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A DICTIONARY  
OF  
SLANG, JARGON & CANT

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*No. 523..*



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A DICTIONARY  
OF  
SLANG, JARGON & CANT

EMBRACING

ENGLISH, AMERICAN, AND ANGLO-INDIAN SLANG  
PIDGIN ENGLISH, TINKERS' JARGON  
AND OTHER IRREGULAR  
PHRASEOLOGY

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

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and their Language," &c.*

VOL. I. A—K.

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## P R E F A C E.

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O a very great number of respectable and by no means uneducated persons, slang is simply a collective name for vulgar expressions, the most refined individual being the one who uses it least. To them it is all that which in speech is "tabu," or forbidden. Others regard it as the jargon of thieves, which has spread to costermongers and street-arabs, though in justice to the worthy people first mentioned it must be admitted that many of them are so fortified in their ignorance of what is beneath them, that they are unaware that thieves have a lingo of their own.

Others, again, believe that it is identical with the gypsy tongue or Romany, an opinion which, in spite of its easily demonstrated etymological absurdity, has held its ground for more than a century; whilst several writers, such as the author of the "Life of Bampffield (or Bampfyld) Moore Carew," have published so-called gypsy vocabularies, in which barely half-a-dozen words of corrupt Romany are to be found.

Many, not without good excuse, find it very difficult to distinguish between technical terms not as yet recognised by lexicographers, and those which are, to all intents and purpose, firmly established.

It is worthy of notice, let it be said *en passant*, that the two nations at the head of the intellectual movement, England and France, have the most extensive slang vocabulary, the two being about on a par in that respect.

Now, the dialect alluded to above was, centuries ago, almost the only slang—and there are men so much behind the times that it is

the only slang to them still. We put in the qualifying "almost" because there always have been certain conditions, such as emigration to savage countries, which have bred new circumstances, with a corresponding development of language. The Roman legionaries in the wilds of Gaul and Germany found classical Latin as inadequate for bush vocabulary as the Anglo-Saxon finds classical English in the backwoods of America and the backblocks of Australia, and they evolved a Low Latin slang corresponding with such terms as "war-paint," "backwoodsman," "ring-barker," "bushman," and "throwing-stick." Modern French has its elements of base Latin origin, just as the English lexicons of the future will include a number of words forged by necessity in the bush and the backwoods—in New World mines and cities—and others which at the present time are only to be found in such dictionaries as the present one.

But here, in the heart as well as at the extremities of "Anglo-Saxony," new needs and new circumstances are being developed unceasingly, and society both high and low, in every walk of life, and on bypaths of art and trade, has of late years taken to inventing new words and phrases, some for practical wants, others for amusement, some coarse and rude, others daintily cut and polished, deftly veiled—all in such profusion, that every one of the old definitions of slang is now inadequate to express the "new departure" phase of the language.

Perhaps the best general definition at which one can arrive is that "slang" is a conventional tongue with many dialects, which are as a rule unintelligible to outsiders. In one case at least it has been framed with the intention of its being intelligible only to the initiated—the vagabond and thievish fraternity.

The vocabulary is based chiefly on words of the language proper, ancient and modern (with an admixture of foreign words), which have become "slang" through a metaphoric process or misappropriation of meaning. Thus "brass," "timbers" and "pins," "red lane," "mug," "canister," "claret," "ivory," "tile," taken figuratively, enrich the slang vocabulary by respectively acquiring the conventional meaning of "impudence," "legs," "throat," "face," "head," "blood," "teeth," "hat."

It has been well said therefore that slang, in its general features, is hardly more than an arbitrary interpretation of the ordinary language. It does not suffice, however, that it should be merely conventional or figurative, else it might be multiplied *ad infinitum*. But being to a great degree the outcome of the humour and wit, more or less refined, of its promoters, it bears the stamp of sarcasm, of callousness, and occasionally of a grim philosophy, as, for example, when a drunkard is called a "lean away," or a man "waiting for a dead man's shoes" is said to be "shepherding" his rich relative—when a clergyman is jestingly called a "sky-pilot" or a "fire-escape"—when a man who feels beaten says that he has been "had on toast," and will "give it best."

Each profession or trade has its "lingo," not to be mistaken for technical phraseology. Thus in cricket "wickets" is technical, but "sticks" is slang; to put a "break" on a ball the former, to put "stuff" on it the latter. "Bone shaker," the old type of bicycle, is slang; but "kangaroo," the latest improvement on the spider bicycle, and which in shape somewhat resembles the primitive "bone shaker," belongs to the technical phraseology of 'cycle machinists.

It sometimes occurs that a technical word comes to be used figuratively in an humorous and sarcastic sense. Sailors talk slang when they say of a drunken man that his "mainbrace is well spliced," or that he is "two sheets in the wind."

Occasionally a class slang word is adopted by the public, and swells the vocabulary of general or "society" slang. This specially applies to nautical and sporting phraseology. Thus it is quite possible for people who do not belong to the seafaring fraternity to hear of a husband having to "look out for squalls" when he comes home "heeling over" from having dined too well, even if he has not "capsized" or been "thrown upon his beam-ends" in the gutter. And many a person when asked to contribute to a charity has declared himself "stumped," though he may never have been near a cricket-field since he left school.

What one might call the classical slang of thieves is technically termed "cant." It has the appearance of possessing more quaint and original features than the more modern lingo, the sole reason

for which is perhaps that it proceeds from dialects but little known, as for instance Romany, or from Celtic and Anglo-Saxon words no longer used as language-words and known only to a few scholars.

*Cant* possesses but few original terms coined in a direct manner by those who employ the vocabulary, for it needs greater imaginative powers than these light-fingered professors are generally credited with to invent terms that shall remain and form part of a language. An illustration of this may be found in the French argot—taken in the narrower sense of malefactors' language and leaving out altogether the Parisian slang—which in spite of all the efforts of those interested in the matter has remained very nearly what it was in the seventeenth century.

The components have been elongated, then curtailed, then their syllables have been interverted, and finally they have reappeared under their original form.

Taking as a starting-point that slang and cant are of an essentially conventional and consequently metaphoric and figurative nature, it may safely be asserted that the origin of slang and cant terms must certainly be sought for in those old dialect words which bear a resemblance in form; not however in words which bear an approximately identical meaning, but rather in such as allow of the supposed offsprings having a figurative connection of sense.

The reader will probably best understand what is meant if he will, for the sake of argument, suppose the modern English language to have become a dead language known only to scholars. Then let him take the slang word "top-lights," meaning eyes. He is seeking the origin of *top-lights*. If he were to find in the old language a word having some resemblance in form and bearing the identical meaning of eyes he would have to reject it. But when he finds the *same* word signifying *the upper lanterns of a ship*, he may adopt it without hesitation, because the metaphor forms a connection link and furnishes a safe clue.

So far we have spoken rather as if slang were a kind of outlaw or Bedouin with every man's hand against it, but of late years many judicious and intelligent writers have recognised that there is a vast number of words which, while current, are still on probation,

like emigrants in quarantine, awaiting the time when they are to be admitted to the regular haven of the Standard Dictionary. But this increase has been so enormous and so rapid that no standard lexicographer could do it justice. It is generally admitted that to keep pace with modern French journalism or novels, a "Dictionnaire d'Argot" is absolutely indispensable, and this is now quite as much the case with English. And when we consider that it is not possible to take up a copy of any of the leading London society journals without finding very often in one single article a dozen slang phrases which have never yet been given in any dictionary whatever, it will be admitted that a time has certainly come to publish a dictionary upon new lines in which every effort shall be made to define such expressions without regard to what the department is called to which they belong.

To show what a need there is of such a work, one only has to reflect that a vast number of more recent American slang phrases (not old English provincialisms established *ab initio* in New England, but those chiefly of modern Western manufacture) have never been collected and published. And the same may be said of those which have cropped up and developed themselves in the English-speaking colonies, in the bush of Australia, or South Africa. The real amount of Romany, Dutch, Celtic, and Yiddish, in the various slangs, has never yet been decided by writers who had a thorough knowledge of these languages, and Mr. Hotten, while declaring that to the gypsies we are in great measure indebted for the cant language, and that it was the corner-stone and a great part of the edifice of English slang, was still so utterly ignorant of it as to have recourse to a vocabulary of Roumanian gypsy to explain the very few words of English Romany in his work, the great majority of which were in some way erroneous. The present is the first Slang Dictionary ever written which has had the benefit of contributors who thoroughly understood Celtic dialects, Dutch, German, and French slang, and who were thus enabled to establish their relations with English cant, and one of these gentlemen is equally at home in Pidgin-English, Gypsy, and Shelta or tinker's slang, which by-the-bye is one of the three principal slangs of the kingdom,

and is here made known for the first time in a work of this kind ; this being also the first Slang Dictionary to which the rich and racy slang of the fifth continent—the mighty Australian commonwealth of the future—has been contributed by one long resident in the country and familiar both with its life and its literature. Information has been gathered at its very source from all classes of society, and in every department contributors have been employed who were perfectly at home in their respective specialities.

We began our preface with trying to define, or discover, the nature of that slippery Proteus, slang ; after doing which to the best of our power, we proceeded to show the necessity for a dictionary such as the present, and to instance the precautions taken to make it exhaustive. We might have added that the majority of the contributors selected were men not only intimate with their subject, but also of proved ability in literature. We could hardly conclude without making some allusion to the volume which was the forerunner of this, “Argot and Slang.” One passage in its preface has attracted much attention for its terse enunciation of what is generally recognised.

“Slang has invaded all classes of society, and is often used for want of terms sufficiently strong to convey the speaker’s real feelings. It seems to be resorted to in order to make up for the shortcomings of a well-balanced and polished tongue which will not lend itself to exaggeration and violence of utterance. Journalists, artists, politicians, men of fashion, soldiers, even women, talk argot, sometimes unawares.” A curious illustration of this has just been brought under the editor’s notice. A gentleman had been publishing for some years with the same firm of publishers, but with very varying success. “I can never for the life of me,” he used to complain, “tell whether Mr. Pompous means that my new book is a poor one or a bad one. His letters are tissues of *under certain circumstances, we should not feel justified in advising* (or not advising), *in the present state of the public taste it is impossible to predict, conceivably, &c.*” But a year or two ago a college friend of this author became a member of this firm of publishers. In due time another book was submitted, and the answer came from the new partner—



“My dear —, it would be *rot* publishing a thing like this. The public would *snort* at it. Yours very truly, —.” The author’s confidence in his publisher went up a hundred per cent. There was now a member of the firm sufficiently intimate with him to employ “slang” in their communications, and the author knew that from that time he would be able to tell to a fraction the exact grade of value they put upon every work he offered them. “Slang” is an essential of the age. Even a bishop has used it in the pulpit, in a modified form, when he said that “Society would be impossible without white lies.” It seems as if the day was not far off when it might be true to say that “Society would be impossible without slang.”

One thing is certain, that the taste of the age is to learn specialities from those who have a special knowledge of them. The public that goes to see the life of the Wild West and the prize-ring, rejoice also in realistic novels by those whose special knowledge best qualifies them for the work, whether it be an uncanny familiarity with the mysteries of the Far West, or the mysteries of Paris ; and these kind of works, as a rule, abound above all others in technical expressions and argot. Granted that people of the same country as the author are generally able to understand these by the context without the labour of a dictionary, a very small percentage of the intelligent foreigners who make a practice of reading English works of note could, without the aid of a vocabulary, be able to decipher the multifarious “lingos” which enter into these books, and this is just the class who will be most assisted by the arrangement adopted in this work of giving all the various departments of slang together.

A. B.



A BRIEF  
HISTORY OF ENGLISH SLANG.

BY CHARLES G. LELAND.

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**I**T does not seem to have occurred to any writer that the chief reason why the early history of purely English slang is obscure, is because that previous to a certain determinate date, there was really so little of it, that it hardly existed at all. There can be no biography of a child worth writing so long as it can babble only a few words. It is probable that of these few early slang words, none have been lost. During the Saxon Early English and Middle English periods, there were provincial dialects, familiar forms of speech, and vulgarisms, but whether a distinct canting tongue was current in England, remains as yet to be established. That the tinkers or metal-workers, who roamed all over Great Britain, were a peculiar people,\* with a peculiar Celtic language called *Shelta*, may be true, but canting as yet did not exist.

No discoveries have as yet been made which cast much light on the process by which English canting, or the language of the loose and dangerous classes, was first formed. This much we know, that in England, to a beginning of antiquated and provincial or perverted words, a few additions were made of Welsh, Irish, or Gaelic, with here and there a contribution from the Continent. It seems to be evident that this rill of impure English, most defiled, was a very

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\* John Bunyan, it may be remembered, once asked his father whether the tinkers were not "a peculiar people." Regarded from any point of view, this indicates that he suspected they were not English. Bunyan, according to recent researches, could not have been a gypsy, but as a tinker he must have known *Shelta*, or the old tinker's language, and therefore naturally suspected that he belonged to some kind of separate race.

slender one. But as C. J. Ribton Turner suggests, it was the arrival of the gypsies in England about 1505, speaking by themselves a perfect language, which stimulated the English nomads to greatly improve their own rude and scanty jargon. According to Samuel Rowlande, whose work, "The Runnagate's Race," appeared in 1610, one Cock Lorrell, a great rascal, but evidently a man of talents, became, in 1501, the acknowledged head of all the strollers in England. This person formed his followers into a regular guild or order, according to the spirit of the time in which he lived, and observing that the gypsies, under their leader, Giles Hathor, were a powerful and rapidly increasing body, he proposed to them a general council and union of interests and language.

"After a time that these vp-start Lossels had got vnto a head, the two chief Commaunders of both these regiments met at the Diuels-arse-a-peak, there to parle and intreete of matters that might tend to the establishing of this their new found gouernment; and first of all they think it fit to deuise a certaine kinde of Language, to the end that their cousenings, knaueries, and villainies might not be so easily perceiued and knowne in places where they come."

Here Samuel Rowlande, speaking ignorantly, says that this tongue was made up out of Latin, English, and Dutch, with a few words borrowed from Spanish and French. To this day it is common enough for "travellers," or gypsies, to tell the ignorant that the language which they speak is Latin, French, or Dutch, &c. From the language itself, as given by Robert Copland (1535), and Harman ("Caveat for Cursitors") in 1567, it appears that the gypsies actually contributed a certain amount of Romany, but that with their natural dislike to teach it, they made this contribution as small as possible—though it is larger than Mr. Turner supposes. He has, however, with very approximate accuracy, shown the various Celtic origins of the terms not reducible to English or Saxon. Of Latin he finds only eight words, of which two are very doubtful, while two others, *gerry* (i.e. *jerry*), excrement, and *peck*, meat, are plainly from the Romany *jirr* (*rectum vel excrementum*), and *pekker*, roast, i.e., roast meat. It is too far afield to seek these common gypsy words in the Latin *gerræ*, trifles, and *pecus*, cattle.

This was the beginning made of the canting or thieves' tongue, and it must be admitted that the first meeting of this Philological Oriental Congress for the purpose of forming a language was probably not deficient in a certain picturesque element, and an able artist might find a worse subject than this grand council of the

gypsies and vagabonds in their cavern among the hills. It is to be observed that Harman, a magistrate who was not only very familiar with every type of criminals, but who was the first who ever published a canting vocabulary, declares that *it was only within thirty years previous to 1567 that the dangerous classes had begun to use a familiar jargon at all*. Mr. Turner says that this statement is little better than a guess at the truth; but Harman, who seems to have been an earnest and honest writer, explicitly declares that his statement was the result of inquiry among many, or to use his own words: "As far as I can learne or understand by the examination of *a number* of them, their language—which they terme peddelars Frenche or canting—began but within these xxx yeeres or lyttle above."

What confirms this statement, if it does not actually prove it, is the fact that Harman, though he evidently laboured hard to make a full vocabulary and had many facilities for collecting words, gives us in all only about 160, while those who came after him in the field are accused of only repeating him. But the truth probably is, that Harman was quite right; canting was really young in his time, and small in proportion to its age. Its growth may be very clearly traced in dramatic, comic, or criminal literature from 1535, as shown by Robert Copland in his "Hye Way to the Spyttel House," down to the present day.

In old canting the most striking element is the large proportion of Celtic words, drawn from all parts of Great Britain. Turner has observed that the Act 5 Edward III. c. 14, affords evidence that the Welsh *gwestur*, "unbidden guest," or vagabond, was a public nuisance in England prior to 1331. In fact the Welsh and Irish stroller, or professional rogue and beggar, was a common type represented and ridiculed in broadsides or plays till within a century.\* Edicts and Acts of Parliament, and the most vigorous punishment and reshipment of "ye vacabones" to their homes, were utterly ineffectual to keep them out of England. In the English "kennick" or canting of the lowest classes of the present day, the greater proportion of

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\* A majority of those travellers and tramps in England, who are simply beggars and thieves, and who do not seek for work, are still Irish. Full information on this subject may be found in the "History of Vagrants and Vagrancy," by C. J. Ribton Turner; and it may be said with truth that all the criminals of the towns and cities put together do not injure the country at large so much as these creatures, who carry vice into every hamlet, and into the remotest corners of the kingdom.

Celtic terms are apparently not taken *directly* from Gaelic, Erse, Welsh, or Manx, but from a singular and mysterious language called Shelta (Celtic ?), or *Minklas Thari* (tinkers' talk), which is spoken by a very large proportion of all provincial tinkers (who claim for it great antiquity), as well as by many other vagabonds, especially by all the Irish who are on the roads. The very existence of this dialect was completely unknown until 1867, its vocabulary and specimens of the language being first published in "The Gypsies" (Boston, 1880). It has been ingeniously conjectured by a reviewer that as all the Celtic tinkers of Great Britain formed, until the railroad era, or about 1845, an extremely close corporation, always intermarrying, and as they are all firmly persuaded that their tinkerdom and tongue are extremely ancient, they may possibly be descendants of the early bronze-workers, who also perambulated the country in bands, buying up broken implements and selling new ones. This is at least certain, that the tinkers as a body were very clannish, had a strongly-marked character, a well-developed language of their own, and that while they were extremely intimate with the gypsies, often taking wives from among them, and being sometimes half-bloods, they still always remained *tinklers* and spoke Shelta among themselves. The nature of this alliance is very singular. In Scotland the *tinkler* is popularly identified with the gypsy, but even half-blood tinklers, such as the Macdonalds,\* who speak Romany, do not call themselves gypsies, but tinklers. The caste deserves this brief mention since it has apparently been the chief source through which Celtic words have come into English canting—an assertion which is not the mere conjecture of a philologist, but the opinion of more than one very intelligent and well-informed vagabond. It is very remarkable that though Shelta is more or less extensively spoken even in London, and though it has evidently had a leading influence in contributing the Celtic element to canting, thus far only one writer has ever published a line relative to it. Hotten or his collaborateurs seem, in common with Turner and all other writers on vagabonds, never to have heard of its existence. It will probably be recognised by future analysts of canting that in all cases where a corrupted Celtic word is found in it, it will be necessary to ascertain if it did not owe its change to having passed through the medium of Shelta.

\* It is needless to say that gypsies have assumed family names, such as Stanley, Lee, &c., and among others that of Macdonald.

Though the gypsy contribution to canting was not extensive, it was much larger than many extensive writers on vagabonds have supposed, and it is worth noting that a number of our most characteristic slang words, such as row, shindy, tool (in driving), mash (*i.e.*, to fascinate), pal, chivvy, and especially the arch-term slang itself, are all Romany. It is not remarkable that Cock Lorrell recognised in the gypsies "a race with a back-bone," and one from whom something could be learned. Their blood "had rolled through scoundrels ever since the flood," and from the beginning they had spoken not a mere slang, but a really beautiful and perfect language resembling Hindustani or Ūrdū, but which was much older. The constituents of this tongue are Hindi and Persian—the former greatly predominating—with an admixture of other Indo-Aryan dialects. It was first suggested in "English Gypsies and their Language" that the true origin of the Rom or gypsy was to be found among the Dom, a very low caste in India, which sprung from the Domar, a mountain tribe of shepherd-robbers; and recent researches by Mr. Grierson among the Bihari Dom have gone far to confirm the conjecture. Its author also discovered that there exists to-day in India a wandering tribe known as *Trablūs*, who call themselves Rom, and who are in all respects identical with the Syrian and European gypsies. About the tenth century, owing to political convulsions, there were in India a great number of outcasts of different kinds. Among these the *Jāts*, a fierce and warlike tribe, crushed by Mahometan power, seemed to have coalesced with the Doms or Rom, the semi-Persian Luri or Nuri (originally Indian), and others, and to have migrated westward. Miklosich, in a very learned work, has, by analysing the language as it now exists, pointed out the Greek, Slavonian, and other words which they picked up *en route*. It was about the beginning of the fifteenth century that a band of about 300 of these wanderers first appeared in Germany, whence they in a few years spread themselves over Europe, so that within a decade many thousands of them penetrated to every corner of the Continent. They were evidently led by men of great ability. They represented themselves as pilgrims, who, because they had become renegades from Christianity, had been ordered by the King of Hungary as a penance to wander for fifty years as pilgrims. They had previously by telling the same story, but adapted to the faith of Mahomet, got a foothold in Egypt. They thus obtained official license to make themselves at home in every country, except

in England, yet went there all the same. Andrew Borde, the eccentric physician, who lived during the reign of Henry VIII., was the first person who made (in 1542) a vocabulary of their language, which he did under the impression that it was "Egyptian" or the current tongue of Egypt. Bonaventura Vulcanius, in 1597, in his curious book "De Literis et Lingua Getarum," also gave specimens of Romany as "Nubian." The first European writer who discovered that Romany was really of Hindu origin, was J. C. Rudiger, and this he announced in a book entitled "Neuester Zuwachs der Sprachkunde," Halle 1782. He was followed by Grellmann, whose work was much more copious. It was translated into English at the beginning of this century, and passed through three editions. George Borrow, in his novels of "Lavengro" and "The Romany Rye," published about 1845, and in "The Gypsies in Spain," first told the public much about this subject, and his influence was very great both in England and on the Continent in awakening an interest in it. Among more recent writers, Dr. Bath C. Smart, Francis Groome, and the writer, have been the principal collectors of Anglo-Romany lore. Borrow, who knew the gypsies so well, was far from being perfect in their language, as he declared positively that there are only 1200 words in the English dialect; more recent researches have more than doubled the number.

The next element of importance which enters into English slang of the middle type, subsequent to old cant, is Dutch. Of this there are two separate sources. In England, from the time of William of Orange until that of George II., there was a constant influx of *Nederduytsch*, while in America, the State of New York, while subject to Holland, contributed an equally large proportion of quaint expressions, and of these in time there was great interchange between the old country and the new. To detect many of these, one must go much deeper into Dutch than the standard dictionaries, and descend to Teirlinck's and other collections of thieves' slang, or dig into such old works as those of Sewel, in which the vulgar and antiquated words "to be avoided" are indicated by signs. As English and Dutch belong to the same stock, it naturally results that numbers of our provincial or obsolete terms are the same or nearly the same in both; in such cases we have generally placed them together. An examination of the work cannot fail to convince any one that our indebtedness to this source is much greater than has ever been supposed. But as these derivations are often as doubtful as they are numerous and plausible, the editor, with the example of Bellenden



Kerr \* before him, would beg the reader to observe that in this work no ancient or foreign words are advanced as *positively* establishing the etymology of any slang expression, but are simply adduced as indicating *possible* relations. The day has gone by when it sufficed to show something like a resemblance in sound and meaning between a dozen Choctaw and as many Hebrew words, to prove positively that the Red Indians are Jews. But "wild guess-work" is still current even in very learned works, and though "in a pioneer way" it is useful in affording hints to true philologists, it should never claim to be more than mere conjecture.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth many Italian words found their way not only into English literature but also into slang, and additions have occasionally been made since then from the same source. Thus *fogle*, a handkerchief, is beyond question the Italian *foglia*, a leaf, also slang for a silk handkerchief (Florentine *follo*), and not the German *vogel*, a bird, as Hotten declares. The number of these derivations is much larger than has ever been supposed, and much of the mine is still unworked.

Old canting retained its character until the reign of Charles II., when a great deal of general slang began to be current, which was not connected in any way with the jargon of the dangerous classes. *Bite*, *macaroni*, and *quiz* were slang, but not cant; they originated in or were first made popular by fashionable people. Following the Spanish Quevedo, and other writers of the *vida tunantesca*, or "tag-rag-and-bobtail school," as models, not only the dramatists, but authors like Sir Roger L'Estrange and Defoe used directly, or put into the mouths of their heroes, a familiar, free and easy, offhand style, which was anything but conventional, or as many may think, correct. Pedantic writers also continued for more than a century to deliberately manufacture in great quantity, from Latin, words of the kind used by the unfortunate Limousin student who was beaten by Gargantua. An "about-town" dialect was developed by "bloods" and wits, in which Dutch, Italian, and French began to appear more frequently than of yore. Gypsy and old canting terms rose now and then from the depths, or dregs, and remained on the surface. It was during this which may be called the middle slang epoch, that those conventional or colloquial terms began to be

\* The author of an ingenious and eccentric work in two volumes, in which he endeavoured to prove that most English proverbs, sayings, and nursery rhymes are all in old Dutch, and have an esoteric meaning, being really attacks on the Church.

current, which, without being *vulgar* or directly associated with crime, were, owing to their novelty, flippancy, or "fastness," still kept in limbo, or under probation. It has been truly enough said that the old slang was altogether coarse or vulgar, and that there was subsequently a great increase in the number of low and obscene terms classed with it, a growth which went on vigorously until the end of the reign of George IV. But while Butler, Swift, Tom Brown, Grose, and scores of minor artists dealt out more or less "dirt or deviltry," it should be remembered that the accretion of new phrases, which were in no way "immoral," was really much greater.

About this time, during the latter part of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth, was the beginning of the vast array of words now in familiar use, which are unjustly called slang, because that term forces upon them associations with vulgarity and crime which they no more merit than that leaves or flowers should be identified with the dirt from which they grow. This quarantine language is simply the natural and inevitable result of a rapid increase in inventions, needs, new sources of humour, and, in fact, of all social causes. New names are in as great demand as they were of yore, when heathen were converted and baptized in batches. Then they were often all called John or James by the thousand "for short," but now we are more discriminating and analytical. But it is to be observed that hitherto no writer whatever has ever dealt with these quarantined words or probationers in the spirit which they merit, or pointed out the fact that they fulfil a legitimate function in language, or attempted to collect them in a book.

It would appear to have been about a century ago that a few Yiddish, or Hebrew-German, words began to creep into English slang. When we consider that fully one-half of the Rothwalsch or real slang of Germany is of this kind of Hebrew, and also the great numbers of persons who speak it, it is remarkable that we really have so little of it. As an instance of the guess-work philology which we have alluded to, it may be pointed out that the common Jewish word *gonnof* (Hebrew *ganef*), a thief, is according to Hotten very old, in English, because it is found in a song of the time of Edward VI. as *gnoffe*!

"The cōuntry *gnoffes*, Hob, Dick, and Will,  
With clubs and clouted shoon,  
Shall fill up Dussyn Dale  
With slaughtered bodies soon."

But *gnoffe*, according to Wright, does not mean a thief at all, but

a churl (also an old miser). Its true root is probably in the Anglo-Saxon *cneov*, *cnuof*, or *cniðvan* (also *cneav*, knave), to bend, yield to, *cneovjan* (*genueflectere*). If country boors or peasants be therefore the meaning of *gnoffes*, it would be in Yiddish *keferim*. This remarkable dialect is now spoken by some thousands of persons in London, and there are one if not two newspapers published in it. The editor has not only the German-Jewish *Chrestomatie* of Max Grünbaum, and many books written in Yiddish, but also eleven vocabularies of it, one of which, a MS. of about 3000 words, is by far the most extensive ever compiled. It seems not unlikely that the word *poker*, as a game of cards, is derived from Yiddish, since in it *pochger* (from *pochgen*) means a man who in play conceals the state of his winnings or losses, or hides his hand. This is so eminently characteristic of *poker* that the resemblance seems to be something more than merely accidental. There have always been Jewish card-players enough in the United States to have given the word. The most remarkable and desperate game of poker within the writer's knowledge (in which not only a fortune but a life were risked) occurred on board a Mississippi steamer, its hero being a Jew.

Of late years many Anglo-Indian and pidgin-English, or Anglo-Chinese words, have become familiar to the public. For the former our chief authority has been the "Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms," by Col. Henry Yule and the late Arthur Coke Burnell (870 pp. 8vo, London, John Murray, 1886), a copious work, as remarkable for extensive erudition as for sagacity, common-sense, and genial humour. For pidgin-English we have used the only work extant on the subject, viz., "Pidgin-English Ballads, with a Vocabulary," by C. G. Leland (London, Trübner & Co., 1887). This remarkable dialect, owing to the ease with which it is acquired, is now spreading so rapidly all over the East that Sir Richard Burton thinks that it may at no distant date become the *lingua-franca* of the whole world.

Anything like a distinct history of the development of English slang has hitherto been impossible, owing to the ignorance of most of those who have put themselves forward as its analysts and lexicographers. Samuel Rowlande told the world that gypsy and canting had resolved themselves into one and the same thing, and following his lead, one authority after the other, such as the author of the "Life of Bampfylde Moore Carew," gave us as "Gypsy" vocabularies, works in which hardly a trace of Romany was to be found. In vain did Grellmann, Hoyland, and George Borrow explain that

these wanderers spoke an Oriental language—even Mr. Edward Gosse, in his “Memoir of Samuel Rowland,” says that “‘Martin Markall’ is entirely in prose, except some queer *gypsy* songs”—the “*gypsy* songs” in question having less resemblance to *gypsy* than English has to Spanish or French. The editor has before him a work written and published within a few years, called “The New York Slang Dictionary,” in which the writer tells us that “*bilk* is a word in the *gypsy* language, from which most English slang is derived” (*bilk* not being *Romany* at all), and assures the reader that his book (which is simply a re-hash of Grose, with the addition of some purely modern Americanisms) will enable him to make himself understood in the slums of St. Petersburg, Paris, or in any country in the world! In common with far greater critics and scholars, he believes that *gypsy* is a mixture of all European tongues and corrupt English, when, in fact, it does not contain a single French word.\* Hotten had a far better knowledge of the constituent elements of slang, unfortunately he had not even an average “smattering” of the languages which *must* be understood, and that into their very provincialisms, argots, and corruptions, in order to solve the origin of all the really difficult problems in it. He knew that the poet, Thomas Moore, made a great mistake in believing that canting was *gypsy*, but he knew nothing whatever of *Romany*, and asserts that it is mingled up and confused with canting, and is ignorant enough to declare that “had the *gypsy* tongue been analysed and committed to writing three centuries ago, there is every probability that many scores of words now in common use could be at once traced to its source.” This was the result of an erroneous belief that Mr. Borrow knew everything of English *Romany* that could be known, while the fact is that by comparison with Continental dialects, and with the aid of what Mr. Borrow did *not* know, it is tolerably certain that the English *gypsy* of three centuries ago is by no means the lost language which he assumed it to be.

The last and not least important element in English slang consists of Americanisms. The original basis or beginning of these is to be found in Yankeeisms or words and phrases peculiar at first to New England. They consisted chiefly of old English provincialisms,

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\* George Borrow thinks that the word *bāddika*, a shop, is from the French *boutique*. It is much more probably the Italian *bottega*, though it still more resembles the Spanish *bodega*.

with an important addition of Dutch which came over the border from New York and New Jersey, and a few Canadian-French expressions. For these the dictionary of Mr. Bartlett is an invaluable source of reference. We cannot praise too highly the industry and sagacity manifested in that work. His weak point lies in the fact that having been guided by dictionaries such as that of Wright, he too frequently assumes that a word which is marked as provincial is not generally known in England. Hence he gives as peculiarly and solely American words which have no special claim to be regarded as such. In addition to these mostly Saxon-born terms, there is a much greater number of quaint eccentric expressions of Western and Southern growth, which increase at such a rate that one might easily compile from a very few newspapers an annual volume of new ones. Yet again, English slang phrases are continually being received and shifted into new meanings and forms, as caprice or need may dictate. It may surprise the reader to learn that the works of Artemus Ward, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and other standard humourists, are by no means the great mines of *slang* which they are popularly supposed to be. It is in the newspapers, especially in their reports, theatrical or local, and not infrequently in the "editorials," that the new racy and startling words occur, as they are improvised and picked up. This dictionary contains a large collection of true and recent American colloquial or slang phrases, and though the works of the great American humourists have been carefully searched for this purpose, it will be found that the majority of terms given are from other sources. The reader who is familiar with Bartlett and other writers on Americanisms, can judge for himself to what extent—or to what a slight extent—we are "indebted" to them. It is true that they are frequently cited, but in the great majority of instances it has been for the purpose of correction, emendation, or illustration of their definitions.

The history of Slang is that of the transition of languages into new forms, and from this point of view it may be assumed that such a work as the present will be of as great interest to the thorough student of history as the folk-lore to which it properly belongs, or anything else which indicates the phases of culture.

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*And Others.*

# A DICTIONARY

OF

## SLANG, JARGON, AND CANT.

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**A 1** (popular), a form used to indicate a high degree of excellence.

The magistrates all praise my zeal,  
 And put me down *A 1*,  
 And burglars when they hear my step  
 Instantly cut and run.  
 They sometimes drop things in their flight,  
 Those things of course I take ;  
 To leave them there to tempt the poor  
 Would be a great mistake.

—*Music Hall Song.*

The expression is also used adverbially.

My friends remark, "Oh, what a lark  
 To see the money fly!"  
 They say we're two young sillies, and  
 We don't know what to buy.  
 But you just leave my Fred alone,  
 He's such a knowing sort,  
 He lays the money out *A 1*,  
 And this is what he's bought.

—*Music Hall Song.*

She is *A 1*; in fact the aye-wunness girl  
 I ever saw.—*Shirley Brooks: The Gordian Knot.*

*I am A 1*, I am all right, comfortable.

It originated from *A 1, Lloyd's*, an abbreviation commonly used in mercantile circles to indicate the character of a ship and its appointments. To be classed *A 1* at *Lloyd's* means that the vessel, its anchors, sails, tackle, and stores have been examined by official surveyors, and found to be in good trim, entitling it to be ranked as first class. When a vessel fails to reach the highest standard, other marks are bestowed.

**A. 1** or **No. 1** (fenian). The latter is often incorrectly used. It should be *A 1*, a title for the commander of 900 men.

**Aaron** (thieves). The *Aaron* is the chief or captain of a gang or school of thieves. This cognomen is invariably accompanied with the prefix *The*—par excellence *the first*—simi-

lar to the eldest representative of certain Irish and Scotch clans or families, such as *The O'Connor Don*, *The Chisholm*, &c. As *Aaron* was the first high-priest, and the *Aarons* are the chiefs of the Hebrew tribes, it is probably of Jewish origin in its slang application. *Aaron* was an old cant term for a cadger who combined begging with acting as a guide to the summits of mountains, chiefly to evade the laws against vagabondage, no doubt a play in its slang sense on its Hebrew equivalent, lofty.

**A-baa** (various). An *abaa* cove, a bad man; an *abaa* muff, a silly person. Among trade unionists an *abaa* signifies a non-unionist, who is generally assailed with the derisive shout, "Baa, baa, black sheep."

**Abacter** (old), a dishonest drover or shepherd, one who connives at the stealing of his master's cattle. Probably from the Latin *abactores*, stealers of cattle. One of the tricks of the *abacters* of old Smithfield was the driving a bullock into a jeweller's or other shop, and during the confusion and excitement of expulsion the *abacter's* confederates, under the cloak of assistance, would help themselves to any valuables handy. The *Annual Register* for 1818 records that one shop was so served three times in that year.

**Abaddon** (old), a treacherous thief, one who turns informer against his fellow-rogues. From the Hebrew *abaddon*, a destroyer; often confounded with the Cockneyism *a-bad-'un*, a bad one.

The prisoner, Money Moses, better known among thieves and fences as Moses the *abaddon*, has been, to my knowledge, for the last twenty years a receiver and dealer in stolen property.—*Report of the Trial of the Great Gold Dust Robbery.*

**Abandannaad** (thieves), one who risks his liberty by committing an act of contemptible petty larceny. The phrase originated through a footpad robbing a woman of a paltry bandanna (hence *abandannaad*) shawl valued at ninepence, for which a notorious high-class, or "high-toby" thief, one "Kiddy Harris," was hanged, although innocent of any connection with the robbery, the real culprit having soon after confessed to the crime. The poor prosecutrix was so horrified at discovering her mistaken identification that she became a lunatic. This incident was the chief cause of the passing of Sir Samuel Romilly's Act for the abolition of capital punishment for robberies on the highway of property under forty shillings value.

**Abandoned habits** (society), the riding costume of the "Pretty Horsebreakers" of "the Lady's Mile," in Hyde Park.



**Abandonees** (provincial), houseless tramps, wanderers. (Harlotry), a prostitute who has either deserted her husband or been abandoned by him.

The married *abandonnée* looks down with a ludicrous assumption of superiority on such of her unfortunate companions as have never vowed at the altar "to obey."  
—*H. Downes Miles: Life of Richard Palmer (Dick Turpin).*

**Abandonment**, city term for the bankruptcy of a railway company.

**Abandons** (popular), foundlings, also applied to street prostitutes.

**Abbess, lady** (obsolete), the mistress of a brothel, also a procuress.

The infernal wretches who traffic in the souls and bodies of their helpless victims are called *lady abbesses*.—*W. Kidd: London and all its Dangers.*

The inmates were called the "nuns," and sometimes "Sisters of Charity." The French slang had formerly the corresponding expression "*abbesse*," the establishment being termed "*abbaye des s'offre à tous*," the inmates "*nonnes*," and the male associate of the mistress "*le sacristain*."

**Abbey-lubber** (nautical). This is an old term of reproach for idleness, and is applied only to the nautical *lubber*. In the "Burnynge of Paule's Church, 1563," it is thus explained: "An *abbey-lubber*, that was idle, well-fed, a long lewed *lither loiterer*,

that might work, and would not."—*Smyth: Sailor's Word-Book.*

**Abbot**, the fancy man or husband of an abbess. A crozier'd *abbot*, or *abbot* on the cross, a man who keeps a brothel more for the purpose of robbery and extortion than that of prostitution.

**Abbreviations**. One of the most notable signs of the degradation and deterioration of a language is the popular habit, in many other countries besides England, of abbreviating words and reducing them to their first syllables, as if in a fast age the common multitude had only time to express themselves in monosyllables. It prevails alike in the learned halls of Oxford and Cambridge and the lowest slums of St. Giles's and Whitechapel. Among the most prominent may be cited the following which, though strictly speaking are not slang, touch on it as not being the original terms. When written or printed they are simply technical and conventional, but used verbally they are slang.

**A.D.C.**, Aide-de-Camp; **Ad.G.**, adjutant; **Ad lib.**, *ad libitum*; **A.Q.M.G.**, Assistant Quarter-Master-General; **biz**, business; **C. in C.**, Commander-in-Chief; **C. - O.**, Commanding-Officer; **Cri'**, "Criterion" (restaurant); **D.A.Q.M.G.**, Deputy-Assistant Quarter-Master-General; **Ex-**

am., university or competitive examination; **Gent.**, gentleman; the **High**, High Street, Oxford; **I.G.**, Inspector-General; **Jocks.**, jockeys; **J.P.**, Justice of the Peace; **Mem.**, memorandum or member; **Mods.**, moderations (university); **N.C.O.**, Non-Commissioned Officer; **Nem. Con.**, *nemine contradicente*; **O.C.**, Old Cheltonian (Cheltenham College); **Ox.**, Oxford music-hall; **Pav.**, Pavilion music-hall; **Photo**, photograph; **Pops.**, popular concerts; **P.R.**, the prize ring; **Pub.**, or public, public-house; **Pug.**, pugilist; **Q.C.**, Queen's Counsel; **Q.M.G.**, Quarter-Master-General; **Rad.**, radical; **Rep.**, representative; **Sov.**, sovereign; **Spec.**, speculation; **Specs.**, spectacles; **S.U.O.**, Senior Under-Officer (R.M. Academy); **Tec.**, detective; **Tol** or **tol lol**, tolerable; **Tram.**, tram-car; **Typo.**, typographer or printer; **Varsity**, university; **Vet.**, veterinary surgeon; **Vice**, Vice-Chancellor.

*Cab* and *bus*, which were originally slang, have by dint of usage succeeded in establishing themselves in the language. In the novels of Charles Dickens they had already acquired a certain archaic flavour.

**Abdar** (Anglo-Indian), a tectotaller. In Hindostanee *abdar* signifies a water-carrier.

**Abdeli** (Anglo-Indian), a hypocrite, a canting preacher, a fastidious or false zealot.

**Aberdeen cutlets** (popular), cured or dried haddocks, or "haddies," as the Scotch term them.

**Abiding** (vagrants), "my *abiding*," generally refers to a temporary resting or hiding place, secure from capture. *Abiding-by*, hiding within call.

Abel had no friends, and as he was not considered to have an *abiding*-place, his being missed from one spot only led to the conclusion that he had gone to another.—*Mrs. Crowe: Lilly Dawson.*

**Abigail** (society), a lady's maid. More properly one of an ill temper, or tyrannical to her mistress.

Tyrrill, on entering his apartment, found that it was not lighted, nor were the *abigails* of Mrs. Dods quite so alert as a waiter at Longs'.—*Sir Walter Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

Old English writers first employed it as a cant word for a termagant woman, and afterwards for a female bigamist. It seems probable that having originally received its present signification from Abigail, who called herself the handmaiden of David, the word became synonymous for a lady's maid, in the same way that Job and Samson came to be applied respectively to a model of patience and to a man of herculean strength. It was used by Beaumont and Fletcher as the name of a handmaiden in their comedy of the "Scornful Lady," and must have been further popularised by the maiden

name Abigail Hill of Mrs. Masham, waiting-woman to Queen Anne. It appears to have been adopted by many authors.

Whereas they petition to be freed from any obligation to marry the chamber-maid, we can by no means assent to it; the *Abigail*, by immemorial custom, being a deodand, and belonging to holy Church.—*Reply to Ladies' and Bachelors' Petition*, 1694.

By coach to the king's play-house, and there saw "The Scornful Lady" well acted; Doll Common doing *Abigail* most excellently.—*Pepys' Diary*.

There are many other instances of the names of characters of comedies or novels having been adopted to denote a whole class of individuals. Thus, an inn-keeper is called Boniface, from Farquhar's "Beaux' Stratagem." A Bob Acres, from Sheridan's "The Rivals," is synonymous with a coward. The French apply to a swindler the name of Robert Macaire, immortalised by Frédéric Lemaitre in his impersonation of the character in the melodrama "l'Auberge des Adrets"—Robert Macaire, by the bye, was the name of a notorious bandit. One of the creations of Balzac, in his "Comédie Humaine," l'illustre Gaudissard, has provided an epithet for a commercial traveller; and the French use *Abigail* with the same signification as on this side of the Channel.

On vit paraître une superbe berline, forme anglaise, à quatre chevaux, remarquable surtout par deux très jolies

*abigails*, qui étaient juchées sur le siège du cocher.—*Brillat-Savarin: Physiologie du Goût*.

Dr. C. Mackay, alluding to the generally accepted derivation of the word, says, "This supposition may, or may not be correct; but it is curious to remark that in the ancient Breton and Gaelic language, *abhagail* signifies flip-pant, waspish, and snappish, which word is derived from *abhag*, a terrier, a snarling dog."

**Abishag** (thieves), the illegitimate child of a mother who has been seduced by a married man. In Hebrew it means the mother's error.

Walpole wrote—"I love David too well not to be jealous of an *Abishag* eight years old."—*Leigh Hunt's Indicator*.

**Able - whackets** (nautical), a popular sea-game with cards, wherein the loser is beaten over the palms of the hands with a handkerchief tightly twisted like a rope. It is very popular among sailors. French soldiers have a similar game, at least as regards the penalty, termed "*foutro*."—Vide *Barrère's Arjot and Slang*.

**Abnormity** (vulgarism), "a bleeding *abnormity*," an opprobrious epithet applied to the treacherous and deceitful; a person of crooked ways, an informer, a deformed or humpbacked person. *Abnormeth* was formerly used in a similar sense.

**Abob** (Winchester), a large white jug containing about a gallon in measure.

**Abounding** (American), applied to a person unmistakably prominent at a party or a public meeting.

When we are told of a professed wit more than usually *abounding* at an evening party, there is no temptation to recruit our dictionaries from the English manufactured in the United States.—*Evening Standard*.

**About East** (American). A term used by men coming from the New England, *i.e.*, the eastern and purely Yankee States, to signify anything that meets with approval. Such things or people are said to be *about East*. J. Russell Lowell in his "Letters" well illustrates this colloquialism of men who regard everything done in their native states as right, and whose eyes are often turned to the old home amidst the roughing and struggle of the wilder West.

There was not a Yankee when Horace Mann regretted we had not the French word *s'orienter* in our speech, "whose problem has not always been to find out what is *about East*. The enthusiastic (though quaintly exaggerated) love borne the East by its sons is, perhaps, most strikingly illustrated in Major Jack Downing's oft-repeated phrase, 'I'd go *East* of sunrise any day to see sich a place.'"

**About right** (vulgarism). To do a thing *about right* is to do it thoroughly.

**About the size of it** (American). An expression indicating an

average, or estimate, or expression of value, or an equivalent, in a very wide sense.

"Do you think that on the whole our Phebe would marry Seth?"

"Wall—I guess that on the whole that's *about the size of it*. She don't know her own mind yet, but she will when she comes to take the measure on't."—*American Story*.

When Eagle Davis died,  
I was sittin' by his side,  
'Twas in Boston, Massachusetts, and he  
said to me, "Old boy!

This climate as you see—  
Isn't *just the size* for me;  
Dead or livin', take me back if you can  
to Ellanoy."

—*A Ballad: In the Wrong Box*.

"Do you take this woman, whose hand you're a-squeezein', to be your lawful wife, in flush times an' skimp?"

"I reckon that's *about the size of it*, squire."—*Chicago Ledger*.

**Above one's bend** (American), beyond one's capacity.

It would be *above my bend* to attempt telling you all we saw among the Redskins.—*J. T. Cooper: The Oak Openings*.

In the South the phrase to signify the same idea is "above my huckle-berry," or "a huckle-berry above my persimmon." *Bend* in this sense is probably derived from the Anglo-Saxon *bend*, signifying a bond or anything that binds—a contract.

For ich am comen hider to-day,  
For to saven hem, yive y may,  
And bring hem out of *bende*.

—*Anns and Amiloun*, l. 1233.

"Above my *bend*" is "more than I am bound or held to do"  
—a Saxon idiom.

**Above par, below par** (popular).

To be *above* or *below par* signifies that the person using the expression is in better or worse health than usual. It is derived from the commercial term which refers to the price of stock, in that case the meaning being "average" or "level." *Above par* signifies also tolerably drunk; possessed of money beyond one's actual expense.

**Abracadabra** (medical), applied to any senseless gibberish or extravagant notion. Organic evolution has been stated to be the new *abracadabra* of science.

The French use the epithet *abracadabrant*, which is best rendered by "stunning" or "flabbergasting." *Abracadabra* was a cabalistic word in the Middle Ages. It was written in successive lines in the form of an inverted triangle, each line being shorter by a letter than the one above, till the last letter *A* formed the apex of a triangle at the bottom. It was said to have magical power, and when hung around the neck it was supposed to act as a charm against ague. It is thought to be derived from the Hebrew *ab*, father, *ruach*, spirit, and *dabar*, word. According to this derivation it represents the Trinity.

**Abraham** (popular), a cheap and trashy slop shop.

**Abraham's balsam** or **hempen elixir** (provincial), execution by

hanging. So named from the hemp tree, a kind of willow, that is called *Abraham's balm* by botanists. By the gypsies it is called *Father's balm*, and it is used by them as a preservative of chastity. There is a peculiar stone in the marshy districts of the North of England called *Abraham's stone*; a piece of this stone is worn by the lower classes round their necks as a charm against ague, thus following the tradition that Abraham wore a precious stone round his neck to preserve him from disease; when Abraham died, God placed this stone in the sun.

