

Appendix

AGRICULTURAL PROVERBS

Aristotle defined proverbs as remnants, which on account of their shortness and correctness, have been saved out of the wrecks and ruins of ancient philosophy. More modern definitions such as, ‘a short pithy saying in common and recognized use’ or ‘much matter decocted into a few words’ or ‘the wisdom of many and the wit of one’ set forth the same elements in slightly varying phraseology. The proverbs have exerted greatest influence on the literary geniuses of the world. Shakespeare has woven a great number of folk sayings into the fabric of his plays so skillfully that we no longer recognise them otherwise than as a part of the genius of the dramatist. The very titles of his plays such as, All’s well that ends well, Much Ado About Nothing and Measure for Measure have become handy and commonly used proverbs.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Haryana’s rural folk. Till recently animal husbandry was also tied to the apron strings of agriculture, though it has now emerged as an independent field of human activity. It is but natural that the bulk of proverbs which came down to us through oral tradition should have centred round agriculture and animal husbandry. This viewpoint, however, does not suggest that other socio-cultural aspects of life were not touched by this genre of folk-lore.

In this brief survey an attempt has been made to provide a glimpse of proverbs which deal with merits of various soils, rains, ploughing, manuring, sowing, selection of seeds, harvesting; plough cattle and milch cattle etc.

१००. उँ उँ [उँ उँ, - उँ [उँ उँ उँ उँ

This proverb shows the excellence of high lying village and a low lying field. This homespun truth of our ancestors has been duly recognized by the modern agricultural scientists. Low lying field is best suited for irrigation and a village situated on a comparatively higher level is saved from the fury of floods.

[उँ उँ उँ उँ, - [उँ उँ, - [उँ उँ

[उँ उँ, [उँ उँ [उँ उँ, [उँ उँ उँ उँ उँ

[उँ उँ, [उँ उँ उँ उँ, * उँ उँ, * [उँ उँ, उँ

* [उँ उँ, उँ उँ [उँ

All these proverbs refer to the characteristics of soil. Cultivation of stiff clay is an exercise in futility. The cultivator is destined to be ruined. Similarly

Kallar land can not yield any crop. Our forebears were not aware of gypsum, which has now made kallar land culturable.

२Ö, üÄÖê "ÖiYÖ, -Ö Ö, ü -Ö □ ÖêYÖ
 ÄÖÖœJü 'Öê -Ö "ü¾ÖÖ -ÖÖî-Ö, YÖÖÖ ÄÖÖ¾Ö-Ö
 *>ü □ ÖÖ¾Öê □ üÖî- Ö
 Öêšü 'ÖÖÄÖ ÖÖÖ YÖ-Öê-Ö, üÖÄÖ
 YÖÖÖ ÖÖÖ-ÖÖê²Ö, ü □ üÖ □ üß tÖÄÖ
 "ÖiYÖ, ²ÖiÄÖÖ □ Ö, Öêšü 'Öê ÖÖÖ²Ö, ü □ ÖÖ ÄüÖê ÖÖî
 ÄüÖ»Öß -Ö, üYÖß "ÖÖ*»Ö<êÄÖÖ □ üÖ»Ö -Ö -ÖÖ<

If it rains in Chaitra it has gloomy prospect for the Rabi crops. Easterly winds in Jyaistha make Pausa dusty and dry. If Jyaistha is sizzling hot, there is likelihood of rain. And after all if rain comes during Chaitra, Vaisakha or Jyaistha, the tiller must make the best of him time. He maynot find more opportune time than this.

Our folk literature also abounds in proverbs which deal with weather prognostics. There were no weather pundits to guide the farmers but even then the village folk through their uncanny insight and long experience of life could forecast the weather more accurately than our modern meteorologists. The following proverbs illustrate the idea in a brilliant manner.

YÖßYÖ, ü -ÖÖ □ Öß²ÖÖ»Öß, *¾Ö-Ö¾ÖÖ □ üÖ»Ö»Ö
 , êü □ Ö
 ÖÖê²Ö, üÄÖê, µÖê Ö, ü □ ü, êü µÖÖ 'Öê- ÖÄüà
 *¾ÖÄÖê □ Ö

If a widow uses kajal (antimony) in her eyes she is surely on the look out for a husband. Similarly if there are clouds like partidge feathers they are sure to rain. In both cases there is no uncertainty about it.

Here is another pithy saying about the certainty of rain.

