

# — The Code of a Herdsman —

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1. Never maltreat your own intelligence with parables. It is a method of herd hypnotism. Do not send yourself to sleep with the rhythm of the passes that you make. = As an example of herd-hypnotism, German literature is so virulently allegorized that the German never knows whether he is a Kangaroo, a Scythian, or his own sweet self. = You however are a herdsman. That is surely Parable enough.

2. Do not admit C L E V E R N E S S, in any form, into your life. Observe the accomplishment of some people's signatures! It is the herd-touch.

3. Exploit Stupidity. = Introduce a flatness, where it is required into your commerce. Dull your eye as you affix it on a dull face. = Why do you think George Borrow used such idiotic clichés as 'The beams of the descending luminary—?' He was a great writer and knew what he was doing. = Mock the herd perpetually with the grimace of its own garrulity or deadness. If it gets out of hand and stampedes towards you, leap onto the sea of mangy backs until the sea is still. That is: cast your mask aside, and spring above them. They cannot see or touch anything A B O V E them: they have never realized that their backs—or rather their T O P S —exist! They will think that you have vanished into Heaven.

4. As to language: eschew all clichés implying a herd personality. Never allow such terms as *Top-Hole*, *Priceless*, or *Doggo* to pass your lips. Go to the Dictionary if you want an epithet. If you feel eloquent, use that moment to produce a cliché of your own. Cherish your personal vocabulary, however small it is. Use your own epithet as though it were used by a whole nation, if people would have no good reason for otherwise accepting it.

#### EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL EPITHETS:

That man is A B Y S M A L .

That is an A B Y S M A L book.

IT WAS P R E S T I G I O U S !

Here comes that S I N I S T E R B I R D !

} Borrowed from the French

HE IS A S I N I S T E R C A R D . (Combination of French and 1890 Slang)

He has a great deal of S P E R M .

I like a fellow with as much S P E R M as that.

Borrow from all sides mannerisms or callings or classes to enrich your personal bastion of language. Borrow from the pulpit, from the clattering harangue of the auctioneer, the lawyer's technicality, the pomposity of the politicians. = Borrow grunts from the fisherman, solecisms from the inhabitants of Merioneth. = 'He is a preux, ah, yes-a-preux!' You can say 'ah-yes-a-preux' as though it were one word, accent on the 'yes'.

5. In accusing yourself, stick to the Code of the Mountain. But crime is alien to a Herdsman's nature.

6. Yourself must be your Caste.

7. Cherish and develop, side by side, your six most constant indications of different personalities. You will then acquire the potentiality of six men. Leave your front door one day as B; the next march down the street as E. A variety of clothes, hats especially, are of help in this wider dramatization of yourself. N E V E R fall into the vulgarity of being or assuming yourself to be one ego. Each trench must have another one behind it. Each single self—that you manage to be at any given time — must have five at least indifferent to it. You must have a power of indifference of F I V E to O N E . All the greatest actions in the world have been five parts out of six impersonal in the impulse of their origin. To follow this principle you need only cultivate your memory. You will avoid being the blind man of ANY moment. B will see what is hidden to D. = (Who were Turgenev's 'Six Unknown'? H I M S E L F .)

8. Never lie. You cannot be too fastidious about the truth. If you must lie, at least see that you lie so badly that it would not deceive a pea hen.—The world is, however, full of pea hens.

9. Spend some of your spare time every day in hunting your weaknesses, caught from commerce with the herd, as methodically, solemnly and vindictively as a monkey his fleas. You will find yourself swarming with them while you are surrounded by humanity. But you must not bring them up on the mountain. = If you can get another man to assist you—one, that is, honest enough not to pass his own on to you—that is a good arrangement.

10. Do not play with political notions, aristocratisms or the reverse, for that is a compromise with the herd. Do not allow yourself to imagine 'a fine herd though still a herd.' There is no F I N E H E R D . The cattle that call themselves 'gentlemen' you will observe to be a little cleaner. It is merely cunning and produced with a product called SOAP. But you will find no serious difference between them and those vast dismal herds they avoid. Some of them are very dangerous and treacherous. = Be on your guard with the small herd of gentlemen!

