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A writer remarks, "If men at the lowest as well as the highest stage of civilization enunciate the same truths, the fact goes to prove that these truths are unimportant." I can hardly assent to the conclusion, even were the premiss correct, whereas it is not. Those familiar with proverbial literature have remarked that some aphorisms are common in matter, and a few even in actual manner and form, to almost all nations and languages. The Syrian, for instance, will say, "The egg of to-day, not the hen of to-morrow;" and "A live dog is better than a dead lion." On the other hand, the points of difference are far more important. Setting aside the sayings which "bear the stamp of their birthplaces, and which wear the colouring and the imagery of their native climes," we find that there are proverbs peculiar to every race—proper to it, as are its syntax and its idiom; that each people speaks out the truth or the half truth which is in it, and, consequently, that for the most part neither the idea nor the wording bear comparison. Moreover, were it a fact that all enunciate the same truth, it by no means proves the latter to be unimportant, except to the few. The student of the nineteenth century will not, for higher thought, consult proverbs or proverbial philosophy, or other saws and instances; but he will treat not a few of them as chapters of anthropological and ethnological history; showing how truth arose in the silent education of the world; how the experience of every-day life gradually took shape and status; how the appreciation of experience became concrete in the pithy

aphorism, till at last the "wisdom of many" gained life by the "wit of one." In it he sees the process of a pencil of light stealing into the child-like savage brain, slowly but surely dispersing the fatal glooms of ignorance and prejudice, of falsehood and barbarism; assuming various degrees of illumination, and at last becoming the perfect day of wisdom and judgment, of truth and civilization. No wonder, as Count Lunan observes, that proverbs have ever been so popular with the human race.

As regards these Proverbia Communia. The labours of Pocock, Erpenius, Freytag; and others, have introduced to Europe the repertories of classical Amsal (الأمسال), in which the Arabs delighted from the days of the Khalifah Ali to those of El Maydani. My object is not so high. Returning to Western Asia, and resuming the studies which had been interrupted by long service in Africa and South America, I at once recommenced them at the commencement—the alloquials of a people new to me. Presently I remembered Burokhardt’s Amsal al Mard (Arabic and English, 1830), which aimed at illustrating manners and customs from proverbial sayings current at Cairo, and it appeared to me that the same might be done for Syria.

The modern dialect of Syria retains distinct traces of the old Aramean, and, as may be expected in a land where men live much at home, every great city—Damascus, for instance—preserves peculiar words and phrases. And without living interpretation it is impossible to master sayings of purely local use and unfamiliar allusion, further mystified by proverbial sententiousness and conciseness. They must, however, be learnt, and even committed to memory, before a stranger can feel himself at home with the people. Here proverbs have not passed from the learned to the vulgar tongues; they are in universal circulation, amongst all degrees, from the ignorant to the man of highest cultivation; and the apposite use of aphorisms is, like wit and eloquence, a manner of power. Some of the sayings are mostly confined to women, and the

1 His "Amsal al Arab," in four vols. octavo, is an excerpt from the vast collection of El Maydani.
nursery; not a few of them have some popular tale whose point they resume. Many are quoted only in part, the rest being suppressed for some obvious reason. So we, for instance, might say “facil per alium.” As will be seen, the peculiar vagueness inherent in Arabic speech allows them an immense range of application, and permits them to be used in a variety of senses, which require from us a certain amount of study. Nor is the labour of studying them for their own sake in vain. It is highly interesting to observe the modern succedaneum for the old aphoristic philosophy of Syria, which in some form or other has overspread the civilized world.

