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YIDDISH PROVERBS, SAYINGS, ETC., IN ST. LOUIS, MO.

BY LEAH RACHEL YOFFIE.

AMONG the Yiddish-speaking Jews of St. Louis there are found a great many proverbs and proverbial sayings which add charm and piquancy to that peculiar dialect of a peculiar people. Jewish proverbs are, of course, older than King Solomon. The wisdom-lore of the ancient Hebrews is known to all the world. It is not with that that this paper is to deal, but rather with the mass of sayings which has sprung up among this scattered people since the time of the Wisdom Books in the Bible and the Apocrypha. The newer proverbs have not taken the place of the ancient wisdom: they have merely supplemented it. The Yiddish proverbs are fast dying out in the speech of the Jews in this country: it is only the older people who still use them. The younger generation of Russian and Polish Jews, especially those born in this country, do not speak Yiddish.

However, these proverbs are not to be entirely lost, for a number of Russian Jewish scholars have made collections of Yiddish folk-proverbs. The most notable of these compilations are those of Bernstein ("Idische Sprichwerter," Warsaw, 1908), who has 2050 of these sayings, and Pirozchnikov ("Idische Sprichwerter," Vilna), also that of Priluzki ("Samelbicher far Folklor," Warsaw, 1912), which contains 1061 proverbs and proverbial phrases about towns, places, and their inhabitants. There is also a collection by M. Spektor in "Jüdisches Volksblatt" (vol. 6); and many Yiddish proverbs are published in "Mitteilungen zur Jüdischen Volkskunde," edited by Dr. M. Grünwald, Vienna.

How old this great number of sayings is, nobody can tell. They have developed in many countries and through a number of centuries. Some of them are direct translations of foreign proverbs picked up from the nations among whom the Jews have lived, although it is well known that proverbs are practically universal, and that the same sayings are found among many different peoples and in widely scattered places. Many of the Yiddish sayings are an outgrowth of the conditions and varied life of the Jews in different places. They are sad and gay, contemplative, cynical, fervid, and scoffing, and they are most interesting and illuminating in reflecting the life of the people.

This study of Yiddish proverbs in St. Louis, Mo., is, I believe, nearly exhaustive. It took two years to gather this material, and the collection contains about four hundred proverbs and sayings. I have collected about two hundred additional expressions, which are,

however, more in the nature of Yiddish slang than proverbial sayings, and are not included in this paper.

The people who contributed to this collection were Russian-Jewish immigrants who have lived in this city for twenty years or more. They were mainly older people, or young people who were born abroad and have grown up in Yiddish-speaking households in this country. These proverbs were taken from both dialects of the Russian Jews, — the south-west Russian Yiddish, and the Lithuanian Yiddish, — but in transcribing them I have used the Lithuanian dialect entirely, since I am most familiar with that form of Yiddish. Besides, it is more easily understood by outsiders, as it is more like German than the south-west Russian Yiddish.

In setting down these sayings in the original Yiddish, the German spelling is followed wherever the words are pronounced as they are in German or approximately so. Where the pronunciation differs from the German, a more phonetic spelling is used. Yiddish, as is now generally known, is the vernacular of the Russian and Polish Jews. It goes back to Middle-High German for its origin, although many changes and additions have occurred in the years since these Jews lived in the mediæval ghettos of Germany. A brief guide for pronunciation will be useful to readers who wish to follow the original: —

ie . . . like *ie* in *believe*.

ei . . . like *ei* in *feign, rein*.

e . . . like *e* in *met*.

ay or ai. like *ai* in *aisle*.

a . . . like *a* in *far*.

s . . . before *p* and *t*, like *sh*, as in German.

z . . . pronounced as in English, except in German words like *zu*.

w . . . as in German.

ch. . . like final *ch* in German *doch*, — more guttural than the usual *ch* sound in German.

German words are pronounced as they are in that language.

Russian and Hebrew words are spelled as they are pronounced in the Lithuanian Yiddish dialect; there is no attempt to spell them as they are in the original Russian or Hebrew.

All other sounds as in English.

A great deal of the charm and flavor of these proverbs is bound to be lost in translating. I shall not attempt, therefore, to translate literally in every case, but shall give a free translation where it is necessary to preserve the spirit of these sayings. It will be impossible, of course, to retain all the savor of the originals. Moreover, a great many of these sayings are in rhyme, and no attempt has been made in this paper to reproduce that.

In presenting these proverbs, I have tried to follow the classi-

fication drawn up by the Rev. J. Long¹ for the English Folk-Lore Society, and based on the Russian collection of Snegiref. I have also been helped by the "Table for the Scientific Classification of Proverbs" found in an article on "Proverbs and Sayings of the Isle of Man," by G. W. Wood, in "Folk-Lore," vol. 5 (1894). Nevertheless I have had to make deviations from both of these classifications to fit the special requirements of the subject-matter.

GOD AND FATE.

1. Gott fiert die ganze welt.
(God governs the whole world [All's right with the world].)
2. Gott weist dem emess.
(God knows the truth [said by a person who is unjustly accused].)
3. Gott is a dayin emess.
(God is a just judge.)
4. Gott vet helfen.
(The Lord will provide [help].)
5. Es is baschert.
(It is fated [foreordained].)
6. Alles is baschert.
(Everything is predestined.)
7. Der mensch tracht, un Gott lacht.
(Man thinks, and God laughs [Man proposes and God disposes].)
8. (a) Gott nemmt mit ein hand, un git mit der andere.
(God takes with one hand, and gives with the other.)
(b) Gott stroft mit ein hand, un benscht mit der andere.
(God punishes with one hand, and blesses with the other.)
9. Gott schickt die refue far der make.
(God sends the remedy before the disease.)
10. Wemen Gott will erquicken, kennen menschen nit dersticken.
(Whom God wishes to succor, men cannot destroy.)
11. Az Gott will geben, git er breit mit putter; un az er will nit, git er kein breit eich nit.
(When God wishes to give, he gives bread and butter; when he does not wish to, he does not give even bread.)
12. Az Gott git breit, giben menschen putter.
(When God gives bread, men give butter.)
13. Ein Gott af alle sonim.
(One God [to punish] all my enemies.)
14. Af morgen zoll Gott zorgen.
(Let God care for the morrow.)

¹ Handbook of Folk-Lore, edited by G. L. Gomme (London, 1890).

15. Behiet Gott far ergers.
16. Me tor nit zindiken.

Nos. 15 and 16 have the same meaning, although they are differently expressed. The literal translation would convey almost nothing of the idea, which is something like this: "Do not tempt Providence by complaining of your hard lot."

17. Er spielt zach mit Gott.
(He is playing with God [tempting Providence].)
18. Zoll ihm ein Gott helfen.
(May the one God help him! [said of some one who is impossible].)
19. Azei wie Gott in Odess.
(Like God in Odessa [said of some one who lives luxuriously].)
20. Zoll zie zain a gute beterin.
(May she intercede [with God] for us! [said of the dead].)
21. Zie kummt op af der welt.
(She suffers in this life [said with the idea that she will have her reward in heaven].)
22. Dem rosche geht af der welt, dem tzadek af jener welt.
(The wicked fare well in this world; the saints, in the life to come.)

WISDOM AND FOLLY.

23. Wu teire, dort is chochmo.
(Where there is a knowledge of the Scriptures, there is wisdom.)
24. Die teire hot kein grund nit.
(The Scriptures have no bottom [require endless study].)
25. Teire is die beste s'cheire.
(A knowledge of the Scriptures is the best wares.)
26. Wu me darf meach, helft nit kein keach.
(Where you need intellect, physical strength will not do.)
27. A kluger versteht fun ein wort tzwei.
(A wise man builds two words out of one [understands two words when one has been spoken].)
28. Als zoll men kennen.
(One should know how to do many practical things.)
29. A mamzer zu zein, abie klug zu zein.
(It's worth being an illegitimate child, if one can be bright therewith [this refers to the superstition that all illegitimate children are bright].)
30. Freg nit bam klugen, freg bam genitten.
(Do not ask the wise man, ask the experienced one.)
31. Besser fun a gratsch a patsch, eider fun a nar a kusch.
(Better a blow from a wise man than a kiss from a fool.)