11. You will meet with this pitfall: at moments, surrounded by the multitude of unsatisfactory replicas, you will grow confused by a similarity bringing them so near to us. = You will reason, where, from some point of view, the difference is so slight, whether that delicate margin is of the immense importance that we hold it to be: T H E O N L Y T H I N G O F I M P O R T A N C E in fact. = That group of men talking by the fire in your club (you will still remain a member of your club), that party at the theatre, look good enough, you will say. Their skins are fresh, they are well-made, their manners are good. You must then consider what they really are. On closer inspection

you K N O W, from unpleasant experience, that they are N O T H I N G but limitations and vulgarities of the most irritating description. The devil Nature has painted these sepulchres pink, and covered them with a blasphemous Bond Street distinction. Matter that has not sufficient mind to permeate it grows, as you know, gangrenous and rotten. Animal high spirits, a little but easily exhausted, goodness, is all that they can claim.

What seduced you from your severity for a moment was the same thing as a dull woman's good-looks. = This is P R O B A B L Y what you will have in front of you. = On the other hand, everywhere you will find a few people, who, although not a mountain people are not herd. = They may be herdsmen gone mad through contact with the herd, and strayed: or through inadequate energy for our task they may be found there: or they may be a hybrid, or they may even be herdsmen temporarily bored with the mountain. (I have a pipe below myself sometimes.)

There are numerous 'other denominations'. Treat them as brothers. Employ them, as opportunity offers, as auxiliaries in your duties. Their society and help will render your task less arduous.

12. As to women: wherever you can, substitute the society of men. = Treat them kindly, for they suffer from the herd, although of it, and have many of the same contempts as yourself. They are a sort of bastard mountain people. = There must be somewhere a female mountain, a sort of mirage-mountain. I should like to visit it. = But women, and the processes for which they exist, are the arch conjuring trick: and they have the cheap mystery and a good deal of the slipperiness, of the conjuror. = Sodomy should be avoided, as far as possible. It tends to add to the abominable confusion already existing.

13. Wherever you meet a shyness that comes out of solitude (although ALL solitude is not A N T I-herd), naiveness, and a patent absence of contamination, the sweetness of mountain water, any of the signs of goodness, you must treat that as sacred, as portions of the mountain.

However much you suffer for it, you must defend and exalt it. On the other hand, E V E R Y child is not simple, and E V E R Y woman is not weak. = In many cases to champion a female would be like springing to the rescue of a rhinoceros when you notice that it had been attacked by a flea. Chivalrous manners, again, with many women are like tiptoeing into a shed where an ox is sleeping. = Some children, too, rival in nastiness their parents. But you have your orders in this matter. Indifference where there should be nothing but the 'whole' eagerness or compunction of your being, is the worst crime in the mountain's eyes.

14. Conquests have usually been divided from their antitheses, and defeats from conquests, by some casual event. Had Moscow not possessed a governor ready to burn the Kremlin and the hundreds of palaces accumulated there, peace would have been signed by the Czar at Bonaparte's entrance. = Had the Lascans persevered for ten days against Cortés, the Aztecs would never have been troubled. Yet Montezuma was right to remain inactive, paralyzed by prophecy. Napoleon was right when he felt that

his star was at last a useless one. He had drained it of all its astonishing effulgence. = The hair's breadth is only the virtuosity of Fate, guiding you along imaginary precipices. = And all the detail is make-believe, anyway. Watch your star soberly and without comment. Do not trouble about the paste-board cliffs!

15. THERE ARE VERY STRINGENT REGULATIONS about the herd keeping off the sides of the mountain. In fact your chief function is to prevent their encroaching. Some, in moments of boredom or vindictiveness, are apt to make rushes for the higher regions. Their instinct fortunately always keeps them in crowds or bands, and their trespassing is soon noticed. Those traps and numerous devices you have seen on the edge of the plain are for use, of course, in the last resort. Do not apply them prematurely. = Not very many herdsmen lose their lives in dealing with the herds.

16. Contradict yourself. In order to live, you must remain broken up.

17. The teacher does not have to B E , although he has to K N O W : he is the mind imagining, not the executant. The executant, the young svelte, miraculous athlete, the strapping virtuoso, really has to give the illusion of perfection. = Do not expect ME to keep in sufficiently good training to perform the feats I recommend. = I usually remain up on the mountain.

18. Above all this sad commerce with the herd, let something veritably remain 'un peu sur la montagne'. Always come down with masks and thick clothing to the valley where we work.

Stagnant gasses from these Yahoosque and rotten herds are more dangerous often than the wandering cylinders that emit them. See you are not caught in them without your mask. = But once returned to our adorable height, forget your sallow task: with great freedom indulge your love. = The terrible processions beneath are not of our making, and are without our pity. Our sacred hill is a volcanic heaven. But the result of its violence is peace. = The unfortunate surge below, even, has moments of peace.