Of all the races known to me, the Syrians and certain West African tribes are those who delight most in proverbs. The Spanish type, immortalized in Sancho Pança comes next; the Portuguese loses much of the characteristic; and the Brazilian, his descendant, has wholly lost it. When visiting Goruba I was so much struck by the speeches and harangues—mere conglomerates of quotations—that I persuaded Messrs. Tinsley to publish, in 1865, a collection of 2859 proverbs, popular amongst seven Negroid and Negro nations. The volume, which bore the title of “Wit and Wisdom from West Africa,” was not so successful as the Adagia of Erasmus, and of course brought out the remark that the “sparkles of wit were few and faint, and the wisdom of the mildest order.” This was to be expected. But my object was to make the people describe themselves, to put them, as it were, in the witness-box upon their racial trial. Pace the critics who differed from me, I cannot but think that the idea of the compilation was good. At any rate, it obtained the approval of one whose opinion in such a matter is worth a thousand cavils of men, who, ignorant of the subject, must borrow from the book itself the arms with which they would assail it. I need hardly mention the name of Mr. William Stirling, now Sir William Stirling Maxwell, of Keir.

This little repertory of proverbs, which I hope soon to supplement with others, was supplied to me by Mr. Hanna Mish, honorary dragoman of H.B.M.’s Consulate, Damascus.

1. “She who hath her husband with her, shall turn the moon with her finger.”

2. “Bring girls, and sit not to no purpose.”—It is better (for a woman) to bear girls (if she cannot have boys), and not to remain childless.

3. “Girl upon girl, and not retaining (barren) for a year.”—Meaning the same as No. 2.

4. “My lady without (the) queasiness (of pregnancy) is unwell.”—Said of a woman who affects to be an invalid; to be delicate, to be interesting.

5. “Love and pregnancy, and riding upon a camel, cannot be hid.”—Similar to the Persian “Musk and murder cannot be concealed.”

6. “However much the brown woman works, it will not pay for her eye-paint and rouge.”—Applied to men and women who spend more than they make. So the Turkish proverb, Fantasia chok, parah yok.

7. “Go the round way, though (it be) long, and marry the daughter of a house (i.e. good family), though she be stale (or has lain fallow, from بير).

8. “The scald-headed woman prides herself on the hair of her (maternal) aunt’s daughter.”—Said about a small or a bad man who boasts the greatness or the goodness of his relatives.
9. "The ass prides himself upon the horse being his (maternal) uncle."—Meaning the same as No. 8.

10. "Like the Jew who (ever) chooses the meanest work."—Said of one who neglects important for trivial matters.

11. "Like Jew beggars, who enjoy neither this world nor the next."—Said of a man who fails in life. So they also say Mišiyel ʾravakkhireh (plur. of Fakkhaře, a jar-maker) wa la dunya wa la akhīreḥ. The jar-maker is proverbially a rascal, and his calling is a poor one. The first three words are generally found sufficient; and to make it more offensive to the Jews, Moslems say, Mišiyel yahād.

12. "Be wroth, O aunt! (here means a stepmother) for all thy curses are in vain."—Said to any one who curses or uses bad language. Fisṣaf ish means literally "vapid wine."

13. "A thousand curses never tore a shirt."—So our adage, "Hard words break no bones."

14. "The mouse is not pure, nor is her prayer answered (by heaven)."—Said to a bad man who curses.

15. "Turn the jar mouth downwards: the daughter will turn out like the mother."—The first half is merely for the purpose of rhyme. Li ummiḥā is also said, instead of Miši ummiḥā.

16. "Girl, who raised thee (so high)? Thine honour (i.e. husband) and the house of thy mother-in-law." (Bayt Hamā, the husband's family; Hamu, father-in-law; and Hamā, mother-in-law.)

17. "(Let a man wear) foul rages, but not show (a naked) skin."—Said, for instance, to woman. Meaning that though poor she may be honest.

18. "Girl! don't exult in thy wedding dress. Ah! how much trouble is behind it."—Said to a man enjoying himself without thought of the future.

19. "Go not amongst the tombs; nor smell evil odours."—Said to one, for instance, who wishes to meddle in troubles which do not concern him.

20. "Say not to the singer, sing, nor to those praying, pray."—Meaning, it is useless to ask a man to do what he is compelled to do; he will only make excuses, and perhaps refuse.

21. "Instead of saying to the hen Kish (pet! be off), strike her and break her leg."—Spoken by one asking a favour from another; and when the latter, who can grant it, makes excuses and puts him off.

