SOME ASSAMESE PROVERBS.

(SECOND EDITION.)

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED

BY

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SHILLONG:
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THANKS to the liberality of the Assam Administration it has been possible to publish a Second Edition of "Some Assamese Proverbs." The first edition, although it met with a favourable reception at the time, contained many inaccuracies which a deeper study of the Assamese language on the part of the compiler and the kindness of various friendly critics, have helped to bring to light. Certain faults in transliteration also which appeared in the first edition have been rectified, the method of transliteration laid down by the Royal Asiatic Society being followed as far as practicable. A large number of the proverbs which appear in this collection are said to be the utterances of Dák, who according to some was a man of humble extraction, being a member of the Kumar caste, who was born in the village of Lehi-Dangárá situated near the now ruined village of Mandiá in the Barpeta mauza. For this fact there is the authority of the "Dák Charitra," in which occurs the line লেহি ডংরা ডাকবগাও. On the other hand, a writer in the "Assam Banti" claims that Dák was a Brahmin by caste who was born in a village near Kaliabar in the Nowgong district, and that Dák and his family migrated to Jorhat during the reign of Raja Rudra Singh. This writer adds that the descendants of Dák are to be found to this day at Rangdai in Jorhat, where the family is known under the name of ডাক বামুণ্ডু ঘর. If the sayings of Dák are examined by any one who is acquainted with the Barpeta patois, I think he will be of the same opinion as myself that Dák's language has a distinct Barpeta ring about it. It is, however, not of much moment Dák's birth place, but it is a matter for congratulation that so many of Dák's sayings
which are brimful of worldly wisdom, as well as practical knowledge of agriculture, have been unearthed. Dák's agricultural sayings and the prohibitions concerning not building and not even cutting bamboos on certain days of the month, are well known to the Assamese cultivators throughout the province, and it is believed that the former are much respected and the latter often strictly observed by Assamese Hindus. It will probably surprise the non-Assamese reader to hear that mustard cannot be sown on the four lunar days of the month ending in the suffix شاء, or that pulse cannot be sown on the five lunar days ending with the suffix شاء, and that cane or bamboos cannot be cut during the six days of the Sharan. Then, again, there is the prohibition regarding ploughing on the day of the full moon, or during the Ambubachi, when the earth is considered to be in a state of impurity. The proverbs to which I have referred above, as also the greater number of the other agricultural sayings, are ascribed to Dák.

It is to be hoped that the inaccuracies in the rendering of some of the proverbs that appeared in the first edition and in the translation have now been rectified, but it should be stated that in the work of revision I am specially indebted to Rai Madhav Chandra Bardalai Bahadur, Messrs. Parsu Ram Khaund, Hem Chandra Gossain, Rajani Kanta Bardalai, Jagat Chandra Gossain, and Upendra Nath Barua. The names, however, of Mr. Abdul Majid, who helped me so much with the first edition, and of Guru Prasad Kakati, who assisted me in collecting in the district of Sibsagar, must on no account be omitted.

In conclusion, it is to be hoped that the present attempt to render into English some of the sayings of the people of the Brahmaputra Valley may help to save the former from oblivion, and the agricultural sayings, which it is believed
are published now for the first time in English, may be of some practical value to agriculturalists. It is intended, hereafter, with the approval of the Hon’ble the Chief Commissioner, and if time and opportunity permit, to publish some of the proverbs of the Surma Valley.

SHILLONG, P. R. T. GURDON.

The 25th September 1903.
SOME ASSAMESE PROVERBS.

Class I.

PROVERBS RELATING TO HUMAN FAILINGS, FOIBLES, AND VICES.

1. Anger, affectation, boasting, conceit, etc.

Ki no bhamakar tali, bhál khan thái phštá khan páli.
What a repetition of anger, you have put down the good one
and picked up the torn one.

This is addressed to a person who is in a great rage, and who
is so angry that he puts down the good cloth he has in his hand,
and takes up a torn one instead.

Bhamak (bhamak) signifies the sudden rising of anger. It is also
applied to a fire which suddenly blazes up.

2. Boasting.

Phop dang dhan naikiyá sudá cháng.
You boaster—you have no paddy and your cháng is empty.

The term Phop dān is applied to a man who boasts about
nothing. Naikiyá (naikiyá) literally is not. Cháng (cháng) is the
platform inside the bān (bharál) or granary.

3. Forgetfulness.

Páhari áchhilo paril manat,
Pánch haraniyá patá áchhe Ráwanar gharat.
I had forgotten it, and then I remembered,
It was a five-coloured stone in the house of Ráwan.
The word পটা signifies a flat stone upon which spices, etc., are pounded. When Lakshman, the younger brother of Ram, was wounded in battle with Rāvana, the mountain Gandhamaḍan was brought by Hunuman. The physician in attendance selected certain requisite medicinal herbs therefrom, and, when asking for a flat stone and pestle for grinding the herbs in question, gave vent to the proverb.

4. **Affection.**

বহার বহবৈং, তিপামার ভাবনা, সলাগুরিতে আইস বাই,
তিনিও ভিক্ষণ দ্বিতী তিনিরে কান্দিছে, নমস্ত্ব বাল গাছে নাই।

Rāhā Rahdai Tipāmar Bhādai, Salagurir Āghani bāi,
Tinior dingit dhari tiniye kāndichhe, samandar bāl gachh nāi.

Rahdai from Rahā, Bhādai from Tipām, sister Āghani from Salaguri,
Are all three weeping on each other’s necks and embracing,
although there is not the least relationship amongst them.

Rahā is in the Nowgong district. Tipām, or Namti, is close to Sibsāgar. Salaguri is also in Sibsāgar.

5. **Boasting.**

নগাই গড়গল্পে বর্ণ বর্ণ।

He tells the news of Gargaon without having gone there.

A man tells the news of the court without ever having been to it. Gargaon was formerly the capital of the Ahom kings, or rather was one of their capitals.

6. **Boasting.**

সাগরত আঁহিল পাখা জন্য শংসা,

Sāgarat āchhil pānchajanya shankha,
Neguriā shāmuke kale mayo tāre bangsha.

In the ocean there was the conch shell with five openings,
But the shāmuk with a tail said "I am related to it."
The shāmuk is a shell-fish, which is found in almost every marsh or "bil." Its shell is in appearance very like a snail shell. It is useless as an article of food, except to the शामुक भंग (shāmuk bhāṅg), which is a species of heron that cracks the shells with its strong beak. Lime is, however, made from the shells in considerable quantities, and is sold and bought by the poor to eat with "tamul" (betelnut). The पञ जन्य शज was the mythical conch which was blown by Sri Krishna during the battle of the Mahabharat.

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7.

**Boasting.**

जहैल न मरो महैल मरो,
फट आठबाँ खन टिंगालिके तेजो।

Jahalai na mare mahalai maro,
Phatā ṭhuvā khan tingāli kai taro.

I do not care for the heat, but I die from the mosquitoes,
Since I have hung my torn mosquito curtain too high.

Probably the meaning of this proverb is "penny wise and pound foolish." Another reading जहैल न मरो, in which case य (Sanskrit य) means fame.

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8.

**Blaming others for one's own fault.**

नकलेओ नोबाबो फटा मुख,
कलेओ लागे भकतর दोष।
Nakaleo nowáro phatá mukha,
Kaleo lāge bhakatar dosh.

There is an opening in the mouth, and I can't help speaking,
If I do speak, the blame will fall on the "bhakat."

Here the man is between the horns of a dilemma; he can't help speaking, but if he does he will get a bhakat into trouble. भकत (bhakat) means a disciple of a gosain or priest.
9. *Conceit.*

बालचिक्रि आदिते माल,  
हই শাস্ত্র চিনিয়ে বাল।  
Jujibalai áhile mál,  
Dui háte chingile bál.

A wrestler came to fight, but he only broke a hair.

बालचिक्र is a vulgar expression signifying inability to do anything.

This proverb applies to the man who is over-conceited about his capabilities. The word माल (mál) more properly means a boxer or wrestler.

10. *Counting one’s chickens before they are hatched—Discontent and exaggeration.*

গছত কঠাল ওঠত ভেল,  
নৌ খাওতেই সেল বেল।  
Gachhat kathál othat tel.  
Nó kháotei sel bel.

Rubbing the lips with oil,  
While the jack fruit is still on the tree.

ওঠত ভেল (othat tel) means on the lips oil. The jack fruit, if eaten without putting oil on the lips, causes sores. There is a Hindi proverb exactly similar to the Assamese. It is (gáchh par kathál kónth men tél). Clearly this is an instance of counting one's chickens before they are hatched.

11. *Discontent.*

সাতো রাক্ষী চাল,  
নেপালো, চেকি টেও  
Lo básalí chál,  
Sátotá sukhar etào  
Nepálo, dheki to o  
Nepálo bhál.
I take off the covering, I did not obtain even one of the seven happinesses, and I did not find even the dheki nice.

A complaint of a woman who is discontented with her lot. She did not find even the "dheki" any comfort. To work the "dheki" is one of the hardest household duties.

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12. Exaggeration.

Eke káthi káve sátotá singhok márilo(n),
Lokak nakalo(n) láje,
Chhamáh kháp di núgani étá márile táte,
Dhanjay dhol báje.

With one arrow I killed seven lions,
I was too shy to tell any one;
But he, after lying in wait for six months, killed a mouse,
At that I see the drum of victory beaten.

The धनजय (dhanjay) was a large drum which was beaten by the Ahoms when they gained a victory. The "dhanjay" was of a particular shape and of large size. An illustration of it is given by Montgomery Martin in his book.

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Kathá kalei lágil pák,
Báve jani gáichhil pání ántibáin,
Tére jéni kátilé nák!

Kathá kalei lágil pák,
Báve jani gaichhil pánt ánibalai,
Tera janir kátile nák.

If I say, a fault is found with my story,
Twelve girls went to fetch water,
The noses of thirteen were slit.

Jáp mári deichhilo Dhápaliká parbat.
Tilikit márichhilo bag.
Khédá mári dharichhilo matá hariná.
Etiyá nepáo matá há(n)har lag.

I used to be able to jump over the Dhápaliká hill.
I killed the paddy-bird in an instant.
I chased a stag and caught him.
Now I can’t even catch up a drake.

Chápáliká parbat is hillock. Chápáliká also is used to express a screen usually made of thatching-grass. This screen, which is sometimes called pàrali (párali), is used for watching crops and for guarding them from wild animals. Bag is short for bagli (bagali), the common paddy-bird. Tilikit, literally, at a snap of the fingers, and so it comes to mean instantly.

15. Exaggeration.

Tilake tál karile.

He made a palm-tree out of a sesamum seed.

The Assamese version of “to make a mountain out of a molehill.” Tél is the sesamum. Tál is the fan-palm or palmyra tree.
16.  

Exaggeration.

ধনব নবিনা টান,
অধিঃ ধাওইছে উধানব মান।
Dhanar nariyā tān,
Bhāt khāîcche udhānār mān.
Dhan's illness is very serious,
But he eats a pile of rice as big as an udhān.

"Dhan" is a term of endearment sometimes applied by wives to their husband; it may be translated "darling."

উধান is a large clod of earth. Three such clods are used to support the cooking pot.

17.  

Exaggeration.

মধুই মৃদুনি তুলি দিল বোঞ্জ,
নপচি মশুনি হল ওঞ্জ।
Nuchhui dumuni tuli dīle bojā,
Naparī nushuni hal ojā.

He lifted the load on to the head of the fish-wife without being polluted by her.

Without study he became a magician.

This proverb is meant ironically. According to Assamese ideas, it would be impossible for a man to place a load on the head of a Dumni without being polluted by her. The "Dom" caste in Assam appears to be considered of equally low status as in Bengal. ওঞ্জ (ojā) means a teacher of arts, magician, exorcist. It is in its last sense that ওঞ্জ is most frequently used, particularly amongst the semi-civilised and more ignorant people. Brian Hodgson gives an interesting account of "ojās" on page 138 of his Collection of Essays.

18.  

Exaggeration.

নাকটার এসব ন শ।
Nakatā kherār na sha.
Of uncut grass there are nine hundred bundles.
This is a case of counting one's chickens before they are hatched, as well as of exaggeration.

19. **Exaggeration.**

बाल छिपाते मोहा मरिल,
मह बोला मोहा बना चे परिल।

Bāl chhipātē mohā marīl,
Mai bolō mohā ranat he parīl.

My uncle died in scratching himself (literally in breaking a hair),
But I thought he fell in an engagement.

मोहा is mother's younger sister's husband.

20. **Exaggeration.**

सजव लगव सज सजनति
मधुक कबिलो पान,
बिक्रमदित्य युक्त उठि
गंगात कबिला स्नान।

Sajār lagāt saṅ sangāti
Madhuk karilo pān,
Bikramaṇḍita murat uthī
gangāt karilo snān.

By associating with the good I drank honey,
And by mounting on the head of Bikramaṇḍita I bathed in the Ganges.

सजव is pure, good, excellent. मधु is honey. Bikramaṇḍita was the name of a Hindu king. The meaning of the third line of the proverb is obscure.

21. **False excuses.**

हाब नाइकिया जिबा,
कर किबा किबा।

Hāb niikiyā jība,
Kay kibā kibā.

The tongue because it has no bone,
Says various things.
A poor excuse made by a man when he says more than he ought. He does not admit the blame, but throws it on his tongue, which, he says, is easily pliable, because it is unsupported by bone.

cf.—The modern Greek proverb (translation).—“The tongue has no bones, yet it breaks bones,” and also the Turkish proverb (translation)—“The tongue has no bone, yet it crushes.”

22. False pride and over-sensitiveness.

কাব অঙ্গত কম কোনে পতিহাব;
যাব অঙ্গত কম সেইয়ে লবিয়াব।
Kār āgat kum kone patiha,
Jār āgat kam seiyc lathiyāba.

Before whom shall I speak, who will believe?
To whoever I say it he will kick me.

23. Greediness.

খাহাব গল পাত কাটিবলেগ,
নিখাৰৰাই মাটিতে খালে।
Khakuá gal pát kátibalai,
Níkhakuái mátité khále.

The greedy went to cut a plantain-leaf,
He who was not greedy eat on the ground.
This is ironically meant.

24. Greediness.

খাবটেগ বেয়া নমু বনটেগ গবীয়া,
পিন্ধিবেগ লাগে তাক আচুৰালি চুবিয়া।
Khábalai damá dam banalai gariyá,
Pindhiba ai láge ták áchuálí churiyá.

He is a great hand at eating, but he is like a lazy bullock as regards work,
And he requires an embroidered “dhuti” to wear.
Greediness.

When the three mollases were watching,
Their god suddenly appeared.

I am told that this means that the three mollases were watching the feast being prepared, when their god appeared; but this proverb might mean anything. The Assamese Muhammadan has a feast on every possible occasion, the feast being prepared in a house adjoining the house of prayer. খুদা is, of course, not an Assamese word, but the Arabic Khuda for God.

Greediness.

This is addressed by some one to a greedy dependent. ভাত্ত and মেখেলা ভাবি are both terms of reproach. The first means one who is fond of ভাত (rice), and the second means one who carries a মেখেলা (mekhelă), a garment worn by women and is therefore equivalent to calling a man a woman.
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Continue
29. *Impatience.*

अतीतवैक उख्तवि
खच खचनि टान।
अराइकै उखुवार
Khach kha.hani tán.

Ukhuwá is more important than arai.

Ukhuwá is equivalent to the Bengali উঘা, *usna*, which is rice obtained by boiling paddy before husking; this rice is coarser than that obtained by sun-drying paddy and then husking it. The meaning of the proverb is that inferior persons are more important than their superiors.

30. *Selfishness.*

আলহিরে বিহারে বাকত লোন;
ধান কিনাই বিহারে ভাঙত লেন।
Álahiye bichháre shákat lon,
 Dhán kinái bichháre dángar don.

The guest looks out for salt in his vegetables;
The paddy-buyer searches for a large "*don.*"

In the old days salt was a luxury, and was therefore much appreciated. The "*don*" is a measure of capacity, and varies in size according to locality. It is supposed to contain five seers weight.

31. *The impatient husband.*

ধিনা পা হতাই তাই
লোন খবিছ।
বিশ তত নাই।
Ki no pai butái táí
Lon kharichá
Dibar tat nái.

What an impatient husband!
He cannot even wait to be served with salt and pickle.
Inattention—Ignorance.

32.

Inattention.

