我的答覆是:「你祇須把讀物實行背誦,牢 記着許多句語,就會得左右逢源,不會得左右為難。」。

常常用了「我見過沒有?」這問題,寫作英文,可以不必 請人批改,竟可以說是自己做自己的教師。這個方法,我在 二十多年前自己想出,便自己實行,覺得很有功效;現在我 很希望你也實行。

背誦不但可以在消極方面幫助你避免錯誤,而且在積極方面教你許多句語,給你應用。我在第二十六,二十七和二十八章裏講了通不通的問題。可是有許多人不但不能寫得通,連不通也寫不出。請你不要說我太看輕讀英文的人們。你自己也不是時常有了意思寫不出來麼?有了一個意思,要用通順的英文表達出來,往往不容易;但不管通不通,祇要表達得出,也不見得一定容易能。其實甲有某個意思而

寫不出,乙把它寫了出來,那幾個字甲也識得,不過自己想不出把那些字那樣排一下罷了。你有了意思而寫不出,也許你早已讀過表達那個意思的那個句語,不過忘掉了它。要補救「寫不出」這個弊病,也得背誦。

背誦雖然好像很費力,但是值得費力的。要省力可以起初少背些:背一句便有一句的益處,背二句便有二句的益處。背順了口,寫起來自會寫得出,而且不錯。例如口頭讀順了"He asks to see you.",寫起來自會寫出 "He asks to see you.",能夠表達你的意思,而且表達得不錯,不會寫出 "He asks seeing you."。不但不錯,而且慣常了竟會雖然要錯也錯不來。舉個例來說:你讀順了"I am",假使一旦故意要寫"I is",必須特別留心幾行,一不留心卻又寫出"I am"來了。

不過有一點必須注意:背誦必須背得一字不誤。我時常聽見學生們背誦英文,聽上去好像很流利,其實像"a","the","at","for","but",等字,很多錯誤或脫落或者竟然無中生有;既然背誦多錯誤或脫落或無中生有,自己寫起來也就多錯誤或脫落或無中生有了。

在一句,或二三句,或四五句背誦得不很精熟的時候,可把它默寫出來,默寫了依照原文改正;這樣等於請那原文的作者修改,也很有益。

該背誦什麼?這個問題不難解決, 祇要是通順的英文就行。字典和文法書裏的例句也好, 成篇的文字裏陳出幾段也好。不過總該背誦自己了解的文字, 與其深, 不如淺。

「關於讀」我講了許多話,這裏不必重複。為了學習「寫」而讀;比較為了「懂」而讀該愈加精細。

在背誦以前,該把原文仔細研究一下;我所說的研究是

研究文字,不是研究內容。該注意某個場合是什麼字,不問是否可以換上旁的字;當然旁的字也許可以用,但不能證明旁的字也可以用便該假定它不可以用。例如你讀到"He asks to see you."一句:該注意可以說 "asks to see",不問 "asks"是否可以改作"requests",或 "to see"是否可以改作"seeing"。也該注意某個場合有某個字或沒有某個字,不問是否可以省去那個字或加上旁的字。例如你讀到"He chooses to stay where he is."一句; 該注意可以說 "stay where...",有"where" 這一字,它的前面沒有旁的字。遇到第十七章裏所說的「英文裏所有而中文裏所沒有的說法」和第十九章裏所說的「對質用法」,該特別注意。

假定你讀下面的一段(競文書局出版的高中英文選第 一册第一課第一段):

Let me introduce you to my family. First comes Father, of course, as head of the family. He is a typical Englishman—a tall, well-built, clean-shaven man, with sharp features, getting on for fifty. He married Mother twenty-six years ago. Since then they have lived together happily as husband and wife.

