

1. Word to the Wise (A). "Verbum sap." Brewer, p. 1313, 1st col.

The proverb is found in Ben Jonson, The Case is Altered, act i. sc. 1; Hyckley, The Gentleman Dancing-Master, act ii. sc. 2; John Crowne, Vanbrugh, see also, act iii. sc. 1; The Spectator, No. 221, Nov. 13, 1711 (by Addison).

"If you were wise, a word would serve."—Ford, The Witch of Edmonton, act iii. sc. 1.

"A word to the wise is enough."—John Crowne, The Country Wife (1695), act iii.

"A word to the wise is enough, and many words won't fill a bushel."

Love Richard Improved (1758).

2. Penny saved (A). A penny saved is two pence gained. In French,

"Un centime épargné en vaut deux". Brewer, p. 959, 2nd col.

"A penny saved is a penny got."

Thomson, Castle of Indolence, cant. i. St. 50.

3. Necessity. Make or virtue of necessity. (Shakespeare: Two Gentlemen of Verona, iv. 1) Brewer, p. 881, 1st col.

John Bartlett, in his Familiar Quotations, 8th edition, p. , quotes, besides the above citation from Shakespeare, from Rabelais, Book I, ch. xi.; Chaucer, Knight's Tale, line 3044; Matthew Henry, Commentaries, Psalm xxxvii. Ps. lxxvii. Ps. lxxviii. Ps. lxxviii. Ps. lxxviii. It is also found in William Painter's The Palace of Pheasant (ed. Jacobs), vol. iii. pp. 150, 191, 215, 233.

"to turn necessity to a virtue"—Howell, Familiar Letters (ed. Jacobs),  
bk. i. sec. 6, let. 3.

4. Necessity the tyrant's plea (Milton: Paradise Lost, book iv. verse 393.)  
Brewer, p. 881, 1st col.

"Necessity's a tyrant."—Ben Jonson, The New Inn, act i. sc. 1.

5. Wild-goose chase. To hunt after a mare's nest. This chase has two defects: First, it is very hard to catch the goose; and, secondly, it is of very little worth when it is caught. Brewer, p. 1301, 1st col.

The expression may be found in Chapman, Monsieur D'Elive, act i. sc. 1; Massinger, The Guardian, act v. sc. 2, and his A Very Woman, act i. sc. 1.



6. Curry Favour. The French courir, to hunt after, to seek, as courir une charge, courir un bénéfice, to sue for a living; courir les tables, to go a spunging. Similarly, courir les faveurs, to sue for, court, or seek favours. Brewer, p. 318, 2nd col.

"Currey favour."—Lily, Euphues and his England (Arber's reprint, p. 368).

Pepper.

7. To take pepper in the nose. To take offence. The French have a similar locution, "La moutarde lui monte au nez."

"Take you pepper in your nose, you was our sport."—The Spanish Gipsy, iv. 190. Brewer, p. 261, 1st col.

"takes pepper in i' th' nose."—Chapman, May-Day, act iii. sc. 4.

"take pepper in the nose."—Lily, Euphues and his England (Arber's reprint, p. 375).

8. Harp. To harp for ever on the same string; To be for ever leading one about the same subject. There is a Latin proverb, Sandum cantatenum recipere. I once heard a man with a clarionet play the first half of "In my cottage near a wood" for more than an hour, without cessation or change. It was in a crowded market-place, and the annoyance became at last so unbearable that he collected a rich harvest to move on.

"Still harping on my daughter."—Shakespeare: Hamlet, ii. 1. Brewer, p. 583, 2nd col.

"harp upon one string."—Lily, Euphues (Arber's reprint, p. 137).

9. Moore. To cast beyond the moon. To make extravagant conjectures; to cast your thoughts or guesses beyond all reason. Brewer, p. 858, 1st col.

"Cast beyonde the Moore."—Lily, Euphues and his England (Arber's reprint, p. 3489).

10. Host. To reckon without your host. To reckon from your own standpoint only. Guests who calculate what their expenses at an hotel will come to always leave out certain items which the landlord adds in.