কওচেই কলা, জহরতে শলা।
Ko (n) t'i kali, jatarate skalā.
If I tell him he is deaf, the spindle is in the spinning wheel.

“There are none so deaf as those who won't hear.”

33.

Inattention.

হই কো বাজ ভগনব কথা,
হি কয় কল থোকা বাহলিয়ে যালে।
Mai ko ráj bhigánar kathā,
Si kái kal thoká báduliyé khāle.

I talk about a revolution;
He interrupts me, saying, a bat has eaten the
bunch of plantains.

রাজভণ লiterally means the breaking up of a kingdom.

34.

Ignorance.

থার নাই তজ্জু ভুল,
সি কি আনে বানিজ্য মোল।
Jār náj tarju tul,
Si kí jáne báníjar mol.

He who has not a pair of scales,
What does he know of the worth of trade?

মোল is value, worth.
35. *An unskilful workman quarrels with his tools.*

नाचिब नाजाने चोताल
खन हेखेम गবिया।
Náchiba nájáne cho(n)tál
Khan herem gariyá.

He who does not know how to dance,
(Finds) the floor of the courtyard sloping.

हेखेम गबिया is usually applied only to land which is not level. It is interesting to compare Christian’s Bihar proverb, which is almost identical (náché na jánin ánganwoen terh). The meaning is the same.

36. *Ignorance.*

বেছব নাকত খবো খালে।
Bejar nákát khare khále.

The doctor has ringworm on his nose.

খব is the common word for ringworm. The meaning of the proverb is that doctors suffer from the same ills as their patients. *c.f. “physician, heal thyself.”*

37. *Improvidence.*

আঘেই আঘিলে পেন বেন,
কুকতক ভুক্তব পরা হল পেন পেন।
Ágai áchhile jen ten,
Bhakatak bhunjábar pará hal pen pen.

You used to live before after a fashion,
But since you have taken to entertaining “bhakats,”
you have become very poor.

পেন পেন generally refers to the fact of a man being involved in debt and difficulty, the usual phrase being ধাবে পেন পেনিয়া হল (dhárere pen peniyá hal), became involved in debt. Perhaps the proverb explodes the idea of the good effects of entertaining “bhakats.” The latter have very considerable appetites, as the saying কনি পাড়ে হাই পাই ভকত দাখে (kani páre háhe khái bhakat dáhe) shows. The above means that, as soon as the ducks lay eggs, the “bhakats” eat them up.
38. **Improvidence.**

Gát nái chál bākali,
Mad khái tin tekeli.

He has nothing to cover himself with,
But he drinks three pots of rice-beer.

Chál literally skin, नाड लाओ पानी (lāọ pāṇī) or the Bengali "pachwai;" which is a liquor fermented from boiled rice. नाड is largely drunk by the aboriginal people of Assam—Kacharis, Miris, and Deoris are particularly fond of it. It is not an unpleasant drink when fresh, its taste being a bitterish sub-acid. Hodgson gives the following description of how the Bodo (Kachiri) brews it:—"The grain is boiled; the root of a plant called, अगोचिता, 'agochitá,' is mixed with it; it is left to ferment for two days in a nearly dry state; water is then added *quantum sufficit*; the whole stands for three or four days, and the liquor is ready. In Goalpara the 'borá mad,' which is the 'mad' of the Rabhas, is a fermented liquor made from 'borá dhán.' The following ingredients also are added:—leaves of the jack tree, leaves of a plant called 'bhatai titā,' and long pepper. The Assamese 'mad' is very similar in taste to the Nāga 'zu,' although the former is perhaps preferable."

The proverb applies to an extravagant drunkard. Christian gives a Bihar saying, which it is interesting to quote, because it expresses the same idea, *i.e.* (máur na jure tári)="He cannot afford rice gruel, yet he drinks toddy!"

39. **Improvidence.**

Mun mukhe āchhe mahar gākhire ká(n)bar bātiye nái.
He has the mind and mouth, but has not the vessel or the buffalo milk.
40. 

*Improvidence.*

Sachi grihashtar lon fel bay;
Michár bákali ne jái khai.

Although the host spends much oil and salt,
He cannot pr·pare a good prawn curry.
But the skin or the prawn is not rubbed off.

Sachi literally is truly.  

*Improvidence.*

Hátat nái bit,
Mane kare pit pit.

He has no money in hand,
But his cravings are great.

*pit* literally gall, bile.  

*Bit* literally wealth, substance.

42. 

*Ingratitude.*

Tan pále báma bôle.

*When in distress, a man calls on Ráma.*

This proverb is not confined to Assam. There is a similar one in Bengali, and probably in Hindi. The proverb means that in times of prosperity, there is a want of gratitude to Ráma; it is only in times of distress that a man calls on his god.
43. Laying pitfalls for others.

कोटाव घर फूटि,
लोकलै बुलि हुल पाति,
आघुनि मधे फूटि।

Kotár gharar kuti,
Lokalai buli hul pátí,
Apuni mare phuti.

He who lays thorns for others,
Dies amongst them himself.

The first line means nothing, and is merely inserted for purposes of rhyme. फूटि (phuti) literally means pierced, or rather burst asunder.

44. Love of false display.

पालिबा नारबा क्रांतब जोटाजोट।
Páliba noaura rudrákhyar jotájot.

There are many rosaries, the beads of which are not told in devotion.

The proverb means that rosaries are as often as not worn for show as for devotional purposes. क्रांतब is the seed of the elaeocarpus ganitrus (Gamble), the hard tubercled nuts of which are polished and made into rosaries and bracelets. जोटाजोट literally great many from जोटास to join together.

45. Love of false display.

पोकवत नाइ मुवत पांग,
लि हय देौतब आंग।
Pokarat nái murat pág,
Si hai dehatar ág.

With a pagri on his head,
And with nothing on the lower part of his body,
he wishes to take the lead.

The Assamese thinks if he puts on a turban, this is a mark of respectability, and he will be thought a भाल मानह (bhál mánuh) or respectable person. पांग is short for पाण्डि।
46. Love of false display.

Bátat chówa jājī bar churiyār pher,
Gharat jowá jādi dhakuár ber.

If you meet him on the road, see the folds of his dhuti.
If you go to his house, (see) the walls are made of the bark of
the támul tree.

Another proverb with a meaning very similar to the last—
"The man puts on fine clothes to go out walking, but his house
is toppling down." The "dhuti" worn by the भाल मांझ (bhál
mánjh) has as many yards of stuff in it as it is possible to walk
in. चक्का is the sheath or bark of the areca nut tree.

47. Love of false display.

मुख्तैल चाले बब डेका,
पोकबैल चाले कंदाकट।
Mukhalal chále bar deka,
Pokaralal chále kandakát.

The front view shows a fine young man,
But the back is a sight for tears.

Another proverb conveying the same meaning as 44 and 45. Also cf. the proverb—बाहिबे बब चं भिबे बौँ बाहिबे, outside it is fair
to see, but inside it is kowá bháturi. The latter is the fruit of a
creeper (momordica monodelpha), of which the outside is a bril-
liant scarlet, but the inside is empty.

48. Love of false display.

Sát purushat náí gáí,
Kariyá lai khirábalai jáí.

His family had no cow for seven generations,
But he takes a "kariyá" and goes a milking.
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XII.

कूटीनि।

छ एक दो तिर दीवार,
छ कह कह कह कह कह खूब।

Lighter yet will lighter be,
Lighter yet will glowing glimmer be.

The well belongs to our house, she went to another,
A third house has known the water making a great chime.

A busy-body interfering in other people’s affairs. कूटीनि is a boarded-up well, or a well with its sides boarded-up and plastered.
कूटीनि is a word derived from the sound of two things, clashing one up against the other. The Assamese are fond of using such onomatopoeic words.

XIII.

Oppression of others.

तु मैं नात, मैं नात नीरा।

When you want the same place.
Do as one would be done by.

Literally, whatever he does to others he gets the same at home. "Do as you would be done by."

XIV.

Out of sight, out of mind.

हरिनाथ देख, हरिनाथ शान्ति दिन निर्बिहि।

When you view your friend in your punishment.

When we are away from them, he is our "parbha.

That is to say, when a man is in company, he forgets all about his "parbha." A "parbha" is a family priest, who presides the rituals (hathiya), funeral ceremony, as well as other ceremonies for the Assamese Hindu. The "parbha" is, as a rule, a Brahman.

XV.

Smelling at a good, etc.

छि कठिना दृश्य, बिकठिना लाखे कठिना।

He can see through the eye of a needle,
but not through that of an ear-lobe.
Penny wise pound foolish.

सबक ना बाई सेवा निषिद्ध गर्न मिलनु ।
Shakat na khai bhun, pitika: jai tini gun.

He does not use salt in cooking vegetables,
but three times the amount (of salt) goes in making salad.

The ordinary Assamese meal consists of—
i. “Bhat” (cooked rice).

ii. (a) fish or makt (dál) cooked, or
(b) fish and vegetable cooked together.

iii. In addition to the second, or as a substitute for it, a kind
of salad is made; this is called “pitika” by the Assamese. This
is made from potatoes, vegetables, and chillies.

The proverb is a warning against false economy, because it
costs far less to use common salt in cooking than to make
“pitika.”

56.

Penny wise pound foolish.

देबे देबे बाइ सोयालै भाँचे ।
Sere sere jai powalai khinde.

Sears go away, but he cries after the quarter-seers.

——

57.

Peevishness.

नाइ हे नेखाक, लाङ्गो रे नेखाक,
Gat o nitir o hach ।
Nai be nekha, loghono nejdo,
Gato nitir o dukh.

If there is nothing to eat I won’t eat, at the same time I won’t fast.
I won’t give my body any trouble.

This should be more properly lazingness. The last line of the
proverb should be, I think, the motto of the Assamese, for he
hates, above all things, giving himself the least trouble.
58. \textit{Presumption.}

कि नहबर हल, पोकलागি हाँगैंগ गन।
Ki nahabar hal, poklági hátálai gal.

What a "contre temps" has occurred,
the woman covered with sores has gone to the market.

पोक लागि literally, full of maggots.

59. \textit{Presumption.}

খচ খচ কক কতা গুথা,
Tumi jena ámár kibá howá.

(I see) you are cutting the betelnut quickly. Are you in some way related to me?

Assamese women are supposed to give betelnut only to their husbands. The proverb illustrates a phase of a rustic "affaire-du-cœur." गुथा is the same as तौमल (támol), betelnut.

60. \textit{The pot calling the kettle black.}

নিজে পোকব তেকতেকীরা,
Nijar pokar tektekiyá,
Lo'kar pokaralai páni chatiyá.

Throwing water at the buttocks of others,
When one's own are wet.

61. \textit{Pride of family.}

নোম নেগুর বর্জিত,
Nom negur barjit,
Mákar nám bar pohári,
Bápekar nám Ranjit.
Although it has no hair on its body and no tail,  
It says its mother’s name is Barpohári,  
And its father’s Ranjit.

The first line describes a mangy cur. Notwithstanding its miserable condition, the animal is proud of its lineage, বব পোহারি. Assamese women who sell odds and ends, are called “pohári.” বব is here used ironically. বজিত is a high-sounding name, only met with in good families.

62.  
Restlessness.
ভাঙ্গি আন মুচিরি খাও,  
পুরা হলে নাও মেলি যাও।  
Bhángi án muchari kháo,  
Pú khái náo meli jáo.

Break and bring everything (that we have) and let us eat it today.  
Let us start in the boat tomorrow morning.

63.  
Selfishness.
অন্য আন চিন্তা, বৃদ্ধ দামুনীর হবন কানে চিন্তা।  
Ánar án chintá, hurí bámunir dukhan kánar chintá.  
Others have other thoughts, but the old Brahmin  
woman thinks only of her two ears (i.e., her earrings).

Christian, in his Bihar proverb, gives a Hindi proverb, which is very similar in meaning:—

Áno ke án chintá, rání ke rájave ke chintá.  
Others have other thoughts, but the Rája has thoughts of the Rája only.

Christian says the proverb is applied to one who is intent on his own thoughts only, regardless of others.
64. **Hyprocrisy.**

आइ ैहीिल ैोिाइ घबैिे,
मय ैहीिले लागत,
अैठे कााा धाबैिे पाइ,
तते हला भकत ।

Ai gaichhil gosain gharalai,
Mai goichhilo lagat,
Ákhai kalá khábalai pái,
Táte halo bhakat.

My mother went to the house of the gosain,
I accompanied her.
When I got “ákhai” and plantains to eat,
I became a “bhakat.”

Perhaps this is a hit at the “bhakats.”: Apparently, the qualification for admission to the “sattra” as a “bhakat” is to be able to appreciate fried paddy (ákhai) and plantains.

65. **Egotism.**

आैोनाब मन देने,
आैझांके देखे तेने,
जानो मन अंताईब एकः ।

Áponár man jene,
Átáike dekhe tene,
Jáno man atáire eke.

He thinks that every body else’s mind is like his own,
As if the minds of all are alike.

The proverb is interesting as illustrating the use of जानो। This literally means, I know. In conversation, however, जानो often means, I doubt, almost I don’t believe you.

66. **Stinginess.**

खािे आैिेया गोिे धान दिे एििे ।
Kúichhe ákhaiyá gome dhán diche edon.

He is bitten by a poisonous snake (ákhaiyá gom) and he gives one don of Indian corn, that is to say, to the ojha or quack doctor.
Selfishness.

মৃদ্ধ মৃদ্ধ একে ঘব সোহো সোহো বুলি
হল দেড় বছব সখি হেনা তোমার জ্বব।
Mudhe mudhe eke ghar sodho sodho buli
Hal der bachhar sakhi henotomar jar.

We live alongside one another

For the last year and a half I have been intending
to ask you, dear friend, how is your fever.

শুঁ is the ridgepole of the house. The expression শুঁ মৃদ্ধ is used when two houses are so close that their roofs touch one another. হেনা means I think.

Sponging on others.

পবব মুরত থাগঁ, ভটিয়া পানিত থাগঁ।
Parar murat khao(n), bhatiyá pánit jáo(n).

I live upon others, and go with the tide.

The proverb probably means that he who lives on others, has
to go along with the tide and sink all individuality of character.
ভটিয়া literally is down-stream as opposed to উজান (uján) up-stream.

Peculiarities.

বি দেশব বি ধাবঁ, বি পোকবব বি নেবা।
Ji deshar ji dhárá, ji pokarar ji nerá.

Every country has its own customs,

Stinginess.

দিওতে দিয়ে ধান খেবব চাইঁ,
তাকে দিওতেই মৃচ কচ্চ যাই।
Dio(n)te diyë dhàn kherar cháí,
Táke diotei much kach jái.

When he gives (at all), he gives the ashes of paddy straw,
And even in giving this he feels faint.
71.  

**Stinginess.**

লোক সভাতে যাবে,
অামার দিনন খোরন চাব।।

Lokar shabhulai jábá.
Ámár diyan thoan chábá.

Go to a gathering at some one else's house,  
(And then) see my liberality.

72.  

**Toadying.**

কাকো দেখি বাংলে বাংলে,
কাকো দেখি ছবাক বাংলে।

Káko dekhi rándhe báre,  
Káko dekhi duwár bándhe.

When (the host) sees some people, he cooks and serves them (a meal),  
And when he sees others, he bars the door.

73.  

**Trickery.**

তেলিয়াই কাঁদে তেল পেলাই,
কপচুষাই কাঁদে পেট পেতাই।

Teliyá kánde tel péláí,  
Kapahuwái kánde lek pétaí.

The oil-seller weeps for the oil that is spilt.  
The cotton-dealer weeps and soaks (his cotton in the tears).

The cotton-dealer is not a man like the oilman, who “cries over split milk,” but finds a way out of the difficulty. The latter part of the proverb, perhaps, refers to a practice which came under my personal observation when in the Golághát subdivision. The cotton is brought down from the hills by Nágas or other hillmen, who almost invariably soak it in water, or even sometimes
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. Class II.

PROVERBS RELATING TO WORLDLY WISDOM AND MAXIMS, EXPEDIENCE AND CUNNING; AND WARNINGS AND ADVICE.

76. A small income and much feasting.

अलग आर्जन विश्राव भोजन,
सेह पुकंच दविद्र पक्ष।

Alap árjan bistar bhojan,
Sei purushar daridr ar lakshyan.

A small income and much feasting,
Are the signs of a man becoming poor.

अर्जन = gain, income; लक्ष = a mark or token.

