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Produced by Susana Dimas-Cintas, Paula Domínguez-Lorenzo and
María F. García-Bermejo Giner.

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VNIVERSITAS
STVDII
SALAMANTINI

PROVERBIAL FOLKLORE

BY

ALAN B. CHEALES, M.A.;

VICAR OF BROCKHAM, SURREY,

Chaplain to the RT. HON. REV. LORD DYNEVOR.

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[NP]

DEDICATION

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND REVEREND FRANCIS
WILLIAM, BARON DYNEVOR.

MY DEAR DYNEVOR,

Having often admired the appositeness of your quotations, especially those from the Sacred Book, I am induced to inscribe to you this collection of Proverbial and Epigrammatic Folklore.

Wisdom and wit are no unworthy yoke fellows. While every expression, however telling, which might seem even to border on the doubtful or objectionable, has been carefully excluded, I must confess to an endeavour to intermingle the amusing with the solid; seeking “to find out acceptable words,” to please as well as profit, in these selections from the accumulated wisdom of the Ages.

It is not easy to over-estimate sound proverbial literature. If *‘i consigli son tutti buoni’* as say the Italians,—all good advice is well worth attending to,—*‘i proverbj son tutti provati,’* much more that of Proverbs, which is advice already tested!

I am your attached friend,

THE AUTHOR.

[NP]

“I gave some years abou to Sir James Mackintosh, as a definition of a proverb—

“A “proverb” may be said to consist of the wit of one man and the wisdom of many.”

Earl Russell, (1875.)

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WOMANKIND.

Place aux dames! Ladies first. Feminine proverbs are in every way entitled to precedence, whether it be in respect of quality or quantity.

And, why is it that Womankind has in every age been made to mark for so many winged witticisms? Because, says 'a severe critic but perfect wife' who is looking over my shoulder,—because it is you men who make all the proverbs! because it is the Unfair Sex with which they originate!

This suggests a keen encounter of wits in Dean Swift's day.

Said Sylvia to a reverend dean,
 What reason can be given,
 Since marriage is a holy thing,
 Why there is none in heaven?

There are no women, he replies;
She quick returns the jest,
Women there are, but I'm afraid
They cannot find a priest!

'Women there are,' no doubt, and in abundance, as ready of retort as the sprightly Sylvia, but '*caerent vate sacro*,' their smart sayings have not been equally well recorded: there is, most unquestionably, another side of the question; though as far as I can learn, it is but scantily represented.

I propose in the present chapter to glance shortly at some of the principal Feminine Proverbs; mindful, if I may, of what was said to the sign painter by the Green Lion, who remarked that, if the Lions should

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ever take to drawing the men, they would find themselves shown up in quite as startling colours.

The facts that have most afflicted the proverb-making mind, appear to have been Woman's Wilfulness, her Wordiness, and I grieve to admit, sometimes also her Wickedness; further, that she either cannot or at any rate will not reason. And thus much, I think, may be admitted at starting, that women are mostly either better or worse than men, more frequently the former; while that, at the same time, a really bad woman is very bad indeed. Jezebel, Messalina, and Lucretia Borgia would be hard to match with any equally evil men in their generation. We dare not think how low woman may fall, if she does fall. To man's foul shame no doubt, his, far more often, the greater sin. But this is the idea that seems to have provoked that coarse old saying

A wicked woman and an evil
Is some nine points worse than the devil.

It has been urged also,—

If woman were little as she is good
A pease cod would make her a bonnet and hood.

But this is evidently the outbreak of some testy Timon.

Glasses and lasses are brittle ware.

All the more reason, then, for the owners to be extra careful over them.

There are but two good women in the whole world around,

One is dead and the other one cannot be found—*German*.

This is almost an echo of that apparently hard saying of the wise man.

“One man among a thousand have I found;

“But one woman among all those have I not found.”

Eccles, vii, 28.

However, the ladies’ answer is perfectly ready.

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‘Because he never looked in the right place. He was not likely to find her among those thousand wives of his!’ and indeed, some of these adverse proverbs, are, in fact, but another form of tribute to woman’s wide spread influence.

Trouvez moi lafemme!

or, as we say,

Who was she?

was invariably the celebrated Lecoq’s first remark, on being called in to investigate any affair of great difficulty; a conviction also found embodied in our ruder English,

There’s no mischief done

But a woman’s one.

Which was also the reason why St. Colomb had no milk; when remonstrated with on this point he invariably replied

Where there’s a cow there must be a woman,

Where there’s a woman there must be mischief—

Acta Sanctora.

Why Adam’s rib?

was the too enquiring young lady’s somewhat provocative demand,

Because it is ‘the crookedest part of the body,’

was immediately her tutor’s most ungallant answer!

This may be slightly counterbalance by that confirmed bachelor Mr. Pope's somewhat dubious declaration,

Would men but follow what their wives advise,
All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.

A woman's advice is a poor thing, but he is a fool who does not take it.

The next proverbial protest is against Wilfulness, and here there is a perfect rush of remonstrants.

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one seems to say,

Experto crede

Believe me, I speak feelingly,

Swine, women, and bees cannot be turned.

'Because is a woman's answer.

I think him so because I think him so—*Shakespeare*.

School boys are said to proceed upon very much the same principle

I do not like you Dr. Fell,

The reason why I cannot tell;

But this I do know very well,

I do not like you Dr. Fell!

"Because" is also the answer of an absolute ruler. *Perché? Perché!* as I used to hear in Italy, whenever I ventured to remonstrate with one of King Bomba's officials.

'I will, Because I will!' And so in the stern old Latin

Hoc volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas.

which we may thus paraphrase

My will is my reason, and surely that is reason enough!

Now absolute rulers all women like to be; and very often very excellent rulers they make; and rule they will

If not by hook then by crook.

as says that old and most mysterious traveller's proverb. Home Rule of this kind, as the gentlemen across the Channel might easily discover, may be had more expeditiously than by entering on an agitation for Repeal of the Union! The following epigram is an instance in point.

Clara's a manager, she's born to rule,
And knows her wiser husband is a fool;
For her own dinner she'll concoct a plan,
Nor take her tea without a stratagem.—*Dr. Young.*

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Another of the kind will be found still more emphatic.

A headstrong wife, who oft came in for blame,
When taxed with scant obedience, would reply,
Why chides my spouse? Our wishes are the same,
He would the ruler be, and so would I!

It is sometimes rather hard to suit both under such circumstances. A judicious compromise may be the only alternative—such for example as that adopted by the translators of the Septuagint. When they came to the list of the 'unclean' animals, there was Arnebeth, the hare, which had to be inserted. But Arnebeth was then the name of Ptolemy's queen. They could not possibly transfer it direct from the Hebrew. Then, try the Greek, Lagoos: that, on the other hand, was the name of the King! So they wisely arranged to call her Dasupous—Mistress Hairyfoot.

A similar compromise is thus stated proverbially.

Men hold the reins, but the women tell them which way to drive.

As the gude man says, so say we,
As the gude wife says so it maun be!

Disguise our bondage as you will'

'Tis woman, woman rules us still—*Wharton*.

Man reigns and woman rules.

In the case of married women it has been argued, not unreasonably, that they ought to have their will, since they are not capable of making one, but a modern, epigram is found taking a different view,

Men dying make their wills—but wives

Escape a work so sad;

Why should they make what all their lives

The gentle dames have had?

Ladies have enormous influence, and they take enormous liberties

Beresford Hope.

The following is still more decidedly in the same direction;

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The man's a fool, who thinks by force or skill

To stem the torrent of a woman's will;

For if she will, she will! You may depend on't!

And if she won't, she won't! And there's an end on't!

Three things are untameable, Idiots, Women and the salt Sea.

Only in one instance do proverbs hold out hopes of an exception to this.

Women, like turkeys, are always subdued by a red rag,—

Antiquary.

Stemming the torrent, in the epigram above, suggests also sustaining it; for example, not unfrequently a torrent of words. And here again the rude remarks of the unfair sex have been frequent.

Foxes are all tail, and women all tongue.—*French*.

A woman's tongue is her sword, and she does not let it rust.

Silence is a fine jewel for a woman, but it's seldom worn.

'Tell one woman'

is the lawyer's joke—

'If substituted in the old form in the place of 'know all men,' would certainly be found to proclaim the matter quite as rapidly' another lawyer however addresses the sex more appreciately.

Fee simple, and the simple fee,

And all the fees in tail,

Are nothing when compared with thee

Thou best of fees, fe-male!

Again we find Epigrams having their say on this matter.

How like is this picture, you'd think that it breathed,

What life, what expression, what spirit!

It wants but a tongue;—says the husband, Dear Sir,

That want is its principal merit!

The Scotch say, with touching resignation to what may be expected afterwards,

Maidens should be mim till they're married;

which is found, more generally,

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Maidens should be mild and meek,

Swift to hear, and slow to speak.

The Italians have a singular manner of classification,

Long and lazy,

Little and loud,

Fair and foolish,

Dark and proud.

Proverbs are rather hard upon little people.

A little pot

Is soon hot.

However that ‘very short young lady’ immortalized by the poet had not much to complain of.

When anything abounds, we find,

That nobody will have it,

But when there’s little of the kind

Don’t all the people crave it!

Thrice happy girl! I hail thee so,

For, mark the poet’s song,’

Man wants but little here below,

‘Nor wants that little long!’

Also,

Little bodies have large souls.

There is one more ideal portrait in which the virtue of silence is specially exhibited.

Her manners mild,

Her actions such,

Her language good

And not too much!

But Womanish and Womanly are two very different things, as Mr. Gladstone took occasion to tell his Greenwich constituents. John Bunyan has shown us that there are Talkatives of Prating Row no less in the other sex: indeed, verboseness is found more often in male than female authors. That historian might well pray to be saved from his friends, when one of them described him as ‘Mr. Wordy,’ who ‘wrote a book in twenty volumes to prove that Providence is always on the side of the Tories.’ But still we all

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somehow get back to the old story; thus America sends it back to us.

Words, if you keep’em, pays their keep,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

But gabble's the short cut to ruin;
'Tis gratis, Gals half price,—but cheap
At no price if it hinders doin!

Ten measures heaven bestowed of speech divine,
And woman straightway ran away with nine.
certainly there is said to be this difference between a story told by a woman and a man,.

The one is her story, the other is history.

The ladies however may find a charming exemplar, if they will listen to Mr. Pope where he tells of one,

Who never answers till her husband cools;
And, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
And has her humour most, when she obeys.
Disdains all losses, high above them all,
And mistress of herself, though china fall!

And men should remember that they can mostly escape the torrent, by letting alone the floodgates;

He who cannot bear the clapper should not pull the bell.

He who the squalling cannot bear
Should never take the sow by the ear.

Good sooth! I hold
He scarce is knight, yea but half man, who lets
His heart be stirred with any foolish heat
At any gentle damsel's waywardness—*Tennyson*.

That women cannot reason has been made the burden of another set of sayings. And to a certain extent this is undoubtedly true. They feel too keenly, and are too quick in their perceptions, to be able to allow time for the slower processes of mental argumentation. An epigram will occur that was made on a mirror.

I change, and so do women too,
But I reflect, that women never do!

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Women are wise off-hand and fools on reflection.
But, says another proverb,
Woman's instinct is often truer than man's reasoning.

—————
'Their conduct still right with their argument wrong'
as some poet has sung. This then is not a very heavy indictment. If she won't listen to
reason, and will be impulsive, why

'Only call it pretty Fanny's way!'

And now, since

Every medal has its reverse side.—*Ital.*

let us turn to the ladies' side of the question; on which I confess to having been all the
time; as Mr. Dizraeli said on a well known occasion, 'I am on the side of the Angels.'
The late Dean Ramsay tells a story of how the new meenister excused himself to the
lady laird for not bowing, as had been customary to the heritor's pew at the close of
the sermon, by pleading that the Church of Scotland did not 'allow of Angel worship;'
which plea one of his country men, a rejected lover, but withal a very philosophical
one, might perhaps also have accepted as valid: thus he laments, but at the same time
consoles himself for the inevitable,

A coof came in wi' routh o' gear,
And I hae lost my dearest dear,
But woman is but world's gear
So let the bonnie lassie gang!

He then continues, in lines that are better known,

O woman, lovely woman fair
An angel's form fallen to thy share,
'Twad been o'er meickle to gien thee mair,
I mean an angel mind;

The ladies may answer, at any rate, that a greater poet is found on their side.

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Old Nature's self the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes O,
Her prentice hand she tried on man
And then she made the lassies O!—*Burns*.

Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare

And Beauty draws us by a single hair.—*Pope*.

Mr. Barrett also speaks on this point very plea singly,

Not She with traitorous kiss her Saviour stung,

Not She denied Him with unhallowed tongue;—

She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,

Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave!

When others failed woman alone was brave

Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave.—*Bary Cornwall*.

We come then now to ask, and are there other proverbs in which the women show up the men folks? And the answer must be that such are surprisingly few. I ought to know. In a weak moment I once undertook to supply a friend, who found himself somewhat overmatched, with a few proverbial weapons. He used them with such effect, (I mean the masculine proverbs) that some Delilah thought it worth her while to make him betray his benefactor. He told wherein his strength lay. Immediately as might have been expected 'The Philistines' were 'upon' me! my devoted head received a perfect shower of sharp sayings; certainly a selection of the severest which my fair foes could put their hands to. As another proverb reminds us.

Every thing will come into use if you only keep it long enough.

And so it shall be now with that startling epistle. I was informed first and foremost,

That pilgrim is base who speaks ill of his staff, (i.e. his wife,)

Man is the head, but woman turns it.

Why is man like a chapel? Because there's no living with him,
and woman like a church? Because there's no living without one.

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When there's a lady in the case
You know all other things give place.—*Gay*.

The lords of creation men we call,
And they fancy we own their sway,
But pray, did not Adam, the very first man,
The very first woman obey

It would be cruel to enquire of the triumphant fair one, and what came of it? As
some one else has said, in lines more remarkable for point than poetry,

God made man upright at the first, and he
Would have continued so, but she

However the ladies as usual have had the last word

'Tis said that we caused man to grieve;

The jest is somewhat stale;

The devil it was who tempted Eve,

And is not he a male?

Again

A man may be guided the whole livelong day

If he only imagines he's got his own way:

And again

Men have many faults, poor women have only two,

There's nothing right they say, and nothing right they do!

This last will have to be read ‘between the lines,’ as the saying is, and taken as womankind’s exposure of the malekind’s unreasonableness. They are sad sufferers no doubt, but they bear up well under it.

The old Sexton, in those charming Copsley Annals, gives a melancholy epitome of what is sometimes a woman’s fate.

Under the water,
Under the yoke,
Under the ground;
To the font carried,
At the rail married,

And then—a mound!

But, notwithstanding this lament, how often the wife outlasts the husband, and single women outlive

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bachelors, a thing which the Daily News not long ago was thus lucidly explaining to us.

‘Nine men out of ten live in a perpetual state of irritation. Everything upsets them. Either the weather is all wrong, or the dinner is half spoiled, or the neighbourhood is dull, or it is too lively, or that horrid fellow is coming, or he won’t come, or some thing or other has happened contrary to His Highness’s ‘wishes. So he works himself into a perfect fever. He frets, and fumes, and chafes, and walks about the very embodiment of discontent. In other words he is killing himself! Slowly no doubt, but surely, for he does it every day Sundays included. Meanwhile the womenkind are taking it as quietly as possible. Even ‘his’ ill humour does not disturb them. They are resigned to it as to any other inevitable dispensation of providence. There they sit, knitting or sewing, or doing crochet work, or nothing at all for that matter, yet perfectly contented. If it rains, well and good, they like a wet day by way of a change. Who ever heard of a woman seriously complaining of the weather? They abuse it sometimes, just for the sake of saying something, or in order to chime in with ‘him,’ but there is no real heart in their complaints. Again who ever knew one of them

in a hurry, or worrying herself about being punctual, as the men do? No wonder then that women live the longest. It is a happy dispensation. Their death might possibly hasten ours. But who can doubt that, when we die, they get rid of their greatest anxiety. Sometimes, indeed, it is only then that they seem to begin to live. The real wonder is then that they ever cease to do so! This account ‘é vero,’ is true: I venture to think that it is also ‘ben trovato,’ to the point.

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The following lines may fitly follow, to which we are indebted to our very appreciative American cousins.

“They’re always abusing the women
As a terrible plague to men;
They say we’re the root of all evil,
And repeat it again and again.

“Of war, and quarrels, and bloodshed,
All mischief too, be what it may;—
And pray, then, why do you marry us,
If we’re all the plagues you say?

“And why do you take such care of us,
And keep us so safe at home,
And are never easy a moment
If ever we chance to roam?

“When you ought to be thanking Heaven
That your Plague is out of the way,
You all keep fussing and fretting—
‘Where is my Plague to-day?’

“If a Plague peeps out of the window,

Up go the eyes of the men;
If she hides, they all keep staring
Until she looks out again”

Let me conclude with a caution. I have been supplying sharp-edged tools, such as fools cut their fingers with. Let me deprecate any ill-advised use of any word here. He is no true man who ever treats woman with anything but the profoundest respect. She is no true woman who cannot inspire, and does not take care to enforce this. Friendly raillery is all fair enough, but it is perilously easy to overdo it. Any real rivalry of the sexes is the sheerest folly, and most unnatural nonsense. As Longfellow has so well written.

As unto the bow the string is,
So unto the man is woman;
Though she bends him, she obeys him;
Though she draws him, yet she follows,
Useless each without the other!

Hiawatha

[16]

‘Woman’s right’ is a good husband, but there are thousands upon thousands perfectly happy, and useful, and contented without one. Let St. Paul solemnise the summing up of this chapter.

“Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

“For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.”

I Cor. xi, II 12.

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WEATHER WISDOM.

After women, weather, perhaps, has called forth the most proverbs. Is there any connection? Dare I hazard the suggestion that both are somewhat uncertain, and inclined to be capricious?

The charming Cloe, has no mind they say,
I prove she has, it changes every day!

—————
Souvent femme varie

Bien fol est qui s'y fie.—*Francis Ist.*

The weather depends very much upon the wind.

No weather is ill

If the wind be still.

And some gentleman, who seems to have been cruelly used upon occasion, has thus busied himself in tracing out the analogy.

What is lighter than a feather?

The dust, my friend, in windy weather.

And what's lighter than that, I pray?

The wind that blows the dust away.

And what is lighter than the wind?

Ah me! 'tis faithless woman's mind! And what is lighter than the last

Well, now, good Sir, you have me fast!

It is only fair to add also the lines in which Sir Walter Scott so chivalrously meets this allegation.

O woman! in our hours of ease

Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;

And variable, as the shade

By the light, quivering aspen made;

When pain and anguish wring the brow

A ministering angel thou!

We English have got a character for talking about the weather, and nothing is more natural in such an

out-of-door nation, when also, as we have seen, there is but one thing more uncertain. Weather proverbs might reasonably be expected to abound amongst us. And unquestionably they do. I apprehend we have far more than most other countries. The accumulations of the experimental wisdom of our ancestors on this subject are both very considerable, and of great practical value.

Take this, to begin with, for its general character.

Be it dry, or be it wet,
The weather'll always pay its debt.

Wait long enough, and, in the long run, the same average is arrived at, the only difficulty being that occasionally,

While the grass grows the steed starves,
and that some may meanwhile think they have been having almost too much of a good thing,

It is no use throwing water upon a drowned mouse.

Some of the weather proverbs are so well known that it would be an insult to the memories of my readers to rehearse them. The days of the week, the months of the year, the moon, the clouds, the rain, the wind, as we have seen, and the winter season, all have their set of sayings; many of which have an important bearing upon the subject of agriculture. Respecting this there must be many floating about, which are still un-registered. It would be a public benefit to note down such at the mouths of those shrewd old farmers, and observant shepherds, whose talk often abounds in them. He is no fool who can produce a good weather proverb.

He, who is weather-wise, is not otherwise.

We will begin with some sayings respecting the day.

Lose an hour in the morning, and you'll be all day hunting for it.

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But don't put too much trust in the morning's promise; for

The morning's sun never lasts the day.

For age and want save while you may
No morning's sun lasts all the day.

Praise a fair day at night.

Again,

The evening brings a' hame.—*Scotch*.

Al fin di salmo ci canta la Gloria.—*Ital*.

When the Psalm is finished they chant the Gloria:
a beautiful thought in respect of the good man's psalm of life.

Blow the wind never so fast
It will lower at last.

or according to the French version, a saying with which Damiens on his way to
those terrific tortures, is said to have consoled himself;

La journée sera dure, mais elle finira!
The day may be dire, but at last it will be done.

The sharper the blast
The shorter 'twill last.

Respecting the days themselves we notice.

Thursday come
The week's gone.

Friday's always the best or the worst day in the week.

As the Friday so the Sunday,
As the Sunday so the week.

Friday's sail
Always fail.

Fridays in the week

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)
Are never aleek.—*Devon*.

Friday will be either king or underling—*Wilts*.

Friday's dream on Saturday told
Is sure to come true be it never so old.

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A Saturday's moon
Always comes too soon.

Saturday new, and Sunday full
Never was fine, and never wull!

Saturday's change and Sunday's full
Never brought good and never wull.

Monday for wealth
Tuesday for health
Wednesday the best day of all
Thursday for crosses
Friday for losses
Saturday no luck at all.

Taking the months next, and beginning with the winter season, we shall find a saying for each one of them.

Green Christmas, white Easter.

If Christmas day on a Monday be
A great winter that year you will see.—*Harleian M.S.*

A snow year, a rich year.

Under water famine, under snow bread.

A cool Summer, and a light weight in the bushel.

Si sol splendescat Maria purificante

Major erit glades post festum quam fuit ante.

If Candlemas day be fair and bright

Winter will have another flight:

If Candlemas day be cloud and rain

Winter is gone, and will not come again.

Where the wind is on Candlemas day,

There it will stick to the end of May.

But now for the months in their due order.

If the grass grows in Janiveer

It grows the worse for it all the year.

In January if sun appear.

March and April pay full dear.

A January spring

Is worth naething.—*Scotch.*

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Janiveer sow oats

Get golden groats.

All months in the year

Curse a fair Februeer.

February fill dyke,
Be it black or white:
But, if it be white,
It's the better to like.

One of many testimonies to the protecting and fertilising properties of snow.

March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.

A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom.

A peck of March dust, and a shower in May
Makes the corn green, and the meadow look gay.

If it rains on Easter day
Plenty of grass and little hay.

A cold April
The barn will fill

When April blows his horn
Then 'tis good for hay and corn.

A poetical version perhaps of the better known couplet.

March winds and April showers
Usher in May flowers.

And here I may be permitted to give a warning against the false hopes, which I cannot but think are excited by Dr. Watts, when he speaks of the Rose as

'The glory of April and May.'

That Queen of the flowers can be hardly said to hold her Drawing-rooms before June, and our earliest Rose Shows are seldom much before the last week of that

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month; but perhaps Dr. Watts was a better poet than florist.

May is mostly a dry month.

A May flood

Never did good.

Look at your corn in May

And you'll come weeping away:

Look at the same in June

You'll come back in another tune.

A dry May and a dripping June

Does surely bring all things in tune.—*Mechi.*

A cold May

Plenty of corn and hay.

Calm weather in June

Sets corn in tune.

A shower in July, when the corn begins to fill,

Is worth a yoke of oxen, and all belongs them till.

Barnaby bright

All day, no night.

Dry August and warm

Does harvest no harm.

Till St. James (July 25) is past and gone,

There may be hope and there may be none—*Sussex*.

The Scotch say,

A haw year

A snaw year.—*Scotch*

A dry summer ne'er made a dear peck.

September blow soft

Till the fruit's in the loft.

To which may be added,

A cherry year

A merry year,

A plum year

A dumb year!

which has had this interesting explanation from a Reviewer in 'the Journal of Horticulture.'

[23]

'The Author' he remarks, (of Folklore) does not perceive its import; 'but it is plain to those who know that Cherries are never plentiful except when their blossoms have a genial spring and summer; and that abundance of Plums cause an increase in the death rate.'

Grant, October, a good blast,

To blow the hog acorn and mast!

This latter is an entreaty in which there is much meaning. In some country places,—I can vouch for one in which the oak is called 'the Surrey weed'—a good Acorn-year is almost as valuable as a second gleaning time to the cottager. I have known families pay half their year's rent with acorns, at 1s. per bushel, collected by their children.