**Abraham cove** (thieves), a mean, beggarly, despised thief, or rather sneak. Decker writes in 1608 that "The *Abraham cove* is a lustie strong rogue who walketh with a slade about his guarrons" (a sheet about his body). The Hon. Justice Matsel, of New York, in the *Rogue's Lexicon*, registers *Abraham cove* "a naked or poor man; a beggar in rags" (*Grove*).

**Abraham grains** (thieves), a publican who brews his own beer.

**Abraham-man** or **Abram-man** (ancient cant), a naked vagabond, a lame or sick beggar, a begging impostor. The Abraham ward in Bedlam had certain inmates who were allowed to go begging on behalf of the hospital, and were called

Abraham-men, the term being applied subsequently to lame or sick beggars, or those shamming distress. The begging impostors designated as Abram-men were well known in the sixteenth century, and are mentioned in the "Fraternitie of Vagabondes," 1575. "An Abraham-man is one that walketh bare-armed and bare-legged, and fayneth to be mad, calling himself Poor Tom." Abraham-men, in Stephen's "Essays and Characters," 1615, are designated as fugitive ragamuffins, pretending to be cripples or impotent soldiers. Harman thus describes them :—

These *Abraham-men* be those that fayne themselves to haue bene mad; and haue bene kept eyther in Bethelam or some other pryson a good tyme, and not one amongst twenty that euer came in pryson for any such cause; yet wyll they saye howe pitiously and most extremely they haue bene beaten and dealt with all. . . . These begge money.—*Caveat or Warning for Common Cursetors.*

The old English dramatists use *Abraham* as a cant word for nakedness, in which sense it is still common among tramps, who say of a naked person, "He was dressed in Abraham's suit, a suit of everlasting flesh colour."

A tawny beard was termed an "Abraham-coloured beard," probably in accordance with the directions for representing all the persons in Scripture as given in the "Byzantine Painters' Guide," the "Book of Ballymott," &c. In all of these the beards are specially described.

A "Judas-coloured beard," a word of similar import, was so called because Judas Iscariot was traditionally supposed to have had a red beard, and was so represented by early Italian painters. But the epithet of an Abraham-coloured beard remains as yet without any explanation or justification. To "sham Abraham" was to feign sickness or distress, and the term is used to the present day.

THE "SHAM ABRAHAM" AGITATION.—Matters must have come to a pretty pass when even the *Daily News* withdraws its support from the Trafalgar Square impostors.—*The Globe.*

A popular song of the last century, when forgery of bank notes for one pound was a common crime, and when the hanging of the detected criminal was quite as frequent, has preserved for posterity the name of Abraham Newland, the then cashier of the Bank of England, who signed all the notes in circulation :—

Sham Abraham you may,  
But you must not sham Abraham Newland.

Sailors use the term to denote an idle fellow who wants to be put on the sick list so as to shirk duty. Workmen also use it, with the meaning "to pretend to be ill," in order to get off work.

**Abraham suit, on the,** any kind of dodge or deceit designed to excite sympathy, used by begging-letter impostors.

**Abraham work** (popular), ill-paid trumpery work; trading shams; showy swindles.

**Abraham's willing** (rhyming slang), a shilling.

**Abregoyns** (American). Bartlett spells this corruption of "aborigines" as *Abergoins* or *Abrogans*.

I have often heard *Ab-rec-goynes* used in jest for aborigines, especially by Virginians, but never *Abrogans* or *Abergoins*.—*C. G. Leland*.

**Abridgments** (old), knee breeches, small-clothes.

*Frantz* (producing a pair of small-clothes which *Toke* examines)—"Your master is von beggar," &c.

*Toke*—"I accept the *abridgments*, but you've forgotten to line the pockets."—*Lytton; Money*.

**Abroad** (Winchester), a boy is said to be *abroad* when his name is taken off "Continent Roll" or Sick List, and he returns to school duties.

**Abroaded** (society), a noble defaulter on the Continent to avoid creditors. It is the police officials' slang for convicts sent to a colonial or penal settlement, but applied by thieves in this country, and formerly in the colonies, to imprisonment merely.

**A.B.S.** First-class sailors are rated as A.B.S., "able-bodied seamen." Sometimes facetiously translated as "a bottle-sucker."

The Albatross  
Is the captain and boss,  
The sea-gull queers  
Are the offi-ceers;

And the Carey chickens, as I guess,  
Is every one an A.B.S.

—*From a MS. of Sea Ballads.*

**Abs.** (Winchester), abbreviation for absent. To get *abs.* is to get away.

**Abscotchalater** (thieves), one who is hiding away from the police. From the American *absquatulate*, to run away.

**Absence** (Eton). This word in the slang of the boys is meant to convey just the opposite meaning. It signifies also roll-call.

**Absent without leave** (thieves), broken out of gaol; escaped from the police. (Common), not forthcoming when wanted for some crime, debt, or difficulty; absconded.

Mr. Roupell, the member for Lambeth, was reported *absent without leave*.—*Morning Star; Parliamentary Summary*.

At no former period on the expiration of the racing season were there so many speculators *absent without leave*.—*Sporting Life*.

**Absit** (university), a permit to be absent from college, hall, or chapel for the day.

**Abskize, abschize** (American). In a sketch of Western life published in 1833, in a Philadelphia newspaper, this word occurs as meaning to depart or go away. It would seem to be

derived from the Dutch *afscheyden*; German *abscheiden*, to leave or depart.

**Absquatulate** (American), to disappear, to run away, to abscond. The reverse of to "squat," from *ab* and *squat*, originally settlers' slang for abandoning a location when fearing an unwelcome visitation, and settling on a more remote spot.

You'd thank me to *absquatulate*, as the Yankees say. . . . Well, I will in a minute.—*Rhoda Broughton: Cometh up as a Flower.*

Bartlett calls this "a factitious vulgarism." It was in use nearly fifty years ago. At that time running away with money by bank presidents, &c., became very common in consequence of financial panics or collapses, and it was the fashion to coin words from the names of the delinquents, as "to Swartwout" or "to Schylerise," &c. When we reflect that there are many Yankee and Western men accustomed to spelling bees, and perhaps more familiar with the difficult words of the dictionary than are many scholars, it does not appear remarkable that we find in American slang a number of words which have a learned length and Latin sound. To any half-educated man with a fancy for extravagant expression, and familiar with "abscond," "to squattle away," and "perambulate," *absquatulate* would readily suggest itself in an effort to recall one or the

other. Once uttered and heard, it would become popular. To deliberately invent a new word, without some foregoing suggestion or basis, and get it adopted, is one of the rarest events in the world, even in America, where men are continually attempting it.

The various slang synonyms are "to skedaddle, to cut one's lucky, to sling one's hook, to mizzle, to bolt, to cut and run, to slip one's cable, to step it, to leg it, to tip the double, to amputate one's mahogany, to make or to take tracks, to hook it, to slope, to slip it, to paddle, to evaporate, to vamoose, to tip your rags a gallop, to walk one's chinks, to pike, to hop the twig, to turn it up, to cut the cable and run before the wind," and in the lingo of the light-fingered and sure-footed gentry, "to make beef, to guy, to speel." —*Barrère: Argot and Slang.*

**Abusive drill**, adjutant's drill. The adjutant, being responsible for the drill of a regiment, has constant parades for instruction and practice, at which he may occasionally use strong language. He is especially concerned with the development of recruits, the perfecting of awkward squads, and of careless or inattentive soldiers sent back to drill as a punishment. A salutary change has no doubt come over the army, which was once proverbial for cursing and swear-



ing. Even the highest ranks were addicted to it, as witness the old saying, "How we swore in Flanders," and the story in Greville's Memoirs of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Anglesea at Waterloo. When the latter was wounded, he cried, "I've lost my leg, by G—d!" "Have you, by G—d!" replied the Duke. But language of correction and reproof is still likely to be strong, and may at times become "abusive" when issuing from a much aggravated adjutant's mouth. A story is told of the last Lord Cardigan which illustrates the style of a military officer of a comparatively modern school. His lordship was being driven to the covert-side in a postchaise, and the postillion lost his way. Lord Cardigan, furious at being made late for the meet, threw down the glass of the chaise and cried, "I may be right or I may be wrong, or I may not be the proper person to say so, but you're a———son of——, and if I could get near you, I'd twist your —— neck off."

**Academies, canting**, the low lodgings or public-houses for cadgers and tramps, lurkers, or the houses of call or country lodging-houses for beggars and impostors who solicit alms by a written petition or forged soldier's or sailor's discharge.

**Academy** (obsolete), an organisation of thieves; a rendezvous

for practising the flash art "dodge;" a goal; a brothel. Termed also "flash-drum," "nanny-shop," "buttocking shop," and in police-court reports, "disorderly house." Establishments where "good beds" are provided for couples are termed "houses of accommodation," which correspond to the French "*maisons de passe*." A chronicler of old London relates that Sir William Walworth, the city fishmonger, who assassinated Wat Tyler, possessed a number of *academies* or low brothels in Southwark, which Wat Tyler had levelled with the ground. "Hence," says the old writer, "private feeling and revenge may have prompted Walworth's activity to slay Tyler." Peter Pindar writes that "*academy* is an euphemistic expression for a house that harbours courtezans." A "finishing *academy*" is a private brothel, where a staff of young (not common) prostitutes are kept on hire. So called from its being the last gradation of private prostitution before going on the public streets. The girls who chiefly resort to these brothels are work girls who visit on the sly: they are not driven by want or desertion, but go from wilfulness; to use their own words, they "work honestly for a living, but do the *naughty* for their clothes." A "character *academy*," a rendezvous for characterless shopmen, footmen, barmen, and others, whereat

false characters are concocted, and other plans are matured for robbing employers. These places are chiefly alehouses kept by discarded servants; as the subscriptions are enforced monthly on those in place, the funds are very large, and each *academy* keeps a staff of well-educated teachers who are well experienced in all the craft of trade, and well-appointed agencies are kept up in all the manufacturing towns, acting as referees, and to give good written characters. A "gammoning *academy*" is a reformatory for juvenile criminals.

**Acceleration** (vagrants). "He died of *acceleration*," he died of starvation.

**Accelerators**, the union relieving officers, from their frequent refusal to give food to the dying outcast, whose miserable career of want often ends in death. In such cases the jury invariably accompany their verdict of natural death with the rider, "Accelerated through the want of the common necessaries of life."

**Accommodated** (thieves), sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

For practising on the flat, I was apprehended and was *accommodated* with a month's board and lodging at the expense of the nation.—*Mayhew: London Labour and London Poor.*

**Accommodation houses** (common), brothels. Their female

frequenters are termed "Ladies of *accommodating morals*," being a trifle more genteel than their sisters, the street prostitutes.

**Accommodation shops** (city).

The officers of certain "Finance Joint Stock Companies" who practise the *accommodation swindle* on "Lloyd's Bonds," Debentures, Preference, and all other shares.

**Accommodators** (thieves), chiefly ex-police constables who negotiate a compounding of felonies and other crimes by bribing witnesses and prosecutors.

**According to Cocker** (common), proper, according to rule, according to the best authority. This phrase refers to a famous writing-master of the name of *Cocker*, who in the time of Charles II. composed and published an elaborate Treatise on Arithmetic.

This work commences with a "Provena," or Preface, which ends thus: "All the Problems and Propositions are well weighed, pertinent, and clear, and not one of them taken on trust throughout the tract; therefore now

Zoilus and Momus lie you down and die,  
For these inventions your whole force defy."

Professor De Morgan writes that the phrase as a popular

saying originated in 1756, and was taken up by the people from Murphy's play of "The Apprentice," in which the strong point of the old merchant Wingate is his extreme reverence for *Cocker* and his Arithmetic. In America, a similar confirmation phrase is in common use, except that the name of *Gunter* is substituted for that of *Cocker*. Gunter was a famous arithmetician, and no doubt the American phrase is the oldest. The old laws of Rhode Island say, "All casks shall be gauged by the rule commonly known as '*gauging by Gunter*.'" "Mr. K., a respected citizen of Detroit, has published a letter entirely exonerating General Cass from the charge of having defrauded his association in the land speculations. He is positive that all was done *according to Gunter*." *According to John Norie* is the standard of appeal among sailors. John Norie compiled a very popular work entitled, "The Navigator's Standard Manual." Among schoolboys *according to Walkinghame* is the confirmation of a rule.

**According to the revised statutes** (American). Anything that is legal, or properly authorised or established. An expression first used in this general or humorous sense by a lawyer of New York named Halstead, in *Vanity Fair*, in 1860.

**Account** (nautical). Going upon *account* is a phrase for buccaneering.

(Sporting), to *account* for, refers to one's personal share in killing.

The persecuted animals (rats) bolted above ground; the terrier *accounted* for one, the keeper for another.—*Thackeray: Vanity Fair*.

**Accounts** (common). To cast up *accounts* is to vomit, and in thieves' lingo it signifies to become evidence against an accomplice.

**Accumulatives** (American). At times an editor in the United States will make a remark or a joke, then another will cite it and add a remark or a parody of it, which will again be commented on by a third. Thus one says:—

"William, familiarly known as 'Bill' Sticker, was indicted last week in Leadville for passing counterfeit money. This is according to law, for he who runs may read in any street, 'Bill Stickers will be prosecuted.'"

To which a rival adds:

"We say amen to that. We were stuck yesterday ourself with a bad bill."

And a third exclaims:

"Suppose Sam Jones should put a bowie into Bill Sticker, who would be the Bill Sticker in that case? Let us reflect!"

We have seen as many as twenty and more of these accumulative paragraphs of this kind "going the rounds" of the country press.

**Accumulator** (racing), a person who backs one horse, and then if it wins results (sometimes including original stakes) goes on to some other horse.

**Ace of spades** (old slang), a widow, alluding to the hue of the card. This slang word is given in the "Lexicon Balastronicum," London 1811.

**Ack** (Christ's Hospital). In the slang of Blue Coat boys this word is expressive of denial or refusal.

**Ack men** or **ack pirates** (nautical), fresh water thieves. Probably from a corruption of "ark," meaning boat, as the term "ark ruffs" has a like signification. *Ack*, however, seems to have some connection with the old term *aker* (apparently from the Anglo-Saxon *egor*, the flowing of the sea), which is still applied on the Trent to a kind of eddying twirl which occurs on the river when it is flooded. In the dialect of Craven, according to Mr. Thomas Wright (Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English), a ripple on the surface of the water is termed an *aker*.

**Acknowledge the corn, to** (American). To admit that one has been got the better of, or is outdone.

It is said that an Illinois hoosier once came to New Orleans with two boats, one loaded with corn, the other with potatoes. He fell among gamblers, was made drunk,

and "anted off" or lost both his boats. During the night there came a storm and the boat full of corn was sunk. In the morning the gamblers came to claim their stakes. The hoosier with great firmness replied, "Gentlemen, I acknowledge the corn, but the potatoes you shan't have —by thunder!"—*American Newspaper*. (Given more fully in *Bartlett's Dictionary*.)

**A-cock** (popular), knocked over, defeated; suddenly surprised, astounded.

He made a rush at me and sent me and my barrow all *a-cock*.—*Thames Police Report*, May 25, 1867.

Also, cocked up.

The small grey sprig on the crown of our pericranium and the thin grey tail *acock* behind.—*Recreations of Christopher North*.

**Acorn** (old cant), the gallows tree.

The *acorn* is planted for thee, my bonny boy.—*Wilson's Tales of the Border*.

**Acquisitive** (American), booty, plunder.

The officers surprised them packing up the *acquisitive*.—*The Man in Possession*, by Leman Rede: *Sunday Times*.

An *acquisitive* cove, a man given to picking and stealing.

**Acrocracy** (American), a coined word to signify the landlord interest.

The introduction of a plutocracy amongst the aristocracy and the *acrocracy*, though it has tended somewhat to vulgarise our social institutions, has not been without its good effect.—*Hallberger's Illustrated Magazine* (1878).

**Acres** (theatrical), a coward, from the pusillanimous Bob *Acres* in Sheridan's play.

In Ireland "a regular *acres* man" meant a professed duellist. From "the fifteen *acres*," formerly a field famous for duels in Dublin. In India, *Acre* Farm, near Calcutta, is used for duels, hence "a regular *acre's* man."

**Across lots** (American). "In the most expeditious manner" (as regards time), or (as regards distance) "by the shortest cut." "He may be said to have attained place and power *across lots*," *i.e.*, with great rapidity. This phrase comes down to us from the old settlers' days, when the shortest road then, as indeed now, was *across lots*, and not by the main road.

You would cut *across the lot* like a streak of lightning if you had a chance.—*Charcoal Sketches*, i. 35.

And in the "Biglow Papers," Mr. J. Russell Lowell says:—

"To all the mos' *across lot* ways of preachin' an' convertin'."

**Acting dickey** (naval), an officer acting as lieutenant although not confirmed by the Admiralty. (Legal), a clerk or agent acting in the name of a lawyer on the Rolls. The practice of *acting dickey* is generally resorted to in questionable proceedings.

**Action** (American), quick work, an immediate result. Western card playing, &c., slang:

"That's my kind," says old Sam; "you get *action* there at every turn. No waiting for any darned cards to turn up."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Actionize, to** (legal), to cite before a legal tribunal.

**Act of Parliament** (old), small beer. A military term referring to the fact that publicans were by Act of Parliament compelled to supply billeted soldiers with five pints daily gratis. There is a story current among the Chelsea veterans that the Duke of Wellington saw a soldier warming his weak regulation beer. His Grace said, "Damn the belly that won't warm *Act of Parliament*." The soldier replied, "Damn the *Act of Parliament*, it won't warm the belly."

**Actual** (American), "the *actual*," money.

As for happiness in this world without the rhino, the chink, or the *actual*, you might as soon think of winning a woman's affections in a raffle.—*Dow's Sermons*.

**Ad., adver.** (printer's), abbreviations for advertisement.

"I want this *adver.* where it won't show," said a lawyer, as he entered the office of a newspaper. "It's got to be published to comply with the law, but it pertains to a divorce case, and we don't want any more publicity than we can help. Let me see; your paper is Democratic, isn't it?"

The editor replied that it was.

"Then run this *ad.* in under the church notices. It will never be seen there by your subscribers," said the lawyer.—*American Newspaper*.

**Adam** (popular), master-man, foreman, or superintendent; termed also "gaffer" or "boss of the show."

**Adam's ale** (old), water as a beverage. It is supposed that this was the only drink of our first parent, and that before Noah planted the vine all were perforce teetotalers.

Your claret's too hot, sirrah drawer, go bring

A cup of cold *Adam* from the next purling spring.

—*T. Brown: Works.*

Another old term for the beverage which "does not intoxicate but does not cheer," is "fish broth." The French argot has the contemptuous epithets "ratafia de grenouilles," and "vase," sometimes varied to "vasinette."

**Adam Tiler** (old cant), a pick-pocket's confederate, who receives the stolen article, and runs off with it. Origin unknown, but supposed to have been the name of one notorious for his skill at this kind of thing. It is possibly from the German *Theiler*, one who shares, a confederate.

**Added to the list** (racing), is said of a horse which has been castrated. A like operation performed on a man is termed in French slang "Abélardiser," from the barbarous treatment of Abélard by Chanoine Fulbert. When a horse has been imperfectly castrated he is called a "rig."

**Addition, division, and—silence!** (American). This phrase originated in Philadelphia.

**Addle-cove** (popular), a foolish man, same as addle-pate. "Literally, a rank sucker."—*N. Y. Slang Dict.*

**Addled-egg** (common), a canard, an egg from the fabulous *mare's nest*.

**Addle-headed** (common), with little brains, or empty-headed; from Anglo-Saxon *adela*, mud.

**Addle-pate** (common), one whose brain cannot distinguish between the objects which are outside it and the imaginations within.

**Addle-pot** (common), a spoilsport; a mar-all.

**Adept** (thieves), a pickpocket, a conjuror.

An *adept* must be one of an audacious spirit with a nimble conveyance and a vocabulary of cabalistic phrases to astonish the beholder.—*The Merry Companion, or Delights for the Ingenious, by Richard Neve (Juggler), 1721.*

(Old cant), an alchemist.

**Adjutant's gig** (military), the barrack roller, which is drawn, presumably under the adjutant's orders, by the defaulters—the men under punishment—who are the slaves, the hewers of wood and drawers of water for officers, comrades, and the barracks generally.

**Admiral** (naval), the ship which carries the *admiral*. Formerly all ships were called *admirals*.

Our tall *admirals* that visit every sea.—*Cornelius O'Dowd.*

**Admiral of the Blue** (old slang), a public-house keeper, so called, says Grose, because publicans were accustomed to wear blue aprons. Properly an *Admiral of the Blue* is one of the third class in the navy, and holds the rear in an engagement.

**Admiral of the narrow seas** (nautical), one who from drunkenness vomits into the lap of his opposite companion.

**Admiral of the Red** (common), a person whose ruby countenance gives unequivocal signs of his penchant for the bottle. Properly, *Admiral of the Red* is an admiral of the second class, and holds the centre in an engagement.

As regards the word *admiral* taken in its literal sense, it may be interesting to remark that this word seems to have been introduced into Europe by the Genoese or Venetians in the twelfth or thirteenth century, from the Arabic Amir-al-bahr, commander of the sea, the terminating word having been omitted (Webster).

**Admirals of the red, white, and blue** (popular), street and square beadles, office and club door-keepers.

**Admiral of the white** (popular), a white-faced person, a coward; a woman in a faint.

**Admire, to** (American), characteristic of New England, and used

in many strange ways, e.g., "I *admire* to look at pictures." *Admire* is often used for liking, predilection, or taste. "I do *admire* peaches and cream." "Don't you *admire* pumpkin-pie with ginger in it?" corresponds to the prosaic use of *adorer*, to worship: "j'adore les pommes de terre frites."

**Adobe** (American), a house made of dried clay in *adobes* or large clay blocks. "To the old *adobe*," is the death-cry of the vigilants of San Francisco when a criminal is tried by lynch law and condemned to death; the old *adobe* being the slang title of the custom-house where the execution of malefactors takes place. *Adobe* signifies a sun-baked brick, from the Spanish.

At Los Angeles, county California, the skilled silk workers are comfortably housed in *adobe* cottages.—*United States Correspondent, Standard*, May 1869.

**Adoi, adoy** (gypsy), there. "Adoi se miri dye!"—"There is my mother!"

**Adonee** (old cant), the Deity. Evidently Yiddish, from *Adonai*, Lord. Martin Luther uses the word as a cant term among beggars for God.

A tramps' toast says:—

"May the good *Adonee*  
Soften the strong;  
Lighten our loads  
And level our roads."

**Adopted** (American) signifies a naturalised citizen. President

B

Lincoln proposed to Congress that the word *adopted* should be struck from all public documents, so as to place foreign citizens and native-born citizens on an equality.

**Adopter**, a scoundrel who pretends to be desirous of *adopting* a child, out of philanthropic motives, on the payment of a certain sum, and either gets rid of it at the earliest opportunity, or leaves it to die of starvation and neglect.

There can be no doubt that if the history of every one of the ten thousand of the young human pariahs that haunt London streets could be inquired into, it would be found that no insignificant percentage of the whole were children abandoned and left to their fate by mock *adopters* such as F. X.—*James Greenwood: The Seven Curses of London.*

The initials refer to the subjoined advertisement, which is given here as a specimen of the mode of proceeding of *adopters*.

*Adoption.*—A person wishing a lasting and comfortable home for a young child of either sex will find this a good opportunity. Advertisers, having no children of their own, are about to proceed to America. Premium, fifteen pounds. Respectable references given and required. Address, F. X.

**Adoption.** (Low) “doption,” an adopted child. In baby farming, “to be mounted for lopping the ‘doption,’” is to be placed in the criminal dock for causing the death of an adopted child.

**Adown in the viol** (thieves), a hue and cry against a detected cul-

prit. *Adown*, although now considered vulgar, was formerly used by our best writers in place of *down*; *viol* refers to the noise of the old-fashioned instrument when played by street musicians, which was very different from its offspring the violin.

**Ad portas** (Winchester), a Latin speech delivered by the Senior College Prefect to the Warden of New College, and the “Posers” (see this word), &c., under the middle gate when they come down at election to examine for Winchester and New College scholarships and exhibitions.

**Adrom** (gypsy), away. From *a* and *drom*, a road or way; Greek *δρομός*. “*Jasa tu adrom, mān hatch akai*”—“Go thou away, do not stop here!”

**Adsum** (Charterhouse), roll-call or name calling.

**Adullamites** (Parliamentary), the seceders from the Liberal party led by Mr. Gladstone during the Reform Agitation of 1867. To “take refuge in the cave of Adullam” is a phrase borrowed from the Old Testament, and was used during the great American civil war in 1863 by President Lincoln in reference to the partisans of General M’Lellan after his dismissal from the command of the army of the Potomac. It was after-



wards used by John Bright in the British Parliament.

John Bright invented another apt phrase when he dubbed the seceders from the Reform party *Adullamites*. Parliamentary tactics have naturally given birth to many slang words.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Adusta, adosta** (gypsy), enough.

"Büt *adosta* Romany chals."—"Many gypsies."—*Lavengro*.

**Advantage** (Californian); pocket *advantage*, carrying a pistol charged and at half cock in the coat pocket, so that if the hand is placed in the pocket it rests on the handle. Sometimes a shot is fired at an adversary through the pocket itself. This is only done with a derringer.

**Ægers** (university slang), letters of excuse; from the Latin *ager*.

Perhaps it's a deep-laid scheme of yours to post a heap of *ægers* while you're a Freshman, and then to get better and better every term, and make the Dons think that you are improving the shining hours by doing chapels and lectures more regularly, artful Giglamps!—*Cuthbert Bede: The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*.

**Ægrotat** (university), a remission of a collegiate duty, generally obtained by some questionable excuse to the principal. From *ægrotare*, to be ill.

**Æsthetic** (American). This word, from being supposed to mean "artistic," has been extended to excellence of all kinds. In 1884 a grocer in Philadelphia advertised very seriously and innocently that he had some

"very *æsthetic* cheese." It is occasionally abused in much the same way in England.

**Aetna** (Winchester), an ambitious appellation given to a small boiler for "brewing," that is, making cocoa or coffee, the combustible used being spirits of wine.

**A. F.**, abbreviation for "Across the Flat," one of the numerous subdivisions of the racing track at Newmarket. The *A. F.* course commences at the running gap in the Ditch, and ends at the winning post of the Rowley Mile, whence also to the Grand Stand. The distance *A. F.* is one mile, two furlongs, and seventy-three yards.

**Affidavit men** (old), men who loitered about the courts of justice ready to swear anything for pay. They were also known as Knights of the Post, and were distinguished by the straw which they stuck in the heels of their shoes. The word has become obsolete, but not so the practice, as there are even now plenty of scoundrels loitering outside courts of justice who are ready to swear to anything for half-a-crown.

**Affinity** (American), a person of the opposite sex who is perfectly in harmony with any one. A *passional affinity* is one in whom intense sexual desire exists in common with

all other attributes. This is the favourite and characteristic expression of the Free-Love sect, which sprung up about 1850, and for a time attracted a great deal of attention, holding public meetings in New York, "giving rise" to much newspaper writing, and not a little extremely lively literature, such as "Fanny Greely, or the Confessions of a Free-Love Sister," &c. Several communities were founded to carry out Free-Love practically; that at Berlin Heights was made the subject of an amusing sketch by Artemus Ward. The Oneida county Free-Love community is described by Hepworth Dixon in "Spiritual Wives." The original Free-Lovers held that love is, or should be made, the motive power and inspiration of life, that to perfect ourselves in every way we should have an *affinity*, that two persons are required to make one complete life or destiny, and that it is the great duty of life to seek for this *affinity*. Everything should yield to this, and should the *affinity* unfortunately be already married to another, there should be a divorce and remarriage at once. Of course, it was soon discovered that a great deal of experimenting with different ladies or gentlemen was necessary before the true *affinity* could be discovered. This liberty to "chop and change ribs *à la mode Germanorum*" was not, however, favourably

regarded by the "cold world" of orthodox Christians.

In the year 1850, a house of ill-fame having been broken up in Philadelphia, its inmates were brought before a magistrate. Among them was a young lady of very attractive personal appearance, who was identified as belonging to an excellent family in the North. On being asked why she led such a disreputable life, she replied that she was an advanced spiritualist and free-lover, and considered it to be the mission and duty of her life to offer herself to men seeking for *affinities*, or to man in the abstract, and that every man whom she liked and who returned the feeling was her husband. She defended her views with great earnestness, and in language which indicated an excellent education and extensive reading.—*MS. Notes.*

I was goin' along the street, 'bout three-quarters past owl-time, when I met as pretty a yard-and-a-half of black silk as I ever looked at. "Young gentleman," says she, "don't you want a *bashernal affinity*?" "What's that?" says I. "It's a prize bed-comforter," says she, "and the price is five dollars, extras included; don't say no, for to-morrow and the day after you'll be sorry to have missed such a chance of addin' to the golden joys of youth."—*New York Sunday Journal.*

**Affirmative side**, the winning side, the side most likely to forward one's self-interest and promotion.

He was shrewd, sharp, and subtle enough to be always on the *affirmative side*.—*The Silent Placeman, 1824.*

Cats and dogs have never been able to agree on the main question that both seem to want the *affirmative side* to win on't.—*Josh Billings: On Cats.*

**Afflictions** (drapers), mourning habiliments. *Afflictions* are quiet, *i.e.*, mourning goods are not in demand. Mitigated *afflictions*, half mourning.

**Affygraphy** (popular) is said of anything that fits nicely.

"Is it in?" said he—"It is," said she.  
 "Does it fit?" said he—"It does," said she.  
 "Quite *affygraphy*?"—"Quite *affygraphy*."  
 —*The Lady and the Shoemaker.*

**Aficionado** (gypsy), a non-gypsy who lives and mixes with the tribe. From the Spanish *afición*, affection.

An *aficionado*, a true lover and student of gypsy life.—*Experiences of a Roumanie Rhei: Penny Illustrated Paper.*

**Afloat** (common), in a promising or a prominent state or condition.

All the town's *afloat*.—*Gay.*

**A-fly** (low), to get *a-fly* is to become expert at.

Go first to costermongery,  
 To every fakement get *a-fly*,  
 And pick up all their slangery.  
 —*The Leary Man.*

**Afterclap** (American). In Pennsylvania and the Western States of America this signifies an additional, and very often unjust demand beyond the agreement or bargain originally made. "None of your *afterclaps*." In Scotland the same word means "evil consequences."

**After-dinner man** (old), a deep drinker.

The good Baronet (Sir Francis Burdett) was not only a foxhunter, but a celebrated *after-dinner man*. It must have been a good bout indeed in which he was worsted.  
 —*Dublin Sketch Book*, 1830.

**After four** (Eton), the interval between 3 and 6 P.M.

**Afternoon buyer** (popular), one who waits until after the market dinner with the hope of purchasing cheaper than before that time.

**Afternoon farmer** (popular), one who neglects his farming operations until late in the season, or holds over his stock until late in the day, in the hope of getting a better price.

**After twelve** (Eton), the recess after morning school and before afternoon class.

I used to visit him regularly in the dear old college from the *after twelve*.—*Whyte-Melville's Good for Nothing.*

Croppie, who abominated all laws and delighted in transgressions, resolved to go to the fair, and without difficulty he persuaded the Pug and me to join him. One day *after twelve* the three of us passed over Windsor Bridge in the same condition as the "bold adventurers" alluded to in Gray's Ode.—*Brinsley Richards' Seven Years at Eton.*

**Age** (American, cards, technical), the oldest hand or player to the left of the dealer, who, at Poker, is allowed to pass the first round after the hands are "helped," and to come in again after all have raised or gone out. He signifies his intention by saying "my *age*," or "I pass the *age*." The effect is that the first player becomes the last player. This expedient is sometimes used to conceal a very good hand, and at other times as preparatory to

a "bluff," or a poor one. As cases of absolute equality among hands are all but impossible at Poker, little is risked by it.

**Aged** (racing, technical), any horse over six years is described as *aged*.

We really do abuse the powers of our blood stock in its undeveloped stage, and use up our racehorses at far too early an age. There is no disputing the fact that Bendigo stands alone as a first-class *aged* representative racehorse now on the turf, where in former days we had our Lanercosts, Touchstones, Beeswings, Alice Hawthorns, &c., by the dozen. — *Sporting Times*.

**Agee or ajee** (American). Bartlett defines this as "askew;" as to have one's hat *agee*. From the term *gee*, used in driving cattle. It seems rather to be derived from *gee*, "to agree with," "to fit," with the prefix negative *a*. In America it is also applied to a door ajar or partly open, as appears by the following rhymes from a comic paper published in Philadelphia in 1833 or 1834 on an incident which occurred there:—

I am an undertaker true,  
And know my business well;  
I'm just the man to punish you,  
For sending folks to hell.

You quite forgot, behind the door,  
When it was left *agee*,  
I caught you hugging Mrs. —,  
Your heart quite full of glee.

According to Wright (Provincial Dictionary), *agee* is North English, and means both awry and ajar. The word is, however, at

present far more generally used in America than England.

**Aggari** (Anglo-Indian), lit. fire-carriage, applied by the natives to a railway train.—*Hobson Jobson, being an Anglo-Indian Glossary*, London 1886.

**Aggerawators** (popular), a corruption of "aggravators," the lock of hair formerly in vogue alike among honest costermongers and men of the Bill Sykes type, worn twisted back from the temple towards the ear. It is now in favour among gypsies and a few "bruisers." The French peasants of Berry are fond of this ornament, which recalls, though much shorter, the old cadenettes of the French husars.

His hair was carefully twisted into the outer corners of each eye, till it formed a variety of that description of semi-curly usually known as *haggerawators*. — *Dickens: Sketches by Boz*.

**Agitate the communicator** (common), ring the bell.

**Agitator** (common), a bell rope; the street door knocker.

**Aglal, glal** (gypsy), before, in front of.

**Agogare** (American thieves' slang), be quick! A warning signal. From *agog*.

**Agonise** (American), to endure agony. A favourite word with young or "sensational" clergy-

men. The writer once heard one of these declare (in Kentucky), that "We must *agonise* if we would see God," and he has since met with the same expression in print.

**Agony** (common), to put or to pile the *agony* on, means to thrill, to horrify, to keep up or intensify the excitement attendant on sensational productions.

"Wife" is a fair specimen of a book of this kind. It is all *agony* from beginning to end. There are no pauses for lengthened descriptions of summer evenings or old-fashioned gardens; there are neither panegyrics of virtuous heroes, nor verbal portraits of lovely heroines. The *agony* is put on at full pressure in the first chapter, and is never shut off till the last.—*Saturday Review*.

That particular column in the daily papers, which is headed by private communications between individuals, is called the "agony column."

And how does she propose to succeed? Pollaky? The *agony* column? Placards, or a Bell-man?—*Black: A Princess of Thule*.

HARD.—I beg of you to see me. Your refusal does more harm than good. Your time will suit me. Please don't refuse. I think it most unkind of you, considering all things.—Q.

—*Standard*.

The *agony* column does not always contain unpleasant or dismal tidings. It is used extensively by lovers and as a means of communication between thieves, &c.

SHOULD be delighted to take sweet counsel of an Oracle so lovely, free, and

mild. True grief to have marred Elysian blisses.

SWEETHEART.—Shall be in town shortly after Christmas. So longing to see you, love. True and faithful even to your shadow.

THE MOON.—Bless us and keep us, what can you mean? I never supposed.—ELIAB.  
—*Standard*.

It is said that the last Carlist revolution was arranged entirely by means of the *Times'* agony column.

Football players say of the side that makes a number of goals that it "piles on the *agony*." In theatrical parlance an "*agony* piler" is an actor who performs in a sensational play in which the blood of the audience is made to curdle and their flesh creep. To "pile on the *agony*" was originally American; it was common in 1840.

**Aidh** (tinker), butter.

**Ainoch** (tinker), a thing.

**Air and exercise** (thieves), penal servitude at a convict settlement. Two stretches of *air and exercise*, *i.e.*, two years' penal servitude.

**Airing** (racing), a horse is said to be "out for an *airing*" when there is no intention on the part of those concerned with him that he should win.

**Air line road, an** (American), an expression applied to a railroad track when it passes over

the level unbroken prairie in a straight line without bend or gradient. "A straight shoot" is also another term for this.

**Aja, ajaw** (gypsy), so. Often pleonastic *kushte ajā*, good enough.

"If waver *fōki kāms lis*,  
Mūkk lendy kair *ajā*."

(If other people like it, let them do so.)—*E. H. Palmer.*)

**Akalak** (Anglo-Indian), a cape worn by Indian officers on state occasions.

**Akerman's Hotel** (obsolete), Newgate prison, the governor being, in 1787, a man named Akerman.

**Akonyo** (gypsy), alone.

"Me shon *akonyo* gilde yoi,  
Men buti ruzhior,  
Te sari chiricloï adoi,  
Pen mandy giloir."

("I am all alone," she sang, "among many flowers, and all the birds are singing songs to me."—*Janet Tuckey.*)

**Alay, alé** (gypsy), down.—("Besh-tu *alay* adoi te me te vel pen tute a kushto *gūdlo*"—"Sit thou down there, and I will tell thee a nice story!")

**Albany beef** (American), the sturgeon, so called because Washington Irving spoke of the "hospitable boards" of that city as "smoking with sturgeon." It is also sometimes

called "nigger beef," sturgeon being in some parts of the United States a cheap fish which was once held in very little account. It is to be remarked that several kinds of fish are often spoken of as meat. Thus a Yarmouth bloater is called a two-eyed steak, or a Yarmouth capon; a kind of fish in India is known as Bombay ducks, and a fresh herring is a Billingsgate pheasant.

**Albert** (common), a watch chain.

**Albertopolis**, according to Hotten, a facetious appellation given by the Londoners to the Kensington Gore district. Now obsolete.

**Aldea** (Anglo-Indian and frontier American), a village or a villa, a country-seat. From the Spanish *aldea*, which is in turn derived from the Arabic.

**Alderman** (popular), a half-crown, a long pipe, a turkey. An *alderman* in chains, is a turkey hung with sausages. "Blood and guts *alderman*," a fat and pompous man.

(Thieves), an *alderman*, a large "jemmy" or crowbar, used for opening safes. An extra large one is called a "lord mayor."

**Alderman Lushington**, intoxicating drink. (Patter imported into Australia by convicts.)

Beer or liquor of any kind is *lush*; to *lush* is to drink. Speaking of a person who is drunk, the "flash" fraternity say, "*Alderman Lushington* is concerned," or

simply, "He has been voting for the *alderman*." A *lush-crib*, or *lush-ken*, is a public-house.—*From Vaux's Memoirs*.

**Aldgate pump** (old), a draught on *Aldgate pump* meant a bill of exchange drawn on persons no better able to pay than *Aldgate pump*.

**Ale draper** (old), ale-house keeper.

**Alemnoch** (tinker), milk.

**Ales** (Stock Exchange), a nickname used by men on 'Change for Allsopp & Sons' stock.

**Alexandra limp, the** (common), a fashionable craze, resulting from a toadying imitation of a certain lady well known in society who walks with a slight limp.

Your own advocacy for the Grecian bend and the *Alexandra limp*—both positive and practical imitations of physical affliction.—*Chambers's Journal*.

**Alfred David** (popular), affidavit; also *Affidavy* and *Davy*.

I almost dropped when up she jumped  
And said, "I'm ready now,  
But why this look of thusness  
That is stealing o'er thy brow?"  
I cried, "Avaunt and touch me not!"  
Then bolted up the lane,  
And I'll take my *Alfred David* hot,  
She don't catch me there again.  
—*Blighted Love*, by Harry Adams.

He is engaged in receiving the *afterdavy* of a man who got his head broke by a tinker.—*Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn*.

**Algerines** (theatrical), performers who bully the manager of a theatre when the salaries are

not paid. Also petty money-borrowers.

**All abroad** (common) an expression used when any undertaking has failed, and a person is uncertain as to the course to pursue. A variant is "all at sea."

"Alas! poor ghost!" It's a doubt which is most  
To be pitied—one doom'd to fry, broil,  
boil, and roast,—  
Or one bandied about thus from pillar  
to post,—  
To be *all abroad*—to be "stumped," not  
to know where  
To go—so disgraced.  
—*Ingoldsby Legends: A Legend of Dover*.

**Alla compain** or **alicumpaine** (rhyming slang), rain, termed "parney" in thieves' lingo; also a common sweetmeat derived from the name of the plant.

Of ups and downs I've felt the shock,  
Since days of bats and shuttlecocks,  
And *alicumpaine* and Albert rocks  
When I the world began.

—*The Leary Man*.

He had been noted for an immoderate partiality for the saccharine though indigestible cates known as *alecampaine*, and Bonaparte's ribs.—*Sala: The Baddington Peerage*.

**All afloat**, rhyming slang for a coat.

**All alive** (tailors), garments unfairly or slovenly made.

**All along of**, an illiterate synonym for "on account of," "by reason of," or "owing to such and such a cause." The phrase oc-

curs in print so early as the time of Chaucer, and is therefore in all probability much older.

**All-a-mort** (old), struck dumb, confounded.

**All around sports** (American), men who take an interest in all kinds of sport—racing, shooting, fishing, ball, pedestrianism, sparring, cock-fighting, ratting, &c.

**All at sea** (common), bewildered, confused; “*all at sea* on the question.”

“Dear, do scientific men become sailors when they are scared?”

“Guess not. Why?”

“Because this paper says that since the earthquake the scientists are *all at sea*.”—*Pittsburg Bulletin*.

**All beer and skittles**, recent slang signifying that the life and the circumstances of the person to whom it is made applicable are not so pleasant or so happy as they might be, or as they are represented to be. The allusion is to the supposed amusements of working men in the skittle ground, and to the beer which they drink to refresh themselves during the exercise.

Even the life of an heir to the Russian throne is not *all beer and skittles*. The young Grand Duke has narrowly escaped being sent to the Crimea instead of to Cannes for the benefit of his health.—*Globe*.

The expression is sometimes varied to *all skittles and beer*.

There's danger even when fish are caught  
To those who a wetting fear;

For what's worth having must aye be  
bought,  
And sport's like life, and life's like sport,  
It ain't *all skittles and beer*.

—*Adam Lindsay Gordon's Poems*.

The word *skittles* itself has ceased to belong to slang phraseology. It may be interesting to remark that the game was originally nine pins; but the Blue Laws of Connecticut having forbidden that game, the astute sons of the Puritans added a pin, and made the game ten pins, or, as it is now called, “American bowls.”

**All brandy** (popular), good, profitable, pleasant.

**All bum** (popular), a female with a large bustle.

**All-fired** (English and American), immoderate, violent. This common expression is thought in New England to be an euphemism for “hell-fired.” Thus people talk of an “*all-fired* abuse,” meaning a crying abuse; an “*all-fired* hurry,” *i.e.*, in great haste.

I knows I be so *all-fired* jealous I can't bear to hear o' her talking, let alone writing to.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

**All fours, to be on** (common), to be on good terms, to be exactly similar; probably of Masonic origin, and referring to the completeness and harmony of the four sides of a “square.”

The cases [Bradlaugh *v.* Newdegate, Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh] are on *all fours*.—*Times*.



**All gay** (thieves), a term to denote that the coast is clear, a variant of "all serene," all right. French thieves use the expression "tout est franco" in the same sense.

Having selected one house, at which James Hawes reported to the fourth man that it was *all gay*, which the detective, who was in hiding in a garden, understood to mean that no one was at home, the four men joined together near it.—*The Globe*.

**All-get-out** (American), an old Yankee expression. "Oh, get out!" appears to have suggested it. This is uttered very often when any person announces or says something extravagant. Whence the saying, "That beats *all-get-out*."

But hark! behold! to-morrow thou,  
In deep revenge mayst dry thy tears,  
I hev a plan which you'll allow  
Beats *all-git-out* when it appears.  
—*The Ballad of Tim Zion Boggs*.

**All holiday at Peckham** (popular) is said when there is nothing to eat. *All holiday* means no work, and *Peckham* is a play on "peck," food.

**All hollow, hollow** (old slang), completely, utterly. "I beat him *all hollow* at a race." Probably derived from *wholly*. All whole, or whole-and-all, *heel en al*, is a Dutch idiom; *heel-all*, the universe.

**All in** (racing) means that bets made on horses in the list are to stand whether the horse runs or not.

**All in!** (Stock Exchange), an expression used by men on 'Change

when a market goes flat, and there is a general disposition to sell.

**All in a pucker** (common), in confusion; so hurriedly as to agitate and perplex. Women of the lower classes, especially when suddenly flustered and agitated, will declare themselves *all in a pucker*, and most frequently such a statement will be deemed sufficient qualification to justify a resort to the usual "pick-me-up."

**All in fits** (tailors). See PARALYTIC FIT.

**All mouth** (American), a man who is a great talker, and only a talker, is said to be *all mouth*.

When one Congressman assaults another he generally hits him in the *mouth*, that being about *all* there is to strike at.—*American Journal*.

**All my eye** (popular), nonsense, untrue. Some philologists have suggested—though they have not adopted—a derivation from the Welsh *al mi hivy*, it is very tedious, *i.e.*, it is all nonsense. It seems far more probable that it is a contraction of the phrase "there is as much of it as there is in *all my eye*," the words being made more forcible by closing one of the organs of vision. To express dissent from any statement, or a refusal to comply with a request, French slang has the corresponding term *mon œil!* which is usually accompanied by a knowing wink and

a significant gesture as an invitation to inspect the organ. *All my eye* is sometimes elongated into "*All my eye and Betty Martin*," which seems to have been the original phrase, and of which many explanations have been given. By many it is said to be a corruption of a Popish prayer to St. Martin, commencing with the words, "O mihi beate Martine!" which fell into discredit at the Reformation. Mr. T. Lewis O. Davies thinks that it arose from a gypsy woman in Shrewsbury, named Betty Martin, giving a black eye to a constable, who was chaffed by the boys accordingly. The expression must have been common in 1837, as Dickens gives one of the Brick-Lane testimonials as from "Betty Martin, widow, one child, one eye" ("*Pickwick*," ch. xxxiii.). Taking for granted that the expression originated from the beginning of a prayer (a theory which is now rejected by most etymologists), this would be but one of the many instances of a religious formula being distorted and ridiculed. Thus, the cant term "to patter flash," *i.e.*, to talk in cant, is from "to patter" (signifying to mumble), which itself is probably derived from paternoster. The French use *patenôtres* with the signification of mumbling, and *patenôtres de singe* means muttering, grumbling; *un vobiscum*, from *dominus vobiscum*, in the

mouth of French work-people, is a disparaging epithet for priest. The familiar *cagot*, *i.e.* religious hypocrite, was formerly a friar of a mendicant order. Then ears polite, on both sides of the Channel, are frequently offended by vulgar allusions to the Bulgarian heretics, though the expression has lost its former opprobrious meaning. Again, some etymologists derive the word "bigot" from the first words of a prayer "by God." "Un goddam" used to be synonymous with an Englishman, at the time when it was thought in France that all Britons had red hair, sold their wives at Smithfield, got drunk regularly after dinner (this may have been a fact at the time of three-bottle men), and always had a bull-dog with his nose at their heels. Bailey ascribes the origin of *hoc est corpus meum*, used by quacks, to *hoc est corpus meum*, when this formula fell into ridicule with many others after the Reformation. It is curious to note that old-fashioned French charlatans still use the words *prêchi-prêcha* as an opening to their *boniment* or puffing speech.

