

Aphorisms

By J. W. Henson

When I read the "PROVERBS" of Solomon the son of King David, in the Bible, I try to understand the reason that caused him to write those terse words. A proverb is a summary of truth. I believe that Solomon would hold court, listening to the facts and arguments that were being presented. When he had enough information to pronounce a sentence of judgment, he would do so through the vehicle of a proverb. I try in my mind's eye to see the scene in the courtroom; to understand the facts that were praised or condemned with the proverb. I believe a novel could be written around each proverb, certainly a short story. I have entertained myself by the hour in this pursuit within the Book of Proverbs.

The aphorisms in this book were condensed from happenings of the workday. They were things that I observed, or was part of; things that were distilled into a short statement of apparent truth. The appearance of truth may be unique to my life experience, and be totally foreign to the reader. I do not uphold these sayings to be universal truth, but rather guides for my way through life.

There was a time when I was the Graphic Arts sales representative to the Cavalier Corporation. They are a very old company that builds machines to dispense bottled and canned soft drinks. There was an old receptionist there by the name of Ruth. She was a collector of proverbs that she found quoted by others. She would type them on sheets and make copies. The copies were then bound into books. She discovered that I valued what she did as a hobby and would give a copy of each new issue to me. I know nothing of what happened to her in the intervening years. I love to know what another does with their spare time; to know upon what they choose to spend their time when there is nothing pressing to be done. It's a window to the soul. The more hobbies and interests a person has the more I want to know and understand the diversities of their complex being.

Life is a fleeting blossom that can be bloomed to the fullest or obscured in the shadows to bring forth a small fragrant flower. The more flamboyant the personality of a person, the less colorful I find his life. It is the ordinary fellow that hides the truth of himself that I find of interest. That man with brightly colored clothes senses that he lacks true color and tries to add it to the outside. What a sham facade. The world looks very shallowly into the soul of the man. They do not value the true worth of the individual.

Let us each seek to find that which undergirds all mankind; that common denominator that rules all, knows all, and loves all.

The following sayings are samples from diaries and other writings that I have done over the years. They are but a few from the many that I have written.

1. It is a futile attempt to sell answers to those who only want to buy echoes.
2. He can speak most fearlessly bold who has the least to lose.
3. Foolishness is the salvation of the downtrodden, and the enslavement of the free.

4. Life without a diary is like a bird without a song.
5. Honest enemies are better than deceitful friends.
6. Let others say and think of you what they will, only know within yourself that you are true and honest.
7. It is in imparting knowledge and skill to others that we secure those things to ourselves.
8. To live apart from others, from their hustle and bustle, surrounded by the quiet beauties of nature is to enjoy a little of the peace of Heaven here on earth.
9. That which is obvious may be taught for truth.
10. If in eternity anything that can happen will happen unless restrained by the Almighty.
11. Temper in man, as in metal, causes a volley of sparks when struck with an abrasive.
12. Patience is the first ingredient of a noble character.
13. Patience brings peace, and peace underlies all of man's happiness.
14. Patience is the source of all happiness.
15. The supreme trio is patience, peace, and happiness.
16. It is truth for you to believe that what you think to be true and just for you is true and just for all mankind.
17. Success is easy for us to cope with, its failure that proves our worth.
18. It is in remaining simple and uncomplicated that we find life fresh and challenging.
19. One good and true friend is worth an army of friends who are self centered and self serving.
20. Faith is the strong road that we travel from Earth to Heaven.
21. The size of objects is unimportant. We can derive mighty thoughts from the microscope, and little or no important thoughts from the telescope, all depending upon how we react to our observations.
22. You cannot argue with ignorance for there is no common basis.
23. He who pays that which a thing is worth and sells by the same standard has committed two errors: first in paying too much and secondly in selling too cheaply.
24. Kindness is wiser than truth.
25. Let no one say it and say it to your shame that they were happy until you came.
26. As a cloudy day makes the sun seem brighter, so it is with sorrow.
27. We must understand in order that we may be understood.
28. In seeking to do another harm it is we who receive the greater hurt.
29. Money is the storage cell of time. If I have the money I can buy the time of others to serve my purpose.
30. Money in the hand of a fool is like snowfall on a hot day. It is a paradox to happen and is sure not to stick.
31. It is a hollow joy to pretend to be that which you would like to be, but are not.
32. The spark of life can be so very fragile, yet so tenacious.
33. Devotion alone is not a true motive.
34. Education is capable of producing ignorant and undisciplined people incapable of being productive.