Lastly

November take flail,

Let ships no more sail.

Both of which recommendations Steam utterly ignores: and then we are back in December with that old saying of sad experience,

A green Christmas makes a fat church yard.

of late doubts have been thrown upon the accuracy of this saying.

But Christmas is not the only dangerous time.

Proverbs warn of the effects of Spring on a shaken constitution.

March will search, April try,

May shew if you live or die.

And again, as a very useful Summer reminder.

Till April's dead

Change not a thread.

Further North they say

Till May is out

Cast not a clout.

[24]

We conclude with the Cloud, Rain and Wind pro verbs.

Post nubila Phoebus,

After clouds clear weather.

'After thunder rain,' as poor Socrates said on a too memorable occasion.

So many mists in March you see,

So many frosts in May will be.

While that best of all known proverbs, testifies to the uncertainty of our weather.

Make hay while the sun shines.

Similar in character are

He that will not when he may,

When he will, he shall have nay.

No time like the present.

The Rain of course, has plenty to say for itself.

Rain from East
Two days at least.

Rain before seven
Fine before eleven.

A sunshiny shower
Will last but half an hour.

Oak before ash
Have a splash,
Ash before oak
Have a soak.

Which is also given otherwise

If the ash before the oak comes out
There has been, or there will be drought.

Again

If on the 8th of June it rain
To expect a wet harvest you may be fain.

If the 24th of August be fair and be clear
Then hope for a prosperous autumn that year.

[25]

Sow wheat in mud
'Twill stand a flood:
Barley in dust,
Be dry that must.

This rule in gardening never forget

To sow dry, and plant wet.

When the sand doth feed the clay,
England woe, and well-a-day!
But when the clay doth feed the sand,
Then 'tis well with Angle-land.

The "rainbow in the morning" it would be an infliction to do more than mention, and the same is true, to a certain extent, of St. Swithun. But his is a tale that will bear re-telling. He was buried at his see of Winchester on July 15th. Being a modest saint he preferred to lie in the churchyard. His officious friends however insisted on removing his remains into the cathedral. The grave was actually opened for the purpose when the rain began. During forty days the removal was impossible. At last they gave it up, and then the weather cleared up; leaving St. Swithun with the reputation of a very rainy saint. His day has sometimes been thought to be the anniversary of the Deluge.

St. Swithun's day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain,
St. Swithun's day, if thou be fair
For forty days 'twill rain na mair.

With regard to which saying one can only remark that it 'lies like an epitaph.' Far more correct is that other,

When God wills all winds bring rain.

As a matter of observation

When the wind's in the South

The rain's in its mouth.

And this reminds of the Fisherman's maxims

[26]

When the wind's in the North

You need not go forth.

When the wind's in the East

The fish will bite least.

When the wind's in the South
The bait goes into their mouth.

When the wind's in the West
The fish will bite best.

The four winds have sometimes been named after the four Evangelists. According to the old Italian legend, the devil, also at one time, wished for a wind of his own. Not being able to prevail with any saint to part with his property, he proceeded to take it, stealing a piece of the North and a piece of the East; which, when he had joined them together, he found suited him exactly.

The wind is East
And that's not good for man or beast.

North East is bad for man and beast.
North West Is much the best.

No weather's ill
If the wind be still.

A sunset and a cloud so black
A Westerly wind you shall not lack.

Lastly, let me put on record some Weather glass and nautical maxims.

Long fore-told

Long last.

Short notice

Soon past.

First rise

After low

Foretells

A sharp blow.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Mackerel backs,
And mares' tails,
Make tall ships
Wear low sails.

[27]

When the rain's before the win,
Tis time to take the topsails in,
But, when the wind's before the rain,
Let your topsails out again.

When the wind backs, and the weather glass falls,
Then be on your guard against gales and squalls.

In fact, as they used to call out from the upper flats of the Old Town in
Edinburgh,

Gardez l'eau! Look out ahead!

[28]

MATRIMONIAL MAXIMS

Their name is Legion, and their wealth bewildering. They are to be found both for and against; of time and choice; for money and for love; of single life and of widowed; of unhappy and of happy marriages; even polygamy gets its notice; while the wedding-ring posies, did I venture on them, would require a chapter to themselves. Epigrams on this prolific subject abound as might have been expected; and one old divine has not thought it beneath his dignity to introduce the subject with this half-serious, and certainly most eccentric expostulation.

Our Marriage is a mar-age.

Our Matrimony is become matter-o'money.

Our Divines are dry-vines.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Our Paradise is a pair-o-dice.

And was it otherwise in the time of Noah? Ah no!

However this may be, Proverbial Philosophy strongly objects to the matter-
o'money marriages.

Better a fortune in her than on her.

Cupid often takes his stand

Upon a widow's jointure land:

but it is very unsafe standing ground.

He that marries for money his children shall curse him—*Talmud*.

Qui prend une femme pour sa dot

A la liberte tourne le dos.

He who for money take a wife

Has made himself a slave for life.

Epigrams have attempted a kind of apology, but in either instance it is a
very poor one.

[29]

Celia thinks happiness consists in state

She weds an idiot, but she dines off plate!

When Loveless married Lady Jenny,

Whose virtues were the ready penny,

I took her, said he, like old plate,

Not for the pattern but the weight.

This is an example hardly likely to be improved into a precedent. Far more
manly and healthy that other sentiment.

Marry for love and work for siller.

And even then

Lips however rosy must be fed.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

The flames of love won't boil the pot,
And where's the fuel to be got?

But work all such must, for

When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.

The mention of Love turns the supply on at once, and a perfect flood of adages might follow.

Amour et mort Death and love

Rien est plus fort. Rise all above.

Or, as was the inscription of that famous statue of antiquity,

Who'er thou art, thy master see,

That was, or is, or is to be.

But Cupid is capricious.

Follow love and it will flee,

Flee, and it will follow thee.

an idea well worked out in the old Scotch song of 'Duncan Gray'

As the French say,

There are no pretty prisons,

And no ugly sweet-hearts.

Again,

'Love is blind.'

notoriously; but what is still more singular is that,

People in love think others' eyes are out.

[30]

Who is there, now on the shady side of forty, that has not looked, with amused pity, on some such ostrich like proceedings; not altogether perhaps without sympathetic twinges.

'A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,' and should induce allowances, for

Love and a Cough cannot be hid.

Love suggests First Love, 'Der ersten Liebe goldene Zeit' as the Germans say. In favour of this there is a remarkable concert of Folklore, especially as to its lasting qualities,

Dov' e stato il fuoco, ci restan sempre le cinere.

Where the fire has been, there ashes burn.

Old porridge is sooner heated than new made.

Although in this case it must not be made too fast, for

Hot love is soon cold.

Love me little, love me long.

To which the poet Laureate has added what will certainly become proverbial before long,

After-loves of maids and men
Are but dainties dressed again.

The Lover's Toast shall come next.

Here's to one, and only one,

And may that one be she!

And may she love but only one,

And may that one be me!

A sentiment which, as to sex, may be varied at pleasure. Proverbs protest in favour of the 'only one.'

Chi due lepre caccia

Una perde e l'altra lascia

which being rather hard to translate, poetically may as well be left to be guessed at from the English sayings,

[31]

He who tries to sit on two stools will come to the ground.

while again,

'Tis good to be merry and wise,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

‘Tis good to be honest and true,
‘Tis good to be off with the old love
Before you be on with the new.

So far we have gone on smoothly enough, but it is only honest to confess that ‘for’ and ‘against’ is most hotly contested. Not to quote Punch’s prize advice ‘to persons about to marry,’ there are other equally emphatical ‘Donts’; more perhaps in the way of epigrams,(which are a kind of expanded rythmical proverb) than in those short, pointed sayings properly so called; but still the epigrams are sufficiently explicit.

For one good wife, Ulysses did destroy
A worthy knot of gentle blood;
For one ill wife, Greece overthrew
The town of Troy;—sith bad and good
Bring mischief, Heaven! may’t be thy will
To keep me free from either ill!

Marry in haste and repent at leisure.

But dont wait too long.

She wudna hae the walkers, and the riders passed by.

<i>Chi ha moglie</i>	Who has a wife
<i>Ha doglia</i>	Has strife.

While the ungallant St. Jerome remarks

Qui non litigat coelebs est.

He must be a bachelor who never brawls.

Some equally ‘crusty old bachelor,’ as the ladies say, has followed this up with a similar, but less classical sentiment.

Tom praised his friend, who’d changed his state,
For binding fast himself and Kate
In wedlock so divine:
Wedlock’s the end of life! he cried.
Too true, alas, said Dick, and sighed,

‘Twill be the end of mine!

Nor is this again very much more merciful.

[32]

Which is of greatest value, prithee say
The Bride or Bridegroom? Must the truth be told?
Alas it must!—The Bride is given away,
The Bridegroom often regularly sold!—*Punch*.

The present Pope, who, if he is not infallible, at any rate often says very witty things, is said to have exclaimed on hearing of Father Hyacinth’s marriage.

‘The Saints be praised! The renegade has taken his punishment into his own hands! The ways of Providence are inscrutable!’

So much is due to impartiality. It is satisfactory to be able to state, however, that the statistics of the other side considerably preponderate. There must be at least two ‘for’ to every one ‘against.’

‘What think you,’ wrote Franklin to a bachelor friend, ‘of the odd half of a pair of scissors? It can’t cut anything. It may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.’

The mill must have two stones.—*Turkish*.

Wives must be had
Be they good or bad.

And so must husbands, for, as the young lady says in the old Scottish song,

‘Tis hard to tak shelter behint a laigh dyke,
‘Tis hard to tak ane, we never can like,
‘Tis hard to leave ane we fain would be wi’
But its’ harder that a’ should be married but me!

The following, on the Unionists, is much to the same effect.

Among the men what dire divisions rise,
For Union one, ‘no Union’ ‘tother cries—
Shame on the sex that such dispute began,

Women are all for union—to a man!

It is well urged

Two in distress

Make trouble less.

[33]

‘Marriage halves our griefs, doubles our joys.’

and, it has been suggested by a misogynist

‘quadruples our expenses!’

But

A good wife and health

Are a man’s best wealth.

What is then in the vale of life

Half so delightful as a wife,

When friendship, love and peace combin’

To stamp the marriage bond divine.—*Cowper*.

A little field well tilled

A little house well filled

And a little wife well willed

leave little to be desired.

Here the polished Mr. Pope may be again quoted, though perhaps somewhat distrustingly.

A wife, ah gentle deities! can he

That has a wife ere know adversity?

All other goods by fortune’s hand are given,

A wife is the peculiar gift of heaven!

This blessing lasts, if those who try say true.

As long as heart can wish—and longer too!

These last words considerably change the whole character of the passage; but we have good, honest appreciation in those other lines, quoted by Mr. Spurgeon in his “John Ploughman’s talk,” a book, by the way, which,—allowing for a little inevitable outbreak, when the author will run himself against the subject of Infant Baptism,—is one of the best shilling’s worth of sound, practical, common sense sayings with which I am acquainted. He is quoting, he tells us, from Secker’s “Wedding Ring.”

Hast thou a soft heart,
It is of God’s breaking!
Hast thou a sweet wife
She is of God’s making!

[34]

Good servants are a great blessing,
Good children a greater blessing,
But a good wife is the greatest blessing.
Let him seek for one that wants one,
Let him sigh for her that has lost one,
Let him delight in her that enjoys one

Where hearts agree
There joys will be
United hearts
Death only parts.

To which we may add out of the Wedding Ring posies,

Godde alone
Made us two one!

Godde above
Increase our love!

It is rather late now to speak of the engaged ring, but this has also its special sayings; a warning one shall be quoted, which is used with great effect in a pleasing book lately published,

O green's forsaken,
And yellow's forsworn,
And blue's the sweetest
Colour that's worn!

King Jamie's famous answer to the Non-conformist Divine, who objected to that expression in the Marriage Service, 'with my body I thee worship,' may be mentioned here with propriety.

'The King, perusing the place, said, we find it an 'usual English term, as when we say, a gentleman of 'worship;' and it agreeth with the scripture" giving honour to the wife.'" As for you, Dr. Reynolds,

Many talk of Robin Hood who never shot in his bow;
'if you had a good wife yourself, you would think all worship and honour you could do her, well bestowed upon her.'"—*Fuller*.

[35]

A good dog deserves a good bone,

But, lest the ladies should consider this rather a left-handed compliment, let me introduce here a much admired epigram:

Lord Erskine, at women presuming to rail,
Called a wife a tin kettle that's tied to one's tail,
While fair Lady Anne, as the subject he carries on,
Feels hurt at his Lordship's degrading comparison.
Yet wherefore degrading, considered aright?
A kettle is handsome, and useful and bright;
And, if dirt its original purity hide,
'Tis the fault of the puppy to which it is tied!

'To be or not to be' having been thus, proverbially, decided in the affirmative, the question of Choice next follows. Folklore regards it very much as a lottery.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Put your hand in the creel,
And draw out either an adder or eel.

Wiving and hanging go by destiny.

He that's born to be hung will never be drowned.
And on the same principle
Marriages are made in heaven.

To marry a sheep, to marry a shrew,
To meet with a friend, to meet with a foe
These turns of chance no man can fly,
Who lives on earth, below the sky.

Still there is such a thing as Natural Selection, nor is advice on the subject
wanting;
Good looks are not the only things to be considered.
There may be.

A fair face and a foul bargain.

So the Italians warn us

Bellezza e follia

Son 'soven' in compagnia.

Pretty fools are no ways rare,

Wise men will of such beware.

Another warning is this

Marry above your match, and you get your master.

[36]

That house doth every day more wretched grow
Where the hen louder than the cock doth crow.—*French.*

It must be admitted however that

'The white mare is sometimes the best horse in the stable'

The Italians have a saying

Né donna, né tela

Non comprar di lume di candela,

which may be roughly rendered,

He will not choose, the man who's bright,

Or wife or clothes by candle-light.

The English version is

Choose your wife on Saturday and not on a Sunday,

i.e. in her work-o'-day clothes.

The ingenious Mr. Coelebs is said to have determined his choice, by observing the way in which three equally charming sisters partook of cheese. Perhaps that they did so at all would have been enough with some people; but let that pass. The First cut off a very thick slice of the rind. The Second ate it up rind and all. The Third adopted a happy medium; and, no doubt, was proposed to upon the spot. The Turks have a saying

Observe the hem, and take the linen,

i.e. observe the mother, in choosing the daughter; that is, again,

Go to a good stock.

We have it on very high authority.

As is the mother so is her daughter.

Ezek. xvi, 44.

Choose a horse made, and a wife to make.

The following general directions may be serviceable.

Good wives to Snails should be akin,

Always their houses keep within:

But not to carry, fortune's hacks,

All they are worth upon their backs.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Exact with regularity:

But not, like city Clocks, so loud

As to be heard by all the crowd.

Good wives like Echo should be true,

And speak when they are spoken to:

But not, like Echo, so absurd

As to insist on the last word.

Coming now to the Lady's side of the arrangement, we find one of the fair sex expressing her views, but alas! the unfair sex has had the spoiling of the statement.

"Whenever I marry," says masculine Ann,

"I must really insist upon wedding a man!"

But what if the men (and 'the men' are but human.)

Should insist, and not less, upon marrying a woman?

Proverbs suggest

Better an old man's darling than a young man's slave.

or as Theodore Hook once wrote, as I am reminded by the Times Reviewer,

Don't talk of hearts,

Of flames and darts,

Soon flattery turns to snarling:

To pass my life,

A happy wife,

Make me an old man's darling.

And Coventry Patmore has admonished,

Maid choosing man, remember this,

You take his nature with his name:

Ask too what his religion is,

For you will soon be of the same.

If you change the name, and not the letter

You change for the worse, and not for the better.

is another, and almost the silliest saying of the kind with which I am acquainted.

Every couple is not a pair.

which must have been the case with those Two Incompatibles who

Parted with but one regret,

Which was, that they had ever met!

[38]

‘Men dream in courtship but in wedlock wake.’

Some Choices are somewhat unfortunate.

Abel fain would marry Mabel,

Well, it very wise of Abel.

But Mabel won’t at all have Abel,

Well, it’s wiser still of Mabel.

And some Choices are sufficiently startling, but

Many men many minds.

—
Many women many whims.

has been also unkindly added; but then most people know their own business best, and like to manage their own affairs in their own way. There has been many a happy edition of ‘Beauty and the Beast.’

Popping the question is thus concisely decided.

He either fears his fate too much

Or his desert is small

Who dares not put it to the touch

To win or loose it all.—*Scott*.

—
Happy’s the wooing

That’s not long a doing.

We will now suppose the choice made and admitted, and that the Time is under discussion. Name the day! Well, Folklore is equal to the occasion.

Marry in Lent

Live to repent.

Perhaps the discovery that the fees are then double may have something to do with this. But Plutarch gives the same kind of reason in his time; only, singularly enough May was their time for Lent observances.—*Quæstiones R.* 86.

Marry in May
You'll rue the day.

May never was the month of love
For May is full of flowers;
But rather April, wet by kind,
For love is full of showers.—*Southwell.*

[39]

To marry in May
Is to wed povertaie.

Very hard upon May, I have always thought; some say that the prejudice originated in Scotland, for this was the month in which Mary Queen of Scots married Darnley; but, as a learned divine has lately pointed out to me, the feeling may be found expressed even as far back as the time of Ovid, as has been obligingly shown me in a late letter to the Times

Nec viduæ tædis eadem, nec virginia apta
Tempora; quæ nupsit non diuterna fuit.

Hac quoque de causa (si te proverbia tangunt)

Mense malum Maio nubere vulgus erit.—*Fasti* 489-492.

Let maid or widow that would turn to wife

Avoid this season, dangerous to life.

If you regard old saws, mind, thus they say

'Tis bad to marry in the month of May.—*Professor Cheetham*

He who marries between the sickle and scythe

Will never thrive!

As our frugal country folks say, ‘After harvest!’

Before you marry
Have where to tarry;

which is a particular application of what Solomon gives generally

“Prepare thy work without,
And make it fit for thyself in the field;
And afterwards build thine house.”

Prov. xxiv, 27.

And, now the Match is made, how has it turned out?

Wedlock’s a padlock,
and therefore is not to be lightly entered upon;
You’ve tied a knot with your tongue you can’t untie with your teeth.

Bear and forbear

Let neither expect too much.

[40]

It’s a good horse that never stumbles
And a good wife that never grumbles.

Let neither expect perfection.

Even the sun has spots on his face.

The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something, every day they live,
To pity, and perhaps forgive.—*Cowper*.

There are three companions with whom a man should always keep on good terms

His stomach
His conscience
And his wife!

which is matched by another useful gastronomic maxim. If you would live long

Avoid controversy,
Lobster salad,
And quarrelsome people.

What I that loved and you that liked,
Shall we begin to wrangle?
No, no, no, no, my heart is fast,
And cannot disentangle!

Or in wooing or in marriage,
Bear this maxim still in mind—
Seldom Wedlock has miscarriage
Where both sides are somewhat blind.

Polygamy has been promised its word of notice, but it neither has, nor can expect to have anything civil said of it.

Two cats and one mouse,
Two wives in one house,
Two dogs at one bone,
Never agree in one!

It is singular that we should find the following as a Turkish proverb.

Put not two feet in one shoe.

which has also suggested itself to the English mind.

Two feet in one shoe
Will never do.

[41]

The poet Cowper is believed to be responsible for the following.

If John marries Mary, and Mary alone,
'Tis a very fair match between Mary and John.
But if John weds a score, oh the claws, and the scratches!

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

It will not be a match, but a bundle of matches!

Once more, even for the Crossed in love there is solace.

There are as good fish in the sea as ever came out.

If one winna, another will.—*Scotch*.

As good water goes by the Mill, as drives it.

What boots the ruddy apple

High up upon the tree?

And what the pretty maiden

That careth not for me?

If she be not fair for me

What care I how fair she be!

while, as the usual result,

Many a heart is caught on the rebound.

Second marriages do not meet with much favour. On this subject the Chinese appear to have very advanced opinions.

A virtuous woman takes not a second husband.

the more moderate view is that into which England has settled down,

The first wife is matrimony,

The second company,

The third heresy.

but what a charming contrast is there in the following,

He first deceased, she for a little tried

To live without him,—liked it not, and died.

Quorn Churchyard.

Hear also a Horsham husband on this subject.

Thy virtues and my love no words can tell,

Therefore a little while, my Dear, farewell,

For faith and love, like ours, Heaven has in store

Its last best gift—to meet and part no more.

[42]

Scripture sayings might be quoted, and doubtless are most familiar, declaring the sacredness, blessedness, and deep mystery of symbolage in the marriage relationship; but it may suffice now to close with that exquisite sentiment, concerning sudden widowhood, to which Mr. Deutsch has introduced us in his able article on the Talmud.

He who sees his wife die before him, has, as it were, been present at the destruction of the sanctuary itself: around him the world grows dark!

Talmud.

[43]

THE FAMILY.

Under this heading also we have a sufficiency of sayings. Parents and children, youth and age, all that begins, completes, and declares the home, belong to this, and should guard its sanctity.

An Englishman's house is his castle.

Home, sweet Home!

Home is home, be it ever so homely.

East or west

Home is best.

Casa mia, casa mia,

Perpiccina che tu sia,

Tu mi sembri un badia!

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

My house, my house, though thou be small,
Thou art to me the Escorial!

My own house, though small,
Is the best house of all.

Every dog is a lion at home.—*Ital.*

Setting up house is no small undertaking.

Building, and marrying of children are great wasters.

Fools build houses, and wise men live in them
is another proverb on this subject; it is partly true, for while
Happy is the man that has a hobby,
if it be a fondness for bricks and mortar, he will assuredly discover that
Hobby horses are more costly than Arabs.
The place for a house has thus been rhymingly indicated.

[44]

Near a church and near a mill
Far from a lord, and under a hill.

When the house is built, the Italians advise,
Let an enemy have your house the first year,
A friend the second,
In the third go and live there.

A saying which shows an amount of calm, cynical selfishness, not often
avowed, nor very readily equalled.

Family secrets should be carefully guarded.

It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest.

He was scarce of news who told that his father was hanged.
And then there is that other, of which Napoleon was so fond,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)
Il faut later son linge sale en famille.

Dirty linen is best washed at home.

In this respect we are much at the mercy of our servants, and owe them a debt of gratitude, which I am not sure is always recognised. How very much mischief, that they might make, never is made, and how many admirable instances of fidelity are on record! The family is hardly complete without ‘the old family servants’; such are sometimes almost more part of it than ourselves. ‘I drove you to your marrying, and I’ll drive you to your burying!’ was the answer of one such, when My Lady would have dismissed him—and another recorded by Dean Ramsay remonstrates, when told, ‘John, we really must part!’

‘An, pray, whar is your Honour going?’

Home life is mostly happy life, and perhaps some of the brightest instances are to be found in this country, preeminently in the Court and married life of Queen Victoria: but it is rather too much, as some have done, to assume that home virtues are only

[45]

English; that, as the French have not the word, so they are far behind us in the home feeling: those who know them best, say, on the contrary, that among them the home affections are especially powerful, and you may sometimes find a joint residence, under the same roof, of three generations, in a way that among us would be considered quite impracticable. Lord Lytton has shown up such insular arrogance rather unsparingly.

All that’s not English in Englishmen’s eyes
Is something to jeer at, sneer, and despise.
As for a foreigner, it’s our rule
To consider him either a knave or fool.
And we honestly think, when we get abroad,
That England alone was made of God;
While the rest of the world, though nobly planned,
Was finished by some apprentice hand.

How many self complacent comparisons are annually drawn between English home life and domesticity, and foreign want of it! It may be doubted, however, whether our sturdy Teuton neighbours, at any rate, are not fully equal to us, and sometimes even excel through a more unpretending homely heartiness.

Mutter treu

Wird täglich neu.

is a little gem of a proverb, on this subject, for which we are indebted to them. It is rather hard to translate. The French have succeeded.

Tendresse maternelle

Toujours se renouvelle.

Mother's truth
Seeps constant youth.

A mother's heart never grows old.

is some kind of an approximation to it.

There is no mother like the mother who bore us.

In Eastern lands it forms a tie of especial closeness to have been the sons of the same mother.