22. "Raham al-dik and Shof and Ye'eke."—Befriend the cock, and see where he bears you. Evil communications corrupt good manners. (Shuf for shuf: others say: Yomoon al-owl.)

23. "Every goat is stuck to her circle."—Said after giving good advice to a man who will not take it.

24. "All the roads lead to the mill."—Spoken to a man who tries roundabout ways, when he can go straight to the point.
25. ما يجي الأبراق من العراق حتى يكون ملسوغ اليوم فارق.
"There is no rising up without a falling down in front of it."—Meaning, that any man will have his turn of good and bad fortune.

26. "The tyrtyak (Mithridate) will not come from Irak (where it is made) till the man bitten by the snakes is released (by death)."—Said by a man whose important business is deferred. Others say, Male' el havad, i.e. the victim of love.

27. على قد بسانك عليه رجليك.
"According to the size of your carpet stretch your legs."—The same as our "Cut your coat according to your cloth."

28. لسائعة مثل مقص السكاف لا يقص الا التهامه.
"Like a cobbler's scissors, which cut nothing but the impure (leather)."—Spoken of a foul-mouthed man. Often the first half of this proverb is found enough.

29. كل الكلاب أحسن من حيمور.
"Every dog is better than Haymúr (proper name of dog, generally pronounced Hammúr)."—The speaker is supposed to declare his dog worse than all others. Said by a man who complains of his wife, children, friends, and so forth.

30. مثل الكلاب شعبه أو جوجه.
"Like dogs, full or empty (it is all the same)."—Benevolently said of a poor man, or of one who wants everything.

31. النذر للذير و الوضاح على سمعان
"Gifts to the convent and filth (polite people prefer El báthá, toll and trouble) for Samaan (proper name of the convent servant)."—Said of a servant or a slave working for his master.

32. كل الدبور تصمع والضمت الى أبو بونبر.
"All the cocks crow, but honour is given to the crested cock (Abú kumburah, a bird with feathered tuft, and there-

fore more remarkable)."—Spoken of a man who carries off honours or profit from those more deserving.

33. كل شي عند العرب صابون.
"Everything is soap to the Arab."—Meaning, all is fish that comes to his net.

34. حتا ابن متنا الذي عاش اللف وما أتاه وما تبنا.
"Hanná, son of Manná, who lived a thousand one hundred years, and never enjoyed himself."—Said to one complaining of a little misery. The Spanish Ommiad Khalifet el Naar, "the heir of prosperity," was more easily contented; he owned to the happy days in a reign of fifty years and seven months.

35. إذا اجعت حوران تسأيد هجاه.
"When the Hauran (plain) fails, Hijanæch (the swampy region east of Damascus) supplies (provision)."—Popularly said in praise of Hijanæch.

36. الطري طري الأرض للسلاط.
"My rump is my rump, and the land is the Sultán's."—Spoken by a man, for instance, when another would turn him out of his place or property.

37. يشتق خرج لا يتعدت ولا يتعمل.
"The tassel of a saddle-bag, which cannot straighten nor incline (the saddle)."—Applied to a ne'er-do-weel, a useless fellow, a man of no consequence.

38. غنيف برغيف ولا بيات جارك جياع.
"A loaf for a loaf (i.e. lend him a loaf), and let not thy neighbour remain hungry (for he will return thy loan)."—Meaning, assist thy brother man, and he will assist thee.

39. خمزكم أكبر من خزينا عجرينا برغيف.
"If your bread be greater than our bread, shame us with a loaf!"—Said to one from whom a favour is wanted, and who boasts that he can do it.
40. “Your neighbour who is near, and not your brother who is far.”—Meaning, your neighbour who does you good is better than a brother who does not. Also, a live dog is better than a dead lion.

41. “The eye cannot rise above the eyebrow.”—Said by an inferior to a superior, who would do him more honour than he deserves.

42. “The eye does not oppose a collyrium needle.”—Meaning, you are too cunning of fence for me to fight you.