可以注意下面的幾點,一面讀,一面想(當然我假定你懂得各句的意思):

- 1. Let me introduce: 因為前面用 "Let", 那 infinitive "introduce" 前面沒有 "to".
- 2. introduce you to my family: "introduce" 的 object 的後面用 preposition "to".
 - 3. First comes Father: 等於 "Father comes first".
 - 4. Father: 指自己的父親,前面沒有"my",用大寫字

母 "F" 開首。

- 5. of course 這語用在句的當中,前後都有 comma (逗點)。
- 6. "as head of the family". 因為前面用 "as", "head" 前面沒有 "the".
 - 7. typical: 用 "typical".
- 8. Englishman: 是 "Englishman" (一個字), 不是 "English man" (二個字)。
 - 9. well-built: 用 "well-built".
 - 10. clean-shaven: 用 "clean-shaven".
 - 11. with sharp features · 用 "with", 不用 "of".
 - 12. sharp features: "features" 可以被 "sharp" 形容。
- 13. features: 用 plural 式 "features", 不用 singular 式 "feature".
 - 14. getting on for fifty · 用 "getting", 用 "on", 用 "for".
 - 15. fifty: 用數字代表歲數。
- 16. married Mother: "married" 和 "Mother" 中間沒有 旁的字。
- 17. Mother:指自己的母親,前面沒有"my",用大寫字母"M"開首。
- 18. twenty-six: "twenty" 和 "six" 中間有 hyphen (連字號)。
- 19. twenty-six years ago:用"ago",不用"before"; "twenty-six"前面沒有 preposition.
 - 20. Since then · 用 "Since" 和 "then".
 - 21. have lived · 用 present perfect tense (現在完成時

態)。

22. as husband and wife: "husband" 和 "wife" 前面都沒有 "a".

這樣讀法,加上背誦和摹仿的功夫,對於學習寫有很大的幫助。

不過我們究竟不能把讀的東西完全背誦;換句話說,我們當然讀得多而背得少。要利用讀而不背的材料,我以為有一件工作可以做,便是自編字典。所謂「字典」,便是把自己讀的東西做一個關於習慣用法的索引,可以叫做 usage index;便是把在閱讀裏注意到的各點,依照字母次序編排,為「對證」起見,注明見何書何頁何行。例如上面所舉的一段裏的"Let me introduce"那一點該放在"L"字母的"let"基,注明見稅文書局出版的高中英文選第一册第一頁第一行。當然儘可以用簡略的方法;例如

Lef me introduce: 沒有 "to" (競高—P.1 L.1). 再簡略些也不妨;例如用某個符號代表「沒有」,用某個字母代表書名,用"I.I"代表"P.1 L.1". 祗要自己看得懂就是了(並不要給別人看)。

你編的這個索引,逐漸增加,越增加越多用處。很可能 有一個疑點,查遍字典不得解決,一查自己的索引便得解 決。

我所說的索引,各人各編,是為自己編的,並不限於一本書。出版的書有這種索引的,據我所知道,祇有桂紹盱先生編譯的米氏英文短篇論說(Arthur Mee's Little Essays);這本書的本文,譯文,和注解祇有六十三頁,那索引倒有八十六頁;索引分做 Idioms, Prepositions, Words Followed by

Certain Prepositions, Studies in Emphasis, 和 Uses of Articles 五部分,很精密,值得細讀。(這本書的索引分做五部分,那是因為編者要使讀者注意那五件事。你為自己編索引,我以為不要分類,檢查可以便利些。)

除了關於習慣用法的索引以外,我以為還可以編一個把題材分類的索引,可以叫做 topic index; 便是把在閱讀裏注意到的句語,依照題材分類。所謂「題材」沒有一定的分類法; 各人可以自定。例如在 family (家庭) 一類裏可以把 "head of the family" 編進去,在 appearance (容貌)一類裏可以把 "well-built", "clean-shaven",和 "sharp features" 編進去。在 age (年齡)一類裏可以把 "getting on for fifty" 編進去。在 age (年齡)一類裏可以把 "getting on for fifty" 編進去。 "family", "appearance", "age",等類別名稱,當然該依照字母次序排列。每一類裏的各項的該怎樣排列,確是一個問題:假使依照字母次序,不一定便於檢查;假使再分細目,不但多麻煩,而且每一個細目裏的各項的排列還是有問題。其實這個問題發生在必須「科學化」;假使某類裏的材料不多,隨便排排也不妨,假使太多了再分細目也可以。好在這個索引是給自己用的,而且寫英文也並不是每寫一句都要查這個索引;不「科學化」也沒有大妨礙。

編這二種索引,當然是費時費力的事;可是「秘本」在手,方便得多,費時費力也是值得的。

第三十章

思想的英文化

用了「我見過沒有?」的方法寫出來的英文,似乎可以通順了。但中國人寫的英文,往往雖然說不出它有什麽一定不通的地方,可是讀起來總有些中國氣味;例如:

- 1. We must study diligently in order to acquire useful knowledge.
- 2. Everyone who works in society should have public spirit.
- 3. If we wish to make China rich and strong, we must first have convenient communications.
 - 4. In such bad circumstances he cannot live comfortably.
- 5. According to my opinion, patriotic people are more important than wise people.
- 6. The condition of teaching English in many Chinese schools is not good at all.
- 7. We felt very happy when we sat under the willow trees and looked at the beautiful scenery.
- 8. If an industrious man is not thrifty, he still cannot become a rich man.
 - 9. If you will come tomorrow, I shall welcome you.
- 10. My elder brother is receiving his college education in Shanghai.

這十句都可以算得通,都說不出那個字用得不對,但都

有些中國氣味;要是有三四個這種句子連在一起,中國氣味更重。

你祇須把自己寫的英文,和任何英美人寫的英文比較一下,你就可以看出英美人寫的英文總有些外國氣味,你寫的英文總有些中國氣味。而且也不獨是你寫的英文有中國氣味;據我看來,中國人能夠寫幾百個字的一段英文,句句都冒充得過作為英美人寫的,我雖然不敢說沒有,大約是很少的。我自己寫英文,常常努力避免中國氣味,但我不敢自信句句都冒充得過作為英美人寫的。

請你試一試,把自己寫的一段英文譯成中文,再把英美人寫的一段英文譯成中文,你便會發現你自己的英文容易譯,英美人寫的英文不容易譯。這因為你寫的英文,是原來先有了中文意思,然後譯成英文的,英美人寫的英文,原來並沒有中文的意思。你要避免中國氣味,加入外國氣味,你必須把你的思想英文化起來。

思想要英文化,你也許以為自己辦不到。其實你必定早已辦到了一些。你不信麼?你見了一隻狗,便會說出"dog"這個字,不必先想到一個「狗」字;你會說"Mr...","Thank you.", "a nice girl", "tomorrow night", "Let me see.", "Never mind."等,都不必先有中文意思。所以我說你的思想已經有些英文化,不過英文化的程度很低罷了。我要你把思想英文化的程度提高。你倘若多讀英美人寫的英文,多用英文解釋的字典,思想英文化的程度便會漸漸提高。(對於一切很難譯成中文的句語,該特別注意。)

關於思想的英文化,有一點要請你注意,便是練習寫作,決不可從翻譯入手。我以為英文程度極低的人,學習造

極簡單的句子,總不能完全不用翻譯;例如造一句 "Here is a dog.",總得先有「這裏有一隻狗。」的中文意思,這種句子並沒有中國氣味和外國氣味的分別。但你不是程度極低的人,你要寫的句子,並不都像 "Here is a dog." 一般的簡單。你倘若借翻譯練習寫作,一定不行;因為既然翻譯中文句子,當然竭力使你的英文句子忠實,但你的英文程度還不很高,一方面既不能自由運用,一方面又被中文句子拘住了,結果便寫出了大有中國氣味的句子。

不但練習寫作,不該從翻譯入手,就是在寫作的時候, 也不該先想了某個中文句語,然後譯成英文。時常有人問 我,某個中文句語在英文裏該怎樣說,例如「爆竹一聲除舊, 桃符萬戶更新。」,「匹夫而為百世師,一言而為天下法。」, 「戲法人人會變,各有巧妙不同」,「在天願為比翼鳥,在地願 為連理枝。」,等,勉強譯成英文,決不像英美人寫的英文。那 種專心考究翻譯這種句語的人,決不能學會寫有外國氣味 的英文。

英美人翻譯中文,有譯得很忠實的;可是越忠實讀起來越像中文。我以為這種譯本看看也不妨,卻不可把它們看作模範的英文。(譯文大都不難讀;我覺得蘇格蘭人 James Legge 譯的「四書」和英國人 Herbert Allen Giles 譯的聊齋誌 異都比中文容易讀,就譯文而論,都算得上品;就英文而論,卻不足為訓。)

第三十一章

什麼是「修辭學」?

