

**A COLLECTION OF PROVERBS AND
POPULAR SAYINGS RELATING TO
THE SEASONS, THE WEATHER, AND
AGRICULTURAL PERSUIT; GATHERED
CHIEFLY FROM ORAL TRADITION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649364756

A Collection of Proverbs and Popular Sayings Relating to the Seasons, the weather, and agricultural pursuit; gathered chiefly from oral tradition by M. A. Denham

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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M. A. DENHAM

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OF
Proverbs and Popular Sayings

RELATING TO

THE SEASONS, THE WEATHER, AND
AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS;

GATHERED CHIEFLY FROM ORAL TRADITION.

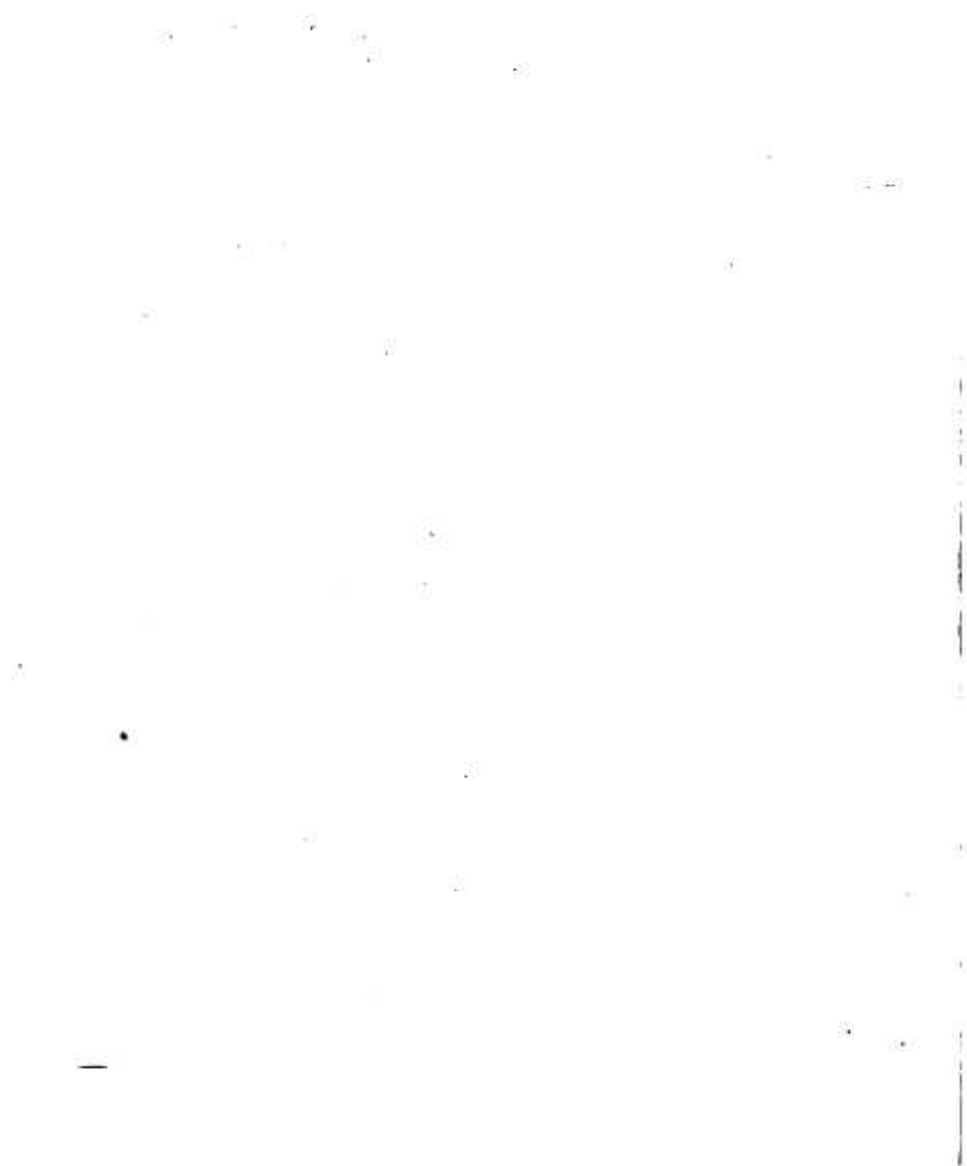
BY

M. A. DENHAM.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY,
BY T. RICHARDS, 100, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

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PREFACE.

" This formal fool, your man, speaks nought but proverbs,
And speak men what they can to him, he'll answer
With some rhyme-rotten sentence, or old saying,
Such spokes as ye ancients of y^e parish use :

*The Proverb-Monger. From the Two Angry Women of
Abingdon, a comedy, by Henry Porter, 1690.*

To those who are aware of the time and trouble required for the accumulation of any extensive series of traditional sayings, it will cause no surprise to be informed, that the present Collection was commenced as far back as the year 1825. In the following year, I sent half-a-dozen (probably all that I had then collected) to Mr. William Hone, for insertion in the *Every-Day Book*, then in course of publication. In that work they did not appear; but were printed in vol. ii. col. 505, of his succeeding periodical (*The Table-Book*), along with other matter, subscribed with the initials of my name reversed. From this period, the collection went on gradually increasing till the year 1843; when having collected, chiefly orally, upwards of four hundred, I made a selection therefrom, which

I arranged for insertion in the *Local Historian's Table-Book*, a work of no common merit, edited by Mr. M. A. Richardson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. These, with few or no foot-notes, appeared in vol. ii. pp. 211 and 254, in the *Traditional* portion of the above publication. "As a token of friendship," Mr. M. A. R. struck off twenty-five copies in a distinct form, which, with the exception of two or three copies which I still retain, have been distributed among my own especial friends, and three or four of the members of the Percy Society; one of whom was so kind (I being a total stranger to him) as to offer his services, not only to submit the same to the consideration of the Council of the Society, but, likewise, to honour me with his valuable services in adding thereto from foreign, and more ancient English manuscript and printed collections. I have acted upon his suggestion; and with his able assistance I can have nothing to fear.

Although the Collector has never seen a single copy either of Howell's, Ray's, Kelly's, Fuller's, or Henderson's Proverbs, he has slight hesitation in asserting that, after the most careful collation, many—very many—will be found in this collection which are not to be found in any other, either printed, or in manuscript. To him it has been a treasure constantly accumulating: few weeks pass-

ing over but one or more have been added to the mass of provincial literature. Like the Lambton worm, of northern celebrity,—

“It grew, it grew, and still it grew;”

or the *Pilgrim's Progress* of poor old John Bunyan,—

“————— Until, at last, it came to be,

For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.”

The remarks of Mr. Brand, when noticing “*vulgar rites and popular opinions*,” are equally applicable to PROVERBS, viz.: “They have indeed travelled down to us through a long succession of years, and the greater part of them, it is not improbable, will be of perpetual observation: for the generality of men look back with superstitious veneration on the ages of their forefathers; and matters that are grey with time, seldom fail of commanding those filial honours claimed even by the appearance of hoary age.”

“If before ye knew only these things, be not disgusted because I have inserted them; if ye shall know more, be not angry that I have not spoken of them, but rather let him communicate his knowledge to me, while I yet live, that, at least, those things may appear in the margin of my book, which do not occur in the text.”—*Guliel. de Malms.*