77. On trying to teach fools.

অজ্ঞানীক জ্ঞান দি মনত পালো কঠী,
কুনবোব ভাণ্ডি পেলাই বাচে। কবরলো নঠ।

Ajjánik jnán di manat pálo kashtha,
Kanibor bhángi pelái báho karilo nashtha.

In teaching an ignorant person I became troubled in mind, for he broke the nest and destroyed our eggs.

This proverb refers to a folk tale related in the Hitopadesh which is as follows: There was a large simul tree frequented by a colony of parrots who laid their eggs in the hollow of the tree. An old parrot used to keep guard over the eggs of the other parrots in their absence. One day a wild cat tried to climb the tree, but the old parrot objected. The former, however, by dint of flattery and fair speeches caused the parrot to be off his guard and succeeded in climbing the tree and eating the eggs. The old parrot, when he saw what had happened, spoke the saying above.
78. **Have nothing to do with three things.**

'Adaśāv śadā jñān,
Gah chārav gandha jñān,
Bëshā tibāv ākādari,
Tinindabho mūrta bahi.

Asatīr sad juān,
Garu chorar Ganga snān,
Beshyā tirīr ekādasi,
Tinoro murat mutā bahī.

Have nothing to do with these three things:
Honesty in an unchaste woman,
A cattle-thief bathing in the Ganges,
A harlot fasting on an ekādasi day.

79. **The importunate's answer.**

Āpūnī ānilchë ho māgi,
Tōk dim kāv pho hāgi.

Apunī anichho mați,
Tok dim kar parā hāgi.

I myself have got by begging,

80. **Anticipating.**

Āgei pākhi kāte,
Kei dinēr nomal.

Agei pākhi kāte,
Kei dinēr nomal.

He cuts the wings of the unfledged nestling beforehand.

literally the youngest of all.
81.  

*Times of affliction.*

अपदत ओ५ गल खजुवाइ।

अपदत हृिंििै.

In times of affliction even the *owtenga* tickles the throat.

The *owtenga* *Dillenia indica* (Watt) is an acid fruit surrounded by fleshy accrescent calyces, which, when the fruit is full grown (in March), have an agreeably acid taste, and are eaten by the Assamese, either raw or cooked, chiefly in curries. The acid juice sweetened with sugar forms a cooling drink. The Bengali name of the fruit is *chalta*. A portion of the fruit is also used pounded with *kharani* by Assamese women and used by them as hair wash.

*cf.—अपदत गािं नोभेिैि शक्र हई (अपदत गािं नोिैि शत्रु है।)*

In times of affliction, even the hair of one's body is an enemy.

82.  

*Give a polite answer.*

अछे दान नाैि समिधान।

अछे दान नाैि समिधान।

Give if you can; at any rate, say something polite.

समिधान literally giving an answer.

83.  

*When all scruples must be thrown to the winds.*

अपदत अयुृित कविवैल युि॥

अपदत अयुृित कविवैल युि॥

In times of adversity, all scruples must be thrown to the winds.

अयुृित—Bengali अयुृित (unbefitting.)

84.  

*On aiming too high.*

उििवाइ माबिले काठि,

उििवाइ माबिले काठि,

जािंगि डोिअं सातििजि भिकििा

जािंगि डोिअं सातििजि भिकििा

शुिलै नाैिििले पाि।

शुिलै नाैिििले पाि।

Uthuwáि मािििे काठि,

Uthuwáि मािििे काठि,

Jálowá domar sáitjáni tirútá

Jálowá domar sáitjáni tirútá

Shubalai nátiile páti.

Shubalai nátiile páti.
This proverb contains a double entendre, but it may be translated as follows:

He rose up and threw the net,
The Jalowa Dom has seven wives,
But his bed is not large enough to contain them.

কাঠি is a thin piece of bamboo used in making bamboo or wicker work. কাঠি জাল is a kind of fishing net. পাটি is literally mat. The Jalowa Dom is the Dom who fishes in contradistinction to the Halowá Dom, the Dom who ploughs.

85. The petty shop-keeper.

এনা বেপাকীক জাহাজু বাতারি কিয়।
Edá bepárík jahájar bátari kiya.
Why does a petty shop-keeper want with news of the steamer?
এনা বেপাকী literally a shop-keeper who sells ginger (এনা).

86. Do one thing at a time.

ওরোকতে পৌঁছেক,  
কেঁবলাটা অহুঁঁই দিয়া  
বেঙ্গোনাটা পৌঁছেক।

Orokate porok,  
Kerélá to sumúáí diyá  
Bengená to porok.

Do one thing at a time,  
Put the kerélá into the boiling rice,  
And then roast the bengená.

কেবলা is the Bengali করলা, Hindi koraila.
The kerélá is the *monordica charantia*, a very bitter kind of vegetable of the gourd family. It is a creeping plant.

87. Learning.

ওজা লগা বিদ্যা,  
পাথি লগা কাব।  
Ojá lagá bidyá,  
Pákhi lagá kár.
Learning under a teacher,
An arrow with feathers,
(Are both effective).

ওজা is a magician, or more frequently an exorcist. 

Vide note to Proverb No. 17.

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88. 

Circumstantial evidence.

হাই চোবর মুরত পাখি,
কঠাল চোবর এঠাই সাখি।
Há(n)h chorar murat pákhi,
Kathál chorar ethái sákhi.

The feathers stick to the head of the duck-stealer,
And the gum is evidence against the jack fruit-stealer.

কঠাল is the jack tree and its fruit. Sanskrit কঠক (kantak);
both the bark of the tree and the fruit are covered with a
sticky juice or gum.

---

89. 

A person with a great idea of his own importance:

কব পবি আহিলা কব দিলা ভবি,
চোতাল ব্য়ান ফাট গলে চেঘ্, চেঘ্, কবি।
Kar pará áhilá kat dilá bhari,
Chotál khán pháti gal chet chet kari.

Whence do you come?
Wherever you trod on the courtyard, it split in pieces.

Literally, whence comest thou? This is said ironically to
somebody who gives himself airs. চেঘ্ চেঘ্ is one of the many
Assamese expressions for conveying the sense of sound. Another
such onomatopoeic expression is ঘং ঘং, also ঘং (gring). চেঘ্
চেঘ্ কবি convey the idea of noise in splitting or tearing asunder:
90.  

On appearing on the "Chatai" Hill.

কিছু জগবত মবে।  
চটাই পর্বতত গাটে।  
দেখাই অঠলি  
পাঠোটা ভবে।  

Kihar jagarat maro  
Chatái-parbatat gáto  
Dekhádi ádhali  
Páchotá bharo.

What fault have I committed?  
I have appeared on the Chatái hill,  
And have to pay five eight-anna pieces.

The চটাই পর্বত is a mythical hill, which was supposed to be situated somewhere in the Sibságar district. The proverb applies to the case of a person who has to pay a fine for some imaginary fault.

91.  

Carelessness.

ককালত কাচি  
বুড়ী ফুলে নাচি।  
Kakálat káchhi  
Búri phure náchí.

The sickle is on the waist of the old woman,  
Who impatiently looks for it elsewhere.

92.  

Quarrelling for no reason.

কথা বা কত ভেকুরি তলত।  
Kathá bá kat bhekuri talat.

Where is your reason (for quarrelling), it is underneath  
the bhekuri lush.

ভেকুরি is a kind of scrub jungle.  

This proverb applies to cases of quarrels about nothing.
93. **Selfishness.**

काब अबत कोने गिरे पानी।
काब भागिना मबे काब हय हानी।
Kār jarat kone piye pāni,
Kār bhāginā mare kār hāi hāni.

Who drinks water when another is thirsty.
Whose nephew dies it is his loss.

The proverb aptly illustrates the way of the world in such cases. भागिना or भागिन is a sister's son.

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94. **The reward of merit.**

केने तोब केने जनि फपबिया तोब तिनि जनि,
ताल तोब एजनी ओ नाइ।
Kene tor kene jani phapariyā tor tini jani,
Bhāl tor ejanio nāi.

What a wife for such a man,
The worthless has three wives, the worthy none!

As a rule, Assamese have but one wife, or two at the most, but occasionally, amongst well-to-do people of the old-fashioned class, the luxury of three wives is indulged in. फपबिया, literally scurvy.

---

95. **Don't be too discriminating.**

काबे। नबुलिबा कक。
এতুইবে দাড়ি চুলি পাক।
Kākō nubulibá kaká,
Etái dārī chuli pakā.

Don't call anyone (of them) grandfather;
They have all of them got white hair and beards.

The proverb means that all are equally cunning, and that one must not single out any particular person and call him कक।
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Also the following Urdu saying on the same subject, where a forced pun is made on the Arabic word *kan* = is:

"Káne ki badzátiyá(n) hain mere dil yaqin, 
Áyá hai Qurán me (n) kán me (n) a'káfrin."

Of the wickedness of the one-eyed I am thoroughly convinced, 
Because even in the Qurán it is said that the one-eyed is among the unbelievers."

---

98. **Useless cravings.**

खातैल नाइ कनटो, 
बब हवैल मनटो।
Khábaloi náí kanto, 
Bar habalai manto.

He who has not a grain (of rice) to eat, 
Has a mind to become great.

कन is the eye or germ of a seed, that which germinates or reproduces an atom.—(Bronson). So it comes to mean anything small. Young children are often called कन or कन लब्ध, कन होबाली।

---

99. **Exaggeration.**

গর্হত গর উঠা, 
হোলোগারে কান বিক্ষা।
Gachhat garu uthá, 
Halongáre kán bindhá.

As wonderful as a bullock climbing a tree, 
Or the lobe of the ear being pierced with a holongá.

Men as well as women bore their ears in Assam. When an earring is not worn, a piece of wood is inserted to keep the hole from closing up. Sometimes paper or cotton is used, but generally a cylindrically-shaped piece of wood. A হোলোগার is a bamboo, used for carrying bundles of paddy, when reaping and carrying is going on. The bundles of dhán (paddy) are slung on to each end of the holongá in equal proportions, so that the
holongá balances on the shoulder. In this way all burdens are carried in Assam, but the word হোলোগা, I believe in Upper Assam is only applied to the pole used for carrying dhán. কানসাবি to the word for the bamboo that is used for carrying other burdens.

100. Laughing at others, misfortunes.
ঢোক বাই ঢোক, সাঙ্গে খালে ঢোক,
মাণ্টি পালে ঢোক।
Ghok bái ghok, sápe khále tok,
Máchhti pálé mok.

Thrust your hand, sister, thrust your hand into the hole,
If there be a snake it will bite you, but if there be a fish let me have it.
This is said in chaff by one girl fishing to another likewise engaged.

101. Useless cravings.
ঘরত নাই কনটো, বব সভালৈ মনটো।
Gharát nái kanto, bar sabhálai manto.
He has not a grain of rice in his house, but he wishes to hold a big feast.
This is almost similar to No. 97, except that সভা is substituted for the verb হবলৈ। Also compare the Kámrup proverb "বুলালত নাই কনটো বব সভালৈ মনটো। (urálat nái kanto, bar sabhálai manto). The উড়াল or উবল is a wooden mortar used for pounding rice in.

102. How things are tested.
ঢোবাক চিনি কাণত,
তিবিক চিনি টাণত,
খুবক চিনি শানত।
Ghorák chini kánat,
Tirik chini tánat,
Khurak chini shánat.
A horse is known by his ears,
A woman in times of adversity,
And a razor on a whetstone.

The idea here is that a good horse keeps his ears erect; a virtuous wife will be faithful in adversity; and a good razor does not break on the whetstone. As to the faithfulness of women, horses, etc., cf. the Persian proverb:

“Asp o zan o shamsheer-i-tez wafádár ke did.”

What man ever saw a horse, a woman, or a sword faithful!

खुर (khur) (or khyur) is the usual word for razor. खान is a grindstone or whetstone. This is one of Dāk’s sayings.

103.

The irony of fate.

When the thief steals the “laphá,”
The householder consoles himself with kharali.

An amusing comment on the irony of fate, perhaps. The लफा फाक is a common Assamese vegetable. खबली=leaves and stalks of vegetables cooked dry. दाङ literally reaps.

खबली खाइ means suffers inconvenience.

104.

Sudden misfortunes.

The thief was seized with colic,
And a wasp stung the weaver.

Both of these are intended to be instances of sudden and unexpected mishap.
105.  

Inevitable.

चापरिले मेघ एवऱ ने?
Cháparile megh erába ne.
Can a rain cloud be avoided by bending down?

106.  

Never waste a moment.

याप धांड जीवन मन,
Bháda teåo ájóhe wan.
Járh khábar jíbar man,
Bahoteo ájore ban.
He who has a mind to thrive,
Scratches up grass, even when sitting down.

धांड जीवन मन literally, the mind for eating and living. The proverb means that people who wish to succeed, should never waste a moment, which may be devoted to work. The grass referred to is that growing in a man's garden or field.

107.  

Working in amity.

जेठबि वैनाइ हाल,
Kihá pál è pál.
Jetheri baináí hál,
Kihar pál è pál.

What turns are there in the ploughings of brothers-in-law.

जेठबि = a wife's elder brother. वैनाइ = a younger sister's husband.

पाल is the word usually applied to a turn of any kind of duty.
हाल, literally, plough.

108.  

On being taken to task for a trifling fault.

जगव वा लगालो कि,
Jagar há lagálo ki,
Máto há(n)h kani·di.

मातो हि हं कनि दि।
What fault have I committed?
I beg pardon and present you with a duck’s egg.

The light of a lamp amid the glare of a torch.

The proverb refers to the case of a person who thinks he is taken to task for a trifling fault.

The light of a lamp amid the glare of a torch.

The proverb means that the feeble light of a lamp would not be noticed in the strong light given by a torch.

Sleep is pleasant.

To sleep in the early morning is pleasant.
A good knife is required to cut betelnut.

This proverb is characteristic of the Assamese.

The punishment of sin, though tardy, perhaps is sure.

He ate the “tengá” a long time ago,
And he is blamed now!

The proverb refers to the case of a man whose sin has found him out. He stole the orange and eat it long ago, and he gets into hot water about it now!

means an offence, anything at which exception is taken.

SOME ASSAMESE PROVERBS.
112.  

Meum and tuum.

ভোঁহ হলে মোব, মোব হলে বাপেবে ও নে পাই ভোব।

Tor hale mor, mor hale bāpereño ne páí tor.

What is yours is mine, but what is mine cannot be got even by your father.

113.  

Ingratitude.

ঠাই দিবা গু, তপ তপনি শুন।

Thái dibar gun, tap tapani shun.

The result of giving a person a place, is to hear him grumble.

The proverb means that, if you give a person a place at a feast, in all probability he will not thank you for your courtesy, but will only grumble.

114.  

False pride.

দেলাব নামেত শিকিয়াতে যাব, গায়িবর নামেত পানীকে যাব।

Dolár námere shikiyáte jábá, Gákhirar námere pánike khábá.

In the name of a dooly you are carried hung on a pole.

In the name of milk you drink water.

দোলা is the Bengali দোলা, a litter for carrying people in. শিকিয়া is a contrivance of ropes for slinging burdens on to a bamboo.

115.  

The use of the thumb.

দেহে আঁধুলিবে খাই, 

ধারে হেঁচিবে খাই।

Daho ángulire khái, 

Burái he(n)chukilehe jái.

All the ten fingers are used in eating,

But it is the thumb that has to push the eatables into the mouth.

The Assamese takes up the rice in the hollow of his hand and then crams it into his mouth, using the thumb to push it in—not a very elegant way of eating. বড়া আঁধুলি (the chief finger).
116.  

Many hands make light work.  

দহোটাব লাখুটি এটাব বোঝা।  

Dahotar lakhti etar bojha.  

The staves of ten men are a load to one man.  

cf.—The Bihar proverb given by Christian—  

"(Das ka lathi ek ka bojh). The idea conveyed is the same  
as in our proverb “Many hands make light work.”  

117.  

"Evils never come singly.”  

কু কপলীয়া হাবীলে ধাই, বা চিপে বলে ধাই।  

Dur kapaliya habilai jai, dā chige bale khāi.  

The unfortunate one goes to the wood,  

and his “dā” breaks, and a wasp stings him.  

This is a case of “Evils never come singly.” বলল is the  

Bengali বোল্লা (a wasp). The use of ধাই is noteworthy; it means  

(literally) eats. The Assamese has no regular word for sting.  

cf.—গাপে খালে (শাপে খালে) a snake bit him—literally eat him.  

118.  

How the poor are despised.  

