CHAPTER VI

Proverbs and the Classroom
This section may properly be titled Proverbs and the classroom. The teachers of English should be able to make good use of proverbs in their teaching. Proverbs can be used as additional teaching tools and their study and teaching can bolster up the standard of English in our country. Teachers who have been using proverbs in the college classes have found them extremely useful in many ways. To generate greater interest the net should be cast wide and proverbs from other languages translated into English should be used and compared with English proverbs nearest in meaning. Proverbs should be suggested by students as well. A selected proverb should be written on the blackboard and its meaning explained. After this stage the teacher should carefully read the proverb many times and the students asked to listen to every sound very carefully. Some students should be asked to repeat the proverb. Faults in their reading, pronunciation, enunciation and so on are to be corrected. The students are to be drilled in these sounds till they come to a reasonable standard and till they have grasped the proverb as a complete unit of speech. A couple of examples can be given. The proverb ‘when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window’, provides us with a review of the vowel sounds: /o/, in poverty; /ʌ/, in love; /ɔ/, in door; /i/, in window. A Turkish proverb in English reads, 'Drink nothing without seeing it, sign nothing without reading it'. This
enables us to practise sounds /\v/ in drink, and /\j/, in nothing. We have also an Italian proverb which when translated reads 'with too many rooster crowing, the sun never comes up'. This gives the initial /r/ in roosters, and the final /r/ in never. In addition, it has the initial consonant cluster /cr/ in crowing and the final cluster /rs/ in roosters.

Again, we can take the proverb, Good wine needs no bush. This provides a framework for the recognition and reproduction of the phoneme /w/ in wine.

After the various sounds are practised we should turn to the words themselves. Sometimes simple words are used - the words are known to and understood by all the students.

If certain words are old, obsolete, strange and unfamiliar, they are explained. Such opportunities are taken to increase the vocabulary stock of the students. Other grammatical points are next considered. Various parts of speech can be examined and illustrated. Interesting facts about sentence structure and other grammatical terms can be communicated.

For example, we have no verbs in such proverbs as Like mother, like daughter; More haste, less speed. Yet the ideas are not obscured. Figures of speech can be illustrated by means of proverbs. Birds of a feather, flock together, shows analogy.

Synechoche is shown in, Two heads are better than one. We have alliteration in Look before you leap. Plenty of proverbs have smiles and metaphors embedded in them. Rhyme is illustrated by many proverbs, An apple a day keeps the
doctor away; and a friend in need is a friend indeed.

Rhythmic patterns are a prominent feature of almost all proverbs as they were circulated by oral tradition and had to have easy memorability. Many proverbs are in couplets, for example,

earlly to bed and early to rise,

makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

The different types of sentences can also be illustrated by taking help of proverbs - even verbal 'sentences' are there, like father, like son. Some proverbs have survived even though they violate the rules of grammar, for example, you pays your money and you takes your choice. This shows that verbal communication is more important than the rules of grammar.

Special attention should be paid to any unusual points arising during the study of a proverb. In some proverbs the meaning is quite clear and transparent. In some, there may be ambiguity. The proverb A rolling stone gathers no moss can be understood in the ways according to the context:

'that such a person does not become encrusted with dull, set, fixed habits or opinions; or that he does not attain a position of security, prosperity and success. This proverb is metaphorical and this aspect also has to be carefully explained. There are proverbs which contain references to old historical facts, manners and customs and cannot be understood without teacher's help by students belonging to different cultural contexts. Unless facts about Caesar are
known, Indian students cannot understand the meaning of *Cossing the Rubicon*. We take again a very common simple proverb, *A burnt child dreads the fire*. This can be taken literally, but we have to go further to see its symbolical value. It means that if a person has undergone some unpleasant experience he will be most reluctant to repeat it. Some proverbs may present linguistic curiosities. In the proverb *Time and Tide wait for no man*, the substantives *time* and *tide* were once synonymous and therefore tantologous old English *ti-me* and *ti-d* deriving by the addition of different stem-forming suffixes from the common Germanic root *ti* - 'to stretch'. The Tudor version of the proverb was *Time nor tide territh no man* where *no man* was the grammatical subject and where the alliteration was thus extended to include the verb'. (Potter).