32. Besser mit a klugen zu verlieren eider mit a nar zu gewinnen (or gefinnen).

(Better to lose with a wise man than to win [or find] with a fool.)¹

The above may also be translated, "Better to lose from a wise man than to win from a fool."

33. Ein nar ken mehr fregen eider zehn kluge kennen entfernen.

(One fool can ask more questions than ten wise men can answer.)

34. Az a nar warft arain a stein in gorten kennen zehn kluge nit aroisnemen.

(When a fool throws a stone into the garden, ten wise men cannot get it out.)

35. Klug, klug, un fort a nar.

(Wise, wise, and yet a fool [said of an exceptionally bright person who does something foolish].)

36. Der klugster mensch benart zach.

(The wisest man is guilty of folly.)

37. A nar is an ewiger tzar.

(A fool is a perpetual care [to his family].)

38. A teiten beweint men sieben tog, a nar dem ganzen leben.

(One mourns for the dead seven days, but for a fool a whole lifetime.)

39. Mit a nar tor men nit handeln.

(One has no right to do business with a fool.)

40. Az a nar geht in mark, freihen zach die kremer.

(When a fool goes shopping, the storekeepers rejoice.)

41. A nar is erger far a rosche.

(A fool is worse than the wicked.)

42. Die kluge gehen zu fuss, un die naren foren.

(Wise men go on foot, and fools ride.)

43. A nar bleibt a nar.

(A fool remains a fool [never learns anything].)

44. Af a nar tor men nit faribel hoben.

(You must not take offence at anything a fool does.)

45. A nar ken a mol zogen a gleich wort.

(Sometimes a fool can say a clever thing.)

46. A nar is a novi. A nar is a halber novi.

(A fool is a prophet. A fool is half a prophet [can foretell the future].)

47. Zei nit kein nar!

(Don't be a fool!)

There is perhaps no people in the world that despises a foolish person as do the Jews. There are a number of epithets which are hurled at unwise persons. Some of them are, —

¹ Compare a Persian proverb, "Better a wise enemy than a foolish friend" (*Folk-Lore Journal*, 3 [1885]: 19); Temple, North Indian Proverbs.

48. Narische kopf!
(Fool's head!)
49. Goische kopf!
(Gentile head!)

It must be remembered that the Gentiles the Russian Jews knew best were the ignorant Russian peasants, and it is not surprising that they should associate stupidity with them.

50. Poiersche kopf!
(Peasant head!)
51. Pusster nuss!
(Empty nut!)

The word "nut" is not used for "head" here, as it is in English slang. This expression is metaphoric.

52. Er is fun Chelem.
(He is from Chelem [the Abdera of the Russian Jews].)
53. Chelemer naraim.
(Chelem fools.)
54. Er is azei wie jener chossen.
(He is like that [certain] bridegroom [refers to certain folk-stories about a foolish bridegroom who made many "social blunders"].)

On the other hand, there are a number of laudatory expressions which are applied to bright persons: —

55. An alte kopf!
(An old head.)
56. Haman's kopf!
(Haman's head! [shrewd, tricky].)
57. Litvak tzeilem kopf.
(Lithuanian Jew cross head! [shrewd; said by the South Russian Jews of the Lithuanian Jews in the northwest].)

MORALITY AND ETHICS, CAUTION AND PRUDENCE.

58. Az me bricht zach op af heissen, blozt men af kalten.
(When one is burnt by what is hot, one blows on something cold.¹)
59. Warf nit arois die schmutzige eider du host die reine.
(Don't throw away the soiled until you have the clean.)
60. Sehen, un heren, un schweigen.
(See, hear, and be silent.²)

¹ Compare Hindi, "Burnt by milk, looks at the buttermilk before he drinks" (Folk-Lore Journal, 3 [1885]: 32); Temple, North Indian Proverbs.

² Compare Italian, "Odi, vedi, e taci" (Bohn, A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs, p. 116); Spanish, "Ver, oir, y callor" (*Ibid.*, p. 261).

61. Went hoben eihren.
(Walls have ears.)
62. Gassen hoben eigen.
(Streets have eyes.)
63. Der mensch hot zwei eigen, zwei eihren, ober nor ein moil.
(Man has two eyes, two ears, but only one mouth [German].)
64. Vos wintziger me fregt, is als gesinter.
(The less you ask, the healthier.)
65. Besser a hon in hand eider an odler in himmel.
(Better a hen in the hand than an eagle in the sky.)
66. Az du'st fohren pamelech, west du schneller onkommen.
(If you drive slowly, you'll arrive more quickly.)
67. Ueber a zwickel macht men nit kalye kein hemd.
(One doesn't spoil a shirt because of one corner.)
68. Az me ganvet avek dem pferd, farschliet men erst die stahl.
(After the horse has been stolen, the stable-door is locked.)
69. Besser frieher bewohrent, eider shpeter beweint.
(Better caution at first than tears afterwards.)
70. Besser haint an ei eider morgen an ox.
(Better an egg to-day than an ox to-morrow.)

CONCORD, STRIFE.

71. A klap vergeht, a wort besteht.
(A blow is forgotten, but an unkind word remains.)
72. Fun a wort wert a quort.
(One cross word brings on a quarrel.)
73. Wu sholom, dort is brocho.
(Where there is quiet, there is blessing.)
74. Eider me derkennt dem menschen darf men leben mit ihm.
(Before one can know a person, one has to live with him.)
75. Ich ken ihm nit onkuken far rachmones.
(I cannot bear the sight of him [I cannot look at him even to pity him].)
76. Schlog mich nit, un leck mich nit.
(Don't beat me, and don't caress me.)

CONTAMINATION AND INFECTION.

77. Ein foiler appele farfoilt die andere.
(One rotten apple spoils the others.)

The above is a Spanish proverb.¹ It is also quoted in Chaucer:

“A proverbe that saith this same word,
Wel bette is roten appul out of hord,
Than that it rote al the remenaunt.”²

¹ Bohn, *A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs*, p. 227.

² Chaucer, *Cokes Tale*, lines 41 ff.

78. Der was spielt zach mit schmole wet zein schwarz.
(He who plays with pitch will become black [German].)
79. Az me esst nit kein knobel stinkt men nit.
(If you don't eat garlic, you won't smell bad.)
80. Az me leigt zach in klaien schlepen die chazerim.
(If you lie in the sty, the pigs will eat you.)

INDUSTRY, PERSEVERANCE, IDLENESS, INCOMPETENCE.

81. Az m'iz foil, hot men nit in moil.
(Lazy people have nothing to eat.)
82. Az a stein liegt af ein platz wert er eich bewachsen.
(This is the converse of "A rolling stone gathers no moss.")
83. Az me zucht, gefinnt men.
(If you seek, you will find [Seek, and ye shall find].)
84. A naier bezim kehrt gut.
(A new broom sweeps clean.)
85. Sie kricht af die wend.
(She crawls on the walls [said of a good housekeeper].)
86. Sie kricht af tisch un af benk.
(She crawls on tables and benches [usage as above].)
87. Az die balhaboste is a stinkerin, is die katz a fresserin.
(When the housewife is a slattern, the cat is a glutton.)
88. A stinkerin fort raitendick af'n fartach.
(A slattern rides horseback on her apron [always in a hurry].)
89. A katschka is in zummer eich a platschka.
(In summer even a duck can be a laundress [there is plenty of water in Russian villages in summer, but it is difficult to get in winter; the idea is that anybody can wash clothes well in summer].)
90. Tsichtig, richtig,
Rein, schein,
Azei wie a bein.
(Neat, right, clean, beautiful, like a bone [used in praise of a good housekeeper].)
91. Eich mir a kunz!
(That's no trick!)
92. Zie riert zach azei wie a blaierner feigel.
(She gets about like a leaden bird [clumsy].)
93. Zie hot hiltzerne finger.
(She has wooden fingers.)
94. Er is a leimener geilom.
(He is an *homunculus* [incompetent].)