**All nations** (obsolete), a coat or garment of different patches; a woman with many colours in her dress. A glass of *all nations* was supplied at the dram shops, and consisted of the mixed drippings of the spirit taps and drops of spirits left in

the measures and glasses. In America this is called "all sorts." It is generally mixed with cayenne pepper. In London "all sorts" is a rapidly intoxicating compound.

**Allo** (pidgin English), all, every. *O* is added to many words in pidgin in an arbitrary manner. "Allo man talkee my so fashion" —"Every man talks to me thus."

Slang-Whang when makee noise,  
Wit 'he pigtail floggee *allo* boys,  
*Allo* this pidgin long tim 'go,  
What tim good olo Empelor Slo.  
—*Slang-Whang*.

**All of a hough** (tailors), very rough, twisted, or slovenly.

**All of my lone** (American), all alone.

**All on the go** (vulgarism), gone, done away with.

Then his supper—so nice!—that had cost him such pains—

Such a hard day's work—now *all on the go*!

'Twas beyond a joke, and enough to provoke

The mildest and best-temper'd fiend below!

—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

**All out** (popular), much, by far; "all out the best," by far the best. To be *all out*, to be quite wrong. (Turf), one who has been unsuccessful during a day's racing is said to be *all out*. (Stock Exchange), *all out*! an expression to denote that the market improves, and that there is a general disposition to buy.

**All out** (athletic), where a runner or walker has done his utmost, and has not a yard up his sleeve.

**All-overish** (vulgarism), a sensation as of illness, chills, shuddering pleasure, or "the creeps" from head to foot.

It made me feel *all-overish* to hear him talk so!

Susan kissed me one, two, three times—  
I swan it made me feel *all-overish* with plum-goodness.

—*An Honest Boy*.

**All over pattern** (decorative design.) "A technical term that is used to denote a design in which the whole of a field is covered with ornament in contradistinction to such as have units only at intervals, leaving spaces of the ground between them. The ornament of the Moors, as seen in the decorations of the Alhambra, and that of Eastern nations generally, is most commonly of this nature; the whole surface of the object is covered with decorative forms so as to present to the eye a mass of elaborate detail, the leading lines of which can often only be detected by careful scrutiny. When, as in some Persian surfaces, these lines are often quite lost, the result is unsatisfactory."—*F. E. Hulme: Suggestions in Floral Design*.

**All over the shop** (common), all over the place; refers also to an obtrusive and exaggerated performance which asserts itself in an offensive manner. In retail

traders' slang it signifies a widely spread movement of any kind, a general scramble, disturbance, or agitation. (Tailors), used of a person or thing taking up too much room.

**Allow** (American), to admit, to declare, to intimate that a thing must be done. This word is quaintly used by rustics in different states to express thought, or opinion on its utterance; to give. "All the people in the room *allowed* that his conduct was perfectly shameful." "He *allowed* he'd give me a new trunk if I'd *allow* him my arm-chair." (Harrow), *allow*, a boy's weekly allowance of pocket-money.

**Allowances** (tailors), *allowances* for making up a garment, *i.e.*, for seams, padding, wadding, buttoning, and respiration.

**All plopa** (pidgin), quite right.

Olo Howqua, he talkee. My wife she velly 'culis 'bout pearlee (is very curious or peculiar as to pearls), she likee one kind pearlee, no other chop (quality) can do; she likee pearlee numpa one lound, he whitey colour. Look, see *all plopa*, allo samee that he Empelor hab got top side he hat. Supposey pearley blongy so fashion, my wiffee too much likee, golaw.—*Howqua and the Pearls.*

**All round** (common), a phrase applied to a thing or person thoroughly adapted to its or his purpose, and signifies in its restricted sense complete and perfect, as "an *all round* man of business," "an *all round* lawyer," "an *all round* sports-

man," "an *all round* gentleman or lady," or even an "all round scoundrel or thief" (in America an "all round crook.") An *all round* man is one who can turn his hand to anything, or a clerk who can undertake all the departments in his business.

A much graver question is raised by the strongly expressed opinion of so many witnesses, that the foreigner is at present a better *all round* man.—*The Times.*

Mr. Cox in the small part of Coquelicot is quite himself as a thoroughly *all round* actor—at all events in appearance.—*Punch.*

An *all round* player at billiards is one who goes in for any kind of stroke, in contradistinction to a player who plays exclusively the spot stroke.

It was very evident that the sympathies of the audience were with the *all round* player rather than with the spot performer. The one was all grace and variety. The other, with plenty of grace, was playing a game which invariably became monotonous after a while. There is no doubt that, nowadays, the British public cares little for billiard exhibitions in which the staple is a continuous succession of spot strokes.—*The Star.*

An *all round* cannon is said of a cannon stroke effected by touching the cushions in succession with one's ball before striking another.

**All-rounder** (common). A shirt collar meeting in front, thus covering the throat, was very fashionable a short time ago, and no "masher" would be seen without one reaching up to his ears.

**All round my hat** (popular), "I feel *all round my hat*," I feel queer, do not feel very well. "That's *all round my hat*" is synonymous with "that's all gammon," or nonsense. From a song which was very popular in 1834.

**Alls** (popular), tap droppings, or inferior spirits, sold cheap; (workmen's), goods and chattels, or, perhaps, more properly, tools. "Come, pack up your *alls* and be off," is a common form of dismissal to a labourer or workman.

**All-same** (pidgin), a very common expression for "the same as," like, or equal.

Supposey you hearee plenty talkee 'bout fashion. Ch 'hoi! my tinkee China-woman, fankwei woman, álo woman, álo tinkey *álo same* inside her mouth. Wat tim you pay plenty dolla', he álo-tim good fashion.—*Howqua and the Pearls*.

**All serene** (popular), all safe, all right.

Who're you, sir?—oh, Mister So-and-so—all right—and this gentleman?—friend o' Mr. W.'s—oh, very well—yes, there's Barney—this a friend o' yours, Barney?—yes?—all right, then—yes, I think we're *all serene!*—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Some years ago the phrase was bawled in the streets, before such expressions as "How's your poor feet?" "Who's your hatter?" came into vogue. The Parisians at this time indulged in equally idiotic inquiries or calls, such as "Et tes pieds sont-ils à la sauce?" "Ohé Lambert! as-tu vu Lambert?"

"Et ta sœur?" Of more recent creation is the stupid "On dirait du veau."

**All smoke, gammon, and pickles** (popular), all deceit, nonsense.

**All sorts.** (See ALL NATIONS.)

**All sorts and conditions of men.** The title of a novel by Walter Besant, and the heading of a well-known collect in the Prayer-Book. It has passed into such common and general use as to have become a truly "fixed popular phrase." (See ALL NATIONS.)

It was a rare mess, *all sorts and conditions of men*, women, and children, dogs and cats, promiscuously intermingled, and all on one grand kick-up.—*American Newspaper*.

**All sorts of** (American). Bartlett defines this as "expert, acute, excellent, capital." It is more accurately, as its name declares, "perfect, complete in every detail, having every quality." *All sorts of a horse* is a horse possessed of *every* merit, not one that is merely excellent or capital. *All sorts of a job* (E. A. Poe, cited by Bartlett) does not mean an expert, acute, or excellent undertaking, but one requiring all conceivable abilities. In this it corresponds to the German *allerlei* and Dutch *allerley*. "Hy is van *allerley* soort voorzien." *Allerley* is, in fact, translated *all sorts* by Sewel.

**Allspice** (popular), a grocer.

**All's quiet on the Potomac** (American). This phrase originated during the Civil War, and has since been the refrain of a very popular song. It denotes quietude; a period of calm enjoyment. "Don't fret about things; they are going on swimmingly, for *all's quiet on the Potomac*."

**All T. H.** (tailors), all right, or very good indeed (stock cutters).

**All the caboose** (common), everywhere. The *caboose* is the galley or cooking place of a ship, or simply a kitchen.

"The fact is he conquers us every one,  
Does love, love, love!  
We don't find it out till the mischief is done,  
By love, love, love!  
To fight against him is no manner of use,  
A gander's a gander, a goose is a goose,  
And Cupid's the king over all the *caboose*.  
Oh! love, love, love!"

**All the go** (common), in demand, fashionable, meeting with a very ready sale.

Jerry Hawthorn was agreeable, and he and Corinthian Tom were soon in the midst of *Life in London*, and lost no time in calling on young Bob Logic, who was a gay spark like his father, and quite *au fait* with all the sprees of the metropolis. "Fashions have changed, my dear Coz," said the Corinthian, "and the young bucks and exquisites seem to us to dress strangely; but I suppose their attire is *all the go* now, and these are the swell suits made by the Dickey Primefit of the day."—*Punch*.

It is also used in America.

A gentleman entered a Chicago gun-store and asked to be shown some revolvers.

"Here is a nice family weapon," said the clerk. "Family weapon?" "Yes, a family weapon. Just the thing for domestic tragedies. It has six chambers, sir, two bullets for your faithless wife, two for the ruthless destroyer of your home, and two for yourself. They are *all the go* now."—*Texas Siftings*.

Fine stock is getting to be *all the go* in that line here now, and there is some as fine here as can be found anywhere.—*Carlisle Correspondence*.

**All there** (general), extensively used with the signification of first-rate, up to the mark. A good player at any game is said to be *all there*; the same is said of a pretty, well-dressed woman. A smart officer also is *all there*. It likewise means to be in one's element.

The band and the 'opping was prime, though, and 'Arry in course was *all there*,

I'd several turns with a snappy young party with stor-coloured 'air;  
Her name she informed me was Polly, and wen, in my 'appiest style,  
I sez, "Polly is nicer than Politics!"  
didn't she colour and smile!

—*Punch*.

**All the shoot** (popular), the whole assembly, all the party. "Every man-jack of them."

The Prince of Wales in a bricklayer's suit,  
I could scarcely believe my eyes.  
Helping to build the Royal Institute!  
At a penny an hour less than *all the shoot*.

Oh! what a surprise!

—*Oh! what a Surprise! Broadside Ballad*.

**All the way down**, or simply **all the way** (common slang, probably American), entirely (*cf.* "down

to the ground"). It implies probably from top to bottom. A common phrase is "that will suit me *all the way down*," or *all the way*.

**All to his own cheek** (tailors) signifies all to himself.

**All to pieces** (common), utterly, excessively. To beat one *all to pieces* is to surpass one altogether. The term is also used by boating men. A crew are said to have fallen *all to pieces* when they are exhausted and the rowing is wild.

**All up** (general), a synonym for "all over," signifies that the end has come to any one, that all is over with him. "All to smash" is another phrase of a similar meaning, applied to a person whose affairs are irretrievably involved, who is utterly bankrupt in fortune. Thus one hears that "So-and-so has gone all to smash," *i.e.*, his credit is gone. Plans, and indeed anything, may go "all to smash." A similar expression is popular among the lower classes in Belgium and Holland, and among children *alle op* signifies that everything is gone—all is over. An odd variety of this slang is sometimes heard in the United States. Mr. Bartlett records that it is a common expression among servants in Pennsylvania to say, "all any more," instead of "all gone" or *all's up*.

**All wag blue** (American), a jolly time, a frolic, a jamboree.—*MS. Americanisms, by C. Lealand Harrison.*

'Tis merry in hall  
When beards *wag all*.

—*Shakespeare.*

**Ally-beg**, a bed. This very ancient and nearly obsolete cant word was expressive of the pleasure found by the vagabond classes in the unusual luxury of a warm and comfortable resting-place for the night. People who slept in a nook in a wall, under a bush or a hedge, or the chance shelter of a barn or outhouse, spoke of a bed as *aille*, pleasant, agreeable, and *beg*, little, *i.e.*, a little place or harbour of pleasantness. *Leab* is Gaelic for a bed, and *leab-beg*, a little bed; and *leab-ker* or *lybker*, a house with beds in it, a lodging-house for travellers.

**Almighty smash** (American). The adjective is used in an infinite variety of ways, and Lord Lytton in a certain measure acclimated it on this side of the water. For example, he speaks in the following quotations of *almighty smash* (that is, a state of complete demolition); of "driving into almighty shivers" (a state of entire collapse); and of "almighty crack" (that is, without ceasing—a reference to the popular crack of doom). These phrases are thus illustrated from one of his best works—

C

"I wish you would mind the child—it is crumpling up and playing *almighty smash* with that flim-flam book, which cost me one pound one."

"As if that was not enough to destroy and drive into '*almighty shivers*,' a decent fair-play Britisher like myself."

"Let us cut short a yarn of talk which, when it comes to likings and dislikings, might last to '*almighty crack*.'"

—*My Novel*.

"The '*almighty dollar*,' that great object of universal devotion throughout our land, seems to have no genuine devotees in these peculiar villages."—*Washington Irving: Creole Village*.

**Almyra**, an Anglo-Indian word for a chest of drawers, derived from the Hindustani *almāri*, and the Portugese *almario*. Old English, *ambry*, a cupboard, niche; Italian, *armadio*; Latin, *armaria*.

**Alsatia** (common), synonymous with low quarter. The higher *Alsatia* was a sanctuary in White Friars, where people were formerly free from arrest for debt. The lower *Alsatia* was also a sanctuary of the same description, and was situated in the Mint in Southwark.

And for this ruin the gambling-house is responsible. Huntley is but one of the thousands who are stripped annually of all they possess in this modern *Alsatia*. Not only of their money, but of their health and of their happiness.—*T. Greenwood: A Gambling Hell*.

Whitefriars, adjacent to the Temple, then well known by the cant name of *Alsatia*, had at this time, and for nearly a century afterwards, the privilege of a sanctuary, unless against the writ of the Lord Chief-Justice. . . . The place abounded with desperadoes of every description—bankrupt citizens, ruined game-

sters, irreclaimable prodigals, &c. &c.—*Scott: Fortunes of Nigel*.

The haunt of gladiators and prize-fighters—of the vicious and penniless—of the savage and the obscene—the *Alsatia* of an ancient city.—*Lord Lytton: The Last Days of Pompeii*.

**Alsatian** (old), a rogue, such as lived in Alsatia or Whitefriars.

He spurr'd to London, and left a thousand curses behind him. There he struck up with sharpers, scourers, and *Alsatians*.—*Gentleman Instructed*.

**Altemal** (American thieves' slang), altogether; the sum total of a story or bill; cut it short. From the Dutch *altemal*, altogether.

What was the *altemal*? It only raised fifteen cases. The dummy raked a case and a half, and the thimble was a first, but the slang and onions were bene.—*On the Trail*.

In olden days the phrase was specially applied to the accounts rendered to the frequenters of brothels, such being given without details—a practice which allowed of gross overcharges without any possible means of verification.

**Altering the jeff's click** (tailors), making up a garment without reference to the cutter's chalk lines or style.

**Altham** (old cant), a "curtall's" wife. A curtall was a second in command in the fraternity of vagabonds.

**Altitude** (obsolete), a drunken man was said to be "out of his *altitude*."



**Amah** (Anglo-Indian), a wet-nurse. Portuguese *ama*, German *amme*, a nurse.

A sort of good-natured housekeeper-like bodies, who talk only of ayahs and *amahs*, and bad nights and babies, and the advantages of Hodgson's ale while they are nursing; seeming, in short, devoted to suckling fools and chronicling small beer.—*Letter from Madras, Yule and Burnell's Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

In pidgin English it has the same signification:—

My look-see, one *amah*, t'at *amah* has got one piecee littee *fankwei* chilo, wat look-see allo-same one Japaneese *nitchky*. I askee *amah*, "How much you sellum my that one piecee culio?"—*The Saucy Sayings of Wan-Tong.*

**Amandi, mende, men** (gypsy), we; *amendi, a men dui*, we two. "Jāsa tu sar amandi, mān se trashno"—"Come with us; don't be afraid."

**Ambassador** (nautical), a practical joke performed on board ship by Jack Tars in warm latitudes, the victim being ducked in the wash-deck tub, and subjected to other indignities (*Admiral Smyth*). Sailors of other nations indulge in similar jokes when crossing the equator.

**Ambia** or **ambeer** (American), a euphemism for salivated tobacco juice, the result of chewing. Bartlett says, "The word is a corruption of *amber*, to which it bears a slight resemblance in colour, manifesting certainly a delicacy of expression which borders upon the poetical."

The word *ambia*, as generally used at Princeton, which largely represents the solid South, is not applied to saliva, but to the intensely strong nicotine, or thick brown substance which forms in pipes. I have always supposed that it is merely a Southern variation of *amber*, which exactly represents its colour.—*Notes by C. G. Leland.*

**Ambidexter** (obsolete), a barrister who acts as a counsel for both parties. Also a blackleg who shares with both parties at the gaming-table, or on the race-course.

**Ambush** (American), a nickname for the scales used by grocers, coal-dealers, &c. So called because they are always "lying in weight."

**Ameen** (Anglo-Indian), an Arabic word *amin*, meaning a trustworthy person, but applied by the English in India to several kinds of native officials, nearly all reducible to the definition of *fide commissarius*. It is also applied to native assistants in land surveying.—*Yule and Burnell: Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

"Bengalee dewans, once pure, are converted into demons; *ameens*, once harmless, become tigers.—*Peterson, Speech in the Nie Durpan case, ibid.*

**Ameer** (Anglo-Indian), originally an Arab word *amin*, root *amr*, signifying commanding or a commander, is used in the East in a very general way for dignitaries and magnates.)

**Amen** (gypsy), among.

*Amen* a shel o' Gorgios,  
Jinas len Romany;  
(Among a hundred Gorgios,  
You'd know the Romany.)

—O. Patteran.

**Amen chapel** (Winchester), a service on "Com. and Ob." (which see), when the responses are chaunted to the organ, and instead of the ordinary psalms and first lesson, Psalms 145, 146, and 147, and Eccles. are used.

**Amen curler** (old), a parish clerk, from the response so frequently made use of by him.

**Amen wallah** (military), the chaplain's clerk, who makes the responses in the garrison or other church. The suffix *wallah* is the well-known Hindustani word signifying man or person, and is one of innumerable instances of the adoption in our army of Hindustani terms, due to the lengthened occupation of India by British troops.

**Amener** (old), a regular *amener*, one who says yes to everything.

**Amerace** (American thieves' slang), very near, within call.

**Americanesses** (American). This version of *Américaine* has begun to appear in Western newspapers.

TALENTED "AMERICANESSES" ABROAD.  
—Miss Anna E. Klumpke, who has been studying for many years under the best Paris masters, can now be ranked among the first American portrait artists. She

received an "Honourable Mention" in last year's Salon for her portrait of her sister, Dr. Klumpke, whose appointment to be house surgeon in the Paris hospitals created no little sensation a year ago in French medical circles. Miss Klumpke, the artist, is now in the South of France finishing a portrait of Miss Elizabeth Cady Stanton.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Americanising** (American).

"*Americanising* a people," according to the Rev. J. S. Gubelman, "consists in teaching them the English language. After this come sundry minor virtues. He is not a true American who desecrates the Sabbath, who yields to intemperance, or treads down the laws."

**American shoulders** (tailors), shoulders cut broad and "built up," to give the wearer an appearance of massiveness about the shoulder.

**American tweezers** (thieves' slang), an instrument by means of which an hotel thief is enabled to open a door fastened with the key in the lock inside.

**Ames all** (old slang), within *ames all*, nearly, very near.

**Aminadab** (cant), a jeering name for a Quaker.

**Ammunition leg** (army), a wooden leg.

**Ampersand** (American, but of English origin), the seat or hinder part. In one of the

Crockett almanacs a hunter speaks of a bear's *ampersand*. Derived from "and per se and," thus explained by Bartlett:—

"Two generations ago, when Irish schoolmasters were common at the South, this expression, equivalent to the & annexed to the alphabet (meaning & *per se and*, to distinguish it from &c.), was in frequent use."

As the *ampersand* came at the bottom of the alphabet, it came to be at length associated with the breach itself.

But he observed in apology, that it (*z*) was a letter you never wanted hardly, and he thought it had only been put there "to finish off th' alphabet, like, though *ampusena* (&) would ha' done as well," for what he could see.—*George Eliot: Adam Bede*.

A shrivelled, cadaverous, neglected piece of deformity, i' the shape of an ezard or an *ampersi-and*, or in short anything.—*Charles Macklin: The Man of the World*.

**Ample form.** Lodge opened by the Grand Master in person, "Due Form" by the deputy, "Form" by other mason or person. Also used colloquially for the "correct thing."

**Amputate your timber, or your mahogany, to** (common), to go away, run off. A variant of "cut your stick," as a person who cuts a walking-stick from a tree or hedge previous to starting on a journey.

**A-muck** (Anglo-Andian), from the Malay *amuk* or *amok*, to run furiously and desperately at any

and every one, to make a furious onset. A word probably derived from the Malay, though there is some reason to ascribe an Indian origin to the term. Malayan scholars say it rarely occurs in any other than the verbal form *mengā muk*, to make a furious assault. It has passed into general use, and is often applied to any one who sets himself up to defy popular opinions, or the multitude. The word was familiar to Englishmen two centuries ago.

Frontless and satire-proof he scours the streets,  
And runs an Indian *muck* at all he meets.

—*Dryden: The Hind and the Panther*, A.D. 1687.

Satire's my weapon, but I'm too discreet

To run *a-muck*, and tilt at all I meet.

—*Pope: Imitation of Horace*, A.D. 1727—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

To run *amock* is to get drunk with opium . . . to sally forth from the house, kill the person or persons supposed to have injured the *amock*, and any other person that attempts to impede his passage.—*Cook's Voyage*.

**Amusers** (English and American), thieves, who formerly used to throw snuff or pepper in a victim's eyes, while an accomplice robbed him, under pretext of rendering assistance.

**Anabaptist** (obsolete), a thief, caught in the act, and doused in the horse trough or pond.

**Analken** (tinker), to wash.

**Analt** (tinker), to sweep, to broom.

**Anava, Anner** (gypsy). In the common dialect *anner* or *hanner*, to bring, fetch, carry.

"If tute 'll *anner* a trustlo levinor mandy 'll pessur lis"—"If you will bring a quart of ale, I'll pay for it."

**Anchor** (nautical). "Bring your a—e to an *anchor*," *i.e.*, sit down; also "bring yourself to an *anchor*," a common phrase.

"Hullo, Pet! . . . *bring yourself to an anchor*, my man." The Pet accordingly anchored himself by dropping on to the edge of a chair.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

"To let go an *anchor* to the windward of the law," to keep just within the letter of the law. Sailors use the expression "to heave *anchor*," meaning to go away.

And yet, my boys, would you believe me?  
I returned with no rhino from sea;  
Mistress Polly would never receive me,  
So again I heav'd *anchor*—yo, yea!

—*C. Dibdin: The Good Ship the Kitty.*

**Anchorage** (popular), a place of abode. The term explaining itself.

**Ancient mariners** (Oxford University slang), rowing "dons" at Oxford. A crew of dons (*vide* DONS) are always called *ancient mariners*.

**And don't you forget it!** (American). This common-place exhortation, as it is popularly used and forcibly intoned, illustrates the fact that any word or expression, by dint of repetition and emphasis, may become associated with humour until it

seems to have something in it beyond its real meaning.

**And he didn't** (tailors), often used to express the belief that a person has really done something discreditable in spite of the attempt to prove his innocence.

**And no mogue** (tailors), and no mistake, joking apart. Sometimes it is used as an interrogation, and at other times to express disbelief; for instance, a man may be relating some incredible story, and an auditor will convey a world of meaning by quietly remarking, but with peculiar emphasis, *and no mogue*.

**And no whistle** (tailors). This remark means, no one seems to think that what you have said applies to yourself, but I do.

**Andrew Miller** (nautical), a man-o'-war; *Andrew Miller's lugger*, a vessel of the royal navy, is smugglers' slang taken out to Australia by the convicts, and is used by accomplices in warning the smugglers of the approach of revenue cutters, &c.

**Anerjäl** (gypsy), over against, *vis-à-vis*. *Mungwé* is also an obsolete term for the same.

An ríkkerdas stardy *anerjäl*,  
To akovo kálo Romany chál.

—*O. Delaben.*

**Angelicas** (popular), young unmarried women.

**Angeliferous** (American), a word signifying "angelic," and first

used by Bird in his novel of "Nick of the Woods," in which roaring Ralph Stackpole frequently calls the heroine "*angeliferous* Madam!"

Heaven, my hyarers, is all sorts of a glorious, beautiful, *angeliferous* place. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, it hath not entered into the heart of any cracker round in these hyar diggings to conceive what carryins-on the jest-made-perfect hev up thar.—*A Hard-West Sermon.*

**Angels altogether** (West Indian), a sobriquet applied to those who habitually give way to excessive drinking.

**Angel's footstool** (nautical), an imaginary sail jokingly assumed to be carried by Yankee vessels. It is said to be a square sail, and to top the "sky sails," "moon sails," "cloud cleaners," &c.—*W. Clark Russell: Sailors' Language.*

**Angel's gear** (nautical), a graceful term used by gallant tars to denote female attire.

**Angel suit** (tailors), vest and jacket combined, and the trousers made to button to the bottom of the jacket. It is now a thing of the past.

**Angel's whisper** (military), the bugle or trumpet call for defaulters' drill. It sounds from three to four times a day, and the expression is undoubtedly euphemistic; like the favourite expletive of the sea captain, who, when reproving his crew,

said: "Bless you, my lads; bless you! You know what I mean."

**Anglaterra, Anghiaterra** (gypsy), England.

**Angled** (billiards), an *angled* ball is one that is so near the edge of the pocket, that a player is prevented from playing at any other ball direct.

**Anglers or hookers** (thieves) petty thieves, who steal goods by means of a stick with a hook at the end.

Suffer none, from far or near,  
With their rights to interfere;  
No strange Abram, ruffler crack,  
Hooker of another pack,  
Rogue, or rascal, frater, maunderer,  
Irish toyle, or other wanderer;  
No dimber-damber, *angler*, dancer.  
—*Ainsworth: Oath of the Canting Crew.*

Modern French thieves call this mode of purloining "grinchissage au boulon," from the circumstance that the hook is inserted through a bolt-hole in the shutters. *Angler* is a very old slang term (nearly obsolete) for an adventurer or catch-penny. It may be found used in Breton's "Wit's Trenchmen" (159) in this sense. It is now also applied to rogues, who at races and country fairs entice the unwary to try their luck at the thimblorig, prick in the garter, three-trick-card, &c.

**Anglo-French.** Much notice has been taken of late of English as

“she is spoken;” not so much of French as “he is Englished,” possibly because it is no longer fashionable in England to use French words needlessly in conversation, although the number of gentlemen who ask for *le-cures* after dinner is still “very respectable.” In the United States it is, however, still very current, if we may believe the assertion of an American “newspaporial writer,” who asserts that “there are on an average six misquotations, malpronunciations, or misapplications of French daily among our entire population per head.”

Detroit is agog over the expected production of a new comic opera, written by Miss Marie M'Kenna, a local musician. It is called “Lucile,” and is a love story of Alsatian peasants. Miss M'Kenna admits that she is “poetess as well as musician.” The following is a stanza from one of her “lyrics”:

Dear Claude will escort me *au bon marche*,  
And whatever we buy will be *recherche*,  
*Recherche*, *recherche*,  
And nicer than anything here.

This is supposed to represent the ecstatic delight of a young girl who has just caught a husband. Miss M'Kenna's French is rather rheumatic, but the verses will touch a chord in every feminine heart.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Anglomaniacs** (American), another name for Bostonians as being ultra-English. There is a club at Boston called the *Anglomaniacs*.

**Angry boys.** Slang of the early part of the seventeenth century, to designate the noisy and riotous young men or “bloods,”

who in drunken or semi-drunken frolics made nocturnal disturbances in the streets, and committed outrages on unoffending passengers. A century later these public nuisances were called Mohawks.

I have heard some speech  
Of the *angry boys*, and seen 'em take to-  
bacco.

← *Ben Jonson: The Alchemist*.

Get thee another nose that will be pull'd  
Off by the *angry boys* for thy conversion.  
—*Beaumont and Fletcher: The Scornful Lady*.

**Angular party** (common), a party composed of three, five, or seven persons.

**Angustrin** (gypsy), a finger, a ring, corrupted to *wongashy*. It also means only a finger's-breadth, or a very little, in any sense. Hence *wongish*, a little, a short time. “‘Hatch a wongish, besh a wongish akai for me,’ pende lāki” — “‘Stop a little, wait a little here for me,’ she said.”

**Animal, to go the whole** (American), in common use in the West. It is a mere, though more popular variant of the English “to go the whole hog,” and means the same.

That they had much better pay first-class, and go the *entire animal*.—*Sala: Twice Round the Clock*.

Opposing all half measures, and preferring to go the *extreme animal*.—*Dickens: Nicholas Nickleby*.

**Animals** (American cadets), the cognomen by which new arrivals

are known at the West Point Military Academy (see also "BEASTS"). The English have "snooker" and the French "melon" as equivalents. A new cadet who puts on extravagant airs and pretensions—a coxcomb or "puppy"—is called "a fast animal."

**Ankair** (gypsy), to begin.

"I ain't lelled kek religion,  
An' I'll kek *ankair* kennā;  
But if waver foki kām lis  
Mikk lendy kair ajā."

—E. H. Palmer.

("I have taken (got) no religion, and I'll not begin now; but if other people like it, let them do so.")

**Ankle** (American thieves' slang).

"She has sprained her *ankle*," she has had an illegitimate child. Also, "She has broken her leg." A somewhat similar expression is used in the French theatrical world; a lady who is *enceinte* is said to have a bad knee: "Elle a mal au genou."

**Anna** (Anglo-Indian). Hindi, *ānā* or *ānāh*, the sixteenth part of a rupee. The term is also applied colloquially to persons of mixed parentage. "Such an one has at least two *annas* of dark blood," or "of coffee colour." This may be compared with the Scotch expression that a person of deficient intellect "wants twopence in the shilling."—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

In the United States this slang is paralleled by the following expressions:—"He" or "she has a lick of the tar-brush."

"He has a white stripe down the back," it being believed that mulattoes or quadroons have a line of light colour on the spine.

**Annex** (American), to steal. It became popular in 1835, at the time of the annexation of Texas, which was regarded by many as a theft.

Robert, "Prince" of the Yetholm gipsies, was recently charged with stealing a pair of spectacles. The "Prince" said that his eyes were in a very queer condition, and that he had no intention of *annexing* the spectacles, which he picked up quite by accident; but the beak remarked that bagging barnacles constituted a serious offence, and was a short-sighted policy for a man to pursue. As "Prince" Robert left the dock he promised faithfully to avoid the eyes of the law in future.—*Fun*.

Some account of this ready-witted Prince Robert may be found in "The English Gypsies and their Language," Trübner, 1874.

**Anodyne necklace** (old), a halter. The hangman's noose was also called the "Tyburn tippet," a "horse's nightcap," a "hempen cravat."

**Anog** (American), an andiron. Bartlett derives this from *hand-dog*, Dutch *aan-hoog*, that which heightens or raises.

**Anointed** (Irish), is expressive of great rascality.

**Anointing** (popular), a sound beating, the effect taken for the cause.

**Anonyma** (obsolete), or *incognita*, a lady of the *demi-monde* or even *quart-de-monde*, corresponds to the French *cocotte*.

The carefully sealed envelopes containing letters from fair *anonymas*.—*Bulwer Lytton: Kenelm Chillingly*.

The late Mr. H. J. Byron, the playwright and actor, in some MSS. annotations to a copy of the "Slang Dictionary," now in the British Museum, says, writing in November 1868, that "Miss —, said to have been the real *Anonyma*, died at Paris about that time." Other synonyms are "pretty horse-breaker," "demi-rep," and the more modern "tart," which, however, is used also in the sense of woman, wife. The lower in the scale are—mot, common jack, bunter, bed-fagot, shake, bulker, gay woman, unfortunate, barrack-hack, dress lodger, &c.

**Another acrobat** (music hall), for another tumbler, *i.e.*, another glass of drink.

**Another fellow's** (popular), a slang phrase which, like most of its kind, owes its popularity to its almost indefinite power of application. Thus if a man remarks that he has a new coat, he is asked if it was *another fellow's*, or if the girl with whom he is in company is not the property of some one else.

Whenever you meet me, I've always a joke,

*Another fellow's.*

I love a good weed, so invariably smoke

*Another fellow's.*

Round into the Cri. every evening I slip,  
And deep in the pale sparkling bitter I dip,

And when I've no money I generally sip

*Another fellow's.*

Not mine, nor yours,

Not his, nor hers,

No, no—*another fellow's.*

—*Another Fellow's Ballad.*

**Another guess sort of man** (old).

The expression is invariably applied to one who is knowing and "fly," or not the man you take him to be. It has a close resemblance both in sound and meaning to the Yiddish "chess." This may be a mere coincidence, but it is certainly of English origin.

He has been a student in the temple these three years; *another guess sort of man*, I assure you.—*Tom D'Urfey: Madame Tickle, 1682.*

**Another lie nailed to the counter**

(American), a very common expression in American newspapers in reference to detected slanders, &c. It was usual in olden times to nail "Bungtown (*i.e.*, Birmingham) coppers," and all kinds of counterfeit or worthless coins, to the counters of the country "stores" or shops. This is mentioned in the "Jack Downing Letters."

"If there is any truth," exclaims the excited editor of a North Carolina paper, "in the story that one of the Chicago Anarchists is employing his time in jail in the perfecting of an invention by which a clarinet, equal in tone to the best in the market, can be made of tin and sold for fifteen cents, the man ought to be hanged at once." Rest easy, brother. None of



the condemned Anarchists is fond enough of work to spend his time in such a manner. The story has doubtless been circulated for political effect. *Another lie nailed.*—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Antagonise** (sporting), to act as an opponent.

Dingley Dell sent Jones and Brown to the wickets, where they were *antagonised* with the leather by Alf and the Young Phenomenon. Alf threw up a maiden.—*The Saturday Review.*

**Anthony cuffs** (old), knock-kneed.

**Anthony** or **tantony pig** (old), the favourite or smallest pig in the litter. To follow like St. Anthouy's pig meant to follow close at one's heels. St. Anthony the hermit was a swineherd, and is always represented with his bell and pig.

**Antimony** (printer's), type.

**Anty-up** (Australian and American), a game of cards.

As they ride up, a savage-looking half-bred bull dog yelps hoarsely, and two or three men creep out from underneath the tarpaulin of the nearest dray, where they have been playing *anty-up* (a favourite game with cards) for tobacco. John recognises a teamster who has been employed by himself.—*D. Sladen.*

From *ante*, the stake with which the dealer at poker commences each hand before dealing the cards; he puts up a "chip" in front of him, hence the name. *Make good the ante*; the dealer, after looking at his hand, must either go out of the

game and forfeit his *ante*, or must make it good by putting up a sum equal to it, so as to make his stake the same as that of the other players. *Raising the ante*; any one at the time of "chipping in" to fill his hand may raise the *ante*, and the other players must then in turn make their stakes equal to the maximum so raised, or else must "run" and abandon what they have already staked.

**Anxious** or **inquirers' meeting** (common, but of American origin), an after-meeting held during a "revival" for the benefit of those who profess "to be *anxious* for their soul's salvation." Those who during "revivals" profess anxiety for "salvation" are said to occupy "the *anxious seat*."

**Anyhow you can fix it** (American), however you may try, try as you may. "I don't see how you can convince me of that, *anyhow you can fix it.*"

Once on a drift log I tink I see an  
alligator,  
Scull my boat roun' and chuck him sweet  
potater.  
I hit him on de head an' try fur to wix it,  
Couldn't fool him bad, *wouldn't nohow  
fix it.*

Den I up wid a brick,  
An' I hit him such a lick!  
An' 'twas nuffin but a pine log upon a big  
stick.

—*Gumbo Cuff, a Negro Ballad, 1832.*

**Any other man** (American). This phrase had a great "run" in 1860. If a man became prosaic,

or began to "discourse," and to use alternatives such as "Brown, or Jones, or Robinson," he was promptly called to order by the cry "or *any other man*." It was first made known in type by Charles G. Leland in a comic sketch in the New York *Vanity Fair*. It has since been discovered that in "Waverley" there is the expression "Gif any man or *any other man*."

**Any racket** (rhyming slang), a penny faggot.

**Anything else, not doing** (American), a strong affirmation generally in reply to a question as to what is or has been done by a third party. "Was So-and-so drunk," or "bad tempered," or "in good spirits?" "He didn't do or want *anything else*," would be the reply.

**Anywhere down there** (tailors), an expression which comes almost simultaneously from every man in the "shop" when anything is dropped on the floor. The words are peculiarly aggravating if it is a breakable article.

**Apartments to let** (popular), a term used in reference to one who is not over bright, whose head requires metaphorically some furniture to fill its empty rooms. The French have a kindred expression for a man who shows signs of becoming crazy, and say that he is removing his furniture, "*il déménage*."

It is related of the celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan that his son Thomas, who was a candidate for a seat in Parliament, jestingly declared to him that he had no decided political principles, that he was inclined to serve the party which would pay him best, and that he should put a placard on his forehead inscribed with the words, "To let." His father replied, "All right, Tom; but don't forget to add, 'unfurnished!'"

**Ape**, an "*ape-leader*" is an old maid. The expression occurs in "The Taming of the Shrew," and is still common. The punishment of old spinsters, it was said, was to lead *apes* in Hades; whereby two equally innocent beings—the maid and the *ape*—were equally but unjustly punished. It is probably an old superstition derived from the East. In India and China, certain evil-doers are supposed to carry about or lead in hell certain animals. (*Vide* Doolittle, "China.") "To say an *ape's* paternoster," is to chatter indistinctly, either from cold or excitement. The expression corresponds to the French "*dire des patenôtres de singe*."

**Apes** (Stock Exchange), a nickname for Atlantic first mortgage bonds.

If anything tickles our fancy,  
We buy them "Brums," "Caleys," or  
"Apes."

—Atkin: *House Scraps*.

**Apollo bunder** (Anglo-Indian), a well-known wharf at Bombay. The word *Apollo* appears to be a very curious change of the native word *palla* or *pallua*, a kind of fish, to that of a Greek god. Other native authorities derive it from *pál*, a fighting vessel, &c.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Apopli** (gypsy), once more, again, yet again. *Kair lis apopli*, do it again; *anpáli*, back again, *lit.*, "or after."

**Apostles** (University, Cantab.). The "Gradus ad Cantabrigiam" says: "The *apostles* are the clodhoppers of literature, who have at last scrambled through the Senate House without being plucked, and have obtained the title of B.A. by a miracle. The last twelve names on the list of Bachelor of Arts—those a degree lower than the *οἱ πολλοί*—are thus designated." The *apostles* are so called because they are twelve in number. (Common) "to manœuvre the *apostles*," to borrow money from one person to pay another, an allusion to the expression, "Robbing Peter to pay Paul."

**Apostle's Grove**, St. John's Wood, also called "Grove of the Evangelist." Evilly disposed persons might remark that the place is saintly only in name, as in some parts it corresponds to the Rue Breda of Paris, where ladies of the *demi-monde* and even *quart-de-monde* dwell.

**Apple-cart** (popular), the human body. The term is in keeping with the "potato trap," which does duty in the slang vocabulary for mouth; the "bread basket," for stomach; "crum-pet," for head, &c. To the imaginative powers of costermongers we probably owe the metaphor. One will say that his *apple-cart* is upset, meaning that he has been disappointed by the failure of his plans. (American) "To 'upset one's *apple-cart* and spill the peaches,' means to ruin any undertaking. The phrase was originally American, and had peculiarly this signification Hotten's limitation of it to the human body was all conjecture and fancy."

**Apple-dumpling shop** (common), a fat woman's exposed breasts. The French argot, with more *galanterie*, terms the same "oranges sur l'étagère."

**Apple-pie bed** (general), is made by untucking the sheet at the bottom of the bed and doubling it up, so as to form a sort of bag half way down the bed and thus preventing the owner from stretching himself at full length. A common trick of mischievous boys and girls at boarding-schools and elsewhere.

**Apple-pie day** (Winchester college), the last Thursday in Long Half, when the "men" get their money and the scholars get *apple-pie*.

**Apple-pie order** (common), in regular order. "Order" is an old word for a row, and a properly made apple-pie had, of old, always an order, or row of regularly cut "turrets," or an exactly divided border. Pies are seldom made now in this manner in England, but in rural America, especially in New England, they are still common.

I am just in the *order* which some folks—though why I am sure I can't tell you—would call *apple-pie*.—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

**Apples and pears** (rhyming slang), the stairs.

**Application** (Irish), name; a corruption and perversion of appellation.

I am not Aurora,  
Or the beauteous Flora,  
But a rural maiden to all men's view,  
That's here condoling  
My situation,  
And my *application* is the Colleen Rue.  
—*Colleen Rue: Broadside*.

**Appro** (trade), a contraction of approbation. "On *appro*," on sale for return. The term is used by tradesmen generally.

**Appropriation** (tailors), garments taken from old rejections and worked in for another "force," or the next "supply" for the same.

**Apronstring-hold** (old), an estate held by a man during his wife's life.

"There are many estates like leasehold, freehold, and copyhold, but a man least likes the *apronstring-hold*."

**Aqua pumpaginis** (old), pump-water. Termed also "Adam's ale," and "fish broth," formerly, when people with weak stomachs did not make a virtue of necessity, and when the others only "pledged" themselves in bumpers of old Burgundy.

**A-ratti, arāti** (gypsy), by night.

"Oh mandy jins *arāti* to kister off a gry"—

"Oh I know how to ride a horse off by night."

**Arch** (popular), a boat.

I goes and sneaks a mikket and a lot of lines of a pal's *arch*.—*H. Evans: The Brighton Beach Loafer*.

**Arch-cove** (thieves), leader of mob or party.

**Archdeacon** (Oxford), the Merton strong ale.

**Arch dell** (old), the wife of a headman of vagrants. Termed also "arch doxy."

**Arch-duke** (American thieves), a funny fellow.

**Arch-gonnof** (American thieves), chief of a gang of thieves; termed "dimber damber," "upright man," in old English cant; and *archi-suppôt* in the old French argot. *Gonnof* is Yiddish for thief; Hebrew, *ganef*.

**Ard** (American thieves), hot; evidently from *ardent*. In old cant it had the signification of foot.

**Area sneak** (popular), one who sneaks into kitchens to steal. Other varieties of malefactors go by the appellations of "prig, cracksman, crossman, sneaksman, moucher, hooker, flash-cove, bug-hunter, cross-cove, buz-faker, fogle-hunter, stook-hauler, toy-getter, tooler, prop-nailer, palmer, dragsman, buz-gloak, amuser, bob-sneak, bouncer, bully-prigger, thimble-twister, gun, conveyancer, dancer, pudding-snammer, ziff, drummer, knuck, buttock-and-file, poll-thief, little snakesman, mill-ben, a cove on the cross, flash-man, finder, gleaner, picker, tax-collector," and formerly "a good fellow, a bridle-cull, a sampsman, an angler."—*Barrière's Argot and Slang*.

**Argify** (popular), a jargon corruption of to argue.

"The European league of Peace and Liberty have just held a congress at Geneva. The first sitting was very noisy. Most 'leagues' prefer liberty to peace, when it comes to *argifying*."

Do you want to *argify*, you little beggar.  
—*Leech's Cartoons*.

**Argol-bargol**. According to Hotten this is a Scotch phrase signifying "to bandy words." It is possible that it has a Hebrew derivation. *Bar-len* in Yiddish is, "to talk or speak in any way," and *bargolis* is one who goes about in misery and poverty, perhaps a fluent beggar. *Argol* is the popular pronunciation of *ergo*—as given by Dame Quickly—a word which

of old was continually used in argumentative conversation.

**Aristippus** (old), a diet drink much in vogue in the latter part of the last century. It was made of sarsaparilla and other drugs, and sold at the coffee-houses.

**Ark** (thieves), a boat or vessel. (Military), a box in the barrack-room used for holding extra articles of a man's kit. In America a large boat used on rivers to transport produce to market.

It may be noted, that in the northern counties the large chests in farm-houses used for keeping meat or flour are called *arks*. Villon, the old French poet, in his Jargon Jobelin, terms *arque* a coffer or money-box, and in the modern French argot "aller à l'arche" means to go frequently to the money-box, to spend one's money freely.

**Ark and dove** (masonic), an American degree preparatory to the R.A.

**Arkansas toothpick** (American), a large bowie knife which shuts up into the handle. It is a piece of savage irony which thus dubs it, as the blade, which has a point of half its length, is over a foot long and two inches broad.

Straightway leaped the valiant Slingby,  
Into armour of Seville,  
With a strong *Arkansas toothpick*,  
Screwed in every joint of steel.

—*Ben Gaultier: American Ballads, B.*

**Ark floater** (theatrical), an actor so loaded with years, that he is supposed, through some effort of the imagination, to have made his *début* before the "floats," *i.e.*, the footlights in Noah's ark. People will say, "You must have come out of the *ark*," or "You were born in the *ark*;" because you are so old-fashioned, and ignorant of current events.

**Ark-man** (old), Thames boatman (Baumann).

**Ark-ruff** (old), fresh-water thief.

**Armpits** (old), petty larceny. The term has been imported into Australia by the convicts. Vaux, in his *Memoirs*, says: "*To work under the armpits*, is to practise only such kinds of depredation as will amount, upon conviction, to what the law terms single or petty larceny, the extent of punishment for which is transportation for seven years. By following this system a thief avoids the halter, which certainly is applied above the *armpits*." Watches are stolen by using the right hand under the *armpit* of the left arm, which is put across the breast.

**Armstrong, Captain** (turf), a dishonest jockey. "He came *Captain Armstrong*" is equivalent to saying that the rider *pulled* with a strong arm, thus preventing his horse from winning.

**'Arry**, for Harry, a familiar general term for a young costermonger

dressed in his best clothes when taking a Sunday walk with his young woman. The corresponding word for the young woman is "Sarah Jane" or "Jemima." The *'Arries* are almost indigenous to London, are generally to be seen with short pipes in their mouths, and swarm at fairs and races and other places of public resort, talking slang and puffing tobacco smoke, and if not altogether of the same genus as the roughs and rowdies that infest great cities, are little removed from them in manners, appearance, and conversation.

*'Arry* smokes a two-penny smoke

Oh! poor *'Arry!*

*'Arry's* pipe's enough to choke,

Bad boy, *'Arry!*

*'Arry* thinks it very good fun

To puff his cheap cigar

Into the faces of every one

While doing the la-di-da.

—*Ballad: How do, 'Arry?*

The female *'Arry* is sometimes called an "'Arriet."

As an inhabitant of Munster Square, I am quite content to gaze on the "green space," and should be very sorry to see it become the rendezvous of the *'Arries* and "'Arriets" of the neighbourhood.—*The Echo*.

**Arse-board**, the hinder part of a cart.

**Arse coolers** (vulgar), a term used by common women in speaking of dress-improvers.

**Arsy-varsy** (old), topsy-turvy, heels over head.

"The old mare pitched him *arsy-varsy* into the ditch."