43. “If there were any good in the owl, the hunter would not pass her by (but would have shot her).” Spoken thus, a man would buy an article; he hears that it has been seen and not bought by another whose judgment he values, and then he applies the proverb. Also, it means that the valuelessness of a person or thing is his or its safety.

44. “One para (misiyeh) worth of watercress (is enough), and I won’t dishonour you, O myself!”—Better be contented with humble fare (etc.) than support an obligation.

45. “Of the month which does not profit you, count not all the days.”—Meaning, take no useless trouble about what will not do you good.

46. “Woe to him who has no nails, and woe to him who has no (one to) back (him).”—The man who has no nails cannot enjoy King James’s greatest pleasure, and the friendless man cannot prosper.

47. “Every cock crows loudly on his own dunghill.”

48. “The stone in its place is a kantar (hundredweight).”—The same as No 47. Also they say, Hasweh sayhıch tasnud khābiyeh kantarıyeh. “The little pebble supports (upright) the jar that holds a kantar (hundredweight).”

49. “He whose head is light soon tires his feet.”—Meaning, that the foot is always running about; or said of a man who does a thing without reflection, his bolt is soon shot.

50. “Speech is of silver, silence is of gold.”—An old proverb in Syria; a comparatively new saying amongst us.

51. “A thorough-bred mare is not disgraced by her (bad) saddle.” They also say, Jarād hā, “her packsaddle.” The Jilāl is the flat pad, the Sarj is after the Frankish fashion.—Spoken, for instance, of a rich man in a bad hat.

52. “The cullender is not hindered by a hole (more or less).”—Applied, for instance, to a man who habitually lies.

53. “Every thing in its place resembles its race.”—There is a similar saying, Kullu and gumzah (حَمْضَ) mà fih. “Every pot pours out its (own contents).” Good trees bear good fruits.

54. “Quoth the merchant to his son, look at the habitual buyer (the pratique), and deal to him accordingly.”—Meaning, treat every man as he deserves.
55. "The mouse fell from the ceiling, and the cat cried 'Allah.' The mouse replied (generally kalat liha et farah), 'go far from me, and I am with a thousand blessings from Allah.'" Allah, is ejaculated when a man stumbles or falls. Said to a man who is getting into the hands of those who will harm him.

56. "When the cow falls, the knackers flock (to her)."—Meaning, when a man gets into trouble his enemies collect to injure him.

57. "He who despises men will be killed (for the sake of) a turnip."—Meaning that if a man oppose one stronger than himself he will be lost by the least faux pas.

58. "Had there not been a locust, the bird would not have fallen."—This alludes to a long story about a bird following a locust into a house, and being trapped. The king was anxious to take a young woman called Jeradeh (the locust) from her old husband named Uafur (the bird); and the latter managed to escape by using the proverb. It is applied to a person who ventures too much. Also it means, "If I had not bribed him, I should not have won my cause."

59. "Oh! how many were my friends when my vines produced syrup; and oh! how few were my friends when that same vine dried up."—Familiar to all, Donec eris feli multis numerabis amicos.

60. "Like the fowls which always think of the broken (or spoilt, corn, poultry food)."—Said to a man always talking shop, about money, or women, for instance.

61. "As long as you lie on this mat, it will become neither longer nor shorter."—Meaning, whilst you are so lazy and inactive, you will do no good, you will not prosper.

62. "What is the bitter to one (who has tasted) the more bitter?"—Said when misfortunes or sorrows come one after the other.

63. "Let not the eye discover what pains the heart."—Meaning, wink at small annoyances. Also, the heart does not grieve at what the eye does not see.

64. "Like the hen who is not mistress of her own eggs."—Said to a man of property who is not master in his own house.

65. "Every worm-eaten (corn-)grain has a blind (others say one-eyed) measurer."—Reproving a servant, for instance, who buys a bad article. Also, Toute fade et a son fade.

66. "Lying is the salt (goodness) of men, and shameful (only) to one who believes."—Said to a great liar, whose lies are, like salt, required for all kinds of food. It is also used in a literal sense, even as Bacon declared that the mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure—only a little less usually than the Syrian adage. The first half is often said without the second, and then it becomes a curious index of material thought.