This refers to a folk-story about Rabbi Loewe of Prague (sixteenth century), who made an *homunculus*, and thereby saved the Jews of the city from a massacre.

95. Zwei geilem gehen tanzen.¹
(Two automatons [*homunculi*] are dancing [said of two incompetent persons who have formed a partnership].)
96. Der blinder fiehrt dem krumen.
(The halt leads the blind.)
97. Zwei meissim gehen tanzen, un s'is nitto wer zoll bezollen sabass.
(Two corpses are dancing, and there is no one to pay the musicians:)

TRUTH, FALSEHOOD, HYPOCRISY.

98. Der emess kumt arois azei wie beimel af der wasser.
(The truth comes out like oil on the surface of the water.)
99. A Gott's ganef!
(God's thief! [a hypocrite].)
100. Fast nit, un ganve nit.
(Don't fast, and don't steal.)
101. Stille wasser grobt tief.
(Still waters run deep [this refers to soft-voiced hypocrites].)
102. Fun alchet wert men fet.
(“I have sinned” makes one fat [men who have prospered because of wrong-doing, later go to the synagogue and cry, “Peccavi!”])
103. Fun alchet wert men nit fet.
(“I have sinned” does not pay.)

These two proverbs (Nos. 102 and 103), although absolute contradictions, are both in use.

104. Yosef's brieder's tieren.
(Joseph's brothers' tears [feigned weeping; refers to the Bible story of Joseph and his brethren].)
105. Er blost heiss un kalt.
(He blows hot and cold.²)
106. A ligner gleibt men nit, afile az er zogt dem emess.
(A liar is not believed even when he tells the truth.³)
107. Zaihe nit durch die lippelach.
(Do not mince your words [be frank].)
108. Honig af'n zung, gall af'n lung.
(Honey on the tongue, gall in the heart.)
109. Dem emess meg men zogen af dem eigenen taten.
(One may tell the truth about one's own father.)

¹ Compare Urdu, “One blind and the other a leper” (*Folk-Lore Journal*, 3 [1885]: 22); Temple, *North Indian Proverbs*.

² Compare Æsop's fable. This proverb is undoubtedly derived from that story.

³ This is another proverb from Æsop, “The Boy who cried Wolf.” It is also a Manx proverb (Wood, *Proverbs and Sayings of the Isle of Man* [Folk-Lore, 5 : 245]).

110. A ligner gleibt nit keiner.¹
(Nobody believes a liar.)
111. Himmel un erd hot geschworen az kein zach zoll nit zain verloren.
(Heaven and earth have sworn that the truth shall be disclosed [that nothing shall be hidden].)

FRANKNESS, OPENNESS.

112. Af'n lung, af'n zung!
(What is in the heart is on the tongue.)
113. Af'n harz, af'n zung!
(What is in the heart is on the tongue.)
114. Schweigen heisst geret.
(Silence gives consent.)

GOODNESS AND EVIL DOING.

115. Arain iz die tier breit, un arois iz zie schmoll.
(The door [to evil doing] is wide, but the return gate is narrow.)
116. Alle mailes in einem,
Is nitto ba keinem.
(No one person possesses all the virtues.)
117. Mit alle mailes is nitto.
(Nothing is perfect.)

MODESTY, PRIDE, BOASTING.

118. Eigene lob stinkt.
(Self-praise is offensive.)
119. Es lobt zach alein, schemt zach alein.
(He who praises himself will be humiliated.)
120. Fun a leidiger fessel is der larm gresser.
(An empty barrel makes the most noise.)
121. Wer is geven zain zeide?
(Who was his grandfather [that he should be so proud]?)
122. Flieh nit zu heich!
(Don't fly too high!)
123. Gaive ligt af'n mist,
Un ver es vill, nemmt es umzist.
(Pride lies on the dung-heap, and any one who wishes can get it for nothing.)

MODERATION, TEMPERANCE, GLUTTONY.

124. Wos zu is iberig.
(Too much is superfluous.)
125. Wos zu is umgesund.
(Excess is unhealthy.)

¹ Compare No. 106, p. 142.

126. Wos weniger me ret, is als gesinter.
(The less you talk, the better off you are.)
127. Er hot fliegen in noz.
(He is an extremist [has flies in his nose].)
128. Az me git ihm a finger, will er die ganze hand.¹
(Give him your finger, he'll want your hand [Give him an inch, and he'll take an ell].)
129. Az me lost a chazir aruf af'n bank, will er af'n tisch.
(Give a pig a chair [bench], he'll want to get on the table.)
130. Dos beste appele chapt ois der chazir.
(The pig snatches the best apple.)

KINDNESS, ALMS, CRUELTY.

131. Gutzkeit is besser fun frumkeit ("klugkeit" in another version).
(Kindness is better than sanctimony ["wisdom" in another version].)
132. Me darf leben un losen leben.
(Live and let live.)
133. Stech wertlach!
(Subtle innuendoes which sting! [stinging words!])
134. Schit nit kein salz af die wunden.
(Don't throw salt on people's wounds.)
135. Fremder breit raisst in halz.
(A stranger's bread chokes.)
136. S'is schlecht zu essen fremden breit.
(It is hard to eat a stranger's bread.)
137. A fremder pelz waremt nit.
(A stranger's cloak does not keep one warm.)
138. Fremds iz nit kein eigens.
(What you get from another is not like your own.)
139. S'iz schlecht in der fremd.
(It is hard among strangers [not in your own home].)
140. Me zoll nit darfen onkummen zu laiten.
(Pray that you may not have to be dependent on others.)

LIBERALITY, NIGGARDLINESS.

141. Der wos glaicht zu nemmen glaicht nit zu geben.
A nemmer is nit kein geber.
(He who likes to take does not like to give.)
142. A karger zollt taier.
(A niggard pays dear.)

¹ Italian, "Give a peasant your finger, he'll grasp your fist" (Trench, *Lessons in Proverbs*, p. 73).

143. Az a karger wert mild, kocht er a borschtsch mit a kulatsch.
(When a stingy person becomes liberal, he cooks cabbage-soup and gulash [too much].)
144. Az me will nit geben Yankefen, git men Eisefen.
(If you won't give to Jacob, you'll have to give to Esau [If you are too stingy to give in a good cause, your money will be taken from you by your enemies].)
145. Fun a chazir a hor is eich gut!
(Though you can't get more than a hair from a pig, take that!)
146. Es is a mitzva a chazir a hor arois zu raissen.
(It is a virtuous deed to pull a hair out of a pig [stingy person].)
147. A chazir bleibt a chazir.
(A pig will always be a pig.)
148. Tinken heisst nit trinken.
(To dip is not to drink.)
149. Az me git, nemm; az me nemmt, schrei "Gewalt!"
(If you're given something, take it; if some one tries to take from you, cry "Help!")

ETHICS IN GENERAL.

150. Besser das beste fun dem ergsten, eider das ergste fun dem besten.
(Better the best of the worst than the worst of the best.)