- Artesian** (Australian, popular), Colonial beer. People in Gippsland, Victoria, use *artesian* just as Tasmanians use *cascade*, in the sense of "beer," because the one is manufactured from the celebrated *artesian* well at Sale, Gippsland, and the other from the *cascade* water.
- Artful** (popular), a word of wide application to intimate trickery, secrecy, and "dodgers."
- He'd an *artful* little bottle on an *artful* little shelf,  
He was not "a little silly," but a very knowing elf.  
—H. Adams: *Sister Hannah*.
- Artful dodgers** (thieves), lodgers; fellows who dare not sleep twice in the same place for fear of arrest.
- Artichoke** (American thieves), a low and old prostitute. It is curious to note that the French argot has the term *cœur d'artichaut* to denote a man or woman of a highly amatory disposition.
- Paillason, quoi! *cœur d'artichaut*,  
C'est mon genre; un' feuille pour tout l' monde,  
Au jour d'aujourd'hui j'gobe la blonde;  
Après d' main, c'est la brun' qu'i m'faut.  
—Gill: *La Muse à Bibi*.
- Article** (popular), a poor specimen of humanity; also, a wretched animal.
- Articles** (American thieves), a suit of clothes; termed in the English slang, "togs, toggery, clobber."
- Articles of virtue** (familiar) (*i.e.*, *vertu*), virgins.
- Artistic**. It is a common error to suppose that *artistic* is a synonym for beautiful, symmetrical, or attractive. That only is *artistic* which, being made by the hand of man, indicates direct individual character and touch. The more machinery intervenes between the original pattern and the mere copy, the less *art* is there. The Sistine Madonna is truly a work of *art*, the most perfect chromo-lithographic copy of it is not. As used by many tradesmen, to indicate their cast works, machine-sawed furniture, &c., the word *art* or *artistic* is mere slang.
- Asā, asārla, asārlus** (gypsy), thus, so, in this manner.
- Ash path** (running), a running path formed of pulverised cinders or black ash.
- Ask bogy** (old slang), an indecent evasive exclamation used by sailors when not wishing to answer any question.
- Askew** (old cant), this may be a corruption of *escuelle*.
- Asking** (turf), a jockey is said to "ask" or "call upon" a horse when rousing him to greater exertion.
- Assay** (American thieves' slang), commence, try it. From the

expression to take the *assay* or *essay*, to taste wine to prove that it is not poisoned. Hence to try, to taste, trial or sample. Shakspeare uses the term.

(He) makes vow before his uncle, never more  
To give the *assay* of arms against your majesty.

—*Hamlet*.

**Asses** (printers). See **DONKEYS**. Term used by pressmen for compositors, by way of retaliation in calling them "pigs." The animal creation has furnished a variety of slang terms for French printers in sufficient numbers to form a small menagerie. Thus a compositor is called "mulet;" a master or foreman, "singe;" a newspaper, "canard" (which also means false news); to have "one's monkey up," that is, to be angry, is "gober sa chèvre" or "son boëuf," from the effect produced by the horns of the animal in the metaphoric operation; a letter which has fallen from the form is termed "chien;" a creditor, "loup;" an idle workman who disturbs others, "ours." "Poser une sangsue" is to correct one's fellow-workman's work in his absence. The German typos say that one receives his "herring" when he gets dismissed from his employ.

**Astern** (common), behind, in the rear of; from the nautical term.

**Asti** (gypsy), would have, have to; *astis*, can, possible; *asti*

*si*, it can be; *nasti nesti*, it is not possible, *i.e.*, it cannot be.

**Astral body** (theosophist), a phrase borrowed from the Rosicrucians, and used by Paracelsus and Van Helmont. It signifies a semi-spiritual self, which goes forth from the body.

Then there is *the astral body*, which is a nice thing to have, as it can be made responsible for all the doings of the carnal body, and can be pressed into service for any occasion when the latter would be of no account, even to the materialising of strawberries in January, or crockery at picnics when the necessary plates and cups have been forgotten. The only difficulty with *the astral body* is its unreliability. It is such a subtle, slippery thing that the owner, unless he hangs on to it with the utmost tenacity, is apt to lose it just when he most needs it, like the Buddhist in New York who was jailed the other day. He had been in the habit of depending upon his *astral body* for the materialisation of coin to meet his expenses, and when arrested for obtaining money under false pretences could only defend himself by saying that he had lost his *astral body*. As he could not show that he had taken any pains to find it, and had not even advertised a reward for it, he had to take the same penalties that are imposed upon those who have no *astral bodies* to fall back upon in time of financial emergency. —*Chicago Tribune*.

**Atch, hatch** (gypsy), to remain, stay.

"Sa mandy *hatched* to kūr, my rye"—  
"So I stayed to fight, my master."

**Atmosphere** (American, Boston), a new slang phrase of society and literature thus explained by an American journal:—

"The cant of the day is the word *atmosphere*, which has displaced 'tone.' When people tried to be exquisite they spoke of



the tone of a novel, a club, or a person. Now it is *atmosphere*. A city is said to have a peculiar *atmosphere* when its people and their customs seem peculiar to the observer. Such words are very convenient when people have nothing particular to say, and mean to say it impressively."

**Atomy** (popular), a small or deformed person. Varied sometimes to an "abortion."

**Atrāsh** (gypsy), afraid.

"An whenever the baval pudered he was *atrāsh* he'd pel a-lay pré the shinger-ballas o' the *gūro*—" "And whenever the wind blew he was afraid he would fall down on the horns of the bull."—*The English Gypsies*.

**At that** (American), meaning something in addition to, an intensive. Said to have originated in Pennsylvania, and to be a translation of the German *dazu*. "She is beautiful and rich *at that*," "She is old and ugly *at that*." It is also used upon a variety of occasions, without reason or necessity.

"Now then, Mister, drinks all round, and cobblers *at that*."—*Notes on Canada*. He's got a scolding wife, and an ugly one *at that*.—*Bartlett*.

The Mississippi's a mighty big drink—and a muddy one *at that*.—*Idem*.

The practice with one-half of the New Yorkers, of moving on the first of May, is an awful custom, and foolish *at that*.—*Major Downing*.

In Australia one talks of dear *at that*, weak *at that*, &c., some such word as "rate" or "price" being understood.

So we'll drain the flowing bowl,

"Twill not jeopardise the soul,

For it's only tea and weak *at that*.

—*Keighly Goodchild: The Old Felt Hat*.

**Attic** (popular), the human head, to be "queer in the *attic*," to be intoxicated or cracked. A somewhat similar term in the French slang is "*grenier à sel*." The synonyms are, "knowledge-box, tibby, costard, nob, nut, chump, upper storey, crum-pet."

**Attleborough** (American), sham. Sham jewellery, from the town of Attleborough, in Massachusetts, where much imitation or trashy jewellery is made.

**Attorney** (thieves). The term is applied to a cunning fellow, or at least one who passes himself off as such; clever in getting round people, or *turning* difficulties (*attorney*, French *à tourner*); a loafer who pretends to a full knowledge of the legal meshes in which the light-fingered gentry are occasionally involved. The *attorney* is always ready to give advice in these and other matters for a small consideration in money, and failing that, for a glass of any kind of "tipple" at the nearest "pub." This distant relation to the great family of "limbs of the law" hangs about the favourite resorts of other kinds of "practitioners," *i.e.*, thieves. He is considered as a shining light by some, as an impostor by others, but whatever the case may be, he distinguishes himself from the real *attorney* by the low rate of his charges.

**Attorney-General's devil** (legal).

This is a barrister, who, not being a Queen's Counsel, is appointed by the Attorney-General for the time being to be his "junior" in Government cases. He is always one of the best men at the junior bar, and as such is chosen by the Attorney-General.

**Attory**, venomous, from adder, a poisonous little serpent, originally spelt and pronounced *ad-dery*. Chaucer in the "Person's Tale" speaks of *attry anger*; Anglo-Saxon *attor*, poison.

**Auctioneer** (popular), to tip him the *auctioneer*, is to knock a man off his legs. Derived from the saleroom phrase to knock down.

**Audit** (Winchester), the day on which the students receive their pocket-money, called also "apple-pie day."

**Audit ale** (Cambridge), very strong ale supposed to be drunk on audit day. It is peculiar to Trinity College. About two centuries ago, some ale was brewed for that college which was so strong and good that the recipe was preserved with care, and the ale has ever since been made every year in a limited quantity. Professors and undergraduates are allowed to purchase a certain number of bottles. This ale will burn like spirits when thrown into the fire.

The table was spread with coffee, *audit*, devils, omelets, hare-pies, and all the other articles of the buttery.—*Ouida: Held in Bondage*.

**Audley** or **orderly** (theatrical), a term used by theatrical showmen when they wish to abridge the performance, in consequence of there being a sufficient number of persons waiting to fill "another house." The manager or parade master will then call out, John Orderly!

**Auger** (American), a prosy fellow, a bore.

**Aul. præ.** (Winchester), an abbreviation which stands for *Præfectus Aulæ*, that is, Prefect of Hall.

**Auly-auly** (Winchester), a game played on "grass court" on Saturday afternoons after chapel. It is played by throwing a small cricket ball at your opponent.

**Aunt.** This term, as used in the phrase at "my *aunt's*," in a brothel, is obsolete. The old slang of the Elizabethan era, *aunt*, had the signification of a concubine, a prostitute, or a woman of loose morals, or, worse, a procuress. "Mine *aunt* will feed me," was a common phrase at one time, meaning an agent who would procure virgins for the purposes of debauchery. Shakspeare and Ben Jonson use the word.

The lark, that tirra-lirra chants,—  
 With, hey! with, hey! the thrush and  
 the jay :—  
 Are summer songs for me and my *aunts*,  
 While we lie tumbling in the hay.

—*Shakspeare.*

The more modern expression for a concubine—who lives in a single man's house without either of them letting the world into the real secret of the connection—is “niece.” Thus many reverend gentlemen in Catholic countries, whose vows of chastity debar them from enjoying the sweets of paternity, are fain to content themselves with being the uncles of pretty “nieces.” A *curé's* niece is a standing joke in France. The sons of the Pope—if these high ecclesiastical dignitaries have any, as they had in ancient times far more frequently than in the present—are called “nephews.”

To go to “my *aunt's*,” to go to the privy. The expression is nowadays used chiefly by girls, who say among themselves, “I am going to my *aunt*,” or “I am going to my *auntie*.”

**Australian flag, the** (Anglo-Australian slang), the bottom of a shirt. The Australian who lives up the country generally wears a belt instead of braces, the result being that when he exerts himself, there is usually a great fold of shirt protruding between his small clothes and his waistcoat, which Englishmen have called in scorn *the Australian flag*. The Cornstalk talks of

him as a “new chum;” he talks of the Cornstalk as “showing *the Australian flag*.”

**Australian grip** (up country Australian), a hearty shake of the hand (compare MASONIC GRIP.) The bushman shakes hands very heartily—a long grip with the whole hand, following three deep shakes. He does not crush your hand; but he is sarcastic about the “limp shakes” and “one-finger shakes” of people “newly out from home.”

None the less

Was he a graceful, well-bred host,  
 But he was hearty in accost,  
 And giving the *Australian grip*  
 And good up-country fellowship  
 As bushmen.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: A Summer Christmas.*

**Autem** or **autum**, a church. This word, which is of the oldest cant, and is given by Harman, is probably the Yiddish *a'thoumme*, a church (*tife* being the common term), which in ordinary conversation would be pronounced *autem*. It seems to have been at first always associated with clerical marriage, and as in cant Adam and Eve are terms for husband and wife, it is possible that *Autem* also owes something to *Oudem* or *Oudem*, as Adam is pronounced in Yiddish. *Thoumme* or *tume* really means the forbidden or impure (church). (“Unrein verboten.”—*Thiele*.) “A,” or “ah,” is the vulgar Yiddish pronunciation for “Ein.” It is curious to note that in old

French cant a church was termed *entonne* or *entifle*, *tifle* being Yiddish for church.

**Autem bawler** or **autem-jet** (old), a parson. The more modern slang has the epithets, "devil dodger," and "sky pilot."

At last Job explained the cause of my appearance, viz., his wish to pacify Dawson's conscience by dressing up one of the pals, whom the sinner could not recognise, as an *autem bawler*, and so obtaining him the benefit of the clergy without endangering the gang by his confession.—*Bulwer Lytton: Pelham.*

**Autem cackle tub** (old), conventicle, or Dissenters' meeting-house.

**Autem cacklers** (old), Dissenters. It also means married women.

Oh! where will be the culls of the bing,  
A hundred stretches hence?

The bene morts, who sweetly sing,  
A hundred stretches hence?

The *autem-cacklers*, autem coves,  
The jolly blade who wildly roves;  
And where the cuffer, bruiser, blowen,  
And all the cops and beaks so knowin',  
A hundred stretches hence?

—*A Hundred Stretches Hence.*

**Autem cove** (thieves), a married man.

**Autem dippers** or **divers** (old), Anabaptists, from the custom of dipping or baptizing the converts.

**Autem divers** (old), church pick purses, and derisively, the churchwardens and overseers of the poor.

**Autem goglers** (old), pretended French prophets.

**Autem jet** (old), one of the innumerable equivalents for a parson. *Autem*, a church; *jet*, black, from the prevailing hue in a parson's dress.

**Autem mort** (old cant). A legal wife, whose marriage has been celebrated in a church. It does not apply to marriages celebrated by "hedge parsons" on the highway, as rendered memorable by the lines supposed to have been given to a pair of gypsy lovers by Dean Swift:—

"Beneath this tree in rainy weather,  
I've joined this whore and thief together;  
And none but *He* who wields the thunder  
Shall part this whore and thief asunder."

The *autem-mort* finds better sport  
In bowing then in nigling,  
This is bien bowse, this is bien bowse.

—*R. Brome: A Jovial Crew.*

**Autem prickears** (old), a general name for Dissenters. (See AUTEM CACKLERS.)

**Autem quavers** (old), Quakers.

**Autem quaver tub** (old), a Quakers' meeting-house.

**Author baiting** (theatrical), a sprightly pastime, invariably indulged in on the first night of an unsuccessful play. The process is as follows:—

"*First.*—Set your trap, and catch your *author*. In order to do so—call for him with spontaneity, and apparent enthusiasm.

"*Second.*—When you have caught him, that is, as soon as he puts his head before the curtain, go for him, shout, shriek, yell, bellow, hiss, emit a flood of 'obscure noises from filthy lips.'

“When you have degraded yourself to the level of the lowest standard of humanity, and when you have insulted the unfortunate dramatist by every means which your paucity of brains and plenitude of lungs can devise, your *author baiting* is complete.”

**Av** (gypsy), come; *avakái*, come here. Full form *me avava*, I come. “If tute’ll *av* akai mandy’ll del tute a horra”—“If you’ll come here, I’ll give you a penny.”

*Av* my little Romany chel,  
*Av* along with mansar!  
*Av* my little Romany chel,  
 Koshto si for mangue.

—Borrow.

**Avails**, profits or advantages, abbreviated into *rails*, is the gratuities given by visitors or guests in great houses to servants for civilities, attentions, or services rendered.

**Avast** (nautical), a sailor’s phrase for stop, cease, stay. According to Webster a corruption of the Dutch *houd vast*, hold fast.

Some etymologists connect it with the old cant term “bynge a waste.” Others ascribe its origin to the Italian *basta*, enough. This derivation seems plausible, from the circumstance that French workmen use *basta* with the same signification as English tars.

*Avast* heaving a minute, Tom, and we’ll light our pipes and gather round and spin cuff; what do you say, lad?—  
*Rare Bits.*

“No satisfactory explanation of this term, which occurs

in the oldest English canting,” says C. G. Leland, “has ever been offered.” In gypsy, *vast* or *vast* (Hindu, *hasta* or *hast*) means a hand, and, as in English, it is intimately connected with using the hands or being ready. *Chiv a vast ado!* means exactly in Romany, “put a hand there!” “be alert!” It is equivalent to “lend a hand!” It will be readily understood that the injunction to lend a hand might easily become a synonym for “attend there!” “observe!” or “look out!” It is to be remarked that in modern English, gypsy *hatch a wongish!* means “stop a bit!” or, literally, “stop a thumb!” *Wongish* is a corrupted form of *angustrin*, a finger or thumb, and it seems to be a synonym for a bit or small piece, because a digit forms a smaller portion of the hand. “I’ll not bate a finger’s breadth of it.” *Vast*, meaning a hand, appears to denote a greater extent or quantity, *e.g.*, “a hand’s breadth better,” and is sometimes confused with *vast*, meaning a great deal. An old Yorkshire song says—

“But Tom got the best of this bargain  
*avast*,  
 And came off wi’ a Yorkshireman’s  
 triumph at last.”

Wright gives *vast* as meaning a waste or deserted space. In the song the actual meaning is that the victor beat his antagonist not *vastly* but by a little, or “by a hand,” *i.e.*, “barely,”

as the succeeding lines clearly prove:—

“For though between dead horses there’s  
*not much* to choose,  
 Yet Tom’s were the better by the hide  
 and four shoes.”

*Avast* in old cant has the signification of away.

*Avast* to the pad, let us bing.—*T. Middleton: Roaring Girl.*

**Avering**, the trick of a beggar boy who strips himself and goes naked into a town with a false story of his being cold and robbed of his clothes, to move compassion and get other clothes. This is called *averis* and to go an *avering*.—*Old Manuscript in the Lansdowne Collection, quoted in Wright’s “Archaic Dictionary.”*

The word is evidently gypsy, from *avcr*, to come or go, as further appears by *averis*, *is* or *os* being (as is common in Indian dialects) a suffix to form a noun (*vide* Av).

**Āvo, āwo, auwo, āwali, avali** (gypsy), yes. *Avali* is rare in England, but it may be commonly heard in Hungary.

Lel a chūmer del a chūmer  
*Avo, āwali!*  
 Buti, buti, sār pa tūte,  
 Mīro kāmlo zi.

Take a kiss—give a kiss—yes—yes. Many and many, all for you, my dear heart.

—*Janet Tuckey.*

**Avoirdupois lay** (old), stealing brass weights off shop counters.

**Awake** (general), on one’s guard, warned, put up to.

“A common expression of the ‘family people;’ thus a thief will say to his accomplice on perceiving that the person they are about to rob is aware of their intention and upon his guard, ‘Stow it, the cove’s *awake.*’ To be *awake* to any scheme, deception, or design, means, generally, to see through or comprehendit.”—*From Vaux’s Memoirs.*

**Awer** (gypsy), but. This recalls the German *aber*, but it is probably only a form of the affirmative *awo*.

**Awful**. This word does duty in fashionable slang for “very.” Girls and women are no longer “very pretty” or “very handsome,” but “*awfully* pretty” or “*awfully* handsome.” The expression is sometimes varied into “*dreadfully*.” An *awful* shame or pity, or a *dreadful* shame or pity, are common expressions both among the high and low vulgar. “An *awfully* fine day” is a favourite expletive among young and old, but especially among the young. All these, and countless other perversions of the word, might fitly be described as *awfully* destructive of the grace, elegance, and purity of the English language. In like manner *very* laughable farces are declared to be *scramingly* funny or *excruciatingly* funny; as if very were no longer an English word.

“The lumberer very rarely mixes in polite society, but when he does he never fails to make his mark. Only a few weeks ago he was introduced to —, and that effusive young lady was quite charmed with him.

“‘I think him *awfully* nice,’ she said; ‘I am quite taken with him.’

“And so were they all, until a subsequent examination of the sideboard disclosed the fact that a considerable portion of the plate had likewise been taken with him.”

The Philadelphia Press quotes

“a charming old lady’s advice to girls—very excellent advice indeed, to the sweet-faced damsels who are making their first bows to society this winter.

Firstly, what to avoid :

“A loud, weak, affected, whining, harsh, or shrill tone of voice.

“Extravagances in conversation—such phrases as ‘*awfully* this,’ ‘beastly that,’ ‘loads of time,’ ‘don’t you know,’ ‘hate’ for ‘dislike,’ &c.

“Sudden exclamation of annoyance, surprise, and joy—often dangerously approaching to female swearing—as ‘bother!’ ‘gracious!’ ‘how jolly!’”

**Awkward squad** (military and nautical), a squad formed of the men who are backward in drill instruction. The French have the corresponding term, “Le peloton des maladroits.”

**Axe to grind**, an (American, political), said when a man who

has some pet scheme or hobby of his own in view, supports another who may in the future be useful to him. Such men are said to have *axes to grind*.

Special legislation in behalf of private interests is one of the curses of this country, otherwise so blessed by the smiles of Divine Providence. The number of *axes* which are taken to the various State Capitols, to be ground at the public expense, is perfectly enormous.—*New York Tribune*.

The phrase is derived from a story told by Benjamin Franklin in his life. Once when he was a boy, a man who wanted to grind an axe persuaded little Benjamin by flattery to turn the stone till he was utterly weary and his hands were sore, and then when it was done, told him rudely to be off. After this, whenever anybody was extremely amiable, the great American philosopher speculated whether the polite person had not an *axe to grind*.

**Ayah** (Anglo-Indian), a Hindoo nurse or lady’s attendant. From the Portuguese *aia*, a nurse.

**Ayrshires** (Stock Exchange), is used to describe Glasgow and South-Western Railway stock.



(fenian). In the Fenian vocabulary this letter stands for a captain.

**Bā** (gypsy), brother, friend. This resembles the north-country *bor*, but is of Hindu origin.

**Babblers** (sport), ill-bred hounds; when the pack is questing the *babblers* frequently open without cause.

**Babelo-dye, babalo-dye** (gypsy), grandmother.

**Babes** (trade), the "small fry" or lower orders of "knock-out" men who are bought over by the larger dealers just previous to a sale coming off, and who for a few shillings retire altogether, or promise to make no biddings while the lot is held by any of the other party.

**Baboo** (Anglo-Indian), from the Bengali and Hindu *Bābū*, which is properly a term of respect, like Master or Mr. Its application in this sense is now confined to Lower Bengal, though C. P. Brown states that it is also used in Southern India for My Lord or Your Honour. In Bengal and elsewhere it is often used among Anglo-Indians with a slight savour of disparagement, as characterising a superficially cultivated but too often effeminate Bengali. From the extensive employment of the class to which the term was applied as

a title, in the capacity of clerks in English offices, the word has come often to signify a native clerk who writes English.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

"But I'd sooner be robbed by a tall man who showed me a yard of steel, Than be fleeced by a sneaking *Baboo* with a peon and badge at his heel."

—*Sir A. C. Lyall: The Old Pindaree.*

**Baboo-English** (Anglo-Indian). This term is applied to the peculiar English which is rather written than spoken by the natives in India. It is difficult to describe, not being specially ungrammatical or faulty as regards orthography, and yet it is the drollest dialect of English known. It is most humorous when the writer has made himself familiar with, let us say Shakspeare and the *Referee*, the Bible and the "Slang Dictionary," Artemus Ward, Milton, *Punch*, and the "Polite Letter Writer," and then contrives to happily unite all their characteristics with most unexceptionable gravity and skill. It is said that a converted Baboo, wishing to combine devotion with kindly feeling, ended a letter to an English lady-patron, to whom he supplied meat, with this expression: "Your affectionate butcher, in Christ." Of late years many amusing specimens of Baboo-English have been collected and published. There is a work called "The Baboo and Other Tales," by Augustus Prinsep.



**Bābus, bawbus** (gypsy), grandfather. "Māndy dikked yer *bābus* a chinnin koshters käliko adré lestis tan"—"I saw your grandfather a cutting woods (making skewers) yesterday, in his tent."

**Baby-herder** (American cowboy slang), a nurse for an infant.—*C. Leland Harrison: MS. Americanisms.*

**Baby-paps** (thieves), rhyming slang for caps.

**Bacca-pipe** (popular), old-fashioned way of wearing whiskers. The *bacca-pipe* was the whisker curled in tiny ringlets.

**Bach, to, batch, baching** (American), from the word bachelor. To form a party and live without women's society or aid in the woods or by the sea-side. The expenses entailed on young men who mix with ladies in society at the watering-places in America are great, and often out of all proportion to their means, the natural result being that bachelors take to the forests or sea-surfs, and live in tents, enjoying themselves thoroughly without the aid of "the muslin," for half, or quarter the money which they must otherwise have expended on treating ladies to carriages, juleps and cobblers after bathing, billiards and ten pins, ball tickets and suppers.

*Baching*, a delightful Western amusement which pleases the doctors. Never

*bach?* Well, it's a great scheme. Can have just what your appetite craves, and at a nominal price, and there is no woman around to find fault and comment upon the lay-out. Of course it requires judgment to prorate the ingredients essential to a first-class repast, and frequently one errs in the quantity of seasoning necessary to impart a palatable relish to corn, tomatoes, string beans, and succotash, but you soon catch on, and frequently before the salt and pepper give out. . . . Yes, *baching* is perfectly delightful, and while errors may intervene during the period in which the dog is convalescing, the outcome cannot be other than satisfactory—to resident physicians.—*California Newspaper.*

**Back** (general) to get one's *back* up, to get angry, the idea being taken from a cat, that always arches its *back* when irritated. "Don't get your *back* up," "Keep your hair on," "Don't lose your shirt," are synonymous expressions for an exhortation to keep one's temper.

**Back block** (Australian), the country outside the margin of the settled districts.

Like the brief flight of a sparrow upon a wintry night,  
Out of the frost and and darkness into  
the warm and light,  
Is the advent of a stranger in the *back blocks* out West,  
Here to-night, and gone to-morrow, after  
food, roof, and rest.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: Out West in Queensland (First Edition of Australian Lyrics).*

These *back blocks* are, as a rule, grazing country, often very poor, let to the squatters (or graziers) in immense tracts at a nominal rent. One often hears of a man holding a thousand

or two thousand square miles. Mr. Fisher, a South Australian, recently put upon the market, in the northern territory of South Australia, *blocks* to the aggregate of thirty or forty thousand square miles. In very remote parts, crownlands are sometimes leased at sixpence a square mile. The two greatest difficulties to contend with (besides droughts and floods) are "getting up stores," and getting to market. Cattle are sometimes driven all the way from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Melbourne, the whole length of Australia, for sale, and some cattle which had come this journey had been six months and three weeks *en route*.

**Back-breakers.** According to the evidence taken before the Children's Employment Commission, the ganger who contracts to do the work hires the smallest and cheapest children, selecting the strongest and most willing of the gang as a *back-breaker*, whose duty it is to set an example of activity to the rest and "put them along."

**Back-cheat** (old cant), a cloak.

**Back-cloth** (theatrical), scenes in a theatre or music hall.

The *back-cloth* is the well-known "woodland glade" that Mr. de Pinna, the manager, invariably selects as the scene of these combats, and three rounds are fought under the Marquis of Queensberry rules.—*Evening News*.

**Back-door work** (popular), sodomy.

**Backed** (old slang), dead, with "one's toes turned up."

**Back end** (racing), the last two months of the racing season.

Lowestoft, though amongst the arrivals, shirked some of his engagements last *back end*.—*Star*.

A *back ender*, consequently, is a horse which appears on the racecourse at the end of the season.

Lord Bradford's horse evidently likes the Doncaster course, and he is undoubtedly a *back ender*. It must be for these reasons that he is so well backed, by the public be it understood, the stable rarely making any sign until the last moment.—*Sporting Times*.

**Backers** (a racing technical term), the general body of the betting public who wager *on* horses winning, in contradistinction to the more limited society of the "ring" or "bookmakers," who bet *against* horses.

This term is also frequently applied to coal carriers, whippers, or heavers.

Mr. Dudley Baxter, M.A., states in *National Income* that a coal *backer* is considered past work at forty.

**Back-gammon player** (old), a practiser of an unmentionable vice. Also called "an usher," or "gentleman of the back door."

**Back-handed turn** (Stock Exchange), having made an unprofitable bargain.

**Backhanders** (common), one who keeps *back* the decanter in order to *hand* himself a second glass before he passes it. Also, a drink out of turn.

Long experience has shown us that to get small advantages over us gives the Scotch so much pleasure that we should not think of grudging them the mild satisfaction, just as a kindly host affects not to notice a valued guest, who, he observes, always helps himself to an innocent *backhand*.—*The Saturday Review*.

**Back handicap** (running), the process of revising a time handicap, the time being reckoned from the second the "limit man" is sent off.

**Back-house, or backward** (common), a privy. So called from being usually situated at the rear of house. Soldiers also call it "the rear," from asking leave to fall to the rear of the company.

**Backing or turning-on** (American thieves' slang), a very usual kind of cheating, by which a man is victimised in such a manner as to render himself liable to punishment.

**Back jump** (thieves), a back window. The window seems to be considered by thieves only in the light of a convenient means of escape, hence the expression "jump."

**Back mark** (running), the mark nearest the scratch—sometimes, of course, the scratch itself. A

man is said to be "backmarked" in handicapping when the handicapper sets him back, or gives him less start than he has hitherto had.

**Back of beyond, the** (American), a mythical country where large fortunes are to be made—a Tom Tiddler's ground.

I sat down to my breakfast on the morning of the second day of April 188-, with no more notion that I should find myself at dinner-time that day at sea, bound on a voyage, the story of which I now propose to write, than I have, seeing that I am come in safety home again, of setting out before to-morrow to seek my fortune in the uttermost part of the mysterious country known as the *Back of Beyond*.—*W. A. Paton: Down the Islands*.

**Back scuttle, to** (thieves), to enter by the back way.

**Back-seam** (popular), to be down on one's *back-seam* is to be at one's last breath.

**Back seats** (American), a very common slang expression signifying reserve or an obscure and modest position. It originated in a saying of President Johnson in 1868, that "in the work of reconstruction traitors should take *back seats*."

General Shelby of rebel notoriety says:—"Let it be distinctly understood at St. Louis and everywhere else that, while the issues of the war are past and forgotten, we take back nothing, and there is no use of their expecting us to do so."

That's true. You don't even take *back seats*. In the Cleveland variety show every man-jack of you is in the bald-headed row.—*Chicago Tribune*.

"For my part," remarked a handsomely, even sportively dressed young man in the smoking-car, "I think this Grover Cleveland is getting altogether too much attention. . . . I predict that in two months he will take a *back seat* as it were. He will discover that there are some big men in this country beside himself. This ain't no one-man country."—*American Humorist*.

### **Baksheesh** (Anglo-Indian).

From the Persian *bakhshish*, a gratuity, a "tip."

What an honour to think that I am to be elevated to the throne, and to bring the seat in Parliament as *baksheesh* to the Sultan.—*Thackeray: Pendennis*.

### **Back slang** (Australian convicts),

the going stealthily to or into a place, sneaking into it. Probably taken out to Australia by the convicts transported thither, though it may have originated there.

(Thieves), to enter or come out of a house by the back door, or to go a circuitous or private way through the streets in order to avoid any particular place in the direct road, is termed *back-slanging* it.—*Vaux's Memoirs*. *Back slang* also means slang produced by spelling words backwards, e.g., "nael ekom" for lean moke, "occabot" for tobacco.

*Back-slanging* is quite aristocratic up the country in Australia, where, unless it is a formal visit, it is almost the universal custom for any one of any rank to drive straight into the stables of the house he is going to, call for a groom (or quite as often a boy) to take the horses, and then walk round to the house.

**Back slum** (Australian convicts' slang), a back room, a back entrance. Probably taken out to Australia by the convicts transported thither.

In ordinary colloquial English, *back slum* simply means a "back street" or a "bad neighbourhood," but Vaux in his *Memoirs* says that among the Australian lays *back slum* is a back room, also the back entrance to any house or premises; thus, "We'll give it 'em on the *back slum*," means "We'll get in at the back door."

### **Back staircase** (popular), a derisive term for a bustle, called

by maid-servants "bird cage," or "canary cage." Parisian ladies had formerly the unassuming *polisson*, superseded under the Third Empire by the more "all round" crinoline, brought into fashion by the Empress, and which became so much the rage all the world over as to be worn even by African belles, whose sole adornment it frequently was. English girls of the lower classes, who could not afford to procure the "real article," would affix wooden hoops to their petticoats. Scoffing Parisians now term the modern "dress improver"—so elongated, painfully pointed, and almost horizontal—"un lieutenant" (a pun on "tenant lieu de ce qui manque") "nuage" ("parcequ'il cache la lune," *lune* being slang for the posterior), and "volapuk."

**Backstairs influence** (common), a disparaging term for occult, intriguing influence.

There is no rule of the service so strict that it will not yield to *backstairs*, or other influence.—*Truth*, April 26, 1888.

**Back talk** (popular), no *back talk*, i.e., speaking frankly.

**Back-tommy** (tailors), a piece of cloth used to cover the stays at the waist.

**Back-track** (American); going back, retreating, eating one's words; to take the *back-track*, to recede from one's position.

The first law of self-preservation admonished Mr. Douglas that he has gone as far in the slavery concessions to the South as he can possibly go, and that if he would save himself at home he must take the *back-track*.—*New York Herald*, December 26, 1857.

I turned to Mac and said, "Come, Mac, what's the use of fooling; come with me."

"No *back-tracks*, Texas. I'll stay here."  
—*R. Morley: The Western Avernus*.

**Back up** (public schools), to call out, as, for instance, when a præfect requires a fag.

**Backy** (tailors), the man working immediately behind the speaker. The term is much affected by "slop cutters."

**Bacon** (common), the body; "to save one's *bacon*," to escape a castigation; "to baste one's *bacon*," is to strike one; (theatrical), to "pull *bacon*."

The late Mr. H. J. Byron, the

actor, very popular in his time, says this phrase has reference to a grimace which he used to make, and which was called pulling a *bacon* face, or, in short, pulling *bacon*, but the expression is not in general use.

**Bad break** (American), an outbreak, outrage, turbulent conduct.

"Sam," he says, "you've made one or two *bad breaks* since you've been in town."  
—*P. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Bad egg** (popular), a rascal.

There is some philosophy in the remark that a man may be a *bad egg*, and yet not be a nuisance unless he gets broke.—*Sporting Times*.

The term is used in America to express a man of unsound or doubtful character. It became popular about 1849-50. If the corresponding slangterm existed in China, a *bad egg* would, on the contrary, mean a very honest fellow.

But one gray-haired old veller shmiled  
crinly und bet  
Dat Breitmann would prove a *pad egg* for  
dem yet.

—*Ballads of Hans Breitmann*.

There was, however, a considerable feeling amongst others there that he was a *bad egg*, and they even went so far as to suggest that the sooner he had a bullet in him the better.—*A. Staveley Hill: From Home to Home*.

**Badge coves** (old cant), persons existing on the bounty of the parish.

**Badgeer** (Anglo-Indian), from the Persian *bād-gēr*, wind-catch.

A contrivance for bringing air down into, and for cooling and ventilating a house. A wind tower.

**Badger** (American thieves), a "panel" thief (panel being probably a corruption of *panny*, a cant word for a house), who robs a man after a woman has enticed him into bed.

In schools it is the fate of red-haired boys to be nick-named after this animal. (Naval) *badger-bag*, the fictitious Neptune who visits the ship on her crossing the line, and is so called from his badgering the uninitiated. Formerly the term was applied to a huckster or retailer, from *badjulate*, to carry, Latin *bajularc*. To overdraw one's *badger* is slang for over-drawing one's banking account, a play on the expression drawing the *badger*.

His checks no longer drew the cash, Because, as his comrades explain'd in flash,

He had overdrawn his *badger*.  
—Hood: *Miss Kilmansegg*.

Also applied in old cant to a footpad who in old days robbed persons near a river, subsequently throwing the body of the victim into the water; a common prostitute.

**Bad give-away** (American), incautious betrayal, lapsus.

It was a *bad give-away* when a temperance lecturer absent-mindedly tried to blow the foam off a glass of water.—*American Newspaper*.

**Bad halfpenny** (Australian convicts' slang), a fruitless errand, no go. Probably taken out by the convicts transported thither. Vaux in his *Memoirs* says:—

When a man has been upon any errand, or attempting any object which has proved unsuccessful or impracticable, he will say on his return, "It is a *bad halfpenny*"—meaning that he has returned as he went.

A ne'er-do-well is called a *bad halfpenny*, because the ne'er-do-well of the family is so difficult to get rid of; he is said "to turn up like a *bad halfpenny*," because imperfect coins are constantly being traced back to and forced back on the person who circulates them.

**Bad lot** (common), a person of indifferent character. The term seems to be derived from an auctioneering phrase. It is often applied to girls who have, as the French term it, "la *cuisse gaie*."

The girl shuddered.  
"I always thought you were a *bad lot*."  
The chorus girl was trying to pluck up her courage.

"Well, well—I was once as pretty as you, and a deal prettier, and was made more fuss with."—*Ally Sloper's Half Holiday*.

A very handsome girl she may be, but a *bad lot*, as her father was.—*R. D. Blackmore: Erema*.

**Bad man** (American). This has a special meaning in the West, where it indicates a heartless, cruel murderer. Rowdies and

bullies in their boasting often describe themselves as "hard *bad men* from Bitter Creek."

In vain he begged for mercy. Milton was obdurate, and refused to be moved by the would-be *bad man's* prayers. He led him into the post tied up like a broncho steer, and the jeers of the citizens as poor Dossy shambled past them on his way to the jail were the death-knell of his badness. He made no "John Branch plays" after this, but attended faithfully to his herd, and the bare mention of the name of Mad Milton was sufficient to keep him quiet whenever he forgot his defeat and essayed the rôle of *bad man*.—*Detroit Free Press*.

"Bad man" for a *cruel* murderer is indeed a very mild way of putting it. If the euphemism were carried on, a murderer pure and simple would probably be styled a *naughty man*.

**Bad match twist** (barbers), red hair and black whiskers.

**Badminton** (prize ring), blood; properly a kind of claret cup. To "tap the badminton, or claret," is to draw blood.

**Bag** (common), any kind of purse when empty; to give the *bag*, i.e., to dismiss, run away.

When of oof they had bereft him, his own tart had promptly left him,  
And gone off with some one else upon a drag.

It was cruel to forsake him; but, as settling day would break him,

She had given him, quite cheerfully,  
the *bag*.

—*Sporting Times*.

(Printers and sailors), a vulgar term for a pint or pot of beer;

"Come and have a *bag*" would be a form of invitation given.

**Bag, to** (familiar), to steal or seize.

The shameful way in which our ships are being *bagged* without the slightest scruple to suit private ends becomes our wretched system of naval government incomparably. The public, who have to pay the piper pretty sweetly for the Spithead pageant, can hardly be expected to look without wonder or disgust at the barefaced partiality displayed by the Admiralty in appropriating vessels.—*Modern Society*.

Also a phrase in common use signifying the expansion of garments by frequent wear.

"You men are so lucky," a fair maiden said,

Discussing the question of dress,

"You're ne'er burdened with petticoats,  
corsets, nor shawls,

Which to us are a source of distress."

"Yes, I know," said a youth who'd been waiting for this,

An argument ready to seize—

"What you've said is all true, but there's one point you miss,

Your pants never *bag* at the knees."

**Baggage smasher** (American), a word with two meanings. The first applies to men who hang about the railway stations to steal luggage, the second to the railway porters and others who in America handle trunks and boxes, &c., with extraordinary carelessness.

"I feel depressed to-night," remarked a large, down-town trunk manufacturer to his wife. "I think I have a touch of malaria." "I fancy it will soon pass away," replied the lady, without much concern. "Why don't you go around to the Grand Central Station, and watch them *smash baggage* for an hour. That will revive you!"—*New York Sun*.

E

A London thief who steals luggage off carriages or cabs by climbing up behind, is termed a "dragsman."

**Bagged** (American thieves), imprisoned, "scooped in," *i.e.*, taken in, victimised.

**Bagging** (northern counties), used of food between meals; in Lancashire especially, an afternoon meal, *i.e.*, what is taken about in a bag. See CARPET BAGGING.

Lancashire adopts the whole-board or partial-board system very extensively. The local term of *bagging* implies bread and cheese, or pies; and there are all the varieties of board and lodging, dinner of potatoes and bacon with butter-milk, *bagging* in the forenoon and afternoon, dinner and lunch, and rations allowed for women.—*Chambers's Journal*.

**Bagging** or **jockeying the over** (cricketers), the practice of batsmen who manage their running in such a manner as to get all the bowling to themselves.

**Bagman** (general), a commercial traveller. A name formerly given to commercial travellers from their travelling on horse-back and carrying their samples or wares in saddle-bags; now used only in a somewhat contemptuous manner.

The late lord came to London with four post-chaises and sixteen horses. The present lord travels with five *bagmen* in a railway carriage.—*W. M. Thackeray: Pendennis*.

**Bagnio** (old), a bawdy house.

**Bag of nails** (American), the same as hurrah's nest or whore's nest. Everything in confusion, and topsyturvy. The sign of the *Bag of Nails* in England has been said by inventive and imaginative etymologists to be derived from "the Bacchicals."

"I may bid as high as your pintle, and make you squint like a *bag of nails*," replied the intruder, "though you rub us to whit for it."—*On the Trail*.

**Bags** (general), trousers. The synonyms are "kicks," "sit upons," "hams." Sometimes rudely called "bumbags."

Then the throng begins to yell,  
But I scatters 'em pell-mell,  
Be their clothing manly *bags* or female  
skirts;  
With my staff I goes for all,  
Both the big 'uns and the small,  
For I'm bound to give sich rabble their  
"deserts."

—*Funny Folks*.

"But, hollo!" he cried, as he caught sight of his legs. "Parsons don't wear tight tweed *bags*." . . . Jack had to unpack his portmanteau, and get out his evening inexpressibles.—*Chambers's Journal*.

When the pattern of the *bags* is very staring they are called "howling *bags*." The synonyms "unmentionables" and "inexpressibles," though generally used jocosely, must have been coined by people with indecent imaginations who think more of the contents than the container, and who would cover with petticoats the nakedness of statues or incase the legs of pianos in "inexpressibles." It may, however, have been invented by



ladies who will blush at the word chemise, but who do not scruple to show themselves in public in such a *décolleté* state as to suggest that only the lower half of that garment has been retained.

To "have the *bags off*," is to be of age and one's own master, to have plenty of money. To have the *bags on* would surely be a more appropriate metaphor in this instance.

**Bags, to take the** (athletic), to go hare in a paper chase.

**Ba-ha** (tailors), bronchitis.

**Bai, by** (gypsy), a sleeve, a bough.

**Bail** (Australian Blackfellows' lingo), no, not. The following is a specimen of the pidgin-English stuffed with Blackfellows' words used by the whites on stations in their intercourse with the aborigines:—

"Too much big-fellow water, *bail* ply (fly), come up; *bail* pind (find) him," answers the aboriginal, adding, however, the question, "you patter potchum" (eat possum).

"Yohi" (yes), said John, rather doubtfully, for he is not sure how his stomach will agree with the strange meat.—*A. C. Grant*.

(Society), to give leg *bail* and land security, a phrase for running away, decamping.

**Baist a snarl** (tailors), work up a quarrel.

**Bait** (Winchester), rage, to be in a *bait*, or in a "swot," to be

angry. To *bait* a lad is to tease him.

**Bait-land** (nautical), an old word, formerly used to signify a port where refreshments could be procured.—*Admiral Smyth*.

**Bāk, bacht** (gypsy), luck. A very common word. *Bāktalo*, lucky.

"Rya del mandy a panjer." "What for?" "For *bāk*." "For bock, kek—but mandy'll dee it to tute to kin a cigarrus."

"Master give me fiver (5 cents)." "What for?" "For *bāk*." "For bock (beer), no—but I'll give it to you to buy a cigar."—*Gypsy Notes in America (MS.)*.

**Bake, to** (Winchester), to rest, to enjoy "dolce far niente;" (common), to fumigate a room.

**Baked** (Australian), tired out. Slang delights in puns. Because meat put in the oven is said to be *baked* when it is "done," a man who is "done up," or "done," is said to be *baked*. This distinctly "slang" use of *baked* is quite different from *baked* in the sense of "heated" or "hot," in which even ladies often use it. In the English slang only "half-baked" means imbecile.

**Baked Spanish** (common). A *Spanish* means a large Spanish onion.

Maria looks very nervous like at this, but told me afterwards if it hadn't been as she tried to forget of the young man, and only to remember there was tripe for supper and a *baked Spanish*, she'd have fainted right clean away.—*Fun: Murdle Visiting*.

**Bākelo** (gypsy), hungry. "Shan tu bākelo?"—"Are you hungry?"

**Baker** (American), a word discovered or unconsciously invented by the Baron E. de Mandat Grancey.

We got there without unduly exciting the idle curiosity of the *bakers* around us. In America they call the habitual man-about-town, the loungee—*baker*. I leave the care of discovering whether there is not in this term an ironical allusion to the way in which they make the execrable bread we are forced to eat everywhere in the country.—*Baron E. Mandat Grancey: Cow-Boys and Colonels.*

The writer of the above had heard the word *loafer*, and having inquired its meaning, innocently translated it as *baker*. In a short time *baker* will, perhaps, be current as a joke, and a few years hence some one learned in Americanisms may possibly declare it to be the original word, or at least a well-established American term, and one recently heard by him in America. (Winchester College), a *baker* is a cushion, generally a large green one, used by prefects and by boys who have studies of their own. The name is also given to a small red cushion used at chapel. Formerly it meant a portfolio. A "*baker layer*" is a junior who has to take a prefect's *baker* in and out of hall at meals. The term was probably obtained by punning on the connotation of the word loaf.

**Baker-knead** (workmen), an in-knead man, one whose knees

knock together—the position in which bakers stand to knead their bread tending to make their knees incline inwards.

His voice had broken to a gruffish squeak, he had grown blear-eyed, *baker-knead*, and gummy.—*Coleman: Poetical Vagaries.*

**Baker-legged** (see BAKER-KNEED).

... His body crooked all over, big belly'd, *baker-legg'd*.—*L'Estrange: Life of Æsop.*

**Baker's dozen** (common), thirteen. Originally the London bakers supplied the retailers with thirteen loaves to the dozen, so as to make sure of not giving short weight.

About a *baker's dozen* of cows and calves were collected.—*P. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

To "give a man a baker's dozen" is to give him a good beating, to give him full measure in that respect.

**Baker, to spell**, an expression for attempting anything difficult. In old spelling-books, *baker* was the first word of two syllables, and when a child came to it, he thought he had a hard task before him.

If an old man will marry a young wife, why then—why then—why then—he must *spell baker*.—*Longfellow: The New-England Tragedies.*

**Bakes** (American), one's original stake in a game, a juvenile term; as " 'I will stop when I get my *bakes*,' said by a boy playing marbles" (*Bartlett*), in refer-

ence possibly to a baker's not always getting his *bake* safely out of the oven. More probably from the provincial English *bakes*, marbles of baked clay or porcelain.

**Bakester** (Winchester), one who bakes—that is, a sluggard, an idle fellow who is fond of lying down doing nothing. (Provincial), a cognomen for a baker.

**Baking-leave** (Winchester), permission to “bake”—that is, to sit in a study or “pigeon-hole.”

**Baking-place** (Winchester), a sort of couch or sofa, an important article of furniture for those who delight in *baking*, that is, doing nothing.

**Bākro, bokro** (gypsy), a sheep or lamb; *bakengro*, a shepherd.

**Bāl** (gypsy), a hair (Hindu, *bal*). *Bālia*, *bāllor*, hairs; *bālnoi*, hairy.

**Balaam-box** (printing shops), used by compositors to designate the receptacle for silly paragraphs about monstrosities in art or nature; or old jokes and anecdotes kept in reserve to lengthen out pages or columns which might otherwise remain vacant. The phrase originated in the comparatively remote days when newspaper editors were sometimes at a loss to fill up the allotted space at their command. No such difficulty, however, confronts them in this age

of verbosity, when the “gift of the gab” is considered to be one of the proofs of statesmanship, and when short-hand writers supply the materials for filling and overfilling the newspapers, by full reports of the speeches of vestrymen, platform orators, members of Parliament, and worse perhaps than all, of windy barristers, doing their utmost in courts of law to make guilt look innocence, or *vice versa*, and otherwise “darkening counsel with vain words.” The disease that afflicts the printing-offices is no longer that of “atrophy,” but of flatulence in its worst and most persistent forms.

An essay for the *Edinburgh Review*, in the old unpolluted English language, would have been consigned by the editor to his *balaam-basket*.—*Hall: Modern English*.

**Balacclava day** (military), pay day, a survival of the Crimean war. The day on which men having got their pay took it down to Balacclava, the great base of supply, where purchases could best be made from sutlers who had their hut shops there.

**Balance** (American), the rest or remainder of anything. Bartlett says that it is “a mercantile word originally introduced into the ordinary language of life by the Southern people, but now improperly used throughout the United States to signify the re-

mainder of a thing. The *balance* of an account is a term well authorised and proper, but we also frequently hear such expressions as the *balance* of a speech, the *balance* of the day, &c." It seems doubtful whether *balance* can ever be quite correct unless it signifies an exactly equal half.

I hit on her affections for the *balance* of the season.