ÄÖÖÓ—Ö □ úÖ₂Ö™êü%ú tÖî, ü ÄÖÖÓ—Ö □ úß Ö™üÖ
 □ ÖÖ»Öß—ÖÄüà ◊ÖÖÿÖß

Much long before modern agricultural practices came into vogue, our hardy farmer was well aware of the utility of proper ploughing. He knew very well that carrots required seven ploughings and barley needed nine ploughings. He was also aware that watering, weeding and hoeing were to be done after regular intervals. Following proverbs illustrate these observations.

ÄÖÖÿÖà₂ÖÖÄüß □ ÖÖ◊Ö, üÖÖ
 ÄÖÖsü₂ÖÖÄü □ ú ÖÖxü
 ₂Öß◊Öê ◊ÖÖî ÿÖÖê₂ÖÖÄü xêü —ÖÖî
 tsüÖ†ÖÄÖ ¾ÖÖÄü, □μÖÖ, üÄü—ÖÖ—Öß, —ÖÖî □ÖÖêxü
 ◊Ö₂Ö xêü □Öê □Ö*Öê □úß»ÖÖêxü

Fertilizer is the life of the soil. When there were no chemical fertilizers, compost was the only substitute of modern Urea which supplied all the nutrients required for the soil. On the utility of manuring, many maxims have been dished out by the farmers. Without manure, the soil is simply sand. When the farmer has nothing else to do, let him collect manure. This is the most practical advise to the farmer.

□ ÖÖÿÖ—Ö, Íêü ÿÖÖê □ ÖêÿÖ, —ÖÄüäÿÖê—Öæ, üÖ
 , êüÿÖ
 süÖ»Öß₂ÖîsüÖ xêüÖê¾Öê □ ÖÖÿÖ
 ◊ÖÖê □ Öê, êü □ ÖÖxü □ Ö, úß, ¾ÖÄüÆμÖÖê □ ú, êü ^—ÖÖ, úß

Farmers recognize the importance of good and sound seed. They also understand the importance of the method and timing of sowing. A good many sayings are found in our folklore dealing with the particular manner in which crops are to be sown, as regards distance or closeness of seed, or lines of seed. The following sayings express these ideas.

□ úÖ»ÖÖ»Öæ, üÖ □ ÖÖ»ü»Ö ¼ÖÖ»ÖÖ
 , üÖê □ úæü ÖÿÖ »ÖÖ†µÖÖê □ úÖ»ÖÖ
 »Öæ, êü □ êü ÖÿÖ æü □ ÖÖêæü-ÿÖ
 ÖÖÖæJü ÖÿÖß ÖÖJü ÖÖÖ □ Öß □ ú- ÖÖ
 "ú □ □ ÖJü ÖÿÖ □ ÖÖµÖÖ Öß ¼ÖÖ»ÖÖ
 ÖÖæü ÖÖæü ÖµÖÖê ×» ÖÖ □ úÖ»ÖÖ
 †ÿÖ-ÖßÖÿÖ □ úÖæÖü ÖæÖü □ ÖúÖÖ, »Öæ, êü □ êü ÖÿÖ
 æü □ ÖÖêæüÿÖ

It is proverbial that milk and curd have been the staple diet of Haryana. It is but natural that milch cattle would have occupied a place of pride in the lives of its people. In Hisar district it is common sayings :

□ ÖÖµÖæü-Ö □ úß, üÖ □ Ö»Öê, »ÖÖÖ ^ ÖÖ êüÿÖæ × □ Ö-Ö
 "úÖÖü - Öß □ ú, ü ÖßÖê "Ö»Öê, ¼Ö "úJü ²Ö "úJüß ×²Ö-Ö

On the other hand, anxiety inseparable from the possession of such valuable property is indicated in this proverb :

□ ÖÖµÖ - ÖÖ "úß, - Öæü tÖ¼Öê t "úß
 ÖÖê üÖ µÖÖ Ö ÖÖ ÖÖÖü □ úÖ, ü - ÖÖ □ ÖÖ¼ÖÖi,
 tÖi, üÿÖê - ÖÖ □ ÖÖ¼ÖÖi ÖÖÖÖÖß...
 tÖ»ÖÖ, - Öæü × □ úÖÖ - Ö - ÖÖ □ ÖÖ¼ÖÖi, ÖÖê, ü - ÖÖ
 □ ÖÖ¼ÖÖi □ ÖÖÖÖÖß...

An exorbitant rate of interest ruins a money-lender; the habit of uncontrolled laughter ruins a woman; the working time wasted in idleness and sleep ruins a farmer; coughing ruins a thief.

□ ÖÿÖß □ ú, üÖêÿÖÖê Öü»Ö ÖÖÿÖÖê, tÖ-Öß □ ú, üÖê
 ÿÖÖê ÖÖÖÖ, üÖüÖê...
 "Ö, üÖêü ÖÖ-Öæ "úÖê □ Öê, ÿÖÖÖÖÖÖü»Öü □ ü
 "æü üÖê □ Öê.....