In "The Statue and the Bust," Robert Browning maintains that sin is excusable if one sins nobly and well. There is a Yiddish proverb to the same effect, although not so poetically expressed. There are two versions of this saying, and in my translation I have tried to embody both: —

151. Az me esst chazir zoll men essen fetten.
Az me esst chazir zoll rinnen ibber'n moil.
(If you do eat pork, let it be good, and fat, and juicy.)
152. An aksh'n is erger fun a meshumed.
(A stubborn person is worse than an apostate.)
153. A neveire kost eich gelt.
(It costs money to sin.)
154. Eine willen leben un kennen nit, un andere kennen leben un willen nit.
(There are some who wish to live [well] and cannot, while others can live and will not [because they do not appreciate what blessings they have].)
155. Eib der schuch passt, kennst ihm trogen.
(If the shoe fits, wear it.)
156. Die reitste appel hot a worm.
(The reddest apple has a worm in it [appearances are deceiving].)
157. Wie me bet zach ois, azei darf men schlofen.
(You've made your bed, and you must lie on it.)

158. Nit alz wos glänzt iz gold.
(All that glitters is not gold.)
159. A mensch iz a mol starker fun aisen, un a mol schwacher fun a flieg.
(Man is sometimes stronger than iron, and at other times weaker than a fly.)
160. Azei wie er fardient, azei hot er.
(He gets his deserts.)
161. Guter wein in a schlechter fass.
(Good wine in a poor vessel.)

GRATITUDE, INGRATITUDE.

162. Thu a hund a teive, baisst er die hand.
(Don't bite the hand that feeds you [Do a dog a favor, he will bite your hand].)
163. Me nemmt arois dem pferd un me farbrennt die stahl.
(They steal the horse, and then burn the stable [adding insult to injury].)
164. Trink ois dem wein un farbrech nit die glez'l.
(Drink the wine, but don't break the glass.)
165. A dank ken men in keschene nit legen.
(One can't put "Thank you" in his pocket.)

NECESSITY.

166. Noth brecht eisen.
(Necessity breaks iron [German].)
167. Az me muz, muz men.
(When one must, one must [Necessity knows no law].)
168. Az me muz, ken men.
(When one must, one can.)
169. Az me ken nit wie me will, thut men wie me ken.
(If you can't do as you wish, do as you can.)
170. Me zoll nit gepruft weren zu vos me ken geweint weren.
(Pray that you may never have to endure all that you can learn to bear.)
171. Az m'iz hungrig, esst men breit.
(If you're hungry enough, you can eat dry bread.)

PERSONAL WORTH.

172. Zei a mensch!
(Be a man!)
173. A mensch is umetum a mensch.
(A man [a person of worth] is a man everywhere.)

The above is a very popular proverb, and is often used in speaking of people who are polite only when it serves their purpose.

174. Besser zai an eck ba a leib eider a kopf ba a fuchs.
(Better the tail of a lion than the head of a fox.)
175. Me zoll trinken wein, ober in a gute fass.
(It is good to drink wine, but from a goodly vessel.)
176. Er ligt wie a chazir in der blote.
(He wallows in the mire with the pigs.)
177. A chazir weist was gut is!
(How can a pig understand what is good!)
178. Wie kumt a chazir zu pfeffer!
(How can a pig appreciate pepper! [Pepper was a great delicacy at one time.])
179. Chazir, avek fun die kez!
(Pig, get away from the cheese!)
180. Gold scheint fun blote.
(Gold glitters even in the mud.)
181. A hund bleibt a hund!
(A dog will always be a dog!)
- (147) A chazir bleibt a chazir!
(A pig will always be a pig!)

INSTITUTIONS, THE FAMILY, PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

182. Besser dos kind zoll weinen eider der foter.¹
(Better the child cry than the father.)
183. A schlechte mame is nitto.
(There is no such thing as a bad mother.)
184. Kleine kinder, kleine freiden;
Greisse kinder, greisse leiden.
(Little children, little joys;
Bigger children, bigger sorrows.)
185. Jeder mutter denkt ihr kind is schein.
(Every mother thinks her child is beautiful.)
186. Ein kind un ein hemd zollen meine sonim hoben.
Behiet Gott far ein kind un ein hemd.
(It's just as unfortunate to have one child as to have one shirt.)
187. Ein kind iz azei wie ein eig.
(Having an only child is like having one eye.)
188. Wer es hot kinder in die wiegen,
Zoll lozen laiten zufrieden.
(If you have children at home, don't annoy other people.)
189. Besser af der welt nit zu leben eider onkummen zu a kind (popular
Yiddish song).
(It is better not to live than to be dependent on children.)

¹ Danish, "Better the child cry than the mother sigh" (Bohn, A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs, p. 349).

190. Me zoll nit darfen onkummen zu kinder.
(Pray that you may not be a burden to your children.)
191. Die eier zainen kliger far die hiener.
(The eggs are wiser than the hens [said scornfully of children who think they are more advanced than their parents].)
192. Der tate is noch do, der zun is schen af'n dach.
(The father is still here, the son is already on the roof [trying to govern the household].)
193. Die appele fallt nit weit fun der beimele.
(The apple does not fall far from the tree [German, Dutch].)
194. Meschugene gänz, meschugene grieben. (See under *Insanity*, p. 162.)
(Crazy geese, crazy cracklings.)

MARRIAGE.

The Jews believe that marriages are made in heaven, and many of their proverbs reflect this belief. The bride or groom is always called "the fated one." Because of this belief, the marriage-customs of the Jews are very peculiar. It will be noticed that there are no proverbs about love among the Jews. That is because love in the Occidental sense is practically unknown among Eastern peoples. The Jews have retained their Oriental traditions in their marriage-customs more than in any other form of their life.

In order to understand some of these proverbs, it will be necessary to know something about the method of procuring a helpmeet among the Jews of a generation or two ago. (Of course, in modern countries and in modern times, a great many young people do as they please; but even in the most advanced countries, — America, for instance, — some of the old customs still remain.) Marriages were arranged by the parents, or through a marriage-broker, whose business it was to bring congenial couples together. Marriage-brokers do a thriving business in some of our American cities to-day. Sometimes a marriage was negotiated; and when the young people found that they did not like each other, the arrangement was broken off with just as much *sangfroid* as it was entered into. Such occurrences gave rise to expressions like —

195. Iz Yachna nit kein kale!
(It doesn't matter; Yachna is not betrothed!)
196. Iz nischt gefidelt!

The latter saying is particularly interesting, because it may be that "Ish gebibble," which was such popular slang in this country a few years ago, is a corruption of "Iz nischt gefidelt." The expression means "Then we'll not play the wedding-march," or something like that.

197. Gott sitzt eiben un port unten.
(God sits above, and pairs below.)
198. Az se kumt der bascherter, wert es in zwei werter.
(When the fated one appears, the marriage is arranged in two words.)
199. Eich mir a chisorin! Die kale iz zu schein.
(What an objection! The bride is too beautiful.)
200. Ois kale, weiter a moid!
(No longer betrothed, again free [marriage negotiations broken off].)
201. A heise liebe!
(A hot love! [Derision.]
202. Starben un chasene hoben farspetigt men nit.
(It is never too late to die or get married.)
203. A weib warft fun die fiess, un stellt af die fiess.
(A wife can make or break her husband [financially].)
204. Az in mill molt zach nit, dreht zach in stub.
(When the mill doesn't turn, the house is upset.)
205. Zie trogt die heiz'n.
(She wears the trousers.)
206. Man un weib zeinen ein leib.
(Husband and wife are one flesh.)
207. Wu zwei schlofen af ein kischen,
Darf zach der dritter nit mischen.
(Where two sleep on one pillow, a third person has no right to interfere
[no right to interfere in a family quarrel].)
208. Zei leben wie die toiben un drapen zach wie die ketz.
(They live like doves, and fight like cats.)
209. A sholem azei wie a hund mit a katz.
(They lead as peaceful a life as a cat and a dog would.)
210. Der tate hot die mame genummen.
(Father married mother [said of people who have been divorced and
remarry].)