Proverbs can be used in classrooms for memory training. Proverbs are short and pithy sayings easy to memorize - this quality of theirs can be made use of. Some games can be designed. First a definition is given. Then everyone tries to follow it by naming the proverb, as in the following:

*It is permitted to the feline race*
*To contemplate even a regal face*

The answer is *A cat may look at a king*.

A longer example:

*A mendicant, once from his indigence freed
And mounted aloft on the generous steed,
Down the precipice will infallibly go
And conclude his career in the regions below.*
The answer is, **set a beagle on horseback, and he'll ride to the levil.**

Here is another:

Bear nut to you famed city of Tyne
The carbonaceous product of the mine.

To this the answer is,

**Do not carry coal to Newcastle.**

It is wellknown fact that a vast majority of proverbs were 'invented' by persons unknown. However, there are some the authors of which can be identified. A set of such proverbs can be given to the students and they can be asked to identify the authors. Here are examples:

The more the merrier —
Familiarity breeds contempt
Let us let bygones be bygones
Absence makes the heart grow fonder
Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

The authors are respectively, Cicero, Syrus, Epitactus, Sayly and Pope. Besides memory improvement, students will also benefit by learning about these men-of-letters. Students can be asked to name proverbs which mention particular objects, such as gold and glass. The answers will be, **Those who live in glass houses must not throw stones,** and **All that glitters is not gold.**
Many such exercises can be constructed to the immense pleasure of the teacher and the taught. These innovative methods of teaching will confer additional benefits. They can broaden the student's knowledge in several ways. With the help of proverbs such as *Rome was not built in a day*, we can arouse the student's interest in Rome, Italy etc. in addition to telling him that great enterprises are not accomplished easily in a short time. Similarly the students will ask why all paths lead to Rome, and why when Greek meet Greek, comes the tug of war?

Certain proverbs specially lend themselves to become good essay topics and subjects of debates and group discussions. *Honesty is the best policy* is one such proverb. The teacher can explain it by telling the students that dishonesty may seem more profitable for a short time but in the long run honesty brings more advantages. After this, the present situation in the country can be highlighted. The students should be free to express their opinions freely - they should present arguments in favour of their own view and against those of the opponents. During group discussion, faults of grammar, logic and pronunciation can be corrected. In essays again remedial treatment for faulty thought and expression can be given. Proverbs which are opposite in meaning are specially suited for arguments. *Many hands make light work* contradicts *too many cooks spoil the broth*. Some will agree with one proposition, some with the other and an interesting debate or discussion can ensue.
Many proverbs offer valuable practical advice, with which the student can profit immensely, e.g., *A stitch in time saves nine; strike the iron when it is hot; Where there is a will, there is a way.* Moral and religious teaching can be given by using some proverbs e.g., *God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; the voice of the people is the voice of God; do unto others as you would they should do unto you.* The Book of Proverbs from The Old Testament can be used in the classrooms. Students can become acquainted with the wisdom of Solomon.

The study and the teaching of proverbs show that a teacher of English is able to impart some instruction in almost all human activities. He has the greatest opportunity to develop various dimensions of the personality of his students. He has therefore to reconsider the limits of his academic discipline. Many times he has to cross the limits of the study of literature and literary criticism.

Proverbs have sprung from the wisdom of the people and do not recognize national frontiers. Proverbs arising in a language of a particular nation spread far and wide and are able to find hospitable doors in other nations. We have already seen how the tales of Panchatantra filtered into Persia and Arabia and found themselves in European countries including England. The fables of Aesop enjoy universal popularity. Hence, proverbs can be used to foster international understanding. In English, we have Constant
dropping wears away a stone. In Hindi we say that if a rope is constantly driven across a stone there will be left a mark on it. Both proverbs mean that persistence will achieve a difficult objective. There is an Arab proverb, An idle person is the devil's play-fellow. The Chinese say, He who does nothing but sit and eat will wear away a mountain of wealth. The Latin proverb says, No deity assists the idle. The Germans say, Idleness has poverty for wages. The French aver, Indolence is the sleep of the mind. And the English say, An idle brain is the devil's workshop. People have roundly condemned idleness everywhere. On other topics such as God, friendship, marriage and so on, similar sentiments are expressed all over. It is clear that one touch of a proverb makes the whole world kin. Proverbs can provide great help in learning other languages. Sometimes we also see national prejudices reflected in proverbs. An Englishman arrogantly asserts, One Englishman can beat three Frenchmen. Such proverbs can be used as a warning against prejudices. We all have national prejudices. We cannot afford to nurture them. The world and its nations are moving closer to one another. The modern age of electronic media is breaking down national barriers. Better understanding among nations removes prejudices. An example of modern awareness is provided by Reader's Digest. It publishes many foreign proverbs translated in English. In its issue of February 1991 on page 1, there is a Jamaican proverb, Marriage hath teeth and his bite very hot. Nothing like this English.
The study of proverbs leads the senior students on to creative writing. We have seen that some proverbs have been used as book titles, such as *All's well that ends well*. Some book titles have become proverbs, *Smell is beautiful*, for example. Perhaps this fact can inspire would-be writers. To start with, however, students can be asked to construct fables on the lines of *Aesop*. The following modern fable by James Thurber can serve as a model:

A short time ago builders, working on a studio in Connecticut, left a huge square of plate glass standing upright in a field one day. A goldfinch flying swiftly across the field struck the glass and was knocked cold. When he came to, he hastened to his club, where an attendant bandaged his head and gave him a stiff drink. "What happened" asked a sea-gull. "I was flying across a meadow when all of a sudden the air crystallized on me", said the gold-finch. The sea-gull and a hawk and an eagle all laughed heartily. A swallow listened gravely. "For fifteen years, I've flown this country", said the eagle, "and I assure you there is no such thing as air crystallizing. Water, yes; air, no." "You were probably struck by a hailstone", the hawk told the goldfinch. "Or he may have had a stroke" said the seagull. "What do you think, swallow?" "Why, I think may be the air crystallized on him", said the swallow. The large birds laughed so loudly that the
goldfinch became annoyed and bet them each a dozen worms that they couldn't follow the course he had flown across the field without encountering the hardened atmosphere. They all took his bet; the swallow went along to watch. The sea-gull, the eagle, and the hawk decided to fly together over the route the goldfinch indicated. "You come too", they said to the swallow. "I-I-well, no", said the swallow, "I do'nt think I will." So the three large birds took off together and hit the glass together and they were all knocked cold.

Moral: He who hesitates is sometimes saved.¹

It is not difficult to recognize the proverb of which this moral is anti-thesis, he who hesitates is lost. Students should be encouraged to construct fables and short stories based on proverbs or on their parodies.

Although a poet is born and not made, still rudiments of poetry can be taught. The help of a proverb can be enlisted. Some proverbs are cast in poetic mould:

If grass look green in Janiveer,  
'Twill look the worser all the year.

This small poem can be used to teach students how to count syllables and how they are arranged in a poetic line. So a knowledge of metre in poetry is imparted. This particular composition is in iambic tetrameter. Students can be taught rhymes also. So, this proverb can be used as a starting
point for the teaching of the technique of versification. In explaining its meaning, we point out that it conveys a prophecy — if the grass looks green in January, it will be worse in all the rest of the months. It is a proverb coined in or before the seventeenth century. Our observation may or may not confirm it. We now consider another one:

If the twenty-fourth of August be fair and clear,
Then hope for a prosperous autumn that year.

Again, here we have a prophecy. To us it may represent superstition but it is also a teaching aid. After the students have learnt the elements of prosody they can be given a proverb and asked to try their hands at putting it in verse. An exercise in the pot calling the kettle black may produce a composition like this:

Whilst self-inspection it neglects,
Nor its own foul condition sees,
The kettle to the pot objects
Its sordid superficies.

Such exercises can be attempted by senior students and perhaps can provide some lighter moments in the classroom.

There are moments in the classroom when the atmosphere becomes surcharged with seriousness and some relaxation is needed. Students who have flocked to the classrooms no doubt require training for life which is a serious affair and not all beard and spittles. At the same time a sense of humour has also to be inculcated. Humour can act as an
armour against 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'.

There are proverbs that convey their message in a humorous note. The students, however, can be trained to play with well-known proverbs so as to produce humorous effects. When Thorstein Veblen says, 'Invention is the mother of necessity', he brings a smile to our lips. Other examples are, 'where there is a will, there is a won't' (Laetille Harper), 'the darkest hour is just before you are overdrawn' (Laurence Peter), and 'early to bed and early to rise and you will never meet the rich and famous' (Elsa Aarne). Endlessly the students can play with proverbs that take their fancy and let the wings of their imagination fly. Humorous effects can be produced - at the same time creative urge can find an outlet.

