APPENDICES
In Anglo-saxon and middle English manuscripts there are valuable collections of proverbs. Many of these were picked up by later collectors and incorporated in their works. Some people of old times entered proverbs in their commonplace books. J. Comybeare in 1580 made a collection of some proverbs, but this collection was published only in 1905. Many other manuscripts of that age also contain a number of proverbs. Some collections of proverbs in seventeenth-century commonplace-books are abstracted out of printed editions.

The first printed collection of proverbs appeared in 1546. The collector was John Heywood and the title of his work was Dialogue containing the number in effect of all the proverbs in the English Tongue. Heywood was one of the king's jesters and he might have invented some of the proverbs. But for an astonishing number of proverbs he provides the earliest literary record in Apperson and Smith. Heywood's book started the craze for the collection of proverbs. People resurrected many proverbs—some dealing with weather lore and some with husbandry. People also began to use proverbs more freely and frequently in their communications and exchange of thought.
After Heywood the next important collector of proverbs is David Ferguson. He was a minister of the Church of Scotland and was a charming conversationalist. He died in 1598. His collection of *Scottish Proverbs* appeared in 1641. Some of his proverbs are Scottish in origin. Some have been taken from Heywood, somewhat modified.

The next important collector was William Camden (1551-1623), an English historian and antiquarian well known for his study of Elizabethan times. He was an usher and later Head Master of the Westminster School, London. In 1614 he published the second edition of his *Remains Concerning Britain*. This included nearly four hundred proverbs. Later editions added more proverbs.

The next notable name in this connection is that of William Baldwin (d.c. 1564), an English divine, school master, philosopher, and poet. Useful collections of Latin-English proverbs are found in his *A Treatise of Moral Philosophy* (1547).

In the later sixteenth and in the seventeenth century the attention of the writers turned to the proverbs of Europe, and especially of Italy, France and Spain. James Sanford published a translation of Italian proverbs with the title *The Garden of Pleasure* (1573). Some teachers have invented dialogues in which they have woven familiar proverbs. John Mingan in his *Spanish Grammar* (1599) gave translations
of some proverbs of Spain, a country specially rich in proverbs and proud of them. Sometimes dictionaries contain many proverbs for example, Randall Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of French and English Tongues* (1611).

Thomas Draxe was an English clergyman of the early seventeenth century. He thought that proverbs lent strength and weight to his sermons and speeches. They also provided rules for the conduct of life. He collected over two thousand proverbs and published them in his *Biblio-theca Scholastica* (1616). He was a native of Warwickshire and collected a number of sayings prevalent in the country. He arranged his proverbs under subject headings such as *Anger*, *Certainty*, *Gluttony* and so on.

After Draxe, the next important name is that of John Clarke who was a Pastor of the Church of Fiskerton, near Lincoln. He collected proverbs as a hobby. He also found them suitable for the teaching of grammar. In 1639, he published *Paremiologia Anglo-Latina*. The proverbs Latin and English are paralleled. The book advertises itself on the title page as: 'Very useful and delightful for all sorts of men, on all occasions. More specially profitable for scholars for the attaining Elegance, sublimity and variety of the best expressions'.

We now come to George Herbert (1593–1633), a metaphysical poet and a pastor. He collected proverbs for his own pleasure and his interest in them was kindled when he studied French, Spanish and Italian. The books of grammar
in the foreign languages used to contain a large number of proverbs and Herbert learnt them carefully. He made a collection of proverbs, and called it Outlandish Proverbs. Unfortunately, the book could not be published during his life time. It was published only in 1640, seven years after his death. The second edition was called Jagula Prudentum and was published in 1651. In this, many proverbs were added by others.

Several collections appeared after the publication of Herbert's Outlandish Proverbs. A short list is given here:


We now come to James Howell (1594-1666). He was Historiographer Royal to Charles II. He had a genuine interest in proverbs. He collected a number of proverbs and published them as a part of his Lawson Tetraslopton
published in 1659. This is a dictionary of the English, French, Spanish and Italian tongues. He was a man of the world and believed that proverbs of different races reveal racial characteristics. He took delight in comparing proverbs of different nations. He freely reprinted proverbs from early collections. He also made a collection of statements which he thought would be counted among the proverbs some time in future.