Hence, as the extremity of baseness,

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“Yea, and hath slandered his own mother's son.”

Psalm I, 20.

A word against a mother is not easily pardoned. The Egyptians make a quaint application of this.

Don't curse the Crocodile's Mother when passing a river.

This explains also the cruel galling of Saul's furious taunt at Jonathan

“Thou son of the perverse and rebellious woman.”

I Sam. xx, 30.

The foundation of families is the conjugal relation. This is well shewn in those marriage-lines, explaining the two parts of it,

‘I take thee,’

the old form ran, in the Marriage Service,

‘to my wedded housebonder.’

which may be thus expanded,

Wife, to weave true the web of life,
Husband, of house the bond and stay,
True metal, like the ring’s pure gold,
Kept in the circlet’s perfect way.

The name of the husband what does it but say,
Of wife and of household the band and the stay.

And proverbs advise

Be captain of your own ship.

It never goes well when the hen crows.

If the father drops the reins, the family coach will soon get into the ditch.

Give a child his will

And a whelp his fill,

and you will ruin both!

He that hath wife and children wants not business.

On the subjects of large families the proverb world is divided.

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Children are poor men’s riches.

But then

The young suckers drain the old tree.

He that has not children knows not what love is.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

To make a happy fireside chime
To bairns and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.—*Burns*.

On the other hand

Little children and head aches
Great children and heart aches.

Children are certain cares, uncertain comforts.

That couple in America had made up their mind, though they were rather premature in their mode of expressing it, who, being in the printing line, called the first child *Imprimis*, and the next *Finis*, and were then compelled to intercalate *Addendum*, *Appendix* and, I believe, also *Postscript*.

Taking the children for granted, education follows, and the need of care in it.

When children stand still
They have done some ill.

Children are great imitators.

Wie die aeltern tingen
So zuritschern auch die Jungen.
As the old cock crows so crows the young.

What children learn at home, soon flies abroad.

Little pitchers have large ears.

Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.

We should be very careful what we say before young people.

Catch them young.

‘Give me the teaching until seven, and you may teach them
what you like afterwards,’

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said a great statesman; though that is rather an early date. The Roman poet was quite right,

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem

Testa diu.—Horace.

which has been happily paraphrased by Moore,

You may break, you may ruin, the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will cling round it still.

But education may be overdone.

Forced fruits fail in flavour.

Tight clothes are the most likely to tear.—*Ryle.*

A man at five may be a fool at fifteen.

Dickens has well shown up the Dr. Blimber blunder.

Soon ripe soon rotten.

Spring bids many a bud to swell

Which ne’er will grow to flowers.—*Clare.*

On the other hand

A ragged colt may make a good horse.

The world is his who knows how to wait for it.

‘Old maids’ children,’ and ‘Bachelors’ wives’ are faultless beings, but then they have no existence!

In educating, Patience is most important.

Be patient, and you shall have patient children;
as also an early recognition of that which they are best adapted for,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Send a lad to the well against his will,

The can will break, and the water spill.

The Proverbs of Solomon overflow with divinely inspired sayings on this important subject, to which in this connection we need but refer.

Drawing towards a conclusion as we come to grown up children, we find

Marry your son when you will, your daughter when you may.

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A son is a son till he gets him a wife,

A daughter is a daughter all the days of her life.

The top of the hill is now turned, and the descent commences.

Seniores priores Age before honesty.

Seniores ad honores

Juniores ad labores.

Let age be honoured, and let youth work hard.

Si jeunesse savait!

If youth knew!

Si veillesse pouvait!

If age could do!

Young man's love blazes and is done,

Old man's love burneth to the bone.

The young man's wrath is like dry straw on fire,

But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.

Every one can keep house better than her mother—until she tries!

It's ill teaching an old dog tricks.

Many old camels carry the skins of young camels to market.—

Though old and wise
Yet still advise.

Time has a taming hand.—*Newman*.

Young folks think old folks fools, old folks know this of young ones.
Yet still,

There's no fool like an old fool.

When a wise man errs he errs with a vengeance.

Youth is a garland of roses
Old age is a crown of thorns.—*Talmud*.

Once a man twice a child.

You might as well physic the dead, as try to teach the old.
But we may conclude with a higher, happier, and holier sentiment.
“The hoary head is a crown of glory,
If it be found in the way of righteousness.”

Prov. xiv, 31.

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NATIONAL.

There is hardly a nation in ancient or modern days whose language can be learned without meeting with new proverbs. Some countries are particularly fertile in them. I should name among the foremost Scotland and Italy. The English language is well supplied, but, in many instances, they appear to have been adopted, and the originals of them are to be found elsewhere. I propose in the present chapter, to

bring forward some that show National Characteristics, taking the lion's share of space for Great Britain and Ireland.

English Counties shall lead the way;

Berkshire is blunt, as might be expected in the Vale of the White Horse,
There be more ways of killing a cat than by choking of
him with cream!

In the neighbouring Surrey, is a saying suggestive of the extreme beauty of its hill and woodland scenery,

In and out like a Surrey lane:

while the town of Dorking of good poultry association, supplies its spirited Rifle Corps with the denomination, of 'The Five Claws.'

The true arms of Surrey to have and to hold
Are the famed warren chequers of blue and of gold.

Nottingham has immortalised its 'wise men of Gotham'; they seem to have been of the same calibre with those three tailors of Tooley Street, who began their famous petition,

'We, the people of England!'

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Lincolnshire, with its long, low, harbourless coast, not inappropriately suggests,

Any port in a storm:

while one of its small towns has no less than two traditions.

O Grantham, Grantham! these wonders are thine,
A lofty steeple, and a living sign!

A swarm of bees was once the sign of an inn at the entrance.
The other is a reputation hardly as complimentary.

Grantham gruel, nine grits and a gallon of water!

Rich Kent takes a fling at less highly favoured districts.

A knight of Cales!
A gentleman of Wales,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

And a laird of the North Countrie,—

A yeoman of Kent,

With his yearly rent

Will buy them up all three!

‘Neither in Kent nor in Christendom.’

Blessed is the Eye

Between Severn and Wye.

is another local saying that may be abundantly verified.

Essex stiles,
Kentish miles,
And Norfolk wiles

Many men beguiles.

in which latter instance, the requirements of rhyme seem to have proved too strong for the grammar.

When Bredon hill wears a hat
Men of the vale, mind that!—*Worcestershire*.

Yorkshire at once supplies us with a touch of the canny North.

I’se Yorkshire too!

is the exclamation, when

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Greek meets Greek;

or, as we say,

When Diamond cuts diamond.

A ‘Yorkshire tyke’

is not to be easily taken in.

What Lancashire thinks to-day, all England thinks to-morrow.—

Sir R. Peel.

And again, what contemptuous vigour is there in the North Country expression,

Two stomachs for the meat and none for the work.

It must have been for a character of this kind that the ‘Warning of Scarbro’ was originated.

A word and a blow, and the blow first!

Though this has been always the Good Old Times way of proceeding,
Castigatque, auditque Rhadamanthus.

First hang and draw,

Then try the cause by Lidford law.

Lidford is a parish which contains the greater part of Dartmoor, a rough wild district, which once had laws of its own.

‘Jedburgh justice’

had much the same meaning.

There was a rough kind of justice in this when the evil doer was taken red handed; but there is no such excuse for the law of the strongest,

The ancient rule, the good old plan,
That he should take who has the power,
And he should keep—who can.

‘Lynch law,’ however, seems to have got even beyond ‘Jedburg law,’ if we may go by the American Judge, in the horse stealing case; who, in his charge to the jury, asked them to ‘make haste, because the room would be soon wanted for laying out the body!’

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‘All friends round the Wrekin’

is the toast in which Shropshire celebrates that noble feature of her country.

No ending like a Devonshire lane.

Devonshire is said to have this also, among other more important characteristics, that they call everything there 'he,' except a Tom cat, which is invariably 'she.'

Blow the wind high, or blow it low
It bloweth good to Hawley's Hoe.—*Plymouth.*

Cornwall contributes

By Tre, Poll, and Pen
Yon shall know the Cornish men:

and again, describing the results of a schoal of pil chards coming into one of their bays.

Meat, money, and light
All in one night

He that will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by
the rook.

while again Wales,

'As long as a Welsh pedigree';

which Walter Scott in one of his couplets, thus strikingly illustrates.

Sir David ap Morgan, ap Griffith, ap Hugh,
Ap Tudor, ap Rhice, quoth his roundelay;
Hur's a gentleman, God wot, and hur's lineage is of Wales,
And where is the lady could say him nay?

There is said to be a kind of tradition in Wales that the first man's name was really Adam Jones, only the Jones, somehow or other, fell into disuse.

'Not guilty' said the Welsh jury 'but not to do it again!' which is only to be equalled by that barbarous English jury of husbands. 'Guilty,' they brought him in, 'but sarved her right!'

Proceeding now to Great Britain and Ireland, the

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special national characteristics have been thus sarcastically stated.

When food is short,

The Englishman weeps,

The Irishman sleeps,

And the Scotchman gangs till he gets it.

An Englishman's never happy but when he's miserable,
A Scotchman's never at home but when he's abroad,
An Irishman's never at peace but when he's fighting:
with regard to which Cumberland's epigram may be quoted,

Had Cain been a Scot, Heaven had altered his doom,

Not forced him to rove, but confined him at home.

A question is also said to have been asked of men of the three Nationalities,
the answers to which are no less characteristic,

'What will you take to stand without your coat in the rain for an hour?'

Englishman I'll take a pound,

Scotchman What will ye gie me?

Irishman Faix, and I'll take a very bad could!

Among foreign nations there is one proverb of this same fashion; which has
lately met with the most marvellous exemplification.

The Italians are wise before the deed,

The Germans are wise in the deed.

The French are wise after the deed.

Scotch proverbs will be met with, scattered up and down, through the whole
of these chapters: it may suffice therefore to give some few here as examples.

Drive a cow to the byre, and she'll run to the ha.

The Spanish say,

Set a frog on a golden stool,

And off he hops, again, to the pool.

and the French

Wash a dog, comb a dog, still a dog is but a dog.

This we have generally

What's bred in the bone will out in the flesh.

and in particular, as I have heard in Surrey,

The more you stroke a cat the more it sticks up its tail.

Again

Give a clown your finger, and he will take your whole hand:

though in this particular instance I should hold him justified. Other Scotch sayings are

Better a tocher in her than on her.

Every man can tout best on his ain horn.

Guid health
Is better than wealth.

Mony kiss the bairn for love of the mother.

He's not covetous but he'd fain have all.

Naething's to be done in haste save gripping o' fleas.

Our ain fish guts for our ain sea mews.—*W. Scott.*

As quiet as the grave or Peebles.—*Cockburn.*

While again, what a fund of the wisdom of experience is there in that saying

Next to knowing what will do, it's best to know what won't do.

Our Transatlantic cousins have thus improved on it,

There's only one thing beats tryin,' and that's doin!

In regard of Irish proverbs I am only acquainted with two, and one of those has probably a Scottish extraction. It comes from Ulster.

Never howl till your hit.

Our English one is somewhat less telling,

Don't cry out before you're hurt.

—————
Don't cross the bridge before you reach it.

but

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A burnt child dreads the fire,

—————
A scalded dog fears cold water.

The other is as follows:

There's many an heiress without a penny.—*Burke*.

But if the Sister Island has not been fertile in proverbs, it has most unquestionably taken a line of its own; Irish Bulls are a kind of cattle which the Green Island alone has been able to bring to perfection. These witty blunders have obtained now a world wide celebrity: e. g, 'Irish reciprocity,' 'all on one side!'

'One man's as good as another,' cried the socialist; 'Yes' said his enthusiastic Celtic supporter, with more truth than he intended, 'and a great deal better!'

'Carried unanimously with one dissenting voice,'
would hardly have been entered anywhere, but in an Irish Minute book.

'When first I saw you, I thought it was you, but now I see it's your brother.'
is an emphatic instance of the bull proper.

'Madam it will wear for ever,'
said the polite tradesman

'and make you a petticoat afterwards,'
while the following advertisement was actually cut from a Dublin paper.
'Lost where it was dropped, an empty bag with a cheese in it, the bag marked L.
G. but the letters are quite worn out; the person who lost it never missed it till it

was gone; so if any person will bring it to him, he shall receive a reward of 5s. on paying for this advertisement.'

'All had been said that could be said, and he got up to say the rest.'—*Irish Orator*.

And this must have been somewhat the way in which he said it, as the Irish Hansard of the time informs us.

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In a debate on the Leather Tax, in the Irish parliament, it was observed by Sir John Plunkett, that, in the prosecution of the present war, every man ought to give his last guinea to protect the remainder.

Mr. Pandalive said 'However that might be, the tax would be severely felt by the bare footed peasants of Ireland.' Sir Boyle Roche replied, 'that this could be easily remedied by making the under leathers of wood.'

Coming now to Countries, the Country of Solomon is the richest of all in wise sayings, very many of which have been Divinely recorded: reserving these for a special notice, we may mention one that appears to have been current in the time of David, and which he applies to show the motive that made him so chivalrously spare his enemy, 'As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.'

I Samuel xxiv, 13.

The ancient empire of China produces a proverb, which comes near to Scripture.

Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you.

Another Chinese saying is very suggestive of a much governed people

Lay not two saddles upon one horse.

'Kick light if you kick often,

I once heard a lad say, who had been knocked about from his childhood.

Again the Chinese tell us

One has never so much need of one's wits as when one has to deal with a fool.—*Chinese*.

Eggs are close things but the chickens come out at last.

A false statement has no feet and cannot stand, but it has wings and can fly far.

The following has lately arrived from Japan.

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Talk of a man and you will cause his shadow to appear.
This might not unfitly be substituted for a less presentable English one.
The Arabic are mostly excellent,

It's no use laying pigeon's eggs and expecting young turkeys.

We say.

It's no use looking for musk in a dog's kennel.

He that plants thorns will not gather roses.—*Persian*.

The fool gives his religion and takes the world,
This is not the wise man's giving and taking.—*Affgham*.

Throw no stones into the well from whence you have drunk.—*Talmud*.
As we have it.

Speak well of the bridge that carries you over.

Everything goes by trying!—*African*.

Everything has its price, but who can set a price upon blood?—*Yoruba*.

When money's mentioned a corpse will open its mouth.—*Hindoo*.

They do not however always breathe a spirit of ardent industry.

Never do to day what you can put off until to-morrow.

Never stand when you can sit.

Ride on a beetle, rather than walk on a carpet.—*Arab*.

Turning to ancient Greece and Rome, we may begin with what singularly parodies a saying of the present day. Where English slang would say of such an one,

He's got hold of ' the dirty end of the stick,'
the old Greeks said still more forcibly,

The hot end of the spit.

Bear young wolves if you wish to be bitten.—*Theocritus*.

The Seven sayings of the Seven Sages are well worthy of notice, especially

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Know thyself!

which is, what a painter would call, in the best manner.

That is also a grand sentiment, as the Spartan mother arms her son for the battle, and gives him the long shield,

Either with this or upon this! i.e.

Either bring this back, or be brought back upon it!

'Spartan nactus es'

the Latins learned to say,

Hanc exorna!

which Lord Nelson has thus translated for us.

England expects every man to do his duty!

Latin proverbs are plentiful. That concise language is well suited for these and for epigrams. We have them in this tongue both ancient and modern, some of which exhibit a most profound knowledge of human nature.

For example

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Beneficium accipere est libertatem vendere.

He lays down his liberty, who lays himself under obligations.

Ex quovis ligno non fit Mercurius,

which may be paraphrased,

You cant make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

but implies that, with proper material, the purse can be made, and also the Mercury.

Qualis Plato

Tales academici,

comes from the philosophical days of the Republic,

Like master, like man.

What masters teach

Disciples preach.

to which has been, not unhappily, appended.

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When doctors disagree,

Disciples then are free.

Who shall decide when doctors disagree

And nicest casuists doubt like you and me?—*Pope.*

As a modern example, take the following epigram, lately found on the statue of the still prolific Pasquin,

Au fuerit Petrus Romae sub iudice lis est,

At ibi Simonem nemo fuisse negat.

Some doubt may exist,

And the strife would be missed,

Whether Peter was ever at Rome;—

But that Simony's there,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

I am free to declare,
And he still makes himself quite at home!

Unlaid eggs are uncertain chickens.—*German*.

The Italians says

Call me not olive till you see me gathered.

Descending the stream of time we arrive at the Turkish Empire. The following show the terror which it once inspired. Our Litanies teach us the same with their impassioned entreaties.

Three things are utterly merciless, Time, Fire, and the Sultan.

Some of the earlier Sultans were like Attila, of whom it was said that, 'no grass grew where his horse had once trodden.' This saying has a ring of the days when all Christendom was expecting to be overrun, until John Sobieski saved Western Europe.

Think with what passionate delight

The tale was told in Christian halls,
How Sobieski turned to flight

The heathen from Vienna's walls.

How when his horse triumphant trod

The burgher's richest robes upon,
A voice rang out, it was "from God"

A man was sent, whose name was John!—

Monckton Milnes.

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Another Turkish saying is a condensation of the Fly on the wheel fable.

They came to shoe the Pacha's horses, and the beetle
stretched out its leg.

Russia is next to Turkey. Her proverbs show a striking mixture of shrewdness and piety.

With God across the sea,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Without Him not across the threshold.

Trust in God, but do not stumble yourself.

This is rather like William the Third's famous advice at the Battle of the Boyne.

Put your trust in God, my boys,
And keep your powder dry.

The Dutch have a saying that is full of force and character, which the late Lord Palmerston was fond of quoting

Painting and whitewashing cost nothing.

They save so much.

A stitch in time saves nine.

whereas

For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For want of a horse the rider was lost,
Being overtaken and slain by the enemy.

The Danes tell us there are three bad neighbours.

A great river,
A great road,
A great lord,

They have lately had reason to add,

And a great nation!

This suggests Germany.

Gefallen macht schön.

the English proverb paraphrases

Handsome is that handsome does.

The Italians say.

*Non è bella qual che bella,
Ma è bella qual che piace!*

which again can best be explained by similar sayings

One man's meat is another man's poison.

Narren hände

Besuchen Tisch und Wände.

A white wall is a fool's paper

From Spain we may import.

Guerra, Caza, y amores

Un piacer y mil dolores.

Who wars, who builds, and whoso loves,

For one joy, thousand troubles proves.

By the street of by and by you arrive at the town of never.

Their town of Seville is very highly spoken of.

Quin no ha vista Sevilla,

No ha vista maraviglia.

He who has not Seville seen,

Has not seen our country's queen.

This can be matched from elsewhere. The French say with truth.

Il n'y a qu' un Paris.

And the Neapolitans

Vedi Napoli e poi mori.

See Naples and die happy!

From Portugal we get.

Better an ass that carries me

Than a horse that throws me.

Better is bread with bran,

Than no bread to a starving man.—*Biscayan.*

And so we come to French proverbs. These have, most deservedly, a great reputation. Again, what knowledge of human nature!

Qui s'excuse s'accuse. A guilty conscience needs no accuser.

Les absents ont toujours tort. The absent are always in fault.

Nourriture passe nature.

Birth is much but breeding more.

Burns would have added,

And heart everything.

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The rank is but the guinea's stamp,

The man's the gold for a' that.

In church and at the polling booth all men are equal.—*Disraeli.*

Italian proverbs are very numerous and very telling. The Italian cities have a sly hit at each other.

Napolitano

Largo di bocca

Stretto di mano.

or as we might say.

Long tongue

Short hand.

Great boast

Little roast.

Tuscany is thus spoken of.

Chi ha da far con Tosco

Non vuol esser losco.

To deal with Tuscans, who's inclined

Must take good care he is not blind.

There is also a play upon the word *tosco*, poison.

Those who have undertaken to learn this charming language will remember what is held up as the perfection of good speaking.

Lingua Toscana

In bocca Romana,

to speak pure Tuscan with a Roman accent. Take for other examples

Il poco basta

Il troppo guasta.

we say.

Enough is as good as a feast.

Tanto buon che vai niente. Too good to be used.

Guardate d' aceto di vino dolce.

Beware of the anger of a good natured man.

The sweetest wines make the sharpest vinegar.

Chifa per se

Fa per tre.

[64]

'Self's the man,' we say? The Italians tell us he's 'as good as three!' And once more, a scoff at saintly assumptions that monastic institutions have but too often justified,

Quattrine, e santità

La metà della metà

When wealth, or sanctity men puff,

The half of half is quite enough.

The mighty Transatlantic Republic, the newest, and soon to be the greatest of the nations, if they keep together, America, lastly, claims our attention. Poor President Lincoln was famous for his sayings, and Yankee smartness has turned out some very telling ones.

The nation gave very practical approval on one occasion; when, in the midst of their Civil war, they elected him President for the second time, because

It's bad to swop horses while crossing a river.

During the Crimea war the Emperor Nicolas, having to communicate with us, gave orders that the document should be translated into the American language: some sayings come across to us in that tongue which really almost require to be retranslated into English. But still there is a force and conscious vigour, which seems to hold exaggeration excused though the almost unbounded proportions of everything around them. Liverpool appears to the New Yorker

'A poor one horse kind of place,'

though we Britishers, to use the same dialect, have been accustomed to consider it

'Some pumpkins.'

'Grant's the man for President'
wrote an enthusiastic supporter

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He's a whole team, a horse extra, and a dog under the wagon!

Another ingenious gentleman, arriving in England in September, describes himself shortly afterwards, as going out with

'A two shooting scatter gun and a smell dog!'

Not enough to make soup for a sick grasshopper,

Smaller than the fine end of nothing.

are tolerable instances of the figure hyperbole: while I incline to think that the following example of advertising, out-does all that even has been attempted by English enterprise. Up to a very recent date, this was to be seen inscribed in large white letters upon the fencing of a New York Burying Ground.

Use Jones' bottled ale if you would keep out of here!

It must had been another of the same family who, when his rival had daubed the rocks all the way up the Hudson with the appeal

'Use Smith's soap!'

supplemented it, whenever practicable, with the following addition

‘If you cant get Jones’!’

I conclude with a proverb, which while thoroughly English in itself, has the additional curious characteristic of being found in perhaps the only letter ever addressed by a hangman to the leading journal.

Mr. Calcraft, in the exercise of his profession, having been made very angry about something by some one or other, made the following remark respecting his adversary in a letter to the Times.

“Ive lived too near a wood all my life to be afraid of an owl!”

[66] VNI^UERSITAS
HISTORICAL.

I mean by historical proverbs, such as carry a history along with them, so that, to the educated ear two words suffice to tell the tale, and apply it.

There are some sayings that have an Iliad in a nut shell.

One of the oldest of all is perhaps that about Abel.

“They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.”

2 Sam. xx, 18.

we have not the key to this, but “ask at Abel,” was the wise woman’s prevailing plea with Joab. The people of that city had been accustomed to be consulted by others. Now they consulted well for themselves. And ended by throwing over their city wall the head of the traitor.

Gold for brass.

Is a Greek saying, founded on the remembrance of Glaucus’ sorry bargain. That impulsive Trojan prince, when about to swear eternal friendship with Diomedes, exchanged his brilliant suit of gold armour for the plain suit of brass which was possessed by the other.

An Agricultural proverb gives a warning of the same kind.

Don’t stop the plough to catch a mouse.

The French say, where any such waste of power is apparent,

The game is not worth the candle that lights it.

Ex pede Herculem

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is a latin adage; from a gigantic footstep you augur a giant. Professor Owen is said to be able to go much further, and from any bone, you like to give him, to be able to supply a full history of the once owner.

Optat ephippia bos.

The ox desires horse trappings.

suggests how everybody thinks everybody else's load lighter; there seems to be a reference to some fable of the kind once current. We have, as an answer to this,

The wearer knows best whereabouts the shoe pinches,

and the Scotch add.

Every man can tont best on his ain horn.

Dont meddle with Camarina.

will be recognised by scholars as another pregnant saying. The men of Camarina, were great sanitary reformers, and insisted upon draining a lake, which, up to that time, like the waters now round Mantua, had been, upon one side, the chief defence of the city. The consequence was, in the autumn they had a pestilence, and in the following spring, the city was stormed on the side left unprotected.

Let sleeping dogs lie,

is the English and Italian version,

Surtout point de zèle,

was Talleyrand's advice to young Diplomats; while Lord Melbourne has immortalised

Cant you let it alone!