The best way of cultivation is to plough it yourself; if you have a tenant, watch him; enquiries made sitting at home will yield nothing; you may have to sell your bullocks as the tenant will misappropriate most of the harvest.

× ◊ ÖÄÖ □ ÖéÿÖß - Öi □ ÖÄÖ - Ö - Ö ◊ ÖÖ¾ Öi, ¾ ÖÄü
□ ÖéÿÖß □ ÖÄÖ - ÖÖÖ - Öi □ ÖÖ¾ Öi...

A field which is not supervised by the farmer, reaps no harvest; the expenditure incurred will prove ruinous.

□ ÖéÿÖß ÿÖÖé ÖÖéÿüß □ ú, üü - ÖéÄü - ÖÿÖ □ ú, üü
ÄÖ¾ ÖÖ#Ö...
, üÖ - Ö - ÖÖÄü - ÄÖ - ÖÖ - ÖÄÖ □ úÖé - üÖé - üÖ □ úÖß - Ö
#Ö<.....

A farmer who handles a small area, but puts in hard labour, God willing, shall never be in want.

"üÖé» Öé, - ÖÖéü, ÖÖÖ - Ö, üÖ, µÖé ÄÖi, üüÿÖ □ ú - Ö
» ÖÖ» ü» ÖÖ...

Sandy soils suit the cultivation of gram, 'moth' and 'bagra'

□ ú» Ö, ü □ úÖ ÖµÖÖ □ ÖéÿÖ, □ ú - Ö"üß □ úÖ ÖµÖÖ
ÄüÿÖ...

The salt-infested land is of as much use as is a deceitful or malicious friend.

◊ Ö - Öß - Ö □ ú» Ö, ü, ÄÖüÖ ± ú Ö □ ú, ü...

The alkaline soils keep the cultivator in perpetual poverty.

, üÖéÄüß» ÖÖé - Ö, ÄÖ - ÖéÿÖ - Ö, ü, t, ü ÄÖÿÖ¾ Ö - ÿÖß
- ÖÖ, ü...
ÖÖéÿü - Öi - Öéÿü □ ÖÖ, µÖé - ÖÖ, ü ÄÖä, ü □ Ö
ÄÖÖÄÖ, ü.....

A heavy soil, meritorious son, virtuous wife and horse to ride, these are just four heavens on earth.

□ ÖêÿößÿÖÖê, êüÿöß³Ö»Öß × ÖÄÖ ÖêüÖ»Öß
 □ Öêÿö...
 □ ú, ü ÖÖê, Jêü □ úÖ Ö-Ä úÄêü, □ úÖ-ÿÖ, ÖÖÄü
 »Ö □ ÖÖêü ÄÖÿö.....

Even a sandy field is good, if manure has been added to it. The farmer's wife coaxes him to plough it seven times, for ample harvest.

t"úÖ²ÖßÖ ÖÖê□Öß □ÖÖü, ÖÖ×»Ö □ú □ÖäÖ
 ÖäÖÖ, üÖ ÖÖü...

Good seeds and enough manuring benefit both the landlord as well as the tenant.

ÖÖ, ü ÖÖÄÖ -Ö ÖÖÄêü²Ö, ü □ ÖÖÄÖÖ □ úÖ²ÖæÖü...
 ÖÖ □ Ö×ÄÖ, ü ÖÿÿÖ²ÖÄÖÖ □ Ö Öî, ü ÖÖiÖÖ ÖÖüü
 □ úÖêæÖüü.....
 †-Ö ÖÖ, üÖê □ úÖê "üÖêJü □ ú, ü, Ö, ü □ ÖÖ ÖÖüÖ
 ÖÖÄÖ...
 ÿÖÖê -Öæ, üß ÄüÖê¼Öÿÿö, üß ÖÖÄÖ...

Four months-Mangsir, Chet, Baisakh and Jeth-you do not need rains even of gold drops. The rain is welcome rest of the year. This ensures bumper harvests and safe threshing periods.

æü Ö³Ö»ÖÖ ÖÖê²ÖÖê»Ö □ ÖÖ, ÖÄêü³Ö»Öß ÖÖê
 Öä-Ö...
 ÄÖÖ¼Ö □ Ö³Ö»ÖÖ ÖÖê²Ö, üÄÖ □ ÖÖ, ÖÖê»Öê, üß
 Öæ-Ö.....