In 1660, Peter Paravicino published The true Idioms of the Italian Tongue. In this, Italian proverbs with English versions are given. Francis Hawkins in 1661 issued a book of English and Latin proverbs entitled Youth's Behaviour. 1662 saw the publication of The History of the Worthies of England by Thomas Fuller, a churchman who included proverbs in it. Proverbs are also included in Robert Codrington's The Second Part of Youths Behaviour published in 1664. A valuable collection of proverbs in Italian and English appears in Giovanni Torriano's book Piazza Universale li Proverbi Italiani, published in 1666. In 1669, William Winstanley published his A New Help to Discourse, which is a collection of a few 'Country Proverbs used in Discourse'.

We now come to John Ray (1627-1705). He was one of England's greatest naturalists. He was pre-eminently a botanist but also took up the study of zoology. He introduced a system of classification in the plant kingdom. He had keen powers of observation. He also took keen interest
in philology and proverb collection. He was the first collector who deliberately invited correspondents to collect proverbs from different parts of the country and send them to him. His book *English Proverbs* was first issued in 1670. He classified the proverbs and arranged them under leading words in alphabetical order. He also gave a list of sources from which he had drawn the proverbs. He added notes which are "learned, leisurely and genial, and are still invaluable for the study of dialect and folklore".

In 1707 appeared *Select Proverbs* by John Mapleton. He shared with George Herbert, an interest in proverbs of a moral kind. The next collector was James Kelly. His *Complete Collection of Scottish Proverbs* appeared in 1721. Not much is known about Kelly. He was a Scotsman but spent a great part of his life in England. There are over three thousand proverbs in this collection. Many are only Scottish versions of proverbs common to many nations. Sometimes such adaptation spoil the shape and sense of the proverbs — nevertheless the book remains very useful. He has also added very interesting notes. His book also contains a useful workable index.

The next important collection of proverbs appeared in 1732, entitled *Gnomologia: Adages and Proverbs*. The compiler was Thomas Fuller M.D. (not to be confused with Thomas Fuller D.D.). He conceded that there might be distinction between adages and proverbs but refused to...
spell out the difference. He exhorted the reader to make use of the collection according to his judgement and pleasure. The proverbs are arranged alphabetically. In this, he was following the method of Kelly. Fuller took most of the proverbs from the works of Day and Kelly. He also added many which he had collected on his own. Like Day, he had the unfortunate tendency to soften the Scottish language to make it more agreeable to the English ear. As a practising physician Fuller must have come in contact with many people from whom he must have learnt many proverbs.

From 1733 to 1758, Benjamin Franklin (1706-90) published from Philadelphia, his Poor Richard's Almanack. He introduced characters on whom he draped his humour and homely wisdom. He wrote and collected many shrewd maxims and proverbs. His humour is always kind, often earthy even to a point of coarseness, but he is never bitter. He laughs at pretence and stuffiness but never sneers at poverty or ignorance. The Almanack is full of proverbs that have entered common speech such as, Time is Money; Keep one's nose to the grindstone; and, Necessity never made a good bargain.

The next important name is that of Allan Ramsay, (1686-1758), a Scottish poet. He is famous for his pastoral comedy The Gentle Shepherd (1725). He later set up a book shop and brought out a collection of poems. In 1737, he published Scott's Proverbs, which is a fairly good collection.
The proverbs are alphabetically arranged. At the end he put a glossary in which unfamiliar words are explained. His book is also provided with a dedication in which he underlines the usefulness of the proverbs to the common people who are busy in their occupations.

After Rawson, no new collection worthy of note was produced till we come to Andrew Henderson's *Scottish Proverbs* published in Edinburgh in 1832.

H.G. Bohn (1796-1884) published his *Handbook of Proverbs* from London in 1855. A. Hislop published *Proverbs of Scotland* from Glasgow in 1862. They are almost reprints of Ray's *English Proverbs* and other collections with a few additions.

W.C. Hazlitt (1834-1913) published in 1869, his *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*. "This was the most ambitious collection that had yet appeared, as the compiler occasionally gave the sources from which he had taken his proverbs, and added a number of notes and quotations illustrating early uses". However, he omitted many proverbs which had come from foreign languages and also those he considered coarse and indecent. The arrangement is alphabetical. There is a long introduction. There is also an index.