The Greek is especially strong in these suggestive sentences,

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‘The cranes of Ibycus’

has the same meaning as ‘Murder will out;’ how it did so, is well told by Mr. Kelly in his *Proverbs of all Nations*, a book to which I am anxious to express my obligations. The lyric poet Ibycus was murdered by robbers when on his way to Corinth. With his dying breath he committed the task of avenging him to a flock of cranes, the only living creatures in sight beside himself and his murderers. The latter, shortly after, when sitting in the theatre of Corinth, saw a flock of cranes passing over. ‘Lo there,’ said one scoffingly, ‘go the avengers of Ibycus!’ The words were overheard and caught up, for already the poet’s disappearance was exciting suspicion. The men were seized, questioned, and, having in their confusion betrayed themselves, were forthwith led off to their well merited doom!

There’s many a slip
Between cup and lip,

is a saying that has also an ancient extraction. It is said to have originated with a slave of a king of Samos, who had been so cruelly overworked in his master’s vineyard, that he gave way to an expression hoping that the king would never drink the wine of it. When the vintage was complete, the king sent for him to see the first goblet drained. The slave replied with something corresponding to this couplet. At that very moment the cry of ‘wild boar’ is heard; the king set down the goblet, rushes out to repel the invader, is brought home slain by the infuriated animal, and the wine remains in the cup still untasted.

The Prussians have a saying that

‘Nothing is certain except death and the Black Eagle.’

an order which was at one time, somewhat lavishly

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distributed. In England, which has never been incommoded in this manner, the usual saying is

Except death and the tax gatherer.

‘Give a dog a bad name’

is another of these suggestive adages, and then,

You may just as well ‘hang him’ at once.

Everything will be laid at his door, exactly as, in some households ‘the cat’ is found most destructive.

‘I’ll not beat thee, nor abuse thee,’

said the benevolent Quaker to the dog who bit him,

‘But I’ll give thee a bad name!’

so he called out

‘Mad dog!’

and then the neighbours came and killed it. This introduces making a ‘cat’s paw;’ which is getting other people to do our dirty work, or work which we do not quite fancy: the idea originating with an intelligent monkey, who used his friend the cat’s paw to get off the bar the roasting chestnuts.

‘Job’s comforters’

tells its own tale.

we may place by the side of this

When a dog is drowning every one offers him water.

When the child is christened you may have godfathers enough.

Virgil’s,

Sic vos non vobis,

applied where one does the work, and another take the pay, has also a story of its own that is worth telling. It seems he had complimented Augustus with an epigram to the effect that rain at night, and in the morning the Public Games, shewed the empire of the world divided between Jupiter and Cæsar.

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*Nocte pluit totâ, redeunt spectacula mane,
Imperium coeli cum Jove Caesar habet..*

The emperor enquired the author, and another person the plagiarist Bathyllus, took the credit. The provoked poet then published several unfinished lines, all beginning.

Sic vos non nobis.

to the effect that he had written the verses and another had obtained the reward; the emperor asked to have the stanzas concluded. No one being able to finish them, Virgil then stepped forward, and did so at once; condoling with the birds, bees, and sheep, that they like himself had, without recompense, to contribute to enrich others.

Hos ego versiculos feci tulit alter honores,

Sic vos non vobis nidificatis aves,

Sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves,

Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes,

Sic vos non vobis.

Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute,

is a familiar, and often used French saying, with regard to which Mr. Kelly tells a curious story.

St. Denis, as all know, is the patron saint of France. But it may not be equally well known that, after his martyrdom by decapitation, he walked a full league with his head in his hand, in order to carry it to a suitable place of burial. The Cardinal de Polignat, in speaking of this miracle, was accustomed to lay great stress on the length of the way traversed. Having done so in Madame de Deffant's presence, she remarked that this was by no means the most wonderful part of it; for,—applying, as I apprehend, not originating this epigram,

It is the first step that is all the difficulty!

Hobson's choice

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is another much employed saying; which is better known than the circumstances in which it originated. 'Old Hobson,' the Cambridge Carrier immortalised by Milton,

appears to have been a man of some substance. In the intervals between his journeys he began the custom of letting out his horses to the Undergraduates; as he had an absolute monopoly there was no appeal from his decision, and thus Hobson's choice,

'That or none!'

had its beginning.

A North Country saying is something like it,

There's no compulsion only you must!

Vae Victis

again has its classic recollections, many of which we have lived to see reproduced in France upon a very large scale.

It's origin is exactly detailed in the following epigram, which reminds us that in the long run injustice will be requited.

Woe to the vanquished! was stern Brennus' word.

When sank proud Rome beneath his conquering sword.

But halting justice hobbles in again,

Woe to the victors will redress the pain!

Another poet tells us

Freedom's battle once begun,

Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,

Though often lost, is always won.—*Byron*.

while it is remarked by a third keen observer of human nature,

Treason doth never prosper, what's the reason?

When it does prosper no man calls its treason!

One more English saying I may mention, before concluding this chapter, like the former, with Transatlantic examples. It is that old Kentish paradox,

Tenterden steeple is the cause of Godwin sands.

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Says Bishop Latimer; 'Mr. Moore was once sent with a commission into Kent, to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Godwin sands, and the shelf which

stopped up Sandwich haven. Thither cometh Mr. Moore, and calleth all the country before him. Among the rest came an old man that was thought to be little less than a hundred years old. Father, said Mr. Moore, what think you to be the cause of these shelves and sands which stop up Sandwich haven? Forsooth Sir, quoth he, I am a very old man, I am an old man, and I think that Tenterden steeple was the cause of the Godwin sands. I mind the building of Tenterden steeple, and before that there was no talk of any flats or sands!’ The thing seems as absurd as that charge against Buonaparte in Rejected Addresses.

Who, while the British squadron lay off Cork,
(God bless the Regent and the Duke of York!)

With a foul earthquake ravaged the Caraccas
And raised the price of dry goods and tobaccos?
Who makes the quarten loaf and Luddites rise?

Who fills the butchers’ shops with large blue flies?

* * * * *

Base Buonaparte, filled with deadly ire
Sets, one by one, our playhouses on fire.

In the present instance however, absurd as it seems, the old man who spoke was not so far out after all. History informs us that, about that time, a Bishop of Rochester had diverted the money, intended for keeping the sea banks in repair, to his purposes of building up Tenterden steeple. Hence the sea got the mastery, and the land became hopelessly lost.

‘The American language,’ to use the Emperor Nicolas’ expression, has enriched our vocabulary of late with two remarkable words, both of which, it cannot be doubted, will eventually become historic. What significance there is in those two syllables Bunkum! It

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is said to have originated in their House of Assembly; members present could not conceive at first what the orator could be aiming at, for it certainly was not either to instruct or convince anyone then listening; presently however a chance expression

revealed the mystery, he was speaking to Buncombe, for the satisfaction of his constituents in that enlightened locality! 'I am not speaking to this House,' said the gentleman from North Carolina, 'I am speaking to Buncombe!' And much Bunkum is spoken for similar reasons in similar places.

Again

Shoddy!

In that single word is the entire history of the follies and extravagances of the *nouveaux riches*, and of those who hang on to them; whether a man has 'struck ile,' or finds that 'Cotton is king,' or in any other way is suddenly lifted up on a pile of the all mighty dollar. Shoddy showed instead of broad cloth, when the rich gentleman in New York ordered in for his new book-case all Mr. Waverley's works! It was shoddy when that other, calling in at the music store, ordered a Copy of the Song of Solomon, as he had heard it well spoken of, and wanted it for his daughter to sing! Some extravagances under such circumstances are almost inevitable, as when the paid-off sailors during the war used to light their pipes with bank notes, and one is reported to have made a watch omelette in a frying pan. When there is no arrogant pretension, pity is excited rather than ridicule, as when poor Mrs. H. answered the polite gentleman, who tried to fill up a gap in the conversation by the remark, Horrid pause! 'Your hands would be horrid also, if you had washed

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'up as many dishes as I have!' She thought he said Horrid paws! and that her red hands were in question. The same idea is suggested by Tennyson, in his Lord of Burleigh, when he describes the village maiden gradually sinking under the weight of her dignities.

But a sorrow grow upon her
And oppressed her night and morn,
With the burden of an honour
Whereunto she was not born.

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PROFESSIONAL PROVERBS.

This requires to be explained. I mean those Which relate to the three that have been called the Learned professions, Law, Medicine, and Divinity

Let the Lawyers lead the way.

An old physician and a young lawyer.

And confide in both with equal frankness. The Italian's bid

Dal medico ed avvocato

Non tener il ver celato.

which may be roughly rendered,

Whatever you do, whatever you say,

Tell your doctor and lawyer the truth always!

Law is a losing affair or else how could the lawyer's live? As Chief Justice Bovill remarked during the Tichbourne trial,

The lawyers have too sober sense

To argue at their own expense.

—
lawyers, tho' keen,

Like sheers cut not self, but the stuff that's between.

—
Lawyers' cloaks are lined by their clients.

A lawyer was defined by the late Lord Brougham as 'a learned gentleman, who rescues your estate from your enemy, and keeps it for himself.'

The Law settles questions of Meum and Tuum

By quietly arranging to make the thing Suum.

—
The last thing that a wise man will do is to go to law.

It is recorded of a famous judge that he used often

to say, though with cautious privacy, that, as a matter of economy, he would allow himself to be robbed of any one of his fields rather than attempt to prevent this by an action at law, and that even though

‘Possession is nine points of the law!’

Ut habeas quietum tempus perde aliquid,

is an old Latin adage, which we may construe,

It’s well worth while letting oneself be cheated sometimes.

Troublesome people, who could not be got rid of in any other way, have been known to disappear entirely after a judiciously advanced loan. But though law is to be avoided, this by no means always follows as to lawyers. Under what exceeding obligations is our English nation to those great men who have established, and administer the laws that fence our freedom.

Then again, what would have become of many an ancient family but for the invaluable guardianship of the old family lawyer! That Oyster example is not all that there is to be said on the subject. The old Craven Street epigram has a very fair remonstrance. This was the offered warning, when lawyers settled in a Street where the Thames ran at the bottom.

At the top of the street the lawyers abound
And down at the bottom the barges are found
Fly, Honesty! fly to some safer retreat,
For there’s craft on the river, and craft in the street!—

Jas. Smith.

To which the answer.

Why should Honesty fly to a safer retreat
From attorneys and barges, I wot ‘em?
For the lawyers are just at the top of the street,
And the barges are just at the bottom.—*Sir G. Rose.*

One other law proverb must by no means be omitted.

He who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client.

We will take the Clergy next. Some of the sayings

concerning them, belong more to the times of the Church of Rome than our own.
The monks seem to have soon become unpopular.

Beware of an ox before, a horse behind,
And a monk on all sides.

—

did man ere live,
Saw priest or woman yet forgive?—*I. R. Lowell.*
The bite of priests and wolves are hard to heal.

—

Good priests are like good women, there are plenty of them, but
they're all under ground.—*Ital.*

—

Patres vocantur, et saepe sunt.—*Erasmus.*

—

Mel in ore, verba laetis,
Fel in corde, fraus in factis.—

quoted by Dr. Kenealy in Tichbourne Trial.

—

Every priestling conceals a popeling.

—

As precious as a priest's wife.—*Russian.*

—

As foul as a priest's ear.—*Irish.*

—

Preti, frati, monachi, e polli

Non ci trovan mai satolli.

Fowls' and friars' greedy eye

Hopeless 'tis to satisfy.

The remarks then become more general.

Next to the minster, last to mass.

They're not a' saints that get holy water.—*Scotch*.

Every glow worm is not a fire.—*Ital*.

Many to market few to church.

Attend your church, the parson cries,
To church each fair one goes;
The old ones go to close their eyes,
The young to eye their clothes.

This charge of 'closing the eyes' is a very old story. John Wesley speaks of having been 'much refreshed' under a very long sermon. Dean Ramsay relates how

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a Scotch clergyman thought to rouse his audience by reproaching them that they were 'all asleep except the idiot Jamie!' Upon which that individual promptly retorted,

'An if I had na been an idiot, I should have been asleep too!'

That other admonition, to the whispering school children, was a trifle more happy,

Hush children, if you speak so loud you'll wake up the old folks!

Quite as many sharp things however have been said on the other side. There is an ignorant impatience of preaching now arising in the lay mind, which demands that the sermon shall last just ten minutes, and yet clearly embody all the leading truths of the gospel.

By our preacher perplexed,
How shall we determine?
"Watch and pray!" says the text,
Go to sleep! says the sermon.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

The ladies praise our curate's eyes
I never see their light divine,
For when he prays, he closes them,
And, when he preaches, closes mine.

What is a Visitation? was one day asked by an enquiring parishioner of his legal representative, the churchwarden. 'Why the parsons all meet together to talk and to exchange sermons.' 'What a pity!' was the desponding comment 'that our man always gets the worst of it!'

I've lost my portmanteau

I pity your grief!

All my sermons are in it,
I pity the thief!

To the church then I went
But I grieved and I sorrowed
For the season was Lent,
And the sermon was borrowed.

Dean Ramsay tells another story of a learned divine who had come to preach, and was much disquieted by

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the effects of a shower of rain he had experienced. 'Bide a wee, Doctor' was the soothing observation, Bide a wee! Ye'll be dry enough presently when ye get into the pulpit!'

Other sayings are these!'

A house going parson makes a church going people.

Pectus facit theologum.

Heart attracts hearers.

"I believed, and therefore will I speak."

clericus in foro
Est piscis in arido.

Parsons, who in the market stand,
Are like a fish upon dry land.

The souls of ministers should be purer than sunbeams.
Goldsmith gives of one such, this beautiful description,
Allured to brighter worlds, and lead the way!

Sir Walter Scott in his 'Antiquary,' thus thinks to hit off the three professions. 'The Clergy live by our sins, the Medical Faculty by our diseases, and the Lawyers by our misfortunes!' How far the former, at any rate, make a living in this way may be doubted; or a living at all in many instances; this has been a difficulty and a danger in all ages. High class cooks get more than curates. But
Scandalous maintenance makes a scandalous ministry.

Matt. Henry.

Church work goes on slowly.
As Dr. Guthrie used to say of his lay brethren,
They expect the piety of an apostle,
The accomplishments of a scholar,
The manners of a gentleman,
it may very fairly be added,
'For the pay of a page!'

Proverbs supply thus much of comfort, and show

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that it is not the church that will lose most by dis establishment.

Land without church

Shall be left in the lurch.

Church without land

For ever shall stand.

I pass now from the Clerical to the Medical profession. There is a more obvious connection, than that which Sir Walter suggested. Some disorders of mind, which baffle the spiritual advisers, are found to give way under judicious medical treatment. While again, mind acts on body with a force that is irresistible. There may be a load on the mind which, while unremoved, will make all attempts of the physician unavailing. How shall medicine minister to a mind diseased!

No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels;

No cure for such, till God who makes them, heals!

The medical maxims may be divided into two classes. Those which discuss the profession, and those which tell us how to do without it. Some of these latter are of considerable value,—if I may venture upon so presumptuous an opinion;—

It's kettle shooting at corbies and clergy,
and it's still more dangerous to hint at any heresy to your doctor; really occasionally, one cannot help being reminded of Dean Swift's recorded judgment:

They'd rather have that I should die,

Than their predictions prove a lie!

The French say somewhat cruelly

Le medecin est souvent plus a craindre que la maladie.

The doctor is often more to be dreaded than the disease,
and certainly the old style required a good, strong constitution,

Bleed him, and purge him, and, if he die, bury him.—*Spanish.*

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If Homoeopathy had done nothing else, it would have earned our endless gratitude by bringing about a reduction in the doses. It can afford then to smile at the following description of the way in which it would feed us.

RECIPE FOR HOMŒOPATHIC BROTH.

Take a robin's leg, the drumstick merely,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Put it in a tub filled with water nearly,
Set it out of doors in a place that's shady,
Let it stand for a week;—three days for a lady.

Dip a spoonful into a five pail kettle,
It should be of tin, or perhaps bell metal,
Fill the kettle up, put it on a boiling,
Skim the liquor well to prevent its oiling.

For thickening and salt take of rice one kernel,
Use to light the fire, "The Salina Journal,"
Let the liquor boil half an hour, no longer,
If it is for a man, you may make it stronger.

Should you now desire that the soup be flavoured,
Stir it once round with a stalk of savoury;
When the broth is done, set it by to tell it,
And then, thrice a week, let the patient—smell it!
If he chance to die say that nature did it.
But if he should get well give the broth the credit!

Dear physic always does good, if not to the patient at least
to the apothecary.—*German*.

'Slept you well?' 'Quite well.' 'My draught did good?'
'It did no harm' 'for yonder it has stood!'

Dr. Cheyne of Bath having prescribed for Beau Nash, called and enquired whether he had followed the prescription? No, was the reply, for in that case I should have broken my neck, as I flung it out of the window!

In which connection we may perhaps be allowed to quote an epigram on a well tableted church.

These walls so full of monument and bust,
Shows how Bath waters help to lay the dust.
Sometimes a misconstrued label has also assisted in

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this respect. It did not much matter that the blister was ‘put on the (oak) chest,’ and kept there without results until the next visit of the doctor; but it became more serious when the energetic daughter interpreted the notice, on the bottle, of her aged father instead of his medicine; and that, for some time before every administering, there was a most serious misapplying of the precept,

To be well shaken before taken!

Other sayings are these.

After death the doctor.

—
Better wear out shoes than sheets.

—
Better pay the butcher than the doctor.

It must be confessed in the proverbial world that the doctors have been somewhat hardly dealt with. Not that they cannot take their own part.

‘You must admit’ said Medicine to Law, ‘that your profession does not make angels of men!’

‘No,’ said Bobus Smith, ‘there you have the best of it, yours certainly gives them the first chance!’

‘Your mistakes are buried six feet under ground,’ said the lawyer: ‘Yes,’ retorted the doctor, ‘and yours are sometimes hung up six feet above!’

Diet cures more than doctors.

In Tennessee especially the doctors are said to have rather a hard time of it. If the patient recovers he seldom pays, if he dies the rule is to shoot his medical adviser.

Now it is all very well to joke, but there is also a very serious side to this subject. And looking at it in this light, who will not admit that there is no class of men more to be admired and appreciated. What perilous family secrets they possess, and never divulge

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them! What valued friends we find amongst them! What unwearied application, what devoted love of science, what a noble army of martyrs to a sense of professional duty, is to be found on the log roll of our medical practitioners! As has been fully proved in a late national emergency

A wise physician, skilled our wounds to heal,
Is more than armies to the public weal.

The best surgeon is he who has been hacked himself.

‘A good Surgeon,’

as runs the famous John Bell’s saying,
should have

The brain of an Apollo
The eye of an eagle
The heart of a lion
The hand of a lady.

No slight requisites, and yet such are to be found: and these powers are very readily exercised. I have known a most memorable instance, in which the first surgical advice in the kingdom, which the rich were glad to be allowed to purchase almost at any price, was readily given, round his country seat, to all and any of the neighbouring poor, who chose to apply to him, by that most eminent man the late Sir Benjamin Brodie.

All homage, then, to the Healing Art, to the Faculty! But allow us, while we are able, to admire at a distance,

Praise the sea but keep on land!

And now for the maxims which profess to make this possible. Proverbs consider that most people ought to be able to make use of them.

Sanitas sanitation omnia sanitas—

Disraeli.

A man at forty is either a fool or a physician;

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Of every woman it may almost be said that she is born a doctor.

Keep the head cool, the feet dry, and a fig for the doctor!

The feet kept warm
The rest takes no harm.

The window opened more,
Would keep the doctor from the door,

But beware of draughts; in a pleasing fiction they are said to give a cold, cure a cold, and pay the doctor's bill. The first, at any rate, is sufficiently certain.

Aria di finestra

Colpo di balestra.

A draught from a window
Is like a bolt from a bow.

Or, as they used to advise,

If the wind strike thee through a hole
Go make thy will, and mend thy soul!

Our hunting ancestors had a saying which should be preserved, although now almost obsolete.

If thou be hurt with wound of hart
Twill bring thee to thy bier.
But barber's hand can boar's hurt heal
Therefore thou need not fear.

Bread at pleasure

Drink by measure,

is also a maxim much to be commended.

The Scotch say

Never let the maut get above the meal.

Proverbs provide a prudent rule even in respect of what may be called natural selection.

Poma, ova, atque nuces,

Si det tibi sordida gustes.

An apple, an egg, and a nut,

You may eat after a slut.

presuming, we may suppose, that the outside has been some protection. Cheese is very properly outlawed,

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Caseus est nequam

Quia degerit omnia sequam.

which dog latin has been rendered

O cheese thou art an evil elf,

Digesting all things save thyself!

Eat leeks in March

Garlick in May

All the rest of the year

The doctors may play—*Sussex*.

By way of general rule these lines may be accepted.

Nature's best pleasures, all the joys of sense,

Lie in three words, Health, Peace and Happiness,

But Health consists with Temperance alone,

And Peace, O Virtue, Peace is all Thine own!

Non est vivere sed valere vita.

Here the terseness of the Latin almost defies the translation. It implies that, without the above,

Life is not living but bare existence.

As another poet has spoken,

Circles are praised, not that abound

In largeness, but the exactly round,

So Life we praise that doth excel

Not in much time, but acting well.—*Waller.*

One other rule, and a golden one, in medicine, as in all else is,

Let well alone.

When trouble sleepeth wake it not.

Chi sta bene, non si muove,

He who is well off let him stay so.

Rub your sore eye with your elbow:

i.e. not at all, for

Non patitur ludus fama, fides, oculus.

To faith, to fame, and to the eye

Let no rude, careless hand come nigh.

The following of any other plan, in its folly and consequences is well shown in the old epitaph.

I was well, would be better, took physic,—and died!

Perhaps there are no proverbs more useful than these to have at the finger ends—I was going to say, at the tip of the tongue, but that is exactly what they would discountenance.

Least said is soonest mended.

More have repented speech than silence.

He who says what he likes, will hear what he does not like.

Speech is silvern, silence is golden.

“He that hath knowledge spareth his words.”

Where God says little, they who are
Most silent are most wise.—*Bp. Jackson.*

Molte parole pochi fatti.

Much din and little done.

or in the French

Beaucoup de bruit

Peu de fruit

which Pope has thus expanded

Words are like leaves, and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

Good words without deeds
Are rushes and reeds.

Ai buoni intenditori poche parole bastano—Ital.

Where hearts are true
Few words will do.

Talking comes by nature, Silence by understanding.

The still sow sucks the most wash.

Empty vessels ring the loudest.

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Pensa molto, parla poco, scrive meno.

Think much, talk little, write less, say the sagacious Italians: who, in this last, have hit on a new danger that has arisen now that 'the school master is abroad.' Some people are afflicted with an incontinence of the pen. Something excites them, at once they dash off a letter, post it themselves, for fearing of being dissuaded, and presently find themselves committed to a very serious quarrel; or they rush into print, and get shown up most unmercifully; until at last they are fain to wish, with that unhappy forger, that learning to write had not been part of their education!

Litera scripta manet.

If the word spoken cannot be recalled, still less can the written letter.

Great are the perils that environ
The man who meddles with cold iron,
says Hudibras; and other perils 'environ' the ink bottle. Job is made to say, in our Authorized Version

"And that my adversary had written a book!"

Happy indeed those Authors in their old age, who recall no line that they fain would blot! But, of all whimsical ways of getting into trouble through incautious writing, perhaps none could exceed the case of that clergyman in the

last century, who was charged during a hot contested election with canvassing from the pulpit.

It appeared that the good man, in his innocence, had written his sermon notes on a good sized piece of card board, which he found on his study table, of which he used the blank portion. The other side however, which was the one, while he held it up that was presented to the congregation, contained these words

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‘Vote for so and so’ in most conspicuous letters, to his unmeasured consternation when the matter was explained to him.

‘No one was ever written down,’ the Times remarks, ‘except by himself.’ And some one has given this rhyming advice, which is also sound reason.

If you from slips
Would guard your lips,
Of these five things beware,
Of whom you speak,
To whom you speak,
And what, and when, and where.

Since word is thrall, and thought is free,
Keep well thy tongue I counsel thee.

Speak well of your friend, of your enemy say nothing.