MOTHER-IN-LAW, DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

211. A gute tochter iz a gute schnur.
(A good daughter makes a good daughter-in-law.)
212. Me zagt der tochter, un me meint die schnur.
(You speak to the daughter, and mean the daughter-in-law [Spanish].)
213. Geh' ich giech, raiss ich die schiech;
Geh' ich pamelach, zagt zie ich krich.
(If I walk fast [my mother-in-law says], I tear my shoes; if I walk
slowly, I crawl.)

RELATIVES.

214. Blut iz dicker fun wasser.
(Blood is thicker than water.)

215. Eigene zainen nit fremde.
(One's own people are not like strangers.)
216. Bind mich af alle vier zaiten un warf mich zwischen mainige.
(Bind me fast, and throw me among my own people.)
217. Zainige az zeı weinen nit, farkrimen zeı zach chozhbe.
(If your own don't weep with you, they at least screw up their faces.)

FRIENDS, ENEMIES.

218. A guter fraint is oft besser fun a bruder.
(A friend is sometimes better than a brother.)
219. Ein harz fielt die andere.¹
(One heart feels another's affection.)
220. Gleich sucht gleich.
(Like seeks like.)
221. A barg mit a barg kennen zach nit zusammen kummen, ober a mensch mit a mensch kennen.
(Mountains cannot meet, but men can.)
222. Zuzogen un lie b hoben kosst nit kein geld.
(It doesn't cost anything to promise and to love.)
223. A fraint blaibt a fraint bis der keschene.
(A friend remains a friend up to his pocket.)
224. Gute fraint fun waiten.
(You are better friends at a distance.)
225. Wos die eig zet nit, die harz fielt nit.
(What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't feel [Out of sight, out of mind].)

PUBLIC OPINION.

226. Besser a weitig in harz eider a charpe in ponim.
(Better a pain in your heart than shame before men.)
227. Az die welt zogt, zoll men gleiben.
(If everybody says so, there's some truth in it.)
228. Az zwei zogen schicker, muz der dritter zach legen schlofen.
(If two say "Drunk," the third must go to sleep.²)
229. Az me klingt, iz a choge.
(If the church-bells ring, it's holiday.)
230. Az se brennt, iz a faier.
(Where there's smoke, there is fire.)
231. Az me zogt meschuge, zoll men gleiben. (See under *Insanity*, p. 162.)
(When people say some one is crazy, believe it.)

¹ Compare German, "Was von Herzen kommt, das geht zu Herzen."

² Compare the Hindi, "If five people together say it's a cat, it's a cat" (*Folk-Lore Journal*, 3 : 36; Temple, *North Indian Proverbs*); also the Italian, "When everybody says you are drunk, go to sleep" (Bohn, *A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs*, p. 123).

232. Mit vos der topf wert ongebrennt, mit dos stinkt er.
(The pot smells of what has been burned in it.)
233. Wu es iz do fliegen, is do tinf.
(Where there are flies, there is dirt.)
234. Jener weisst nit wemen der schuch kwetscht.
(A stranger can't tell where the shoe pinches.) (See under *Trouble*,
etc., p. 159.)
235. Einem dacht zach az bai jenem lacht zach.
(One always thinks that others are happy.)

CONFORMITY.

236. Az me spielt, tanzt men.
(When others play, you should dance [When in Rome, do as the
Romans do].)
237. Azei wie me spielt, azei tanzt men.
(Dance to the tune that is played [When in Rome, do as the Romans
do].)
238. Af wemens wogen me sitzt, singt men dem lied.¹
(People always sing the tune that pleases their host [or benefactor].)

GOSSIP.

239. Az me geht zwischen laiten, weisst men vos se thut zach in der heim.
(When you go to your neighbors, you find out what is happening in
your home.)
240. Az es hot far a yohren gebrennt, stinkt haint die schmolene.
(If there was a fire last year, you can still smell the smoke.)
241. Me tor nit gleiben biz m'is ba der bai nit gewenn.²
(You should not believe unless you yourself were there.)
242. Far mein thür vet eich a mol zein a blote.
(There may be mud before my door, too, some day.)
243. Zie geht suchen bei jenem in teppel.
(She goes looking into other people's pots and kettles.)
244. Zie mischt zach wie a koch leffel.
(She stirs about like a stirring spoon.)
245. Wu'z zwei is er a dritter.
(Where there are two, he makes a third.)

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

246. Warf arois dem eiven.
(Throw out the stove [said when an unexpected guest arrives].)

¹ Meaning the same as for Nos. 236 and 237, "When in Rome," etc.

² This is a quotation from the Talmud. Compare Hindi, "Until I see with my own eyes, I will not believe" (Folk-Lore Journal, 3 : 26; R. C. Temple, North Indian Proverbs.

247. Trog gesunderheid, zureiss gesunderheid.
(Wear it in good health, tear it in good health [said to a person who is wearing a new garment].)

There is an English saying very much like the above:

“Health to wear it, strength to tear it, and money to buy a new one.”¹

248. Schmir zach ois die schich!
(Grease your shoes! [said to some one who has just said “Thank you”].)
249. Der Mittwoch is langer far dem Donnerstag.
(Wednesday is longer than Thursday [said of an untidy woman whose petticoat shows beneath her skirt].)
250. Host meire? Lehen krishma.
(Are you afraid? Say your prayers.)
251. S'iz gut? Ess mit breit.
(Good? Eat it with bread.)

The last two expressions are usually addressed to children.

252. Creplach essen wert eich nimiss.
(One gets tired even of eating creplach [a favorite dish something like Italian ravioli].)
253. Zie trogt bureckes, iz a simmin az zie wet kochen a borschtsch.
(She is carrying beets, — good sign that she'll cook beet-soup [something is self-evident].)
254. Chezik hot dem taten nit derkennt.
(Chezik did not recognize his own father [said when one has failed to notice a familiar friend].)
255. Es vet halten fun Esther toness biz Purim.
(It will last from the Fast of Esther to Purim [one day].)
256. Zai a mensch wesst du sitzen in sucke.
(Be a man [worthy], and you'll sit in the sukkah [the booth still erected by pious Jews during the Feast of Tabernacles to commemorate their life in the wilderness, when they “dwelt in booths”].)
257. Er iz araingefallen azei wie a Yoven in sucke.
(He stumbled in [awkwardly] like a peasant [Ivan] into a sukkah.²)
258. Purim is kein yontef nit, un kadoches iz nit kein krenk.
(Purim is no holy day, and fever is no disease.)
259. Shabbes hot der rosche in gehenim eich ruh.
(On the Sabbath even the wicked in hell have rest.)
260. Az me esst Shabbes kugel, iz men die ganze woch zat.
(If you eat pudding on the Sabbath, you'll not be hungry all week.)

¹ “Said in some parts to anybody who gets a new article of dress” (Hazlitt, *English Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions*, p. 226).

² A Russian peasant would hardly know how to conduct himself in a Jewish tabernacle.

261. Az me fregt a shaile wert treif.
(If you ask the Rabbi a question about a doubtful matter, he will surely find something wrong [the idea is, better not ask, and take the benefit of the doubt].)
262. Wu der chosin sitzt, dort is eiben on.
(Where the bridegroom sits is the head of the table.)
263. Vos teig mir mein Polish reiden, az me lost mich in heif nit arein.
(What's the good of my Polish speaking if they won't let me enter the manor-house? [social prejudice against the Jew].)
264. An ochs hot a langen zung un ken kein scheifer nit blozen.
(An ox has a long tongue and can't blow the ram's horn [blowing of the ram's horn in the synagogue on the Day of Atonement].)

PROVERBS SHOWING SUPERSTITIONS.

265. Dienstag is a gringer tog.
(Tuesday is a good [easy] day.)

This is a very interesting superstition. The Jews have always considered Monday a bad day for the beginning of any enterprise, and Tuesday a particularly propitious day. This curious belief goes back to the first chapter in the Bible. On every day that God created something, he called it good except on the second day. There is no mention of "And he saw that it was good" on the second day, while on the third day (Tuesday) the expression occurs twice: therefore Monday is a bad day, and Tuesday a good day.