35. It is no more possible to educate a fool than it is to withhold education from a wise man.
36. Joys and sorrows are the bumps and holes in the road of life.
37. Lay a broad foundation before you attempt to build too high.
38. It is not how fast you drive, but what you accomplish when you arrive that counts.
39. Improper communication is the basis of most of the world's ills.
40. Deceit is the dishonest man's way of achieving what it took honest effort to get in the first place.
41. My favorite sound is total silence.
42. Knowledge is a worthy pursuit, unless the chase erodes the quality of life.
43. View the future with expectant hope and the past with great fondness.
44. Do not enjoy the now so much that you deprive the future.
45. Do not plan so much for the future that you damage the quality of today.
46. The calendar is a milestone measuring our journey to the grave.
47. Peace of mind is better than great wealth.
48. Wealth seeks that which peace of mind already owns.
49. Neither ask nor accept another's advice, for he knows less of your affairs than you should.
50. I trust no man who is not married to a good woman.
51. If my watch is more than a minute fast or slow it does not deserve a place on my arm.
52. A pebble that rolls among its peers in a brook is rounded and smoothed.
53. You have no more right to say that this man is good than to say that another is evil. Both are judgmental. Say only that he pleases me, or that I dislike him.
54. We see but do not observe, hear but do not listen, talk but do not think.
55. To never support a church or school, to never watch over the bed of affliction, to never pay a just tax is to remove something from society without returning a thing to its place.
56. A man with one eye is king in a colony of blind men. So it is with insight.
57. Think twice before you act, then act.
58. There are hungers that bread will not satisfy and thirsts that water cannot quench.
59. Wisdom is knowledge aptly applied.
60. Simplicity is the product of a sophisticated mind.
61. A tale-teller is the producer of man-made yarn.
62. Some get an education in spite of going to school.
63. Practice the gentle art of letting others have their own way.
64. The lazy man is like a clock; he has time on his hands.
65. This morning I saw a small bird chasing a crow. I commented, "It's the spunk and not the size that counts".
66. To know and not share is to only half know.
67. A strong box with nothing in it is better than an empty head.
68. A beautiful morning is one when you feel good.
69. Most advice is like a rotting onion, it stinks.
70. Seize adversity and turn it into a profit. A bee can make honey of dung.
71. I have never been alone. I am in the most thoughtful and stimulating company when others are absent.

72. Theory is man's sixth sense.
73. Like a collared dog on a chain, man's fears hold him from advancing.
74. Of all the pollutions, mind pollution is the worse.
75. Compassion is the keystone of civilization,
76. The greatest monument a man can leave behind him is a good, productive child.
77. Age is a plus, not a minus. Proof: Every year you add one.
78. The mind must master the art of illogical thought to become a true idea dynamo.
79. Love is blind could be no truer than in the case of a blindfolded dog.
80. I have come to realize in my life that some of what I acknowledged as noble standards, were but worship at the high altar of opinion.
81. I do not ask of my friends that they be friendly, handsome or outgoing, but that they teach me truth and abide by their instruction.
82. It is the quality of ones children that makes him rich.
83. Man is the only animal that arises and puts on his own harness.
84. Evil is the misuse of good.
85. God will never experience an emergency.
86. The value of a man is in his ability to measure and test, and in his desire to do so.
87. Inflation and debt are the measure of man's greed.
88. Wisdom is the defining, and reducing of opinions.
89. Time is important only to man.
90. Man's fears come from his insecurities.
91. Man is a complex being who derives some of his most basic pleasures from simple enterprises.
92. To know why is better than to know how.
93. It ain't like it used to be and it shouldn't be.
94. Honest men entertain no political ambitions, and ask for no favors of those who do.
95. Error is but truth embellished for another's good.
96. Avoid two people; he who talks too little, and he who talks too much.
97. Reputation is the opinion of others; character is what you really are.
98. The world hungers for creative thought.
99. Behave in a manner that causes fools to wonder.
100. If you cannot be great, raise a great child.
101. Light of any intensity is to darkness as wise man is in the company of fools.
102. Shun the fool's wisest question for it contains venom.
103. It is not death that mankind fears, but only reaching that condition.
104. Do not polish a fool, for the base metal is the more exposed.
105. Disregard the fool's folly lest he consider you a brother fool.
106. Fret not that your opinions change, for life is growth, and growth is change.
107. It is of more virtue to avoid a problem than to invent a way out of it.
108. When our great father said, "I cannot tell a lie." he did.
109. Know where you go, for uncertainties cause one to lean upon another.
110. Choose those you hate with care.
111. Perfect freedom is anarchy.
112. There aren't any safety slogans around a funeral home.
113. Light travels friction free, darkness is heavily encumbered.