হৃদি হলে লেটেলা ভার্জাই নেছেলে হিত,  

বাঁট লগ পাই নিটিলে নেসোলে দিল বাঁধে বুলি কিবা হিত।  

Dukhiya hale leterá bhárjyái nedekhe hit,  

Báat lag pái mitire nosodhe dibá lágé buli kibá hit.  

When leterá (the sloven) becomes poor,  

his wife does not esteem him;  

When his friends meet him by the way, they take no notice  

of him, fearing they will have to help him with money.  

The first proverb is an illustration of our own saying that  

“When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window.”  

The second part shows the way of the world in such cases.  

লেটেলা,  

the man’s name in this proveb, literally means a sloven.  

ভার্জা is  

a Sanskrit word for wife. The common Assemese word is  

বিত (ghaini). হিত literally means advantageous, profitable.  

নোসেঁ (literally) do not ask after him.  

বিত is a synonym for ধান (dhan).
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122.

Hypergamy.

নবকব কন্যা উদ্ধারিলেই শুচি।
Narakar kanyá uddhárilei shuchi.

A girl (bride) from hell is purified when taken up.

Even girls of a lower status in society are allowed to be married by men of a higher status, in the same caste, cf. Manu “হঠক্রং হঠক্রং”। নবকি one of the many infernal regions enumerated in the Hindu books. Manu speaks of twenty-one hells and gives their names. Other authorities vary greatly as to the numbers and names of the hells. (See Vishnu Puran, II, 214, and Dowson's Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology.)

123.

Cutting off the tiger's tail.

নেগুব কাটি বাঘ চোখলৈ মেলিলে।
Negur káti bágh chôngalai melile.

They cut off the tiger's tail, and then let him loose in his haunt.

This refers to the inadvisability of letting off a bad character with a light punishment.

124.

A name that bodes ill-luck.

নাম পরিহে সাঙ্গ হাসাবত মারাহি দাঙ।
Námar parichhe sáng hašavat márāhi dáng.

The nám (singing of religious songs) is over, shut the door.

শা ফিনিশিড, over.

It is usual to shut the door of the namghar when prayers are over.

125. "People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

নাহাহি মোক খুচারিব তোক।
Náhañhi mok, khuchariba tek.

Don't laugh at me, you will catch the contagion (if you do).

People who laugh at others' misfortunes, are thus advised.

The proverb means, do not laugh at another's misfortune lest it befalls you.
126.  

Ill-gotten gains.

पापव धन आरोपितस बाई।  
Pápar dhan práyshchittat jái.

Money got by unfair means, goes in expiations.

The आरोपित is imposed by the “gosain,” or spiritual guide. It consists of (a) money payment to the gosain, (b) penance, c) certain duties to be performed.

127.  

Don’t lose time in partaking of a meal when it is ready.

पाले चबाई भांगिबा पाखि, होय। भातक न धरा बाखि।  
Pále charái bhángibá pákhi, howá bhátak na thábá rákhi.

When you have caught a bird, break its wings.  
Don’t delay in eating rice which is ready.

128.  

Three people should always be intent on their work.

পডে, পড়াই, বোয়ে পান,  
এই তিনিয়ে নিচিয়ে আন।  
Parhé, parhái, royé pán,  
Ei tiniye nichinte án.

He who reads, he who teaches, he who sows pán,  
These three should not think of anything else.

The cultivation of the pan vine requires some attention. This is one of Dák’s sayings.

129.  

Want of worldly wisdom.

পড়ি শুনি করিবে বিয়া, চর্চে লই গল ভুয়া দিয়া।  
Parhi shuni karile biyá, chore lai gal bhuyá diyá.

A man married after acquiring knowledge,  
But he was deceived and his wife was stolen away by a thief.

130.  

Want of tact.

বাটিত লগ পালে কমায়, দা গরিদিয়া আমায়।  
Bátit lag pálé kamár, dá gari diyá ámár.

They met the blacksmith on the road and said “Make a knife for us.”

i.e., they expected the blacksmith to be able to make a “dá” for them when he was away from his forge.

The above saying is quoted in the case of an untimely request or invitation.
131. **One who is always in hot water.**

बाबटा माहब तेषटा जगब, सदाइ हुघेह एटा लगब।

Báratá máhar terátá jagar, sadái nuguchhe étá lagar.

In twelve months thirteen scrapes,
I cannot exist without getting into hot water.

This is the complaint of somebody who is always in trouble.

---

132. **Opposites.**

বলীয়ে নিক্ষিলীয়ে বিকৃষ্ণ হতাহ্তি,

বলীয়ে নিধরনীয়ে বিকৃষ্ণ নিত্যাবতি।

Baliye nirbaliye kihar hatáhati,
Dhaniye nirdhaniye kihar mitráwati.

What passage-of-arms can there be between the strong and the weak,

What friendship can there be between the rich and the poor.

বলী means a strong man.

বলী also means a sacrifice. হতাহ্তি means hand-to-hand conflict; also two people working together at the same task. নিত্যাবতী is the same as মিত্যাবলি, which means friendship.

---

133. **So terrible that even Bhagbanta and Basudev are afraid.**

ভয়ত ভগবত পলাই কিলাল বাহুদেয় দশাই।

Bhayat Bhagabanta palái kilalai Básudeo darái.

Bhagabanta even flies from fear, and Basudev is afraid that

he will be beaten.

ভগবত or ভগবান is পথমেষ্ট (Parmeswar), বাহুদেয় is another name for কৃষ্ণ (Krishna).

---

134. **Bitter words are hard to hear.**

ভাতপ তিতা কামলৈল তাল, মাতব তিতা বাংলৈল টাল।

Bhátar titá khábalai bhál, mátar titá khábalai tán.

It is possible to eat bitter rice, but it is hard to hear bitter words.

ভাতপ তিতা, rice that is flavoured with acid to make it palatable.
135. 

From good comes good.

ভালবাস্ত আল সর্বথি কাল।
Bhalab hal sarbati kál.
Good comes from good for all time.

সর্বথি কাল (literally), for ever and ever.

136. 

Which is the sweeter—sweet words or sweet food?

ভোজন মিঠা নে বচন মিঠা?
Bhojan mithá ne bachan mithá?
Which is sweeter—sweet food or sweet words?

বচন also means a passage from a sacred book.

137. 

Only go when you are invited.

মাতিলে বন্ধনকে। যায়, নে মাতিলে ভোজনই নাজাব।
Mátile ranalaiko jábá, ne mátile bhojalai nájábá.
Go to a battle even if you are summoned,
but don’t go to a feast uninvited.

The proverb means that when you are invited even go to a battle at the risk of your life, but don’t go uninvited to a feast.

138. 

Anticipating evil.

মোর পোশ বোবাবী হব, মোক চুলিত ধবি বাটিত ধব।
Mor por bowári haba, mok chuliit dhari bátat thaba.
My son will have a daughter-in-law.
Who will catch me by the hair and throw me on the path.

বোবাবী, son’s or younger brother’s wife. The former is called পো বোবাবী and the latter is called ভাই বোবাবী।

139. 

Cutting wood by no means an easy task.

মোনাইয়ে কাঠ কাতে, মায়ে পানী হেন দেখে।
Monáiyé káth káte, máye pání hen dekhe.
The maternal uncle cuts wood;
his wife thinks it an easy job.

পানী হেন, literally as easy as water.
140.  
*Where there is a will there is a way.*

मन कविले चन कविब पावी।
Man karile chan kariba pári.

If I put my mind to it, I can find a way to make it difficult for him.

141.  
*The shorter it is, the more it tears.*

ঘেতেকতে নাটে, ঘেতেকতে ফাটে।
Jetekate náte, tetekate pháte.

The shorter it is, the more it tears.

The proverb refers to an Assamese folk tale regarding an old woman who, as fast as she sowed her *mekhela* (petticoat), the latter kept on tearing.

142.  
*None but the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.*

লুইতেহে জানে বঢ়া কুমান ওই বেহ।
Luitehe jáne bathá kimána lai bahe.

The Luhit knows how deep the oar dips.

The Luhit is the old name for the Brahmaputra. Now-a-days by the Luhit is understood that portion of the Brahmaputra between the mouth of the "Subansiri" river and Luhitmukh. The saying has the same meaning as our own proverb "None but the wearer knows where the shoe pinches."

143.  
*A man of no consequence.*

লাঠি মারিলেও সিটেৱা, বোপাই বুলিলেও সিটেৱ।
Láthi márisle jíto, bopái bulile sító.

It is all the same whether you kick him or call him father.

The saying means that it is not worth while pleasing a certain person, for বোপাই is a friendly address. লাঠি means a kick given backwards at any one following up behind. লাঠি means a stick or a club.
144.  
_The boon of having a travelling companion._

লগ হলে লঙ্কালৈকে যাব পাবি।

Lag hale Lankalaiko jåba pári.

-In company one can go even as far as Lanká.

Lanka is the name given by Hindus to Ceylon.

145.  
_The more haste the less speed._

লবা লবি বেলিকা জোলোঙ্গাত জাপি নোদোমাই।

Lará lari beliká jolongát jápi nosomái.

_When you are in a hurry,_

you can’t fit in even a jápi into the knapsack.

This saying is meant to illustrate the idea expressed in our

_own proverb “The more haste the less speed.”_

146.  
_What makes up the house._

লাথাই লুবিয়ে দে থান,

Láthi luriye dē than.

লোকোলাই হ্রবিয়ে জুংল থান।

Láthi luriye jhūnl khán.

Children make up the house,

Sundries also make up the hearth.

োকোলা হ্রবি means odds and ends of firewood that are not

burnt. জুংল = জুইশাঙ = জুইথাঙ। ঠাই = hearth.

147.  
_Do as you would be done by._

সমানে সমানে কবিয়া কাজ,  

Samáne samáne karibá kaj,

হারিলে জিকিলে নাই লাঘ।

Hárile jikile nái lágh.

Deal equally with your equals,

And then whether you succeed in life or not, you need

not be ashamed.

_In fact, “Do as you would be done by.”_
148. *Even little things are of profit.*

দোলা মুখত মাথি পবে,
দিও লাভ ভিতর।

Solá mukhat mákhi pare,
Sio lábhar bhitar.

Even if a fly falls into a toothless mouth,  
It is a gain.

dōla means the same as লাপঁঢ (lāpung), i.e., toothless.

149. *The kiss of love.*

চেনেহার চুমাই নাকটি চিঢ়ে।
Chenehar chumái nākati chinge.

The kiss of love wounds the tip of the nose.  
নাকটি = literally the cartilage of the nose.  
চিঢ়ে = literally breaks asunder.

This is an ironical expression for false love or affection.

150. *Half a loaf is better than no bread.*

হেবা পোঁরা ধনব চৌড় অনাত ভাঙ।
Herā powā dhanar chodha anāo bhāl.

If you find even fourteen annas of lost money, it is well.

151. *When the bone of contention is removed.*

হইহ পোরালী নিলে সেনে,  
তুমি বেঙে মরে। ভেঙে।
Ha(n)h powāli nile sene,  
Tumi jene mayo tene.

The hawk has carried off the duckling;  
Now we are equal.

Literally, I am the same as you are. The hawk has carried off your duckling, so you can’t lord it over me any longer.
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156.  

*Silence is golden.*

কথাব দূরেচাঁ বাক্যব বেশই।

Kathār duyeshār bāndhar du mer.

Two words in speaking, two rounds in a fastening.

This means that you should not say more than is absolutely necessary on an occasion. Two rounds in a fastening refers to the splicing together of bamboos when two rounds or more are made with the rope or cane before the knot is tied.

157.  

*A person not worth conciliating.*

ধাঁর মারিলেও যেন, গাড়িবে মারিলেও তেন।

Dhāre márile jene, gādibe márile tene.

It is the same whether you strike with the sharp edge or the blunt side (of the dá).

This saying refers to a person who is so weak and insignificant, that it is all the same whether he is your enemy or your friend, as he cannot injure you or benefit you. ধাঁর (dhār) and গাড়ি (gādi) are always used, respectively, to denote the sharp edge and blunt side of a "dá."

158.  

*Crying over spilt milk.*

কান্দিলে ধাঁর জুল নে যাই।

Kándile dhār shuj ne jāi.

By weeping a debt is not paid.

It is no good crying over spilt milk.

ঝুঁক �means to liquidate, to repay a debt.

159.  

*A chip of the old block.*

বাপেক যেনে পিতেক তেন।

Bápek jene pitek tene.

Like father, like son.

*i.e., the son's "a chip of the old block."*
160. Can a leopard change his spots.

“Even with washing, charcoal cannot become white.
This proverb is derived from the Sanskrit saying “अगर्भ शह घोंटेन मलिनस्वं न मुक्ति.”
Also compare the Hindi proverb क्रलाको मयला छुटे, धर आग कबे अरेश।”

161. Worldly wisdom.

“Dinar parbat rātir jui,
Tāk nekhedi thākibā shui.
A mountain by day and a fire by night,
Do not follow them, but remain resting.
They are both far away though they seem to be near.

162. Responsibilities of power.

“Wherever there are kingdoms, there are duties to be performed.


In a temporary residence there is no rule.
The proverb means that, when you are away from home, there is no necessity for thinking about les convenances of society.
Another reading is—

In a foreign country you need not regard rules of society.
With reference to this proverb, cf. No. 82; also the Bihar proverb given by Christian (page 70 of his book)—

“Jaisal des, taisan bhes.”
“Suit your behaviour to the country.”
164. **Half a loaf is better than no bread.**

একো নোহোবাতৈক কনা নোমাৰী ডান।

Eko nohowātkai kanā momāio bhāl.

A blind uncle is better than no uncle.

Here কনা is used to signify a blind person, its real meaning being one-eyed.

165. **A sound piece of advice.**

কাঁকডেমা চাই লুবিবাখী, ।

তাবে কাঁমানি তাবে জব ই।

Phā(n)kdemä chāi luribā khari,

Tāre kānmāri tāre jari.

When you gather firewood look out for the phankdema.

So that you can find your stick for carrying the bundle of faggots on, as well as the fastening out of it.

The phankdema is a tree the bark of which is useful for fastenings and which is highly combustible, as it contains much oil; hence the proverb. The branches also are straight and light, and therefore handy for use as kānmāris (poles for carrying burdens).

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**Class III.**

**PROVERBS RELATING TO PECULIARITIES OF CERTAIN CASTES AND CLASSES.**

166. **Ahoms.**

আহোম চকলং হিজুর বেই, ।

তেংবার পাতলিত পরিহী সেই কবা সেই।

Ahomar chaklang Hindur bei,

Tomār pātalīt parichho jei karā sei.

For the Ahoms the "chaklang" and for the Hindus the "bei,"

Deal with me as you like, now that I am in your grip.

These lines are meant to express the feelings of a bride after marriage.
चकलं (chaklang) is the name of the Ahom marriage ceremony. बेई (bei) is a wooden square frame set up on four posts and decorated, under which the bride and the bridegroom are given a ceremonial bath.

Here बेई is put for बिषा, a part for the whole, by synecdoche. Now-a-days, nearly all marriages, even amongst the Ahoms and Chutiás, are performed according to the Hindu custom, there being very few “chaklang” ceremonies. The Ahoms and Chutiás are becoming rapidly Hinduised.

167.

Bhakats.
कनि पाबे हाँहे खाइ भकत धाइहे।
Kani pāre hā(n)he khái bhakat dā(n)he.
Ducks lay eggs and the Bhakats eat them.

भकत (bhakat).—This is the name given to the disciples of the gosains.

168.

Bhakats.
भकततैক चौकि खोरा टौ भांगब ने।
Bhakatatakai dhe(n)ki thorá to dāngar ne?
Is the pestle of the “dheki” of more value than a “bhakat”?

The खोरा (thorá) is the heavy pestle fixed on the lever of the dheki.

169.

Marriage.
बेतिया मारिब डोलत चापव,
Bettiya máriba dholat chápar,
Mokhita labá murut kápar.
Jetiyá máriba dholat chápar,
Jetiyá labá murut kápar.
When the drum is beaten,
Then cover your head with a cloth.

It means that, when a marriage is finally settled and is going to be celebrated by the beating of drums, then the girl should cover her head with a cloth.

In Assam, girls before marriage do not veil themselves. It is only, on the day of marriage and afterwards that the veil is donned, when the new life is said to begin.
170.

Hastiness.

ভুকুটোত কল নপকে।
Bhukutot kal napake.

By means of a blow the plantain does not ripen.

ভুকুটোত—with one blow.

171.

Bhakats.