It is interesting to know, in this connection, that "in the Hebrides the ploughing-season never begins on Monday, according to the old adage, in which they firmly believe, 'What is begun on Monday will either be premature or late.'" ¹

266. Bai nacht hört zach weit.
(Prayer is heard best at night.)
267. Bai'm emess genossen.
(He has sneezed to the truth.)

This is an almost universal superstition. It is found among people in nearly every part of the world. The famous example from the *Odyssey*, where Penelope laughs with delight because Telemachus has sneezed to what she hopes will be the truth, is known to nearly every one.²

268. Ziben is a ligen.
(Seven is a lie.)

This is a very puzzling expression, since seven was a sacred number among the Jews.

¹ Folk-Lore, 11 [1900]: 439; Malcolm MacPhail, Folk-Lore from the Hebrides.

² The *Odyssey* of Homer, Butcher & Lang, p. 292, Book XVII.

269. Az die katz wascht zach, wellen zein gest.
(If the cat washes herself, there will be guests.)
270. Az me singt eider me steht uf, wet men weinen eider me geht schlofen.
(Sing before seven, cry before eleven [Welsh, English, etc.])
271. Ess beiner west du hoben a weissen chossen.
(Chew on bones, and you'll have a handsome husband.)
- (Personally, I believe this was invented to induce fastidious little girls to eat all the meat from the bones for the sake of thrift.)
272. Kein ain hore, kein tzore, kein beis eig!
(No evil eye, no misfortune, no evil eye! [a charm to ward off the evil eye.])
273. Nit do gedacht; nit far kein menschen gedacht!
(May it not happen here! May it not happen to any living person!
[a charm for same purpose as No. 272.])

There is such a mass of charms of this kind, that it would take a special study to deal with them all. These are the two best known.

PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS SHOWING *INSOUCIANCE*, INDIFFERENCE.

One of the traits of the Russian Jew which is rather surprising is a certain *insouciance* more Gallic than Semitic. "I should worry" is a literal translation of a Yiddish expression which found its way into nearly every corner of this country through the vaudeville stage and the comic supplement of the newspapers. There are a great many expressions like this one which have been used by the Russian, Polish, and Galician Jews for generations. Perhaps it was this assumed indifference which enabled them to survive the persecutions and hardships to which they were subjected in those countries.

274. Hob ich a zorg!
Zoll ich zorgen!
(Why should I worry? [literally, "I should worry!"])
275. Wet er nit tanzen af mein chasane!
(Then he won't dance at my wedding!)
- (195) Iz Yachna nit kein kale! (See p 148.)
- (196) Iz nischt gefidelt. (See p. 148.)
276. West du nit benschen die kelbel zu der chupah.
(Suppose you don't bless the calf under the marriage-canopy, who cares?)
277. Wet ihr mir nit schicken grüns af Sh'vuos.
(Then you won't send me [growing] things at Shabuoth [Feast of Weeks, in June].)
278. Die bobes diage.
(Grandnanny's worry!)

279. Umglicklich Cracow!
(Unhappy Cracow!)
280. Es geht arain in ein eir un arois fun dem anderen.
(In at one ear and out at the other [English, Italian, etc.])
281. Ich her dich wie die katz.
(I am paying just as much attention as the cat is.)
282. Ich her dich wie in Puchawitz die Megille.
(I am listening to you about as much as the people of Puchawitz did to the reading of the Book of Esther.)
283. Nit em meint men.
(He acts as if he weren't meant.)
284. Geh, schlog zach die kopf in wand! (See No. 387.)
(Go beat your head against the wall [Italian].)

EXPRESSIONS USED TO SHOW THAT SOMETHING IS INCONGRUOUS, FAR-FETCHED, ABSURD.

285. Es passt azei wie a chasir a zottel (krentzel).
(It's just about as becoming as a saddle on a pig ["a wreath on a pig," another version].)
286. Er ken zach zunefreiden azei wie a chasir mit an indik.
(He can carry on a conversation about as well as a pig can with a turkey.)
287. Es gefällt mir azei wie in Purim a dreidel.
(It's just about as pleasing as a clapper on Purim [Feast of Lots].)
288. Es wet ihm helfen azei wie a teiten bankes.
(It will help as much as leeches would a dead man.)
289. A greisse chmara un wintzig regen.
(A great cloud and little rain [tempest in a teapot].)
- (199) Eich mir a chisorin! Die kale is zu schein. (See No. 199.)
What a fault! The bride is too beautiful!
290. Pferds fuss potkeve.
(A horse's hoof's horseshoe! [anything that is absurd, far-fetched, redundant].)
291. A meitze ibber a rettach!
(The blessing over bread said over a radish!)
292. Az die mois is zat, is die mehl bitter.
(When the mouse has eaten enough, the flour is bitter [sour grapes].)

MONEY AND BUSINESS.

293. Gelt fiert die ganze welt.
(Money rules the world.)
294. Mit geld ken men alles.¹
(Money can do everything.)

¹ German, "Liebe kann viel, Geld kann alles" (Bohn, A Polyglot of Foreign Proverbs, p. 158).

295. On geld is kein welt.
(No world without money!)
296. Wer es hot geld hot die ganze welt.
(He who has money has the whole world.)
297. Geld geht zu geld.
(Money goes to money.)
298. Az me zollt geld, is wert geld.
(If you pay money, it's worth it.)
299. A karger zollt taier.
(A niggard pays dear.)
300. Wolvele fleisch essen die hind.
(Cheap meat is fit for dogs.)
301. Umsisst setzt zach aflu kein make nit.
(You can't have even a boil for nothing.)
302. Onkuku kost nit kein geld.
(You can look at things without paying for them.)
303. Fregen kost nit kein geld.
(It doesn't cost anything to ask.)
304. Wer es hot die matbea,
Der hot die dea.
(He who has the money has the authority.)
305. Az me hot s'cheire,
Hot men nit kein meire.
(If you have capital, you're not afraid [to do business].)
306. Az me stellt nit ain, nemmt men nit arois.
(If you don't invest, you can't have any proceeds.)
307. Az me leigt nit arein take,
Nemmt men arois a make.
(If you don't invest money, you'll get nothing but pain.)
308. Az me leigt arain kadoches, nemmt men arois a krenk.
(If you invest a fever, you will realize a disease [Nothing venture,
nothing have].)
309. Az me handelt mit a nodel, gewinnt men a nodel.
(If you invest a needle, you'll realize a needle.)
310. Az me schmiert, fort men.
(If you grease your wheels, you'll be able to ride [refers to bribes or
tips].)
311. A noventer groschen is besser wie a waiter kerbel.
(A penny near at hand is worth a dollar at a distance.)
312. Az me zucht chale, farliert men breit.
(If you seek cake, you'll lose bread [Let well enough alone; don't
venture too far].)

313. Baiten a schuch af a laptze!
(Exchange a shoe for an old slipper [drive a bad bargain].)
314. Azei geht af der welt,
Einer hot die baitel, der zweiter hot die geld.
(So goes it in this world: one has the purse, and the other has the money.)

TRADES.

315. Sein tate is geven a schuster (schneider).¹
(His father was a shoemaker [or tailor].)
316. A schneider yingel!
(A tailor-boy! [term of contempt].)
317. Der schuster geht borvess. Alle schuster gehen borvess.
(The shoemaker goes barefoot.)
318. Der schneider geht naked.
(The tailor goes naked.)
319. Der schneider neht a ganze woch, chotsch zureiss zach, is nitto af Shabbes.
(The tailor sews all week, and has nothing on the Sabbath.)
320. A badchen macht allemen freilach, un allein ligt er in dr'erd.
(The wedding-jester makes every one laugh, and is himself in the depths of misery.)
321. A hunt tor kein katze nit zain.
(A dog must not be a butcher.)
322. Freg dem cheile, nit dem reife.
(Ask the patient, not the physician.)