A word, and a stone, let go, cannot be recalled.

As by the ears the ass is known,
A fact as sure as parsons preach,
So man, has all experience shown,
Is seen most clearly by his speech.

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

Special proverbs supply us with some excellent admonitions.

Better the feet slip than the tongue.

Give neither advice nor salt until you are asked for it.

Advise none to marry, nor to go to war.

Dont talk of my debts unless you mean to pay them.

Dont talk of a halter in his house who was hanged.

Some people have the undesirable faculty of always saying the wrong thing to the wrong people: others delight in what Sheridan called, ‘a nice derangement of epitaphs;’ nor can that comparison of his Mrs. Malaprop ever come to be forgotten,

‘As pensive as an allegory on the banks of the Nile!’

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In bocca serrata non entra mai le mosche.—Ital.

which may be paraphrased

He that has a head of wax should not sit in the sun:

More literally.

Keep your mouth closed, and then the flies cannot enter.

They never taste who always drink,

They always talk who never think.—*Prior.*

Least said is soonest mended.

Singing is next door to talking; of this says Coleridge,

Swans sing before their death, ‘twere no bad thing,

Did certain persons die before they sing.

But here we are on dangerous ground, and will simply record further, this somewhat cruel epitaph, which may, or may not, have referred to her singing,

Here lies Miss Arabella Young,
She's learned, at last, to hold her tongue.

It must not be supposed, however, by any means, that Speech has nothing to say for itself. Quite the contrary,

Trust not still water, nor a silent man:

while again, as old Homer has it, it is no small thing to be 'an articulate speaking mortal.'

How wonderful thus to be able to communicate our thoughts to others; what a marvellous matter is the power of persuasion; how great a gift is eloquence; what a delight to an audience the well ordered and flexible voice of the practised speaker! I remember such an one, who could sway the largest assembly, even as the wind the ears of corn that bend before it; playing on the human heart as on an instrument, carrying from grave to gay, from thrilling pathos to laughter inextinguishable, rousing and allaying the feelings, almost at his pleasure! And there are grades

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of good oratory. O what an orator! said the Athenians when they listened to some among his rivals, but when Demosthenes thundered and lightened, when he spoke, there was but one feeling, 'Up,' cried the whole assembly, 'let us go against Philip!' 'When so and so preaches,' said the old shipwright, 'I can build a boat from keel to deck, but when that other man comes, I never get a chance of even laying a plank!

Speak gently!

is an excellent precept, and again

Speak kindly! and speak cautiously!

Birds are entangled by their feet, and men by their tongues.

Words often effect much more than we are aware.

Sometimes words

Wound more than swords.

Full many a shall, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant;
And many a word, at random spoke,
Will hurt or heal a heart nigh broke.

Some scripture sayings will fitly conclude this.

“The tongue of the just is as choice silver

Prov. x, 20.

The tongue of the wise is health”

Prov. xii, 18.

“The tongue is a fire.”

Jas. iii.6.

How strikingly the old grandmother, in her too exciting early recollections,
is made by Tennyson, in one of his poems, to exemplify her own statement!

And then to go, and be slandering me, the base little liar!

But ‘the tongue is a fire,’ you know, little Annie, ‘the tongue is a
fire!’

On the other hand, and how assuredly,

“A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth,

And a word spoken in season how good is it!”

Prov. xv, 33.

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FRIENDSHIP.

Sayings concerning Friendship, now claim our attention. They are spread over a
wild field, and are many of them to be remarked for their force and their excellence.

We cannot do without friends.

One hand will not clasp.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

He, who lives unloving, dies unlamented.

Friendship doubles joys and halves pains.

He who has a thousand friends has not one friend to spare,
And he who has an enemy will meet him everywhere.

L' amitiè est amour sans ailes.

No friend like to a woman man discovers

So that they have not been nor may be lovers.—*Byron.*

‘Better a toun house,’ say the Scotch, ‘than an ill tenant,’ better no friend than a false friend; yet even the most selfcontained must sometimes admit with the poet Cowper;—

Sweet is solitude!

But give me still a Friend in my retreat

Whom I may whisper, Solitude is sweet!

So many and such varied excellencies are required for the constituting of a true friend, that there is room for the playful sarcasm, with which Cowper, in another place, pretends to throw doubt on such a thing’s existence.

Horatio’s servant begged to go abroad,

Dreading a negative and overawed,

‘Tis but a step, Sir, just at the street’s end;—

For what? An please you, Sir, to see a friend—

A friend, Horatio cried, and seemed to start,

Yes, marry, shalt thou, and with all my heart!

And fetch my cloak: for, though the night be raw.

I’ll see him too, the first I ever saw!

born to greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.' Some are well supplied by nature, while others have to manufacture them for themselves. And home made friends are mostly the best. Family friends are very greatly to be treasured. We have this on high authority,

“Thine own friend, and thy father’s friend, forsake not.”

Prov. xxvii, 10.

Also, and in general, it is to be remarked, there are no such friends to be found as among relations. They will mostly do more for us, and put up with more from us, than any others. Interfering in a family feud is something very like taking either side in a matrimonial dispute; at any moment the matter may be made up; and they will thankfully offer you up on the altar of reconciliation!

Two’s company and three’s none,
and be careful not to make the third where this is manifest. But keep up cousinships. The Scotch are wise in this, as most other things, in their generation;

Blood is thicker than water,
this our American cousins most chivalrously showed at the Peiho; let us hope we have seen the last of family quarrels in that quarter.

Tre fratelli Brothers three

Tre castelli. Three castles be.

“A three fold cord is not quickly broken.”

Eccles. iv, 12.

Still stand by kin

Through thick and thin.

But although, as we have observed, friendship stands perhaps more firmly based among kindred than among acquaintance; yet a breach, if it once be made,

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is harder to be filled up among relations than among any other.

“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city.”

The Spaniards have a doubt whether such damage to friendship can even really be remedied,

A broken friendship may be soldered, but it will never be made sound.

How forcibly Coleridge has put this in his *Sir Leonine*,

Each spake words of high disdain,
And insult to his heart's dear brother;
They parted, ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining,
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs that had been rent asunder:
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once had been.

Friendship then has its dangers as well as delights. If we have friends we must be careful over them.

Friends are like fiddle strings, they maunna be screwed o'er tight.
Nor taken liberties with.

Better lose your joke than your friend.

Love your neighbour but do not pull down your hedge.

A hedge between
Keeps friendship green.

If you want to keep your friend dont go and live with him,
And dont pay him too long visits;
In Spain they say

Al huesped y al pese
A tres dias triede.

Fish, and the friend who comes and stays,
Dont do to keep beyond three days.

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“Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour’s house, lest he be
weary of thee, and so hate thee.”

Prov. xxv, 17.

Cowper, who ia especially strong on this subject, thus shows up in another place
one most objectionable phrase of supposed friendship, the imagining that intimacy is
any excuse for impertinence.

The man that hails you Tom or Jack
And proves by thumps upon your back
How he esteems your merit,
Is such a friend, that one has need
Be very much a friend indeed
To pardon, or to bear it!

The wise man who is invited to make his friend’s house his own, will take care
not to do it; still less will any gentleman do so uninvited.

‘Bon sang ne peut mentir’

say the French,

Good blood cannot lie.

whereas it is just here that inferior, and bad breeding will be sure to show itself. This
was the fatal mistake that poor Beau Brummel at last fell into—George ring the bell!
The Prince Regent got up, and did so, but when the servant came, he said, ‘Mr.
Brummel’s carriage!’

In this way friends may be lost through our own fault, any breach of fidelity, or
ingratitude also imperils us. The Latins felt this strongly,

Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris.

Say ungrateful, and you’ve said everything.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)
Eaten bread should not be forgotten.

Every gracious man is also a grateful man.

But there are also cases in which friends are lost undeservedly. Not that they are of the best sort, but

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still, we miss them. 'Nature abhors a vacuum.' I mean 'fair weather friends:' of such the saying is,

While the pot boils, friendship blooms.

In time of prosperity friends will be plenty;

In time of adversity one out of twenty.

"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour;
But the rich hath many friends."

Prov. xiv, 20.

Great friends are not always gracious.

Dante tells, most feelingly

how salt another's bread is, and the toil

Of going up and down another's stairs.

While again true friends are not always judicious, 'more plain than pleasant' is often the mental verdict after an interview with one of those very honest people, who think they prove their friendship by saying rude things. Judiciously to reprove is perhaps the height of friendship.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

Prov. xxvii, 6.

But then he will not be always making them. Really the expostulation of the poet is sometimes quite required.

It might have been well to dissemble your love,

But why did you kick me down stairs?

while Canning has thus forcibly deprecated the plain speaking infliction,

But, of all ills, just Heaven, thy wrath can send
Save me, oh save me, from a candid friend!

We are next reminded that care must be taken in the choosing of friends, and to see that they are trustworthy.

Trust not a new friend, nor an old enemy.

—————
You must eat a peck of salt with a man before you know him.

—————
An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse.—*Gay*.

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The Italian speaks very feelingly on this subject

*Di chi mi fido guardarmi, Dio,
Di chi non mi fido guardero io!*

‘Gainst those I trust, Good Lord! defence provide,
I’ll guard myself ‘gainst all the world beside!
also they warn

Noscitur a sociis.

—————
A man is known by the company he keeps.

*Dimmi, con chi tu vai,
Ti diro chè tu sai.*

Only say with whom you go,
All about you then I know.

—————
Keep bad men company and you’ll soon be of their number.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Who friendship with a knave has made
Is judged a partner in the trade.—*Gay*.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
Thinks who endures a knave is half a knave,
Save just at dinner, then prefers, no doubt,
A rogue with venison to a saint without.—*Pope*.

Canning has well ridiculed the gushing school of sentiment and intimacies founded on a few hours' acquaintance.

'A sudden thought strikes me, let us swear eternal friendship!'

'Tarry a little,'
the famous Lord Bacon used to say,

'That we may speed the more.'

Indeed, as the ingenious Mrs. Malaprop observes, though she is discoursing on a tenderer form of friendship,

'My dear, it's best to begin with a little aversion.—*The Rivals*.

Un peu d' absence fait beaucoup de bien.

A little absence does a great deal of good.

Many friends no friend.

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A poet not much known, has well described friend ship as it should be—

He that is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need:
If thou sorrow he will weep;
If thou wake he cannot sleep;
Thus, of every grief in heart
He with thee doth bear a part:
These are certain signs to know,

Faithful friend from flattering foe.—*Barnfield*.

Also the poet Cowper, the great authority on this subject, pays a very graceful compliment to one of his friends in this epilogue.

Once on a time, an emperor, a wise man,
No matter where, in China or Japan,
Decreed that whosoever should offend
Against the well known duties of a friend,
Convicted once, should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare,
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was nought within, and all found out.
Could such a law, as that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple State,
Some few, that I have known in days of old,
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold!

He then concludes with a charming apostrophe to Joseph Hill, of Wargrave Hill, to whom the rhyming epistle was first written,

While you, my friend, what ever wind should blow,
Might traverse England safely to and fro',
A good, kind man, close buttoned to the skin,
Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within!

Again we conclude with a reference to the source of all perfections.

“A man that hath friends must show himself friendly,
And there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”

Prov. xviii, 24.

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MONEY MAXIMS.

I don't mean only about making money, though plenty of bad advice is abroad on that subject. Mine shall not only be for, but against. As almost the worst of the former take the instance of that evil old father in Horace. 'Keep getting' he says, some

how!

—*rem*

Si possis recte; si non quocungue modo rem!

Get! honestly if you can, if you cant, why then somehow!

Some of our modern principles, if Tennyson has correctly portrayed his Northern Farmer, although less heathenish, are hardly more elevated. A father is advising his son to throw over a penniless lass, and seek—

Them as has munny has all—Wot's beauty? the flower as blows,
But propuppy, propuppy sticks, an' propuppy, propuppy grows!

L'Amour fait beaucoup, mais l'argent fait tout,
the French say; a horrid sentiment, but with too much of truth in it. We paraphrase, and improve, I think,

Gold goes in at every gate except Heaven's.

In the Latin we find

Auro loquente inest omnis oratio.—*Greg. Naz.*

which may also be paraphrased, and perhaps best after this fashion.

The irrisistible rustle of a bank note!

Gold dust blinds all eyes.

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What makes all kinds of reasoning clear?

About five hundred pounds a year!

And all seem black was white before?

Why something like five hundred more?

Those are evil days, in which it is held as a true maxim that

'Every man has his price'

Proverbs seem deeply embued with this belief.

No lock will hold

'Gainst the power of gold.

The Greeks said on this subject,

Money makes the man.

Money makes the mare to go

Whether she has legs or no.

To which there is somewhere a very admirable answer.

Worth makes the man, and want of worth the fellar,

The rest is nought but broad cloth and prunella.

In certain instances ‘proputty’ ought to have its weight; the mistake is in supposing that it weighs so much—

For example, it is a true saying.

When two ride together one must ride behind,
and, who that is, another saying shows—coming down to us evidently from the days of double horses,

He who hires the horse must ride before.

He who pays the piper may order the tune.

What keep a dog and bark myself?

is a reasonable enquiry.

People who ‘pay their money,’ have also a right to ‘take their choice!’

Our American cousins talk of the ‘almighty dollar,’ but there is a very apt answer.

Money is not almighty.

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a fact which its worshippers have brought home to them sooner or later. In times of trouble it is often found that the less a man has of it the better for him.

Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.

They laugh the loudest who have least to lose.

Often in each and every way it is a trouble.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

They who have money
Are troubled about it,
And they who have none
Are troubled without it!

With regard to getting it these are words of wisdom,
Money is easier made than made use of.

Gear is easier gained than guided.—*Scotch*.

A fool may make money, but it takes a wise man to spend it.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

There is high authority against 'hasting to be rich,' and the Spaniards have enlarged on the idea after their fashion,

He who would get rich in a year, gets hanged in half a year.

While the Italians warn

Mai divento grande fiume che non v' intrasse aqua torbida.

A river never becomes great without taking into it a deal of dirty water.

A Jewish writer thus warns in Ecclesiasticus,

As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones;
So doth sin stick close between buying and selling.

For

Gold may be bought too dear.

All is not gain that is put into the purse.

There is a blessing on active industry,

A nimble nine pence is better than a slow shilling.

But also

An honest shilling is better than a knavish sovereign.—*Surrey*.

De male quaesitis vix gaudet tertius heres.

Ill gotten gear

Wilna enrich the third heir.

On the other hand, and how excellently,

He is rich enough who wants nothing.

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough.—*Shakespear.*

Few desires, happy life.

Pochi quattrini, pochi pensieri.

Little wealth, little woe.

Gran casa, gran croce.

A big place,

An anxious face.

Enough is as good as a feast.

Quo non opus est, asse carum est.

What we dont want is always dear.

At a great pennyworth pause.

Many are ruined by bargains.

many things are

“Bought because they might be wanted,

Wanted because they might be bought.”

Again proverbs warn us

Money borrowed

Is soon sorrowed.

Would you know what money is, go borrow some.

He that goes a borrowing
Goes a sorrowing.

Give a shilling sooner than lend half a crown.

Credit keeps the crown of the causeway.

And so the old Scotch song,

When I hae sax pence under my thumb,

Then I get credit in ilka town;

But when I hae naething they bid me gang by,

Hech! Poverty parts gude company!

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Out of debt out of danger.

Pay as you go,
And, what you have, you know.

Short reckonings make long friends.

Better go to bed supperless than run into debt.

In this connection Economy has many an encomium.

Parsimonia magnum vectigal.

Economy is a good income.

A shilling saved is a shilling gained.

Waste not want not.

But there are some

‘Penny wise and Pound foolish.’

They

‘Spare at the spiggot,’ and let run out at the bung hole.’

Or, as an indignant old family servant observed to me of a young couple, whom she had long oppressed, and who had at last mustered up courage to dismiss her on the plea of economy,

There are people, who save candles’ ends, and throw away whole candles!

Economy and industry are good ways of getting but there is still a better.

Gifts to the poor
Increase the store.

Earn all you can,
Save all you can,
Give all you can!

Giving to God is no loss.

The pockets of the poor are a safe bank.

“There is that scattereth, and yet increases,
And there is that withholdeth more than is meet,
But it tendeth to poverty.”

Prov. xi, 24.

[104]

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS.

Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth, according to the Church of Rome, are the Seven; and, following this order, it will be found that each has become the centre of a forcible and very useful circle of sayings.

Pride begins, which we are warned against.

Fly pride,

says the peacock.

However this is rather too much like

Satan reproving sin.

It reminds of that other maxim, which does such little credit to the users,

Do as I say, and not as I do.

Good reasons, why we should 'fly pride' are given;

"Pride goeth before destruction."

Prov. xvi, 18.

Pinnacles of the temple are slippery places.

The topmost branch is not the safest perch.

He that will not be counselled cannot be helped.

If wilful will to water, wilful must be drowned.

None are so wise as those who know nothing.

all pastors are alike

To wandering sheep, resolved to follow none.—*Cowper*.

Of all speculations the market holds forth,
The best that I know for a lover of pelf,
Were to buy Balbus up at the price he is worth,
And sell him—at that which he sets on himself!

"See'st thou a man wise in his own conceit?"

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

There is more hope of a fool than of him!”

Prov. xxvi, 13.

Pride’s opposite is that much commended virtue Humility.

Like too many others, oftentimes,

Laudator et alget!

It is praised and passed over.

But

“Before honour is humility.”

Prov. xv, 33.

‘The trees bow in the wind!’
and thus avoid uprooting.

The Humble escape multitudes of mortifications which the pushing and arrogant are constantly incurring; exceedingly sensitive people, which mostly means very proud, are exceedingly unpleasant people; while the easy going and amiable are welcome every where.

The wind, which smites the mountain, blows
More softly o’er the open wold:
And gently comes the world to those
That are set in gentle mould.

But there must be no pretence about it. Dickens has well gibbeted ‘umbleness’ in Uriah Heap and his writhings. Self respect should be co-extensive with humble mindedness. The lazy world often takes a man at his own appraising. This idea seems to have struck two different minds simultaneously. And why not? For what are these sayings but,

‘The wisdom of many and the wit of one.’

‘What oft was thought before, but ne’er so well expressed.’

Well, here is exactly the same idea under two different aspects.

Dont make yourself a mouse or the cat will eat you.

If you make yourself chaff the cows will eat you.—Arab.
or again, as is that highly practical maxim from Billingsgate

It's folly to cry 'stinking fish.'

Thus far there may seem a kind of opening for an exception. But not so with this other rule.

Never grease a fat sow, nor praise a proud person.

Praise undeserved is satire in disguise.

Therefore

Beware of the net of the flatterer.

which we may vary,

'There are that kiss and kill,'

Say the cautious Italians, those supreme students of human nature;

Chi vi caressa piu che suole,

O ingannar vi ha, o ingannar vi vuole.

Whose manner is so over sweet

Has cheated, or intends to cheat.

It is proverbially easy to praise the Athenians at Athens.—*Times*.

Second on the list stands Covetousness, with regard to which Matthew Henry mournfully remarks,

"All seek their own," and very many more than their own!

'The dust alone'

quoth Araby

'Can fill the eye of man!'

To which Scotland rejoins with as much point, if less poetry.

He'll get enough ae day, when his mou's full o' mools.

Is there any school boy, as Macaulay used to ask, ignorant of that Latin adage,

Crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit?

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The love of money increases quite as fast as the coin.

Poverty wants somethings, luxury many, but avarice all.—

Cowley.

Avarice? why that other word ‘miser’ tells its own tale! A miserable man! The more he has, the more he wants! He lives unloved, and he dies unlamented.

Selfishness in this shape is not least to be execrated. John Ploughman has wittily sketched out such an one’s epitaph.

Here lies a man who did no good;—

And, if he’d lived, he never would;

Where he’s gone, and how he fares,

Nobody asks, for nobody cares.

Lust is the third most unloveable subject.

Serving one’s passions is the sorest slavery.

Foul hands befoul all they touch.

True blue never stains.

“Unto the pure all things are pure;

But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure.”

Titus i, 13.

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”

Matt. v, 8.

Anger stands fourth, respecting which it has been somewhat singularly observed,

Anger improves the appearance of nothing but a cat’s back.

Chain anger lest it hurt thee.—*Hindu.*

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Anger makes a rich man hated, and a poor man scorned.

No foolery like falling out.

Ira brevis furor.

Anger is short madness.

A hasty man never wanted woe.

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A man in a passion is riding a horse that runs away with him.

No one can tell in cold blood what he may do in a passion.

But

It takes two to make a quarrel.

It is the second blow that makes the fray.

Therefore beware! There is no question that some are by nature more irascible than others, the state of the nervous system also may explain a great deal. 'Too much lithic acid in the blood!' As a celebrated Surgeon has suggested in his Philosophical Discussions. But when we know our infirmity we are bound to be on our guard against it; and all ought to know Where to seek help sufficient. Also great allowances are very often to be made for others.

A waiting appetite

Kindles many a spite.

An hungry man an angry man.

It's ill talking between a full man and a fasting.

Lord Lytton puts this well in one of his minor poems.

Panem et Circenses.

Bread and Entertainments,

was the Roman emperors' recipe for keeping the people quiet; the Spaniards say
'Pan y toros'

Man's but a poor weak creature, at best,
Till the fiend in the belly is hushed to rest,
To make a Land happy, contented, and quiet,
The best of all ways is to look after the diet.

or as Mr. Henley said the other day in the House.

When the belly is full the bones are at rest.

Another excellent way to avoid angry quarrels, is to be very ready both to
'forgive and forget.' This has been excellently well played on in a modern distich.

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'Forgive, forget' we're often told
Was found a maxim good of old,
But half the saying's better yet—
Ever forgive, but ne'er forget!

But, to keep closer to the point, this way of quashing quarrels, by forgetting the
injury, is not more christian than philosophical.

'Write injuries in dust, kindnesses in marble.'

As is the epitaph on a certain one,

Some write their wrongs in marble, He, more just
Stooped lowly down, and wrote them in the dust;
There, half effaced from sight he bade them lie,
And grieved they could not scape the Almighty's eye.

Faults are thick when love is thin.

Mr. Moore in one of his sonnets makes a young lady moralise, that

Love is scarce worth the repose it will cost.

Certainly this is pre-eminently true of the momentary gratifying of an angry

impulse. Says an able writer in the Cornhill, putting the matter at any rate in a very novel manner.

‘Why, the taking home to one’s business and bosom of a good sized Quarrel, reminds me of nothing so much as the enforced reception of that famous white Elephant. To maintain a good quarrel with due consideration to every point of time, rightly judging where to plant the sting, where to guard one’s own weak point; to frame our speeches and written sentences with a lawyer’s regard to every construction that may be put upon them: all this takes so much out of a man, usurps so vast a portion of his time and faculties, that &c.’

And then the avoiding, the advising, the other people made uncomfortable—and the post coming in,—and the post going out, and the copying letters!

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If, ‘to err is human, to forgive divine!’

Be assured it is also no less advantageous than excellent, to
“Follow peace with all men.”

Heb. xii, 14.

But, it is a strange and unhappy characteristic of some quarrels, that they, who ought to be the most, are often the least willing to put an end to them,

Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,

But they ne’er pardon who have done the wrong.—*Dryden*.

which sentiment shows, to say the least, a profound knowledge of what may be called the Night side of human nature.

Under such circumstances our only way is to give a wide berth to the fire ship.

Foenum habet in cornu

says Horace,

‘There’s hay on the horn, the beast is vicious!’

and also, an authority infinitely higher

“Make no friendship with an angry man,

And with a furious man thou shalt not go,

Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul!”

Gluttony is the fifth of the stigmatised seven, including Drink, which deserves the very worst that can be said of it.

More have been slain by meat than murder.

“Whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame.”

Phil. iii, 19.

More have been drowned in wine than water.

Where the devil cannot go himself he sends drink.

When the wine is in, the wit is out.

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging;

And whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”

Prov. xx, 1.

[110]

Envy comes sixth, green eyed envy! This is some times spoken of under the name of ‘the evil eye;’ amulets against this are abundantly used in Italy. In the Levant and further East there is the extremest dread of this ‘mal ochio,’ which a peculiar motion of the fingers is often used to disenchant. However this may be, the envious are mostly greater sufferers than the envied.