An Yiddish proverb pointedly states, laughter can be heard further than weeping. As already stated, some proverbs have humour ingrained in them and also contain elements of wit. When the proverb maker tells us that nine tailors make a man, this joke is at the expense of the tailors. In such cases, the proverb maker can tell us in the words of Falstaff, 'I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men' (Henry IV Part 2, I, ii, 10).

When students reach an advanced stage and their stock of proverbs has risen high, the work of classification can be undertaken to improve their understanding and grasp. It was Aristotle who introduced the idea of categories into logic and philosophy. He taught that reality could be classified 'according to several categories - substance,
quality, quantity, relation, determination in time and space, action, passion or passivity, position and condition. The idea of classification was taken up in logic, philosophy, science and other disciplines. A couple of examples from science may be cited. Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778) a Swedish botanist was the originator of the classification of plants and animals. The elements were classified by the Russian chemist Dmitri Mendelejeff who formulated the periodic law and invented the periodic table.

In literature we have tragedy, comedy, epic and so on. Scientific accuracy in humanities is not possible. We cannot attain scientific precision in classifying proverbs - there are several ways of classification. They may be classified according to the place of origin, the date of composition, the thematic content and so on. Kenneth Burke suggests the following categories:

i. Proverbs designed for consolation
ii. Proverbs meant for vengeance
iii. Proverbs for admonition or exhortation
iv. Proverbs for foretelling
v. Proverbs that name typical recurrent situations.

Burke has provided us with many examples to illustrate his categories. We shall see some of them.

The proverbs designed for consolation include

"The sun does not shine on both sides of the hedge at once;"
Think of ease but work on; The worst luck now, the better another time; Little troubles the eye but far less the soul; He is not poor that hath little, but he that desireth much. To what extent are these proverbs effective it is difficult to say but we must not forget that even Shakespeare advises us 'to patch grief with proverbs'. The proverbs cited by Burke are simple to understand and easy to apply to particular situations.

We turn to the second category - vengeance. Examples cited are, "At length the fox is brought to the furrier; Sue a beggar and get a louse; The higher the ape goes the more he shows his tail; The moon does not heed the barking of dogs; Fools tie knots and wise men loose them". We can add, "where vice is, vengeance follows; and, The noblest vengeance is to forgive". However, all thoughts of vengeance are extinguished when we remember the Biblical exhortation, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19).

Burke does not provide many examples of the third category - admonition and exhortation. He cites, "First thrive, then wife; when the fox preacheth, then beware your geese". We can add, "Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread; A fool and his money are soon parted; Do unto others as you would they should do unto you. There are many proverbs of this type."
The fourth category consists of proverbs that deal with foretelling, "Sow peas and beans in the wane of the moon, who soweth them sooner, be soweth too soon; when the wind is in the north, the skilful fisher goes not forth; when the moon is in the full, then is it in the wane; Straws show which way the wind blows; When the fish is caught, the net is laid aside; Eagles catch no flies".

In the category of typical recurrent situations Burke places, "Sweet appears sour when we pay; the treason is loved but the traitor is hated; the wine in the bottle does not quench thirst; the Sun is never the worse for shining on a dung hill".

Burke does not suggest that this is the only way of classification. He claims no finality for his system. He admits that some proverbs can be shifted from one category to the other. 'When the fox preacheth, then beware of your geese', has been placed in the foretelling group but it can also be placed with full justification in the vindictive group.

Burke remarks,

"The point of issue is not to find categories that 'place' the proverb once and for all. What I want is categories that suggest their active nature. Here there is no 'realism for its own sake'. There is realism for promise, admonition, solace, vengeance, foretelling, instruction, charting, all for the direct bearing that such acts have upon matters of welfare".
Proverbs can be classified according to their themes. Many dictionaries of proverbs have followed this system. One such dictionary is the *Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs* by Rosalind Ferguson. Another is named *A World Treasury of Proverbs* edited by Henry Davidoff. In the latter, the number of topics according to which proverbs are grouped is 1576. Most of these proverbs are by unknown authors. However, there are many whose authors are known. The number of such authors is 442. Shakespeare is the largest contributor with 361 statements to his credit. The students should be asked to study proverbs carefully and classify them according to this system.

