

Halloween¹⁾

All Saints' Day, which falls on 1st November, is regarded in the West as a festival. It was formerly a religious day and has been observed since the 4th century. 31st October, the night before All Saints' Day called Halloween, was originally New Year's Eve celebrated by the Celts. The Celtic authoritative²⁾ druids³⁾ believed that demons and spirits of the dead roam the earth on their New Year's Day. In order to protect themselves from any potential tricks and harms done to them, they wore frightful masks and disguised themselves so that the spirits would think the druids belonged to their own evil company. And tasty eatables were offered to curry favour with them and bonfires were lit to drive them away. Later on, those practices were gradually changed into a custom of commemorating on 31st October the return of dead souls to their homeland. People on that day also commemorated all the dead saints either well-known or not well-known. Because dead souls are observed on All Saints' Day, some people tend to call it Ghost Day. This day has been now developed into a non-religious ordinary festival. Wearing exotic⁴⁾ masks, putting on gorgeous and weird clothes and holding candlelit pumpkin lanterns⁵⁾ carved into grotesque⁶⁾ heads, people gather cheerfully on streets in the evening to sing and dance to their hearts' content. Spectacular fancy dress balls are held in some places. This festival appeals especially to the lovely kids. They dress up in costumes and go from door to door to extend good wishes for asking for confectionaries⁷⁾ or some small gifts. Halloween is really a joyful festival in the West.

万圣节前夕

11月1日万圣节是西方社会的一个节日。它本来是个宗教节日，始于公元4世纪。10月31日万圣节前夕原是凯尔特人的除夕夜。当时凯尔特人中一些有权威的祭司们认为妖魔鬼怪会在新年之际降临人间，为了驱邪避害，他们佩戴可怕的面具来伪装自己使鬼怪把他们当成一伙的。一方面供奉美食款待它们，另一方面又点燃篝火驱赶它们。后来，这种做法逐渐改变为10月31日纪念亡灵返回家园的习俗。人们在那天还纪念所有出名和不出名的亡故圣者。有些人把万圣节称为鬼节就是因为西方社会在这天纪念亡灵。今天万圣节已演变成非宗教的民俗节日。在万圣节前夕，人们头戴怪异的面具，身穿艳丽而奇特的服装，手提雕刻成怪诞脸形并点燃蜡烛的南瓜灯笼，欢聚在大街小巷载歌载舞，有些地方还举行盛大的化装舞会。这一节日尤其吸引天真可爱的孩子们。他们化了装串门走户地祝福，索取糖果或其他礼物。万圣节前夕不失为西方人洋溢着欢乐气氛的一个节日。

NOTE 注释：

1. Halloween [ˈhæləuːi:n] n. 万圣节前夕，诸圣日前夕
2. authoritative [ɔːˈθɒrɪtətɪv] adj. 权威的，有权威的，命令的
3. druid [ˈdruːɪd] n. 德鲁伊特教祭司
4. exotic [ɪgˈzɒtɪk] adj. 奇特的

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5. lantern ['læntən] n. 灯笼, 提灯
6. grotesque [grəu'tesk] adj. 奇形怪状的, 奇异
7. confectionary [kən'fekʃənəri] n. 糖食, 糖果