

lived he never relapsed into indolence, but was beloved and honored by all who knew him. Children of the present day have no responsibilities—all, even those of tender years, should be taught to know that they exert an influence for good or ill, and that in some way or other they can be useful. There is plenty of time after school days are over for fashionable dissipation; and if children are properly reared, few will desire what is honorably and honestly beyond their reach. Children should have warm, substantial clothing, abundance and variety of food well prepared and served, regular hours, good bathing, regular and frequent exercise; and then, and only then, ought you to expect the mental labor necessary to make them men and women. Their studies should never be intensified from frivolous causes, and they should be taught that high mental culture is worth more than any fortune. I am not writing theoretically, but practically from experience. Necessity, or perhaps I should more properly say misfortune, has compelled me to teach, and it is the difficulties in the way of success I daily encounter, that induces me to pen this article. No one has tasted more fully of life's pleasures than I, yet I unhesitatingly gave them up and educated my own children rather than enjoy luxuries at their expense. I do not believe in severity—it is rarely, if ever, necessary, but it is utterly impossible to educate a child mentally, morally or physically, if the present system is continued in, and the race will continue to degenerate until we shall be pigmies indeed.—*American Educational Monthly.*

## A CHAPTER OF PROVERBS—NOT SOLOMON'S

BY MRS. A. E. BARR.

PROVERBS are the portable philosophy of centuries, the current coin of a nation's wisdom: bearing the same relation to its character as ballads do to its history. And though my Lord Chesterfield considers them "ungentlemanly," we venture to say that they have an antiquity and an authority quite independent of his approval. Abraham on Mount Mariah uttered in two sublime words his conscious faith and trust. David quotes as a time-honored saying, "Wickedness proceeding from the wicked." Solomon's proverbs have out-lived his power, and a greater than Solomon gave us many of his evangelized ethics in this popular form. Admitted their antiquity and authority, nothing strikes us so much as their cosmopolitanism. They are thorough citizens of the world, adopting the dress and languages of those with whom they sojourn, but still preserving their identity; just as the grape is still the fruit of the vine, though in every country it may have a different bouquet and flavor.

The wisdom of Greece gave us the famous aphorism "Exceed in nothing." Travelling to Italy it became in the mouth of the stately Roman "*Ne quid nimis*"; the Frenchman shrugs his shoulders at unprofitable excellence and says, "Too keen an edge does not cut;" the practical German sees that "Too many sacks are the death of the ass;" the religious Portuguese echoes the proverb in "Too much wax burns the church;" the Nile boatman will tell us that "Too many sailors sink the ship;" the Englishman, careful of his dinner, that "Too many cooks spoil the broth;" and the wise Scotsman preserves the true Hellenic flavor in "Eneuch's as guid as a feast."

"Know thyself," was the Delphic proverb which faced every devotee as he entered that famous shrine. And the original majestic simplicity of this sum of earthly wisdom is discernable in all its wanderings;—even in the homely dialect and sly obliquity of

"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see oursel's as ithers see us!"

Taking the mote out of another's eye while the beam is in our own, receives in the following proverbs a wide and significant reproof. "Satan corrects sin" is the English version. In Italy the paragon says to the pot "Keep off or you'll smudge me." In Spain the raven cries to the crow "Avaunt Blackamoor." In Germany one ass calls another "Long Ears," while the peculiar state of morals in Catalonia gives a great significance to their version of the same proverb, "Death said to the man with his throat cut, How ugly you look!"

In English we recognize the general ingratitude for divine help in great emergencies by saying "The river past, God forgotten." In Spain the saints take the place of God and they say "The river past, the saints forgotten." Italy acknowledges a still more profound depth of ingratitude and says "The peril passed, the saints mocked." In this one proverb each nation writes its religious autobiography. Such examples could be extended indefinitely; we will notice only one more, the same which in the "beginning of times" dropped like pure gold from the lips of the Father of the Faithful, "Jehorah-Jireh." His posterity bore the same witness in the old Israelitish proverb, "When the tale of bricks is doubted, Moses comes;" and there are very few who cannot recall "seasons of extremity" which have been "God's opportunities."

The Greek proverbs as a class are remarkable for their wisdom and delicate perception. We have already quoted two of the

most famous. Here is another which could have come so touchingly from no other source: "Misfortune, where goest thou, into the house of the artist?"