Another way in which the proverbs may be classified is given below:

1. Proverbs about emotions: Examples are "Absence makes the heart grow fonder; All is fair in love and war; Fain part in pleasure".

2. Proverbs representing escape from tight situations: Examples are, "No news is good news; Everything comes to him who waits; Every dog has his day".

3. Proverbs that can provide plots for creative writing: such as, "Crossing the Rubicon; Athanasius against the world; To heap Ossa from Pelion". Such proverbs require knowledge of history, mythology and so on. One can attempt to write one's own drama or fiction based on such proverbs. Not all proverbs lend themselves to such treatment.
4. Proverbs in this category resemble the proverbs in category 3 but are non-historical and non-mythological. Examples - "Necessity is the mother of invention; An eye for an eye" and so on.

5. Proverbs relating to character. Examples are, "Cowards die many times before their death; It is never too late to mend; Fools rush in where angels fear to tread; Help a lame dog over the stiles; Where there is a will, there is a way". The exhortation contained in these proverbs are designed for improvement of individual character.

6. Closely related to the above are proverbs which provide us a scale of value. Here we deal with universally applicable values. Examples are, "Honesty is the best policy; Virtue is its own reward; A hedge between keeps friendships green; Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you". This category will include proverbs which emphasize religion and morality.

7. Here we place those proverbs which permit us greater freedom in our point of view. Some may say, Half a loaf is better than nothing. Another may not agree. He has a different point of view and he prefers to go the whole hog. Another example is, Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion. Someone may not agree, he may prefer to be content with a servile situation.

8. By and large proverbs are serious in content. In some, however, an element of humour is present. Examples
are, "A bald head is soon shaven; A beggar's purse is bottomless; A whistling woman and a crowing hen is neither fit for God nor man".

In some proverbs an element of irony is present and it contributes to humour. We have the proverb, **Fine feathers make fine birds.** This means that people judge others by appearance so we must dress well. In a sarcastic sense it points out that a person may not be as good as his clothes suggest, we have also ironical humour in God heals and the doctor takes the fee.

9. Most of the proverbs are couched in simple, easy to understand language, but some are written in a symbolical language and have to be interpreted carefully. An example,

The calf, the goose, the bee

The world is ruled by these three.

Here calf stands for parchment, the goose for a pen and the bee for the wax. As we know, in olden days government orders were written on parchment with pens provided by goose feathers and were sealed by bee's wax. These orders regulated the work of the government. These days, however, this proverb is no longer valid. Many such proverbs hide their meaning below the surface and therefore have to be unravelled carefully.

As has been pointed out earlier by Burke no classification can be rigid. So the classification suggested above also cannot be said to be free from all shortcomings.
Some proverbs defy rigid classification and seem to float easily from one category to another with full justification. 'Early to bed and early to rise, make a person healthy, wealthy and wise' - says the proverb. It may offer advice on health and may be categorized accordingly. At the same time it offers practical wisdom. Similarly, it is not easy to understand how by simply rising early a man can become wealthy and wise. Wealth as we know can be acquired only by the sweat of the brow not by simply rising early. Similarly, the acquisition of wisdom is also not a simple affair. Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers. We have another saying - fools rush in where angels fear to tread. It sounds like a warning. It is also humorous to some extent. We have another fool in a fool and his money are soon parted. This again releases sparks of humour. It also cautions us to be careful about our money. Our meddling intellect however may ask, how could a fool acquire money in the first place - the money which will soon part from him. These examples demonstrate that the classification here proposed is neither entirely thematic, nor is it absolutely based on semantics.

It has been amply shown that proverbs can be used in the class room to increase verbal competence. It is no exaggeration to say that India's international position depends in some degree on people's ability to use words effectively and understand them well. We have to face greatly increased competition from other countries.
Sometimes we have to counter bitter propaganda against us. Our diplomats are representatives of a great country and every statement of theirs here and abroad is subjected to great critical scrutiny. Our businessmen also now have global connections. Incompetence in the use of language is a major source of inefficiency and waste. Anything that helps us in the mastery of language should be welcomed. The use of proverbs in classrooms therefore should not only be welcomed but encouraged.