Despite all its faults, Hazlitt's book was reprinted many times during subsequent years. No new important collection of proverbs came out till 1902, when Lean's *Collectanea*...
was published after his death. This work consisted of five volumes and was published from Bristol during 1902-1904. These volumes were the results of over fifty years of reading and research upon proverbs. Owing to the death of the author before publication the book could not receive final touches, so the material suffers from want of arrangement and collation. The book is therefore 'difficult and disappointing to use'. However, with V.C. Lean, we enter the twentieth century. W.W. Skeat published Early English Proverbs in 1910 and J.C. Bridge published Cheshire Proverbs in 1917.

In the year 1926, M.P. Tilley, an American Professor published Elizabethan Proverbs Lores with parallels from Shakespeare. This is a collection of over seven hundred proverbs. He provides a scholarly introduction and traces the popularity of many proverbs. The attention of other American scholars was also drawn to the study of proverbs.

In 1929, J.M. Dent & Co. of London published English Proverbs and Proverbal Phrases: A Historical Dictionary by G.L. Apperson. Apperson spent nearly nine years before he gave shape to his dictionary and produced a better work than that of Bohn and of Hazlitt. Apperson has adopted a novel twofold method of arrangement — he has grouped proverbs having a common theme. The remainder have been arranged alphabetically. Each proverb is illustrated with quotations largely from literature and not from proverb collections.
There are also explanatory notes. Apperson's Dictionary is much better than anything we had before for three reasons: his collection is fuller, his is the first historical dictionary of English proverbs and he follows the method of arranging all the proverbs and proverbial phrases under one alphabet according to the first significant word. It is easy to trace a proverb in Apperson if it is there at all.

Most of the books mentioned above appear in the standard bibliography of proverb literature. The book bears the title *Proverb Literature*. The material was mostly collected by T.A. Stephens a member of the folk-lore Society. The book was edited by W. Bonser and published in 1930. About half of the books mentioned in *Proverb Literature* were not used by Apperson and by W.G. Smith.

In *Chaucer's Use of Proverbs*, (Camb. Mass. 1934), B.J. Whiting has given an interesting study of the literary artist at work using proverbs to raise a laugh, to heighten character drawing or to support his own comments.

In the year 1935 appeared the *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* compiled by W.G. Smith. It was truly a landmark publication backed as it was by the unquestioned authority and prestige of the Oxford University. Thanks to the cooperation of scholars like Max Forster, Kenneth Sisam and Mrs. Haseltine, Smith was able to make use of proverbs collection in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English manuscripts. This Dictionary contains a valuable introduction by
Mrs. Haseltine. However, as F.P. Wilson points out, many proverbs are still left out. Some difficulty in finding particular proverbs is felt because Smith observed the syncategorematical particles. He reverted to the system of Camden and Ferguson.

The second edition of Smith's Dictionary was published in 1948. It was revised through out by Paul Harvey. He dropped many proverbs mostly Scottish because of their trivial character. Many new ones of greater interest were introduced. The alphabetical arrangement was continued but improvements were made. "Under any other word of importance in the proverb a cross reference has been given showing the opening word under which the proverb appears together with so much of the rest of it as will indicate its general sense. . . . . . These cross-references, which are very numerous should make it possible to trace without difficulty any proverb in the collection" (Harvey). This edition also made a fuller use of G.L. Apperson's English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases.

In 1948, The Macmillan Company of New York published The Macmillan Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Famous Phrases, compiled by Burton Stevenson. It is a monumental work running into more than 2000 pages. An attempt has been made to trace back the sources of proverbs. In some instances the trail leads back nearly six thousand years to Egyptian scribes but for the most part it goes no further than the
Homer's writing of about 800 A.D. and the later Hebrew wisdom literature. The compiler has relied on the Oxford English Dictionary, Apperson and Smith. John R. Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanism has also been extensively used. Stevenson also gives a list of important early collections of English proverbs.