নাকত লাগিল পাক;
Mahá bhakatar chidra lágil,
নেথি পাতিম কাক।
Medhi pátim kák.

An unexpected thing has happened;
The head bhakat has been found fault with,
Whom shall I make a medhi?

The saying is ironically meant. The head "bhakat" is next to the gosain, the most powerful person at the Sastra. He is a person who is generally supposed to be above suspicion. A medhi is a person of much less importance, being only the gosain's agent at a village. The medhis are entitled to receive, I believe, a small portion of the offerings or of the gosain's "kar," or tax, as commission for collecting the same. These officers exist all over Assam, and through them the gosain and the bhakats at the Sattra keep touch with the people. Medhis are sometimes known by the title of "sajtola." There are also ranks of medhis, e.g., "bor" medhi (head medhi) and ráj medhi (the chief officer of the gosain outside the sattra). Medhis at village feasts generally receive what is called মান (mán), which literally means honour or obedience. The "mán," however, often takes a more tangible form in the way of a gift of an earthenware "charu" (vessel) and a pátidhárá, i.e., a seat covered with a pati or mat, by the man who gives the feast.
172.

_Bhakats (of Kamlâbâri)._  

अगर कमलाबरीवार धूई खाई खबि,  
एतिरार कमलाबरीवार नौ खोंबे भबि।  

_Agar Kamlâbâriyâi dhui khâi khari,  
Etiâr Kamlâbâriyâi no dhowe bhari._

The Kamlâbâri "bhakats" of former days used to wash firewood before they cooked with it, The Kamlâbari "bhakats" of the present day don’t even wash their feet.

This saying means that the "bhakats" of this _sattra_ used to be so punctilious, that they washed firewood before cooking with it, for fear that it might have been defiled by the touch of some person. Now-a-days the "bhakats" do not even take the trouble to wash their feet before eating, washing of not only the feet, but the whole body, before eating being the strict custom of all Hindus.

173.

_Bhot._  

बजाब धन स्थोट गिरिहू।  

Rajâr dhan bho(n)t girîha(n)t.

The rent-collector is the owner of the king’s wealth.

सौट is the old name for rent-collector. In the days of the Rajâs, the revenue was farmed out to “bhots,” who paid the Rajâ a certain sum annually; and made as much out of the ryots as they could.

174.

_Bhuiyas._  

कटा हुक चिटा हुक पाते टंगाली,  
भगा हुक चिगा हुक झंजवे पोवाली।  

_Phâtâ hak chita hak pâtar tangâli,  
_Bhaga hak chigâ hak Bhuiyâ(n)r powâli._

Let it be torn, let it be broken, it is still a scarf of fine silk,  

Let him be young, let him be old, he is still the son of a Bhuiyâ(n.)

_पट_ (pât) is a fine kind of Assamese silk, obtained from the cocoons of a worm that feeds on the mulberry tree. The best
descriptions of this kind of silk are to be obtained in the Jorhát subdivision of the Sibsagar district.

The sālī is either a scarf or waistcloth. These are often made of “pāt” or “mezankari” silk and are embroidered with red, or even very occasionally with gold thread.

भुईया—Bhuiya(n)s were, as their name implies, landholders, the word भुईया being derived from भुई or भूमि (land). Bronson says they were “rájbangshi,” or of the royal family. They were, in addition to being landholders, entitled to certain privileges granted them in consideration for their performing certain judicial functions; apparently, they were attached to the chief courts of justice in the times of the Rájás, and they acted as umpires or arbitrators in civil suits. Robinson mentions in his “Assam” the “Báro Bhuiya,” or 12 Bhuiyas. With reference to this proverb it will be interesting to compare Christian’s Bihar proverb—

Báp ke put sipáhi ke ghora,
Nau to thorá thorá.

Which Christian translates—

“A chip of the old block,
like the steed of the trooper,
If he is not up to very much, still he is above the average.”

175

Barás.

बार घरत तबार गाठि, बर्खनो थाकिब केइ बांडि।
Barár gharat tarár gá(n)thí, baráno thákiba kei ráti.

In the Bará’s house the walls are fastened with “tará,”

How many nights will the Bará live in it?

बारा (bará).—A “bará” was an inferior officer appointed by the Assam kings over 20 péons. Thè bará apparently looked after road-making and other public works, and used to move from place to place; hence the saying “thakiba kei ráti” (how many nights will he remain).

तरा (tará) or तारापत is the wild cardamom, which elephants are very fond of. The walls and roofs of temporary huts are frequently made of तरा (tará).
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179. "Mahang.

�ন মহঞ্জৈল গল, লোন ভাব পেলাই,
মাটি ভাব অনেল বধ মেচিবাল হই।
Dhan Mahangalai gal lon bhār pe'āi,
Māṭī bhār anile ghāṛ machibalai hal.

My beloved husband has gone to Mahang, returning whence he throwing asile the load of salt, has brought in a load of earth which will serve the purpose of plastering the house.

�ন লোভ; মহঞ্জ (Mahang) is a place on the Naga Hills boundary close to Baruaśālī in the district of Sibsagar. Here there was a salt mine, and it was from that place Upper Assam used to receive its supply of salt. The proverb means that the man is such an idiot that, instead of bringing home salt, he brought earth which, however, his wife utilised in plastering the house.


তিরিক কিলে, মিরিক মিলে।
Tirik kile, Mirik mile.

A wife is to be managed by blows, and Miris by good treatment.

With reference to this Assamese recipe for managing a wife, compare No. 96, also the old English saying "a woman, a dog, and a walnut tree, the more you beat them the better they be."


মহাং চিন মাহানিত, বুধ গরু চিন খাহানিত।
Mahantar chin máhanit, burā garur chin ghā(n)hanit.

The Mahanta is known in a field of máḥ and an old bullock in a grass-plot.

A man's worth can be tested by only in the field of work for which he is fitted.

The story runs thus. If you want to test a man whether he is really a mahanta or not, take him to a máhanī (or field of pulse), and if he can resist the temptation of eating the pulse, he is a real mahanta, conversely if an old bullock cannot graze in a grass plot, it is deemed worthless.
MARIYAS—NAGAS.

Máhni (máhani) is a field of "máh," which is a black "dál" or pulse. The latter part of the proverb means that an old bullock, when it is past work, is turned out to graze.

182.

*Mariyas.*

 Martial dhán keleí, Gariyak kán keleí.

What will the Mariyá do with dhán and what will the Gariyá do with his ears?

The meaning is that the Mariyás live by working in brass and have therefore very little to do with cultivation. The mál Gariyás (Muhammadans) do not pierce their ears for earrings, and therefore there is no need to them for ears.

**Mariyá.**—The Mariyás are braziers. They are, as a rule, much looked down upon. They are professedly Muhammadans, but are quite ignorant of the tenets of Islam really. Possibly, they are converts from Hinduism, which may account for the contempt with which they are held by Hindus. **Gariyá.**—This term, as stated before, is meant to be one of opprobrium, but in reality it is nothing of the sort. **Gariyá** means a man from "Gaur" (an ancient city in Bengal). The Assamese Muhammadans say they are a relict of the Muhammadan invasion. In the times of the Rajás, they were much oppressed, but their status has much improved of late years.

183.

*Nágás.*

Nágíniye lará pái, nágái jál khái.

The Nágá’s wife gives birth to a child,

the Nágá drinks the medicine.

Jál (jál) is the Hindustáni *jhál*, a preparation of hot spices taken by women after delivery.

Nágá (Nágá) or Nágá (Nágá) is a generic term, which includes a number of large and powerful hill tribes.

The Nágá drinking the medicine.—Here a reference is made to the custom of couvade which prevails amongst some of the Nágá tribes.
184.

Thieves.

চোর পোখ মুখ খানিয়ে।
Chor por mukh khaniye.

The only thing that my son, who is a thief, has is his voice, i.e., he is only good at making fair speeches.

There are two kinds of thieves is Assam—the thief in the ordinary sense of the word, and the ছোকালি চোর (chhowali chor) or the stealer of young women. Marriage by capture still exists in Assam, indeed, amongst the lower classes; this is by no means uncommon. A young man singles out a girl at the “bihu” festival, who is perhaps not insensible to his attentions, and, when opportunity offers, elopes with her. This is called ছোকালি চুরি (chhowali churi), or the stealing of young women. In this way the bridegroom escapes the payment of money or presents to the girl’s parents.

185.

Thieves.

বোপাই আছিল চোর, সেই পকটি দোষ।
Bopai achhil chor, sei pakiti dous.

My father was a thief, I am of the same nature.

of.—No. 158—বংশে যেনে পিঞ্জেক তেঁতে (Bápek jene pitek tene).

186.

Thieves.

বোপাই বিপরিত দোষ,
Bopai biparit douš,

এটা কানকটা এটা চোর।
Eti kankata eti chor.

Joraro jor biparit jor,

A pair, a wonderful pair;
One has cropped ears and the other is a thief.

The use of বিপরিত is here ironical. কানকটা (kankata) literally with ears that have been cut off. It was the custom in the times of the rajas to cut off the ears of thieves and other offenders.
Class IV.

PROVERBS RELATING TO SOCIAL AND MORAL SUBJECTS, RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS AND POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

187.

Betelnut.

बटेल्नूट का पत्ता चालाई, नसोक खाना,
Sei tāmolar bīlah chābā.

Cut it small and chew it often,
Then you will enjoy the pleasure of betelnut (chewing).

188.

Dead Sea Fruit.

बाहिरे बांच भित्र बोट सोवाभटूरी
Bāhire rangchang bhitare kowābhāturi.

Outside it is beautiful, but inside is kowābhāturi.

The “कोवाभटूरी” (Momordica Monodelpha) is a creeper which bears a beautiful fruit to look at but which contains nothing.

The text of the proverb supplied the title of a farcical play by Srijit Hem Chandra Barua, exposing the foibles of Society in Assam some time ago.

189.

Bihu.

सात बिहुर सात कृषि
Sāt bihur sāt kāni.

An egg that has survived seven Bihus.

There are three Bihus, the Chait, Kārtik, and Mágh Bihus. They are held on the last days of the months just enumerated. The Chait Bihu is a very pretty festival, the Assamese women coming out in their best clothes and jewellery, and with sprays of orchid in their hair. They dance and sing under the trees of
the forest in imitation of the Gopis of the Brindában. No man is supposed to go near to them, but this festival nevertheless results in many runaway matches. Cows are bathed in the rivers, and sometimes painted at this festival. The Kártilik Bihu is a much smaller festival, and has no peculiar customs that I can recall. The Mágh Bihu is an important feast, as it is the harvest-home. By the end of (Puh the middle of January) all the rice has been gathered in, and if the season has been a good one, there is much rejoicing. Large piles of wood are made, and at night a light is put to them, when they blaze up and make grand bonfires.

The Assamese play a game with eggs at these festivals. Two men each take an egg and push them point to point at one another. The egg that breaks is beaten, and the unbroken one wins. This custom is referred to in the proverb above, and is called কলিজুকা [kanijujá]. In the old days there used to be buffalo fights, and even elephant fights, at the Bihu.

190.  
**Good advice.**

বাহি নিদিবা হাত,
লবা ছোঁবালে লোচনে নথবা,
বিবা গঞ্জুলিতে ভাঙত।
Ráhit nidibá hát,
Lará chhowálik laghóne nathabá,
Dibá gadhukite bhát.

Don't touch the stock (don't lay your hand on your savings);
Don't keep the children fasting;
But give them cooked rice in the evening.

বাহি (ráhi) saving, stock. লোচন (laghon) fasting. গধুলি (gadhuli) evening.

191.  
**Busy-bodies.**

লগনী নহলে জুই নজলে,
টুটকীয়া নহলে গাও নবহে।
Lagani nahale jui najale,
Tutakiyá hale gáo(n) nabahe.
Without kindling wood the fire won't light,
And without a backbiter no village can be established.

तुटकिया (tutakiya) a backbiter.

192.

Childless Woman.
खाब नाइ केचुवा बुढ़के नछुरा।
Jār nāi kechuvā burāke nachhuwā.
She who has not a baby to dance, should make her old man dance.

193.

Cutting of the nose.
nimāb nāk kātī satinīyē bānā bhanga kare.
Nijar nāk kāti satinir jatrá bhanga kare.
She cut off her own nose, so as to prevent her husband's second wife
from starting on a journey.

One wife, out of jealousy, because her husband's second wife is
going out for the day, slits her own nose, so as to prevent her
starting. The Assamese have a superstition that, if anything
mutilated or deformed is seen when setting out on a journey, the
journey will be unlucky. सतिनी (satini) or सतियई (satiyai)=
one of the several wives of one husband. Polygamy brings many
evils; not the least of these evils is the jealousy that nearly
always exists between the wives which results in continual squabbles. c.f.—the following translations of Eastern sayings:

Malay—"Two wives under one roof: two tigers in one cage."

Telugu—"Two swords cannot be contained in one scabbard."

Afghan—"Who likes squabbles at home, contracts two
marriages."

Tamul.—"Why fire the house of a man who has two
wives?" i.e., the fire of anger and jealousy is enough.

194.

Cutting of the nose.
नाक काटिले आँगिर दाणे पाले,
Chuśi kātì kānh kon kāle?
If the nose is cut off, it will regain its old size by treatment,
But if the hair is cut off, when will it come again?
195.  

**Daughters.**

कথात कথা বাঙ্গালী, খাঁকুক বাঙ্গালী কান,
মাক ঘরত জীবনি বাঙ্গালী, পথারত বাঙ্গালী ধান

Kathát kathá báre, khashikát báre kán,
Mákar gharat jiwarí báre, pathárat báre dhán.

A story grows by telling, a bit of straw makes the hole in the ear larger;
A girl grows up best at her mother's house, paddy grows best on the pathár.

খাঁকুক means a grass tooth-pick, a roasting spit, or a spire of dry grass to which the eggs of "mugá" silkworms are attached. Here it is used in its first sense, the tooth-pick being used to make the hole, bored through the lobe of the ear, bigger. Both men and women wear earrings, called thuriá (থুরিয়া), which are nearly always cylindrically-shaped bits of amber, with a gold knob at the end, which shows in front. As these "thuriá" are often of considerable diameter, a large hole is required in the ear. The best way to widen the hole is to put in an additional bit of straw (খাঁকুক) each time this is possible. The proverb is an answer to the question—Where do things thrive best?

196.  

**Daughters and the value of land near the house.**

টিক্কু বালক ওলাই মাটি, মাক ভালে জীবনি জাগি।

Tik baladhá olái máti, mák bhále jiyék játi.

That bullock is good which jumps up when its buttock is touched, that piece of land is good which is in front of a man's house; and if a mother is good the daughter is the same.

টিকু মাটি, টিকু বালক (tik baladhá) a bullock that jumps up or runs when its buttock is touched. ওলাই মাটি, land in front of the house, *i.e.*, the land which receives the drainage of the house which, acting as manure, renders it more fertile than other land. Dák is the author of this proverb.

197.  

**Daughters.**

মাক কার জীবনি বাঙ্গালী, ঢেকি ঠোঁটা লাই বাঙ্গালী পাঁজি।

Mákat kai jiyék kájí, dhékí thóra lai báte pá(n)jí.
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201. 

_Fisher man._

ডোম চহাকি হল চুকত পাতিলে ডুলি,
উলিয়াই পেলাই দিলে গা শঙ্গশঙ্গাই হুলি।
Dom chahaki hal chukat pátile duli,
Ulyái pelái dile gá shungshungáiche buli.

A Dom became rich, and he placed in the corner of his house a basket for storing paddy,

He then pulls the basket out, saying that he feels his body itching.

A dom would not usually possess a "duili" for storing paddy, as he earns his bread by fishing: gá শঙ্গশঙ্গাই (gá shung-shungáî), literally to feel an itching in the body. The word is derived from হুলিংa bristle, a beard of a grain of paddy.

202. 

_Guitar._

মানতে টোকারী বাজে।
Mánathe tokári báje.
The tokári is played when respect is paid.

টোকারী (tokári) is an instrument of music played with the fingers like the guitar.

203. 

_Husband._

এতিয়াহে পােলেহি থরপতা লৈ,
কিলাবতটে আহিিচে খেদাল লৈ।
Etíyáhe pólehí gharpatá pai,
Kilábalai áhichhe kherdál lai.

Now has come the worthy husband,
He has come to beat me with a straw.

This is an ironical proverb.

204. 

_Husband._

কি কম কি নকম পঞ্চ নাম রাটালী।
Ki kam ki nakam pair nám rátálí.