114. Become skillful at dismissing anxious thoughts, and worries.
115. The salesman is the one with the initiative, not the one with the product to move.
116. Art is a visual symphony.
117. A man apt to promise is a man apt to forget.
118. In all good things, anticipation is a greater joy than the actual event.
119. Love only that which can give love in return.
120. Shun that man who must be made an exception to the rule.
121. Choose your friends well and it won't require so many of them.
122. Strong words provoke strong actions.
123. There are those who carry no keys. Either they have nothing to protect, or others open the doors for them.
124. A man who stands all night with his leg in bear-trap displays endurance, not patience; endurance of necessity and not of bravery.
125. That art which serves not its master is worthless to him.
126. The bird cares not who rules the land.
127. As embarrassed as an old cat caught at play.
128. Challenge fear and see it flee.
129. Independence Day ... the day your wife is out of town.
130. You are the only one with the ability to make a fool of yourself.
131. If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.
132. Distant thunders boast of dangers that are not present.
133. She who cooks sparingly cooks for many years.
134. If there is nothing in your life worth dying for, there is nothing worth living for either.
135. It takes no special talents to complain.
136. Entertain large wants for they call us to large action.
137. If my strength were iron and my determination like flint, then would I ignite the world with a volley of sparks.
138. Creative genius is the spark of life.
139. Our ability to forget is as important as our memory.
140. We project upon others our own weaknesses,
141. He who feels alone when by himself is poor company when another is present.
142. All human progress begins as a theory.
143. I try to share a part of each day with myself.
144. I could have given him some advice, but withheld for fear he might repay it.
145. It is not the mass of a bowl that makes it useful, but the void.
146. The less one does, the more time he has to believe how busy he has been.
147. As smoke ascends into the air and is lost, so should be the fool's words.
148. All life and energy are drawn from the past. ,
149. Next spring's flowers lie beneath this winter's duff.
150. I would be at peace with all men. Let another if he must; risk the peril of being my enemy.
151. If the crow is to eat he must rise early.
152. Many students feel that they are preparing for life, and miss the fact that they are now living life.
153. If you do not possess genius yourself, practice stimulating it in others.

154. The joy of harvest lightens the toil of planting.
155. As small clouds evaporate and leave a clear, blue sky, so it is with small worries.
156. Provide no unwanted service.
157. Plagued is that man who has no good woman with whom to share his joy and mourn his loss.
158. Never allow yourself to appear totally harmless.
159. Pride generates the feeling that our lives have been worth sharing.
160. The art of retaining old friends is better than the gift of making new ones.
161. Only that which you do not possess is entirely safe from loss.
162. I feel that I have sold my time to another for less than it was worth to me.
163. Money wisely spent is the best saving of all."
164. Tomorrow is the only new frontier.
165. Every man should make of his life a memorial.
166. The brave do not burn lights while they are sleeping.
167. Man needs something more noble than himself to reflect on.
168. When you are far out front there is no one to get even with.
169. People are the secret of every successful enterprise.
170. I never spend much time condemning myself.
171. Being profitably occupied is reward enough.
172. Any service that only the government can furnish, the people live better without.
173. I am opposed to organizations; they whip the human spirit and force it into their mold.
174. If all are not given equal opportunity then there is opportunity for none.
175. I have often said that fat is like having a baby. Putting it on is fun, taking it off is labor.
176. A sermon is not what a preacher says, but what the heart hears.
177. All life flows toward those who are happy with out cause.
178. When the economy fails, the excesses of the ignorant drag under the frugal and the sensible.