In the year 1950 was published Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries. The compiler was the eminent American Scholar H.P. Tilley. The place of publication was Ann Arbor. This is a very comprehensive work exemplary for clarity and for references, particularly to Shakespeare and was used by many English scholars including F.P. Wilson the editor of the third edition of Smith's Dictionary.

Everyman's Dictionary of Quotations and Proverbs compiled by D.C. Browning was published by J.M. Dent & Co. of London in 1951. It lists 3621 proverbs alphabetically with no comments or explanations. An index is provided.

Cassell & Co. Ltd. of London in 1953, published A World Treasury of Proverbs collected by Henry Davidoff. It contains about 15000 proverbs taken from twenty-five languages. More than half are from English. The proverbs are arranged themewise. Within a thematic group the proverbs are arranged alphabetically. The selection of proverbs is made very judiciously. The book is very useful for comparative study of proverbs of different nations.
In 1958 was published Dictionary of American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases 1820–1880, compiled by A. Taylor and B.J. Whiting. This collection is very useful to an English reader. B.J. Whiting and H.W. Whiting also published Proverbs, Sentences and Provincial Phrases in 1968.

The third edition of Smith's Oxford Dictionary was issued in 1970. It was revised by F.P. Wilson who was an authority in the sixteenth and seventeenth century literature. He collected many new proverbs and cited many earlier examples of proverbs used. As Joanna Wilson observes in the introduction, "The present edition is the result of F.P. Wilson's life-long interest in proverbs, which began with his early work on Dekker and continued with his wide and deep knowledge of Elizabethan literature". There is a continuation of the alphabetical method and more cross-references have been provided. Proverbs can be located more easily in this edition.

B.J. Whiting in 1977, issued Early American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases.

In 1982 John Simpson issued The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, an abridgement of The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs. Simpson says, "The parent dictionary concentrates particularly on the period up to seventeenth century...". This concise version deals with principally with proverbs known in the twentieth century, especially in Britain and America, and it also gives full documentary information from the point at which each proverb enters the English language.
In addition, copious modern examples have been sought and included in order to establish evidence for each proverb's present currency. It is the only attempt that has been made to record and describe the modern proverb principally in Britain, but also in America and other important areas of the English speaking world. This Dictionary is a very useful compilation.

A very good collection of proverbs was published by Penguin Books in 1983. The title of the book is The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs. The compiler is Rosaline Ferguson who has provided a good preface to the book. Proverbs from different languages are taken. They are arranged in categories according to themes. Within a particular thematic arrangement the proverbs are recorded alphabetically. A very useful index is included and a proverb can easily be located. Unfamiliar and old obsolete words are explained.

Some general dictionaries also include a collection of proverbs. An example is Reader's Digest Great Encyclopaedic Dictionary Vol. III, 1978, 2nd edition. Some books on idioms include a number of proverbs. For example, we can take, A Book of English Idioms, (3 volumes), by V.H. Collins (Longmans, London 1964).

However, it is clear that a standard definitive edition of collected proverbs has not yet appeared. Such a work requires operations by a syndicate of readers who should provide a foundation as firm as laid down for the Oxford
English Dictionary. Perhaps a single man working patiently for years may be able to abstract proverbs from dictionaries and proverb collections as Apperson and Smith have done.

But as we have seen, such works are far from perfect. We can never be sure at what period the proverbs entered the English language and acquired literary acceptance. We also will not certainly know whether the proverbs became naturalized or remained a foreign import. The making of dictionaries is no longer an individual matter as in the days of Cotgrave or Florio or Dr. Johnson. A really good dictionary of proverbs can only be made with the cooperation of a large circle of readers spread far and wide. Their efforts must be coordinated by a group of editors.
Most proverbs as we know are the products of the imagination of those whose names have been lost in the hoary mists of antiquity. Some of them must have been 'mute inglorious Miltons' who expressed themselves poetically - although on a very small scale. Here are three examples of such poetic effusions:

i. When you are an anvil, hold you still
   When you are a hammer, strike your fill.

ii. He that will not when he may
    When he will, he shall have nay.

iii. If the adder could hear and the blindworm could see
     Neither man nor beast would ever go free.