POVERTY AND RICHES.

323. Mit geld tor men nit stolzieren,
Weil me ken es gleich verlieren.
(Don't boast of your money, because you can easily lose it.)
324. Der reicher esst dos fleisch, un der areman die beiner.
(The rich eat the meat; the poor, the bones.)
325. Einer bovet un der anderer weint.
(One builds [the house], and the other lives in it.)
326. Einer neht, un der zweiter geht.
(One sews [the garment], and the other wears it.)

¹ Shoemaking and tailoring were the most menial occupations among the Russian Jews, and it was no small blot on one's escutcheon to have had a shoemaker or tailor among one's ancestors. Compare Behar, "The son of a tailor; he will sew as long as he lives;" cf. also the following Punjabi proverbs: "The father never hit a tomtit, but the son is an archer;" "The mother was an innkeeper, and the son is Fattah Khan;" "The mother a radish, the father an onion, and the son a saffron-flower" (R. C. Temple, "Some Panjabi and Other Proverbs" [Folk-Lore Journal, vol. 1, 1883]).

327. Der zater gleibt nit dem hungrigen.
(The well-fed can't believe the hungry.)
328. Noch a schwerin mogen is gring zu fuss zu gehen.
(It's easy to go on foot after you've had a good meal.)
329. Kleider machen dem menschen.¹
(Clothes make the man [Dutch, Persian].)
330. Az die reiche heiben on zu zochen,
Hoben die aremeleit zu kochen.
(When the rich begin to sigh, the poor have something to cook [because the rich give alms when they are ill or sad].)
331. Wos teig mir der goldener becher az er is full mit treren?
(What good is the golden beaker when it is full of tears?)
332. Besser a reicher schochen eider an aremer balaboss.
(Better [to be] a rich tenant than a poor landlord.)
333. An areman will eich leben.
(Even a poor man wants to live.)
334. A lecherdicken zack ken men nit onfillen.
(One can't fill a torn sack [full of holes].)
335. An areman is wie a lecherdicker zack.
(A poor man is like a torn sack.)
336. Az s'is nitto in top, is nitto in teller.
(If there's nothing in the pot, there's nothing on the plate.)
337. Eider azei foren is besser zu fuss gehen.
(Better walk than ride like that.)
338. Arem is nit ken schande, abie nit schmarkate.
(Poverty is no disgrace, just so it isn't filthy.)
339. (a) Willst dem molzeit erlich halten,
Darfst ihm in zweien spalten.
(b) Az me vill zach bam koved halten,
Muz men dem molzeit in zweien spalten.
(If you wish to retain your self-respect, you must learn to divide your meal in two.)
340. Die chale staiet nit af a meitze.
(There isn't enough bread to say a blessing over.)

¹ Compare Persian, "New sleeves get a good dinner." Sykes ("Persian Folk-Lore," in *Folk-Lore*, 12 [1901]: 280) says of this proverb: "This proverb alludes to the story that a shabbily-dressed *mollah* was turned away from a feast. On returning in a new coat, he was given the place of honor at the entertainment." — There is a similar folk-story in Yiddish, of Herschel Stopolya, a legendary figure among the Southwest Russian Jews. Many stories are told of his wisdom and practical good sense. One day he went to a wedding-feast, and was not admitted because of his shabby clothing. He returned later in new and beautiful garments, and was given a seat near the bridegroom. As the meal proceeded, people noticed that Herschel Stopolya was not eating, but was putting the food inside of his coat. When asked what he was doing, he answered, "You are not honoring me with this meal, but my clothes. I am therefore feeding my clothes."

341. Wen freit zach an areman? — Wen er farliert un gefinnt.
(When does a poor man rejoice? — When he has lost something and found it again. [The idea is that he never acquires any additional wealth].)
342. Schlimmazl, wohin gehst du? — Zum areman.
(Bad fortune, where goest thou? — To the poor man.)
343. Noch dem areman schlept zach der schlimmazl.
(Bad fortune follows the poor man.)

THRIFT, WASTE.

344. Shpor, shpor,
Kummt der schwarz yor,
Un nemmt zu gor.
(Save, save.
Comes the evil year [personification],
And takes it all away.)
345. A bis'l un a bis'l,
Wert a fulle schissel.
(A little, and a little,
Until there's a full bowl.)
346. Behalt dem weissen gilden af'n schwarzen tog.
(Put away the white penny for the black day.)
347. Az me esst uf dem beigel, bleibt in keschene die loch.
(If you eat your doughnut, you'll have nothing in your pocket but the hole.)
348. Mit schnee ken men nit machen gomolkess.
(You can't make cheese-cakes out of snow.)
349. Fun an eck fun a chasir ken men nit machen a straimel.
(You can't make a hat out of a pig's tail.)
350. Az me shport nit dem groschen, hot men nit dem rubel.
(If you don't save the penny, you'll not have the dollar.)

TROUBLE, SORROW, FORTUNE, MISFORTUNE.

351. (a) Jeder Yid hot zain peckel.
(b) Jeder mensch hot zain peckel.
(c) Jeder einer trogt zain peckel.
(Everybody has his burden.)
352. Jeder weiss wu sie drickt ihm der schuch.
(Every one knows where his shoe pinches [German, Scotch, Manx, Italian].)
- (234) Jener weiss nit wemen der schuch kwetscht. (See No. 234.)
(One doesn't know where another's shoe pinches.)
353. Es lacht zach allein, un es weint zach allein.
(One laughs alone and weeps alone.¹)

¹ Compare this with "Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone."

354. Die welt is full mit tzoress, nor jederer fielt nor zaine.
(The world is full of trouble, but each man feels his own.)
355. Einer weisst nit dem anderens krenk.
(One doesn't know another's sorrow.)
356. Keiner zogt nit "Oi" az se thut nit weh.
(One doesn't cry "Oh!" if he's not in pain.)
357. Az me weint zach ois, wert gringer af'n harz.
(After you've had a good cry, your heart is lighter.)
358. Der was hot nit versucht bittere, weisst nit wos süss is.
(He who has not tasted the bitter does not understand the sweet
[German].)
359. A mol is die refue erger fun der make.
(Sometimes the remedy is worse than the disease.)
- (235) Jeden dacht zach,
Az ba jenem lacht zach. (See No. 235.)
(One always thinks that others are happy.)
360. Einem's mazl is an anderens schlimmazl.
(One's good luck is another's bad luck.)
361. Rebeine shel eilem, heb mich nit uf, warf mich nit arop.
(Father in heaven, don't raise me up, don't cast me down!)
362. Du fohrst, gib achtung af die hinterschte redder.
(You drive, look to your hind wheels.)
363. Er legt zach wie a haar,
Un steht uf wie a naar.
(He lies down a lord, and rises a fool.)
- (148) Tinken heisst nit trinken. (See No. 148.)
(Dipping isn't drinking.)
364. Er lacht mit jascherkess.
(He laughs under leeches [forced laughter].)
365. Er lacht mit heiven.
(He laughs with yeast [forced laughter].)
366. Bis se kummt die nechomo,
Kricht arois die neschomo.
(If you wait until your ships come in, you're likely to lose your strength
[breath].)
- This passage is practically untranslatable. I have given a very free rendition of the idea. *Nechomo* is the realization of your desires, dreams, and so on; while *neschomo* is "soul" or "strength." Both are Hebrew words.
367. Nit alle zeit gehen avek in ein zeit.
(There are better days coming [free translation].)
368. Nit af alle mol schlecht, un nit af alle mol gut.
(Things can't be bad all the time, nor good all the time.)