67. "Blame not the absent (who is doing your work) till he shall appear."—Similar to our De mortuis, etc. Les absents ont toujours tort.
68. "Like the Murábain (hired labourers) who rejoice at the opening of the grain-bags (which benefit the master)." — Spoken to or about a man who works for another’s advantage.

69. "Follow the liar to the house-door (i.e. to the end of his lies)." — Said of a "promising" man, push him as far as possible.

70. "He who plays with the cat must suffer her claws." — Addressed to one, for instance, who is insulted after speaking to a rude fellow, who has touched pitch, and has been defiled.

71. "From the number of his daughters, even the dog (in the streets) has become his son-in-law." — The man with many (plain) daughters must make presents to every one in order to get them off his hands.

72. "Like the dustman’s donkey, who paces swaggering, and yet carries only dirt." — Spoken of or to a pretentious fellow. Also they call him Himar Muhamma Asfur, "ass laden with books."

73. "He who wants the dog says to him, ‘Good morning, O my uncle,’ (or, Sabahah el khayr haji halb, ‘Good morning, Mister Dog.’)" — So the people of Trinidad wittily say, Déir chein, cé chein; Devant chein Cé, “Missier Chein.”

74. "The hand which you cannot bite, kiss it, and pray that it may be broken." — Same meaning as 73. They also say, "He kisses the hands and he laughs at the beards."

75. "Hell and amongst the slippers?" — Meaning, for instance, that when you condense to visit your enemy you expect to be civilly treated, and yet you are not — adding insult to injury. Also, don’t let people say that I am in hell and also disgraced; I am lost in both worlds.

76. "Every one has stung him, even the horse-fly." — Said about a man who suffers from every one.

77. "The crooked furrow is (the work) of the big bull." — Meaning that the fault is from the great man. A saying often used about the rulers, who, of course, should set the best example.

78. "Never in all his life shall the divider (arbitrator) go to heaven." — Because the arbitrator in these lands is always a rascal; he gets the best portion — the oyster, not the shells.

79. "Get rid of the Badowi (wild man) with a cloak, and not with the whole cloak-market." — Meaning, sacrifice a little to save much.

80. "Speak of the wolf, and make ready the club." — So our adage, “Talk of the Devil,” etc.

81. "The honest man appears when he is spoken of.” — Said as No. 80. Also about a man who does good.

82. "Do not boast of thy many children before Izrail (the angel of death), or of thy wealth before the tyrants.” — The first half of this phrase is the more used.
83. لَتَقُولُ نَوْلُ حَتَّى يَصِيرُ بِالْمُكِبَّلِ

"Do not say ‘beans’ before they are in the measure.”—So our proverb about counting chickens; the vision of Mirza, etc.

84. حَصَابُ العَفَّالِ مَا يَبْذِجُ عَلى حَصَابِ البِيْدَرِ

"The estimate of the field (whose crop is still in grass) does not agree with the estimate of the thrashing-floor.”—Same signification as 83.

85. يَا حَوْاجِيَهُ يَا عَيْبُهُ عَلَى المَغْنِسِ الْبَابِلِ

"O his (fine) eyebrows! O his (fine) eyes! they show upon the mughitasal (place where the Moslem dead are washed).”—This is especially a woman’s proverb, meaning, it is useless to praise a thing which is before your eyes. They generally say, Ya hawajibhu, ya uyunhu, etc.

86. شَدّ الأَخْمَطِ وَطَهُّ الَّذِي أَلْحَبَّهُ يَشْرِبَ مَوَهَّهُ

"Tighten the thread and draw it close; whose has a share let him put it down (contribute it).”—Said, for instance, to a shareholder, one of a picnic, etc., who grumbles.

87. عَشَرَةٌ حَلَقَاتُ يَحْكِمُ وَشَرْبُ موَهَّهُ

"A friendly party of Aleppines laugh, jaw, and drink water.”—Our “tea and turn out.” Tahannak from hanak, a jaw; in low language, as we say, to jaw, to chaff.