What to say and what not to say, my husband's name is "chisel."
A woman who has always to be corrected for making mistakes, gives vent to her wrath by saying that her husband's name is "chisel," i.e., he has a tongue as sharp as a chisel.

205.

**Husband.**

किहत कबिला कि, धान एडोन दि,
पै तो पाला नितो किलाइ दि।
Kihat karilo ki, dhán edon di,
Paí to pálo nító kiláí si.

What have I done to have bought a husband

for a *don* of paddy,

Who always beats me.

In Assam the bridegroom, as a rule, has to make presents to the bride's parents before marriage, so that in this proverb the order of things is reversed.

206.

**Practical knowledge.**

খাব জানিলে চাউলেই চিবা,
বাহিব জানিলে মাটিয়েই পিবা,
বুলিব জানিলে মজিয়াই দেড়পত্ব বাঁট।
Khába jánile cháulei chirá,
Bahiba jánile mátiyei pirá,
Buliba jánile mojíyái der parar bát.

If eaten knowingly (contentedly), common rice is "chirá" (parched rice),

To one who knows how to sit the ground is the stool,
To her who knows how to walk the dining-room is
two and a half prahar's journey.

If you know how to eat, rice is as good as "chirá." If you know how to sit, the ground is as good as a chair. And if you only know how to walk, it takes as long as a *prahar* and a half to cover the floor in your house. Slowness of gait in a woman is considered lady-like, as well as graceful. মজিয়া=মাজ কোথালি (*máj kotháli*), the middle room of the house, where the meals are served and eaten.
207.  

**Husband.**

গিরিয়ে বোঁলে ডোক ডোক,
বৈনিয়ে বোঁলে পুরা গাড়ুলি
হই সাজ এক লগে ডোক।

Giriyeka bole bhok hhok,
Ghainiyeka bole puá gadhuli,
Dui sáj eke lage hhok.

The husband cries out “I am hungry,” “I am hungry,”

The wife replies, “Let the morning meal and evening meal
be taken together.”

This is a case where the wife is too thrifty and half-starves
her husband. The Assamese has, as rule, three meals a day, *i.e.*, in the early morning, midday, and evening. In the early morning
he eats cooked rice, either hot or cold, according to his fancy or
his means. In the middle of the day he takes what is called
জলপান (jalpán) or lunch, which often consists of পিঠাগুরি (pitháguri)
or cakes made from rice flour. In the evening is the large meal
of the day; it consists of cooked rice, fish, or vegetables. (*See
No. 55.*)

208.

**Husband.**

আলকে বুলিলে ককাই,
আথাবে মুখবে চিনিব নোবাবি,
শৈলেক বুলিলে ককাই।

Jálake bulile jakái,
Ándháre mudháre chiñiba nowári,
Paiyekak bulile kakái.

The net was mistaken for a *jakáï*,
And she called her husband “kakáí” (elder brother)
in the dark.

আল (*jál*) is a fishing net, of which there are several kinds.
The nets are made from the *riha* fibre, which is very
strong. जबकि (jak'ī) is a scoop with a handle, which is pushed along in the mud by women to catch small fish. The jak'ī is made of split bamboo with a whole bamboo for a handle, and is very light.

209. Learned.

जनीर भीत मिश्र रेखर महग्गह।

What is cockle rice and fish to the learned, is an insurmountable difficulty to the unlearned.

ब्यङ्गः—something very troublesome and unavoidable.

210. Low birth.

सोम जन्म वालिका जन्मा व कुंजरासाधित द्वस,
अर्थ भाष्क घैर लिखरते लिखरि शास्ति लल।

To janaam jhi jina mai kashiyatili ghar,
Esir chak kai chali thindi manthi lahr.

I know your lineage, your home is in the paddy nursery,
If I were to say a little more, you would run away.

ससा (esir), literally नसी सस, one word; लिखरे, to run away rapidly.

211. Lover.

चारबाग आरि कान्ता गविल।

Chabalai shi phizdhat paril.

He came only to have a look, but he got tied up.

The saying refers to the case of a man who has been carrying on an intrigue, but has been found out.
212. **Maternal uncle.**

मोराइं मरक भूतक पाछे पाम ।

Momái marak, bhutak páchhe pám.

Let the uncle die, I will find the devil (हृत) afterwards.

This is rather an amusing instance of "Shutting the stable-door after the steed has been stolen." The usual exorcism of the evil spirit is here dispensed with until after the man's death.

213. **Marriage.**

एटाइ बोर खोबोचात ैैक, ।

बियार खोबोचा सुकंत ।

Etái bor khorochat kai,

Biyár khorochá sakat.

The slip-knot of marriage is the strongest slip-kont of all.

214. **Mother-in-law.**

चल पाई बियनी नितौ तिनि बेलि ।

Chal pái biyani nító tini beli.

If the son's or daughter's mother-in-law gets a chance,

she comes to the house three times a day.

वियनी (biyani) son's or daughter's mother-in-law, the father-in-law is called बियै (biyai).

215. **Mother-in-law.**

शाह बोयानीब खब, ।

कों खाई गाखिरब सब ।

Sháhu bowáir ghar,

Kone khái gakhirar sar?

The mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law are the only members of the house.

Who else is going to drink the cream?

सब (sar) = चामनि (chámaní), cream.
216.

Oil.

I have become black through having fallen (wounded) in battle,
And I have become scurfy through having no oil.

A coolie whose skin has been tanned through exposure to
the sun, says he has become black owing to being wounded on the
field of battle. Having no oil to rub on the body is given as an
excuse for his skin being scurfy. The Assamese rub their hair
and body with mustard oil.

217.

Old man.

He looks an old man, but in reality he is a flame of fire.
Though he looks old, he has not lost his spirit and energy.

अग्नि कुरा (agni kurá) = जूई कुरा (jui kurá), a torch. अग्नि (agni)
= ignis (Dowson). To quote further from the same authority—
"Fire is one of the most ancient and most sacred objects of Hindu
worship. Agni is one of the chief deities of the Vedas. He is
one of the three great deities—Agni, Váyu (Indra), and Surya—
who, respectively, preside over earth, air, and sky."—(Dowson.)

218.

Pohári.

The Pohári's witness is her husband.

The only witness a pohári can cite is her own husband to
corroborate her false statement regarding the value of her stock
in trade. Nobody else will support her in her false statement
except her husband.

Pohári (pohári) are petty traders.
219. 

Porters.

Bhārik nere bhāre, jūbyāk nere pachalār khāre.
The burden does not leave the porter’s back,
And pachalā khār curry does not leave the slovenly man.

The above means that a porter cannot earn his livelihood without carrying loads, and a sloven can only get pachala khār (a bad kind of curry) to eat.

Pachalā—the sprout of the plantain tree from which curry is prepared.

220. 

Religion.

"ধর্মঃ জ্ঞান অধর্মঃ ক্ষয়।"
Dharmar jai adharmar khay.
The victory of religion is the decline of wickedness.

ধর্ম (dharma) is moral and religious duty. Dharma was an ancient sage, sometimes classed among the prajápatis, the fathers of the human race, who were produced by Manu. Dharma married thirteen (or ten) of the daughters of Dakhsa, and had a numerous progeny, but all his children "are manifestly allegorical, being personifications of intelligences and virtues and religious rites, and being, therefore, appropriately wedded to the probable authors of the Hindu Code of religion and morals, or the equally allegorical representation of that code, Dharma."—(Wilson) cf. “যত্তোধর্ম্ম সত্তোজয় ।”

221. 

Step-mother.

Ki kum māhi aib gun,
Ehāte kābīrī ehāte loṅ
Ki kom máhī āir gun,
Ehāte khārani ehāte Ion !

What shall I say of my step-mother’s kindness,
In one hand she has solution of potash and in the other salt!
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Urbashi.

Ekei Urbashi duwâre path.

She is an Urbashi and at the same time there is a path (straight) up to her door.

Urbashi, or Urvasi, was one of the Apsaras, the nymphs of Indra’s heaven. The name “which signifies moving in the water, has some analogy to that of Aphrodite.”—(Dowson.) The Râmâyana and the Purânas attribute the origin of these nymphs to the churning of the ocean.

There is a love story told in the Mahabhárata, which need not be reproduced here, concerning Urbashi and Puru-ravas, a mythical person, mentioned in the Vedas, connected with the sun and the dawn, and existing in the middle region of the universe. This story Maxmuller considers “one of the myths of the Vedas which expresses the correlation of the dawn and the sun. The love between the mortal and the immortal, and the identity of the morning dawn and the evening twilight, is the story of Urvasi and Puru-ravas.” The word “Urvasi,” Maxmuller says, “was originally an appellation and meant dawn.” Dowson writes—“Dr. Goldstücker’s explanation differs, but seems more apposite. According to this Puru-ravas is the sun and Urvasi is the morning mist; when Puru-ravas is visible, Urvasi vanishes, as the mist is absorbed when the sun shines forth.”

Village conversation.

Dhekitya latá patá,
Bhát khúote pâni khái,
Sio etá kathá.
Bits of fern, creepers, and leaves,  
He drinks water whilst eating rice,  
Are these the subjects of conversation?

This is a description of village talk. लड़ा पता = odds and ends.

Water Sprite.

Khál khánì jasínì chapáì lalē.

By digging a drain (near your house)  
you have brought the evil spirit closer.

The jasínì is one of the dü minores of the Assamese.  
Although the “jasínì” is supposed to be evilly disposed,  
apparently it does not require to be propitiated by offerings.  
The “jasínì” presides over tanks and drains. Stories are told  
by the villagers of men who had been pulled down into the depths  
of deep pools by “jasínís,” and so drowned whilst bathing.

Water Sprite.

Thalat thal Rajá potá pukhurir ba(n)ket Rajá.

A king reigns on land, in half-filled-up tanks reigns the water sprite.

(thal) = Sanskrit शूल (sthal), land, place.  
पूक्षि (potá pukhuri), literally buried tank.  
What is meant generally by the expression, however, is a tank in process of being filled up.  
बाक [ba(n)k] is an evil spirit said to haunt swamps and marshes.  
The ba(n)k, like the ‘Will-o’-the-wisp,’ leads people astray at night.

Widower.

Jo(n)r puri baralár hát pâle hi.

The torch burnt down to the hand of the widower that held it.
Mr. Abdul Majid notes on this—"When a man loses his wife and becomes a widower (baralá), he is so immersed in grief that, when he lights a torch, he lets it burn his hand in his absence of mind."

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230. **Widower.**

ঠনঠন মধন গোপাল, একেটা বরলাহ নথন চোতাল।

Than than Madan Gopál, ekétá baralár nakhan chotál.

He is alone by himself a “Madan Gopal” (a widower),

he possesses nine courtyards (and houses to correspond).

মধন গোপাল (Madan Gopál) is either a bachelor or a widower.

মধন (Madan) is one of the names of কাম (Káma), the Indian Cupid.

(Gopál), cowkeeper, a name of the youthful Krishna whilst living amongst the cowherds in Brindában.

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231. **Widower.**

পর্বত কাঙ্ক্ষি ভৈর্যাত বাপ,  
ববলাহ বিচারিচে শুকান ধান।

Parbatat káchhakani bhayámát bán,
Baralát bichárichhe shukán dhán.

To look for turtle’s eggs in the hills, to put up a weir  
( across a stream) in the plains,

Are as difficult things to do as to obtain dry paddy at a  
widower’s house.

In the proverb just above, we have some of the advantages of widowerhood. In this proverb we have one of the disadvantages. বাপ (bán) is a weir thrown across a stream to prevent the fish finding their way out to the Brahmaputra. Such weirs are difficult to put up, and still more difficult to keep in place, as the streams are liable to rise suddenly and wash them away. Turtle’s eggs are found on the sandhills alongside rivers. They are difficult to find unless the turtle is seen making its way off from the place where the eggs have been deposited.
232.  

**Wives: The contrary wife.**

খোজে খানী দিয়ে লোন,
এন উীতত খাঁব কোন।
Khojo khârani diye lôn,
Ene ubhatit thâkiba kon.
I ask for a solution of potash and she gives me salt,
Who can stand a wife who is so contrary?

233.  

**The wife who is a hasty cook.**

খব বাচনি খব বাচনী পৈয়েক লগচেব যাই,
ওদয় বাকনি ওদয় বাচনী পৈয়েকে তিনি সংক্ষি যাই।
Khar rândhâni khar bârâni paick lâghone jái,
Odá rândhâni odá bárâni pëike tîn sájí khâi.

She is a smart cook and a smart distributor, yet her husband goes fasting,
The other is a slow cook and a slow distributor, yet her husband gets three meals a day.

A hasty cook often spoils what she is cooking. A cook who takes time and trouble, prepares a satisfactory meal.

বাচনী= is one who serves the food, a distributor.
খব= quick; ওদয়= slow.

234.  

**The wife supreme in her own house.**

ঘবে পতি বীনী খালে পতি বসিনী।
Ghare pati ghaini khâle pati jasini.

In the home the wife is supreme, in the ditch reigns the water sprite.

235.  

**A wife who, though well-meaning, is without tact.**

তিনি গুলুরিত তোবে তাত,
. উজুতিত চিদিলে পৈয়েকব দাত।
Tîni Godhulit tarichë tât,
Ujutit chingile pâiekar dá(n)t.
She spread her loom at dusk,
And in her hurry she broke her husband’s tooth by tripping up against him.

তাত (tāt) is the wooden hand-loom used by Assamese women for weaving cotton or silk.

236.  

Helplessness.

পার কর যুদ্ধ। গাইঞ নাথাবে।
Pár kar jubayá gáy nátháware.
Cross me over (the stream), young man, it is out of my depth.

237.  

The spoilt wife.

বেটায়ে তাঁচিলে কাটবা, গড়াঘঞ পালেচি বতবা,
বৈনীয়ে তাঁচিলে কাচই, ঢেল মৃচুকাই হৈই।
Betíye bhàngile katará, Gargáon pálehi batará, Ghainiyé bhàngile ka(n) hi, thale muchukáí há(n)hi.

The maid servant broke the stand of the dheki, and the news spread to Gargáon.

The wife broke a brass plate, and the result was only a smile (from her husband).

কাটবা (katará) a stand on which the dheki works. গড়াঘঞ (Gargaon) near Nazira was at one time the capital of the Ahom kings.

238.  

Inequalities.

বষব দাই পিছলি দাই,  
সকব দাই যুক্তবি খাই।
Barar dái pichhali jái,  
Sarur dái khuchhari khái.

The mistake of the great one passes without notice.  
Whereas that of the small one is never overlooked.
239.  

The stingy wife.

Viṣṇuṭī vīlē vīkṛtāī nīdiye।
Bidhatāy dileo tiratāi nidiye.
Although Bidhatā gave, the wife does not! 

Bidha (Bidhatā) is Brahma, the creator.

240.  

The wife always beautiful.

Māj mūrat nāi chuli, pāiyāk ñātē ḍapāi rulī।
Māj murat nāi chuli, paiyeke māte ḍapāi buli.

She has no hair on the middle of her head, but her husband calls her “rūpahi” (the beautiful one).

241.  

A paragon of a wife.

Sarṣa sūlakaḥyānī tāi, pāṭītē mūte ḍabukotē ḍāi।
Sūrba sūlakaḥyānī tāi, pāṭito mutē charuto khāi.

A paragon of a wife, she spoils the bed and eats from the cooking pot.
The proverb is of course ironical.

242.  

Women.

Tīrīr chutī bāranir butī।

Women that are short in stature and brooms that are worn out are to be avoided.

The Assamese think a great deal of a tall woman.

243.  

Women.

Tīrī, dibī, tāṭē, kōbara,
Ei tīnchārī āṭaī nē ṛora।

Tiri, Miri, bhātō, kowā,
Ei tini chārī āsaī no powā.

Of women, Miris, the parrot, and the crow,
The minds of these four you cannot know.
244.  

Agony of Death.

ৰুকালীণ, নাঘে হুটা হই, কাটি কুই কটনা,
এই তিনি চায়ি যমক যাহন।

Thuparir pai, máje phutá chái, káti khái kataná,
Ei tini chári jama játaná.

To be the husband of a worthless woman, a boat covering
with a hole in the middle of it, and to live by spinning and
weaving for wages,

These three are the agony of death.

cf. the Hindi proverb—

Jhar jhar jári urukha ghar,
Nári chanchal chor nakar,
Báp satru satmán pái,
Ehí pancha báp sahan najái.

A water pot with a hole in it, a leaky house, an unsteady
wife, a thief servant, a father an enemy, these five are unen-
durable.