—*Negro Song of 1843.*

**Balbus** (university), Latin prose composition. A term derived from Arnold's "Latin Prose Composition," a well-known text-book in which *Balbus* (who does not connect in his memory this odious individual with the magister's cane!) occurs at the beginning of the exercises and on every page, sometimes over and over again, right through to the end of the book.

**Balderdash** (old), a term applied to adulterated wine, and to senseless talk or writing.

**Bald-face** (American), new whiskey.

**Bald-faced shirt** (American cow-boys), a white, *i.e.*, muslin or linen shirt. So called because *bald-faced*, or Hereford cattle have white faces. — *C. Leland Harrison: MS. Americanisms.*

**Bald-faced stag** (popular), a term of derision applied to a bald-headed man.

**Bald-headed row** (American), the front seats in the pit of a theatre. It is an old joke in the United States, that whenever there is a great "leg-piece," or a "frog-salad" (*i.e.*, a ballet with unusual opportunities for studying anatomy), the front seats are always filled with veteran *roués*, or "Uncle Neds."

**Baldober** (see BALDOWER), a director, or leader. In German thieves' slang the director or planner of a robbery, who gets a double share.

**Baldower** (Yiddish), head-speaker. One who conveys information; a spy. Connected with this are *baldowern*, to direct, plan, spy, lurk, observe (in Dutch slang *baldoveren*), also *baldorer*, a spy or traitor.

**Bales, a little drive with** (popular); *Bales* is the policeman who superintends the Black Maria, or prison van.

I was fined forty shillings, but not forty pence

Had I in my pocket to pay,  
So into the p'lice van soon bundled was I,  
But to *Bales* I sung all the way.

—*Oh, ain't I having a day. Bertini, Marlborough Street.*

**Bale-up** (common), an equivalent of "fork out," that is, pay, give the money instantly, a phrase imported from the Australian bushrangers.

**Ball** (prison), prison allowance; six ounces of meal; a drink. A *ball* of fire in popular slang is a

glass of brandy, in allusion to the fieriness and pungency of the wretchedly bad spirit sold as brandy to the lower classes.

**Ballad-basket** (old cant), a street singer.

**Ballast** (common), money. Some of the slang synonyms for money were or are—"Oof, ooftish, stumpy, muck, brass, loaver, blunt, needful, rhino, bustle, cole, gilt, dust, dimmock, feathers, brads, chinks, pieces, clinkers, stuff, clumps, chips, coin, shekels, corks, dibbs, dinarly, horse-nails, gent, huckster, mopusses, palm oil, posh, ready, Spanish, rowdy."—*Barrère: Argot and Slang*.

A rich man is said to be well-*ballasted*. A man is said to "lose his *ballast*" when his judgment fails him, or when he becomes top-heavy from conceit.

**Ballooning** (Stock Exchange). When stock is increased to a figure far beyond its real value it is said to be *ballooned*, and the operation by which this is effected is called *ballooning*. The means by which this result is attained are cooked or otherwise favourable reports, fictitious sales, and so on.

**Ballooning it** (American), exaggerating, indulging in bounce, pulling the long bow. It is said to have originated in a story of a man who boasted that he had fought a duel in a balloon

and brought down his adversary, balloon and all. But this was a veritable occurrence, as appears by the *St. James's Gazette* of August 5, 1887—

"Since General Boulanger's conditions are unacceptable to M. Ferry, and as the usages of duellists seem conflicting on this subject, perhaps these eminent men might try a duel on the very reasonable conditions agreed on by M. de Grandpré and M. le Pique in Paris in 1808. These gentlemen having quarrelled about a lady, agreed to have it out in balloons, each party to fire at the other's balloon and try and bring him down. A month was taken to build two similar balloons; and on a fine day the pair ascended with their seconds from the Tuileries gardens, armed with blunderbusses. When they were about half a mile up, and some eighty yards apart, the signal was given, and M. le Pique missed. M. de Grandpré, however, made a successful shot, and his opponent's balloon went down with tremendous rapidity, both principal and second being instantly killed—much to the satisfaction of the spectators."

**Balls** (popular), "to make *balls* of it," to make a mistake, to get into trouble.

**Balls' all** (popular), all rubbish.

**Ballum-rankum** (old), a ball where all the dancers are thieves, prostitutes, or other very degraded persons, as in the "buff-ball," in which both sexes join without clothing.

**Bally** (society), a word in use among the young men of the present day to emphasise a speech. Coined by the *Sporting Times*, from the Irish word "bally-hooly." It is mostly

used as a euphemism for "bloody." Of the same class are "darn it!" "by golly!" "great Scott!"

"Oh, that's b— rot!" quoth the disdainful Chiderdoss, who by way of a change had both backed and tipped the right 'un. "Who interfered with him?"

"Why, the *bally* winner, of course! Didn't he get in front of him?"

And then sundry sad and silent men faded away into the Rainbow, and got in front of several drinks.—*Sporting Times*.

**Ballyrag** (Oxford University), a free fight in jest. This is an old word that has been in use at least a hundred years—spelt also *bullarag*. The conclusion of a big "wine" (*vide WINE*), is often a wholesale *ballyrag* or *mêlée*, always carried on in good temper (personal violence in a quarrel is practically unknown at Oxford). To *ballyrag* a man is to mob him and play practical jokes upon him, to hustle him. To *ballyrag* a man's rooms is to turn them upside down, to make "hay" of them.

Dear Muriel,—I always was rather a toff; but when I tell you that this blooming house has become *perfectly beastly*, I know you will pity the poor old bounder. I have been rotting all day in the library, but even *ballyragging* has lost its charm. A sweep or a smug would be a relief, but there is not so much as a plunger to be seen nor a mug to speak to. Under these circumstances I miss you most awfully, and I write to say that if you would come to my diggings for a little while it would be perfectly rippin.—Your affectionate uncle,  
G. E. C.

P.S.—That's where the joke comes in.—*The Culture of the Misses: The St. James's Gazette*.

(Common), to bully, to make a kick up or riot.

None of your flaring up, and *ballyragging* the people about.—*Edmund Yates: The Rock Ahead*.

The word is a corruption of *bullyrag*, to threaten, bully, hustle. "Bully" is a provincialism for a riot. It may be noted that in Yiddish *balhe* and *rag* mean a riot, a fight, and rage. *Bahle-rag* would, in fact, be a roaring row.

**Balm** (old), a falsehood.

**Balmy** (common), sleepy, from *balmy* (lit., soothing) sleep; weak-minded, dull, easily imposed upon, mad.

The people in our alley call me Salvation Sally,  
Since I have been converted, but I try to bear the load,  
They say I must be *balmy* to go and join the Army,  
That leads you to salvation in the White-chapel Road.

—*Salvation Sally*.

The expression is much in favour with thieves.

I had hardly got outside when he came out like a man *balmy*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Among convicts to "put on the *balmy* stick" is to feign insanity.

There was always a number putting on the "*balmy* stick"—or, in plain terms, feigning insanity. Nobody in prison believes in brain disease. Every lunatic is accused of "putting it on," and is punished for it. There are always a dozen or so in the *balmy* ward.—*Evening News*.

To be a little bit “*balmy* in one’s crumpet” means to be slightly crazy. The synonyms are “to be touched,” “off one’s chump,” “wrong in the upper storey,” “to have rats in the upper storey,” “a tile loose,” “half-baked,” “dotty.” To “go *balmy*” signifies to go mad.

“Ah,” said Tom Carleton subsequently to the Talepitcher, “none o’ *my* kids ever go *balmy* over flowers or the Academy; give ‘em ice cream and Buffalo Bill—that’s the business!”

To have a “dose of *balmy*,” or a “wink of the *balmy*,” to sleep.

As it’s rather late, I’ll try and get a wink or two of the *balmy*.—*Charles Dickens: Old Curiosity Shop.*

**Bālo, bālor, bawlor** (gypsy), a pig.

“Oh I jassed to the ker  
An’ I tried to mang the *bālor*,  
Tried to mang the mīllo *bālor*  
When I jassed to the ker”—

“I went to the house and I tried to beg the pig, tried to beg the dead pig when I went to the house.”

—*English Gypsy Ballads.*

Policemen are also called *bālor*, or “pigs” in gypsy.

**Balovas te (an’) yoras** (gypsy), bacon and eggs; *yoras*, eggs.

“Ballovas an’ yoras,  
Ballovas an’ yoras,  
A’ the rye an’ the rāni  
A pirryin āp the drom”—  
“Oh! the eggs and bacon,  
Oh! the eggs and bacon,  
And the gentleman and lady  
A-walking up the way.”

**Balsam** (thieves’ slang), money.

“It was no great quids, Jim—only six flimseys and three beans. But I’m flush of the *balsam* now, and I ain’t funk’d to flash it.”—*New York Slang Dictionary.*

—*I.e.*, “There wasn’t much money, Jim—only six notes and three sovereigns. But I’ve plenty of money now, and I am not afraid to show it.”

Also impertinence, impudence.

**Balwar** (Anglo-Indian), a barber.

This is an amusing instance of native blending of *balwala* (hair-person, *capillarius*) with the English word.

It often takes the further form *balbar*, another fictitious hybrid shaped by the Persian *buridan*, to cut; *guosi*, hair-cutter.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Bam** (old), facetious humbug; “to *bam*” was to impose on a person by means of falsehood; also to chaff and poke fun at any one.

**Bamboozle, to** (common), to cheat, to delude, to humbug.

Fair ladies attend! and if you’ve a friend At court, don’t attempt to *bamboozle* or trick her!

Don’t meddle with negus, or any mixed liquor!

Don’t dabble in “magic!” my story has shown,

How wrong ‘tis to use any charms but your own.

—*Ingoltsby Legends.*

In the language of sailors, to *bamboozle* has the meaning of to decoy the enemy by hoisting false colours.

This word has been a stumbling-block to all the etymologists who have attempted to grapple

with it. "It is," says the Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, "a Chinese and gypsy word, meaning to dress a man in bamboos to teach him swimming." As the gypsies never had intercourse with China, and as the explanation is utterly unintelligible and irrelevant, the etymology must be reckoned imaginative, to say the least of it. "Hotten, with others, credits *bamboozle* to the gypsies; as *bambhorna* is Hindu for to humbug, and as the terminative *āsel* is used in Romany, it is possible that *bamboozle* is the Hindu word gypsified."—*C. G. Leland: MS. Gypsy Notes.*

**Banagher**, to bang.

**Banco or bunko steerer or roper** (American), a sharper, a confidence-trick man.

The *roper* or the *banco steerer* gentleman is one and the same animal, and he will find you out the morning after you land in Chicago or St. Louis. He will accost you—very friendly, wonderfully friendly—when you come out of your hotel, by your name, and he will remind you—which is most surprising considering you never set eyes on his face before—how you have dined together in Cincinnati, or it may be Orleans, or perhaps Francisco, because he finds out where you came from last. And he will shake hands with you; and he will propose a drink; and he will pay for that drink. And presently he will take you somewhere else, among his pals, and he will strip you so clean that there won't be left the price of a four-cent paper to throw around your face and hide your blushes.—*The Golden Butterfly.*

(Charterhouse School), *banco*, evening school.

**Bandanna** (Anglo-Indian). Hotten says of this word that it was originally a peculiar kind of silk handkerchief, but is now a slang word, denoting all kinds of "stooks," "wipes," and "foggles," and in fact the generic term for a kerchief. In the United States it is specially applied to a kind of cotton or muslin handkerchief from Madras, much worn by women of colour, especially old-fashioned or elderly ones, wrapped about the head. The American *bandanna* is invariably made of yellow and red in cross stripes.

This term is properly applied to the rich yellow or red silk handkerchief with diamond spots left white by pressure applied to prevent their receiving the dye. The etymology may be gathered from Shakspeare's Dictionary, which gives *bāndhnā*, a mode of dyeing in which the cloth is tied in different places, to prevent the parts from receiving the dye. "Sir Horace Fogle is about to be raised to the peerage as Baron Bandanna" (*Vanity Fair*, ii. c. 52.)—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Banded** (popular), hungry; literally, bound up. From the notion that to appease the pangs of hunger, one must tighten his belt.

**Bandero** (American), widow's weeds.—*New York Slang Dictionary.*

**Bandog** (old), a bailiff or his assistant.

**B. and S.** (common), brandy and soda.

"And now, wife of mine, I wonder whether your domestic handiness would



go far enough to give me a *B. and S.?*" The obedient wife flies to the cellaret, and for the first time in her life Squire Morcombe's daughter opens a soda-water bottle.—*Braddon: Hostages to Fortune.*

**Bands** (Australian convicts), hunger. Introduced into Australia by the convicts transported thither. Cf. the English thieves' expression *banded*, meaning hungry.

"To wear the *bands*" is to be hungry or short of food for any length of time; a phrase chiefly used on board the hulks or in jail.—*Vaux's Memoirs.*

In the early days of New South Wales, before Australia began to produce meal and grain for itself, the colony was dependent for its supplies upon England and the Cape of Good Hope, and the colonists were several times on very short commons, and even on one occasion were absolutely in danger of perishing. The phrase is derived from the custom among the poor, and soldiers on an expedition, of wearing a tight belt round the stomach to prevent the pains of starvation.

**Bandy** (Anglo-Indian), a word of general application to several kinds of vehicles, such as carriages, bullock waggons, buggies, and carts. Used in Southern and Western India. It is the Telegu *bandi*, Tamil *vaṇḍi*.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

A mighty solemn old man, seated in an open *bandy*, as a gig with a head that has an opening behind is called at Madras.—*Memoir of Colonel Mountain, 1826.*

In thieves' slang it means a sixpence, so called from this coin being sometimes bent.

**Bang** (pugilistic and low), a blow; Icelandic *bang*, a hammering. "I'll give you a *bang* in the 'gills.'" To *bang*, to beat.

The hemp, with which we used to *bang* Our prison pets, yon felon gang,  
In Eastern climes produces *bang*,  
Esteemed a drug divine.  
As hashish dressed, its magic powers  
Can lap us in Elysian bowers,  
But sweeter far our social hours  
Over a flask of wine.

—*Lord Neaves: Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

*Banged up to the eyes*, is drunk. Hair worn down low on the forehead almost to the eyes, is in America called a *bang*, and the practice of thus wearing it is *to bang*. Called "toffs" in England.

*Bang*, as applied to wearing the hair low, is derived from the provincial English. In Norfolk the edge of a hat is said to *bangle* (Wright) when it drops or *bangs* down over the eyes. And corn or young shoots when beaten by the rain and hanging down, are *bangled* or *banged*. So loose and hanging ears are "bangled ears."—*Notes by C. G. Leland.*

He *banged* his hair to hide his bunged eye.—*News-paper.*

To make the *bang*, you must begin by dividing your front hair at half-inch distances from ear to ear, combing the rest back. The process is repeated until the whole front hair has been successfully *banged*.—*Illustrated London News.*

(Stock Exchange), to *bang*, to loudly offer stock with the intention of lowering the price.

Oh! in the days of old,  
At least, so I've been told,  
We only heard of "puff," and "rig," and  
*bang*,

But now better things exist,  
For we daily swell the list,  
And have really quite a choice of market  
slang.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

To *bang* also signifies to excel  
or surpass. *Banging*, great or  
thumping.

**Banger** (Yale), a thick stick, cane,  
or bludgeon.

The freshman reluctantly turned the key,  
Expecting a Somophore gang to see,  
Who, with faces masked and *bangers* stout,  
Had come resolved to smoke him out.

—*Yale Literary Magazine*, vol. xx.

p. 75.

(Popular), an obvious untruth.

**Bangle** (Anglo-Indian). This  
word, now generally used in  
England, is from the Hindu  
*bangri*. The original is applied  
to a bracelet of coloured glass,  
but it is now extended to all  
kinds of such ornaments for the  
wrist when in ring-form or of  
one piece of metal.

Hear their wrists and ankles jangle,  
With many a brass and silver *bangle*;  
Dresses sprayed with many a spangle,  
So for living fish they angle.

—*The Mild Hindoo.*

Miss H. wore her blazing Cashmere  
shawl; her great brooch . . . ; and her great  
bracelets (she used to say, "I am given to  
understand they are called *bangles*, my  
dear, by the natives") decorated the sleeves  
round her lean old hands.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes.*

It is curious that the Hindu  
word *bangri* exists in Eng-  
land as the gypsy term for a  
waistcoat, *i.e.*, originally a mere  
ring, belt, or circlet of cloth,  
like a cummerbund.

**Bang off** (common), to write a  
letter *bang off*, in a hurry.

**Bangster**, a provincialism for the  
victor.

If you are so certain of being the *bang-*  
*ster*, so very certain, I mean, of sweeping  
stakes.—*Sir Walter Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

Also, a loose woman, a bully.

If the Pope's champions are to *bang-*  
*sters* in our very change-houses, we shall  
soon have the old shavelings back again.  
—*Scott: The Abbot.*

**Bang straw** (provincial), a barn  
thresher, but applied to farm  
servants in general.

**Bang-tailed** (popular), short-  
tailed.

"These little *bang-tailed* sinners any  
good?" said Drysdale, throwing some  
cock-a-bondies across the table.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

**Bang-up** (common), fine, first-rate.  
Synonymous with "slap-up."  
To *bang-up*, to make first-rate,  
stylish.

Pat to his neck-cloth gave an air  
In style, and à la *militaire*;  
His pocket, too, a kerchief bore,  
With scented water sprinkled o'er;  
Thus *banged-up*, sweeten'd, and clean  
shav'd,

The sage the dinner-table braved.

—*Combe: Dr. Syntax.*

Jem drove me in a gig of the regular  
*bang-up*, stay-for-nothing, rumtumtiddy  
order.—*Punch.*

Nothing more thoroughly *bang-up* and  
highgeewoa rollicking than the run which  
the Evergreen had last Thursday.—*Punch.*

A *bang-up* cove is a dashing  
fellow who spends his money

freely. Bartlett gives *bang-up* as American, but it has long been common in England, where it originated. "Bangs Banagher," beats the world.

**Bang up to the mark** (popular), in fine or dashing style.

**Bangy** (Winchester) brown; brown clothes considered as vulgar; brown sugar. Probably from *bangy*, dull, gloomy, an adjective used in Essex.

**Bangy-wallah** (Anglo-Indian), a carrier of parcels.

The lady's luggage was particularly scant, and the *bangy-wallahs*, as they are called, who carry the boxes, had an easy time of it.—*Mark Lemon: Falkner Lyle.*

**Banjee** (Anglo-Indian), a band of music.

**Banjo**, the name given by the patients in one at least of the London hospitals to a bed-pan, from its somewhat fanciful resemblance to the well-known and now fashionable musical instrument.

**Bank, to** (thieves'), to put in a place of safety. "To *bank* the swag," to secure the booty. Also, *to bank* is to go shares.—*Hotten.*

**Bankers** (old), clumsy boots and shoes.

**Bankrupt cart** (old), a one-horse chaise; so called, it is said, by Lord Mansfield, from being

so frequently used on Sunday jaunts by extravagant tradesmen.

**Bank sneak** (American), "*bank sneak* thieves," men of education, good address, and faultless attire, who in gangs of three or four engage the attention of the officers of a bank while one of their number commits a robbery. No thieves are so dangerous, or so much dreaded.

**Banners** (American), newsboys' slang. The word is explained in the following extract from the *Chicago Tribune*:—

"Oh, I say, Figsy," cried one, "ain't yer gittin' stood off a good deal on yer *banner* this week?"

"Yer'd better dry up, Slimmy, or may be yer wouldn't like me to mention how yer sponges yer eatin's."

"Eatin's," explained the matron, "are the meals which they get down-town. *Banners* are the fees which they pay for their meals and lodgings at the home. That word is in use all over the United States, and I have never found a newsboy yet who could tell me where it came from."

**Banter, to** (American). The preliminary discussion or *pour-parler* which precedes a bargain is called a *banter* or *bantering*. It is derived from *banter*, to make a jest of or to challenge.

CHATHAM, N.C., Nov. 15, 1886.—A white man named Moore was sent to the chain-gang on Saturday for having traded wives with another man. When Judge Gilmer asked him what he had to say why sentence should not be passed, he replied that he did not know his act was a

crime. A man came to his house with a woman that was better-looking than his own wife, and *bantered* him for a trade; so he "swapped," and paid \$1.50 to boot. As this was his first "swap" he hoped that the court would impose a light sentence.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Banting**, the process of getting rid of superfluous fat by means of a strictly regulated diet. The method was introduced by Mr. Banting—hence the name—about twenty-five years ago.

A parlour where all the furniture seemed to have undergone a prolonged course of *banting*.—*Miss Braddon: Only a Clod*.

**Banty** (popular), saucy, impudent. Probably from bantam or *banty-chickens*, which are proverbial in America for pertness.—*New York Slang Dictionary*.

**Banyan** (Anglo-Indian), an undershirt, originally of muslin, and so called as resembling the body garment of the Hindus, but now commonly applied to underbody clothing of elastic cotton, woolen, or silk web.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

Those were the days when even the honourable members of the Council met in *banyan* shirts, conjee caps, and long drawers, with a case-bottle of good old arrack, and a gouglet of water on the table.—*India Gazette, February 24, 1781*.

An undershirt, commonly called a *banyan*.—*Williamson, V. M. i. 19*.

I have lost nothing by it but a *banyan* shirt, a corner of my quilt, and my Bible sined.—*Sufferings of a Dutch Sailor*.

**Banyan days** (nautical), those in which no flesh meat was issued to the messes. Stock-fish used

to be served out till it was found to promote scurvy.

Of kitcheny (butter, rice, and dal) the European sailors feed in these parts, and are forced at such times to a Pagan abstinence from flesh, which creates in them an utter detestation to those *banyan days*, as they call them.—*Ovington, A. D. 1690*.

May your honour never know a *banyan day*, and a sickly season for you, into the bargain!—*Marryat: Japhet in Search of a Father*.

According to Admiral Smyth, "The term is derived from a religious sect in the East, who, believing in metempsychosis, eat of no creature endowed with life." Hotten says the term is probably derived from the *Banians* or *Banyans*, a Hindoo caste, who abstain from animal food. Quite as probably from the sanitary arrangements which have in hot climates counselled the eating on certain days of *banyans* and other fruits in preference to meat.

The dinner, I own, is shy, unless I come and dine with my friends, and then I make up for *banyan days*.—*Thackeray: The Adventures of Philip*.

**Bar** (racing), except. *Bar* is used instead of the common compound form *debar*. When the bookmaker says "ten to one *bar* one," he means that he will lay ten to one against any horse *bar* (*i. e.*, except) one.

"How do they bet?" inquired the Jubilee Plunger.

"Evens," replied Gus Jacobs.

"All right. I'll bet you a monkey."

"No," said Gus. "I don't want to bet—but here! I'll lay you 700 to 400 *bar* one."

"All right," said the Plunger. "I'll have it."—*Sporting Times*.

(American thieves), "*bar* that toss," stop that game.

"*Bar* that toss, Jim," said Bell, "for you're as fly at the pictures as the devil at lying, and I would rather be a knight of Alsatia than a plucked pigeon."—*On the Trail*.

(Oxford University), to *bar*, to object to. Probably from to *bar*, in the sense of to except; commoner in the compound form *debar*. A "Bullingdon" man would probably say that he *barred* "the Union." An "Exeter" man would be pretty certain to say that he *barred* "Jesus."

**Bār** (gypsy), a hedge, a garden or inclosure; a pound for cattle. Persian, *bāgh*. Also a stone; *tacho bār*, a true or real stone, *i.e.*, a diamond.

**Baragan tailor** (tailors), a rough tailor.

**Barber, to** (university), to do one's impositions by deputy, the college barber having often been employed to perform this duty—hence the phrase. Those who by this means get rid of their impositions are said to *barberise* them.

"And as for the impositions, why," as Mr. Bouncer said, "ain't there coves to *barberise* for you, Gig-lamps?"—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Barber, that's the** (old slang). Grose in his rare first edition of the "Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue," says this

was "a ridiculous and unmeaning phrase in the mouths of the common people about the year 1760, signifying their approbation of any action, measure, or thing."

**Barber's cat** (common). Hotten gives the definition—a half-starved, sickly-looking person. A term used in connection with a coarse expression.

**Barber's clerk** (common), a conceited, over-dressed fellow, who apes the manners of a gentleman.

**Barbly** (pidgin), habble, noise. Probably the same as bobbery or bobbely. "Too muchee *barbly* makee that chilo."

**Bared** (popular), shaved.

There are boys who think themselves men, and who go to barbers' shops to be, as they say, *bared*.—*Diprose: Modern Joe Miller*.

**Bare-footed on top of the head** (American), an expression applied to a bald man.

**Barge** (printers), an article used by compositors in correcting the forms. Either a flat piece of card, or a small wooden box, with divisions to hold spaces for altering the justification of the line. A case, with some boxes full and others nearly empty, is also called a *barge*, probably referring to those boxes full up to the edge. The technical term would be space papers or space box.

(Common), *barge* or *bargey*, a term of ridicule applied to a very corpulent man or woman of large posterior development; a simile derived from the shape of a coal barge, or any clumsy boat or ship, compared with a wherry, or other vessel of more elegant and slender build.

**Bāris, bawris, bawri** (gypsy), a snail; *bawris simmun*, snail soup.

**Bark** (popular), an Irish man or woman. Hotten says that no etymology can be found for this. In low Whitechapel Yiddish the term would at once be understood to mean a wanderer or vagabond, based on *barkolis*, or *bargolis*, one who goes about in misery and poverty, and *barches*, "further," as *barches holchen*, "to go further." It is, however, probably derived from the Celtic *barrag*, scum, or dirty scum. Scum, as an abusive term, "scum of the earth," is originally Irish, *vide* BARKSHIRE. (Common), the skin, to "bark one's shins" is to get the skin off one's shins.

That'll take the *bark* from your nozzle, and distil the Dutch pink for you, won't it?—*The Further Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*.

(Popular), cough.

So I suppose we must sing "Spring's Delights" when we ain't on the *bark* or the sneeze.—*Punch*, 1887.

**Barker** (common), a man employed at the doors of shows and shops of an inferior class

to entice people inside. The French slang has the exactly corresponding term *aboyeur*. Among touting photographers he is called a "doorsman." At universities a *barker* signifies a great swell, and in America a noisy coward; *barker* has another signification explained by the following quotation:—

But what was "barking"? I thought a great deal about the matter, and could arrive at no more feasible conclusion than that a *barker* was a boy that attended a drover, and helped him to drive his sheep by means of imitating the bark of a dog.—*Charles Greenwood: Outcasts of London*.

Also used by thieves for pistol. The term is in contradiction to the saying, that a "dog that barks seldom bites."

Here a loud holloa was heard close by the horses' heads. "Good heavens, if that is a footpad!" said Mr. Spencer, shaking violently. "Lord, sir, I have my *barkers* with me."—*Bulwer: Night and Morning*.

"*Barkers* for me, Barney," said Toby Crackit.

"Here they are," replied Barney, producing a pair of pistols.—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

In nautical parlance, *barkers* is an old term for lower-deck guns and pistols.

**Barkey** (nautical), a sailor thus calls a pet ship to which he belongs.

For the *barkey* she did know,  
As well as e'er a soul on board,  
'Twas time for us to go.

—*Old American Slaver's Song*.

**Barking irons** (thieves), pistols; and in nautical slang large

duelling pistols, which French soldiers call "pieds de cochon."

**Barkshire**, a word applied by the low English to Ireland; from *bark*, a contemptuous and derisive name for an Irishman or Irishwoman. A member for *Barkshire* is a noisy, howling, troublesome fellow, who attempts to cough down his opponents, *i.e.*, bark at them.

**Bark up the wrong tree**, to (American), is said of a man who vainly endeavours to accomplish a thing for which he is not fitted, or who addresses himself to the wrong person for assistance.

"You didn't really go to old Bullion," said a politician to an office seeker; "why, he has no influence there, I can tell you; you *barked up the wrong tree* there, my friend, and you deserve to fail.—*Richmond Enquirer*."

**Barnaby** (common), to dance *Barnaby* is to move quickly and irregularly. See Cotton in his "Virgil Travestie," where, speaking of Eolus, he has these lines—

"'Bounce,' cries the portholes, out they fly,  
And make the world dance *Barnaby*."

**Barnacle** (old cant), pickpocket.

The man that stood beside thee is old Crookfinger, the most notorious setter, *barnacle*, and foist in the city.—*Mark Lemon: Leyton Hall*.

**Barnacles** (common), spectacles; termed also "gig-lamps" or "bosses." From *barnacle*, a kind of shellfish, or from *barnacles*,

an instrument consisting of two branches joined at one end with a hinge, to put upon a horse's nose, to confine him for shoeing, bleeding, or dressing.

Your eyes dasell after your washing;  
these spectacles put on;  
Now view this raysour; tell me, is it  
not a good one?

They bee gay *barnikles*, yet I see  
never the better.

—*Edwards: Damon and Pithias*.

**Barndoor practice** (society), the fashionable but indefensible system of battue, by which the birds are brought all within a limited range, where they fall an easy prey to the "sportsman!"

**Barnet fair** (thieves), rhyming slang for hair; called also "thatch."

**Barney** (popular), a mob or a crowd, disturbance.

'Ard lines, ain't it, Charlie, old hoyster?  
A *barney's a barney*, dear boy,  
And you know that a squeege and a skylark  
is wot I did always enjoy.  
A street-rush is somethink splendacious  
to fellers of speerit like me,  
But dints and diakkylum plaster will  
spile the best sport, dontcher see.

—*Punch*.

This word has several meanings, and apparently two distinct roots—one Aryan, and the other Semitic. *Barney*, a mob or crowd, may be derived from the gypsy *bāro*, great or many, which sometimes takes the form of *barno* or *barni*, and which suggests the Hindu *bahrna*, to increase, proceed, to gain, &c.,

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and *bharna*, to fill or satisfy. *Barney*, a swindle, a sell, or a cross, is probably from the Yiddish *barniss* or *barnoss*, which becomes a Jewish proper name in Barnet, popularly *Barney*. (Dickens gives this name to a young Jew.) *Barniss* means a leader of a multitude, or headman of any description. Remote as the connection between a "swindle" and a "captain" may seem to be, it is direct enough according to the lowest form of Yiddish or German thieves' slang, in which a leading, a clever, a swindling man are all united in *cochemer*, "a wise man," and also "a leader of thieves." In *achprosch* we have again the conceptions of intelligence united to robbery, and to leadership. Further, *baldober*, a director, a leader, is applied to an arch-thief who gets double share. *Balmassematen* has also the double meaning of a shrewd man of business and a swindler, and the transition from a swindler to a swindle is natural enough, and has many parallels. It is to be observed that Hebrew terms of this stamp are far more frequently used by Christian than by Jewish malefactors, as is proved by their corruption. From the *barniss*, *barnet*, or *barney* of a gang of thieves, we have *barneying*, robbing, or swindling, whence *barney*, a swindle, is all in order.

(Racing), the person who prevents a horse winning a race, is described as "doing a *barney*."

The same phrase is applied to the horse itself.

(Running), humbug, rubbish; in racing, when a man does not try to win.

(Society), trip, excursion, outing.

(Popular), fun, larking; teasing for amusement. It is common to hear people of the lower class say, whenever there is any object in view to make fun of, or have a game with, "Let's have a *barney*."

**Barney, to** (Harvard University), to recite badly.

**Barn mouse** (popular), to be bitten by a *barn mouse*, to be tipsy. Possibly an allusion to barley.

**Barn stormer** (familiar), a term formerly applied to itinerant actors who acted in barns, like the troupe of Scarron's Roman Comique, and that of Gautier's Capitaine Fracasse.

**Barnum** (American.) "To talk *Barnum*" is not to indulge in extravagant "high-falutin,"—this the great American never does,—but to utter vast assertions in a quiet manner. The following is a good specimen of it.

Rising Phoenix-like from the ashes of my fifth great fire, which only served to illuminate my path of duty as the American people's champion amusement-provider, I have taken into equal partnership my energetic and experienced friend and former associate, James A. Bailey. We have enlarged and vastly improved the



greatest show on earth, which we propose to establish as a permanence, with a reserved capital of several millions of dollars. At an early date we intend to establish in several of the largest American cities permanent museums containing many thousands of natural, artificial, mechanical, and scientific curiosities. . . . The Barnum and Bailey show will present to this and future generations a world's fair and a moral school of object teaching of unexampled variety and superior excellence, more amusing, instructive, comprehensive, and vast than was ever before seen or dreamed of.—*Phineas T. Barnum.*

**Barnumise**, to (American), to act as Mr. Barnum, a showman, impresario, and a public character, in so many phases famous, or notorious, that his name has passed into the established list of Americanisms. The word humbug does not express so much as that of Barnum.

Barnum had made himself so extremely conspicuous in so many ways even thirty years ago, that a Paris editor suggested that when his engagement as manager for Jenny Lind should come to an end, she would make quite as much money if she would go about exhibiting *him*. Long ago not a soul in the United States put the least faith in Barnum's curiosities, but this made no difference in the receipts, people thronged in "just to see how he humbugged the greenhorns." In one advertisement the great exhibitor admitted with beautiful candour that what he exhibited might *not* be genuine, that he himself with all his experience might have been taken in by un-

scrupulous deceivers—"all that we ask," he said, "is that the public will come and judge for themselves, and we promise faithfully to abide by their verdict." The public did come, paying twenty-five cents (or one shilling) per head and passed their verdict, and Mr. Barnum *did* abide by it (and the dollars), and at once got out something new. At last nobody put any faith in his curiosities. Then it became a source of intense delight to him to exhibit objects which were really remarkable, and to make the public believe they were frauds. Having once a real bearded woman, Barnum ingeniously contrived to have it reported that she was a man, and to get himself prosecuted for imposition, the result being a medical examination, an acquittal, and of course an increased rush of sight-seers. It should be added that Mr. Barnum has always been noted for very great though always judicious generosity, that he is exceptionally honourable and honest in his private dealings, and that he has built up Bridgeport, Connecticut, from a small town to a city. Barnum's colossal show was destroyed by fire a short time since.

**Barrack hack** (army), a girl who prowls about barracks for purposes of prostitution, generally the lowest of the low. French soldiers call these "pailleasse de corps-de-garde." *Barrack-hack*

is also applied to young ladies of perfectly virtuous character, but who have been to garrison or military balls for several years. The term was freely used at one time in reference to one of the parties in a noted criminal case.

**Barracking** (Australian), bantering. Probably from the slang term *barrikin*, jargon, speech, or discourse, on account of the "palaver" which traders must hold before they can strike a bargain.

**Barrakin** or **barrikin** (popular), jargon, gibberish; low, unintelligible language.

The high words in a tragedy we call jaw-breakers, and we say we can't tumble to that *barrikin*.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

From the French *baragouin*, which has the same meaning. It occurs in Rabelais as *baragoin*. "Cheese your *barrikin*," stop talking, shut up.

**Barrel boarder** (American), "a bucket-shop bummer, a low sot" (*New York Slang Dictionary*), evidently derived from sitting about on the barrels in a small shop.

**Barrel fever** (common), the sickness caused by intoxication, sometimes called the bottle-ache, the quart-mania, and the gallon-distemper, all possible precursors of *delirium tremens*.

**Barres** (old), gamblers' term, applied to money lost by them, but which they do not pay.

Whereby they wyl drawe a mannes money but pay none, which they call *barres*.—*Ascham: Toxophilus*.

**Barrick** (American), a common word in Pennsylvania for a hill. From the German *berg*.

Bang, bang! de sharp pistolen shots  
Vent pipin by his ear,  
Boot he tortled oop de *barrick* road  
Like any mountain deer.

—*Breitmann in Politics*.

**Barrow-bunter** (costermongers), female costermonger.

I saw a dirty *barrow-bunter* in the street, cleaning her dusty fruit with her own spittle.—*Smollett: Humphrey Clinker*.

**Barrow-tram** (popular), a term applied jocularly to a raw-boned, awkward-looking person.

**Barter** (Winchester), a *barter* is a ball more generally called a "half volley" by cricketers, from the name of R. S. Barter, a famous cricketer. It has also the signification of a hard hit. To *barter* is to hit the ball hard at cricket.

**Barts**, an abbreviation of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, used by medical students and others.

**Barvelo** (gypsy), rich, wealthy.

A lórdus vías kete wélgóro  
Rya te ranis shan *barvelí*.  
A tano rye te a kámelo,  
Ávo mī pírryní, ávali!

—*A Lord Went to the Fair*.

—Lords and ladies are rich. A young gentleman and an agreeable (lovely) one. Yes, my sweetheart, yes.—*Janet Tuckey.*

(Hindu, *bhara*, increase, fullness.)

**Bash**, to (popular), to strike, to thrash, to crush; to *bash* hats is a favourite amusement of London roughs in a large crowd. From a provincialism to beat fruit down from the trees with a pole.

He taps me across the hand with a cane, and my mother goes in and *bashes* him over the head with a poker, and gets him fined for assaulting me.—*Punch.*

(Pugilistic), a *bash* is one of a variety of blows.

It certainly seemed also that this encounter had been full of "go." The "cockles" of the hearts of Corinthian Tom and Jerry Hawthorn warmed as they heard and read of "fibbing" and "countering," of "red-hot smacks," "left-handers on the nob," "rib-roasters," "uppercuts," "exchanges," "*bashes*," "knock-downers," "body-punches," "spankers," "welts," "smashers," "whistlers," "rattling ivories," "stingers," "bangs," "hot-uns," and of the "tapping" of the "claret," and the flowing of "the ruby."—*Punch.*

(Old provincial English), to beat. In Bedfordshire to beat fruit trees with a pole. Allied to *baste*, to beat; Icelandic *beysta*, Swedish *bösta*, and *basä*, to beat. An English word of Danish origin.

In prisons to *bash* signifies to strike, and especially to flog. *Bashing in*, a flogging at the commencement of a ruffian's term of imprisonment; *bashing out*, one at the close.

(Popular), a tremendous plunge or fall. A word expressive of sudden concussion, breaking up, or tumbling.

The chaise went crash and I went *bash*  
Amongst the shafts and wheels,  
And Mary Ann and her mama,  
Went right head over heels!

—*George Horncastle: Mary Ann and her Mama.*

**Basher** (pugilistic), prize fighter, synonymous with "bruiser."

**Bashing** (prison), a flogging.

**Basing** (gaming). "That's *basing*" when clubs are turned up trumps—the allusion as generally explained being "that clubs were trumps when *Basing* was taken." This was one of the most memorable of the sieges of the Civil War.

**Basket** (old cant), used in the phrase "a kid in the *basket*," said of a woman in the family way. (Tailors), stale news.

**Basket meeting** (American). A half picnic and half religious meeting.

**Basket, to bring to the** (old), to fall into poverty.

God be praised! I am not *brought to the basket*, though I had rather live on charity than rapine.—*Father Darrell: Gentlemen Instructed.*

**Basket, to go to the** (old), to be imprisoned.

Arrested! this is one of those whose base and abject flattery helped to dig his grave.

He is not worth your pity, nor my anger ;  
go to the basket and repent.—*Massinger :  
Fatal Dowry.*

This is from the fact that a basket was lowered from the prison window for alms by a man, who called out, "Pity the poor prisoners!"

**Bastard brig** (naval), a coaster, termed also a "schoony-orgy" or "hermaphrodite brig."

**Bastile** (thieves, paupers, and tramps), the workhouse or "big house;" formerly a prison. The word is now abbreviated into "steel."

**Bat** (American), a frolic, a spree. An abbreviation of *batter*, which means the same.

I'm away from the shop and away from  
my work,  
And I mean to cut up like a regular  
Turk ;  
So down with the Lager and up with  
your hat,  
We are off for the day on a regular *bat*.  
—*Concert Hall Songs.*

Also a prostitute who only walks the streets at night. Termed "hirondelle de nuit" in French slang.

You lie, you *bat*—I couple with no cove but my own. Harry, will you let yourself be made a two-legged stool of by a flag-about?—*On the Trail.*

In the English slang, "on his own *bat*" has the signification of on his own account, by his own exertions, a cricketing phrase. *Bat* also means pace—to go off at a good *bat*.

**Bates' farm** (prison), the prison; probably applied only to Cold Bath Fields.

Now every morning when you rise  
You get a starving meal,  
And if you don't eat all they send  
You have to work the wheel.  
Then so merrily we go  
To chapel to have prayers,  
And for a little pastime work  
The everlasting stairs.  
For it was this blooming morning  
I left *Old Bates's farm*.  
I feel so glad this blessed day  
I've left *Old Bates's farm*!

So C. B. F., the initials of Cold Bath Fields stamped on articles used in the prison, is interpreted Charley Bates's Farm, and to be on the treadmill there is feeding the chickens on Charley Bates's Farm. A warder of that name is said to have been in charge there.

**Bath** (general), "go to *Bath*" is so universally used that it has almost ceased to be slang. Invalids or insane persons used to be sent to Bath for the benefit of its mineral waters. So "go to *Bath*" literally meant you are mad, go to Bath to get cured.

You tell a disagreeable neighbour to "go to *Bath*" in the sense in which a Roman would have said "abi in malam rem."—*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, New York.*

"Go to *Bath*!" said the Baron. A defiance so contemptuous roused the ire of the adverse commanders.—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

This town does not seem to have been in favour with the Earl of Rochester, who thus describes it:—

There is a place, down a gloomy vale,  
Where burden'd nature lays her nasty  
tail;

Ten thousand pilgrims thither do resort  
For ease, disease, for lechery and sport.

—*Works.*

Bath, which has given its name to various things for which it was supposed to be famous, as *Bath* brick, *Bath* buns, *Bath* chairs, &c., has, besides, provided the French argot with the adjective *bath* or *bate*, an equivalent of *AI*, used in phrases such as “*c'est bien bath*,” that is, excellent, first-class, tip-top. “*Être de la bate*” signifies to be lucky, fortunate. The origin of the expression is as follows:—Towards 1848 some Bath note-paper of superior quality was hawked about in the streets of Paris and sold at a low price. Thus “*papier bath*” became synonymous with excellent paper. In a short time the qualifying term alone remained, and received a general application.—*A. Barrère: Argot and Slang.*

**Batha** (Anglo-Indian). “Two different words are thus expressed in Anglo-Indian colloquial, and in a manner confounded: (1.) Hindu *bhātā*, an extra allowance made to officers, soldiers, or other public servants when in the field or on other special occasions, also subsistence-money to witnesses or prisoners. (2.) Hindu *batta*, agio or difference in exchange, or discount on uncurrent coins.”—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Bathing machines** (nautical), old 10-gun brigs are so named.

**Bat mucker** (Winchester), an instrument for oiling bats.

**Bats** (thieves' slang), old shoes or boots. In Somersetshire, low-laced boots. From *pat*, old gypsy for foot or shoe.

**Battels** (university), a student's account at the college kitchen. Sometimes also it is used for the goods supplied.

Buttery and kitchen cooks were adding up the sum total; bursars were preparing for *battels*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

It is an old word, originally meaning an account. In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1872, it is said to be derived from *bezahlen*, “to pay.” Wright gives the derivation old English *bat*, increase, and Anglo-Saxon *dal*, deal, portion. Another origin is that given by Dr. Brewer, *battens*, from the verb *to batten*, to feed. *Batten* is used by Shakespeare in Coriolanus, and also in Hamlet, where the prince addresses his mother, and asks her to compare his father's portrait with that of her second husband, whom she married so soon after the funeral of the first as to scandalise all Denmark.

Follow your function, go! and *batten*  
on cold bits.

—*Coriolanus*: Act IV. scene 5.

Could you on this fair mountain leave to  
feed,

And *batten* on this moor?

—*Hamlet*: Act III. scene 4.

(Oxford University), to *battel*, to be indebted to the buttery for provisions and drink, to run an account for food, &c., with the college as opposed to boarding in a private house. In De Quincy's "Life and Memoirs," p. 274, there is an allusion to this practice—"Many men *battled* at the rate of a guinea a week and wealthier men more expensive, and more careless men even *battelled* much higher;" also to reside or keep terms at the university. It has been suggested that the word is derived from an old monkish word, *patella* or *batella*, a plate.

**Batter** (popular), wear and tear. "Can't stand the *batter*," *i.e.*, not equal to the task; "on the *batter*" on the streets applies to prostitutes, termed in French argot "*battre le quart*" with this special meaning; also, given up to debauchery. See **BARRY**.

**Batters** (printers), a recognised term applied to bad or broken letters which are flung into the "hell box," a receptacle to hold these discarded types, which are melted down eventually.

If you please, sir, . . . the devil has been putting live matter into hell instead of *batters*.—*American Newspaper*.

**Batting his eyes** (American), a gambler's term for men who look on but do not play.

**Battle of the Nile** (rhyming slang), a "tile," *i.e.*, a hat.

**Battlin'-finches** (bird fanciers), explained by the following quotation:—

It's all in the trainin' of 'em. I've had *battlin'-finches*—we calls 'em *battlin'-finches* when they're trained for match-singing or for pegging—wot 'ud sing in my hat as I walked along, and without being in any cage at all.—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Battlings** (public schools), weekly allowance given out to boys on Saturdays.

The business of the latter was to call us of a morning to distribute amongst us our *battlings* or pocket-money.—*Dickens: Household Words*, vol. i. p. 188.

**Battner** (old), an ox. "The cove has hushed the *battner*," the butcher has killed the ox; from *batten*, to fatten. According to Skeat, of Scandinavian origin, from the same root as "better."

**Batty** (workmen), wages, perquisites. Derived from *batta*, an extra pay given to soldiers while serving in India.—*Hotten's Dictionary*.

**Batty-fang** (provincialism), to thrash; *batty-fang* or *batter-fang*, blow; *batty-fanging*, a thrashing.

The Pastor lays on lusty *fangs*  
Whitehead the Pastor *batter-fangs*.  
—*Ward: England's Reformation*.

**Baulk** (Winchester), a hoax, a false report. (Popular), when street boys are playing at pitch and toss, the cry may be heard "head a *baulk!*" or "woman a *baulk!*" should the coin fall on its edge instead of flat on the ground.

**Baum, to** (Univ., American), to fawn, to flatter, to curry favour.

**Bávo, bávól** (gypsy), air, breath, breeze, wind. "O shillo *bávól* puderla 'dré ye hevyor"—"The cold wind is blowing through the holes." *Bávól* is sometimes used for dust.

**Bawbells** (old slang), the testicles, a corruption of *bobble*, a provincialism signifying stones and testicles.

**Bawdy banquet** (old cant), whoring.

**Bawdy baskets** (old slang), women who sold pins, &c., to servant girls, or exchanged these articles for eatables, and occasionally stole linen off hedges. Also applied to the itinerant vendors of obscene and ribald literature, and to a prostitute.

Many a faire lasse in London towne,  
Many a *bawdie basket* borne up and  
down.

—*Puttenham: Art of English Poesie.*

**Bawhawder** (Anglo-Indian), from the Hindu *bahadūr*, a hero, a champion. A word applied in Anglo-Indian to any great swell or soldier. It is a title of honour for bravery, which is found in one form or another all over the East.

There is nothing of the great *bahawder* about him.—*Athenæum*, No. 2670, p. 851: *Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Bayadere.** This word, though generally supposed to be Hindu

for a dancing-girl, is only a French form of the Portuguese *bailadeira*, from *bailar*, to dance.

"Come, an hour of rapture prove?"  
"And what art thou?" "A *bayadere*,  
And this the joyous home of Love."  
—*Goethe.*

**Bayard of ten toes, to ride** (old slang). The old equivalent of "Shanks' mare" (German *Schusters Rappen*, cobbler's black horses), *i.e.*, to go on foot. In the old romances *Bayard* was a celebrated horse.

**Bay-window** (American), pregnancy, with a big belly. New York Slang Dictionary: "She has a *bow-window* to her toy-shop." The French argot expresses the same by the phrase, "Elle a un polichinelle dans le tiroir," the *tiroir* being in this phrase a "toy-shop."