88. دِيْكُ الْخَيْبَى مِنَ البَيْضِ يِبْصَمُ

"The clever cock crows from the egg.”—Alluding to a sharp boy: also meaning that the boy is the father of the man.

89. كُلُّ الْجِمْلَةَ بِعَارِكَتۡ مَا عَدَ جَمْلَا بَارِكَتۡ

"All the camels are fighting together, except our camel, which is kneeling.”—Said by a man to himself when others are working round him, and he does nothing. Jamal-kum is used if applied to another. It also means all are employed except myself.
"The church which is near does not cure."—Said of a man, for instance, who buys (or consults a doctor, etc.) from afar, when he can buy as well near. Also of near relations, one's cousins, for instance. Opposed to the Scotch idea of blood being thicker than water.

98. حس الطلب يؤدى إلى بعيد.
"The noise of the kettle-drum goes far."—Report flies abroad: the end often omitted is :u rei fārīgh, "and she is empty inside." That would be said of a windy boaster, etc.

99. صوت الطبل غطّى البابان.
"The sound of the (big) drum drowns the flute."—Said of a great man when a greater appears. Also in the form Ajā (has come) el Tabl, etc.

100. جمل مطر الجمل يبرّك.
"The camel kneels on the place of the camel."—Spoken, for example, when dismissing a servant; another can soon be found. "There are as good fishes in the sea," etc.

101. كنت اصلي حتى تحصل ليما حصلت أصلي.
"I used to pray till I obtained (what I prayed for); but when I obtained it, I left off praying."—Meaning, for instance, women fawn and flatter till they get what they want.

102. المعروف مع غيره له نايع.
"Kindness is wasted on the undeserving (the ungrateful)."

103. خذ الأصل ولو ان له على الصبر.
"Take the noble, though (sleeping) upon a mat."—Meaning, in marriage (or in hiring servants, and so forth) prefer blood to money.

104. لجمل لشاف حربته لوين فكك رئبته.
"If the camel had seen his hunchback he would have fallen and broken his neck."—Corresponds with Burns' lines about the "Gifftie."
"If he (the muleteer, etc.) be walking upon this road, let him sew with another pack-needle."—Said, for instance, of one who asks an impossible favour, deeming it easy, "Let him take some other thought!" this pack-needle can do no good.

"Dew fills not upon an empty well."—Said to a person who lives beyond his income.

"This filter will not fill the (water-) skins."—Same as 114.

"Whoso knocks at the door hears the reply."—Similar to our "Knock, and it shall be opened to you."

"No skin has burst, and no oil has been lost (lit. poured out)."—Used when a man wishes, for instance, to decline a contract.

"If thou knock at a door which is not opened to thee, consult thine honour and go."—Said when a favour is asked of one who makes excuses.

"Is not Fatimah (my daughter) at her task? Is not Hasan (my son) at his school?"—Meaning "What matter to me?" Kuttab in low language means a school.

"He is not of those who believe, or of those who disbelieve."—Said of a man who does not care for anything. (Quoted from the Koran.)
They said to the blind man, “What dost thou desire?”
He replied, “A pair of eyes!”—Said when you offer a thing
which you know is wanted.

“He who is not of thy loins, however mad he be, be glad.”
—Because his madness does not concern you. A rascal
proverb, and great contrast to the *Homo sum*, etc.

“My lover is handsome, and a breath of wind came to
him (and made him love me the more).”—Meaning, he was
glad (or grieved), and now he is the more gladdened (or
grieved). To whom much is given, more shall be given us.

“I love my friend, though he be a black slave.”—Said
when a man blames you for liking what is not worthy.

"Like the teacher of boys, whose beard is there, but whose
wits are nowhere."—Said to an absent man, one *cupo concen-
trate*, etc. There are the usual multitude of stories against
schoolmasters. It is enough to quote part of this proverb,
*e.g.* Hanir el dakan.