In Assam, the bullock carts and boats are covered with hoods
made of matting, with bamboo hoops to support it. Any one
who has travelled in a bullock cart or in a boat with a hole in
its hood on a wet night in the rains, will endorse the truth of
this saying.  কটনা (kataná)="বেচাইল লোকব হুট। কটা বা কাপব রোক্তা
মায়া।"—(Bronson.)  "(Bechaloi lokar shutá hátá bá kápar bowá
mánush)."  One who spins or weaves for others for hire.  দম
(jam) is the Indian Pluto.

Class V.

PROVERBS RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AND SEASONS.

245.  

The brinjal out of season.

রূপ্তায়া। রূপ্তায়া ভোজ রূপ ভোজ ভোজ কবে।
Ábatariyá bengnái mok tol mok tol kare.

The egg plant that is out of season, cries out
"pluck me," "pluck me."

This saying is expressive of contempt towards men who are
too pushing.
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If the man who treads out the paddy has soft feet, the sharp beard of the ear pierces his foot and he jumps with pain.

The paddy is generally trodden out by oxen, but sometimes by men and women as well. If a person has soft feet, i.e., if a man is not accustomed to such work, the sharp beard of the paddy runs into his foot.

250.  

**Paddy seedlings.**

कठिया हे चूट जेठते परा।
Kathiya he chuti Jethate para.

The paddy seedlings are small, but they were sown in Jeth.

The seedlings referred to are those which are required for transplanting to the “rua” or paddy-field. The month Jeth corresponds to 15th May to 15th June, which is about the time when the “kathiya-tali” (seedling beds) are prepared and the seed sown.

251.  

**Ploughs.**

गधुली हले सात हाळ बाई,  
परा हले ए हालो नाइ।
Gadhuli hale sāt hāl bāi,  
Puā hale e hālo nāi.

In the evening he arranges for seven ploughs,  
But in the morning he has not one even.

The meaning is that one who talks much performs little. It is applied to a lazy fellow who contemplates doing everything in the morning, but actually does nothing when the time comes. The Assamese never ploughs in the evening, at least not unless he can possibly help it. A ploughman’s day is generally from dawn till about 11 or 12 o’clock. After that he lets his bullocks loose, and does no more that day.
252.

Radish.

বি মূলা বাড়িব ছুপাটে চিন।
Ji mulá báriba dupátate chin.

The radish that will grow large, you will know when it has spread but two leaves.

253.

Jack fruit.

ধান পুবিয়া কঠাল পাতল তলতে লুকাল।
Dhán puriyá kathál pátar talate lukál.

The biggest jack fruit of all, i.e., that one worth a purá of dhán, lay hidden underneath the leaves.

This proverb is applied to those who hide their light under a bushel.

254.

Náhar.

নাহরত কেও সুকাঠি?
Náharat kaio sukáthi?

Is there any better wood than Náhar?

নাহর (Náhar) the iron wood of India (Mesua ferrea).

255.

Chait.

পালে হি চাঁত ধান বম কত?
Pále hi Chat dhán bám kat.

The month of Chait has arrived, where shall I sow the paddy?

Here চত=চাইন্ত (Chaitra). The month of Chat or Chaitra is from about the 15th March to the 15th April, or about a full month before the commencement of the ploughing season. The sowing of áhu dhán commences from Mágh. The man who has spent his time in doing nothing when it is too late thus complains.
256.

**Mangoes.**

पक्र आम बेलिका किहिब रुज़ा नोह।
Pakā ámar belikā kihar kujā mohā.

At the time of eating ripe mangoes who cares for the infirm

The time for mangoes to ripen is about June; but as mangoes are always full of worms in Assam, it is difficult to understand the enthusiastic tone of the proverb.

257.

"Māh."

ফাল কাটোতেই মাহ বতব গল।
Phāl kātotei máhar batar gal.

Whilst he was cutting the plough-share,
the time for máh-sowing passed away.

"Māh" is pulse much eaten by the Assamese. Māh is sown at the end of the rains and is reaped in the cold weather. The ফাল (phāl) is the plough-share.

258.

**Seluk.**

বুব পতি শেলুক নে?
Bure pati sheluk ne?

Do you find a "seluk" each time you dive?

The "seluk" is the edible root of ভেট (bhet), a kind of lotus, which grows in bils. The ভেট (bhet) is something similar to the "singhāra," the Assamese শিঙ্গরি (shingari).

259.

**The Bor tree.**

বব গছ কাঁচিলে বিহিনাই কবিলে,
vov ghe kāchilē birhinaī kabilē,
chittikā pābilē ṣṭha।

লোকক লেখাই কেভেনাই মাতিবত,
lokak lekhaī kēvenāī mātibat,
phericē nēkhi bēkha।
Bar gachh kátile ghitingái karile,
Chitiki parile ethá.
Lokak dekhuwái keterái mátibá,
Bhitari neribá bethá.

When the "bor" tree was cut down, it fell with a crash,
And its juice poured out like rain.
Before people speak to him sharply,
In private you should make much of him.

The first part of the proverb is irrelevant to the second, which, as being a piece of advice to some one, should more properly have been detailed in Class II. धियुङाई (ghitingái) = an onomatopoeic word, signifying any sudden sound, as a clap of thunder—(Bronson). चितिकि (chitíkí) "chitiki," literally, driving in like heavy rain through an open window. बर गाछ (Bar gachh) =बट, the Indian fig (Ficus indica). These trees grow to an enormous size in Assam, notably the "Feseng Bor gachh" near Difflu in Golághát.

260.

The kerelá.

বাবে হাত কেবেলাব তেবে হাত গুটি।
Báre hát kerelár tere hát gutí.

The kerelá is 12 cubits long, but the seeds are thirteen!

The "kerelá" is the "Momordica carantia," a well-known vegetable. (Bengali কবলা, karalá.) The saying is applied to a man who draws the long bow.

261.

On buying land.

মাটি কিনিবা মাজ থাল,
ছোবোলী আনিবা মাক ভাল।
Máti kinibá máj khál,
Chhowáli ánibá mák bhál.

Buy land which slopes towards the centre,
And marry a girl whose mother is good.

ef.—"Take a vine of a good soil and a daughter of a good mother." This is borrowed from Dák.
262.  

**Paddy cultivation.**

গক চাবা গধুলি বোঁ চাবা পুবা,
জকাই বাঁওতে ছোবালী চাবা দেখি কেনে কুবা।

Garu chábá gadhuli rowá chábá puwá,
Jacob háote chhowáli chábá dekhi kene kuwá.

Look for your bullocks in the evening,
look at your paddy-field in the morning,

Have a peep at the girl who is fishing with the "jakáii,"
and see what she is like.

The Assamese lets his bullocks roam about after midday,
 when he has finished ploughing. In the evening he ties them
up so as to be ready to commence ploughing as soon as it is light.
The second part of the proverb is irrelevant, although amusing.
Dák is the author of this proverb.

263.  

**Sichákai chéra botalá tán.**

It is easy to catch fish by ladling up water than to collect fish that
have been left behind.

264.  

**A fence.**

নিত চাওনে তাতি।

Nita cháoone tátí.

A fence always requires looking after.

The Assamese fence in their "rowá," the paddy-fields, after
the "kathiá" (seedlings) has been transplanted; the fences are
made of split bamboo, and are constantly either being stolen and
used for firewood, or broken down by stray cattle. The author
of this proverb is Dák.

265.  

**Pepper, pán, and plantains.**

ঝালুকত গোবর পানত মাটি,
কলা পুলী কবা তিনিবাব কাটি।

Jálukat gobar pánat mati,
Kalá pulí rubá tinibár káti.
Place manure round the black pepper bush

and earth round the pán tree,

And cut the plantain three times before you plant it.

The above proverb gives useful hints as to the cultivation of black chillies, pán, and plantains. This is another of Dák’s sayings.

266.  

On cultivating sáli dhán.

धन धन तैके दीता आली,  
पारबाट टिङठो खबा शाली;  
तेहो यदि नहि चाली,  
तेहे पाथिरा डाकक गाली।

Ghan ghan kai dibá áli,  
Parbatar tingato rubá sáli;  
Teo jadi nabai sáli,  
Tehe páriba Dákak gáli.

If you make the ‘ális’ as near to one another as possible,  
You can plant “sáli” on the tops of hills.  
If then the “sáli” does not grow well,  
You can abuse Dák.

Alis (आली) are the divisions in the field built for the purpose of damming in the water. Dák was the originator of this saying.

267.  

Tamarind and “Owtena.”

आग फाँ.ल तेतेली पाच फाले ४,  
देइ वव नाथु ह उठिलने सो।  
Ág phále teteli pách phále au,  
Sei gharar mánuh uthilane no.

A house with a tamarind tree in front and an “owtená” behind,  
Has not the owner of that house gone away from here yet?

नें (ad)=नाइ घोरा “nai howa,” not yet.  
Another of Dák’s sayings.
268.  

**Sesamum.**

माखब माख देखि तिले बेख मेले।

Māhar már dekhi tile bet melī.  

Seeing the "māk" beaten out, the s. amum has split itself (for fear of being beaten).

तिल (til) — sesamum orientale. The proverb is meant as a hit at people who are too officious.

269.  

**The best crops.**

শহ চিকুন পবব, পো চিকুন ঘবব।

Shah chikun parar, po chikun gh rar.

The best crops are those growing on the fields of others, the best sons are those at home.

The above means that people are never satisfied with their own crops, but are envious of those of others.

———

**Class VI.**

**PROVERBS RELATING TO CATTLE, ANIMALS, FISH, AND INSECTS.**

———

270.  

**The paddy-bird and the fish.**

অধিক মাছত বগলি কনা।

Adhik máchhat bagali kanā.

When fish are too plentiful, the paddy-bird is blind.

*i.e.*, the fish are so thick, that he does not know which to catch first, and so, perhaps, all escape him, hence the saying that he is blind.

*cf.—অধিক মাছত যোগী আব বাঙল।*

Adhik máchhat jogi ád báól.

When fish are too plentiful, a mendicant (*lit.* hermit) becomes half-mad.
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274.  

*The mosquito.*

ুঁড় আঁছে হাতি নহয় মানুষ গক ঘাই,  
বাখ নহয় ঘাইক পাই তাখে ঘাই,  
হবলক ঘাইতে, পানির বেুলিত।

Shu(n)r áche háti nahay mánuh garú khái,  
Bágh nahay jáke páí tâke khái,  
Haralak gháte, pánir janmit.

*It has a trunk, but it is not an elephant,*  
*It eats men and cattle, but it is not a tiger;*  
*Whatever it eats, it eats on the spot.*  
*It vanishes with a blast of music, it is born from water.*

*It is not difficult to guess the answer to this simple Assamese riddle.*

275.  

*The dove and the hawk.*

উবি গল কৃত্তিব কপো বেশি নিলে সেনে,  
একে কাঢ়ি কাবেব সাত ঠাইত ভেদিলে,  
হাও কথা হৈছে তেনে।

 Uri gal katiyá kapô khedi nile sene,  
Eke káthi káre re sáth tháit bhédile,  
Iyo káthá háichhe tene.

The little dove has flown away being chased by a hawk,  
He has pierced it (the latter) in seven places with one arrow only;  
This story also is like that.

The above is meant to illustrate the case of a person who tells  
a story which *prima facie* appears to be false.

276.  

*The mouse.*

এটি নিগনির সাত বান পাম।  
Etá niganir sáth khán pám.

One mouse has seven "páms."

The word *pám* (*pám*) means a farm, or more commonly a piece  
of outlying cultivation, which is often situated in the forest or  
in the midst of thick grass jungle. These páms are liable to
the ravages of all sorts of animals, and have to be carefully watched. The proverb means that, although he is a small man, he has many things to do.

**277. The snake.**

এবাব সাপে খালে লেঁজুটা তখন।
Ehár sápe khále lejuto hhay.

A man who has once been bitten by a snake, is afraid of every piece of rope.

"Once bitten twice shy."

Also *cf.* a Bihar proverb given by Christian:

*Dudhke dehal matha phuk pihi (n).*

One scalded by (hot) milk, drinks (cold) buttermilk even after blowing into it.

**278. The "Puthi," "Khalihana," "Rô," and "Barâli" fishes.**

চোর পুথি, খলিহানা, নিলগা স্কো বসালি।
Ocharar puthi, khalihaná, nilagar, rô, baráli.

Near us we have the "puthi" and "khalihaná"

The "rô," and baráli are far away.

The meaning is that it is better to catch the puthi and khalihana which are small fish near at hand than to think about the rô and the borâli (large and well flavoured fish) which are far away.

The proverb is meant to illustrate the saying—"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

**279. The duck.**

কিনা হায় ঠোঁটিলেকে মঙ্গল।
Kiná há(n)har tho(n)talaike mangah.

The duck that has been bought, has flesh on it right up to the beak.
This means that in the buyer's estimation, such a duck has. As a matter of fact, the duck that is bought in the market, is often lean and skinny.

280.  

The tiger and the deer.  

কালসে কাল বিপরিত কাল,  
হাঙ্নাই চেলােকে বাঘে গাল।  
Kálaro kál biparit kál,  
Harińái cheleke bághar gál.  

What a time!  What a time for the opposite to happen!  
The deer is licking the tiger's check.

281.  

The tiger and the tom cat.  

বাঘ চাব নেলাগে রেন্দাকে চোর।  
ভাল মাঘুহ চাব লাগিলে আলি রাটীলে যোর।  
Bágh chába neláge bondáke chowá,  
Bhál máñuh chába lágile álí bátalai jowá.  
You need not see a tiger, see a tom cat,  
If you want to see gentlemen go to the road.

This is perhaps a cynical proverb. It means that a tom cat is quite enough to frighten you, who are talking about experiences with tigers. The allusion to ভাল মাঘুহ (bhál máñuh) being seen on the road, is ironical.

282.  

The tiger.  

ভাল রাটীলে বাঘক,  
পছ মাবি আনি দিলে। অঙ্গত।  
Bhál khátilo bághak,  
Pahu mári áni dilo(n) ágat.  
I have served the tiger well,  
By killing a deer and placing it in front of it.
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286.

**The ant.**

**Guri paruwá** alap barashunéi bán,
Solá mukhar e charei tán.

To the ant a few rain drops is a flood,
To the toothless mouth one slat even is hard to bear.

**Guri paruwá** is a species of tiny ant. In the original Assamese, for **alap barashunéi** read **muñinéi**.

---

287.

**The weaver bird.**

Charái he saru kintu lay holong gachbat báh.

The bird indeed is a small one, but it builds its nest in the lofty **holong**.

The bird referred to is the little weaver bird, which builds its hanging nest on the highest branches of tall trees. The **holong** (**D. pilosus**) is a fine tree, and grows with a long straight stem to a considerable height. The **holong** supplies many of the tea boxes of Assam.

---

288.

**The “chital.”**

Dekhotei chital pithite kaṁtā.

Obviously, a “chital” fish; it has thorns on its back.

The “chital fish” is very bony. Only the lower portion which is called **kōlātì** is fit to eat. The back or upper portion which is full of bones is called **gādā**.

---

289.

**The monkey.**

Bayasat bāndaro sondar.

The monkey even looks beautiful when it is full-grown.

**Sondhar** is corrupted form of **śundhar** (beautiful).
290.

_The squirrel._

बालीब तामोल केरकुबाइ खाई,
आमाक दिले जानो अखले खाई?
Bárir támol kerketuái khái,
Ámák dile jáno athale jái?

The squirrel is eating the betelnut in the garden,
Will it be thrown away if given to us?

If the betelnut was given to us it would not have been lost, but now it is eaten by a squirrel.

291.

_The "chengeli."_

बुठाब हातत चेंगेली।
Burár hátat chengeli.

In the hand of the old man is the "chengeli."

The "chengeli" is a kind of small fish found in _bils_. The skin of the "chengeli" fish is very slippery. It is very difficult to catch it, and if once caught it slips out of the hand, but when it is caught by an old man it cannot escape, because the hands of an old man are rough.

292.

_Horses._

भाल भाल घोराई ना पाई बाह,
बतुवा घोराई बिवाते बाह।
Bhál bhál ghorái ná páí ghá(n)h,
Batuwá ghorái bichháre máh.

Whilst good horses are not getting grass,
The inferior ones are looking for máh (pulse).

_बतुवा_ (batuwá) is a term which is applied to horses usually. An inferior country "tat" is often called a _batuwá ghorá_. "_Máh_," the pulse of the country, which is often used for feeding cattle.
293.  