Curses are like chickens, they come home to roost.

The brighter the moon shines, the more the dogs bark, which does not hurt the moon, though it may get the dogs into trouble. An epigram has thus described one form of it.

Grudge leaves the poor his whole possession nearly,

He means his next of kin shall weep sincerely.

Envy is spoken of in Scripture as the ‘rotteness of the bones;’ more than any other sin it is its own immediate punishment.

“A sound heart is the life of the flesh:
But envy the rotteness of the bones.”

Prov. xiv, 30.

It is however mostly best to deprecate it, and to avoid exciting it as far as may be;

“Wrath is cruel, and anger outrageous:
But who is able to stand before envy?”

Prov. xxvii, 4.

Last of all see Sloth. A stupid looking vice, but with more of mischief in him than is generally admitted. The Church of Rome has not done amiss even in consigning him to such society.

Idle brains are the devil’s workshop.

—
The devil tempts some, but an idle man tempts the devil.

—
An idler is a watch that wants both hands
As useless when it goes, as when it stands.

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Good Dr. Watts remarks in a not unknown connection,
Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

A saying which once met with a most unexpected application; said the Rector’s lady, who took such pains about the sewing class, to lazy Jane, who had been brought up to be spoken to; after other admonitions,—Now, tell me, who is it that finds work for the idle? She was hardly prepared for the immediate, and penitent answer,

Please M’m it’s you!

Again, take this description,

‘Lazy like a pig’s tail, going all day, and doing nothing.’

This saying well expresses the 'strenua inertia,' the active indolence of the restless busy body, who is given to minding every one's business except his own.

But

No pains

No gains.

Naething's got without pains

Save dirt and long nails.

Continued sweeping makes a high heap.

Little strokes

Fell great oaks.

The employment of Piece work, now so general, and necessary, does not set before us a very pleasing side of human nature; but no one who has seen Day-labour dawdling over its work, will be inclined to doubt the advantage, or advisability. A man will work for himself with a heart he does not always seem to have for an employer. And some do not get even thus far; with what solemn, but sharpened irony, does Holy Scripture speak of such an one.

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"The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting."

Prov. xii, 27.

"A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom,

And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again."

Prov. xix, 24.

At the same time, it is to be observed, there may be over activity, as well as the want of it.

Not to mention other instances, both the Captain of a ship, and the Mistress of a family, have been some times known to carry cleanliness and industry to a very extremity of aggravation. The sailors in a certain ship, are said, on one occasion to

have been driven to thus rewriting for themselves the Fourth Commandment.

All the six days thou shalt work and slave as much as thou art able,
On the Seventh holystone the deck, and rub the chain cable!

This extremity is almost equally to be avoided, for manifestly,

‘There is a medium between painting the face and not washing it!’

And the Golden Mean in this, and all else, is the happiest. Activity, however, it must be admitted is the safest side, and also prompt action, for

‘Delays are dangerous.’

While your foot is shod crush the thorn.—*Talmund*.

The remedy of to-morrow is too late for the evil of to-day.

We will close the chapter with the motto of the late Mr. Dallas, a man widely known for good and the great things he accomplished.

‘My father,’ he says made me learn this, ‘and I never forgot it.’

The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them, Folly and Sloth
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and trouble,
And make the impossibilities they fear!

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THE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

The Four Cardinal Virtues are Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude. To these if we add the Three Theological Virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, we have another Seven, forming no unsuitable sequel, or undesirable antidote, to the Seven Sins we have just been considering.

Prudence has placed himself first in the series.

Take Time by the forelock.

is a maxim which none can afford to neglect.

Eile Haste

Mit weile. Makes waste.

Gently does it.

Hurry no man's cattle.

Nothing can be done well unless time enough is allowed for it. Again prudence will profit by the experiences of others.

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

Happy he whom other men's dangers make observant.

"I'll neither meddle nor make!"

said the young cock. He had seen the old cock's neck wrung for taking part with his master, and the hen's for taking part with the dame.

The Scotch caution is characteristic, given to one bent on interfering,

"You'll get your kail thro' the reek."

and have to sup on smoky porridge.

And there are many other such prudential maxims.

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Trust not one night's ice.

Place not all your eggs in one basket.

As is that never to be forgotten Recipe, in Mrs. Glasse's immortal Cookery Book. 'How to make Hare Soup,'

'First catch your hare!'

which has since been enlarged on.

Dont sell the bearskin till you've killed the bear.

Dont count your chickens till the eggs' are hatched.

Never 'holler" till you're out of the wood.

One cant tell what a pie is till the lid is off.

Chi fa conto senza l' oste,

Lo convien fare due volte.

He who reckons without his host will have to reckon over again.

One swallow does not make a Summer,

which last, when lately quoted, was promptly replied to by an enigmatical young lady,

But one grasshopper can make a Spring!

The Spanish warn that

Barefooted men should not tread upon thorns.

Measure an hundred times and cut once.

say the Italians.

He who stumbles twice over the same stone, deserves to
break his shins.

Once bit twice shy.

Improbe Neptunum increpat qui bis naufragium fecit.

He, who his shipwrecked twice over, should not blame the sea.

Prevention is better than cure.

It's no use locking the door when the horse is stolen.

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Safe bind

Safe find.

If things were to be done twice all would be wise.

Experience keeps a dear school but fools learn in no other.

Wit bought
Is better than taught.

The wary Italians hold Prudence in high esteem.

Presto e bene The more haste
Non se conviene. The worse speed.

Chi va piano

Va securo e va lontano.

He who goes softly goes surely, he who goes surely goes far.

Other Prudential maxims are of this nature

It's no use trying to please everybody.

He must rise early that would please everybody.

On ne peut pas contenter tout le monde et son pere.—

La Fontaine.

L aqua cheta rovina la ponte.

It's the still water that ruins the bridge.

The French have the same

Il n'est pire eau que l' eau qui dort.

There is no more dangerous water than the still and deep.

Beware of a silent dog and still water.

what a mine of wisdom is there in that often neglected recommendation.

Make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy.

and again

Half a loaf is better than no bread.

Better is bread with bran

Than no bread to a starving man.—*Biscayan*.

It is an exceeding act of folly to press people too far,

The smallest worm will turn being trodden on.—*Shakespear*.

as that aggravating woman found, that was always declaring

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she should die, when the meek old husband at last remarked, ‘well my dear, I’m sure I wish you fix a day and keep to it!’

This is from the Greek,

Fools, because they know not how often half is better than the whole!

It has also been aptly expressed in our epigram.

A patron’s responding is always so kind,

I starve—and he tells me he’ll ‘keep me in mind.’

Half his promise, in sooth, would my spirits restore;

Let him ‘keep me,’ and faith I will ask for no more!

—————
A little help is worth a great deal of pity

It is very trying when the remittance has dwindled down to ‘unremitting kindness.’

There’s small choice among rotten apples.

—————
When bad’s the best nought must be the choice.

—————
Of two evils choose the least, of two sins, neither!

—————
Guter Sath

Kommt uber Nacht.

A good night’s rest

Will counsel best.

—————
Sleep on it.

The pillow is the best counsellor.

It's mostly as well to have 'two strings to the bow,' a proverb that has come down from our famous English archers' time; to which Dr. Johnson is said to have added.

'And a pebble in your pocket ready to throw at a dog!'

It's good, in every case, you know,

To have two strings unto one's bow.—Churchill.

But over caution may induce needless suspicion, hence Proverbs remind us

All are not thieves that dogs bark at.

'I smell a rat' cried the Hibernian orator, 'but I'll

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nip it in the bud;' and it appeared that he had only found out 'a mare's nest' after all,

Omne ignotum pro magnifico.

All the unknown is by way of being magnified.

But

Every spot is not the leprosy.

Temperance is next to prudence. 'Sweet sister Temperance' as Edward the VIth used to call Elizabeth.

Ne quid nimis.

"Not too much"

even of a good thing.

Dont overdo!

In word and deed, in manners and in dress,

Be ever modest, and avoid excess.—*Pope.*

There's moderation in all things.

You may choke a dog with pudding.

Licitis perimus omnes.

We are undone by over doings.

It's hard to carry a full cup without spilling.

Let not the window be so painted as to shut out the light.—

Baxter.

But

Do not put out the candle because of the snuff.

Dont cut off your nose to spite your face.

What cant be cured

Must be endured.

under this heading would come also proverbs relating to Temperance of Living

After dinner sit awhile

After supper walk a mile.

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“Be not among wine bibbers;

Among riotous eaters of flesh.”

Prov. xxiii, 20.

“When thou sittest to eat with a ruler,

Consider diligently what is before thee,

And put a knife to thy throat

If thou be a man given to appetite.”

Prov. xxiii, 1, 2.

This idea seems adopted in those remarkable proxy marriages, where the ambassador

weds a queen

With the nice surety of a sword between.

Justice succeeds to Temperance. It shall be with that grand old sentiment,

Fiat justitia ruat coelum.

Let justice be done tho' the sky be brought down!

Amicus Plato, amicus Aristoteles, sed magis amica veritas.

which Mr. Sterne thus renders.

So and so is my friend, but Truth is my sister.

Truth is a very important part of justice.

“We can never “render to all their due,” unless they get Truth from us. Truth is a debt which we owe to all men.

“Speak every man Truth with his neighbour.”

Ephes. iv, 23.

Truth may be blamed

But shall never be shamed.

Not that it has always justice done it at first.

Truth has a scratched face.

Truth lies in a well.

O what a tangled web we weave

When first we practice to deceive.—*Marmion.*

Dare to be true, nothing can need a lie

A fault which needs it most grows two thereby.—*Geo. Herbert.*

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He, who will speak the truth, should have one foot in the stirrup—

Turkish.

which is something like the plan that has been suggested to judges at Rose Shows, Poultry Shows and the like; namely to ‘get through their work as quickly as possible, and then go off by the next train!’

But Truth and Oil always come to the surface at last.

Truth is the daughter of Time.

Magna est veritas et praevalabit.

Great is Truth, and it will conquer at last!

All that is truth, however, is not to be always telling.

Children and fools tell all they know.—*German.*

Mental reservation is one thing, and most objectionable; a prudent reticence is quite another.

It is not every question that deserves answer.

As a very charming lady friend of mine once observed

Speak the truth always, but do not always speak the truth.

Nor again, is saying disagreeable things to our neighbours, a manner of speaking the truth which is at all to be commended. Some people speak the truth after a fashion, which at once suggests the legal warning

The greater truth the greater libel.

Their idea of truth is much on a par with those others’ idea of justice; who say their say, and relieve their mind, and then immediately beg that they may not hear a word further; but if

Tu pulsas, ego vapulor tantum, ubi rixa?

If you are to do all the beating, and I all the bearing, dont call that a fair fight!

It reminds of that guest, who in the old hard drinking days, was actually pursued into his bed chamber with the bottle. ‘Sir,’ he gasped out, at last, to his

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host and the boon companions, ‘Sir’ ‘ your hospitality borders on brutality!’

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Truthfulness of this kind is near a kin to tyranny!

One thing more in respect of Justice, Proverbs bid

Audi alteram partem. Hear both sides.

Unless we keep to this rule we shall often be doing great injustice.

There are two sides to every story.

A thousand probabilities do not make one truth.

Summum jus summa injuria.

Extreme right may be extreme wrong.

Two wrongs will not make one right.

Speak of a man as you find him.

One tale is good until another tale is told.
Frequently very little longer.

“He that is first in his cause seemeth just;
But his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.”

Prov. xviii, 17.

Fortitude is the fourth Cardinal Virtue. We are told in three languages.

Nocumentum

Documentum.

Trouble teaches!

No land without stones

Or meat without bones.

A rough diamond is better than a smooth flint.

Though the bird's in the net

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

It will get away yet.

Though I'm down in the dust

Yet in God will I trust.—*John Ploughman*.

Crosses are ladders that lead to heaven.

As they used to say in the old Pack horse days.

Every horse thinks its own pack the heaviest.

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But, 'Patience is a virtue.' Indeed, 'the virtue.' Only, dont try that of other people too far.

Patience is a good nag but she'll bolt.

Il mando e di chi che ha pazienza.

The world is his who knows how to wait for it.

Col pazienza e la pallia ci maturano le nespole.

With patience and packing even medlars are made eatable.

You need not be a horse because you were born in a stable.

Wait for the turn of the tide.

It's a long lane that has no turning.

Qui vivra verra.

If you live you'll learn.

'Time and myself against any two.'—*Philip 2nd*.

What can escape Time's all destroying hand?

Where's Troy? and where's the Maypole in the Strand?—

Pope.

Better a sma bush than nae bield.

—————
If the kirk be ower big just sing mass in the choir.—*W. Scott.*

The camel wanted horns and they took away his ears.—

Talmud.

In all such instances 'Grin and bear it,' may be grim, but it is true philosophy.
As an old moralist remarks,

Our way lies through a Vale of Tears, and we must get
used to the climate.

—————
Use is second nature.

—————
The back is made for the burden.

—————
The curst cow has the crumpled horn.

—————
'Bear and forbear!' thus preach the ancient sages,
And, in two words, contain the sense of pages.
With patience bear Life's certain ills, and oh!
Forbear those deeds which threaten future woe!

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But

A broken leg is not healed by a silk stocking.

—————
Pity's a poor plaster.

—————
Pity without relief
Is like mustard without beef.

The Prussians have a proverb, which, certainly, of late they have abundantly verified;

When you're anvil hold you still,
When you're hammer strike your will.

It's no use barking when you can't bite.

To which we may add,

And it's still less use biting at any time.

The Lex talionis, the Law of Revenge, fully worked out, can only end, as it has among savages, with an actual edition of those two famous Kilkenny cats, when nobody is left on either side to avenge himself. That alone which is right is alone expedient.

“Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me:

I will render to the man according to his work.”

Prov. xxiv, 29.

“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Rom. xii, 19.

Another branch of Fortitude is firmness. And Firmness in its right place. Fortitude in a good cause is obstinacy in a bad. The two qualities have been thus defined. Firmness, a strong will—Obstinacy, a strong wont.

Causa non poena martyrem facit.

It is the cause, not the cross, that makes the martyr.

The old meaning of Virtue is literally Manliness, calm courage and endurance. Courage was what the ancients accounted man's chief virtue, even as unsullied chastity is that of woman. Now, true Courage is ever sustained by fortitude, while hasty rashness will often times show the white feather,

Ne tentes out perfice.

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Woe to the coward, that ever was born,
Who drew not the sword, before sounding the horn!

Before bidding defiance it is wise, and not less courageous, to be careful that we have put ourselves in an attitude of defence. The same may be said of exercising rule, and guiding others; a firm though sharp rule is preferred by all to a hesitating; to show timidity is to invite aggression. Aaron Hill's famous lines on the Nettle well explain this.

Tender handed touch a nettle,
It will sting you for your pains;
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains!
'Tis the same with common natures,
Use them gently—they rebel:
Be as rough as nutmeg graters—
And the rogues will serve you well.—*Aaron Hill.*

Dryden has given very much the same kind of advice to rulers.

Subjects are stiff necked animals, they soon
Feel slackened rein, and throw the rider down.

Finally in respect of this same Endurance, proverbs admonish
Weeping must not hinder worship.

We are also reminded that its amount cannot always be estimated by outward demonstration.

The loudest grief is not the longest.

A blating cow soonest forgets her calf.

The noisiest grief speaks not the deepest wound,
'Tis shallow rivers run with loudest sound.

There's no grief like the grief that does not speak.

We have now arrived at the Three Theological Virtues. In respect of these it is ours but to lightly skim the surface. We are near Holy Ground, upon which to enter is rather the province of theology.

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Howbeit even these have their somewhat sarcastic and proverbial aspect.

Quid est Fides? Quod non vides!

Quid est Spes? Vana res!

Quid est caritas! Magna raritas!

Faith is the first of the three. With regard to the want of which it has been said forcibly,

An Atheist is got one point beyond the devil.

“The devils believe and tremble.” But even as “There is none good but One,” so also only One is to be implicitly trusted. It may seem a bitter satire, but it is certainly a true saying.

In this world we are saved by want of faith.—*Ld. Halifax.*

Fronti nulla fides.

which is paraphrased

Appearances are deceitful.

All is not gold that glitters.

Believe half what you see, and nothing that you hear.

Yet, notwithstanding this,

Better be deceived than deceiver.

Better sometimes sorry than always suspicious.

No doubt the pleasure is as great

In being cheated as to cheat.

And lookers on are most intent

When least they know what thing is meant.—*Hudibras.*

Hope has the next place. Here on earth, many times

Hope comes halting home.

Fallitur augurio spes bona saepe suo.

The seemingly good hope is misled by its very hopefulness.

The poet Young has spoken very despondingly;

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Lean not on earth, 'twill pierce thee to the heart,

A broken reed at best, but oft a spear;

On its sharp point peace bleeds and Hope expires!

It is true, 'Every cloud has a silver lining,' but then it has a great deal in it besides.

What remedy's best for a bootless bale?

She answered, Endless weeping!

For the mother knew that her only son

In the Strid's dark depths was sleeping.—*Rogers.*

But how often

When bale is hext

Boot is next.

As the Spanish turnspit consoled himself,

The largest leg of mutton must get done at last.

God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

says Mr. Sterne; a grand piece of sentiment, but not the Scripture, it is often supposed to be. It was a beautiful thought of the Greeks, in their old time mythus, to leave Hope at the bottom of the box of Pandora.

Look to the light,

All will be right.

Morning is ever the daughter of night,

All that was dark shall be all that is bright.

The Italians think women more hopeful than men,

La Speranza è feminina.

Again

La Speranza è il pan dei poveri.

Hope is the poor man's daily bread.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast.

As a modern poet has sweetly sung

Hope that lives

On what God gives

Is Christian Hope, well founded!

Cum duplicantur lateres venit Moyses.

When the tale of bricks is doubled Moses appears.

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Such was one proverb generated by a hope in God that had good foundation.
And there is another still earlier.

“Jehovah jirah!”

“The Lord will provide.”

“In the mount the Lord shall be seen.”

Gen. xxii, 14.

Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

Hope we have as an anchor of the soul.

Heb. vi, 19.

And now we come to Charity, with its two fold acceptance, through our, in this instance, English poverty of language. *Caritas* is love—a loving heart, and what that leads to; saying and doing, not saying and not doing, according as God may be most honoured and man best advantaged.

Charity gives out at the door, and God puts in at the window.

Bis dat qui cito dat.

He gives twice who gives quick.

Dat bene, dat multum,

Qui dat cum munere vultum.

Much and good he doth impart

Who giveth with a loving heart.

Giving to God is no loss.

Sown corn is not lost.

Never try to save God's money.

Better feed five drones than starve one bee.

but still

Indiscriminate charity is the bane of society.

Thus much of the ordinary acceptation of Charity. It also implies all that kindness of principle from which such acts flow.

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Kindness is conquering.

Col miel e nom col' aceto si pigliano le mosche.

A drop of honey will catch more flies than a pint of vinegar.

Frightening a bird's not the way to catch it.

Love rules his kingdom without a sword.

“Charity suffereth long and is kind.”

I Cor. xiii, 4.

To quote all St. Paul’s encomiums would be to copy out the whole chapter. It were well that all had it at heart, and by heart, that wonderful extolling and exhibiting of “the greatest of these, Charity!” All that is noble, all that is loveable, all that is truly excellent, is contained in this word.

“GOD IS LOVE.”

Why speak further?

But to return to things on a lower level, observe this too, its Humility; without condoning vice, the tender, humble compassion with which Charity seeks out, and would reclaim the wanderer.

“Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

Gal. vi, 1.

Aut sumus, aut fuimus, vel possumus esse quod hic est.

That which is he,

We are, or were, or we might be!

As the good old Puritan used to say, so often as he saw a man lead off to execution; a thing, unhappily, but too common in his day—

But for the grace of God, there goes John Bradford!

“Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”

I Peter iv, 8.

But not of a man’s own. This perversion I shall have to deal with in another place. It might be very convenient but it is not possible to

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compound for sins, that we’re inclined to,

By shunning those that we’ve no mind to.

or after some misdeed by seeking to balance it by an imagined good deed. This is what some of those unpleasant old robber chiefs seem to have attempted; after murdering and plundering all their life time, they would try to make it all right by founding a

church or a monastery; some even sought for salvation by putting on the garments of a friar to die in.

who to be sure of Paradise
Dying, put on the robes of Dominick,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised.—*Milton*.

Too often they appear to have been encouraged in this absurdity. It has been said well and bitterly, With most men,

Success covers more sins than charity.

True charity will not undertake to be liberal either with ill gotten, or with other people's money. That gentleman's conduct is not to be improved into a precedent, who was so much affected with the pleadings of the preacher, that he emptied the whole of his neighbour's pocket into the plate!

Ancho is charitable all must own,
He steals a pig and gives the poor the bone.—*Biscayan*.

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REFUGIUM PROVERBIALE.

A valued friend of mine, of well known fame in the scientific world, among other valuable publications has edited a 'Refuge list for plants not otherwise classified.' I propose to make this chapter something of the same kind for proverbs.

Honesty, Content, Industry and Politeness are every bit as cardinal as any of those which the Church of Rome has canonized.

Honesty, then, let us begin with.

Honesty is the best policy.

Linea recta brevissima.

as is M. Guizot's well chosen and very excellent motto;

The shortest line's the straightest 'twixt two points.—

Ld. Lytton.

But it must not be

Honest as the cat when the milk's away.

For

He that steals an egg would steal an ox.

To hold the bag is as bad as to fill it.

It is a sin

To steal a pin.

as we, all of us, used to be informed in the nursery.

Our modern poets have very properly stigmatized the way in which great fishes are often allowed to break through meshes, by which smaller offenders are infallibly caught.

‘Tis mean to rob a hen roost, or a hen,
But stealing thousands makes us gentlemen!

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To steal for pence is dastardly and mean;
To rob for millions with a soul serene
Soils not the fingers: all success is clean!

The rogues who steal a pound are willing
They should be hanged who steal a shilling.—*Biscayan*.

Steal a pin, in chains be bound,
Steal a kingdom, and be crowned.—*Biscayan*.

(translated by Sir John Bowring.)

After Honesty, Content claims our notice.

Few desires, happy life.

Chi sta bene non ci muove.

which we may interpret by two English sayings.

Sit in your place and none will make you rise.

but

Striving to better oft we mar what's well.—*King Lear*.

—————
A bird can roost upon but one branch.

—————
A mouse can drink but his fill at a river.

—————
It is not the great cage that makes the bird sing.

—————
All flesh is not Venison;
and dont expect it to be such!

Every branch of a tree is not a top branch.

—————
We cant all be top sawyers.

La bottega da

Del vin che ha.

—————
We must take what we can get.

—————
As well a newt might make complaint
Because a nightingale it aint!

—————
You cant make cheese out of chalk.

—————
He is rich enough that wants nothing.

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They who cannot have what they like
says that wisest of all French proverbs,

Should learn to like what they have.—*Times*.

“You may go further” my Lord, “and fare worse,”
a witty priest said to the Bishop of Derry, who was questioning the fact of Purgatory.

Other sayings are

Better sma fish than nane.

Make the best of it.

Always take things by the smooth handle.

What cant be cured
Must be endured.

And dont meet evils half way.

If evils come not then our fears are vain,
And, if they come, fears but augment the pain.—*Sir T. More.*

Two things you won't fret at, if you're a wise man,
The things you cant help—and the things that you can!—

a rule which does not leave much for Discontent to fasten on. Very much to the same effect writes the amusing author of *Dr. Syntax*.

That man, I trow, is doubly curst,
Who of the best doth make the worst:
And he, I'm sure, is doubly blest
Who of the worst can make the best:
To sit, and sorrow, and complain
Is adding folly to our pain!

Some one else has written in a similar strain.

For every evil under the sun
There is a remedy—or there's none,
If there is one, try and find it!
If there is not, never mind it!

Other wise saws to the same effect are as follows—

It's no use crying over spilled milk.

Omelettes are not made without breaking of eggs.—*Robespierre.*

Revolutions are not made with rose water.

Every man must row with such oars as he has.

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Let Hercules do what he may,
The cat will mew, the dog will have his day.—*Hamlet*.

A watched pot never boils.

Crooked logs make straight fires.

A black hen can lay a white egg.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.—*Dickens*.

It's a poor heart that never rejoices.