The value of proverbs as teaching aids is now well established. As an educational aid proverbs can be indeed very effective. We have now to examine the role of the prime mover in the classroom - the teacher of English both in schools as well as in colleges. In a letter to R. Woodhouse dated 27th October 1818, Keats remarked, "A poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no identity - he is continually informing and filling some other body". What Keats has said about a poet can also be said about a teacher of English. The teaching of English is necessarily related to other subjects and a teacher of English has to develop such skills in the students as will help him in his future profession. We have already seen that in India a great deal of command over English is still needed if a person wishes to get ahead in his job. To cater to this need so many so-called institutes of English have sprung up like mushrooms in many cities and towns and they are flourishing. The need for such Institutes can be
abolished if proper ground work is prepared at the school and college levels - especially at the college level.

As stated earlier, the teacher of English has a multifaceted personality. English is a language of knowledge of all subjects in India - it is also a library language. Hence, the knowledge of all subjects is entombed in the English language. Attempts have been made to transmit knowledge in Indian languages but these efforts have not yet been fully successful. English remains a service language. It is the key which opens the door to knowledge.

As a service language, English has to be brought closer to other subjects and the English teacher has to pick up a great deal of acquaintance with other subjects. Many textual lessons an English teacher has to teach usually deal with other subjects. English text books are filled with extracts from science, technology, Economics, History, Commerce and other subjects. The English teacher has to teach these extracts and in the process becomes Jack of all trades, and may not remain even a master of English. In this arduous work proverbs as they embrace all departments of life can be of immense help. We have already seen that proverbs spring from life and are condensed pieces of wisdom. Among the proverb makers we meet philosophers, scientists, public administrators, economists, historians and so on. A few examples can be taken of each.
It is the great Greek philosopher who tells us

*Art is long, life is short.* Never were truer words spoken.

Life is really short, the Bible gives us 'three score and ten' years. It takes years to become proficient in art.

A work art when created is, as Keats tells us in the Ode on Grecian Cern, permanent in nature. *I today, you tomorrow* is another one of the philosophical types.

Computer science has given us *garbage in, garbage out.* This is now a recognized proverb and it means this, "Garbage is a colloquial term in data processing for 'incorrect output' which will according to the proverb, inevitably produce faulty output" (Simpson).

In public offices, as Parkinson tells us 'Work expands so as to fill the time available'. The economist speaks to us about cutting our coats according to the cloth and about pennywise, pound foolish. He, caution us to look before we leap, at the same time reminding the entrepreneur that nothing venture, nothing have. The historian tells us why Caesar's wife should be above suspicion and what Caesar did when he crossed the Rubicon. He also tells us why when Greek meets Greek there is a tug of war.

It is clear from the above discussion that proverbs can help in the study of other subjects. The teachers of other subjects can also introduce proverbs in their own teaching and help the students to memorize certain facts.
and also to add interest to their lectures. It should be the duty of the English teacher to remind other teachers of the proverbs relevant to their subjects. Proverbs of course will be part of the store of knowledge of other subject teachers but an occasional reminder from the English teachers will do a world of good. There should be a free flow of information between other teachers and the teachers of English. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the teaching of language is the most important part of the job of the English teacher.

Some general principles underlying successful teaching of English and the place of proverbs in it may briefly be stated here. All these are implied in what has been discussed before:

1. Progress in learning a language does not mean only acquisition of knowledge. Linguistic tasks must be performed. A proverb is not to be merely understood. Students should be able to write a paragraph, or an essay about it or use it for group discussion or debate.

2. A proverb should be chosen for the day and proverbs allied in meaning and opposed in meaning if any should be taken into consideration.

3. Students should be encouraged to think of situation in which the proverb will be applicable. A brief explanation should be given by the teacher if necessary
4. If proverbs contain allusions, they must be explained.

5. Oral discussion of the proverb should be followed by written exercises as suggested in point 1.

6. Concentrate on those elements of structure which cause difficulty. Sometimes difficulties arise when parts of speech are missing eg. no pains, no gains, here today and gone tomorrow.

7. Some proverbs are cast in the poetic mode. Prose explanation should first be attempted by the students. The teacher can then help.

8. Increase of vocabulary should also be aimed at. Old or Middle English and foreign words should be explained but the students should be taught to avoid them.

9. Items learned once should be repeated as often as possible so that they do not disappear from memory.

10. The class should be kept lively and active by selecting such proverbs as may contribute to cheerfulness. Proverbs should be, as far as possible, related to activities inside and outside the classroom.
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