"The invitation of the ass to a wedding is to (carry) wood
or water."—Said, for instance, of a man who has no right to
be in a distinguished assembly; of one who works without
pay, etc.

"(It is) my country (home), although comfort has fallen
out with me; (it is) my family, although they fail to befriend
me."—Used, for instance, when advising an exile to go home.

"If (one's) birth-place were not deadly, the poor lands (of
the world) would be deserts, (as no one would go abroad).”—Almost the same as No. 134.

"He who wisheth not to marry his daughter asks much
(read) money."—*Nakd* is the same as *Mahr*, the pre-nuptial
settlement made upon the *Moslemah*. Said of one, who not
wishing to sell, asks a ridiculous price. In Syria, men do not
refuse to part with an article to a superior, but demand some-
thing unconscionable, as £100 for a dog.

"He talks a stick from every valley."—Said of one who
talks much nonsense. A favourite proverb with the
peasantry; not used in the city, but of course intelligible.

"Like my mistress, like my master."—Supposed to be said
in the language of a black slave girl. Applied to a man
who cannot get satisfaction from or content any one. It
would also mean, "There is no good (to be got) from my
mistress or my master." Amongst Syrian Moslems the
grandchildren address their grandparents Sidi and Sitti.
The Christians for Sidi would say Jaddi.

"No nail can scratch (thy body) but thine own."—Advising
a man to do his own business, and not to ask the aid of
others.

"The (live) coal burns only its place."—Meaning the heart
knoweth its own bitterness, etc. Said to those who administer
useless pity.
الذي تخدمه طبعه والذي ترهبه بعده

"Obey the man thou servest, and sell the thing thou pledged."—Because it is useless to keep it. The proverb means, finish off your business—*Age quod agis.*

بيت الذي رباني ما ينساني

"The house which brought me up will not give me up (forget me)."—Although you will not assist me, others will.

كل شيء تزببه يلفتك إلا بني آدم يقلعك

"Every thing (which) thou plantest will profit thee, save the son of man, who will uproot thee."—Ingratitude is apparently the rule in Syria.

جناك يا أترعر نوانسنا كفدت قريئك وخونينا

"We brought thee, O scald-head! to be company with us; thou didst uncover thy scald-head and frighten us."—Said of a friend whom you summon to your aid, and yet he goes against you.

من تزوج من غير ملته بموت يعبر عنه

"Whoso marries out of his faith, he dies a living death (lit. he dies of a disease besides his own disease)."—The significance is evident. The proverb is also said to one who meddles with what does not concern him.

من آمنك لا تكون وله كنت خوان

"One who trusts thee, deceive not, though thou be a deceiver."

ان ضاعت الأمانة اعمل ميزنك عبك

"If trust be broken make thy pocket thy store."—Spoken to a man when you lose confidence in him.

يقتل القلم ويطع في جمانه

"He kills the killed (man) and goes to his funeral."—Applied to a man who tricks you and pretends sympathy or friendship.

هل يدّه يوم ما يقول أحد

"He who wants *nah* (goodies), says not *Ah.*"—Meaning, who wants to be a rich or great man must not show funk or doubt.

In Syria, and especially in Damascus, there is a child's language, which may perhaps number a hundred words, and which has found its way into literature. Witness the following rather pathetic "Rubai" of the Shaykh Abd el Ghani el Nabulusi:

طعميتكا الدم ونعنم ونسم الحم

"I fed thee with the *nam* (goodies) and the *nam-nam* (goody-goodies);
And I gave thee drink (*unbu*), and I clothed thee in silk the *dah* (nice);
And when thou askest a tip (*tiss*) I could not say thee *bah* (there is none);
But to-day, O my beloved! I am the bugbear (*bu*-*bu*), and another man is the nice (*dah*)."

In the proverb *nah* is a child's word for sweetmeats. *Ah* is the exclamation when eating something too hot, or when wanting to be led to the closet; in the latter sense *kikh* and *kukh* are used by the nurse. *Daadah* means "walking," *du*, "falling," *a'-a* (ثابات), "going near something dirty." The camel, the horse, the ass, all have their nursery names, and these are sometimes by no means easy to write.