**B.C.** has become the stereotyped exponent of a ridiculous charge of libel. A genteel young woman complained to Mr. Ingham of having been abused by a person who called her a *B.C.* The magistrate asked what *B.C.* meant, when he was told that *C.* meant "cat," but *B.* was too shocking to be uttered aloud. She consented, however, to whisper the naughty word in his worship's ear. Mr. Ingham heard the mysterious "libel," and though he could not grant the summons, *B.C.* has acquired the signification given above.—*Dr. Brewer: Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.*

(Racing), the Beacon Course, the full length (four miles, one furlong, one hundred and forty-three yards) of the racing track at Newmarket.

**Beach cadgers** (old), idle vagabonds dressed as sailors, who prowl about the beach at watering-places and obtain money on false pretences from persons frequenting that part.

**Beach-comber** (nautical), a fellow who loafs about a port to filch small things. One who prowls about the sea-shore to plunder wrecks or pick up waifs and strays of any kind. In the Pacific any kind of sailor adventurer. (Nautical), a river boatman.

**Beach-tramper** (nautical), coast-guard.

**Beadle** (freemasons), an officer answering to junior warden in a council of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

**Beak**, originally thieves' cant (beck), for policeman, magistrate, but now it has only the latter signification.

I suppose you don't know what a *beak* is, my flash com-pan-i-on? . . . My eyes, how green! . . . Why, a *beak's* a madg-strate; and when you walk by a *beak's* order, it's not straightforerd, but always agoing up and niver a coming down agin.  
—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

The term is used by better men than thieves.

There was an old obstinate *beak*  
(Who oftentimes played a queer freak),  
Said, "Take her away—  
Next time she must pay!"  
And would not let her chief witness  
speak.

—*Sporting Times.*

Some etymologists derive *beak* from the Saxon *beag*, a gold collar worn by civic magistrates as an emblem of authority. It seems, however, that "beck," a constable, was from a metaphor based on the literal meaning of the word *beak* or *bill*, and the circumstance that a detective is nowadays termed a "nose" comes in support of this supposition. It may also be derived from "to beckon," to intimate a command, the "move on" of the modern constable. To account for the meaning of magistrate, it may be said that the transition was easy from the humble guardian of the law to the more exalted one. Thus French malefactors gave both policeman and magistrate the common appellation of *vache*. A judge is sometimes called the "*beak* of the law."

**Beaker hunter or beak hunter** (thieves' slang), a thief who devotes his attention to the poultry yard.

**Beak gander**, judge of the superior court.

**Beam ends** (general), a nautical metaphor. A person entirely at a loss, who is "all abroad," is



said to be "thrown upon his *beam ends*."

He laughed the idea down completely; and Tom abandoning it, was thrown upon his *beam-ends* again for some other solution.—*Charles Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

The French would express a state of embarrassment by "il est au bout de son latin," or "il ne sait sur quel pied danser."

The phrase also means to be in great need, when the "ballast" (money)—to continue the nautical metaphor—is gone.

When a fellow is on his *beam-ends*, as I was then, he must keep his eyes about him and have impudence enough for anything, or else he may stop and starve.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

"On one's *beam-ends*," in a sitting posture.

You get on stunningly, gig-lamps, and haven't been on your *beam-ends* more than once a minute.—*C. Bode: Verdant Green*.

**Bean.** This word occurs in several colloquial phrases, such as "three blue *beans* in a blue bladder," and refers to a rattle-head, a foolish fellow.

They say—  
That putting all his words together,  
'Tis three blue *beans* in a blue bladder.  
—*Prior: Alma Cant.*

The phrase is evidently from a jester's bladder with *beans* or peas in it. It must be noted, as a coincidence, that the idea of a *bladder* was uppermost in the minds of those who coined the French word *fol*, fool, jes-

ter, from the low Latin *follis*, bellows or bladder.

"Not worth a *bean*," or "the black of a *bean*," corresponds to the Latin *ne hilum* (literally "not the black of a *bean*"), contracted into *nihil*. There is a Dutch proverb, "Every *bean* has its black," i.e., "Every man has his faults," which gives force to the English expression.

(American slang), a *bean* is specially a five-dollar gold piece, and "bean-traps" is synonymous with stylish sharpers.

Formerly *bean* meant a guinea. This is possibly from the French *bien*, used in old canting among other meanings for property or money.

"Couldn't you let him pike if I come down with a thimble and ten *beans*?"

The detective shook his head.—*On the Trail*.

**Bean feast** (tailors), a good feast, also an annual excursion of workpeople.

**Beano** (printers). See 'GOOSE. Abbreviation of word "bean-feast," mostly used by machine-printers. Compositors generally employ the term "'goose" or "wayzgoose" for this festive event.

**Beans, he don't know** (American). The natives of New England, but especially of Boston, are celebrated for culture or intelligence of the highest order, and also for an extraordinary fondness for beans baked in a

pot with pork—of which Fuller, the Shakspeare of divines, said that “it was a good dish which the Pythagoreans and Jews had contrived between them to spoil.” The result of all this has been a saying for any ignorant person that *he don't know beans, i.e.*, “he is an ignoramus, or Gentile—he is not a Bostonian, he is not fond of beans, *ergo*, an outside barbarian.” Others derive it from the old joke, “How many black beans make five white ones?” to which the answer is, “Five, if you peel them.” He who knew how to answer this question was supposed to *know beans*. In the following extract from the *Boston Globe*, in which an effort is made to select from the local directory names which indicate articles of food, it is worth observing that the first name thought of is, of course, *Bean*, although the list is not in alphabetical order:—

“THE HUB'S HAPPY FAMILY.—According to the city directory, there are plenty of *Beans* in Boston, one Egge, eight Pyes, a number of Onions, and one Crumb. Besides these there are three Bones, also Salt and Jelly. Seven Beers are found, and Coffee, Milk, and Teas. There is one Chicken to three Goslings and a Hawk. Boston also has a pair of Stockings, one Sock, one Cravatt, a pair of Mittens, and four Collars. Three Hatts and one Wigg complete the outfit.”

The writer for the *Globe* forgot to look out for Bacon to go with his *Beans*. It was, we believe, a Boston Bacon, “fore-named” Delia, who first denied

to Shakspeare the authorship of his plays.

(Society), to be “full of *beans*,” means to be in good form. The metaphor is borrowed from a horse being said to be full of *beans* when he is fresh and frisky. To be *beany*, is to be in a good humour, like a horse who has had a good feed. (Common), to “give *beans*,” means to give a good beating.

He's the unbought and undefeated Chelsea Chicken, and I reckon that when he meets the Brazilian Gamecock—Tom Tiffin, who holds the championship of the Western Hemisphere, he'll give him *beans*. —*Moonshine*.

The term *beans* is also used for money; a “haddock of *beans*,” a purse of money.

**Bear** (Stock Exchange), a fall, or a speculator for a fall; a man who sells stock which he does not possess in the hope of being paid not to have it delivered. His confrère the “bull” speculates in the same manner for a rise, while the “stag” operates on shares of new companies which he applies for with the intention of selling at once at a premium. The commonly accepted and very old explanation of these words is that the *bears* claw or pull the stock down, while the bulls toss it up. The “stag” is the representative of the timid speculator, trusting more to his fleetness of foot than to the balance at his banker's when the expected premium is “nil,” and he is

called upon to pay the allotment.

Now as the Bull had run away,  
Unable for the shares to pay,  
'Twas clear, as he'd no cash to spare,  
The Stag then couldn't pay the *Bear*;  
So when the *Bear* went for his due,  
The Stag had gone to Boulogne too.

And, since the Stag had cut and run,  
'Twas plain the *Bear* could pay no one;  
So those to whom he money ow'd,  
When they sought out the brute's abode,  
Found that the *Bear*, or him they call so,  
Had cut and run to Boulogne also.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

Current expressions in the "House" are: to operate for a *bear*; to realise a profitable *bear*. To *bear* the market is using every effort to depress the price of stock in order to buy it.

And these are the clients who sell and buy,  
Who "*bear*" when low and "bull" when high,

And who pay the Como, a source of gain,  
Which lightens sorrow and eases pain. . . .  
And these are the men who, all forlorn,  
Wander about all tattered and torn,  
Who have been clients, who sell and buy,  
Who "*bear*" when low and "bull" when high.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

Dealings are now becoming more active in these stocks, and a considerable *bear* account is developing itself.—*Truth*, April 26, 1888.

When speculators become defaulters—to whatever category of the animal trinity mentioned above they may belong—they are metamorphosed into "lame ducks," and "waddle out of the alley."

"To *bear* a bob" (nautical), used jocularly by Jack-tars for

"to lend a hand;" (popular), to join in chorus with persons singing.

**Bear splitter** (old slang), a rake; one of the "loose fish" sort who is fond of prostitutes. The allusion is obvious.

**Bearer-up** (thieves' slang), a gambling cheat, more generally called a "bonnet," a commission agent, bidder or sweetener at an auction; a decoy-duck at cards who induces strangers to play with sharpers by persuasion or by seeing him win. From the legal term "bearer" in old law, one who bears down and oppresses others by vexatiously assisting a third party in maintaining a suit against them.

**Bear fight** (society), a rough and tumble in good part. The smoking or billiard rooms at night in country houses are the places where *bear fights* frequently occur.

**Be-argered** (common), drunk. Probably from the German *be-ärgert*, irritated, vexed, referring to the "fifth stage of intoxication, which is one of wrath and fighting" (*Körte, Sprichwörter der Deutschen*).

**Bear-leader** (common), the travelling companion or tutor of a young gentleman or nobleman, employed by the parents or guardians to watch over him

and keep him from evil courses which he might fall into if left to himself. "Unlicked cub" was and still is a slang term for an undisciplined youth, and was no doubt the origin of *bear* as applied to the same kind of person. When Dr. Johnson visited Scotland and the Hebrides in his old age, accompanied by James Boswell, who has left the world so amusing an account of the prejudices of his uncouth and ungainly hero against everything he saw in Scotland, it pleased the wits of Edinburgh to call Boswell his *bear-leader*. Henry Erskine, to whom Boswell had introduced the great man, slipped a shilling into Boswell's hand, saying, "Take that, my good man; it's for the sight of your *bear!*"

**Bears?** are you there with your (old), are you there, or, at it again? Joe Miller says the expression originated in this way. A man disgusted with a sermon on Elisha and the bears, went on the following Sunday to another church, where he heard the sermon delivered once more by the same preacher.irate at being thus foiled, he cried out, "*Are you there with your bears?*" The explanation is more quaint than convincing. The phrase seems to have been very common in the seventeenth century.

Another, when at the racket court he had a ball struck into his hazard, would ever

and anon cry out, "*Estes-vous là avec vos ours?*" which is ridiculous in any other language but English.—*J. Howell: For-raine Travell.*

Oh, quoth they, here is an accident may save the man; *are you there with your bears?* We will quit the exercise of the House's right rather than that should be.—*Roger North: Examen.*

**Bear watching,** to (American), a phrase indicating suspicion.

"Jones may be a nice man, but he'll *bear watching*—you had better keep your eye on him."

"Now Erer Rabbit knowed he bes' look about right spry, cayse de creeters all had dey eyes skint an' dey years open fer him, cayse he hed setch cu'yous leetle ways wid him dat *he'd bar watchin'.*"—*Erer Rabbit.*

**Beastly** (common). This word, which was once used only in a very abusive sense, has, by dint of repetition, come like awfully, or dreadful, or horrid in America, to signify "very."

Ere ladies use such *beastly* names our follies to condemn,

They should bear in mind they always find we're *beastly* fond of them.

—*Zoological Companions: A Ballad.*

They go on if I say "*beastly* jolly,"

And say that I mustn't talk slang,

And lecture me well on the folly

Of shutting the door with a bang.

—*H. Adams: Only a Little Bit Giddy.*

It is also used in society as an emphatic adjective. Everything that does not meet with approval now is *beastly*: as, "We had a *beastly* dull sermon this morning." Surely a libel on animals, as the original meaning is, "pertaining to, or

having the form and nature of a *beast*." Thus, the young French lady used the word correctly when she said of her pets, "I like horses, I like dogs, I like parrots; in short, I like everything that is *beastly*!"

**Beasts** (American cadets). At the United States Military Academy, at West Point, new cadets are so called. More appropriate and suggestive terms—though not so forcible—are used at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst—"Snooker," "Johnny;" "bejants" (*béjaunes*) is applied to freshmen at Aberdeen University.

**Beat, to** (American), to cheat, or "do" one out of money in any way.

Two of these eating establishments are large and busy places, wherein two good dishes can be had for a dime (fivepence). It is said that the waiters are all athletes and skilled bouncers, who are more respected by the public than any waiters ever were before. It is like trifling with dynamite to try to *beat* one of these places out of a dinner, and the bummer who does so is described as looking and feeling as if he had been through a rolling-mill when his waiter has tired of toying with him.—*Chicago Tribune*.

To "*beat hollow*," to "*beat into fits*," to "*beat badly*," to surpass or excel. A man who is wholly exhausted is said to be "*dead-beat*."

"That *beats the bugs*!" (American). The phrase is used to denote anything stupendous, incredible, incommensurable.

Probably from an old story in which some bugs showed astounding sagacity and achieved some wonderful feat in order to baffle their tormentor and extricate themselves from a perilous position. Another version is that a man to prevent the bugs from getting to his bed, made a circle of tar round it. Then they climbed up to the ceiling, and fell or jumped down on the bed. Finally, he made another circle of tar on the ceiling, and that "*beat the bugs*."

"Well, if this don't *beat the bugs*!" he'd say. "What a spot o' work this is, sartainly."—*Sam Slick*.

Mr. Atkin, in his "House Scraps," has a story of a dog that certainly "*beats the bugs*." "One said his dog was so clever that it would not go out with him unless his cartridges fit his gun. 'Well, old man, I must admit that your dog is above the average, but I'll back mine against him for a fiver. I was in our lane the other evening, when my dog pointed at a man I had never seen before, and as nothing would make him move, I went up to the man and said, 'Sir, would you oblige me with your name?' 'Yes, sir, my name is Partridge.'"

**Beat, a** (journalistic). "To have a *beat* on one," is to call on one.

On my return home I had what journalists call a *beat* on nearly all my acquaintances, to whom I had much that was strange and wonderful to tell concerning my travels.—*W. A. Paton: Down the Islands*.

(American), to “get a beat on one,” to have the laugh of one, to take a “rise” out of.

“Great Cæsar! and we’ve gone to press,” gasped the editor. “The afternoon papers will get a *beat* on us tomorrow.”—*San Franciscan*.

**Beat daddy mammy, to** (old military), to practise the elements of drum beating.

**Beat the Dutch, to** (popular). *That beats the Dutch*, is said of any startling statement or incredible fact. To beggar description or stagger belief. Originally used to express extreme stupidity and obstinacy, a Dutchman being popularly represented as a phlegmatic person whom nothing could move.

**Beaten down to bed-rock** (American), reduced to the last extremity.

Some had died, others were dying; none were well, and all were, as they tersely put it, *beaten down to bed-rock*.—*Phillips-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Beater-cases** (obsolete), shoes or boots; also called formerly “bowles;” more modern are the “trotter-cases” (termed “trot-tinets,” or “trottins” in French slang), “grubbers, carts, beetle-crushers, crab-shells, and hock-dockies.” Thieves and roughs in a poetical mood have given them the name of “daisy-roots,” while mashers ruefully talk of their pointed patents as “ex-cruciators.” A policeman on his beat is said by the roughs to

exercise his “plates of meat.” The much despised spring side boots officers term “Jeminas.”

**Beaters** (thieves), feet, an abbreviation of *dew-beaters*, a slang term for feet, and, in Norfolk, coarse oiled shoes that resist the dew. “To pad one’s *beaters*,” to walk, to walk away.

Pluck me some panam and caftar, Bill, for I want to pad my *beaters*.—*New York Slang Dictionary*.

The earlier word is “batters” or “bats,” which represents the original “pats.” In gypsy, *tompats* is in common with canting a word for feet. Hindu, *tal-pat*, the sole.

**Beating the booby** (nautical), the beating of the hands and arms across the chest, to warm oneself in cold weather. An older synonymous expression is “beating Jonas.”

**Beating the quartermaster** (American), a phrase current in the army, which probably originated in the following story:—

Jonas Smith, of Washington, Indiana, towards the close of the late war, was body servant to a Quartermaster, and after the close, and when the Quartermaster had been mustered out, as the story is told, he requested Smith, as a last service before parting, to take a large box on a dray to the freight depot and ship it, asking Smith at the same time “if he could read and write.”

Jonas answered that he could not, started off with the box, and on the way to the station removed the shipping-tag, which bore the name of the Quartermaster and that of the place the box was to be shipped,

and substituted his own name and address, and by that means obtained a box of new army blankets the Quartermaster intended to capture or steal from Uncle Sam.

Jonas, who is fairly educated, said in extenuation of this commercial transaction :

“ Mr. Quartermaster ‘ captured ’ the blankets from the Government, and I captured them from him. Everything is fair in war.”—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Beating the road** (American), travelling in a railway train without paying. There are many ways of doing this known to the American “ dead beat,” adventurer, and tramp. One is to pretend to be an official employed on some other railroad, another to make a private arrangement with the conductor or an employé to be allowed to travel in a freight car, a third is to simply hide in the freight.

The problem was—twelve or thirteen hundred miles to be overpassed without paying one’s fare over the rails. This would have been an easy task to many, and some months later it would scarcely have caused me so much anxiety, but I was then inexperienced, and somewhat green in the matter of passes, which are often to be obtained by a plausible man of good address, and versed in the methods of *beating the road*, or, more literally, of cheating the company.—*Roberts: The Western Avernus*.

English roughs and thieves term this kind of cheating “ doing a duck,” generally managed by hiding under the seat of a carriage.

**Beau.** This is a word in very general use in America to signify a lover or an especially devoted attendant. From this the verb

to *beau*, to *beau* about. In Queen Anne’s time the *beau* meant rather an elegant man than a lover.

The Southern girl is more frivolous-minded than her Northern sister; she cares more for *beaux* and ribbons, a dance and a laugh. She loves the sunshine and stroll in the park with no definite end in view except perhaps a smile and a bow from the young men of her acquaintance.—*Boston Record*.

**Beau-nasty** (old), a fop who, though in exterior finely dressed, is dirty and slovenly in person and habits.

**Beautifiers** (popular). Women who, like Madame Rachel, profess to make people “ young and beautiful for ever.” Of late years these persons have become common, and have many customers not only in the demi-monde, but even among poor girls.

Take my advice, girls; good complexions  
Only are gained by early strolls,  
Heed not the *beautifier’s* directions,  
Use not her dear cosmetic rolls.  
—*Ballad: Strolling Down the Lanes*.

**Beau trap** (old), a well-dressed sharper who used to lie in wait for country visitors.

**Beauty-sleep** (common), a nap before midnight.

Are you going? It is not late. . . . A medical man, who may be called up at any moment, must make sure of his *beauty-sleep*.—*Kingsley: Two Years Ago*.

And would I please to remember that I had roused him (the hostler) up at night; and the quality always made a point of paying four times over for a man’s loss of

G

his *beauty-sleep*. I replied that his loss of *beauty-sleep* was rather improving to a man of so high a complexion, &c.—*Blackmore: Lorna Doone*.

**Beavers** (Winchester), originally, leave to go out in the afternoon, when none but prefects were allowed to wear hats. Afterwards the appellation denoted an intermission of half-an-hour in the course of the afternoon on whole school days, when school began at two o'clock. The term is now obsolete. A *beaver* (nautical), is a helmet in general, but particularly that part which lets down to allow of the wearer's drinking.

**Beck, beur** (old cant), a constable. In Dutch slang, *bekaan* means arrested, imprisoned.

The ruffin cly the nab of the Harman *beck*  
If we mawnd Pannam, lap or ruff-peck.

—*Thomas Dekker*.

**Bed** (thieves' slang), put to *bed* with a shovel, dead and buried.

Played out they lay, it will be said,  
A hundred stretches hence;  
With shovels they were put to *bed*  
A hundred stretches since.

—*A Hundred Stretches Hence: New York Slang Dictionary*.

**Bedder** (universities), a bedmaker, a species of charwoman now nearly extinct in Oxford, but flourishing at Cambridge.

**Bed-fagot** (common), a contemptuous term for a woman, but more specially applied to a prostitute. A provincialism for a bedfellow.

**Bed filling** (army), lying down after dinner to rest and digest. It is the general rule that the cots or iron bedsteads in soldiers' barrack-rooms shall be constantly kept neat and tidy, palliasses rolled up and bedding evenly folded. But at certain hours, as after dinner, a little relaxation of the rule is allowed.

**Bed-house**, a house of assignation. One where beds and rooms are hired by the hour or half-day, &c. An institution which has spread with incredible rapidity of late years in England and America, since the suppression or gradual disappearance of brothels, so that, according to trustworthy information, where there formerly existed one of the latter, there are now from ten even to twenty of the former. The repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act has given a great impetus to the establishment of *bed-houses*.

**Bedoozle** (American), to confuse, bewilder, the result being that a man is "all abroad," or "flabbergasted."

**Bed-post** (common), in the "twinkling of a *bed-post*," in a moment, as quick as lightning, in a jiffy, or as rapidly as a staff can be twinkled or turned. A more modern expression extensively used is, in the "twinkling of a pike-staff," which explains itself. *Bed-post*, in this case, seems to have replaced bed-staff, a wooden pin



stuck formerly on the sides of the bedstead to keep the clothes from slipping on either side, and which might be wielded as a stick or staff when a brute thought it necessary to chastise his better half. *Nous avons changé tout cela*, and now the improvised staff has been superseded by the poker, varied by an application of hob-nailed boots.

**Bed-rock** (American), to get on the *bed rock*, not to be able to go lower or to abate. Used in this instance: "What is the price of that?" "Six dollars." "Is it *bed-rock* price?" *i.e.*, is it your lowest price. *Bed-rock* pieces, the last coins in one's almost empty purse; probably a miner's phrase.

**Bee** (American), a meeting, generally a merrymaking, but with a practical or beneficial object. Thus there are apple-bees for paring apples, husking-bees for husking, raising-bees to "raise" houses, and spelling-bees. Probably an abbreviation of the old word "bidding," or the Dutch *bied*, influenced by *bee* as a type of industry. "Bidding," pronounced *bee*-ding, meant an invitation a century ago.

Harry cum parry, when will you marry?

When apples and pears are ripe.

I'll come to your wedding without any bidding,

And stay with the bride all the night.

—*Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes for Boys and Girls* (Standard Edition).

A "chopping-*bee*" is thus described in a western magazine: "Once a clearing was attempted on a large scale. It was for the site of a public institution. The inhabitants within a radius of ten miles were invited to a "chopping-*bee*." Each one brought his axe and day's provisions. No spirituous liquors were allowed. The work was ordered by an elected marshal of the day. The front rank of trees, ten rods in width, were chopped partially through on either side, then the succeeding ones in like manner for a space of perhaps twenty rods. Then the last rank was felled simultaneously by the united force, when, with a crash increasing to a thundering volume, it bore down on the next, till all lay prostrate. And thus for three days did this volunteer war against the forest progress."

**Bee-bee** (Anglo-Indian), Hindu, from the Persian *bī bī*, once applied to English ladies, who are now called Mem Sahib. It is still often used by native servants in addressing European maid-servants. — *Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

A Hindu concubine.

But the society of the station does interfere in such cases, and though it does not mind *bee-bees* or their friends, it rightly tabooo him who entertains their white rivals.—*William Howard Russell: My Diary in India in the Year 1858-59*.

(Gypsy), an aunt. Sometimes applied respectfully and

affectionately to any middle-aged woman. "The title *Bibi* is in Persian the same as among us *señora* or *doña*." — *Texeira: Relacion de Hormuz, A.D. 1611.*

**Beef** (Australian convicts' slang), "stop thief!" introduced by the convicts transported thither. A feature of thieves' cant, and indeed of slang generally, is its fondness for punning and rhyming, e.g., "cobbler," applied to the last sheep that is shorn, "slang-whang," and "Bolt-in-turns." Thief was canted into *beef* because they rhymed.

*Beef*—stop thief. To *beef* a person is to raise a hue and cry after him in order to get him stopped.—*Vaux's Memoirs.*

(English thieves' slang), to *beef* it, or to give hot *beef*, is to give chase, pursue, raise a halloo and cry.

I guyed, but the reeler he gave me hot  
*beef*,  
And a scuff came about me and hollered ;  
I pulled out a chive, but I soon came to  
grief,  
And with screws and a james I was  
collared.

—*The Referee.*

(Nautical), a figurative term for strength — "more *beef!*" more men on ; (common), "*beef* up!" or "put your *beef* to it!" An ejaculation meant as a request to use one's strength, to use one's muscles to good account. (Popular), the penis ; to be dressed like "Christmas *beef*," to be in one's best clothes.

Man's poor heart in ecstasy  
Will very often beat,  
When the tart is young.

'Tis then he'll go and dress himself  
Like unto Christmas *beef*,  
When the tart is young !

—*When the Tart is Young.*

**Beef-headed** (popular), stupid, dull as an ox. *Beef-willed* is a provincialism with a like signification. "*Beef-witted*," that is, dull, thick-headed ; "having no more wit than an ox" is a term used by Shakspeare.

**Beef it, to** (provincialism). To *beef it* is to indulge in a meal of butchers' meat ; it only occurs amongst the lower and poorer classes.

**Beefment** (thieves), on the *beefment*, on the look-out.

**Beef stick** (army), the bone of the meat in the day's rations. A soldier is allowed, at home, three-quarters of a pound of meat, including bone, and when the day's mess dinner is cut up, little but the *stick* remains for those last served.

**Beef straight** (American). When a man has nothing but beef for a meal, and must eat it without bread, vegetables, &c., it is *beef straight*. The same term is applied to any other kind of food *per se*.

**Beef to the heels, like a Mullingar heifer.** Mr. H. J. Byron says : "The expression *beef to the*

*heels* is first found, I believe, in the Irish saying, 'A Waterford heifer, *beef to the heels.*'"

Dolly was not a fine woman, as they say, at all; not *beef to the heels*, by any means; in a grazier's eye she would have had no charm whatsoever.—*Rhoda Broughton: Cometh up as a Flower.*

**Beefy** (common), unduly thick, commonly said of women's ankles; also rich, juicy, plentiful. To take the whole pool at loo, or to have any particular run of luck at cards generally, is said by players to be very *beefy* (Hotten). *Beefy* is also applied to a bloated, red-faced person.

**Bee-gum** (American), a hollow gum-tree in which bees have hived. This is more technical than slang.

Bob tuck him by de skin,  
As de bear wus comin' in,  
An' he pull, an' he pull till down de hol-  
ler tree cum;  
Den nigger Bob come out,  
An' run like nigger mout,  
While de bear tink he got de debbil in  
de *bee-gum*.

—*Negro Song.*

**Bee in the bonnet** (common). To have a *bee in one's bonnet*, is to be odd, eccentric, fantastical, whimsical, or half-crazy. It is supposed to be a peculiarly Scottish phrase, because Scotsmen wear "bonnets," and Englishmen do not. Its use, however, is not confined to Scotland, but was known in England in the seventeenth century, and is still common. It occurs in a song

by Herrick, entitled the "Mad Maiden," of the date of 1648:—

"For pity, sir, find out that *bee*,  
Which bore my love away;  
I'll seek him in your *bonnet* brave,  
I'll seek him in your eyes."

A friend speaking to an Edinburgh lady of a late eminent professor in the University, said he was an excellent man, but he had a *bee in his bonnet*. "Don't say that," replied the lady, assuming a look and tone of reproof. "You under-rate him. *A bee in his bonnet!* Why, he has a whole hive of *bees* in it!" The French have the corresponding expression "avoir un hanneton"—a may-bug.

**Been in the sun** (popular), intoxicated, alluding to the flushed countenance of one who has been drinking heavily.

**Been measured for a new umbrella** (American), said originally of a man that nothing fitted him but his *umbrella*. An old joke, reproduced by Artemus Ward, who took his own generally wherever he found it.

"Wall, about this time there was a man in an adjacent town who had a green cotton umbrella."

"Did it fit him well? Was it custom-made? Was he measured for it?"

"Measured for what?" said Abe.

"The umbrella?"—*Artemus Ward.*

**Beeno** (gypsy), born. "Ki sos o tikno *beeno?*"—"Where was the babe born?"

**Been to Bungtown. Been to Boston** (American). It is re-

ported that instances have been known in which ladies living in the country have gone "to town" for the purpose of meeting with lovers, or making them, "in loco secreto." So it is said of one not quite above suspicion, that *she has been there*, and should a foreigner not understanding the phrase ask where, the answer may be, *to Bungtown*. In Philadelphia it is said of a very fast woman, that she has been to, or comes from Scranton, a town in Pennsylvania.

**Beer barrel** (pugilistic), the body.

That draws the bung from the *beer barrel*, I'm a thinkin'.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Beerslinger** (American), a term for a barman in a lager-beer "saloon" or tavern. It originated in Philadelphia in 1848-49, about which time lager-beer was first brewed in America. The word "slingers" had previously been commonly applied for at least forty years to other barmen, who were often spoken of as "whiskey-slingers" (a punning term). "Rum-slingers" or "gin-slingers," derived in this instance probably from ginsling. In America "sling" is a very common expression, indicating to be engaged with, or to tackle, attack, &c. Hence "hash-slinger," one who eats at an ordinary table, or one who is eating in any way. "Ink-slinger," a writer. "Don't sling your sass at me," means give

me no more of your impudence. "Jerk" and "jerker" are in every way exact synonyms for "sling" and "slinger," *e.g.*, a beer-jerker.

**Beeswax** (common), poor, soft cheese, sometimes called "sweaty-toe cheese," the French equivalent of which is "pied de facteur." Applied to persons whom it is difficult to get rid of. Friends conversing together seeing one of this kind coming towards them, frequently say, "Here's old *Beeswax*, let's be off."

**Beeswaxers** (Winchester College).

Thick-soled, laced-up boots are so called, no doubt from being used in damp or snowy weather, after having been besmeared with beeswax, grease, or dubbin, in order to make them water-tight.

**Bee-sweetening** (American), honey, more jargon than slang.

I was once a guest in a log-cabin, in a remote part of Indiana, in 1864. There were on the supper-table three kinds of sweetening for the coffee, and yet none of them were made from the cane. "Will you have," asked my host, "*bee-sweetenin'*, *tree-sweetenin'*, or sorghum?" *Bee-sweetenin'* was honey, *tree-sweetenin'* was maple sugar and maple molasses, while sorghum was the coarse molasses made from a kind of Chinese maize.

**Beetle-crushers** (common), a person's foot. More frequently used with the sense of foot of large proportions, large flat foot. Also shoe or boot.

Yes, but what horrible boots! whoever could have had the atwocity to fwame such beetle-crushers.—*Rhoda Broughton: Red as a Rose is She.*

The expression was first used in *Punch*, in one of Leech's caricatures. A man with "extrémités canailles," as the French have it, is said to be blessed with "beetle-crushers and mutton fists." (Army), an infantry soldier is derisively termed *beetle-crusher* by the cavalry, varied sometimes to "mud-crusher," a near equivalent of the French "pousse-caillou."

Who wouldn't be a millionaire,

A-rolling in his riches?

Though dolor-ous the load they bear—

Who wouldn't be a millionaire?

I own the rich man's shoes to wear

My beetle-crusher itches!

Who wouldn't be a millionaire,

A-rolling in his riches?

—*Funny Folks.*

**Before-tim** (pidgin), formerly, once, previously, ere now, of old.

Old How-qua, he one piecee velly largey Hong machin (merchant), sartin *before-tim* you plenty healee (have heard of) allo-same How-qua.—*How-qua and the Pearls.*

**Beggarbolts** (nautical), a term formerly applied to any missiles thrown from a galley-slaves' boat at an attacking force.

**Beggars' velvet** (common), particles of down shaken from a bed, and left to accumulate under furniture by the negligence of housemaids. A more

befitting term is "sluts'-wool," as reflecting on the lazy habits of the maid.

**Begum**, a rich widow.

**Beilby's ball** (old), an old Bailey executioner. "You will dance at *Beilby's ball*, where the sheriff pays for the music," from the name of the executioner in the time of Jonathan Wild.

**Be in it, to** (common), like the American phrase "to be on it." But the English expression seems to denote being in trouble, "I'm always in it."

And I *was in it*, fairly in it!

I fell in the box of eggs and there I quickly stuck.

I *was in it*, fairly in it!

I *was in it*, for it's just my luck.

—*Song.*

**Bejant**, new student at Aberdeen University. A corruption of the French *béjaune* (*bec jaune*), unsophisticated young man, compared to an unfledged black-bird. The term is applied to the first or lowest class, the second being the "semi-bejants," the third the "tertians," and the fourth the "magistrands."

**Belay** (nautical), stop. "Belay that yarn," cease talking, we have had enough of it.

**Belch** (old), beer.

**Belcher** (roughs), a blue bird's-eye handkerchief.

**Belial** (Oxford), Balliol College.

**Bell** (tramps), a song.

**Bellerin** (American), talking loudly, crying aloud.

'Twas up among de mountains  
All in de woods an' canes;  
A nigger came a *bellerin*  
An' rushin' throo de wanes.

—*Lucy Neal.*

I hed a plaguey good ol' musket that I'd brung with me from my hum in Jarsey, an' I'd polished an' iled it till it was slick as a whistle, an' I kinder thought I'd open Jeff's eyes a leetle ef I got any kind of a chance to p'int it at one o' them air deer Jeff'd ben a *bellerin* so much 'bout.—*New York Sun.*

**Bellows** (pugilistic), the lungs; "bellows to mend" was formerly said of a pugilist when winded, and generally of a person out of breath.

**Bellows, bellowses** (American), the heaves in a horse.

And when old Tom Jefferson sent for me to go to Washington, I was still here with fifteen children and as good a hoss as any man ever sid, only she was blind and had the *bellusses*.—*Uncle Steve's Stump Speech.*

(Nautical), an old hand at the *bellows*, a man up to his work, to his duty. A "fresh hand at the *bellows*" is said when a gale increases.

**Bellowsed** (thieves) was said of one who had "lumped the lighter" or had been "lagged," *i.e.*, transported. As *lagged* is a gypsy word, meaning bound or tied together (Hindu *lāgárnā*), it is probable that *bellowsed* is the common provincial word

*belost*, which has precisely the same signification.

**Bellowseser** (pugilistic), a blow that knocks the wind out of the "bellows" or lungs. (Old cant), a sentence of transportation for life; that is, to the convict's last breath when his lungs or "bellows" cease to play.

**Bellows to mend** (pugilistic and athletes), short in the wind, pumped out.

To one gentleman he would pleasantly observe, as he tapped him on the chest, "*Bellows for you to mend, my buck!*"—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Bell swagger** (old), a noisy, bullying fellow.

**Bell-topped or knobbed** (vulgar), a man with a large top to his generative organ.

**Bell-topper**, that kind of hat known in England as a "chimney-pot," a "silk hat," a "high hat," a "top hat," a "*bell-topper*," a bell-shaped top hat. The term is, we believe, not unknown to hatters in England, but in Australia it is universally used, often even by refined people. White ones are very much commoner than black in Australia and America, on account of the higher temperature.

When the writer was about to land at Port Melbourne he was warned "a man is of no account in Melbourne without a white *bell-topper*." Soon after this he went to the Geelong

races and ordered a dozen oysters at a stall. The man gave him thirteen by mistake. "Stop," he said, "you're giving me too many." The man who was next to him—quite a common man and a little drunk—turned round and addressed him sentimentiously, "A cove with a white *bell-topper* should never be mean."

**Belly-chere** (old cant), food.

**Belly-chete** (old cant), an apron.

**Bellyful** (old), a sound drubbing or thrashing.

**Belly-go-frister** (old slang), the first blow, usually given in the belly.

**Belly hedges** (Shrewsbury School), an obstruction of a moderate character in steeplechases run by the boys.

**Belly plea, the** (old), the old slang term to describe the practice of women condemned to death pleading pregnancy in mitigation or deferment of sentence. This custom is alluded to in the "Beggar's Opera." In most jails there were men termed "child getters," who made a practice of qualifying women to put forward such a plea.

**Belly-timber** (common), food; termed also "prog," "grub."

**Belly up**, a facetious way of allud-

ing to a woman being in the family way.

"So help my greens, if our Sal ain't bin and got her *belly up*."

**Belly-vengeance** (common), sour beer that will give the stomach-ache.

**Below the belt** (tailors), unfair or mean, from an expression used in boxing or fencing.

**Belt, belt tinker, bellows** (tailors), a very roughly made garment.

**Belting** (nautical), a beating, before the rattan or cat-o'-nine-tails came into use.

**Belting society** (legal), a debating society, formerly held in the Inns of Court.

**Beltinker** (popular), to give a man *beltinker*, to thrash him.

Then they begin using bad language. They swear they'll give me *beltinker* if they ever hear me again.—*Ballad*.

Some of the synonyms are "to give one Jessie, a tanning, a hiding, a walloping, a jacketting, a dusting, to walk into, to quilt, to set about," the operation being sometimes pushed to "thrashing one within an inch of his life," or "knocking into a cocked hat."

**Belvidere** (popular), a handsome man, an Apollo. Pronounced *belvy-dcar*.

The ladies say I am bewitching,  
In fact I'm a real *belwidere*.  
In bar-room, in parlour, in kitchen,  
Oh, this is the language I hear.  
—*The Beautiful Major: Ballad.*

**Bemuse, to** (common), to fuddle oneself with drink.

**Ben** (journalistic and theatrical), short for benefit.

**BENEFIT TO JACK BURKE.**—This well-known boxer, who has had the misfortune to break his leg in two places, is to be accorded a benefit at the Mason's Hall, Bow Common Lane, on Monday, December 5. A capital programme has been organised, and we hope that his fellow pro's will rally round him on the occasion, and give his *ben* a good send off. M.C.'s Jack Fay, and T. Sands.—*Sporting Life.*

(Common), an abbreviation for "Benjamin," a waistcoat (see **BENJAMIN**); to stand *ben*, to treat one to liquor.

**Benamee** (Anglo-Indian, also old gypsy), anonymous. Hindu, *bē-nāmi*.

A term specially applied to documents of transfer and other contracts in which the name entered as that of one of the chief parties is not that of the person interested.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Benat, benar** (old cant), better.

**Ben cull** (thieves), a friend, a comrade, a "pal." *Cull* meant formerly a man, a fool; *ben*, an abbreviation of the cant term *bene*, good.

**Bend** (common), "that's above my bend," *i.e.*, beyond my power, too expensive or too difficult to perform (Hotten). This has nothing in common with the "Grocian bend," an

affected style of walking assumed by some ladies as a flattery to royalty, in keeping with the "Alexandra limp."

**Bender** (common), a sixpence, so called because it is easily bent; also "kick," a very old word. In old cant "half-a-borde," and now a "tanner," and in thieves' lingo a "cripple."

"What will you take to be paid out?" said the butcher. "The regular chum-mage is two-and-six; will you take three bob?" "And a *bender*," suggested the clerical gentleman.—*Charles Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

(American), a frolic, relaxation, spree, or "party." Probably from the Dutch *bende*, an assembly, party, or band.

I led her through the festal hall,  
Her glance was soft and tender;  
She whispered gently in my ear,  
"Say, Mose, ain't this a *bender*?"  
—*Putnam's Monthly (Bartlett, p. 29).*

Hans Breitmann joined de Turners,  
November in de Fall,  
Und dey gived a boosten *bender*  
All in de Turner Hall.  
—*Breitmann and the Turners.*

Also a leg.

Young ladies are not allowed to cross their *benders* in school.—*Longfellow: Kavanagh.*

(Thieves and roughs), the arm; over the *bender* means over the arm, over the left, *i.e.*, not really. In the same way schoolboys said, "I'll do it—fain," meaning that they will not.

Vaux, in his Memoirs, says:—"Bender is an ironical word used in conversation by flash people; as where one party affirms or professes anything



which the other believes to be false or insincere, the latter expresses his incredulity by exclaiming *bender!* or if one asks another to do an act which the latter considers unreasonable or impracticable, he replies, 'Oh, yes; I'll do it—*bender,*' meaning by the addition of the last word that in fact he will do no such thing."

**Bendigo** (common), nearly obsolete. A fur cap named from a noted pugilist, who is said to have got his nickname from his skill at "ducking." This "muscular Christian," some fifteen years ago, became a convert and preacher.

**Bendover** (Winchester) is to place yourself in such a posture as to give one so disposed an opportunity of "spanking" you.

**Bene, ben** (old cant), good.

A gage of *ben* Rom-bouse,  
In a bousing-ken of Rom-vile,  
Is benar than a Caster, Peck, pannam,  
lay,  
Or popler, which we mill in dense-a-vile. —*Thomas Middleton.*

"Stowe your *bene*" is thus explained—

"What, stowe your *bene*, cofe, and cut benar wydds."—*Harman: Caveat.*

*I.e.*, "What, hold your peace, good fellow, and speak better words."

A *bene mort*, a pretty woman.

Oh! where will be the culls of the bing,  
A hundred stretches hence?

The *bene morts*, who sweetly sing,

A hundred stretches hence?

—*A Hundred Stretches Hence.*

**Bene darkmans** (old cant), good night.

**Bene flakes** (old cant), bill-forgers.

**Beneship** (old cant), very well.

**Ben-flake** (thieves), a steak at a "slap-bang," *i.e.*, a low cooking-shop or eating-house.

**Beng** (gypsy), devil, flame; *ben-galo*, *bengesero*, devilish. Also *bengis* or *bengus*. *Bengis* his zē (zee), (May) the devil (be in) his heart. Paspati, also Pott. *Theis.* ii. 407, arguing from mere resemblance of sound, derives *beng* from *benk*, a frog, or *beng*, a frog, or *benga*, squint-eyed in Hindu. But as *bengel* in German and Dutch means a mischievous, evil fellow or scamp, there is probably some Aryan root which would furnish a more direct connection with the evil principle.

"As if yuv had dikked o' *beng* te sā,"—  
"As if he had seen the devil and all."

—*English Gypsy Songs.*

Perhaps it comes from *bēg*, Hindu, but of Mongol origin, meaning lord or master. The Spanish gypsies call the devil by a similar term, *el buen baron*, the good baron or lord.

**Bengi** (military), an onion. Origin obscure, but it may be referred to the Hindustani *beng* or *bhang*, from its pungent taste; or again, it may be a

form of the Hindu *bhindi* (often pronounced like *bengi*), the okra of America, also called *bendy* and *bámia*. One variety of it is about the size of an onion.

**Bengy**, a waistcoat, is from the gypsy *bangri*.

**Benighted**, the (Anglo-Indian), a term applied in raillery to the inhabitants of Madras by their envious neighbours.

**Benjamin** or **benjie** (common), a waistcoat or coat, formerly a "Joseph." Possibly an allusion to Joseph's garment left in Madame Potiphar's grasp. Dr. C. Mackay says it was so named from a once celebrated advertising tailor in London. (Nautical), a low crowned straw hat, with a very broad brim.

**Ben joltræm** (old), poor and coarse food, such as agricultural men, navigators, and men working on roads, have to put up with.

**Bens** (American), tools, styled "alls" by English workmen.

**Benvenue** (printers), obsolete. This was a kind of entrance-fee paid by the workman to the "chapel" on entering a new office. Equivalent to "standing his footing." Derived from the French apparently, *bienvenue*, welcome, footing, used in the expression "payer la bienvenue."

**Beong** (costermongers), a shilling; in old cant a "borde" and now a "bob;" from the Italian *bianco*, white, also a silver coin. An equivalent for this is to be found in most slangs. For instance, in Dutch thieves' slang, *witten*; in German, *blanker*; Italian, *biancon*. Formerly French silver coins were termed *blancs*.

**Beray** (old cant), dung, dirty.

**Berk, burk**, pl. *berkia* (gypsy), breast, breasts.

**Bero** (gypsy), a ship or boat; *beromengro*, a sailor; *beromcesero*, pertaining to a ship, naval. "Ghiom adré a béro"—"I went in a ship," in common jargon "mandy-jawed (or jassed), adré a *bero*."

**Berthas** (Stock Exchange), London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, ordinary stock.

Dear *Bertha*, I have not forgotten, She's really a feature in "rails;" And tho' some of my tips have been rotten, I landed some money in "mails."

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Besh** (gypsy), a year. Continental gypsy, *bersh*. *Dui besh*, two years.

**Beshāva** (gypsy), I sit, common form *besh*; *Besh tu alay*, sit down; *beshella*, he sits. "Who *besh* in ye pus, around the yag"—"Who sit in the straw around the fire."—*G. Borrow: Lavengro.*

**Beshermengro** (gypsy), one who sits, a magistrate.

**Bespeak-night** (common), a night in theatrical performance set apart for the special benefit of some actor or actress—a benefit in modern phraseology.

**Best** (common), to *best* a man, to have the better of one in any way.

And this great party, the noble army of consumers, would cry out at any attempt to raise the price of the commodity for the benefit of the producers, whom, by a curious perversion of mind, they consider their natural enemies, to be *bested* at every possible opportunity.—*Evening News*.

To cheat.

When I went to the fence he *bested* me because I was drunk, and only gave me £8, 10s. for the lot.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Thieves), to give in *best*, to affect repentance.

If when in the magisterial presence he contorts his countenance in affected agony, it is merely because he perceives from his worship's tone that he wishes to agonise him, and is shrewd enough to know that to "give in *best*," as he would express it, is the way to get let off easy.—*J. Greenwood: The Seven Curses of London*.

**Bester** (popular), one who gets the better. Also a low betting cheat, a blackleg.

**Best girl** (American), the preferred one; a sweetheart.

"Did you ever hear," asked my *best girl*, as we drove along Delaware Avenue, past the elegant grounds of Jonathan Scoville, "why Mr. Scoville never built that costly residence he had planned?"—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Besting** (running), to get the better of any one by unfair means.

**Besting the pistol** (running), where a runner gets the best of the starter, and is away on his journey when the pistol goes off.

**Bet a seed, to** (American), to bet the smallest chip or counter, *i.e.*, stake, in the game of poker.—*MS. Collection of Americanisms, by C. Leland-Harrison*.

**Be there, to** (common), to be in one's element, to be knowing at a thing.

I very soon began to preach and prate,  
And with the sisters played some funny pranks,

I was so good at nobbling with the plate,  
They soon made me captain of the ranks;  
And often when our meetings were dispersed,

With sister Jane I'd offer up a prayer,  
I'd such a jolly spree when she took me home to tea,

For I know what it is to *be there!*—*Song*.

**Better than a dig in the eye with a blunt stick** (common). The expression is used to denote a thing of little value.

**Betting round** (racing), laying fairly and equally against nearly all the horses in a race, so that no great risk can be run. Commonly called "getting round."

**Betty** (thieves), a skeleton key or picklock, termed also tivil, twist, screw; all *Betty*, it is all up! past recovery.

**Bet, you** (American), you may be sure of it, you may safely bet that it is true.

We reached the settlement of *Ubet*. The name had been selected from the slang phrase so laconically expressive of "You may be sure I will." . . . A night marauder took advantage of a good moon to place a ladder against a window, hoping to secure the property of a gentleman asleep within the chamber. As he lifted the window and put his head in the gentleman woke up, and with great promptness presented his six-shooter, shouting out, "You get!" With equal promptness the detected thief exclaimed, "*You bet!*" and slid down the ladder,—*et procul in tenuem ex oculis evanuit auram.*—*Alex. Stavelly Hill: From Home to Home.*

**Bever** (obsolete), a slight repast between meals, an afternoon lunch, a meal eaten in a hurry. It was in use at the English and American universities. At the former the *bevers* consisted of a portion of bread and an allowance of beer laid out in the hall in the afternoon, a break of a quarter of an hour in school time being allowed in summer for this refreshment. The peculiar nature of the repast was a relic of the old founders' days. Old English *bever*, a drinking; from the old French *bevre*, to drink.