For the bards, it is good to speak and sing; for the daughter-in-law to be bashful and speak less; rains are good for Sawan, but hot sunshine is necessary for Jeth to let the crops mature.

—Ö, Jü» Ö □ μÖÖ ◊ÖÖê "ÖiYÖ, -Ö Ö, ü -Ö □ ÖêYÖ...

Rain during the month of Chet [March-April] ruins the harvest and consequently the household.

ÄÖÖ, Jü xüÖê tÖi, ü ÄÖÖ¾Ö □ Ö × -ÖYÖ...
¾ÖÖxüÖê "ÖÖ, ü tÖi, ü tÄÖÖê◊Ö □ ú.....

Two falls of rains in Sadh, daily falls in Sawan, four in Bhadon and one in Asoj, constitute the ideal rainfall of summer.

◊ÖÖ "Ö ·Ö □ êü -Ö "ü ·Ö ^Ö, ü □ úß tÖê, ü...
YÖÖÖ ◊ÖÖ □ ÖÖê -ÖÖ-Öß □ úÖ ◊ÖÖê, ü.....
×YÖYÖ, ü -ÖÖ □ Öß²ÖÖxü»Öß, ×¾Ö-Ö¾ÖÖ □ úÖ◊Ö»Ö
, êü □ Ö...
¾ÖÖ²Ö, üÄÖê¾ÖÖ "Ö, ü □ ú, êü tÄÖ "Öê "Öß-Ö-Ö
"Öê □ Ö.....

Lightning flashes in the North-West, and partridge-feather-shaped cloud indicate certainty of rain; just as a widow who puts kajal in her eyes is sure to find a husband.

-ÖÖ»ÖÖ -Ö, Jêü YÖÖê²Ö ÄüYÖ ×²Ö □ ÖÖ, Jêü...
ÄÖ, üÄÖÖê, YÖ, üÖ, "Ö □ ÖÖê □ úÖê "ÖÖ, êü.....

Frost is injurious to Rabi crops, it especially destroys, mustard, sesame, and gram.

»ÖÖ □ ÖÖ ×»Ö tÖê»ÖÖ □ Ö □ úÖ,
-Öß»ÖÖ ×»Ö tÖê □ ú, üÖê Jü.....
-ÖÖê»ÖÖ ×»Ö tÖê²ÖÖ Äü □ êü,
-Öß»ÖÖ ×xü tÖê "üÖê Jü.....

†üö-öβ²ööüö □ úÄöü 'öë □ öüüö,
 ²öæ, êü □ êü -öæü □ ööêüüö.....

White, blue and black are superior breeds, whereas the yellow and brown coloured are considered the worst.

—öä □ öö²öü»ö Äüöê -ö, ü»öê -öö, ü...
 Äööüüö □ ú, ü»öê ^, ü»öê -öö, ü.....

A 'Jhunga' bullock [with horns curved forward and downward] is one of the best breeds. Purchase it, without examining it. It is the best.

"üöüö 'öäöÄü töî, ü "üöüü □ úö-ö...
 t""êü²öü»ö □ úβµöö -öÄü "öö-ö.....
 "üöüüβ □ öæöü- ö²öî □ ö-ö- □ öä, üö...
 *²öÄö *»ö töê -ö □ úüö tö²öä, üö.....

A small muzzle and small ears are the marks of a good bullock. You shall not regret buying a bullock with short neck and with brinjal coloured hoofs.

²öü»ö *Äö □ öö»öö töî, ü 'öæöü 'öä"üö»öö.....

a bullock with a pair of mastic horns; a man with an impressive moustache are impressive.

Haryana, since its inception in 1966, has undergone a sea change. There is virtually transormation in all walks of life. Green revolution which swept the state during first decade of its inception wrought metamorphosis in the style of living and mode of thinking of people. Their tastes and means of entertainment have radically changed. Nowadays our villagers have no time to sit in the Chaupals to say and hear folktales. Folk-songs have been replaced by 'filmi' songs. Folk-tales, folk-songs and folk-drama have been sidelined by radio, television and cinema. In this fast changing rural scenario, old proverbs may sound irrelevant and seem reduandant. But apart from their academic value, they constitite a part of our cultural heritage. How did the modern society evolve ?

What are the various phases through which it had to pass? These questions have agitated the minds of social scientists who have made extensive studies of folklore of the people living in different parts of the world and most interesting conclusion they have arrived at are that there is a great similarity in the primitive beliefs and thoughts of the present day people, no matter in what corner of the globe they live. If we care to look from this angle it becomes imperative to preserve our folk literature from the ravages of time. There is no denying the fact that no civilized society can afford to destroy this invaluable asset of our cultural legacy.

References

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