These couplets are easy and simple in meaning. There are other slightly longer but we have no full length independent poem composed of proverbs. Some sayings of great ones like Shakespeare and Pope have passed into proverb lore, but I know only of one English poem in which almost all lines are proverbs. This poem is called Lover's Proverbs, written by Michael Drayton.

Drayton was born in 1563 and died in London in 1631. Details of his life are little known. He produced a vast
quantity of historical, topographical and religious poetry, in addition to odes, sonnets and satires. Among his works is Idea's Mirror published in 1594. It is a series of sonnets many of them inspired by French originals. Reproduced below is his sonnet Love's Proverbs (spellings modernised)

**Love's Proverbs**

As love and I, late harboured in one inn,  
with proverbs thus each other entertain;  
In Love there is no lack, thus I begin,  
Fair words make fools, replieth he again;  
Who spares to speak, doth spare to speed (quoth I)  
As well (sayth he) too forward, as too slow;  
Fortune assists the boldest, I reply,  
A hasty man (quoth he) never wanted woe;  
Labour is light, where (quoth I) doth pay,  
(Saith he) Light burden is heavy if far borne;  
(Quoth I) The Main lost, cast the By away;  
You have spun a fair thread, he replies in scorn.  
And having thus awhile each other thwarted,  
Fools as we met, so Fools again we parted.

These fourteen iambic pentametric lines constitute a type of sonnet known as Shakespearean. It is a dialogue between Love personified and the poet and is carried on in proverbs. The conversation begins when the poet says that love wants nothing at all, to which love replies that a man in love is fooled by too many flattering words. The poet
contends that if a person does not speak of his love in so many words he cannot prosper speedily in love. He means that the principle 'silence is golden' is not applicable in the affairs of the heart. Love then utters a caution - do not be too fast, neither should a person be too slow. The poet contends that fortune favours a bold person - he means to say that none but the brave deserves the fair. Love replies by saying that a man in haste gives invitation to many miseries. Love by implication says, act in haste, repent at leisure. The poet now changes the tune and says that to a person truly in love, even the heaviest labour becomes light. Love says that even a light labour becomes too heavy if carried on beyond capacity for too long a time. The poet says that when the main purpose is realized then all difficulties are to be forgotten. Love replies in scorn that the poet's argument lacks substance. Having entertained each other in this way and being no further enlightened, the parley between the poet and love is over.

It is an entertaining poem with a serio-comic undertones. The tone is light. The reader is not made to feel that he is listening to trite worn-out cliches. It is not difficult to enter into the spirit of the poem and enjoy the light hearted banter. As we have already seen, the people of those days were very fond of proverbs. Their minds were very well stocked and they loved to quote proverbs in all sorts of situations.
We have seen that this is not the age of proverbs. We have also seen that our present day authors do not use many proverbs. To test this statement the number of proverbs in twenty books was counted. The following table shows the result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title and year of Publication</th>
<th>Number of Proverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Samuel Butler</td>
<td>The Way of All Flesh (1903)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 G. Bernard Shaw</td>
<td>Major Barbara (1907)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Somerset Maugham</td>
<td>Of Human Bondage (1915)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 G. Bernard Shaw</td>
<td>Heartbreak House (1918)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 G. Bernard Shaw</td>
<td>Apple Cart (1929)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Daphne du Maurier</td>
<td>Jamaica Inn (1926)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Daphne du Maurier</td>
<td>Rebecce (1938)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Somerset Maugham</td>
<td>Christmas Holiday (1939)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Daphne du Maurier</td>
<td>The Kings General (1946)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Kingsley Amis</td>
<td>Lucky Jim (1954)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Richard Gordon</td>
<td>Doctors in Love (1957)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 N. Kazantzakis</td>
<td>The Last Temptation of Christ (1960)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 P.G. Wodehouse</td>
<td>Service with a Smile (1961)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Irving Wallace</td>
<td>The Plot (1967)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Irving Stone</td>
<td>Those whoLove (1967)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 J. Susanne</td>
<td>Yargo (1979)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 J. Black</td>
<td>The Plunderers (1983)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Ben Abachan</td>
<td>The Assassin Code (1985)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 D. Lapierre</td>
<td>City of Joy (1985)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Mary Booth</td>
<td>Carpet Sahib (1986)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table clearly shows the decline in the use of proverbs. Samuel Butler about whom the shades of the nineteenth century lingered used forty-nine proverbs in The Way of All Flesh (1903). Later works use very few—most have used less than five.