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough.—*Othello*.

It must indeed be an extreme case, if,

‘There's ne'er a best among them, as the feller said of the
fox cubs.’

Some people's discontent is most unreasonable.

You cant take it out both in meal and in malt.

You cant eat your cake and have it.

You cant get butter out of a dog's mouth.

On ne peut pas sonner les cloches, et aller à la procession.

One cant both ring the bell and walk in the procession.

Neither is it very creditable to

Run with the hare, and hold with the hounds.

—————
To howl with the wolves, and herd with the sheep.

—————
'Live and let live,

is a widely extending maxim.

Just experience tells in every soil,

That they who think must govern those who toil,

And all that Freedom's highest art can reach,

Is but to lay proportioned load on each.

At the same time we must remember

He that is warm thinks all are so.

It is no credit to bear well the misfortunes of other people. So it is said of some people, very meek till something touches them, but then

'tis overboard

With law and gospel when their ox is gored!

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The Talmud gives an excellent reason for contentment, and for not expecting very much on our journey through this life.

This world is like a wayside inn, but the world to come is
the real home—

a sentiment which has been enlarged on by another writer, who seems to have been somewhat unfortunate in his company.

This world is like an inn, for there

Men call, and storm, and drink and swear:

While undisturbed a Christian waits,

And reads, and prays, and meditates.

Dryden is more moderate

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Like pilgrims to the appointed place we tend,
This world's an inn, and death the journey's end.

Life would be tolerable but for its pleasures.—*Sir G. C. Lewis.*
Industry was to be our third centre of sayings.
No one need be ashamed of honest work.

Better black hands than no bread.

It's not work that kills men, it's worry.

Laboremus. Let us be doing!
was the favourite motto of the Emperor Severus.
Laborare est orare.
Work is worship.
Pray to God devoutly,
Hammer away stoutly.

The Achaeans got to Troy, there's no denying,
All things are done, as they did that; by trying!—*Theocritus.*

The third time is never like the rest.

Unlooked for often comes.

Di facientes adjuvant.
God helps those who help themselves.

He who waits for another man's shoes will long go bare foot.

He who waits for another's trencher will eat a cold meal.—*Span.*

—————
No pains

No gains.
—————

He that would catch fish must not mind getting wet.

—————
He that by the plough would thrive

Himself must either hold or drive.

'Stripes,' as the young lady put outside the letter in which a refusal was sent to her lover. He read it 'Persist!' and he read it right,

Fit laborando faber.

Practice makes perfect.

It was a grand characteristic of the first Caesar.

Nil actum reputans dum quid superesset agendum.

Counting nothing as done, so long as ought remained undone.

And no less grand that regret of Adrian

Perdidi diem!

I have passed a day without doing good!

—————
Well begun

Is half done.

But

It's the master's eye make the horse fat.

—————
If you wish a thing done, go yourself; if not, send!

And do it at once.

Strike while the iron is hot.

—————
New brooms sweep clean.
—————

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Ein Heute ist besser als zehn Morgen.

One To-day is better than ten To-morrows.

Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.—

Merry Wives of Windsor.

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They that wash on Monday have all the week to dry;

They that wash on Tuesday are not much awry;

They that wash on Wednesday there's no need to blame;

They that wash on Thursday wash for shame;

They that wash on Friday wash for need;

They that wash on Saturday—oh they are sluts indeed!

The virtues of Early Rising, in the service and furtherance of Industry, are widely known, and cannot be too widely celebrated; we will now example some of these.

Aurora musis amica.

Morning is the best time for study.

Morgen Stunde

Hat Gold im Munde.

The morning hour

Gold doth shower.

An hour in the morning is worth two afterwards.

Six hours of sleep the human frame requires;

Hard students may to seven incline;

To eight the man whom toil or trouble tires,

But lazy folks will all have nine.

The 'Four Eights' as a working man's toast is spreading widely; and, it is said, is

pretty certain to be made before long a very general stipulation. How far these will conduce to Industry and Income may perhaps reasonably be doubted.

Eight hours sleep, eight hours play,
Eight hours work, and eight shillings a day!

But until the Golden Goose, Capital, has been killed, or half murdered, it is to be feared that, by too many, the fallacy will not be recognised. If

All work and no play
Makes Jack a dull boy.

All play and no work
Gives Tom a ragged shirt.

The answer that the grasshopper got should be remembered. 'But what did you do in the summer' said

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the ant to the starving grasshopper? 'Oh I sang in the summer!' 'Then dance in the winter!'

Our ancestors were 'early birds' indeed compared with what we are, and the adoption of one of their Time Tables now would surprise people.

To rise at five,
And dine at nine;
To sup at five
And bed at nine
Will make a man
Live ninety nine.

The French appear to have had almost exactly the same saying

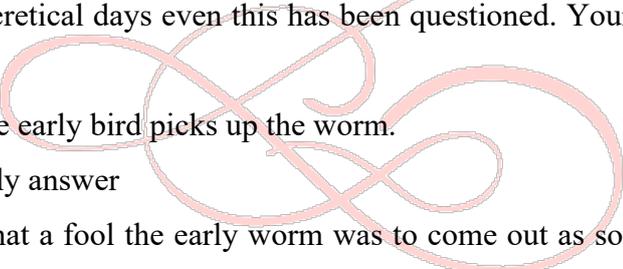
*Lever à six, diner à dix,
Semper à six, coucher à dix
Fait vivre l' homme dix fois dix.*

These hours are certainly somewhat primitive, and remind of the country parson who came up to Town for important business with his bishop. He had been asked to

pass the night at the palace; and, on arriving about four was ushered into the drawing room. Presently the five o'clock tea was brought in; he was invited to join the ladies, and partook with them of a frugal repast; not without some surprise at the thinness and short supply of the bread and butter. He felt that a bishop should be "a lover of hospitality." Still it was not for him to make remarks. At half past seven bed room candles arrived. He thought it rather early, but as every one else retired of course did so also; much grieved at family prayer being thus strangely neglected. At half past eight he was roused out of his first sleep by the butler's announcing that dinner was on the table, and his lordship was quite tired of waiting!

Everybody used to admit that Early Rising was an essential.

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VNI^UERSITAS
STVDII
SALAMANTI^{NI}


He that would thrive

Must rise at five:

He that has thriven

May lie till seven.

But in these heretical days even this has been questioned. Young people used to be admonished that

The early bird picks up the worm.

They now pertly answer

What a fool the early worm was to come out as soon, and
get picked up!

This however is an instance of too hasty generalization. On enquiry it will be found to have been the late worm, and not the early, the worm who would 'not go home till morning,' that got picked up; which makes our moral still more admirable.

There is an old Scotch song, however, in which the case of the defendant is put very well; and evidently by one who has an interest in the pleadings.

Up in the morning's nae for me,

Up in the morning early,

No fate can be worse in winter time

Than to rise in the morning early!

A cozy house, and canty wife,
Keeps aye a body cheerly:
And pantry, stored with meat and maut,
It answers unco rarely.

But up in the morning, nae, nae, nae,
Up m the morning early!
The gowansi¹ maun glent² on bank an' brae
Ere I rise in the morning early!

Returning as the French say 'à nos moutons,' to the subject of self-help more immediately we have this concise advice.

Self do, self have!

Longfellow's Miles Standish gives an excellent rhythmical version of this sentiment.

¹ daisies. ² glisten.

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That's what I always say, if you wish a thing to be done well,
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it for others!

Though he proceeds to supply a most whimsical application, by wooing the young lady through his secretary, who—wins her! 'Why dont you speak for yourself, John?' being the reply to rather halting and elaborate advocacy.

Another incentive to Industry admonishes,

A rolling stone gathers no moss.

Though this has its answer in a proverb for the Dorking neighbourhood,

A sitting hen loses her breast feathers!

As an instance of another, equally true, and equally well answered, I may quote

Ills weed grow apace.

To which the long lad, who was intended to be galled by it, replied on the instant

Good rye

Grows high.

Lastly comes the caution, Beware of lost opportunities.

The mill cannot grind with water that is past.

Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well.

The night cometh when no man can work.

John ix, 4.

Politeness shall be the last of those admitted to the Refuge.

Handsome is that handsome does.

‘Manners makyth man,’

Quoth William of Wykeham.

as is the admired motto of a well known Family.

‘Behaviour’ contains every one of the vowels, and much more. A man without manners is a partially

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civilized savage; a woman would be something worse; only happily such a spectacle is very seldom met with.

‘Be ready with your bonnet, and slow with your purse!’

the Scotch say, which is, perhaps, going a little too far; but certainly

Good words cost little and are worth much.

and it is the same with good manners.

Here it is that Christianity shines through with such lustre. The rude uncultured clown will become a perfect gentleman in feeling and even manner, when once he has been brought under the refining influences of real religion. Whereas, if devoid of principle, very fine gentleman may be found doing very ungentlemanly things.

‘*Grattez le Russe*’

the French say somewhat unkindly,

Et vous trouverez le Tartare!

Dig but a little below the surface, and there you are again at the old barbarism.

But it is a poor thing if like ‘Beauty,’ politeness is to be ‘only skin deep!’ though that is ‘deep enough,’ in the former instance, as the young lady observed, ‘for all practical purposes.’ Politeness should arise from a genuine regard and respect for our neighbours’ feelings, and the desire of pleasing him in every way that is reasonable.

It is well to remember that if

‘Manners makyth man,’

another proverb announces,

Woman makes the manners.

But these will also depend on, and take their tone from the Society frequented.

He that goes with the wolves learns to howl.—*Span.*

He who lies with the dogs rises with fleas.

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The son of an ass brays twice a day.—*Span.*

There appears in this last to be a reference to the ass who was so very like a lion, until he tried to roar; but after that the lion skin was useless. In the same way we seem to learn that, unless there is genuine kindly feeling, the mere affectation of interest, and the payment of attentions for ulterior objects, are more likely to attract dislike than good will. The self seeking speedily becomes apparent, as in the case of the foiled canvassers whom Macauley has commemorated.

They were gentlemen kind and well-bred,

No flouting, no sneering, no scorn;

They asked after my wife—who was dead

And my children—who never were born!

—————
Dogs bark as they are bred,

And fawn as they are fed.
—————

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AMBIGUOUS.

It has been suggested that this series will hardly be complete, unless some reference be made to Ambiguous Sayings; such for instance as that famous medical maxim.

Stuff a cold and starve a fever;

the only approach, I ever heard, to a rational interpretation of this, was that a person who could be guilty of the former, might possibly also be capable of committing the latter!

Other sayings of this kind may be remembered, which once vexed our childhood; and, it is to be presumed, will afflict the rising generation to the end of time.

Those that ask must not have, and those that don't ask don't want.

How many blue beans make five?

Why do Cheshire cats always grin?

Put a pinch of salt on a bird's tail if you want to catch it!

I have since learned that there are other things beside birds which are best taken

Cum grano salis.

with a little allowance.

Frightening a bird is not the way to catch it.

You cant catch birds by throwing stones at them.—*Whately.*

Again there are opposing sayings which thus seem ambiguous.

Common Fame's

Seldom to blame.

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Common report's a common liar.

'Murder will out,'

and then again

Mortui non mordent.

'Dead men tell no tales.'

It is not difficult to see that both sayings are true under different circumstances.

A higher flight is taken when we come to the Ambiguous Oracles of antiquity. Here we have dubious sayings indeed; and, as some have thought, of a very dubious origin.

Among very prudent people, in Roman Catholic countries, it has sometimes been the custom, in churches dedicated to St. Michael, to present one candle to the Saint himself, and another to the figure lying under his feet; so as to stand well with both parties. On the same principle the old Scotch laird, before he went out with the Pretender, had put his son into the English army, that the property might remain in the family under all eventualities. Some of the recounters of the classic oracles have been no less sorely puzzled as to what source to attribute them. And, it must be admitted, there is something in them, occasionally, that is rather uncanny. They are so cunningly worded; answering to the consulter's wish, and yet equally true if the counselled undertaking prove an utter failure, that we are reminded of

The juggling fiend—who never spake before,—

Yet cries, I warned thee! when the deed is o'er.—*Byron.*

A remarkable instance is supplied by that King's fate, who was assured by the Oracle that if he crossed a certain river he would 'destroy a great Empire.' And so he did, but then it happened to be his own!

Thou shalt go thou shalt return never by war shalt thou perish.

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is another such utterance, which lured on to destruction. And then, there is another which can only be given in the Latin tongue the conciseness of which is specially suited to these sayings.

Aio te Æacide Romanos vincero posse!

which, as Pyrrhus found to his cost, really meant that the Romans would conquer him.

In another sense that Irish barrister's statement cannot be altogether acquitted of ambiguity:—

‘And so my clients resolved on a bold course, they took the bull by the horns, and indicted him for perjury.’

Mr. Pitt upon carpets may be quoted for a witty use of one such dubious declaration. This was his toast at a great public dinner in that locality.

May the staple trade of Kidderminster be trampled under
foot by all the world!

But ambiguity is sometimes produced unintentionally, by that noble contempt of punctuation still occasion ally to be met with. Take the following.

Erected

To the memory of

John Phillipps

who was accidently shot by his brother as a mark of affection.

And again, culled from the correspondence column of an American paper—

‘The following lines were written by one who has for
many years slept in his grave for his own amusement.’

Nor can those two Jury verdicts be considered quite out of this category.

Guilty—but served her right!

Not guilty—but not to do it again!

The figure Anacoleuthon affords other examples where, as in many epigrams, the apparent meaning

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suddenly changes to the opposite. As for example in that dialogue between an old

Incumbent and the Next Presentation.

‘I’m glad to see you well,’ ‘Oh! faithless breath!
What!’ glad to see me well, and wish my death?
‘No more, I pray, my good sir, this misgiving,
I wish not for your death, but for your living!’

So again in that similar epigram entitled

The younger Brother.

Ah! cruel wretch! indignant Crito said

‘ ‘Tis plain you wish your elder brother dead!’

‘Nay, heaven forbid,’ quoth Tom, ‘not I, Sir, never;’

‘Those we wish dead, they say, live on for ever!’

That rejoinder of a well known opponent of one of the Burial Bills partook also somewhat of this character. The Nonconformists charged him with objecting to their being buried in his churchyard. ‘On the contrary,’ he promptly answered, ‘I’m perfectly ready to bury you all!’

One or two more of this kind may be added.

It is a maxim in the schools

That women always doat on fools,

If so, dear Sir, I’m sure your wife

Must love you as She loves her life!

The rule of the Road is a paradox quite,

Both in riding and driving along;

If you go to the Left you are sure to go right,

If you go to the Right you go wrong!

Still more remarkable is the conclusion to which some one seems to have been led by this peculiarity.

If you go to the Left you go to the right;

If you go to the Right you go to the wrong;

And so its’ the best to keep straight along!

Punch will I hope excuse my quoting his useful addition.

The Salamanca Corpus: Proverbial Folklore (1875)

But in walking the streets 'tis a different case,
To the right it is right you should bear;
To the left should be left quite enough of free space
For the persons you chance to meet there.

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Dean Ramsay tells a story of an encounter between rival wits, on one occasion; where 'the unexpected' certainly brought off the defendant as winner. Young Scotland is excusing himself to his meenister for absence from kirk, by alleging a dislike, that he has, to long sermons; Deed 'man, ye may land yourself where ye'll never be troubled wi sermons lang or short!' 'Weel, perhaps so, Doctor, but it 'll no be for want o' meenisters!'

Scant-o'-grace thinks a' preaching' lang.

To take rather another class, it must be confessed that now a day Telegrams are some times responsible for ambiguous sayings, as that M. P., so soon unseated, is said to have found to his cost.

He telegraphed to his agent, I'll come down 5 p.m.

His agent at once distributed £5 per man!

with results, on a Petition, that may easily be imagined.

Among Ambiguous sayings, I am inclined to think that Riddles, and certainly Enigmas, have also a right to be included.

Take perhaps the oldest.

"Out of the Eater came forth meat, and out of the Strong
came forth sweetness."

Judges xivt 14.

How apposite is the basely gained but well put answer of the Philistines!

'What is sweeter than honey?

And what is stronger than a lion?'"

Again, let me commemorate that classical enigma of great antiquity, which is reported to have procured the Theban Sphinx many a dinner?

'What is that animal which in the morning goes on four legs, on two legs at

noon, and on three in the evening?' It was really very well contrived. How

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annoyed she must have felt at the arrival of Oedipus! The following lines partake somewhat of the same character; and, without the key, are sufficiently puzzling.

She walked on earth, she talked on earth,
Reproving man for sin;
She's not on earth, she's not in heaven,
And never will get in!

Dean Swift on the Vowels, and Lord Byron on the letter H, are too well known to bear quoting; but four others shall be mentioned.

The highest gift of Heaven to man,
When all its wondrous works we scan:
Which, when our own, we lose with sorrow,
And often are compelled to borrow,
The lover's gift, the poet's song,
Which art makes short, and nature long!

Two of these are by Canning and Cowper respectively, and both refer, in different ways, to the same thing.

A noun there is, of plural number,
A foe to peace and quiet slumber,
Now any other noun you take.
By adding 's' you plural make,
But if you add an 's' to this,
How strange the metamorphose is,
Plural is plural then, no more,
And sweet, what bitter was before!

I am just two and two, I am warm, I am cold,
And the parent of numbers that cannot be told,
I am lawful, unlawful, a duty, (tis thought)

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

I am often sold dear, good for nothing when bought.
The greatest of boons, and a matter of course,
And given with pleasure when taken by force!

Cut off my head, the singular I act,
Cut off my tail, the plural I appear,
Cut off my head and tail, and wondrous fact,
Although my middle's left, there nothing there!
What is my head cut off? a sounding sea!
What is my tail cut off? a flowing river!
And through their mingling depths I sporting play,
Parent of sweetest sound though dumb for ever!

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Thus far I have written of Ambiguous sayings. A more serious consideration is the vastly increasing misuse that is now being made of perfectly plain declarations, which are often twisted into meanings which their originators never dreamed of. A book might be filled with 'wrested texts' out of scripture. Many modern expressions are no less woefully misrepresented.

"O Liberty! cried poor Madame Roland"

What crimes have been committed in thy name!"

How often

'Licence they mean, when liberty they cry'—*Milton*.

What has been the working out of that once famous French manifesto, *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*?

A very fine sounding expression, but what did it come to under the Empire?

Infanterie, Cavalerie, Artillerie!

And, of late under the Commune?

Liberty—to do evil!

Equality—in misery!

Fraternity—Such as that of Cain with his brother!

Lastly, let the letters of the alphabet have their innings. It has often been an exercise to the male mind what it is that the ladies talk of after dinner? One of themselves has lately revealed it. It is the 3 Ds! Domestic, Diseases, and not least, Dress!

It would be cruelty to quote at length the 3 Rs of the facetious Alderman. The 3 Ks are less known; would they were as widely promulgated.

King, Country, Constitution!

That old Jacobite toast has now been long happily forgotten. 'The King! (over the water)!' Put into a rhyming form it used to run in this fashion.

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God bless the King! God bless the Faith's Defender;

God bless,—no harm in blessing—the Pretender!

Who that Pretender is, and who that King,

God bless us all, is quite another thing!—*Dr. Byron.*

Let us trust that King Mob, who is now 'that Pretender,' spite of all ominous signs, may be no more successful than the exiled Stuarts were.

'Many Masters'

are not to be desired,

There is no tyranny like the tyranny of a Democracy.—*Aristotle.*

King Mob is a cruel and many headed monster.

They are words of highest wisdom and chiefest authority,

“ My Son fear thou the Lord and the King,

And meddle not with them that are given to change!”

For their calamity shall rise suddenly.”

Prov. xxiv, 22.

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PERNICIOUS PROVERBS.

'All proverbs are not pious proverbs,' says good Matthew Henry.

All hoods make not monks.—*Shakespear.*

Votes should be weighed as well as counted, and sayings sifted before they are accepted.

Proverbs there are, which both in principle and expression are positively bad. My object in the present chapter is to warn against such, selecting some few by way of example. And it is the more necessary for, as some rustics used to think a thing must be true that is written in a book,

‘A book’s a book altho’ there’s nothing in’t!’

so there are good people who give in at once on being plied with a proverb. It is with no small satisfaction, therefore, that I see the Daily Jupiter from time to time laying hold of a fallacy of this kind, very much in the manner that an experienced terrier snaps up a rat, and scrunching it up with no less speedy certainty. To take an instance, how many impertinences, as every one who has anything to give knows but too well,—are daily prefaced with that plea,

‘There is no harm in asking’

Which, as the Times remarks, is ‘about the most foolish of excuses. There is always harm in what is weak, or unreasonable, or certain to be unsuccessful!’

Though a question may not be indiscreet, an answer would be.—

Sir S. Northcote, 1874.

Again, there are other cases in which proverbs are unfairly put, and the truth so distorted, as to produce a

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one sided impression. Thus, even pious ones may be made pernicious; indeed such distortions are the most dangerous of all. There may be ‘a pinch of truth in every pound of lies’ but it is hardly fair to sprinkle that pinch over the surface, and then exhibit this as a sample of the quality. This is well exposed by Pope, where he is attacking the maudlin sympathy, sometimes shewn to great criminals under the garb of Christian charity. It is said

‘Love the sinner, while you hate the sin.’

This is very proper in a certain sense—and then,

‘Condemn the fault and not the actor of it.’—

Measure for Measure.

this is going somewhat further.

Bellum cum vitiis, pax cum personis,

War with vice, peace with the vicious.

This is too much. And Pope at once, very properly comes down upon it.

‘Spare thou the person, and expose the vice!’

How, Sir? Not blame the sharper but the dice?

‘Where,’ as the Times observes in quoting, ‘the fallacy is at once made evident.’

Somebody, surely, must be held responsible. We and our actions are one. We cannot shuffle off their paternity. Not condemning is one thing, condoning is another. This point has been long since settled, and by supremest authority.

“Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour,

And not suffer sin upon him.”

Lev. xix, 17.

I have remarked that Sacred Sayings are especially liable to these perversions. This is observable in respect of two which we have concerning Charity.

Charity covers a multitude of sins!

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Now it is well to be exact in all scriptural quotations, the actual text is

“Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”

I Peter iv, 8.

which conveys a different impression, and implies, as is the case, that the ordinary inference is erroneous. This proverb is often used to suggest that giving to good objects makes up for giving way to wicked, covers a man’s own sins; but, look into the matter, and it is at once plain that the sins covered by charity are those of other people. Only One Mantle will cover a man’s own sin, and that is not of man’s making.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.”

Prov. xxviii, 13.

If perverted from its proper meaning,—that the loving will not show up the

failings of their fellows,— this proverb becomes both false and pernicious.

The other is not unlike it.

‘Charity begins at home.’

This is often used as an excuse for not giving. It is quite right that Charity should begin at home, but quite wrong that it should end there. That is the perversion; and, with those who use this proverb, charity mostly takes a long time in beginning. Those, who are the readiest to help abroad, it is always found, are the people who are doing most at home.

“God loveth a cheerful giver.”

2 Cor. ix, 7.

The transparent excuse that ‘there is so much to be done at home,’ is never used by the really loving, as their reason for neglecting need in other places. ‘Charity’ should indeed ‘begin at home,’ but not begin and end there!

The house that will not open to the poor will open to the Physician.—*Talmud.*

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A Surrey Sunday School child’s answer was too near the truth to be all a blunder. ‘What is charity?’ Please, ‘M’m, charity is giving to others what we dont want for ourselves!’ True genuine charity ‘begins at home,’ no doubt, but does not end there,—as in the instance of those of whom the poet has spoken

whose circling charities begin

With all those loved ones Heaven has made us near,

Nor cease till all mankind are in its sphere.

Another Scriptural misapplication, not unfrequent, is the following.

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?”

The answer at once is, not unless you also are infallible, all wise and all good, incapable either of injuring or of being injured! ‘Everybody has a right’ observed Boswell to Doctor Johnson ‘to say what he likes!’ ‘Yes Sir,’ replied the Doctor ‘and everybody has a right to knock him down for saying it!’ Civilised society could not consist for a single day, unless men consented to give up their lawful rights in very

many respects. The law will not allow any one to exercise those rights to the detriment of another, and the law of public safety rides over all,

Salus populi suprema lex.

It is not lawful for any one to abuse his authority. The disgust of the costermonger may be natural, but it must continue,

The times is come to a pretty pass,

When a man maynt wallop his own jackass!