Roman proverbs have a curt simplicity and directness, with a patriotic or military flavor. "A crown from a spear" is the natural expression of a nation who recognized in military success "the divine right" to govern. "In the midst of arms the laws are silent," will receive the endorsement of thousands who have learnt within the last ten years the meaning of military boards, and the mysteries of provost-Marshal's offices. "Virtue is praised—and starves;" "Keep silence, and be a philosopher," have just that taint of civil contempt for learning and the arts of peace, which power physical affects generally toward power mental.

Mr. Trench (who is authority on the subjects of proverbs) thinks Spain richer than any other country in this kind of literature. The humor of Spanish proverbs is peculiarly subtle, full of a quiet dignity, and seldom devoid of a certain amount of chivalric politeness. "White hands cannot hurt." "Never speak of a rope in the house of a man who was hanged." "If you want to beat a dog, say he ate your iron." "The gallows are made for the unlucky." "The wolf does that in the week which prevents him coming to church on Sunday." In these refrains we are struck with the disposition to turn reproof into "an excellent oil which will not break the head." There is a stately pathos, too, in the quiet irony which recognizes their proverbial ill-luck in calling all disappointed hopes "Successors of Spain."

The majority of Italian proverbs are cynical and selfish, and have an ecclesiastical and revengeful flavor. "Big churches, little saints." "Touch a friar, and the crows flutter as far as Rome." "With the Gospel one becomes a heretic." So much for the orthodoxy they represent. Many of them relate to intrigue, to the danger of which they are quite sensible; as such proverbs as this evidence: "For an honest man half his wits is sufficient, the whole is too little for a knave." Those relating to revenge show a depth of sly vindictiveness painful to contemplate. "Revenge waits time and place, it is never well done in a hurry;" and "Revenge when one hundred years old has still its sucking teeth."

But the degraded heart of the Italian proverbs find a deeper depth in the Egyptian, which are so servile and so devoid of all consciousness of virtue that they could only spring from a nation utterly slavish and heartless. "If the monkey reigns prostrate thyself before him;" "Do no good, and thou shalt find no evil;" "Kiss the hand thou canst not bite;" "If the waters come like a deluge place thy son under thy feet," are proverbs which are of local and circumstantial growth, incapable of naturalization in any free or Christian country.

The Dutch proverbs are of an amphibious nature, they have one foot on land and one on sea. "Pull gently at a weak rope." "Cover the pot, an ell is in it." "Coupled sheep drown one another." "A wreck on shore is a beacon at sea" sufficiently show their peculiarity. In like manner the Arab draws his similitudes from his desert surroundings. "Let the night be your camel" is no doubt the experience of some Ishmaelitic sage, skilled in cattle-lifting; "More beautiful than a black horse with white feet;" "The last drinks least;" "Death is a black camel which kneels at every man's gate," bear distinct trace of their eastern origin.

The French proverbs are full of "glories," and "great souls," and "eternities," short vivid sentences flashing out their own intensity. Those relating to women are remarkable for a keen and generally kind insight into her nature, thus: "Take the first advice of a woman, and not the second," acknowledges that wonderful intuition which is aptly described by Montaigne as "*l'esprit primesautier*," that which, if it is to take its prey must take it at the first bound."

Proverbs in praise of virtue and in reproof of vice abound in the English languages, and some of them are very beautiful. "Silence was never written down." "By the street of By and By one arrives at the house of Never." "The unrighteous penny corrupts the righteous pound." "Charity gives itself rich." "God never wounds with both hands." The Scotch proverbs equally moral have a more caustic tone and a broader humor. "He that teaches himself has a fool for his minister." "The miser will rake hell for a hawbee." "Lippen to me, but took to yourself." "Ye wad do little for God, if the deil were deid." No one can fail to contrast the directness of these Caladonian proverbs with the delicate implication of their Spanish relatives.

Proverbs in which rhyme and alliteration have been called in as aids to memory are so numerous and so general that we would almost imagine rhyme to be the mother tongue of proverbs. "Birds of a feather flock together;" "Safe bind, safe find;" "He who would thrive, must rise at five; he who has thriven may sleep till seven;" "No pains, no gains;" "East, west, home is best" are well known and excellent examples of this class. But such alliteration as, "Out of debt, out of danger;" "A cat may look at a king;" "All is not gold that glitters" are just as abundant. Another common form is that of pleasant exaggeration as when the Arab says of a man whose luck never forsakes him, "Throw him into the Nile, and he will come up with a fish in his mouth."

Purely selfish and immoral proverbs cannot be passed over. That they exist, such abominable maxims as "Every man has his