Just to show how far the proverbs have fallen in the estimate of literary men we can take a passage from Don Quixote:

"why" quoth Sancho, "I neither say nor think one way nor the other, not I; let them that say it eat the lie, and swallow it with their bread. If they lay together, they have answered for it before. I never thrust my nose into other men's porridge. It is no bread or butter of mine. Every man for himself, and God for us all, say I; for he that buys and lies, finds it in his purse. Let him that owns the cow take her by the tail. Naked I came into the world, and naked must I go out. May think to find filches of bacon, where there is not so much as the racks to lay them on; but who can hedge in a cuckoo? Little said is soonest mended. It is a sin to belie the Devil, but misunderstanding brings lies to the town, and there is no padlock in people's mouths; for a close mouth catches no flies".

"Bless me", cried Don Quixote, "what a catalogue of muddy proverbs hast thou run through! What a heap of frippery were hast thou threaded together and how wide from the purpose!"

A comparison of the above passage with a passage from a modern work will amply illustrate the change in literary style that has come about in three centuries. The current literary style frowns upon proverbs, cliches,
quotations, and jargon. Ironically enough, the present day ideals are expressed by Cervantes in his *Preface to Don Quixote*. He says:

Do but take care to express yourself in a plain, easy manner, in well-chosen, significant, and decent terms, and to give a harmonious and pleasing Turn to your Periods; study to explain your thoughts, and set them in the truest light, labouring as much as possible not to leave them dark or intricate, but clear and intelligible.
APPENDIX 4

The proverb The Vicar of Bray will be Vicar of Bray still (shortened to Vicar of Bray) deserves special treatment. It shows how a living man becomes a 'legend' and later becomes immortal in a proverb. He has become synonymous with a turncoat, a renegade, an opportunist, a time server and a fickle inconstant person. He changed his political views with every change of Government. A parallel for him may be found in Vidkun Quisling who betrayed his country Norway and became Prime Minister during German Occupation (1940-1945). The name of Quisling has already entered Chambers’ Dictionary (1988, Indian reprint) where it is put equivalent to one who aids the enemy. It is Time which will show whether Quisling emerges as a proverb or is consigned to the limbo of oblivion.

Nothing is known historically of the Vicar of Bray. It might have been Simon Alleyn who, as Vicar of Bray, was a protestant in the reign of Henry VIII and Edward IV, Catholic in the reign of Queen Mary and Protestant again in the reign of Elizabeth I. Being taxed for being a turncoat, he said, "I always kept my principle, which is this, to live and die the Vicar of Bray".

In the year 1720, the following poem was published with the title Vicar of Bray by an unknown poet:
VICAR OF BRAY

V.B.  In good King Charles's golden days,
When loyalty no harm meant,
A zealous High-Churchman was I,
And so I got preferment.
To teach my flock I never missed,
Kings were by God appointed,
And lost are those that dare resist,
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

Chorus:  And this is law I will maintain,
Until my dying day, Sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll still be the Vicar of Bray, Sir.

V.B.  When royal James possessed the crown,
And Papery came in fashion,
The penal laws I hooted down,
And read the Declaration;
The Church of Rome I found fit
Full well my constitution;
And I had been a Jesuit,
But for the Revolution.

Chorus:  And this is law etc.

V.B.  When William was our King declared,
To ease the nation's grievance,
With this new wind about I steered
And swore to him allegiance
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance;
Passive obedience was a joke,
A jest was non-resistance.

Chorus:  And this is law, etc.

V.B.  When royal Anne became our Queen,
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory,
Occasional conformists base,
I blamed their moderation;
And thought the Church in danger was,
By such prevarication.

Chorus:  And this is law, etc.
V.B. When George in pudding-time came over,
And moderate men looked big, Sir,
My principles I changed once more,
And so became a Whig, Sir;
And thus preferment I procured
From our new faith's-defender;
And almost every day abjured
The Pope and the Pretender.

Chorus: And this is law, etc.