But yet, unless he hold his hand, he will certainly be taken up for cruelty to animals!

The following sayings may be remarked on as often mischievous.

Over shoes, over boots.

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In for a penny, in for a pound.

The helve must after the hatchet.

As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb.

The obvious enquiry is, Why be hung for either? What is to be gained by getting deeper into the mire? There is mostly more wisdom, and unquestionably far more courage, in stopping short so soon as the mistake is found out, rather than in floundering on, when the result must be ruin.

It is no use throwing good money after bad.

Again, take this,

‘Happy is the man that has a Hobby:’

the saying seems innocent enough. But all depends upon what the Hobby is.

One master passion, fixed within the breast,

Like Aaron’s serpent swallows all the rest.

Oftentimes

Hobby horses are more costly than Arabs.

Other proverbs of this class are still more objectionable.

In quoting this proverb I venture to avail myself of a passage in a very remarkable address delivered by the well known Member for Berkshire, at the Quebec Institute, on November 25th, 1874. He is enforcing ‘throughness.’

‘The chief end of all education, whether displayed in the exercise of the mental faculties or in the humbler sphere of mechanical labour, is that of throughness in work. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

‘That is the golden precept which ought to be engraved on the heart of every man whatever his condition in

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life, and whatever the work which he is called upon to do. Nelson’s last signal—

“England expects every man to do his duty”

which thrilled the hearts of the British fleet before the victory of Trafalgar, does but express the idea which is the manspring of all true greatness, whether national or private, that of throughness in work.

‘But suppose instead of that famous signal with which the name of Nelson will ever be associated, another kind of signal had been presented to the eyes of our astonished seamen. Suppose some vile Enchanter, such as we read of in fairy tales, could have transformed those magic words into some such as these:—

“He that fights and runs away
May live to fight another day;
But he that is in battle slain
Ne’er will live to fight again.”

‘And what is worse suppose our sailors had acted upon it! you smile at the idea as extravagant and incredible; but let me tell you that the base and cowardly adage, which I have just quoted, is the very counter-part of another, which is the gospel of bad workmen in every part of the world and which is not unknown even in English workshops—I mean the adage that’

“Good work is bad for trade.”

Again

He that is down, down with him.

is an expression of some of the basest feelings of human nature. Another saying notices it,

All bite the bitten dog.

When the tree is down every one runs with his hatchet.

Again

“Revenge is sweet,”

if so at first, it is ever found in the end exceeding bitter.

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Again

Calumniare audacter aliquid adherebit.

Throw plenty of dirt and some will stick.

with respect to this, the Times observes ‘the familiar proverb, that, ‘if enough dirt is thrown, some of it will stick,’ contains a truth which few can afford to disregard; and which, in the interests of others, no one ought to disregard.

It may be remarked here in passing, with regard to this sort of saying that, where thus misapplied, it may sometimes with advantage be taken up, and reapplied; and all the more tellingly from the exposure of the perversion. This is remarkably so in the case of quotations. Consult the context, carry on the saying a little further; and, then if it has been used unfairly, a further quotation will be the most complete of refutations. This may often be observed in the debates of our Houses of Parliament. The other day an Honourable gentleman was speaking of some usage he wished to recommend, and which, he said, in England had

‘Grown with her growth and strengthen’d with her strength.’

The quotation seemed very apposite, but how did it look when the next speaker supplied the whole stanza?

And yet Disease, which must destroy at length,

Grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength!

Mr. Disraeli is peculiarly happy, not only in making proverbs but also in meeting them. Some of his sayings are now stereotyped into our English language, as for example, ‘England has outgrown the Continent.’

‘The question is, is man an ape or an angel? Now, I am on the side of the angels.’ ‘Precedents embalm principles.’

While, again, as an instance of his readiness of grappling with, and retorting such like sayings, who

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does not remember in the debate, in which such formidable things were threatened.

“Honourable gentlemen may say ‘The hour is come, and the man!’ but I think it will be found that the clock is wrong, and the man mistaken!”

Many other instances might of course be mentioned. The well known Sir F. Burdett, having changed his opinion and gone over to conservatism, being shortly after pressed hard by Lord John Russell—‘I hate the cant of patriotism’ exclaimed Sir Francis. Said Lord John Russell ‘The cant of patriotism is no doubt a bad thing, but what I hate more is the recant of patriotism!’

Other instances of pernicious proverbs, or at least such as must be labelled ‘dangerous,’ I adduce, though somewhat unwillingly, from our poets.

Take those well known lines of Tennyson.

There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds—

These have been made to support some very startling assertions, and hardly such as the poet would have advocated. This is true in one sense, and not true in many others. It is one thing to swallow down creeds, or any other assertions wholesale, unreflectingly, and blindfold; it is quite another to yield assent because God has spoken. If a man is to ‘honestly doubt’ all that he cannot absolutely demonstrate, why then he cannot be quite sure of his very being, even that he ever was born; at any rate Bishop Berkeley has plenty of standing ground for his philosophical questionings of the existence of Matter!

‘New lights’ of this kind,
it has been well remarked

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‘Mostly come through cracks in the tiling.

The ‘faith’ found ‘in honest doubts’ sometimes appears remarkably like what is commonly called Credulity. There are people who ‘will believe anything provided it is not in the Bible.’ They can comprehend spiritualism but not spirituality. They tolerate Table Turning but not the truths of the Christian Revelation. ‘Two things’ writes Laménais, ‘astonish me in this generation, It decides about everything, and it believes nothing!’ Rather a cruel charge in these days of Natural Selection and Protoplasm. Not unlike that mythic Frenchman, who, getting confused in his theology, left out the “not” in the commandments, and introduced it into the creed, the Spirit of the Age is ready to question everything that has sufficient authority, and to swallow down everything else which asserts that it is scientific. Genesis is to be principally a myth, but there are good reasons for supposing that we are all descended from monkeys! Am I speaking too strongly? Is there not at this very moment grave doubt among great philosophers whether man’s origin is not from the very same protoplasm as that of the common nettle? There is another and rather more favoured theory, which prefers to go back to a kind of marine sponge or jelly bag. One theory has suggested an animal with ‘short pointed ears’ as our immediate predecessor: it suggests another, with by no means short ears, as its acceptor.

Quorum si credideris

Expectare poteris

Arthurum cum Britonibus.

‘If you can believe such tales as these, you are capable of still expecting King Arthur, even as the ancient Britons do!’

But we have English poetry on the subject. The

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Theory of Development, in some of its phases has been represented, by no means unfairly, after the following fashion.

A Deer, with a neck that is longer by half

Than the rest of his family—try not to laugh!

The Salamanca Corpus: Proverbial Folklore (1875)

By stretching, and stretching, becomes a giraffe!
Or a very tall Pig, with a very long nose,
Sends out a proboscis right down to his toes,
And then by the name of an Elephant goes!

Man was an ape in the days that come early
Centuries after his hair became curly—
Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist,
Then he became man and a Positivist.

A writer in Blackwood happily suggests that, on such principles, the first chapter of Genesis might thus be rewritten.

A motion most comic
Of dust motes atomic,
A chaos of decimal fractions;
Of which each, under fate,
Was impelled to its mate
By love, or the law of attractions!

And some one else has thus epitomised the Coming Creed of the Credulous Future.

I believe in gas and water,
And in Fate, Dame Nature's daughter.
Consciousness I put aside,
The dissecting knife's my guide.
I believe in all the gases.
As a means to raise the masses,
Carbon animates ambition,
Oxygen controls volition,
All that's good or great in men
May be traced to Hydrogen.
And the body, not the soul,
Governs the unfettered whole!

I come now to Mr. Pope, whose wit and high polish make him especially quoted.

And, I submit, what can be more unfair than the way in which he sometimes

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puts things? Take this example. It is a well known, and often used expression,

For differing creeds let godless bigots fight,

His cant be wrong whose life is in the right.

Not to notice the somewhat unnecessarily hard words, and confining ourselves to the sentiment, what is the conclusion? Of course he cannot! "He cant be wrong," as it is put so antithetically, if his "life is in the right." But is it? That is a subject for previous enquiry. To assert that it "is," is an entire begging of the whole question. It is all very well for the Ladies to manage affairs after this fashion.

'Their conduct still right with their arguments wrong.'

Let it be allowed that women, in general, cannot reason, and yet mostly leap to the right conclusion.

'Take your wife's first advice, and not her second.'

is a matrimonial maxim that is worth remembering. Still, a philosopher like Mr. Pope should be prepared for argument. Well then, how can a man's life be right, unless his principles are right also? Will a sum come out correct which has an error in its first stating?

If a man's creed is that of Mahomet, 'the Koran or the sword;' the Ultramontane, that every Pope is, and has been infallible; that of the Mormans, that polygamy is a most christian institution;—if it be any false creed; will his life be right if he acts up to it? Will he be an honest man if he does not? It is a poor compliment to humanity to say that 'men are better than their beliefs.' But, in fact, you might as well put a disturbing mass of iron by a magnet, and then insist that the ship can still be steered safely, as think to have a man's 'life in the right,' while he has no fixed principle, or when his creed is 'in the wrong.' There is scarcely any crime that has not been committed, and

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justified, at the biddings of a false creed, and under its authority.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

Sweet poet! cease thy most mistaken song!

He cant live right, whose creed directs him wrong!

The man who wrote the famous line, 'He cant &c.'

Was a great poet undoubtedly, but he was a wretched divine.—

Canon Ryle.

In some few instances, the fault is not in the proverb but in the employer of it; a clean glove is made to cover a dirty hand, a harmless saying is made a hurtful one through the manner of its application. Take for instance the common maxim,

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

This may sometimes be true of this world, but it is miserably erroneous as regards things of the next. John Bunyan shows this in his portrait of the two boys. Passion 'will have all his good things now,' but wiser Patience 'is willing to wait.' And, as regards the proverb, there are birds and birds, and bushes and bushes; everything depends on the nature of the handful. In respect of things eternal

"We walk by faith not by sight."

2 Cor. v, 7.

Again, general Untidyness has sought justification in the reminder that

We must eat a peck of dirt before we die.

But surely that is no reason for taking it all at once!

It is an excellent thing to be fertile in resources.

'Its a mean mouse that has but one hole,'

or, as Mr. Pope versifies,

The mouse that only boasts of one poor hole,

Can never be a mouse of any soul.

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Its good in every case you know

To have two strings unto one's bow.—*Churnchill.*

Yet shiftiness and delusive dealing are not any the less objectionable. Pitt's conclusion was a most pitiable one,

An independent man is one who cant be depended on.

I conclude with Superstitious Sayings, which have yielded, at least in former days, many a plentiful crop of mischief. It is not always agreeable to be sent from the table lest there should be thirteen at dinner; we may smile at the good lady's consternation,

Next post some direful news will tell,

The salt was spilled! To me it fell!

but, in the days when they burned witches, some of these absurd ideas were very serious matters, and such maxims have been made to excuse horrible cruelties.

More superstitions survive among Sailors than among most other people. They are more exposed, perhaps, by the nature of their profession to such influences.

Jonah has left an evil legacy to the preacher fraternity; I remember a thick fog, which delayed us in the Sea of Marmora, being entirely attributed, by the Italian sailors, to three Priests whom we had on board with us.

Sailors have the greatest objection to starting on a Friday.

Friday's sail

Always fail.

A ship owner is said, on one occasion, to have made a resolute endeavour to break down this delusion. He began a ship on a Friday, it was launched on a Friday, he called it the Friday, it sailed on a Friday—and it was lost on a Friday!

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But, then, there are some predictions which tend to fulfil themselves.

'Never prophecy'

says the Americans,

'Unless you are sure.'

He ought to have been sure of his crew before he flew in the face of all their prejudices. The Italians hold also another day in dread besides Friday,

Né di Venerdì, né di Marte,

Non si sposa, e noa si parte.

Of Tuesdays and Fridays, I rede thee, beware;

And to take wife or journey or either day spare!

On this point Mr. Lowe is worth hearing.

‘The great fault is that people are in too great a hurry to generalize. The ship is to sail on a Friday and it is never heard of again. Persons therefore say, never sail a ship on a Friday. I upset a salt bowl on a Friday, and got pitched off my horse the same day; and they say, never spill salt on a Friday. Thirteen persons dine together on a Friday, and one dies before the end of the year, and persons then says that 13 persons should never dine together on a Friday. Now this is a miserable superstition, and it is just the same with the miserable notice of generalization.’—*Rt. Hon. Robert Lowe.*

Take another well known saying,

Vox Populi vox Dei.

There is such a thing as a general consent, a universal impression which is pretty sure to be right, but Popular Opinion is quite as likely to be wrong. It is a proverb also capable of most unpleasant personal applications. This the late Lord Lytton very cleverly brings out.

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‘No pleasure like a Christian roasted slowly,
To Odin’s greatest member can be given:
The will of freemen to the gods is holy;
The People’s voice must be the voice of Heaven.
On selfish principles you chafe at capture
But what are private pangs to public rapture.’

‘You doubt that giving you as food for Freya
Will have much marked effect upon the seas;
Let’s grant you’re right—all pleasure’s in idea;
If thousands think it, you the thousands please.
Your private interests must not be the guide,
Where interests clash majorities decide.’—

Gawaine and the Viking.

The last Pernicious Proverb I have to mention is a little one.

‘It is only a very little one,’

‘Once more’ has been ‘once too often’ with how many! The ‘only one more glass’ has made many a drunkard.

Obsta principiis.

Beware of beginnings.

From bad to worse is poor preferment.

There may be danger even in the extreme the Yankees speak of, when a thing is ‘shaved off finer than the small end of nothing:’ or when ‘there is not enough of it to make soup for a sick grasshopper.’

At any rate we can hardly accept the excuse of a certain Royal Highness, who having been remonstrated with for going out shooting on the very day after the death of a near relation, replied apologetically, that he had ‘only been shooting very small birds!’

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PIOUS PROVERBS.

Pious Proverbs will conclude the series. This chapter might happily be enlarged far beyond our limits. I propose but to mention a few of the most approved; referring finally, and more at length than I have yet done, to that treasure house of truest wisdom, the inspired Proverbs of Solomon. Well has it been remarked concerning the book in which we find them,

Some books contain silver sayings,

Some that are even golden,

One Book alone is full of bank notes!—*Newton.*

‘As we have no book so useful for our devotions as David’s Psalms, so we have none so serviceable for our sayings as Solomon’s Proverbs.’— .

But to begin with words of man’s wisdom—

Bear and forbear.

‘Bear and forbear!’ Thus preach the ancient sages,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Proverbial Folklore* (1875)

And, in two words, enclose the sense of pages,
With patience bear life's certain ills, and oh!
Forbear those deeds which threaten future woe!

—————
Gather thistles,
Expect prickles.

—————
Corruptio optimi pessima.

This may be paraphrased

The finest silks are soonest stained.

—————
The sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies, that fester, smell far worse than weeds.—*Shakespeare.*

—————
When a good man errs, he errs with a vengeance.

—————
Better be a fool than a knave.

—————
Better suffer ill than do ill.

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—————
As you make your bed so you must lie on it.

—————
Beware of little sins, and of all the “onlys.”

—————
The Pitcher, that goes often to the well, gets broken at last.

—————
Commit a sin twice and you will think it allowable.—*Talmud.*

—————
A fault, once denied, is twice committed.

A small leak will sink a great ship.

whereas.

A stitch in time
Saves nine.

For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For want of a horse the rider was lost,
Being overtaken and slain by the enemy.

No time like the present.

Reformation is too late when retribution begins.

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding
small.

Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds
He all.—*Longfellow*.

‘threatened folks live long,’

and so is it, says Matthew Henry, ‘with threatened sins.’

Make the plaister as wide as the wound.

With regard to the future many lands have their sayings.

L’homme propose,

Mais Dieu dispose.

‘Man appoints, God disappoints’

is our English, less pleasing version.

Every bullet
Has its billet.

Non ci muove foglia,

Senza Iddio voglia.

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Not a leaf moves on the trees,
Unless God Almighty please.

It is ill jesting with God's Judgments,
and, it may be added, 'with God's Word'; quoting scripture irreverently comes very near to breaking the 3rd commandment, How sharp and forcible is old Fuller's expostulation.

'Jest not with the two edged sword of God's word!

Will nothing serve thee to wash thy hands in but the font? or to drink healths in but the Church chalice?

Again

Prayer and provender hinder no journey.—*Matt. Henry.*

or, as the Roman Catholics used to say in Scotland,

Meat and mass hinder nae man.

The body is sooner drest than the soul.

Half the truth is often a whole lie.

This is a proverb which Tennyson has most admirably versified.

A lie which is all a lie, may be met with, and fought with out right,

But a lie which is half the truth is a harder matter to fight.

... Half right's wholly wrong.

The shortest line's the straightest 'twixt two points.—

Bulwer.

I must now draw attention to an intermediate tract of country lying between ordinary pious proverbs, and those with which God's Word Written supplies us. There is a perfect mine of practical wisdom, hardly ever worked, to be found in a book which is contained in the Apocrypha.

The sayings are not scripture, they put forth no claim to be considered inspired;

yet we may say of

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very many of them, (and it is the highest praise,) that they are a good imitation. I mean the proverbs to be found in the book Ecclesiasticus. At the risk of being lengthy I subjoin a few of these, following the order observed in the previous chapters. They are hard upon Women, as in the following example,

Any plague but the plague of the heart!

Any wickedness but the wickedness of a woman!

So Jeremy Taylor has said, but it applies to both sexes,

Better sit up all night than go to bed with a dragon.

A friend and companion never meet amiss,

But above both is a wife with her husband.

Marry thy daughter and so shalt thou have performed a weighty matter, but give her to a man of understanding.

Honour thy Father with thy whole heart,

And forget not the sorrows of thy Mother.

Glory not in the dishonour of thy Father,

In thy Father's dishonour is no glory to thee.

Go not to law with a Judge;

For they will judge him according to his honour.

Honour a Physician with the honour due unto him,

For the uses which ye may have of him,

For the Lord hath created him.

Speech proverbs are plentiful here as everywhere else.

Believe not every Tale.

To slip upon a payment is better than to slip with the tongue.

Friends also have many a mention.

If thou wouldest get a Friend, prove him first,

And be not hasty to credit him.

The Italians advise

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Treat your friend as one who may some day become your enemy;
and your enemy as one who may some day become your friend.

Forsake not an old Friend,

For the new is not comparable to him;

A new friend is as new wine,

When it is old thou shalt drink it with pleasure.

Better is the life of a poor man in a mean cottage,

Than delicate fare in another man's house.

Money Maxims have their mention.

When a rich man speaketh, every man holdeth his tongue,

If a poor man speak, they say, what fellow is this?

Pride is rebuked most forcibly:

Pride was not made for man.

Pride is hateful before God and man.

While, as to Sin generally, how excellent this advice is—

Say not, I have sinned and what harm hath happened unto me?

For the Lord is long suffering, He will in no wise let thee go.

Be not ashamed to confess thy sins,

And force not the course of the river.

These others are more general.

Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead.

But for a fool, and an ungodly man all the days of his life.

All things are double one against another,

And He hath made nothing imperfect.

Go weigh me the weight of the fire,

Or measure me the blast of the wind,

Or call again the day that is past!

Who can number the sand of the sea,

And the drops of rain, and the days of eternity?

Whatever thou takest in hand

Remember the end,

And thou shalt never do amiss.

Thus is arrived at the Proverbs of Solomon.

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“Apples of gold in pictures of silver,”

as such sayings are therein called; we lose some thing inevitably from their transference into another language; but, even in our English version, how they gleam out golden from their framework of silver setting! Here is the good gold of solid matter, and the silver of elegant and most apposite phraseology. And what wonderful wisdom! What profound and perfect knowledge of human nature! That which they offer they can do, and in the perfection of instructiveness,

Give subtilty to the simple,

To the young man knowledge and discretion.

A man of wisdom will hear and will increase learning;

And a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.

Searching for wisdom in other writings is but scratching on the surface of the gold mine; here we have a shaft that leads straight down into it.

St. Basil thus characterises the Book.

It bridles the injurious tongue, corrects the wanton eye, and ties the unjust hand in chains. It persecutes sloth, teaches prudence, raises man's courage, and represents temperance and chastity after such a fashion that we cannot but have them in veneration.

As there are no songs comparable to the Songs of Zion, so there are no sayings like Solomon's Proverbs!

A man who would be armed with a stock of aphorisms appropriate to each and every emergency, who seeks to have by him sayings that are at once witty and weighty, cannot do better, will do best by studying the Book of Proverbs.

In illustration of this let us begin with 'The Family.' On the careful maintenance, and perfect purity of all its relations, there is founded, and depends, beyond all else, a nation's welfare; now see how this, especially, is guarded in its beginnings, and fenced

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in through its continuance, and exalted in its special sanctities.

Drink waters out of thine own cistern.

And running waters out of thine own well.

Let thy fountains be blessed,

And rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Train up a child in the way he should go,

And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Children's children are the crown of old men,
And the glory of children are their fathers.

In what sharp, severe lines we have in one place the brawling and contentious woman delineated, while, in another, the good and gentle receives her just meed of admiration—

A continual dripping in a very rainy day,
And a contentious woman are alike.

Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind,
And the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself.

Who can find a virtuous woman?
For her price is far above rubies.
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
But a Woman that feareth the Lord,
She shall be praised!

If we look for Matrimonial Maxims here is the whole Iliad in a nutshell
House and riches are the inheritance of fathers,
And a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing,
And obtaineth favour of the Lord.

Is it of Friends and Friendship that we would speak?
Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart,
So doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend:
But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

The Salamanca Corpus: Proverbial Folklore (1875)

And a brother is born for adversity.

In Money Maxims how true, though severe on human nature;

It is naught! It is naught! Saith the buyer;

But when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

The Italians have a similar saying, showing the opposite.

The buyer has need of an hundred eyes, the seller of but one.

How useful is the warning against all selfish greediness.

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye,

And considereth not that poverty shall come upon him,

Where else could have been furnished forth such a picture as that given in Proverbs xxiv, 30—34, of the House of the Sluggard, of the invincible laziness that at last possesses him? As it is said again,

A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom,

And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

Here we have Cheerfulness most justly commended;

He that is of a merry heart,

Hath a continual feast.

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,

But a broken spirit drieth the bones.

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity,

But a wounded spirit who can bear?

Anger, again, is especially warned against, and the various forms of Folly made manifest; while Self-control is extolled for all its admirable uses.

A fool's wrath is presently known,

But a prudent man covereth shame.

He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly.

He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding.

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He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Thus showing that self conquest is the highest of all. Whereas

He that hath a perverse tongue,
Falleth into mischief.

The number of proverbs relating to Speech and the government of the tongue is very considerable. Some have already been quoted. These are others—

Whoso keepeth his mouth, and his tongue,
Keepeth his soul from troubles.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life,
But perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A lying tongue hateth them that are afflicted by it,
And a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Taking general subjects, how consummate is the wisdom of this Advice to avoid thrusting ourselves into other people's quarrels!

Hudibras has given it after his own coarse fashion,
They that in quarrels interpose,
Will often wipe a bloody nose.

But observe the same told with no less force, and with far more dignity.

He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him
Is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.

We say,

A guilty conscience needs no accuser.

This is put in Scripture still clearer, and with the other side also shewn to us.

The wicked flee when no man pursueth,
But the righteous are bold as a lion.

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Once more; are the varieties of the fool tribe perplexing, the conceited fool, the empty fool, the talkative fool, and the mere simpleton, who should be more gently handled? Observe how Solomon supplies directions for dealing with each one severally.

Answer not a fool according to his folly,
Lest thou also be like him.

As we say.

Silence is the best answer to the stupid.

While again, he advises immediately after.

Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own conceit.

Silence may sometimes be mistaken for assent. If it be the conceited fool, he must not be left to imagine unanswered words unanswerable. Again,

A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty,
But a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.

Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar,
Yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

The wise in heart will receive commandments,
But a prating fool shall fall.

Lastly, would we hear "the conclusion of the whole matter;" one part of which, at any rate, the men of this age will find no difficulty in agreeing with—I half repent having added to the accumulation—

"Of making many books there is no end,
And much study is the weariness of the flesh:
Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter,
Fear God, and keep his commandments,
For this is the whole of man!"