**Bevy** or **bevali** (common), beer; abbreviation of beverage. Gypsy *pivi*, drink; Slavonian *pivo*, beer. Other appellations for beer are "gatter, oil of barley, bug juice, ponjello"; and were it the best of Bass's it is termed by boarding-school boys "swipes."

**Bewer** (tinkers' slang), a woman. "Misi to my *bewer*"—"Write (*i.e.*, go or send) to my woman." Young *bew'r*, a girl.

**B flats** (popular), bugs.

Mrs. B. beheld one night a stout negro of the flat-backed tribe, known among comic writers as the *B flats*, stealing up toward the head of the people.—*Household Words.*

**Bheesty** (Anglo-Indian), a water-carrier. "The universal word in the Anglo-Indian households of Northern India for the domestic who supplies the family with water, carrying it in a mussuck or goat's skin on his back. No class of men is so diligent, so faithful, unobtrusive, and so uncomplaining as the *bhistis*."—*Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

Here comes a seal carrying a porpoise on its back. No! it is only our friend the *bheesty*.—*In my Indian Garden.*

**Bible** (nautical), a hand axe; also a square piece of freestone to grind the deck with sand in cleaning it; a small holystone, so called from seamen using them kneeling.—*Admiral Smyth.*

**Bible carrier** (common), a person who sells songs without singing them (Hotten).

**Bible-clerk** (Winchester), a college prefect who has to read the lessons in chapel, to keep order in school, to open the doors for masters, to keep up the fire, and assist at flogging. He holds his office for a week at a time. *Bible-clerks* come into

course now (since "Cloisted time" 1872) on Wednesday instead of Saturday. A *Bible-clerk's* scob is the first "scob" (box spelt backwards, phonetically) on the right hand as you enter school. It bears a brass plate with the inscription engraved on it: "Τω ἀεὶ ἀναγνώστη"—"To each successive reader," because *Bible-clerks* used to read the lessons at meals.

**Bible-pounder** (popular), a parson; termed also a "white-choker," a "devil-dodger," a "cushion-smiter."

**Bibling** (Winchester), a flogging consisting of six cuts on the small of the back administered by the head or second master. The term is obsolete. The *bibling-rod* was an instrument with which the punishment of *bibling* was administered. It consisted of a handle terminated by four apple-tree twigs.

Underneath is the place of execution where delinquents are "bibled." It need hardly be said that it (the rod) is applied in the ordinary fashion, six cuts forming what is technically called a *bibling*, on which occasion the Bible-clerk introduces the victim; and four being the sum of a less terrible operation called a "scrubbing."—*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*.

**Biddable** (common), docile, obedient to order, tractable.

**Biddy** (Winchester College), a bath in college which was filled every morning for Prefects, &c., by the junior man in each

"gallery" or bed-room. The origin of the word is possibly due to the French *bidet*, an article of bed-room furniture for the use of ladies, more common on the Continent than in England. (American), an Irish servant girl.

**Bidree** or **bidry** (Anglo-Indian). Of late years all amateurs of bric-à-brac in England have become familiar with a kind of niello-work of silver patterns on a black metal ground which comes from the Deccan, and which takes its name from the city of Bidar. This is *bidree* work. The ground is made of three parts pewter to one of copper, which is inlaid with the silver, and the ground is then blackened.—*Madras Literary Society Journal*, New Series, i. 81-84.

**Biff** (Americanism), to give a "*biff* in the jaw," to strike one in the face. In England to "fetch you a wipe in the mug," or "give you a bang in the chops," are choice. *Biff* is from the provincial English *befet* or *buffet*, a blow; old French *bufet*. Possibly Anglo-Saxon *bifjan*, to shake.

**Biffin** (popular), "my *biffin*" is a friendly appellation.

"Ain't that up to Dick, my *biffin*?" "I never said it warn't."—*J. Greenwood: Under the Blue Blanket*.

**Big as all out o' doors**, a humorous Americanism for any-

thing unusually or abnormally large.

The infarnal villain! Tell me who he is, and if he was as *big as all out-doors* I'd walk into him.

He is looking as *big as all out-doors* jist now, and is waitin' for us to come to him.

—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker.*

**Big-bird** (theatrical), to "get the *big-bird*," to be hissed. The *bird* is supposed to be, and is very often, a goose. French actors call hissing "appeler Azor," this being the usual name for a dog.

**Big bugs** (American), an expression for great people, people of consequence, aristocrats. Bartlett thinks that this word suggests some anecdote which would be "worth finding out." There is no lack in American newspapers of anecdotes explaining the origin of popular phrases, but unfortunately about ninety-nine in a hundred of them are what Germans call *Nachwerk*, manufactured afterwards by some ingenious humourist to suit the case. The following, which is of recent origin, might easily pass for one of these valuable originals. Those which have already appeared on *Chestnut*, sworn to by as many authorities as those cited by Autolyceus, would fill a chapter.

It puts me in mind of a story once heard from an old man. He was speaking of a rich neighbour who was going for the first time to New Orleans. "Yes," he said, "Mr. Jones is a mighty big man

round here, but he won't stand a chance to shine down there. He'll be like the bug who lived on a pumpkin, and because he was twice as big as any other bug round there, he allowed he was the largest insect on earth. But one day there came two or three of them big gold beetles, and lit on the pumpkin in all their original splendour, and Mr. Pumpkin Bug jist turned pale and crawled down underneath. "Children," says he, "I wouldn't hev thought it, but there's *bigger bugs* in the world than what I be!"—*Queer Bits.*

While my wife goes out washin', an cleanin' *big bug* houses, I'll have a shop down-town for renovatin' trousers.—*A Bootblack's Soliloquy.*

In the Australian lingo *big bugs* has also the meaning of man of importance.

"What's your brother doing?"

"Oh! he's an awful *big bug* now. The Minister of Railways has got him a billet in the Civil Service."

"What's the billet?"

"Railway-porter at Lal Lal."—*Victorian Comic Paper.*

**Big country** (sport), the open country.

In the roomy stalls of the stables you make the acquaintance of Donative, who bore his lord and master to victory over three miles of *big country*.—*The World.*

**Big dog with a brass collar, the,** the principal or head of a concern, or the biggest "wig" of a place.

**Big fellow** (Australian Blackfellow's lingo), large, a quantity; a specimen of the pidgin English stuffed with Blackfellow's words used by the whites on stations in their intercourse with the aborigines.

"Too much *big fellow* water, bait (ply) fly come up bait pind (find) him," answers the aboriginal, adding, however, the question, "You patter potchum?" (eat possum).—*A. C. Grant.*

**Biggin** (Winchester, &c.), a coffee-pot consisting of two parts—a strainer, and a coffee-pot.

"It is very odd," said Hatton to his companion Morley, "you can't get coffee anywhere." Morley, who had supposed that coffee was about the commonest article of consumption in Mowbray, looked a little surprised; but at this moment Hatton's servant entered with a mysterious yet somewhat triumphant air, and ushering in a travelling *biggin* of their own, fuming like one of the springs of Geyser. "Now try that," said Hatton to Morley, as the servant poured him out a cup.—*Disraeli: Sybil.*

**Biggity** (American), large, extravagant, grand, presumptuously.

Well, den, w'iles dey wuz all a-settin' dar, en de 'lasses wuz a bilin' en a blubberin', dey got ter runnin' on, talkin' mighty *biggity*.—*Uncle Remus.*

**Big guns** (common), men of importance, great people.

M. Coquelin has been fêted, feasted, and generally entertained during his stay in the metropolis. The other evening he was invited to meet the Prince of Wales, and had the honour of supping with Albert the Jolly, and a host of other *big guns*.—*Modern Society.*

**Big head** (American), a term of abuse, implying that a man is conceited, "bumptious;" to get the *big head*, to be in a state verging on intoxication, what the French call "être alimé."

All the Colonel's tact and diplomacy were necessary to preserve peace now. . . .

The "boys" got the *big head*, and displayed effervescence scarcely less remarkable than that of the champagne itself.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

It signifies, further, the feeling of a swelled head, accompanied by headache experienced in the morning after a debauch, when one has "mal aux cheveux," as the French express it.

A *big head* laden with cocktails and gin,  
Is all that I have to say,  
To remind me of the whisky that has all gone in

To a hold that is not far away.  
As I sit on a keg gazing over the beers,  
That the bums are all scooping down,  
I pray that the barkeeper may have no fears,

For in whisky I'll never be drowned.  
—*Chicago Tribune: Dear Boys, Come and Have a Drink.*

**Big house** (costermongers), the workhouse.

As long as they kept out of the *big house* she would not complain. . . . The men hate the thought of going to the *big house*.—*London Labour and the London Poor.*

**Big Injun** (American), a term applied at first by the red Indians to indicate some great chief.

"He *big Injun*—he heap *big Injun*—he dam heap *big Injun*—he mighty dam big heap dam *big Injun*—he Jones!"—*Three Thousand Miles in a Railway Car. Philadelphia, 1869.*

**Big mouth** (American), a very common expression applied to any man who talks too much, who is windy, "gassy," and given to bosh. During his trial for murder the wretched Guiteau often interrupted the judge by crying out "Shut up, *big mouth*."

Henry George is going to leave New York for a while. He is probably jealous of Liberty, whose mouth is a yard wide.—*Philadelphia North American*.

They hev wandered with their sorrers unto the sunny South,  
They hev got tremendous swallows, and a monstros lot of mouth.  
—*Ballad of the Green Old Man*.

**Big nuts to crack** (American), a difficult or large undertaking.

**Big pond** (American), the Atlantic.

He (old Clay) is all sorts of a hoss, and the best live one that ever cut dirt this side of the *big pond*, or t'other side either.—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker*.

**Big pot** (common), a somebody, a person of consequence.

My name is Peter Smifkins,  
I live with ma at Slough;  
I've got a city clerkship,  
So I'm quite a *big pot* now.  
—*Music Hall Song*.

**Big side runs** (Rugby), the open paper chases.

**Big sides** (schools), a school term for the practice games at football, where all or nearly all the boys join in. It was originally used at Rugby.

**Big take** (American), anything very much affected or popular. A grand acquisition, a fashion, a success.

We hear that certain fragrant and cunningly contrived bouquets for ladies are a *big take* in New York. In the centre of the pretty bunches of flowers half-pint bottles are neatly concealed. The bottles are filled with cool refreshing cocktails; straws run through the corks, and as the gentle daughters of Eve take a sniff, they can enjoy a "snifter."—*Fun*.

**Big, to look** (common), to assume an inflated air or manner. To "talk *big*," to talk in a boasting manner, from the propensity of very small men to assume "bumptious" or defiant ways. These expressions have almost ceased to be slang.

**Big wig** (common), a pompous, conceited individual. Also applied by the lower classes to those in a high station of life or office. Thus a judge or nobleman will be termed a *big wig*. The word is used in a good-humoured, familiar sense.

The portraits of Holy Bonifacius, Bishop of Budgeon, and all the defunct *big-wigs* of the college.—*Thackeray: Lovell the Widower*.

Talbot Twysden's dinner-table is large, and the guests most respectable. There is always a *big-wig* or two present.—*Thackeray: The Adventures of Philip*.

This morning he went up of his own accord afore the Lord Mayor or some of them city *big-wigs*.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

(Nautical), a high officer.

**Bikin** (gypsy), to sell; *bikin engro*, a merchant, or one who sells.

**Bildar or beldars** (Anglo-Indian), a term applied to diggers with the spade or mattock in the public works.

Ye lyme is allé out—ye masons lounge about!

Ye *beldars* have alle strucked and are smoking att their eese,

Ye brickets are alle done!—

Ye kyne are skynne and bone,

And ye threasourour has bolted wyth. xii thousand rupees!

—*Anglo-Indian Glossary: Ye Dreame of an Excecutive Engineere*.



**Bile** (old slang), an old term used for the female organ of generation.

**Bilk** (common), to defraud, to cheat, to obtain goods without paying for them, to cheat the driver of a hackney carriage or a girl from whom one has received the sexual favour; a *bilk*, a deception. The term has long been in use.

And all the vile companions of a street  
Keep a perpetual bawling at the door:  
Who beat the bawd last night? who  
*bilkt* the whore?

—*Earl of Rochester's Works.*

I don't intend to *bilk* my lodgings.—  
*Fielding: Tom Jones.*

But as upon the scene I cast  
My wond'ring gaze, a friend went past.  
His nose was red, he reeled along,  
And when I asked him what was wrong,  
Strong drink, he said, was (*hic!*) a *bilk*,  
And so he had been drinking—milk!

—*Scraps.*

To “do a *bilk*,” to defraud, specially used in the case of prostitutes who are cheated, in the French slang “poser un lapin.” Most etymologists derive the word *bilk* from the Gothic *bilaitan*, to mock, to deride.

*Bilk*, as provincial or old English, meaning to cheat or defraud (Wright), is a form of *balk*, which has the same meaning, in the sense of hindering a man in his rights. *Balk*, to hinder, is, according to Skeat (Etymol. Dict.) from *balk*, a beam or bar; to put a balk or bar in a man's way. Anglo-Saxon *balea*. But as English it is probably from a Danish source, *bjalka*, Old Norse

*bialki* (Ettmüller, *Lex. Ang. Saxonicum*), which brings us directly to *bilk*.

“*Bilking* the blues,” in prison slang, is evading the police. In society a man who, though never actually found out, is strongly suspected of cheating at cards, would be called a *bilk*.

**Bilker** (common), same meaning as *bilk* in the sense of cheat, but specially applied to rascals who defraud prostitutes or cabmen.

A third and frequent means of evading payment of cab fares is for riders late at night, or in the small hours of the morning, to stealthily get out of the vehicles in motion, and then run off unobserved. Some of these malpractitioners have become so skilful in this action that they have left the cabs and gently closed the door afterwards without being seen, when they were being driven along at six or seven miles an hour. In a few instances the more expert of these *bilkers* have even jumped out of “hansoms” in dark roads or lanes unperceived by their drivers when the “two-wheelers” have been running at eight or nine miles an hour.—*Tit Bits.*

(Popular), one who gets a bed at a lodging-house and does not pay for it.

Besides, the sympathies of the other lodgers are always with the *bilker*, and if they took any part in a scuffle, should such a thing arise, it would be in his favour and against the porter.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

**Bilking** (popular), explained by quotation.

The consequence is that all duties are discharged in such a place in the most slovenly manner, and that as many as pos-

sible are shirked, with consequences in the way of *bilking*, or getting beds without paying for them.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

**Bill (Eton)**, in the *bill*, on the punishment list.

Some of the small boys whom this delightful youth tempted to ape his habits, had often occasion to rue it when they staggered back to college giddy and sick, carrying with them a perfume which told its tale to their tutors, and caused them to be put in the *bill*.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

**Bill, a long or short** (common), a term of imprisonment.

Out of prison, Larry! Lord save me! yev've had a *short bill* this time for kicking a woman.—*Savage London.*

**Bill brighters** (winter), small fagots employed in the kitchen to light the fires.

**Billed up** (army), confined to barracks, a term peculiar to Her Majesty's Guards, to whom a punishment which curtails freedom of movement is no doubt especially irksome.

**Billet** (Australian, popular), a situation. A *billet* is as universal a term for a situation as "screw" is for a salary in Australia, or "bobby" for policeman in England. The metaphor is of course taken from *billets* or quarters being found for soldiers, who are then said to be "*billeted* out" in military parlance. Thus one of the commonest slang words in Australia—

Up country *billets* oft are loss,  
Work for "tucker"—trust the boss.

—*Edward Fitzgerald: Printers' Proverbs in the Australasian Printer's Keepsake.*

A gentleman at a boarding-house in Parramatta, New South Wales, in 1883, related with great gusto a curate's *billet* in Northumberland which had just come under his notice. The vicar was away travelling round the world for his health, and the curate, a Cambridge graduate, received the magnificent stipend of £120 a year for looking after the church services, the parish, the vicar's wife and five children, and two pupils cramming for matriculation.

*Billet* is used in England with a like signification. In prisons "getting a *billet*" is being appointed to some office which procures certain advantages for the convict who is fortunate enough to receive the favour.

Some time later on I renewed my acquaintance with P— under difficulties which were not altogether insurmountable, and as he walked behind me in the exercise ground, he told me the story of his commercial career. Being a "communion bloke" and a "good character" man, he soon got a *billet*. He was enrolled amongst the "cleaners," and promoted to be the "chaplain's orderly," which was the only *billet* I wished to obtain for myself. He secured it, and on a Sunday solemnly marched up the pulpit stairs to open the Bible or Prayer Book, and fix therein at the proper places the hymns and anthems to be sung by the congregation. This was his Sunday's duty.—*Evening News.*

(Old military slang), *billet*, appointed place or aim. "Every bullet has its *billet*."

**Billiard slum, the** (Australian convicts' slang), false pretences. Probably introduced into Australia by the convicts transported thither. To "give on *the billiard slum*," to "mace" or "give upon the mace," *i.e.*, to obtain goods on credit which you never mean to pay for, to run up a score with the same intention, or to sponge upon your acquaintance by continually begging or borrowing from them (Vaux's Memoirs). To parallel the pun between "mace" and *billiard slum*, *cf.* "bolt-in-tun," "cobler," &c. Slang, and especially thieves' slang, is very addicted to these puns.

**Billingsgate pheasant** (common), a red herring or bloater, otherwise known under the appellation of "Yarmouth capon" or "two-eyed steak."

**Bill of sale** (old slang), widows' weeds.

**Billy** (Scotch), a silk handkerchief, also used by thieves; (common), a policeman's staff; (thieves), stolen metal; (New Zealand and Australia), a saucepan. In the Bush, everything—tea, soup, or anything else—is boiled in the *billy*, a tin saucepan with a wire poop-handle to carry it by. The sundowner or swagman, tramping the country in search of work, invariably carries this *billy* and a blanket. In the latter all his worldly goods are usually strapped up; sometimes

he goes so far as having a bit of mackintosh sheeting outside the blanket to keep it dry. He will be seen "humping" (carrying) these on the hottest day.

So much for our hero! A statuesque foot  
Would suffer by wearing that heavy nailed  
boot—

Its owner is hardly Achilles:  
However, he's happy. He cuts a great  
"fig"

In a land where a coat is no part of the  
rig,

In the country of "damper" and  
*billies*.

—*Dr. Kendall: Tim the Splitter.*

**Billy boy** (nautical), a Yorkshire vessel, with one mast.

**Billy-button** (thieves' slang), rhyming slang for mutton; also a contemptuous term for a young journeyman tailor.

**Billy buzman** (thieves), a pick-pocket who confines his attention exclusively to silk handkerchiefs.

**Billycock** (Australian), a kind of hat. The *billycock* is a low, round, hard-felt hat with a turned-up brim. Hotten describes it as a soft felt hat of the Jim Crow or "wide-awake" description.

**Billy-fencer** (popular), a marine-store dealer.

**Billy-hunting** (popular), buying old metal; one of the occupations of a "billy-fencer" or marine-store dealer. (Thieves),

going out for the purpose of stealing pocket-handkerchiefs.

**Billy-stink** (Anglo-Indian), a name given by Europeans in India to the vile liquids of native manufacture sold in the bazaars.

*Billy-stink* is the very appropriate name given by Europeans to one of those maddening native compounds. It would indeed be very hard to say what the component properties of this very highly-flavoured fluid consist of. . . . When drinking any of the odoriferous mixture it is a common thing for individuals to press the apertures pertaining to their nasal appendage between thumb and forefinger.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks.*

**Bims, bimshise** (West Indian). Barbadoes and its inhabitants are so nicknamed throughout the West Indies. A recent traveller hazards the following ingenious explanation—which if not true ought to be so—of these terms, which are confessedly obscure in their derivation. “Barbadoes is known all the world over as the little island that pays her way; it has never been conquered; its people are enterprising and energetic, go-ahead and driving; in short, the business men of these islands (the Caribbees). Barbadian may therefore be said to mean a man with ‘go’ and grit, energy and *vim*.”

**Bing** (gypsy), the devil; (old cant) a liquor shop, as a rum *bing*; to *bing*, to go, to attack, shoot.

“Could you not have turned him on his back like a turtle, and left him there?”

said Lord Etherington. “And had an ounce of lead in my body for my pains? No, no! we have already had footpad work enough. I promise you the old buck was armed as if he meant to *bing* folks on the low toby.”—*Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

**Bing avast** (old cant derived from gypsy), an angry command to be off, meaning literally, “go to the devil.” *Beng* English gypsy; Scottish gypsy *bing*, meaning the devil, and *avast* from *avāva* second present indicative and imperative, *avāsa* or *avéssa* “thou goest,” or “go thou.” Full form, *bing avas tu!* or *avaste*. It is probable that in Harman's vocabulary *a* is by accident separated from *vast*. *Bing*, the devil, is not to be confounded with the same word in “to *bing* out,” in old cant, nor *avast* with *avast*, in its other meaning. It is probable that those who made the old cant, having learned from gypsies that *bing avast* meant “go to the devil,” considered that *bing* meant “go” or “come” a distance, and used it as such.

*Bing* out, bien morts and toure,  
For all your duds are *binged avast*.  
—*Old Song, 1560.*

**Binge** (Oxford), a big drinking bout. To *binge* is a provincialism for to soak a vessel in water to prevent its leaking. It is also a nautical term meaning to rinse a cask. This word seems to be connected with *bung*, the orifice in the bilge of a cask, through which it is filled.

**Bingo** (old cant), probably of gypsy origin. Spirits or brandy.

Pass round the *bingo*, son of a gun,  
You musty, dusky, husky son!

—Lord Lytton : *Paul Clifford*.

Some soda-water, with a dash of *bingo*,  
clears one's head in the morning.—*T. Hughes* : *Tom Brown at Oxford*.

“*Bingo boy*,” a drunkard ;  
“*bingo mort*,” female dram-drinker.

*Bing* (gypsy), the devil, an evil spirit, probably suggested the word. Puns on spirit in its twofold meaning have always been common both in English and gypsy. *Bengalopani* (gypsy), rum.

**Bingy** (trade), a term largely used in the butter trade to denote bad, ropy butter (*Hotten*).

**Binnacle-word** (nautical), any learned or affected word used in the navy, which the sailors jeeringly offer to chalk upon the binnacle.

**Binni** (tinker), small ; *binny soobli*, a boy ; lit., small man.

**Birch broom** (thieves), rhyming slang for room.

**Birdcage**, a slang term in vogue among the lower orders for a bustle, or in more modern slang a “dress-improver.” This part of a lady's toilet is a kind of pad or cushion worn at the back of the dress for the purpose of expanding the skirts, and, in some cases, making up for certain

deficiencies in the wearer's form. Those now in fashion are immensely elongated structures, little suggestive of the human form ; some are built on the principle of the old crinoline, with wire or steel ribs, hence the appellation of *birdcage*.

She was walking in her best clothes on Bank Holiday, when a crossing sweeper knocked up against her, and being a perfect lady she was all over his chevvy before he'd time to turn round, and they took her by the chignon and the *birdcage* and waltzed her into Vine Street quicker than a wink.—*Sporting Times*.

Me and Jane was at Greenwich last week. The hill's very nice, but Jane quite spiled her *birdcage* rollin' down. A new dress, too.—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*.

Not long ago there was an action relating to patents in the High Court of Justice. The court was strewn with various specimens of these articles, and considerable amusement was caused by the spectacle of a judge and several leading counsel arguing gravely on the intricacies of the various designs for dress-improvers. The judge, after looking at several designs, said, “I hope you are going to produce another of these articles, Mr. —, which I do not see here. It is called the Jubilee . . . it is one which, when a lady sits down, plays the ‘National Anthem.’” An old lawyer would have his feeble joke, too, and remarked that he had attended the sittings of the court for many years, but that never had he witnessed so much “bustle.”

(Racing), the saddling pad-dock adjoining the Grand Stand at Newmarket. (Popular), a four-wheeled cab, otherwise known by the appropriate appellation of "growler."

**Bird-lime** (thieves), rhyming slang for time.

**Birdseye** (popular), a handkerchief.

Were they lurking at this secluded spot until what they thought was a good time to sheer off with the "swag"? Was that the swag tied up in the blue *birdseye*?—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Bird's eye fogle**, a (prize-fighters), the name of a scarf tied round their waists by prize-fighters in the ring; a neckerchief or handkerchief with white spots on a black, blue, or other ground. *Fogle*, from the German *vogel*, a bird.

**Bird's eye wipe** (common), a kerchief, either for the pocket or neck, with blue spots on it.

**Birk** (back slang), a "crib," *i.e.*, house.

**Birthday suit** (common), the suit of our first parents before they had a bite in the apple.

**Bish** (Anglo-Indian), poison; Sanskrit, *visha*, poison.

An old English gypsy once asked me if I knew what *becsa* meant. He said it was a kind of poison made from beans. I recognised in it at once an Indian word for poison, especially aconite.

**Bishop** (horse-dealers), to *bishop* a horse is a swindling contrivance resorted to in order to deceive buyers as to its age. An old horse has no black streaks on his teeth, and by some process these are made to appear; from a north of England term. See **BISHOP'S FOOT**.

(Common), the chamber utensil or "jordan;" also, latterly, an "it." The last is derived from the humorous description of Max O'Rell in "John Bull's Womankind," p. 15:—

"Better still, would you believe that in very good houses I have seen, and very plainly too, . . . yes, positively, I have seen *It* on the floor under the washstand?"

**Bishop's court**. In most Australian sees the bishop's palace is called bishop's court. Perhaps palaces are considered unsuitable for democratic communities; just as it is not correct to address a colonial bishop as "my lord." In practice, however, they are always addressed "my lord." Not to do so would be an incivility.

**Bishop's foot**, to *bishop* (Lowland Scotch and North of England), the devil's foot. Milk burned in the pan is, in the North of England, said to be *bishoped*. In Fifeshire the expression is applied to food that has been scorched in cooking or otherwise spoiled—"the *bishop's foot's* in it." The *bishop* means the devil, and the saying

is probably a relic of the times of the Reformation, when in Scotland everything connected with prelacy was considered to be bad.

**Bisser** (gypsy), to forget.

**Bit** (American), correctly the old Spanish "real," equal to twelve and a half cents, or about sixpence. In England the now seldom seen fourpenny-piece was called a fourpenny-bit, also a "joey," from the late Joseph Hume, M.P., who extolled its convenience in a speech which he made in Parliament. In Pennsylvania the "real" was called an elevenpenny-bit,—*bit* being a translation of the Spanish "peso," a piece or *bit* (as it was popularly understood), and signified any coin. Since this Spanish and Mexican money was withdrawn from circulation the term *bit* is applied to the "dime." The "medio" or "half-real" was in Philadelphia called a *fippenny-bit* (fivepenny), which was abbreviated to "fip," as "elevenpenny-bit" became contracted to "levy." This old Spanish currency became so worn that the "levy," which was legally worth twelve and a half cents, often weighed less than the ten-cent silver piece or "dime," and it was said that boys were in the habit of filing down and smoothing the latter so as to make them pass for the former.

A Philadelphian is always stylish and fashionable when he owns twelve and a half cents, for then he can always hold a *levy* (levee).—*Vanity Fair*, 1861.

(West Indian), a *bit* is a fourpenny piece. In Demerara the negroes make this one of their units of calculation. Thus a shilling is three *bits*, and so on.

(Popular), fourpence.

**Bitch, to** (old slang), to give way through fear. The primary meaning is to sport. (Common), "to be" or "to stand *bitch*," from the gypsy *bitcher* or *bitch*, to send away, let go, or yield.

"Don't *bitcher* it because you're arash"—"Don't let it go because you're afraid."

To assume a woman's functions in making tea, presiding at the table, &c.

**Bitchadey-pawdel** (gypsy), transported.

**Bitch booby** (old military slang), a country girl.

**Bitcher** (gypsy), to send. Hence to order or command. *Bitchering kers*, police or assize-courts. See To **BITCH**.

**Bitcherin mush** (gypsy), a magistrate.

**Bitcher-pawdel** (gypsy), to transport.

**Bitch party** (university), tea party; only suitable for women in the

minds of the coiners of this irreverent expression. "Will you be old *bitch*?" means "Will you make tea?"

**Biter** (old), a woman of inordinate sexual desires.

**Bite the ear, to** (prison slang), to borrow. "I bit his ear for three and a sprat"—I borrowed 3s. 6d. of him.

**Bite the roger, to** (thieves), to steal a portmanteau.

**Bite the wiper, to** (thieves), to steal a pocket-handkerchief.

**Bite, to** (common), to take in, impose on, cheat, over-reach in any way. Hotten says this is a gypsy term, but does not prove it. "Cross-bite, for a cheat, constantly occurs in the writers of the sixteenth century. Bailey has cross-bite, a disappointment, probably the primary sense, and *bite* is very probably a contraction of this." It is much more probably derived from the Dutch *buiten*, which in slang means, according to Teirlinck, to buy, or trade, and which is more accurately defined by Gherard van der Scheuren (*Teuthonista oft Duytslender, 1475-77*) as "*Buyten, wesselen mangeln, cuyden; tuyschen-cambire, permutare,*" &c. These words all mean to trade, exchange, or barter; but *tuyschen* indicates cheating, or swindling; combining the force of the analo-

gous German words *tauschen*, to exchange or trade, and *täuschen*, to deceive. Hotten also says that *bite* is a north country word for a hard bargain (used by Pope), and that Swift tells us that it originated with a nobleman in his day. According to Sewel's Dictionary, *buit* is booty, spoil, pillage; *buiten*, among other meanings, has "to go out to pillage," and "*zich te buyten gaan*" (*i.e.*, to go out, or away, or too far) is "to be exorbitant." When we remember that *buyten* means in Dutch to *bite*, and *buyten* (which has almost the same pronunciation) to bargain with all the associations of deceit and plunder, it seems much more probable that *bite*, a hard bargain, or *bite*, to cheat, came from the Low Countries direct, than from an English word signifying "disappointment."—*C. G. L.*

*Bite* was formerly used as an interjection equivalent to the modern expression "sold!" There is a story of a man sentenced to the gallows who sold his body to a surgeon. . . .

It is a superstition with some surgeons who beg the bodies of condemned malefactors, to go to the gaol and bargain for the carcass with the criminal himself. . . . The fellow who killed the officer of Newgate, very forwardly, and like a man who was willing to deal, told him, "Look you, Mr. Surgeon, that little dry fellow, who has been half-starved all his life, and is now half-dead with fear, cannot answer your purpose. . . . Come, for twenty shillings I am your man." Says the surgeon, "Done, there's a guinea." This witty rogue took the money, and as soon



as he had it in his fist, cries, "*Bite*, I am to be hanged in chains."—*Spectator*, No. 504.

**Bite up** (tailors), an unpleasant altercation.

**Bit-faker** (thieves' slang), a coiner or forger of false money. To "fake" is probably the Latin *facio*, which has many meanings besides its primary meanings of "make" and "do." It may also be a form of the gypsy *ker*, which has the same significations. A *bit-faker* would, therefore, be a maker of money (bit).

**Bit-faking** (thieves' slang), coining or forging money.

**Biting his hips** (tailors), regretting what he has done or said.

**Biting up** (tailors), grieving for something lost or gone.

**Biting your name in** (popular), taking a large draught of some liquor, drinking deep or greedily.

**Bit of blood**, a spirited horse that has some blood.

**Bit of cavalry**, a saddle horse.

**Bit of leaf** (prison), a small quantity of tobacco.

The same rigid rule is in force at Portland. I suppose it is because the convicts almost to a man set such a high value on a *bit of leaf*, regarding it as the greatest luxury of their lives, that the authorities are so severe in their endeavours to keep it from them. But they get it for all that.  
—*J. Greenwood: Gaol Birds at Large.*

**Bit of mutton** (common), a nice woman, generally in a questionable sense.

**Bit on**, a (common), slightly intoxicated.

The gallant captain was *a bit on*. He wanted to make some purchases there and then.—*Sporting Times.*

**Bit of sticks** (sporting), a copse.

The form of the master, his white head,  
who bends

With his fine old school air, deferential  
and courtly,

As his hand to our Belle's tiny boot-  
tip he lends.

"Boots and saddles" the word is:—and  
ye who would follow

For a last stirrup-cup loiter not nor  
delay!

For from yon *bit of sticks* will ere long  
the view-holloa

Ring the rise of the curtain, the start  
of the play.

—*Sporting Times.*

**Bit of stuff** (familiar), overdressed man; a man with full confidence in his appearance and ability. A young woman of dissolute life, who is also called a "bit of muslin."

(Common), a draft or bill of exchange.

I am sorry that *bit of stuff* (meaning the bill) wasn't for five thousand francs.—*Lever: The Dodd Family Abroad.*

**Bits of stiff** (popular), bank notes.

**Bitter** (general), to "do a *bitter*," to have a glass of bitter ale. Originally an Oxford term.

Into the "Cri." of an evening I slip,  
And into the cool sparkling *bitter* I  
dip.

—*Music Hall Song.*

**Bitto, bitti** (gypsy), a bit, a little, small, little. A *bitto mūsh*, a small man; *bitti dir*, fainter, lower (voice), less, smaller; *bitti mūllos* or *mūlleys*, goblins, fairies.

**Bivvy, pivvy** (provincial), a drink, beer; a shant of *bivvy*, a pot of beer; a diminutive of beverage, or from the gypsy *piava* or *biava*, to drink; *pivo*, beer in Bohemian or Czech. In French cant *pivois* is wine.

**Biyêghin** (tinker), stealing; *biyêgh'*, to steal; *biyegh' th'eenik*, to steal the thing.

**Biz** (English and American), business.

"They manage these things better in France," said Gub, on the Caffarel affair. "It's all very well to sneer at 'decorated tailors,' but I think if you can do it, to pay your tailor with a decoration is dashed good *biz*. I think I shall try it on."

"What'll you decorate him with?" asked Rootytooty, who takes a lively interest in these matters, and believes muchly in an editor's ability to benefit his fellow-men.

"Oh," replied Gub, "I shall try him with the Order of the Boot."—*Sporting Times*.

It also means any kind of occupation.

That wasn't my day for being in the target *biz*, and I flopped flat as a pancake.—*American Newspaper*.

To bonnet a lot of old blokes and make petticoats squeal is good *biz*,  
But a Crusher's 'ard knuckles a crunching yer scrag? No, I'm blown if that is!  
Let 'em swarm "in their thousands"—the

mugs!—and their black and red flags let 'em carry;  
But wen they are next on the job they will 'ave to look wide-oh! for 'Arry.

—*Punch*.

In theatrical language the *biz* is the acting, performing a part.

And, when you come to Covent G., it also may be said,

That Horace Lennard's book is good, and worthy to be read;

That Squire and those are funny chaps that Fanny Leslie's "great,"

And Joseph Cave, in all the *biz*, is smart and up to date.

—*Punch*.

**B. K. S.** (officers), barracks, used specially among officers in mufti, who wish to preserve the incognito.

**Blab** (common), to talk inconsiderately, to let secrets slip out, betray; Dan. *blabbre*, to babble.

"He has not peached so far," said the Jew. . . . "If he means to *blab* us among his new friends, we may slap his mouth yet."—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Among the many modes of tormenting practised by the ordinary woman of society, one of the worst is her habit of *blabbing*, or repeating to one dear friend the things that have been lately said and done by another dear friend.—*Saturday Review*.

**Black-and-tan** (street), half-and-half, porter and ale mixed. (American), applied to black and brown terriers. A mulatto, a mixture of mulattoes and blacks. During the Civil War the South was called the *black-and-tan* country, from the planters "tanning" or beating their slaves.

**Black arse** (common), a kettle or pot.

**Black art** (old cant), the art of picking locks.

**Blackball** (society), means to vote against a man for election for a club, &c., by ballot. The expression was derived from the once prevalent custom at club elections of giving each voter a white and a black ball; if he wished to vote for the election of the candidate he put in the white ball, if otherwise, the black ball. This term is so frequently used that it has ceased to be slang, and the word "pill" has been substituted. The French equivalent, a corruption of the English, is *black-bouler*.

**Blackberry swagger** (popular), a person who hawks tapes and bootlaces (Hotten).

**Blackbird, to** (colonial), to kidnap, from the colour of the skin of those kidnapped, such as negroes, natives of New Zealand. &c. In the quotation reference is made to "Kanakas," which see.

But sometimes—we are glad to say in the past—iniquitously *blackbirded* or kidnaped, and practically sold into slavery.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Blackbird catching** (colonial), the slave trade; recruiting coloured labourers in the South Sea Islands.

**Black-box** (thieves), a lawyer.

My blown kidded a bloke into a panel crib and shook him of his thimble to put

up for a *black-box*, but it wouldn't fadge. I took two stretches of air and exercise.—*On the Trail*.

*i.e.*, "My girl enticed a man into a bawdy house (where men are robbed by confederates), and stole his watch to procure money for a counsel, but it was of no use. I got two years at a convict settlement."

**Blackboys** (up country Australian), aboriginal servants in Australia. *Blackboy* means a black who has become a servant. It is not surprising that "boy" should be synonymous with "servant" in countries in whose infancy free adult whites could hardly by any wages be induced to work. The term is not applied to wild blacks.

In many instances where two or three teams travelled together, one or more were driven by *blackboys*, that is to say, aboriginal natives; the term being invariably employed by colonists towards blacks, no matter what age they may be. These were attired similarly to their white companions in shirt and trousers; but the shirts were as a rule of a more gaudy pattern, and a bright-coloured handkerchief as often as not encircled their waists, or was bound round their heads.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Black bracelets** (old), handcuffs.

When the turnkey next morning stepp'd into his room,  
The sight of the hole in the wall struck him dumb;  
The sheriff's *black bracelets* lay strewn on the ground,  
But the lad that had worn 'em could nowhere be found.

Tol-de-rol!

—*H. Ainsworth: Jack Sheppard*.

**Black cattle** (old), parasites infesting the heads of uncleanly people.

**Black cattle show** (clerical), a gathering of clergy; *e.g.*, Episcopal visitation, or garden-party.

**Black coat** (common), a clergyman, from the habitual sombreness of his attire. The French argot has *corbeau* for a priest, for the same reason.

**Black diamonds** (popular), a common simile for coal. Also, talented persons of dingy or unpolished exterior; rough jewels (Hotten).

**Black disease** (medical), the common name of more than one disease, as of black jaundice, and of melæna.

**Black eye** (common), "we gave the bottle a *black eye*," *i.e.*, drank it almost up. "He cannot say 'black is the white of my eye,'" *i.e.*, he cannot point out a blot in my character. (Nautical), "black's the white of my eye!" used when Jack avers that no one can say this or that of him. It is an indignant assertion of innocence of a charge. "Le ciel n'est pas plus pur que le fond de mon cœur!"

**Blackfellow** (Australian), an aboriginal, one of the native inhabitants of Australia. The first feature in the natives which struck the early settlers of Australia was their colour. It was

natural for them to write of the *blackfellows*. At present the term is most used by whites "up the country," and by the aborigines themselves. Townspeople generally talk of "aboriginals."

I was one day at a country cricket match in Victoria. Two aboriginals were present. We were a man short, so we asked one of them to play for us. Both came into the pavilion, when the one who had been asked to play said to the other, "*Blackfellow*, you just clear out of this—this place for cricketers, not for *blackfellows*."—*Douglas B. W. Sladen*.

**Black fly** (country), a clergyman.

**Black-foot** (provincial), one who attends on a courting expedition, to bribe the servant, make friends with the sister, or put any friend off his guard. The French say of a man who favours love intrigues, that "il tient la chandelle."

**Blackford, Blackford swell** (London slang), a swell supposed to be in borrowed or hired plumage. It is common for roughs to cry *Blackford!* to a swell dressed up for the occasion. So called from an advertising tradesman well known as letting on hire suits of clothes by the day.

Said the teacher: "And it came to pass that David rent his clothes.' Now what does that mean, boys, 'rent his clothes'?" Up went Benny's hand. "I tumble," says he, "*Blackford*."—*Popular Song*.

"He is seen everywhere about town I declare,  
When at home, who the deuce can he be?"

He says he resides with his ma in  
 Mayfair  
 Though his letters are postmarked  
 E.C.  
 He looks very well that's beyond all  
 dispute  
 For at *Blackford's* he's rigged up  
 and down,  
 For *Blackford* lends suits, from the  
 hat to the boots,  
 And that just suits the Boy about  
 Town."

**Blackfriars** (thieves' slang), used as a warning; "look out!" French thieves would say, "ac-resto!"

**Blackguard** (common), a low, disreputable fellow. Dr. Johnson, Gifford, and others derive this from an attendant on the devil, and also from the mean dependants of a great house, who were generally called the *black guard* as early at least as the beginning of the sixteenth century.

We have neither school nor hospital for the distressed children called the *blackguards*.—*Nelson: Address to Persons of Quality*.

A lousy knave, that within this twenty years rode with the *blackguards* in the duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping-pans.—*Webster: The White Devil*.

Thieves and murderers took upon them the cross to escape the gallows; adulterers did penance in their armour. A lamentable case that the devil's *blackguards* should be God's soldiers.—*Fuller: The Holy War*.

C. G. Leland says:—"It is probably the old Dutch thieves' slang word *blajaart*, from *blaj*, meaning a man (but always in an inferior sense), and *art*, the

commonest termination for a noun. 'The greater part of the nouns in slang which are of Dutch origin, are formed with the ending *aard* (*aart*, *erd*, *crt*), *er*, *rik*, *heid*, and *ing*.'—*James Teirlinck, Woordenboek van Bar-goensch*. To those who would object that man does not necessarily mean a vulgar or low person, I would suggest that in thieves' patois it means nothing else, and that in our British tinkers' dialect, *subil siableach* (Gaelic for a vagabond) is used simply to denote any man."

Likewise in the French argot, *gonce*, originally a fool (occasionally used with that meaning now), has the signification of man, individual. Wright has, however, shown that the entirely English term *blackguard*, as applied to scullions, was in general use at an early date.

Her Majesty, by some means I know not, was lodged at his house Ewston, farre unmeet for her highness, but fitter for the *black garde*.—*Lodge's Illustrations*, ii. 188.

I was alone among a coachful of women, and those of the elector's duchesse chamber, forsooth, which you would have said to have been of the *blacke guard*.—*Morison's Itinerarie*.

Though some of them are inferior to those of their own ranke, as the *blackeguard* in a prince's court.—*Burton: Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Nor must her cousin be forgot, prefer'd  
 From many years' command in the *black guard*,

To be an ensign.

Whose tatter'd colours well do represent  
 His first estate i' th' ragged regiment.

—*Earl of Rochester's Works*.

In the above the allusion is to the cousin of Nell Gwyn, Charles II.'s mistress.

These make out a strong case for the early use of the word in England. It would seem to have died out for a time and been revived, possibly under Dutch influence, in the time of the Georges.

It has been suggested that *blackguard* is from *braggart*, with a change of liquid. French of the sixteenth century *braguar*, *bragard*, or *bragghar* (gradually altered to *bragueur*, then *blagueur*), dandy, vain fellow, swaggerer, traceable to the old *braies*, breeches, dandies of the sixteenth century being known by the approved style of their breeches. More recently there are instances of dandies or others receiving the appellation of the more conspicuous articles of their dress or the colour of these—the *talon-rouge*, a dandy of the time of Louis XIV.; *col-cassé*, the modern Parisian “masher;” *casquette-à-trois-ponts*, a bully; *culs-rouges* and *cherry-bums*, hussars; *white-choker*, a clergyman, &c.

It has also been said that the term was derived from the circumstance of a number of dirty ragged boys attending on the parade to blacken the boots and shoes of the soldiers and do any other dirty offices. From their constant attendance at the time of the Royal Body Guard mounting, they were by some facetious person nicknamed the *blackguards*.

**Blackie** (American), a very old word for a negro, still occasionally used. It is to be found in a negro song which dates back to the beginning of this century.

Our son no more he serve ; no more play  
de lackey,  
No more our daughter weep, cos wite man  
call dem *blackie*.

—*Ching-a-Ring Chaw*.

**Black jack** (American), rum and molasses, with or without water. A New England drink. (Winchester), a large leathern jug which formerly was used for beer.

**Black job** (undertakers'), a funeral. Lord Portsmouth's hobby was to attend all the *black jobs* he could hear of.

“What, a funeral mute?” “Yes, sir, *black job* business.”—*Edmund Yates: Land at Last*.

**Black language** (Anglo-Indian), an expression, no longer common, for Hindustani and other Indian tongues. It is remarkable that the English gypsies sometimes speak of Romany as the *Kālo jīb*, or black tongue. The term was doubtless originally Hindu.

**Blackleg** (common), a name formerly appropriated to swindlers in racing transactions, and to those who betted without intending to pay their losses. Also generally applied in America to gambling of any kind. In its earlier application it

meant a swindler or criminal, and is conjecturally derived from such fellows' legs being black and bruised from sitting in the stocks and wearing fetters; or from the legs of a game-cock, which are always black, gamblers and swindlers being frequenters of the cockpit. Else from an allusion to the legs of a "rook," another name for a swindler. *Blackleg* is now a recognised word. In old provincial English a *black-foot* was a man who attended a lover on a courting expedition to do the dirty and mean work, such as bribing servants, and acting the Leporello.

(Tailors) *to blackleg*, a set that reject a man as not fit to move in their society, or who organise a method to compel a man to leave his situation or the town, are said *to blackleg* him.

**Blackletter lawyer** (legal), an antiquarian expert in law, whereas one well versed in "case law," or the decisions of judges, is termed a "case lawyer."

**Black lion** (medical), the name given to certain rapidly-sloughing ulcers which affected our soldiers when in Portugal.

**Blackmail** (recognised). To levy *blackmail* was a tribute extorted by powerful robber chieftains to protect travellers from the depredations of other robbers inferior to themselves in strength and organisation. In the United

States, says Bartlett, it usually means money extorted from a person, by threatening to accuse him of a crime or to expose him in the newspapers (it is used with a like meaning in England).

"Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just,"  
But sure that force in self defence will fail,  
Whose only armour 'gainst the critic thrust,  
Is found to be *black mail*.

—Punch.

What Mr. Caine tells us about Clapham Common is unfortunately not confined to the suburbs, but is a very active evil in the centre of the very best parts of our town, and the continuous *blackmailing* of unfortunates by the police has been a notorious fact in such thoroughfares as Piccadilly, Pall Mall, Waterloo Place, Regent Street, &c., for some years past. —*Saturday Review*.

Skeat says:—"Mail is a Scottish term for rent. *Blackmail* or *black rent* is the rent paid in cattle, as distinct from *white money* or silver." It is curious to note, however, that *maille* in old French signified copper coin (a trace of which still remains in the modern phrases *sans sou ni maille*, *avoir maille à partir*, &c.). This word may have been adopted by the Scotch, who still retain French words in their phraseology. *Black-money* is a provincialism still used (Wright).

**Black Maria** (English and American), the cell van in which prisoners are removed from court to prison. Termed in the French argot "panier à salade."

Bobbies base and beaks inhuman  
 Every fieldmale's path perplex ;  
 Who on earth would be a woman—  
 Which it is a wretched sex.

No one freer, no one greater,  
 'Arry cycles : is it just  
 Sarah Anne's perambulator  
 Should be hobject of disgust ?

What's the reason, tell me why, ah !  
 Why that gig with children nice  
 Should be scorned like *Black Maria*,  
 Full of villainy and vice ?  
 —*Ally Sloper's Half Holiday.*

When Lord Carrington and his attendant noblemen arrived in Melbourne on a visit lately, *Black Maria*, the prison van, was drawn up by the station, apparently in waiting.—*Modern Society.*

This term is said to have originated in Philadelphia in 1838.

**Black Monday** (popular), executions used to take place on Mondays.

**Black mummer** (old), a person unshaved and unwashed.

**Black ointment** (thieves), pieces of raw meat.

**Black psalm** (old), to sing a *black psalm* was to cry.

**Black Sal** (popular), the tea-kettle.

**Black Saturday** (workmen's).  
 When a labourer or mechanic has anticipated or drawn all his wages and has no money to take at the end of the week, his mates say "he has a *black Saturday* in his week."