「修辭學」這個名稱,似乎被許多人過分看重。他們對它「仰之彌高」,把它看作「莫測高深」,簡直是「玄之又玄」的「衆妙之門」。其實就「修辭」二字解釋,「修」是「修飾」,「辭」是「文辭」,「修飾文辭」並沒有什麽玄妙。「修辭」二字連用見易經裏的「修辭立其誠。」,也沒有什麽玄妙。

修辭學指英文裏的 rhetoric. "rhetoric" 這個字,就字源而論,原來指「講」不指「寫」,在英國現在還是通常指「演說術」,但在美國通常指我們所說的「修辭學」,簡直等於「作文法」(這裏所說的「作文」並不專指學校裏的所謂「作文」)。

對於修辭學,似乎有許多人在「仰之彌高」以外,還把它看作萬能.他們以為修辭學比文法「更上一層樓」,讀了文法就會寫得「通」,讀了修辭學就會寫得「好」,讀了文法不一定會寫得「通」,這點我已經說過。讀了修辭學不一定會寫得「好」,正像讀了文法不一定會寫得「通」一樣。實際上一味讀文法結果連不通也寫不出,一味讀修辭學結果也是連不通也寫不出。

修辭學書讀讀也可以,不過我有下面的二點要請你注 意:

- 一: 有若干陌生的術語, 假使你要求得修辭學的專門知識,都該研究它們, 記牢它們; 但在學習「寫」上幾乎沒有用.
 - 二:修辭學書大都人云亦云,有些規則是不切實際的。

例如說句子的開首不該用 "and" 或 "but", 末尾不該用 preposition, 但實際上英美人寫英文並沒有這種顧忌。(我聽見過一個笑話,一個教師教學生們不該把 "with" 用在句子的末尾,卻說了 "With' is a very bad word to end a sentence with.", 他自己說的句子的末尾卻是一個 "with".) 這些規則,我給它們取一個名字,叫做「修辭迷信」。除了上面所說的二條以外,最普通的有:

- 1. split infinitive (分隔不定辭, 例如 "to carefully consider") 絕對不可用。
 - 2. 兩個接連的句子不該用同一個字開首。
- 3. "each other" 祇用在兩個人或兩個東西, "one another" 祇用在兩個以上的人或兩個以上的東西。
 - 4. "only" 必須接近它所形容的字。

其實修辭學書的作者們,未必不知道這種規則是迷信,不過 做修辭學書不得不這樣說;因為做這種書的人,大家這樣 說,倘若有人說穿了這個道理,多烘先生們便要不信任他 們,他們的書便不能生意與隆。

"rhetoric"往往含着「過甚其解」,「華而不實」,「矯揉造作」,等意思,就是指所謂 "fine writing"; fine writing" 表面上說 "fine",實在並不說「好」,我在英文作文教本裏說過:

"Fine" means good. But "fine writing" is not good writing but bad writing. In this more or less technical term "fine" is used ironically: it means shony, ostentatious, affectedly elegant or ornate. "A piece of fine writing" and "a fine piece of writing" are quite different things: the former means a piece of writing that is affectedly elegant or ornate, and the latter means a piece

of writing that is well done.

有許多人以為要「修辭」必須把文字「修」得「美麗」纔行,把尋常字和簡單句語看作太淺近或太不像樣;他們識了一個生些或長些的字或語,便設法用在自己的文字裏;結果弄巧反批,即使不錯,讀起來也不三不四。

其實所謂 "literary English" 便是不俚俗的普通英文,並不是什麼特別的英文;至於在字典裏注明 "literary" 的字,竟是咬文嚼字的字,不但在談話裏不該用它,便是在普通的寫作裏也不該用它。"literary English" 這名稱裏的"literary"一字的意思是「可以用在寫作裏的」,字典裏所注的 "literary"一字的意思是「可以用在寫作裏的」,字典裏所注的 "literary"一字的意思是「祇用在文學作品裏而不用在普通文字裏的」。