خاص التجارة لا مكسب ولا خصاره

"The specialty of trade is not to gain and not to lose."—Said to a man when disappointed of a great profit.
"The greatness of the threshing-floor, and not the exultation of thine enemies."—Meaning, he works hard in order to disappoint those who would revel in his misfortunes.

"The madman has none (to care for him) but his own (people)."—Said to a man who is friendly, and from whom you want a favour. Also meaning, "No one will have patience with your illhappens but a relative." A similar saying is, مَا لَيْسَ يُرْضِيُكَ إِلَّا أَحْيَاءٌ, "No sympathy with the lute except its wood" (its shell). Applied to the wife, taking the part of her husband, etc.

"He has learned from love (only) the word Awnashtaro," "(You have made me sad by your absence," "it is long since I saw you)."—He learns only that, and he pretends to know much. Applied to a man who would be a sage, a doctor, a merchant, etc.

"The departed (from this world) has no friend."—Spoken of a man always changing his friends during life.

"On God's day, God helps."—Said, for instance, to a person who predicts your failure.

"The lowland drinks its own water and the water of the other (upland)."—Meaning, he keeps friendly with all.

"He who marries my mother becomes my (step-) father."—We must be resigned to those who govern us. Annas is the paternal uncle, the step-father, or the father-in-law.
"Death is not enough for the dead, he must be squeezed in his grave."—Meaning, a man not only dies, his family must spend money on his funeral. Said also, when, for instance, a man has too much to do, and more business comes. A similar saying is khurkah (for khirkah) fauk el khurduk, a wad or rag upon the (charge of small) shot; and Shankuleh fauk el himl, a package upon the load—the last straw that breaks the camel's back.

"We said to thee, 'cook it,' not burn it."—Pas de zèle.

"The timbrel burst and the lovers were scattered."—Quoted when offence is taken in company and all part displeased.

"Everything new brings joy; everything old brings repulse."—The new broom expels the old.

"Preserve thy old; (for) thy new will not last thee."—Opposed to the former. In Syria also these sayings are in pairs.

"His stomach from (eating) sour things is crude."—Said when trouble (or business) comes upon trouble, etc.

"Much meddling went to hell (and) said, 'The fuel is green' (there)."—Of course it is useless to tell those there what the state of the fuel is. Ghalabah is mostly applied to excessive talking, e.g., Lâ takassar el ghalabah / in Persian, Fuzuli ma-kun.
وعى الكبير يساى الصغير. 181.

"The big vase contains the small one."—That is to say, "Be patient, you are a greater (or wealthier) man than he is."

لا بد بذوب الثلج ونبان الوحم. 182.

"The snow must certainly melt and show the filth" (also خيرًا). Spoken of a man who makes much fuss about business of no importance.

مثل دجاج داريا بيتركت افعمه وبيكل الجميرة. 183.

"Like the hen of Daraya (village) that leaves the wheat and eats the filth," which explains itself.

الفاية عوجة. 184.

"The cucumber is crooked."—Meaning, you can’t make the cucumber straight, or the liar a truthful man. So they say, Zanab el kalb aawaj wa lau hattuh alf sanat li’l kalb, "The dog’s tail is crooked though you put it in the mould for a thousand years." Applied to bad government, etc.

ما شفنت ولا قمت ولا بعرف. 185.

"I have not seen, and I have not perceived, and I don’t know."—It is said that this is the first sentence of the catechism taught to the Jewish child at Damascus.

كل نغل جائز وكل مطلوب حرام. 186.

"All (things) done are lawful; all (things) asked for are unlawful."—Used when encouraging a man to act upon his own responsibility.

مثل خورى عين طينه. 187.

"Like the priest of Ayn Tinah." They relate that the parishioners having complained of their tyrannical parson to the Moslem authorities, found him sitting amongst and in high favour with the latter. A kind of Vicar of Bray. Said of one from whom you cannot escape.