369. Zollst nit zorgen dem zorg fun morgen.
(Do not bear to-morrow's burden [Take no thought for the morrow, Sufficient unto the day, etc.]
370. A schlim mazl kummt eich a mol zu nutz.
(Sometimes a piece of ill luck comes in handy [It's an ill wind, etc.]
371. Ba laitn a mazl!
(Some people do have luck!)
372. Mit mazl ken men alles.¹
(If you have good luck, everything is possible.)
373. On mazl teig gor nit.
Without luck, nothing will succeed.

PHILOSOPHY.

374. Die ganze welt is a cholem. Der leben is a cholem.
(Life is a dream.)
375. Die ganze welt is ein stadt.
(The whole world is one city.)

YOUTH AND AGE.

376. A jung beimele beigt zach, an alter brecht zach.
(A young tree bends, an old tree breaks.)

BEAUTY, PERSONAL CHARM, ETC.

377. Vos teig schoenkeit ohn mazl?
(Of what use is beauty without good luck?)
378. Zu schoen is a mol a chisorin.
(Too much beauty is a fault sometimes.)
379. Schwarz chenefdik.
(“Black but comely” [Dark-complexioned and pretty].)
380. A knip in der bak un die farb zoll stehen.
(A pinch in the cheek, and color in it.)
381. Schoen, in mir gerotten.
(About as pretty as I am [derisive].)
382. Bei nacht zainen alle küh schwarz.
(At night all cows are black.)

WOMEN.

383. Lange hor un kurzer seichel.
(Long hair and short wit [Russian].)
384. Weiber hobn nain mos reid.
(Women have nine measures of talk.)

¹ Compare Hindi, “If the king be angry, he can take away your livelihood, but not your good luck” (Temple, North Indian Proverbs [Folk-Lore Journal, 3:28]).

385. Zie hot a männersche kopf.
(She has a man's head.)

INSANITY.

386. In Tammuz wert men meschuge.
In August one goes crazy.
387. Bist du meschuge? Schlog zach die kopf in wand. (See No. 284.)
Are you mad? Go beat your head against the wall.
- (231) Az me zogt meschuge, zoll men gleiben. (See No. 231.)
(When people say that some one is crazy, believe it.)
- (194) Meschugene gänz, meschugene grieben. (See No. 194.)
(Crazy geese, crazy cracklings.)
388. Az Gott will einem strofen, nemmt er ihm dem seichel avek.
(Whom God wishes to punish, he makes mad [cf. "Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad"].)

DRINK.

389. Wos bai a nichterin af'n lung,
Is bai a schickerin af'n zung.
(What is in the heart of a sober man is on the tongue of a drunkard.)
390. Bist du schicker? Geh schlofen.
(Are you drunk? Go to sleep.)

DEATH.

391. Starben muz men.
(We must all die.)
392. Zicher is men nor mit'n teit.
(One is certain only of death.)
- (202) Starben un chasene hoben farspetigt men nit. (See No. 202.)
(It's never too late to die or get married.)
393. Der mensch is zum starben geboren.
(Man is born to die [from a popular Yiddish song].)
394. Mit'n malach hamovess
Traibt men nit kein kitovess.
(You can't jest with the angel of death.)
395. Wos die erd deckt zu, dos muz men fargessen.
(What the earth covers we must forget [said to some one who is grieving excessively for the dead].)
396. Dem is weh der wos ligt unter'n schnee.
(Woe to him that lies under the snow!)
397. Der malach hamovess schlecht,
Un blaiht gerecht.
(The angel of death slays, and remains justified.)

CRIME, PUNISHMENT.

398. Far Tillem zogen sitzt men nit.¹
One is not imprisoned for saying his prayers.
399. Af a ganef brennt die hittel.
(The thief's hat is on fire [Russian].)

The above is a Russian proverb based on a famous folk-story.

400. A ganef fun a ganef is potter.
It's no crime to steal from a thief.
401. Ert obgeleckt a guten beindel.
(He has licked a good bone [graft].)

WEATHER.

402. S'iz azei kalt es is a neveire arois lozen a meschugenem hund.
(It's so cold that it's a sin to drive out a mad dog.)

There are practically no Yiddish proverbs about weather-signs, agricultural conditions, and so on, because the Jews have not been farmers for thousands of years.

ETHNOGRAPHIC, JEWS AND GENTILES.

403. Besser in goische hend eider in yiddische mailer.
(Better in Gentile hands than in Jewish mouths.)

It is interesting to see what the Jew thinks of himself. "Gentiles" in these pages must be understood as referring to the Russian peasants, who ignorantly massacred the Jews. Yet this proverb states that it would be better to fall into the hands of these peasants than into the mouths of the Jews!

404. Voinen zoll men mit yiddin un handlen mit goim.
(Live among Jews, and do business with Gentiles.)
405. Behüt Gott far yiddische kepf un goische hend!
(God protect us from Jewish heads and Gentile hands!)
406. Mit a yid is gut kugel essen, ober nit af ein teller, weil er chapt ois.
(It's good to eat pudding with a Jew, but not from one plate, because he'll grab.)

Much has been said about the shrewdness of the Jew in business. These proverbs will show, I think, that the Jews have suffered from the extortionist Jew just as much as the peasants have. Nobody defends the profiteer and extortionist, least of all the Jews themselves.

407. Voinen zoll men zwischen goim, un starben zwischen yiddin.
(Live among Gentiles, and die among Jews.)

¹ Compare Scotch, "Ye've neither been biggin' kirks nor placin' ministers" (*Folk-Lore Journal*, 2 [1884]: 59 [from Aberdeen and its Folk, 1868]).

408. Zwischen yiddin wert men nit ferfallen.
(One does not perish among Jews [refers to the charity and generosity of the Jews to the poor].)
409. Az se nitto kein meiden, tanzt men mit schikses.
(When there are no Jewish girls, one dances with Gentiles.)
410. Wen singt a yid? Wen er is hungrig.
(When does a Jew sing? When he's hungry.)
411. A goische kopf!
A bauersche kopf!
(A peasant's head! [stupid!])

AMERICA.

It is interesting to know what the Russian Jewish immigrant thinks of this country. Many times he is disappointed in the land of his dreams, especially at first, when he has to live and work in unpleasant surroundings, and when he earns little money for the comforts of life. The most common expression of his disillusionment is, "Woe to Columbus!" The saying that he has heard in Russia about America is, "America is a golden land." He repeats this after he has been here a little time, but he says it with a shrug of the shoulder and a contemptuous purse of the lips. An expression that may surprise the descendants of the Mayflower Pilgrims is, "There is no family pride in America."

412. America is a goldene medina.
(America is a golden country.)
413. Eich mir a medina!
(Not much of a country!)
414. A klog zu Columbus'n.
(Woe to Columbus!)
415. Es is dein America!
(It is your America! [said to a person who is successful].)
416. Er lebt zach op in America!
(He's having a jolly time in America [said of one who is prosperous].)
417. In America is nitto kein yichess.
(There is no family pride in America.)
418. In der heim is er geven a schuster,¹
In der heim is er geven a schneider,
In der heim is er geven a ganef.
(At home [in Russia] he was a shoemaker, tailor, thief [here he has become a person of importance].)
419. Er arbet far der city.
(He works for the city [said of a person unemployed].)

¹ See p. 157, footnote.

I think the above originated in saying that some one was walking the streets, looking for work, and counting the bricks in the sidewalk for the city. It may be a local St. Louis expression.

420. Zie is azei dick wie die grobe blecherin.
(She is as large as the tinner's fat wife.)

This is a purely local St. Louis expression. About twenty years ago there lived on North Seventh Street a tinner whose wife was abnormally large. This simile is the result of that good woman's excessive girth, and is still used by Yiddish-speaking Jews in this city.

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SOLDAN HIGH SCHOOL,
ST. LOUIS, MO.,
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