



富蘭克林

Benjamin Franklin

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張煒 英譯

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一七〇六年生於美國東部波斯頓，家貧，僅讀二年書，輟學後，幫助父親製造蠟燭，販賣香皂，維持生活。兄弟姊妹十七人，排行十五。天資聰慧，不喜數學，愛好文學，常寫文章。一日，拜訪長輩，因門低，頭被撞，長輩笑曰：「若欲平安，必須低頭。」受此啓示，奉為圭臬，自訂座右銘：「節約、勤勉、誠實、正義、謙讓、沈默」等。

十七歲時，單身至紐約創事業，成立印刷廠，改良印刷機器，出版雜誌。因放風箏，偶發現雷電有正負，故發明避雷針及眼鏡、瓦斯燈等。於四十二歲時，功成業就，後為美國大政治家，獨立宣言起草委員之一。曾參加美英、美法和平條約簽字，卒於一七九〇年。

Benjamin Franklin was born to a poor family in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1706. He only attended school for two years, and after quitting school he started earning a living helping his father to manufacture candles and sell soap. He had 16 brothers and sisters, and he was the 15th among them. He was highly gifted. He did not enjoy math, but loved literature and wrote a lot of articles. One day he went to visit an elder, and he hit the door frame because the frame was too low. The elder smiled and said, "To avoid thumps, you have to keep your head down." Inspired by this, he set his motto as: "frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, humility, silence".

At the age of 17, he went to New York to start a business on his own, establishing a printing house. He also improved the printing machines and published magazines. When he flew kites, he accidentally discovered the fact that lightning had positive and negative polarities, and this discovery led to his invention of the lightning rod. He also invented bifocal glasses, developed gas lighting, and so forth. By the time he was 42, he had become really successful with his business. He later became a great politician of the US, and was one of the committee members who drafted the *Declaration of Independence*. He also attended the signing of the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty of Alliance. He died in 1790.

本傑明富蘭克林生於1706年，1790年他走了。生於美國東部波士頓，家裏很窮，他讀書只讀了兩年書，以後就輟學回家，輟學就是不讀書了，幫助父親製造蠟燭，販賣香皂來維持生活。他兄弟姊妹有十七個人那麼多，他是排行第十五個，再多一個就是十八羅漢，可惜還少一個，還不夠。他生來就非常聰明，不喜數學，愛好文學，願意寫文章，常寫文章。

「一日，拜訪長輩」：有一天，他去見一個鄉長去。鄉長住的是一個很矮的房子，因為那個房子矮，所以門就低。「頭被撞」：他一進門沒有小心，就把頭撞了，大約把頭撞破了。頭撞破了，自己不好意思。「長輩笑曰」：他這個鄉長就笑他說。「若欲平安」：你若想一切一切都平安，不把頭撞痛的話，「必須低頭」：你要一切都是謙恭和藹低頭，不要那麼貢高我慢，不要那麼看不起人。

「受此啟示」：因為得到這種的教誨，「奉為圭臬」：他就拿這個當金科玉律來自謹。「自訂座右銘」：寫到自己的座位旁邊幾句話。寫什麼呢？「要節約，要勤勉」：不要懶惰，節約不要浪費錢，「誠實」：不要虛偽，不要打妄語，「正義」：不要邪裏邪氣，要有正義感，「謙讓」：要對人謙恭和藹，「沈默」：不要講那麼多話等等。前面這幾樣事是他的座右銘。

「十七歲，單身至紐約」：一個人到紐約去創事業。「成立印刷廠，改良印刷機器」：把印刷的機器都改良，「出版雜誌」：又出版雜誌。「因放風箏」：他放風箏，偶然發現在雷電交加的時候有正負——陰電、陽電，「故發明避雷針」：於是就發明避雷針，將電的力量分散開來。「及眼鏡、瓦斯燈等」：他也創造、製造眼鏡，又創造瓦斯燈等。

四十二歲時，功成業就，樣樣都成功了，為大政治家。他又參與政治，所以在美國獨立宣言他是起草委員之一，曾參加美英、美法和平條約簽訂等等。他死的時候是在1790年，1706年到1790年，大約八十多歲吧！

Commentary:

Benjamin Franklin was born in 1706 and passed away in 1790. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. His family was very poor and he only went to school for two years, and after dropping out from school, he made a living by helping his father produce candles and sell soap. Among the 17 siblings, he was the 15th child in the family. If there were one more, it would be like the Eighteen Arhats. What a pity that it was just one fewer. He was born very smart, and although did not enjoy maths, he loved literature and wrote a lot.

One day he went to visit an elder, the church minister of the town. The elder lived in a house with a low ceiling, so the door frame was correspondingly low and his head hit the door frame. He was not careful when entering the house, so he hit and hurt his head. He was a bit embarrassed when this happened. The elder smiled and said, "If you want to avoid thumps, you must lower your head." If you do not want to hurt your head, keep it low and you will be safe and sound in everything. You need to be modest, polite, and maintain a low profile; don't be so arrogant and look down upon others.

Inspired by this, he treated this statement as his principle and set up his own motto. He wrote a few sentences on his desk. What did he write? "Be thrifty, and be hard-working. Don't be lazy. Learn to save and don't waste money. Be honest, and do not be fake or lie. Act with integrity, and don't be wicked. Be modest, and treat people politely and kindly. Be silent, and do not speak so much", and so forth. These phrases are among his mottos.

At the age of 17, he went to New York on his own. He went there to start his business by himself. He established a printing house, improved the printing machines, and published magazines. He also published newspapers and magazines. When he flew kites, he accidentally discovered the fact that lightning had positive and negative polarities. This led to his invention of the lightening rod, which diffuses the power of lightning into the ground. He also invented and made bifocal glasses, and developed gas lighting and so on.

By the time he was 42, he had become really successful with his business as well as in many other areas, such as becoming a great politician. He actively engaged in politics and was one of the committee members who drafted the *Declaration of Independence*. He also attended the signing of the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty of Alliance. He died in 1790 in his early 80s.

待續

To be continued