我記得小時候學習中文作文,讀過一本作文捷徑,這本書裏講着許多作文法,其中一個叫做「避熟就生法」。但我卻勸你寫英文要避生就熟。不但要避生就熟,還要避繁就簡。借中文來講,「傷風」就說「傷風」,不要說「卡他兒」;「窮」就說「窮」,不要說「經濟壓迫」;「我喜歡喝酒。」就說「我喜歡喝酒。」,不要說「關於喝酒方面,我有一些太白遺風。」。寫作英文,說"read"就說"read",不要說"peruse";"cooking"就說"cooking",不要說"culinary art";"This story is interesting." 就說 "This story is interesting." 就說 "This story is interesting." 就說 "This story is told in such a manner as to hold one's attention." 寫日常的意思,祇要用日常的字句;說「我有一隻貓。」和「他有二隻鳥。」,不論小學生或大文豪都說"I have a cat."和"He has two birds.". 小學生當然「儉腹」,不在話下,那「腹笥便便」的大文豪也沒有用「文」之地。

當然我所說的不要用的字或句語,並不是絕對不該用;有時候為了幽默或文字的質嚴(例如報紙上的社論)起見, 祇得用它們。不過我勸你不要以為尋常字和簡單句語太淺近或太不像樣,希望你破除這個迷信就是了。

第三十二章

要寫那樣的文,該讀那樣的文

我在第二十五章裏講過「一通百通」的道理。必須「一通」纔能「百通」。可是各種文字有各種文字的體裁和慣用語,所以要寫那種文字,必須讀那種文字。借中文來講,精通古今文學的人,假使完全不讀事務信,便寫不出普通的事務信。文學裏沒有「逕啓者」,就寫不出「逕啓者」;文學裏沒有「卽希查照為荷」,就寫不出「卽希查照為荷」。反轉來說,專寫事務信的老手,假使完全不讀文學,便寫不出任何「文學」性的東西。事務信裏沒有「三疊陽關,一聲河滿」,也沒有「大自然的懷抱」,就寫不出「三疊陽關,一聲河滿」和「大自然的懷抱」,就寫不出「三疊陽關,一聲河滿」和「大自然的懷抱」,不論那個平凡的,陳腐的,或濫用的句語,不會見過決不會知道。我在我做的英文尺牘全書(English Letter-Writing: Principles and Practice, 競文書局出版)裏舉了下面的四十句當作覆信的第一句,都是普通而淺近的,可是不會見過它們的人就寫不出它們:

- 1. I have your letter.
- 2. I have received your letter.
- 3. I have got your letter.
- 4. I was pleased to receive your letter.
- 5. I am in receipt of your letter.
- 6. I received your letter yesterday.
- 7. I got your letter the day before yesterday.
- 8. I acknowledge (the) receipt of your letter.

- 9. I was glad to receive your letter.
- 10. I am glad to learn from your letter that....
- 11. I am sorry to learn from your letter that....
- 12. I am delighted to learn from your letter that....
- 13. I am surprised to learn from your letter that....
- 14. I thank you for your letter.
- 15. I have to thank you for your letter.
- 16. I wish to thank you for your letter.
- 17. I must thank you for your letter.
- 18. Thank you for your letter.
- 19. Thank you very much for your letter.
- 20. Thank you ever so much for your letter.
- 21. Thank you so much for your letter.
- 22. Many thanks for your letter.
- 23. This thanks you for your letter.
- 24. Your letter received.
- 25. Your letter is received.
- 26. Your letter has been received.
- 27. Your letter was received.
- 28. Your letter was received on April 16
- 29. Your letter is to hand.
- 30. Your letter has come to hand.
- 31. Your letter arrived yesterday.
- 32. Your letter came (to me) on Tuesday last.
- 33. Your letter reached me yesterday morning.
- 34. In reply to your letter I....
- 35. In answer to your letter I....

- 36. Referring to your letter I....
- 37. With reference to your letter I....
- 38. Replying to your letter I....
- 39. In response to your inquiry I....
- 40. In response to your request I....

我們中國人對於中文目濡耳染,尚且有些讀書人不會寫事務信。我們讀英文大都祇靠書本,範圍更小。所以你最好讀一些書本以外的東西。我想假使有人編一本「非書本式」而且「非文學性」的文選,該是很有用處的。這種文選,除了包含各種實用文章以外,也該包含一切不得叫做「文」的東西:例如公文,法令,章程,信札,新聞,等還算是「文」,該選入,發票,匯票,支票,戲票,車票,收據,仿單,卡片,廣告,招牌,等也該選入。現在既然沒有這種文選,祇得隨時隨地留意。

話又說囘來了。你要「百通」,必須先做到「一通」。