"Found us few minutes, to his cost,  
He did but count without his host."

Butler; Hudibras, pt. i. coult iii. lines 22-3.

Brewer, p. 630, 1st col.



"Certainly, he is lyke for mee to make his reckoning twice, because reckoneeth without his Hostesse." — Lyly, *Euphues* (Arber, p. 84)

11. Faint. Faint heart never won fair lady

"He bids a way with fust or make."

King; *Orphues and Eurydice*

"Faint hearts faire ladies never win." (1569)

*Philobiblon Society's Publications* (1827, p. 22).

Brewer, p. 440, p. 2nd col.

"Faint hart neverth winneth Castell nor Lady." (1580)

Lyly, *Euphues and his England* (Arber's reprint, p. 364).

12. Spoon. He hath need of a long spoon that eateth with the devil.

Shakespeare alludes to this proverb in *The Comedy of Errors*, iv.3; and again in *The Tempest*, iii.2, where Stephano says: "Mercy! mercy! this is a devil. . . I will leave him, I have no long spoon."

"Therefore behoveth him a yul long spoon  
That schal ete with a fiend."

Chaucer; *The Squire's Tale*, 10, 911.

Brewer, pp. 1168-1170.

"Some with long spoons, yoth provout stale and adde  
Eat with the devil; this, sir, has a ladle."

Sir William D'Avenant, *The Rivals* (1668), act iii. (Works, v. 267)

13. Lay Tail. Cut and long tail. One and another, all of every description. The phrase had its origin in the practice of cutting the tails of certain dogs and horses, and leaving others in their natural state, so that cut and long tail horses or dogs included all the species. Master Blended says he will maintain Anne! Page like a gentleman. "Ah!" says he —

"That I will, come cut and long tail under the degree of a squire  
[i.e. as well as any man can who is not a squire]. — Shakespeare:  
*Merry Wives of Windsor*, iii.4. Brewer, pp. 770-771.

"Come over cut and long tail." — Sir William D'Avenant,  
*The Two Ormel Brothers* (1630), act iv. sc. 1 (Works, i. p. 175).



14. Curtain Lecture. The nagging of a wife after her husband is in bed. The lectures of Mrs. Candler in Punch are first-rate caricatures of these "small cattle".

"Behold what endless brands by wivies are bred,  
The curtain lectures make a mournful bed."

Brewer, p. 319, 2nd col.

Oxyden.

Bartlett says, in his Familiar Quotations (8th ed.), that it is "Part of the title of a volume printed in 1637." This information he takes from W. Carew Hazlitt's English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases (1st edition 1869), see the 2nd ed (1884), p. 8. The expression also occurs in Comus, the Double-Dealer, act ii. sc. 4; Dean Swift's The Duke of Grafton's Answer, l. 38 and his Palinodia, l. 36.

15. Arion. A Greek musician, cast into the sea by mariners, but carried to Tænaro on the back of a dolphin. Brewer, p. 65, 1st col.

"More than that famous old received history  
Of good Arion, by a pe dolphin saved."

p. 164.

Drayton's Poetical Rhapsody (ed. Patten), vol. II.

"Thus with his harp and voice Arion rode  
On the mute fish safe through the rolling flood."

William King, Art of Love, Part XIII. ll. 13-14.

"Of" Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand  
Wakes the break harmony that sailors love."

Byron, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto II. St. 21.

16. Jamian Sage (The). Pythagoras born at Samos; sometimes called "the Jamian." (Six centuries B.C.)

The "Tis enough,

In this late age, adventurous to have touched  
Light on the numbers of the Jamian sage."

Brewer, p. 1098, 1st col.

Thomson.

"This rect <sup>in</sup> sacred veneration held  
Opinions, by the Jamian sage revealed."

Early, Clarendon, ll. 170-1.

"Behold each night shade reveals to sight,  
The Boetian, Jamian sage, and all who taught the right."

Byron, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto II. X. St. 8.