The "kakila."

महब निल्कत ककिला डाव !
Mahar singat ka(n)kilá dá(n)r !

On the horn of the buffalo is the snout of the "kakilá" fish !

The "kakilá" (esox caucila) is a long, thin fish with a snout, which makes it look very peculiar.

—

294.  

The game cock.

বখব কেকুকা বলতে মেব ।
Ranar kukurá ranate mare.
A game-cock dies in battle.

The practice of cock-fighting prevails all over Assam amongst those who keep fowls. The tea-garden coolies are very fond of it, and often bring cocks with them from long distances for the purpose.

—

295.  

Elephants and horses.

বাজাক চিনিবা দানত,
Raják chinibá dánat,
An elephant when it is in the "thán,"
And a horse by its ears.

থান=থান is the place where elephants are kept at night; it is also called ঘুম by Assamese.
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Both sal and singi fish are unclean to Hindus. This proverb is an instance of the "pot calling the kettle black," also, cf., proverb No. 60.

299. **Tigers and snakes.**

Sāpe khái bāghe khái jadi mare jale,
Jār ji habā láge nij karmar phale.

Whatever happens to any man, whether he is bitten by a snake or devoured by a tiger or drowned, is the result of his own action.

300. **Dogs.**

Kukurak nidadībā thāi, larā ēchhowālik nidadībā lái.

Don't give a dog a place and do not give indulgence to children.

The dog being an unclean animal, must not be allowed anywhere where there is a possibility of its defiling any of the cooking or eating or drinking vessels.

301. **Dogs.**

Kukure jāne ki tām tulsi?

What does a dog know of the value of copper vessels or of the "tulsi"?

When a Hindu worships his god, he dedicates to him leaves of "tulsi" in a copper vessel. The "tulsi" is the "Ocimum sanctum," or holy basil.

cf.—Bihar proverb: "Can a monkey appreciate ginger"? also Telegu proverb: "What can a pig do with a rose-bottle"?
Class VII.

ADDITIONAL PROVERBS.

302.

अ छीते नाग जाओते शुईन,
लगत याब पाप आक पुईन।
Aho(n)te nángatá jáote shuin,
Lagat jába pāp aru puin.

We arrive (in this world) naked and we leave it empty,
Our vice or virtue accompany us.

शुईन is a corruption of शुना, zero.
पुईन is a corruption of पुण्य, virtue.

303.

दौषत दं, गुणत पुजा।
Dosat danda, gunat pujá.
Punishment for an offence, reward for merit.

304.

Diversity of opinions.

नाना बुद्धिव नाना रुजः
Náná Rishir náná mat.
Different rishis have different opinions.

e.g., Manu is contradicted by Parasar and Parasar by Jajnavalka, and so on. Quot homines tot sententiae.
306. **Advantage of self-help.**

सातब सातब वाउसिब बने,
सातबिब नेखन या बदातिल।
Sā(n)tar sā(n)tar bāusir bale,
Sā(n)tarib nejāna já rasātale.

Swim, swim with the help of your (own) arms,
If you can’t swim go to Rasātal.

बाउसी literally the upper portion of the arm. बदातिल is, according to the Padma Purāna, the sixth hell where the Daityas and Dānavas dwell.

307. **Disability of weakness.**

खोड़बखोजे पति अपराध।
Khorār khoje pati aparādh.

A lame man commits an offence at every step.

308. **Incapacity.**

शामुके कि जाने माणिकव मोल? ।
Shāmuke ki jāne mānikar mol?

What does a snail know of the value of pearls?

309. **Might is right.**

याब लाठी ताब माट।
Jār láthi tār máti.

He who can wield the láthi, the land belongs to him.

310. **Obsequiousness.**

अति भक्ति चोरव लक्षण।
Ati-bhakti chorav-lakshan.

Obsequiousness is the sign of a thief.

This proverb may be aptly applied when courtiers are over servile.
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A thief can never give up the habit of stealing,
A hare does not leave its form,
A Dom, however well-to-do he may be,
Nevertheless has his house on the river bank.

314.

Bullocks.

આછે ગૂડ નવી હાલ,
હોયાત વ્હે નોહોવાની ભાલ।
Áchhe gari nabai hál,
Howát kai nohowá bhál.

There is a bullock but it does not plough,
No bullock at all is better than such a bullock.

One of Dák’s proverbs.

315.

Kindness.

અપેદાવ માત, અકાલવ ભાત।
Ápadar mát, ákálar bhát.

A kindly word in adversity, cooked rice in a time of
famine ( are acceptable).

316.

Destiny.

અલાચા કથા નહં સિદ્ધી,
બટિત આછે કનના બધિ ।
Álachha kathá nabai siddhi,
Bátat áchhe kaná biddhi.

Nothing can be accomplished by mere proposal,
(Because) blind fate (stands in) the way.

317.

Want of means.

જાર નાઈ ધાન ભાવ નાઈ માન ।
Jár náí dhán tár nái mán:

He who has not paddy is not respected.
318.  

Want of means.

খাঁ নাই গুক পি সরাতৈক লক।  
Jār nāi garū si sabātkai sarū.

He who has not cattle is the smallest of all.

319.  

Blind to one's own faults.

আপনায় মুখ বেকা,  
Dāponāk chāri láthi.

His own face is ugly,
But he kicks the mirror four times.

পাপোন—Sanskrit দর্শন, looking-glass.

320.  

Empty vessels sound the loudest.

বিশ নাইকিয়া সাপব  
Bis nāikiyā sápar

The snake is not poisonous,
It only hisses.

This applies to the case of a man who talks much but who
does little.

321.  

The castor oil plant the banyan where there are no trees.

নাইকিয়া দেশত এবাই ববগছ।  
Nāikiyā desat erāi bar gachh.

In a treeless country the castor oil plant is a banyan.

এনা গছ, the castor oil plant (Palma christi). The proverb
is derived from the Sanskrit sloka "যথিনু দেশে কৌশলাভি এবংপি 
জনামতে।"
322. Undutifulness to parents.

जीवन के नकबिले दया,
मबिले कि कुविब गङ्गा गया?
Jiyante nakarile dayá,
Marile ki kariba G.angá Gayá?

He was not kind to his parents in their life time,
Will he perform their srúddhas at the Ganges and at Gaya after their death?

323. Perfection an impossibility.

भात हले पुत्र नाइ, पुत्र हले भात नाइ?
Bhát hale put náí, put hale bhát náí.
One has food enough but no children, another has children but no food.

324. Advice regarding paddy cultivation.

हु इष्टि नष्ट हय माजे लले बाट,
हु भिक्षौ नष्ट हय नितेने बेहाउ हाट?
Su krisi nasta hai máje lale bát,
Su tiri nasta hai nitau behái hát.

Good cultivation is destroyed if there is a path through the midst,
A good woman is destroyed if she continually trades at the hát.

Another of Dák’s sayings.

325. Two critical periods.

মৃনিব বন, তিবীব বিদন ।
Muninar ran, tirir biyan.

What war is to man, child birth is to woman.

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Continue
On a good path walk far,
Do not leave it,
Marry a young girl,
Do not marry a widow.

330. 

*Mangoes and jack fruit.*

आमे बँन कङ्गले धान।
Āme bān kathāle dhān.

When there are mangoes there are floods,
When there are jack fruit there is paddy.

This is one of Dák’s prophecies. Another belief is that when there is much mango blossom there will be cholera.

331. 

*Disappointment.*

তত্ত নাহিলে খাই,
Ektō nāhilō khāi,
Tato nāhilō khái,
Ekheto pābalai nāi.

I came without taking anything to eat there,
but here there is nothing to eat.

332. 

*Silikha.*

ভাত খাই উঠ তিনি শিলিখা,
Bhāt khāi uthi tini shilikhā,
ফি কবির বোগ তিলিকা।
Kī kariba rog tilikā.

If you take three *shilikhā* fruits after a meal, no disease can attack you.

*শিলিখা (shilikhā),* the tree and its fruit, *Terminalia citrena* (*Gamble*). The Assamese eat the fruit of this tree, because of its laxative properties. There is a Sanskrit proverb—

“হবিতকী হেং বোগম,” which has the same meaning as the saying above.
333.

_FATALITY._

_Want of thrift._

\[333.\]

\begin{verse}
Fatality.

When the time of death arrives,

The advice of physicians is useless.
\end{verse}

_334._

Unchastity.

\begin{verse}
She knows the names of her twelve paramours,
But does not know the name of her married husband.
\end{verse}

_335._

Misery heaped upon misery.

To pour acid on rotten fish.

_336._

Want of thrift.

The more a man’s income increases the more he spends.
337. *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.*

কোলাস টো এবি পেটবেটোলাই-আশা করা।

*Kolar to eri petartolai ashā karā.*

Hoping for something still in the womb,
While abandoning that which is in the lap.

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**Class VIII.**

*DAK'S AGRICULTURAL SAYINGS.*

---

338.

আগে বল পিছে বাঁধ,
নেই গিরিব কিমান সাহ।

*Áge kal pichhe bā(n)h,*
*Sei girir kimán sāh.*

Plantains in front and bamboos behind,
How independent that house-holder is.

সাহ literally means courage.

---

339.

এহাত এমূঢ়ন কলা পোত,
তেহে চাবা কলা পোট।

*Ehält emuthan kalar pot,*
*Tehe chábā ka'ar got.*

If you plant the plantain one cubit and one muthan deep,
Then you will see how large the plantain will become.

মূথন is a measure of length from the elbow to the middle joint of the little finger.
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343.

Krishi bāhibā bēhibi ḍjanan,
Sāphal krishi máñibā mane.

Krishi rákhibá beri jatane,
Sáphal krishi máñibá mane.

Take care to fence your cultivation,
Then you may be sure of its success.

344.

Krishi bāhibā cābha bāgē,
Bākē bōlō pēmvā mane lāgē.

Krishi karibā cōchar bhāge,
Dāke bole mor mane lāge.

The nearer cultivation is to the house
The better, according to Dāk.

345.

Ghan sāriyah pātal māb,
Ābān di kāva kāpāh.

Sow mustard thick and pluse thin,
Place a covering over the cotton plant.

Ābān is a Sanskrit word meaning covering. The ordinary Assamese word for a covering of a plant is ḍākō.

346.

Āhin kātīt bāhibā pāṇī,
Bēnevēk bājāi bāke bānhī.

Āhin Kātīt rákhibā pāṇī,
Jenekai Rajāi rákhe Rāni.
Keep water (in the field) in Áhin and Kártik,
Just as the king takes care of the queen.

Áhin-Káti corresponds to from the middle of September to the middle of November.

347.

शाओन कथिया नहर धान,
आहिनर गोछ बिफल जान।
Sháonar kathiyá nabay dhán,
Áhinar gochh biphal ján.

From seedlings sown in Shrában paddy does not thrive,
Transplanting in Áshwin is fruitless.

The month Sráwan or Srában corresponds to July-August.
Áshwin corresponds to September-October.

348.

खेते तहु गाचे धन,
चहे तांखोल नगन-बडन।
Sáte tanu pá(n)che ghan,
Chhaye támul nadan-badan.

Seven is too far, five too close,
Six gives good areca nut.

In each case the distance is supposed to be in cubits. नगन-बडन is a corruption of नागनबन, the grove of Indra, where all fruits are thought to grow abundantly, including the famous pāriját.

349.

पुबे बेचे पश्चिमे ढाया,
बेई शेतव असव काय।
Pube tenu paschime chháyá,
Sei sasyar amar káyá.

Open to the east and to the west shady,
That cultivation never dies.

किया=कष, body.
350.

ঘের জৈষ্ঠ গৈল বিনা মাঙ্গলে,  
কৃষি করিব। কাহার বলে।

Jebe Jeisth gaila biná nángale,  
Krishi karibá káhár bale.

If Jeth has passed without ploughing,  
With whose help will you cultivate?

ঘের=খিটি; গৈল=গল। From the use of these two forms it would appear that Dák was a Barpeta man.

351.

ভাদব চাবি, অহিনব চাবি,  
মাহ ব’রা মিমান পাবি।

Bhádar chári Áhinar chári,  
Máh babá jímán pári.

In the last four days of Bhádra and the first four of Áshwin,  
Sow pulse as much as you can.

This is a well known proverb.

352.

অমা পুরীমাত বায় হাল,  
তাব হথ সর্বত্র কাল।

Amá purnimát báy hál,  
Tár dukh sarbatí kál.

He who ploughs on the day of the full moon, or of Amábánya,  
is always in distress.

অমাবাস্ is the day of the conjunction of the sun and moon, particularly also the fifteenth day in the second halves of the months Srávan and Bhádra. পুরীমা is the day of the full moon. Besides অমাবাস্ and পুরীমা, there are the following days on which Assamese Hindus cannot plough—একাদশী (the eleventh day of the lunar half of the month); স্তাক্ষী (the last day of the month); অষ্টাদশী (the four days in Asárh; when the earth is supposed to be unclean.
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356.

গাঁজাব বলুক ওচব জাই,
তাকে নেছাবে জানন্ত। হই।
Gáo(n)r balad, ocharar bhui(n),
Ták nechháre jánanta hui.

A wise man purchases a bullock from his own neighbour
food and land which lies near.

Class IX.
MISCELLANEOUS.

357

তেবেদে মানিক যদি একাগত জলে,
তেবেদে তক যদি হালিপের ফলে,
তেবেদে সতী যদি সামী সঙ্গে থাই,
তেবেদে বিদ্যা যদি ধন মর্য পাই।

Tebese mánik jadi endhárat jale,
Tebese taru jadi hálipare pha’le,
Tebese satí jadi swámi sange jái,
Tebese bilyá jadi dhan dhìrma pái.

That pearl is a real pearl which sparkles by night,
That tree is a real tree which bends down with the weight
of its fruit,
That Sati is a real Sati who accompanies her lord,
That learning is real learning which brings riches and
honour.

তেরারান্তৃ—is the archaic form of তেনেহলে or তেহো। The reference
to the Sati accompanying her lord is significant of the practice
of immolating widows that existed throughout India before its
abolition by Lord William Bentinck in December 1829 A.D.

358.

তেবে সতী যদি মশ বাঞ্চনে আনে,
তেবেদে গৃহ্ষ যদি আটি থাই বাঞ্চনে।
Tebe jashí jadi jash bákhañe áne,
Tebese grihaustha jadi áti khái dháne.
He is a famous man if his praises are sung by others,
He is a real house-holder who has sufficient paddy to eat.

359.

লবব নিঃফল যদি আঁগত আঁছে নই,  
তিনীব নিঃফল পাটিত নাই পৈ,  
খেভিব নিঃফল পথারব নহায় ধান,  
গোহলব নিঃফল হাকিমে নকবে কান।

Lunar nishphal jadi ágat áchhe nai,  
Tirir ni-hphal pátit náí pai;  
Khetir nishphal pathárat nahay dhán,  
Gochbarar nishphal hákime nakare kán.

Running is useless if there is a river in front,  
A woman is useless who has no husband in her bed,  
Cultivation is useless if paddy does not grow in the field,  
A law suit is useless if the Judge does not listen.

360.

পিতাপুত্র যদি কন্দল বাজে,  
পুত্রক দণ্ডব পতিত বাজ।  
Pitá putre jadi kandal báje,  
Putrak dandiba pandit ráje.

If there be a quarrel between father and son,  
The pandits should punish the son.

361.

মবে উকশি পৃথী,  
মবে পাহাত সুপা,  
মবে অলাপ পানীয় মাছ,  
মবে নদীর কুলব গাছ।  
Mare uruli-pungá,  
Mare paduli-sungá,  
Mare alap pánir máchh,  
Mare nadir kular gáchh.

The vagrant, the man who visits others constantly, the fish in a little water, the tree on the river bank, are likely to die.
362.

सकदसू हाँब ३ठौ पातल,
ताइक देखिब। गनब सुल।

Saru danta jär oth pátal,
Tāïk dekhibá dandar mul.

A woman with thin lips and small teeth,
Is the root of a quarrel.

363.

বি জনি নাবী মুরুজে নাগ, ধামীবজ্জাজনে অভিভাব,
ভাল বিলিয়ে কয়ে খং, তাইব লগড নিমিলে খং।

Ji jani nári nubuje nyáy, swámir nejáne abhipráy,
Bhál bulile kare khang, táir lagat nimile rang.

She who does not appreciate justice, she who does not know
the mind of her husband,
She who gets angry if you speak to her gently, is not pleasant
company.
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