**Black-sheep** (Winchester).  
 When a man in "junior part"

jockeyed a man in "middle part" he was said to *black-sheep* him, whilst the other was said to be *black-sheeped*. This could only happen in "cloisted time," that is, during the last eleven weeks of "long half," when "middle" and "junior parts" went up together. It refers now to senior and junior divisions of "middle part."

**Blacksmith's daughter** (old), the large keys with which the doors of sponging-houses were furnished.

**Black spy** (popular), the devil.

**Black strap** (popular), port wine. (American), New England rum and molasses. (Nautical), the dark country wines of the Mediterranean. Also, bad port, such as was served for the sick in former times.

Ask for a bottle of *black strap* out of bin No. 4; light your cigar, smoke the room full; nod to misses, pull up your shirt collar before the looking-glass.—*Drawing for the Million.*

(Old), the name by which a certain punishment, a labour task imposed on soldiers at Gibraltar for small offences, was called.

**Black teapot** (popular), a black footman.

**Black town** (Anglo-Indian), the popular local English name for Madras. It is also used at Bom-



bay to distinguish the native quarter.

Many cadets on their arrival are obliged to take up their residence in dirty punch-houses in the *black town*.—*Munro's Narrative*, 22.

**Black wash** (medical), a lotion consisting of calomel and lime-water.

**Black work** (popular), undertaking.

**Bladder of lard** (popular), a bald-headed person. The French equivalent is "boule de vieux oing."

**Blade** (common). It is generally and plausibly assumed that this word for a man is derived from *blade* as a synonym for sword, and a soldier. And this seems to be borne out by the analogy of a similar French expression, *une bonne lame*, which formerly meant a man of the world, a dashing man. *Blade* is still used in the provinces for a brisk, mettlesome, sharp young man. But as it has the same pronunciation as the Dutch *bloed*, meaning "blood," and as a blood was the common term for "a fast, and high-mettled man" during the reigns of the Georges, it is not impossible it owes much to the latter. The word was also a personal noun in Dutch, as *een arme bloed*, a poor fellow. *Blood*, a simpleton, is from a different root; *bloode*, timid, fearful; Irish

*blate*, German *blöde*. Roysters and debauchees were also termed "roaring boys."

I do not all this while account you in  
The list of those are called the *blades*  
that roar

In brothels, and break windows; fright  
the streets

At midnight worse than constables.

—*Shirley: The Gamester*.

**Bladhunk** (tinker), prison.

**Blame** (popular), a mild expletive used when one is dissatisfied or disappointed. Oftener heard in the provinces than in London, and much more so in America.

The keeper had fired four times at an Indian, but he said, with an injured air, that the Indian had skipped around so's to spile everything—and ammunition *blamed* skurse, too.—*Mark Twain: Roughing It*.

Yes, John Bull is a *blamed* blockhead.  
—*Sam Slick*.

"Man alive! This ain't the boat; this is the ferry house!"

"Yew—don'—say so!" slowly ejaculated the sunburned old fellow. "An' here I've been a waitin' three hours for the *blamed* thing to start for Brooklyn!"—*Drake's Traveller's Magazine*.

"Damnation!" is sometimes softened into "blamenation!"

**Blan** (gypsy), the wind.

**Blank** (hunting), to draw a *blank* in coursing or hunting is to have a run without meeting with anything. Quite recently the term *blank* has been adopted as a substitute for "damn," "bloody," and other forcible expressions.

Here you've been and gone three hours on an errand for me, and *blank* me if you ain't runnin' off without a word about it.—*Bret Harte: Gabriel Conroy.*

Because you're religious, *blank* you, do you expect me to starve? Go and order supper first! Stop! where in *blank* are you going?—*Bret Harte: Gabriel Conroy.*

"For *blank's* sake, sir, give me the office, you knows me surely, and that I'm square. Vell, then, give me the office, so help me *blank* I'll keep it dark."

Enter a closely-shaven, bullet-headed fellow in an ecstasy of excitement at having just seen Cuss, and at the exquisite "fitness" of that worthy. "So help my *blank, blank!*" he cries delightedly, "if he ain't a *blank* picter with the weins in his face down 'ere and 'ere, a showin' out just if a *blank* hartist 'ad painted him. Tell yer he's beautiful, fine as a *blank* greyhound, with a *blank* heavy air with him that looks *blank* like winnin'. Take yer two quid to one, guv'nor?" adds the speaker, suddenly picking out a stout purple-faced farmer in the group of eager listeners.

—*Charles Dickens: Farce for the Championship in All the Year Round.*

**Blanket**, a lawful (old cant), a wife. The allusion is obvious.

**Blanket hornpipe** (popular) refers to the sexual intercourse.

**Blanks** (Anglo-Indian), a rare word used for whites or Europeans by themselves.

**Blare** (popular), to roar, to bawl.

He *blared* and he hollaed and swore he was hurt,

His coat got torn off and he hadn't a shirt,  
Then the missus comes down and she said  
to the cook,

You audacious hussey, you'd best sling  
your hook.

—*The Masher and the Parrot: Broadside Ballad.*

**Blarney** (common), flattery; supposed to be derived from a stone in the tower of Blarney Castle, near Cork, the kissing of which is a feat of some difficulty, from its perilous position in the wall. It is supposed to confer the gift of eloquence, of a kind peculiarly adapted to win the hearts of women. It is a common saying in Cork, when a man is trying his powers of persuasion or wheedling, "he has been to Blarney Castle," or "none of your *blarney.*"

**Blast** (popular), a familiar name amongst the lower orders for erysipelas of the face.

**Blater** (popular), a calf; to "cry beef on a *blater,*" to make a fuss about nothing.

Don't be glim-flashy; why, you'd cry beef on a *blater.*—*Lytton: Pelham.*

**Blather** (general), idle nonsense. Also thin mud or puddle.

A prize-fighter who does not fight is about as valuable a machine as an alarm clock which does not go off. He has no *raison d'être*. We do not of course wish to insinuate that any of the "fistic marvels" of to-day are guilty of such conduct. And yet there may be those who watch "Mr." John L. Sullivan revolving round the provinces in a cloud of *blather*, who think the cap should fit.—*Fair Trade.*

**Blatherskite** (American), a man whose tongue runs away with him; an irrepressible noisy chatterer; "blathering." Of Scotch origin (*vide* BLEATHERS).

**Blaze** (American). "To *blaze* a tree," to remove the bark so as

to leave a white surface exposed, which serves either for a boundary, a landmark, or as a sign to direct travellers. The Algonkin Indians of the north-east *blaze* trees so as to direct Indians leaving a village; white men make such marks on the other side.

A path which brought us opposite Ntunduru Island, *blazing* the trees as a guide.—*Stanley: Through the Dark Continent.*

It is used in this sense by the up country Australians.

The last six miles of a new road into Carcoar had just been marked out and partially made by the inhabitants, expressly for the governor. It was a well chosen but rough track designated by *blazed* trees on either hand, the unbarked parts being painted white, in order to be more manifest in the dusk.—*Lieut.-Col. Munday: Our Antipodes.*

It also applies to any kind of landmark.

I picked up a stone, and *blazed* my course by breaking off a projecting corner occasionally from lava walls and festoons of sulphur.—*Mark Twain: A Strange Dream.*

*Blaze* is an English provincialism for a white spot on a horse's forehead; and *blazed* is a term applied to a tree when marked for sale.

(General), to *blaze* away, to fire.

He *blazed* away and missed you in that shallow watercourse.—*A. L. Gordon: The Sick Stockrider.*

**Blaze of triumph** (theatrical), a ridiculous hyperbole, invented by the poet Bunn, to indicate

a great success and crowded houses. To the initiated this usually signifies a dead failure, and a house crowded with "dead-heads."

**Blazer** (university), a coloured loose flannel jacket, worn as the uniform of a boating or other club; originally red, but now of the club colours, striped or coloured accordingly. The surplice worn by students in chapel on certain feast or fast days, is described as the *blazer* of the Church of England. Each club chose a different colour or combination of colours, and these combinations are something sufficiently startling to have originated the appellation.

Another fair damsel was resplendent in a scarlet *blazer* over cream-coloured flannel. Some of the striped *blazers* were very becoming. Slate and white, and black and white, were decidedly the favourites, though one daring dame had ventured on magenta.—*Modern Society.*

The effect produced by the thousands of floating and moving craft, with their occupants in brilliant *blazers* and light costumes, is quite unique of its kind.—*The Standard.*

(Prisons), a jacket worn by convicts.

If the young gentlemen do not like the convict *blazers*, they will not be allowed to take out a boat unless accompanied by a policeman.—*Funny Folks.*

**Blazers** (nautical), a term applied to mortar or bomb vessels, from the great emission of flame to throw a 13-inch shell.—*Admiral Smyth.*

**Blazes** (common). "Go to *blazes*," i.e., "go to hell," is a common expression both in Great Britain and the United States, among those who are too fastidious to say the word that they mean, and are willing to go ninety-nine per cent. in the expression of profanity, making use of "by Gad," instead of "by God," "great Scott," instead of "great God," and "darned" instead of "damned."

I could have told Johnny Skae that I would not receive his communication at such a late hour, and to go to *blazes* with it. —*Mark Twain*.

**Bleach, to** (Harvard University, Massachusetts), to absent oneself from morning prayers. To prefer being present in the spirit rather than in the body.

**Bleached mot** (popular), a fair-complexioned wench.

**Bleak** (thieves' slang), handsome (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Bleating cheat** (old cant), a sheep. "Cheat," meaning a thing (gypsy), was added to a word describing the cry of the animal, thus cackling cheat, grunting cheat, &c.

When I spoke to him, he said something about a *bleating* sheep losing a bite; but I should think this young man is not much of a talker in general. —*Macmillan's Magazine*.

**Bleating cull** (old cant), a sheep-stealer.

**Bleating prig**, sheep-stealing.

**Bleating rig** (old cant), sheep-stealing.

**Bleed, to** (English and American), to be obliged to pay money against one's will, or to oblige one to pay.

A boy lives in Pennsylvania who suffers from bleeding at intervals. He usually bleeds nine days at a time. Candidates who *bleed* three months at a time will envy him. —*San Francisco Alta*.

This is in reference to the extravagant demands made upon political candidates by "heelers" and "strikers."

Then this fine old Englishman, to crown each other deed,  
Has lately shown that for our sake he did not fear to *bleed*.

A generous gift, that silver cup, in sooth you'll be agreed,  
That a *cup* which bears nine handsome *mugs* is a handsome one indeed!

—*St. Helen's Lantern*.

(Printers), a book or pamphlet that is cut down so much as to touch the printed portion is said to *bleed*.

**Bleeder** (sporting), a sovereign; (university), a "regular *bleeder*" signifies a superlative duffer.

**Bleeders** (old), spurs, from their causing blood to flow by frequent use.

**Bleeding the monkey** (nautical). The *monkey* is a tall pyramidal rod or bucket which conveys the grog from the grog-tub to the men. Stealing from this *in transitu* is so called. —*Admiral Smyth*.

**Blethers** (Scottish), wind or windy; nonsense. Robert Burns jocosely laments that his business was to string up *blethers* in rhyme for fools to sing. *Bletherhead* is a loquacious fool. *Bletherumskite* is a synonymous word, but expressive of still greater contempt by the use of the word "skite" or "skyte," which signifies excrement. To *blether* or *blather* is to talk tediously and foolishly. The word is akin to "bladder," that is, filled with wind.

I hae been clean spoilt just w' listening to twa *blethering* old wives.—*Sir Walter Scott: Old Mortality.*

Wha can ken . . . whether sic prayers as the Southron read out of their auld *blethering* black mess-book there, may not be as powerful to invite fiends, &c.—*Scott: Fortunes of Nigel.*

**Blew or blue** (common), to waste, to spend, to dissipate. "I *blew* a bob (I wasted a shilling)," said a costermonger, "when I went to an exhibition of pictures." To spend or lose one's money in gambling or betting.

But knock-down blows the punter knows  
Are a part of his racing creed,  
And he says this year he has no fear—  
"The Baron *must* succeed!"  
We think so too, and our oof we'll *blew*,  
However rash the act,  
For if this one's missed he will swell the  
list  
Of the winners we might have backed.  
—*Sporting Times.*

We'll polish off the malt and grog, and to  
have we are bound,  
A jolly jug, and kiss the girls and women  
all around;

We'll take a stroll, and then keep it up  
till boxing night,  
*Blew* all the coin—rent as well, and think  
we're doing right;  
And if we have to pawn the clock, next  
day I shan't repine,  
It was my father's custom, and so it shall  
be mine.

—*Song.*

**Blewed** (common), spent, disposed of. Lost or been robbed of. Primarily, to pay out, to spend. German *blaue*, which suggests blue, and not to blow, as the original. *Ins blaue hincin* (away into the blue), vanished, gone; the French *passé au bleu* has the same signification. *Faire passer au bleu*, to suppress, dissipate, spend, squander, appropriate. An allusion to a distant, undefined place in the blue above.

**Bligee, bligey** (pidgin), obliged.

Too muchee '*bligee* you, Missee Hughsee, fo' that number-one book. You show me that pricee, England-side, my look see that Table, can savey how-fashion makee offer. Must catchee chancee now.—*Chin: Punch.*

**Blimey** (common), an apparently meaningless, abusive term.

C. FOR THE MOB.—As this is a court, I feel it suitable and proper to use the sort of language always used up *our* court. I therefore remark, "Liars, murderers, rascals, ghastly bloodsuckers, devils; garn hout, shet up currant-face, *blimey*," and other things which would naturally occur to a gentleman by Act of Parliament.—*An Ennobling Exhibition.*

**Blind** (popular), "in the *blind*," in the night, in darkness.

Then it's down with the bedstead and let  
us away,  
Pack up all we can in the *blind*,  
And long ere the morning,  
Without any warning,  
We'll leave back-rent and landlord be-  
hind.

—*Song.*

(Printers), a term applied to a paragraph mark ¶, owing to the fact of the eye of the P being black or filled up.

**Blind cheeks** (popular), posteriors, termed sometimes *blind* Cupid. The French argot calls it more appropriately *le borgne*. Another slang expression for the same part of the body is "two fat cheeks and ne'er a nose;" in French slang "un visage sans nez."

**Blinder** (thieves), to "take a *blinder*," to die.

Some rubber to wit had napped a winder, And some were scragged and took a *blinder*.

—*On the Trail.*

**Blindo**, to (army), to die.

**Blind one's trail**, to (American), to act in such a way that it would be difficult to trace one's doings; putting off the scent. Thus a fox in crossing a river *blinds his trail*, water being fatal to the scent of dogs.

**Blink**, to (American), to drink. In Dutch thieves' slang, *blinkert* is a glass. "*Blinkert* om uit te buizen"—"To booze from a glass."

**Blinker** (American), a phrase fully explained by the following anecdote from a New York newspaper:—

"The term growler has become obsolete, and *blinker* has succeeded it. A waggon-load of 'supplies' was transferred to the Bedlows (prison) island boat, and among them were two two-gallon kerosene oil cans. A boat-hand remarked, 'They must be usin' lots of kerosene—they officers over there—for they gets them cans filled mighty often!' The secret was let out a few minutes later, when one of the men coming on deck with the happy smile of one who has interviewed the ardent, said to one of his companions: 'I say, Jimmy, the *blinkers* have got good stuff this time!'"

—*Vide* BLINK.

**Blinkers** (pugilistic), the eyes, termed also ogles, optics, peepers, winkers. (Common), spectacles. *Blinkert*, Dutch slang, glass.

**Blinko** (thieves), the term is explained by the quotation.

"What is a *blinko*, for instance?" "Well, it's a kind of entertainment, singing, and that," replied the old fellow, "to which strangers are not invited—least of all the police."—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**Blizzard** (American), a word of many meanings. In one of the early Crockett almanacs about 1836 it appears as distinctly meaning a shot from a rifle.

"The elder boys when they went to school carried their rifles to get a *blizzard* at anything they might meet on the road."

It has been conjectured that in this sense it was derived from

blaze, or from the (Canadian) French *blessor*, to wound or hit. It was also applied to lightning at an early date. At present the tremendous wind-storms like the typhoon which sweep over the West are called *blizzards*. It possibly owes this later meaning to the German *blitz*.

With reference to the word *blizzard*, a Western correspondent sends the following:—The word was first used in Marshall, Minn., some thirteen years ago. Some friends were enjoying themselves at a public-house, when a storm of wind and snow arose, and one of the number, looking up quickly, uttered a German expression (our correspondent has forgotten the words) which sounded very much like *blizzard*. His friends took it up and have since called a storm of wind accompanied by snow a *blizzard*. Some years ago the origin of the word was sought and it was said to be Indian, and that an Indian used the expression (or one similar in sound) upon seeing some white men coming out of a severe snowstorm.—*Detroit Free Press*.

The German expression here referred to is “blitzen!”

**Bloat** (American), a drunkard, a drowned corpse.

**Bloater** (popular), “my bloater,” a term of friendship much in favour with 'Arry, who likes his friends as much as his bloater for breakfast, and that is not saying a little.

But, bless yer, my bloater, it isn't all chin-music, vots and “ear! 'ear!” Or they wouldn't catch me on the ready, or nail me for ninepence. No fear!  
—*Punch*.

**Block, the** (Australian). “Doing the block,” i.e., promenade, is

one of the favourite amusements of Melbourne ladies between twelve and one and five and six. *The block* is the fashionable promenade in Melbourne. *The block* is the block of buildings in Collins Street lying between Swanston Street and Elizabeth Street.

**Block house** (old slang), a prison, house of correction, penitentiary, and similar establishments. The expression reminds one of the French military slang term *le bloc*, an abbreviation of *blockhaus*.

**Block of stock** (American), an adaptation of the French term *en bloc*, meaning a large number of shares in anything, a great undivided mass, held as a single interest.

It would be comparatively easy, therefore, for a syndicate to take the control from Jay Gould, especially if Russell Sage or some other holder of a big *block of stock* were to join the movement.—*Chicago Tribune*, October 2, 1887.

**Block ornaments** (popular), the better kind of meat scraps sold at butchers' stalls.

On the shelves set out in front of the shop, meat scraps are offered at 1½d. the lb.; better scraps (or *block ornaments*, as they are termed) at 4d.—*Standard*.

For dinner, which on a week day is hardly ever eaten at the costermonger's abode, they buy *block ornaments*, as they call the small, dark-coloured pieces of meat exposed on the cheap butchers' blocks or counters.—*Henry Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

Also old-fashioned, queer-looking men and women.

**Bloke** (common), not strictly "a man," as Hotten defines it, but a man in a contemptuous sense. So the word was originally used in the police newspapers twenty-five years ago. A *bloke* was a victim of sharps, a stupid person, a greenhorn. It is not from the gypsy *loke*, a man, as Hotten asserts, *loke* not being an Anglo-Romany word. It is probably from the Dutch *blok*, a block, a log, a fool, which gives rise to *blok-ker*, a plodder, a dull fellow, and to the English *blockhead*.

The girl is stunning, the *blokes* say, so we must forgive you.—*Ouida: Held in Bondage*.

"Give us a horder, then, old *bloke*," shrieked another gamin.—*F. W. Robinson: Little Kate Kirby*.

It has another signification, which is explained by the quotation.

It came out in the course of the evidence that the meaning of the word *bloke* was "a man whom a woman might pick up in the street."—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Blood** (fencing). In the old back-swording contests a *blood*, *i.e.*, a streak of blood on the head or face at least one inch in length, was the equivalent of a decisive "broken-head." The word *blutiger* is used in the same sense by the German students on the Mensur.

In prize-ring parlance the word is not considered sufficiently graphic, and *blood* is never mentioned except under syno-

nyms such as "claret" (especially picturesque in connection with tapping), "Badminton" (a peculiar kind of claret cup invented at the Duke of Beaufort's seat), "ruby," "crimson," "Chateau Lafitte," &c.

**Blood and entrails** (nautical). This is a slang name given to the British ensign by Yankee sailors.

**Blood and thunder** (popular), port wine and brandy mixed.

**Blood and thunder literature** (American), now common in England. Literature of the loudest and coarsest sensational kind, "detective" novels, romances like "Jack Sheppard" and the "Outlaw of the Plains," "Life of Buffalo Bill," &c.

One more instance of the deleterious influence of *blood and thunder fiction*. Lecomte, the man who made a most determined attempt to murder a messenger of the Bank of France the other day by plunging a bradawl into the nape of his neck, was an inveterate peruser of crimson-toned literature, his favourite authors being Ponson du Terrail, Gaboriau, and Lacenaire, the lettered murderer who emulated the deeds of Hoffman's "Cardillac" by prowling around the streets of Paris for victims.—*Paris Correspondence: Daily Telegraph*.

**Blood boat** (naval), a "tally boat" or bumboat, a boat employed to carry provisions from the shore.

**Blood-curdler** (society), a story of murder likely to make the reader's blood curdle.



It will contain two pages of interesting and absorbing turf reminiscences by ourselves and master; a *blood-curdler*, by the murderman.—*Sporting Times*.

The only one who is annoyed is our own special murder-monger, who has got several *blood-curlers* of English extraction up his sleeve.—*Sporting Times*.

**Blood for blood** (trade), barter among tradesmen, who exchange with each other the commodities in which they deal.

**Blood-suckers** (society), extortioners, people who are constantly getting money. Derived from vampires, who are blood-suckers.

If the stay be longer, the porter and the boots expect something. A fair estimate is about two francs per diem divided between all the *blood-suckers*. Members of the Stock Exchange generally give treble this; members of the aristocracy half.—*Truth*.

(Nautical), lazy fellows, who by skulking throw their proportion of labour on the shoulders of their shipmates.—*Admiral Smyth*. In the army such fellows are styled "scrimshankers."

**Bloody**. Dr. C. Mackay makes the following remarks: "A word that is constantly used in the sense of sanguinary by the rudest and foulest-mouthed of the vulgar. Did these people know the harmlessness of the odious epithet, as they now understand it—if they understand it at all—they would perhaps cease to employ it, as not sufficiently

coarse and disgusting to suit their ideas of the emphatic. Dean Swift, who was partially acquainted with the vernacular Gaelic of Ireland, wrote from Dublin to his friend Gay that it was 'bloody hot'—an expression which he would not have permitted himself to use in its blackguardly English sense of sanguinary. 'Bloody hot,' in the use made of it by Dean Swift, meant 'rather hot.'"

Mr. Charles G. Leland writes: "Mr. Hotten thinks that this is an expletive without reference to any meaning. Any one who will take the pains to look over the sanguinary words in any European language can at once perceive a great deal of meaning in the association of *bloody* with evil or revolting. We find, for instance, ill or evil blood, blood-thirsty, blood-stained, bloody, in the sense of cruel or atrocious, bloody council, blood-guilty, and in German or Dutch, blood-shame or incest, a blood-revenger, bloody revenge, and in all three 'a bloody villain' for murderer, as nothing is more natural than for an adjective or adverb used in so many opprobrious meanings to take on others. The transfer of *bloody* from murderous to everything wicked or bad seems as natural as Max O'Rell's derivation of it from By'r Lady! is absurd. As R. H. Proctor remarks, in his *Americanisms* ('Knowledge'), it is 'simple nonsense.' The Germans have *blutwenig*, which

has nothing to do with *blut*, 'blood;' the first component is a dialectal form of *bloss*, 'merely.'

The Earl of Suffolk gives the following definition of the word: "*Bloody*, an ornamental adjective of infinite adaptability and significance. This word is used largely though not exclusively in turf circles."

**Bloody Jemmy** (popular), sheep's head.

**Bloody king's**, a red-brick church in Barnwell (St. Mary's the Less), resembling King's College Chapel in architecture.

**Bloody Mary's**, the red-brick church, St. Paul's, resembling St. Mary's in Cambridge, the University church.

**Bloody shirt, the** (American), agitation of the war question after the Civil War.

"Chorus of mugwump, democratic, and rebel yells: Here's Blaine waving the *bloody shirt* again. The colour line is wiped out; the negro question is settled, and all Southern negroes interested in politics are democrats. Down with the sectional question!"

**Bloomer** (Australian), prison slang for a mistake. Abbreviated from the expression "a blooming error."

**Blooming** (common), used commonly for emphasising a word, but generally in an ironical

manner, or to express disappointment or ruffled feelings—mild swearing, in fact. It is applied to everything from a swell to an oyster.

Heard on the course at Ascot after mounted bobby had rushed amongst horses in Prince of Wales' Stakes and completely spoiled Phil's chance of winning.irate backer of Phil, with feeling: "Just like my *blooming* luck; a *blooming* peeler's stood in my way all my life."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

He had been tried and found guilty of murder. The day had come for his execution, and the Talepitcher and Tom Beard had made a special journey to the gallows with a Church Service and a German dictionary to hear his last words. As the fatal moment approached he turned to the hangman, in a dazed, half-conscious manner:

"What day o' the week is this?"

"Monday," replied Berry.

"Monday, is it? Well, s'whelp my good garden stuff, this is a *bloomin'* nice way to commence the week!"—*Sporting Times*.

**Bloomy** (American), flowers; from the Dutch.

**Bloss** (American thieves), woman, girl, mistress; from *blossom*, old English slang.

I only piked into Grassville with a dimber-damber, who couldn't pad the hoof for a single darkman's without his *bloss* to keep him from getting pogy.—*On the Trail*.

**Blot the scrip** (popular), to engage to do anything by a written instrument.

**Blot the scrip, and jark it** (old cant), to stand surety or bail for any one.

**Bloviate** (American), a made up or "factitious" word, which has been used since 1850, and is perhaps older. It is irregularly used to signify verbosity, wandering from the subject, and idle or inflated oratory or blowing, by which word it was probably suggested, being partially influenced by "deviate."

**Blow** (university), a drunken frolic; an old slang phrase formerly much in vogue at both Oxford and Cambridge, but not much used now, such words as "spree," "tight," &c., having superseded it. Also, "to blow," and "to go on the blow." (Old cant), "He has hit the blow," *i.e.*, he has stolen the goods, or done the deed. (Common), a shilling.

For this I went to the Steel (Bastille—Cold Bath Fields Prison), having a new suit of clobber on me, and about fifty *blow* in my brigh (pocket). When I came out I went at the same old game.—*J. Horsley: Prison Jottings.*

**Blow, blow it** (American thieves' slang), to be silent, be quiet! hold your chatter! This is quite the opposite of the English slang "to blow," which means to inform on, or the common American "to blow," *i.e.*, to talk loudly and emptily.

Mac Clarty objected; giving the young man a warning look, he said, "Nixey Toohey, get out flash—*blow it*, man, *blow it!*" which meant that Mr. Mac Clarty thought that Mr. Toohey ought not to talk so much.—*Philadelphia Press*, Dec. 8, 1887.

**Blow, blow on, upon** (common), to expose, inform.

And she ain't got nobody but me to keep a secret for her, and I've been and *blowed* on her.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

You wouldn't *blow* an old chum among his friends, would you?—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker.*

Depend upon it that they're on the scent down here, and that if he moved, he'd *blow upon* the thing at once.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

But I will *blow* her, he said, I will *blow* her ladyship's conduct in the business.—*Sir Walter Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

Derived from the primary meaning to *blow*, to spread by report as if with a trumpet, to publish; or from *to blow upon*, to taint, to blast, to bring into disfavour or discredit.

Happily for him, he was not put to the bar till the first burst of popular rage had spent itself, and till the credit of the false witnesses had been *blown upon*.—*Macaulay.*

In Dutch an ear-blower, *oor-bleazer*, means an instigator, informer, or sycophant; the French *siffler dans l'oreille* seems to be closely allied to it. (Winchester), *to blow* signifies to blush, like a rose in full bloom. (American), *to blow*, to brag, or "gas" unduly. (Old slang), "to blow the groundsels," using the floor for the purpose of sexual intercourse. (Common), "*to blow the gaff*," to reveal the secret, to "peach," to inform. The old form still in use is "to blow the gab," *i.e.*, to utter the discourse, which has more meaning in it.

Why, he scarcely knows a jimmy from a round robin, and Jack deserved the tippet for making a law with him, as all coves of his kidney "*blow* the gaff."—*On the Trail*.

Sometimes "to blow the gag," which literally signifies to blow off the metaphoric impediment which keeps one's mouth closed. *To blow off*, to treat to drinks. (Common), *blow out*, a good meal.

That was a rare good *blow out*, soliloquises Dan, complacently recalling the taste of the savoury viands.—*Savage London*.

**Blowed**, to be *blowed*. This expression is a weak attempt to avoid the use of the oaths "damn" or "blast," and occurs in only such expressions as "I'll be *blowed* if I do," and many others that are continually heard from the mouths of the populace. Tom Hood was asked to contribute to a new cheap periodical for nothing, or for a small advance as he termed it upon nothing, and replied to the request that he would willingly do so in the interest of cheap literature, if his butcher and baker would act upon the same principle towards himself. He cited a letter on the subject which he had received from his butcher:—

SIR,—Respectin' your note; cheap literature be *blowed*! Butchers must live as well as other people, and if so be as you and the readin' public wants to have meat at prime cost, you must buy in our beastesses, and kill yourselves.—JOHN STOKES.

It's no shame to be defeated by Pecksniff. *Blow* Pecksniff.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

**Blowen** (thieves), originally a showy courtesan, a prostitute, but now used more in the sense of woman, mistress.

Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly *blowen*,  
Or be grabbed by the beaks we may,  
And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing  
A Newgate hornpipe some fine day.  
—*William Maginn*.

All the most fashionable prigs, or toby-men, sought to get him into their set; and the most crack *blowen* in London would have given her ears at any time for a loving word from Bachelor Bill.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

It is used with a like meaning by American thieves.

Ah, Bell! you were always the *blowen* for a rum bing.—*On the Trail*.

M. O. Davis gives the definition of "*blowen*, a showy woman, used disparagingly," which would imply that it is derived from *blown*, i.e., inflated. It seems on the contrary to be used in a complimentary sense, a simile from a full-blown flower, and this poetical derivation is borne out by the closely allied term, *blowess*, a pet, and *bloss*, a woman, from *blossom* in American thieves' lingo.

**Blower** (American), a noisy, talkative man, a "gas-bag."

A man who earns his living by travelling about with a lung-tester was in Indianapolis the other day. He was approached by a tall, well-fed personage, who handed him five cents and prepared to blow into his machine.

"Hold on—hold on a minute!" said the street faker, excitedly, as he scanned his customer a moment, and jerked the tube out of his hand; "ain't you Dan Voorhees?"

"I am D. W. Voorhees," replied the tall man, in some surprise.

"Then you can't touch this machine. I wouldn't have it burst for \$50. Here is your nickel. This ain't no elephant lung-tester."

And shouldering his machine the man walked rapidly away, as if he had had a narrow escape.

It would appear from this artless anecdote that Mr. Voorhees has a natural reputation as a *blower*. It is said that the late Horace Greeley, during a trip from New York to Philadelphia, being engaged in a political discussion, went on "narrating" or "orating" for a long time, while all the other passengers kept silence in admiration of the great man. But the conductor, not knowing who the speaker was, and thinking that he was monopolising an undue share of conversation—a great offence in the United States—stepped up to him with the remark, "Old man, you *talk* too much. Shut up! We don't allow no such *blowing* on this train." And then there was a roar of laughter "fit to blow the roof off."

(Popular), a tobacco-pipe.

**Blow in** (American), another form of "blew," to spend one's money.

"Sam? Isn't he in the valley?" "Not much! Sam got two months' wages ahead, so he cracked his whip, and went off on a bend." "To *blow in*?" Jake laughed assent.—*Saddle and Moccasin*.

"To *blow in* one's pile," to spend one's money, to pay.

I had "*blown in my pile*"  
On the strength of his tip,  
The name of the horse  
Was on many a lip;  
But I learnt, ere sunset, to my sorrow  
That there's slips twixt the cup and the lip.

—*Turf, Field, and Farm*.

**Blowing** (Australian, popular), boasting, bragging.

The public-houses presented a very busy sight, and judging by the bars it seemed that when men were not eating, sleeping, or working, they were drinking grog and boasting (or *blowing*, in colonial parlance) of some feat which they had performed, or of the particular merits of some horse, bullock, dog, or man.—*Grant: Bush Life*.

The metaphor probably is "*blowing* one's own trumpet," if indeed it be not simply an abbreviation, Australian slang being given to abbreviations of all kinds. Anthony Trollope gave a good deal of offence in Australia by speaking of *blowing* as a national failing out there.

(American), "*blowing* his bazzoo," *blowing* his own trumpet, boasting. From the Dutch *bazu*, abbreviation of *bazuin*, a trumpet or trombone, "*Jemands lof bazuyuen*," to sound one's (own) praise. (Thieves), "*blowing* out a red light," stealing a gold watch, a white light being a silver watch. (Nautical), "*blowing* great guns and small arms," heavy gales, a hurricane; "*blowing* the grampus," throwing water over a man on watch who has fallen asleep.

**Blown together** (tailors), garments badly made are said to have been *blown together*.

**Blow out** (common), an entertainment or feast.

"She sent me a card for a *blow out*," said Mowbray, "and so I am resolved to go."—*Sir Walter Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

Synonyms are "spread," "flare up."

**Blow up** (common), so universally used as to have almost ceased to be slang; to vehemently scold, reprimand.

The other day some poor fellow married a somewhat faded beauty, and one of his former acquaintances inquired how the newly-wedded pair were getting on. "Very indifferent," was the reply. "She's always *blowing him up*." "I'm not surprised at that," said the first. "Look at the amount of powder she carries about her."—*Ally Sloper's Half Holiday.*

To give a *blowing up* is synonymous.

(Workmen), to *blow up* (i.e., to sound the whistle), is to call the men to work; used by foremen and gaugers.

**Blowsy** (common), wild, disordered, dishevelled, generally applied to the hair of a woman when unkempt, disarranged, and streaming over her forehead and face. "Blowsabella" is the name given to a personage in an ancient mock heroic poem.

**Blub** (popular), an abbreviation of to "blubber," to cry like a child with noise and slaving.

Don't be a fool and *blub*, Jim, it's a darned good thing for you,

You'll find a mate as can carry and I'll play the music too.

—*George R. Sims: Ballads of Babylon.*

**Blubber** (popular), the mouth; to "sport *blubber*" is said of a large coarse woman who exposes her bosom; *blubber* and guts, obesity; *blubber-belly*, a fat person; *blubber-head*, a stupid person. (Nautical), *blubber boiler*, a whaling vessel. (Common), *blubber cheeks*, large flaccid cheeks hanging like the fat or *blubber* of a whale. The term has ceased to be slang.

**Bluchers** (Winchester), college prefects with only "half" power, which means they can only "fag" men in "hall" or "chambers."

The remaining eight college prefects (called in Winchester tongue *bluchers*) have a more limited authority, confined to chambers and the quadrangle.—*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.*

**Bludgers** (thieves), fellows who do not hesitate to use the bludgeon.

**Bludget**, a low female thief who decoys her victims into alleyways, &c., to rob them (New York Slang Dictionary). *Bludger* (English slang), a man who uses violence in robbery; it has possibly some connection with the old Dutch slang word *bolletje*, a man or master. "Volmaakt, bolletje, volmaakt!"

**Blue** (common). This word enters into several slang phrases, not only English but of other nationalities.

To be in "the *blues*," to have a "fit of the *blues*" (in French *broyer du noir*), to be afflicted with

"blue devils," to drink till "all is blue," "to be partial to blue ruin," "to look blue," "to cry blue murder," are all familiar phrases of ancient origin and modern prevalence. "Du vin *bleu*," and "petit *bleu*," are used by the French to signify thin, sour, unwholesome wine, terms which owe their origin to a similar association of ideas.

In some of those with melancholy meanings, there is an evident connection between *blue* as a colour, and the idea of grief, disappointment. Thus the French have the expression, "En voir de *bleues*," to meet with great disappointment, annoyance, sufferings, a variant of "En voir de grises." "En bailler tout *bleu*," to be gaping with astonishment at some news or act which arouses one's indignation, from the livid hue of the face.

Charles G. Leland makes the following remarks:—

"*Blue*, English popular slang, but somewhat extended in the United States. When this word is used to denote extremes, as 'to drink till all is *blue*,' 'a dyed in the wool *blue* Presbyterian,' 'true-*blue*' in political opinions or honesty, it would appear that its origin is possibly maritime. *Blue* water was till a recent period always described as off or out of soundings, so that, like the sky, it suggests no end. It is remarkable that in both German and Dutch the same idea of extremity is connected

with *blue*. An utterly bad, pitiful result in the latter is 'Een *blauwe* nytvlugt.' In the last extremity of dead drunkenness, or in the swoons of a man in the *delirium tremens*, a *blue* sky or atmosphere seems to gather round the victim, in which a luminous point appears, which 'seems to come directly at him,' as the writer has heard it described. To look *blue* is probably derived, like *blue*-noses, from cold, or from approaching death, which latter would sufficiently account for the relation of *blue* to despair, despondency, and misery."

"Now, shendlemens, I sings you a song of mine own vot I translade from de Sherman of Schiller":—

Dere is an oldt saying, und I peliefe id  
is true,  
Dot ven a man dies his fingers toorn  
*plue*,  
His fingers toorn *plue* by de light of de  
moon,  
Und vy shouldn't efery man enjoy his  
own room?  
Gorus.—Room, poys, room, by de light  
of de moon,  
Und vy shouldn't efery man enjoy his  
own room?

—Yale College Song.

"*Blue* devils and red monkeys are said by the experienced to be the characteristic apparitions which haunt drunkards."

(Common), to talk *blue*, to talk immodestly, or libidiously. "A bit of *blue*," an obscene or libidinous anecdote. "A brown conversation" and "a brown study" is used in the contrary sense, and means seriously, gravely, and decently.

K

(Oxford and Cambridge), a man is said to get his *blue* (that is, the right to wear the University colour) when he represents his University against the rival university, in the annual boat-race, cricket-match, athletic sports, or football matches.

**Blue, blew, to** (common), to pawn or pledge, to spend or lose one's money at gambling, to waste money generally. Varied to *blew*, from the phrase "blown in," which refers to money that has been spent, as in the phrase, "I 'blewed' all my tin." For another derivation see BLEWED.

He'd a rooted aversion to everything blue,

And so innately modest was he  
That he blushed when his optics encountered a view

Of the broadly cerulean sea.

He adored modest maidens of charming eighteen,

But blue-stockings he'd always eschew,  
And he carried his tastes to the verge of the mean—

He had oof, which he never would *blew*.

—*Sporting Times*.

"*To blew a job*," to make a mess of a business; from to blow in the sense of make worthless; (thieves), *to blew*, to steal; "*blewed of his red 'un*," i.e., his watch stolen from him. "I've been *blewed of my skin*," I've been robbed of my purse.

**Blue-apron** (common), a *blue-apron* statesman. "A lay politician, a tradesman who interferes with

the affairs of the nation. The reference is to the blue apron once worn by almost all tradesmen, but now restricted to butchers, poulterers, fishmongers, and so on" (Dr. Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable).

**Blue bill** (Winchester), every "man" in "Commoners," that is, school, in contradistinction to college, has his tradesman's bills enclosed in a *blue* envelope given to him by the head-master on the last evening of the half, after "preces" or prayers, at 8.45 P.M., in "Mugging Hall." (See this word.)

**Blue Billy** (popular), the handkerchief (blue ground with white spots) sometimes worn and used as a colour at prize-fights. Also the refuse ammoniacal lime from gas factories (Hotten).

**Blue blanket** (vagrants), explained by quotation:—

The vagabond brotherhood have several slang terms for sleeping out in a field or meadow. It is called "snoozing in Hedge Square," "dossing with the daisies," and "lying under the *blue blanket*."—*J. Greenwood: Under the Blue Blanket*.

The French have the equivalent "Coucher à l'hôtel de l'Étoile." (Popular), a large rough coat, a pilot coat.

**Blue-blazer** (American), a fancy drink of sugar, hot water, and spirits, but made in a peculiar manner.



**Blue-blazes** (common), hell. As there is probably no man who has ever heard of hell who has not been taught to associate it with burning sulphur or brimstone, the expression does not seem to be so meaningless as some writers suppose. (Popular), spirituous liquors.

**Blue boar** (old cant), the vulgar term for a venereal disease.

**Blue-bottle** (general), a policeman, a constable, termed also a "blue devil."

The Bobby's big boot, though, is nudging her now,

And she sleepily stutters, "All right!  
Whatsh th' row?"

Then the buzz of the *blue bottle's* borne on the breeze—

"Now move yourself, 'Liza! Come, pass along, please!"

—*Sporting Times*.

It occurs in Shakspeare in the Second Part of King Henry IV., where Doll Tearsheet calls the beadle "a *blue-bottle* rogue." Most etymologists agree in ascribing the appellation to the colour of a policeman's uniform. The term was formerly applied to servants dressed in blue liveries. The police force is sometimes spoken of as the "blues." The old French city police were termed by thieves *les verts*, from their green uniforms, and nowadays a French rogue will talk of *les serins* (canaries), *i.e.*, *gendarmes*, with yellow facings. The rebel *chouans* called the Republican

soldiers *les bleus*. The Austrians and the English were respectively styled *les blancs* and *habits rouges* by French soldiery. Again, "blue bellies" was a term applied by the Confederate soldiery during the Civil War to the Federals, on account of their blue gaberdines, and the latter dubbed their adversaries "grey-backs." Many other examples might be given in support of the above derivation of *blue-bottles*.

**Blue boy** (popular), a bubo.

**Blue butter** (popular), mercurial ointment.

**Blue cheek** (popular), explained by quotation.

There were three fashions for whiskers when I was a child, and they were variously known as *blue cheek*, the whisker shaved off and leaving the cheek blue; "bacca pipe," the whisker curled in tiny ringlets; and "touze," or whisker worn bushy.—*J. Greenwood: Outcasts of London*.

**Blue flag** (popular), a blue apron worn by butchers, greengrocers, &c. "He has hoisted the *blue flag*."

**Blue funk** (English and American), extreme fright.

It put me in a regular *blue funk*.—*Punch*.

**Blue moon** (proverbial), an undefined period, used in the phrase, "Once in a *blue moon*."

**Blue murders** (popular), a great and unusual noise. To call *blue*

*murders*, to call out loudly. "If you hit me again I'll call out *blue murders*."

**Blue noses** (Americanism), natives of Nova Scotia.

"Pray, sir," said one of my fellow-passengers, "can you tell me the reason why the Nova Scotians are called *blue noses*?" "It is the name of a potato," said I, "which they produce in the greatest perfection, and boast to be the best in the world. The Americans have in consequence given them the nickname of *blue noses*."—*Haliburton: Sam Slick*.

**Blue peter** (nautical), the signal for sailing when hoisted at the foretop mast-head. This well-known flag has a blue ground with a white square in the centre (Admiral Smyth).

The *blue peter* has long been flying at my foremast, and . . . now I must soon expect the signal for sailing.—*Justin McCarthy: A History of Our Own Times*.

This expression is also applied to the call for trumps in whist.

**Blue pigeon** (thieves), the lead on roofs; to fly or shoot the *blue pigeon*, to steal lead off the roofs of buildings. (Nautical), a nickname for the sounding lead.

**Blue pill** (American), a bullet. Lead has long been termed *bluey* in England, and death by a bullet *blue murder*, but the enormous consumption of *blue pills* or calomel in the United States renders it possible that the simile originated there.

. . . That if he did so he would be received with a welcome from a horse-pistol. To which the answer was, "Hev got a mountain howitzer witch karrys a fore-pound (4 lb.) ball, and I intend to blow you and your house to hel before I begin on your turkers. So come on with your pistil and *blue pil*.—*Knickerbocker Magazine*.

**Blue plumbs** (thieves), bullets.

No rapture can equal the tobyman's joys,  
To blue devils *blue plumbs* give the go-by.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Blue ribbon** (racing), the term is only applied to the Derby.

Melton, who won the *blue ribbon* after one of the most exciting finishes.—*Illustrated London News*.

**Blue ruin** (popular), gin of inferior quality. Termed also "blue ribband."

His ear caught the sound of the word  
*morbleu!*

Pronounced by the old woman under her  
breath;

Now, not knowing what she could mean by  
blue death,

He conceived she referred to a delicate  
brewing,

Which is almost synonymous, namely,  
*blue ruin*.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

A tumbler of *blue ruin* fill, fill for me!  
Red tape those as likes it may drain,  
But whatever the lush, it a bumper must  
be.

—*Lord Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

Dr. Brewer gives the explanation: "*Blue*, from its tint, and *ruin*, from its effects." Compare as regards similes of colour "red tape," red wine; "petit bleu," coarse red wine; "une verte" or "perroquet," a glass of absinthe (which is green); "une brune," a glass of porter; "une

blonde," a glass of ale; "une jaune," a dram of brandy; "une dame blanche," a bottle of white wine; "pivois savonné," white wine; "négresse," bottle of red wine. And with respect to pernicious effects, "breaky leg," strong drink; "eau-de-mort, casse-poitrine, tord-boyaux," rank brandy. The term *blue ruin* must have been coined by sober people, or by repentant drunkards, whilst those otherwise inclined gave it the fond appellation of "white velvet," or "white satin," unconsciously imitated by French dram-drinkers, when, after having tossed off some horrible stuff in an *assommoir*, they fervently ejaculate, "C'est un velours, quoi!"

**Blues** (common), the Royal Horse Guards; the Bluecoat school; the crews of the 'Varsity boat race—the dark *blues* being the Oxford men, and the light *blues* those from Cambridge; the police force.

Well, what's the row . . .  
Or whether this here mobbing, as some  
longish heads foretell it,

Will grow to such a riot that the Oxford  
*blues* must quell it?

—*Hood Row at the Oxford Arms.*

(Society), "a fit of the *blues*" means a fit of depression; it is abbreviated from the "*blue devils*," which are supposed to appear to a man suffering from *delirium tremens*.

She had attracted him for a while, but his strong good common sense, as well as

his strong healthy body and robust habits, soon carried him out of the *blues* he had for a while fallen into.—*Lucy Farmer*; or, *Chronicles of Cardew Manor.*

**Blue skin** (West Indian), the child of a black woman by a white man. The name of a mulatto, one of the characters of Ainsworth's "Jack Sheppard."

**Blue squadron**, one of the (East Indian), a person having a cross of the Indian breed.

**Blue the screw**, to (popular), to spend one's salary.

He buys her gloves and dresses new,  
And stands her dinners down at Kew;  
In fact on her *blues* all his screw,  
Which some day he will sadly rue.

—*The Gaiety Masher: Broadside.*

**Bluey** (thieves), lead. (Austrian), a bushman's bundle, the outside wrapper of which is generally a blue blanket (Murray).

**Bluff**, to (American, low), to put down by a bold front, to oppose by "cheek" or effrontery.

I did not care if it took me a week; I was not going to be *bluffed* by them.—*North of England Advertiser.*

German, *blüffen*. The eleventh commandment among thieves in Germany is "Du sollst Dich nicht *verblüffen* lassen"—"Don't let yourself be *bluffed*." Dutch *blufferd*, a snarling fellow; *blaffen*, to bark at. Also Dutch, *verbluffen*, to put out of countenance, to face down.

(Patterers' slang), an excuse, a pretence.

There is a strong suspicion among men whose heads are level that the minstrel variety performance is a *bluff* of the "messenger" to keep from the public the real motives of the murders.—*Bret Harte: Gabriel Conroy.*

**Bluffer** (provincial), an innkeeper, or landlord of a public-house.  
(Nautical), a boatswain of a ship.

**Bluffing** (American, cards), betting high on poor cards at poker, in the hopes of frightening the other players into going out. A crafty player will often allow himself to be called for a small *bluff*, so as to establish a reputation for doing it, in order to lie by and win a good stake when he has a really good hand, on which he has thus induced his antagonists to suppose that he is *bluffing*. The English equivalent for this term is "bragging."

**Blunderbuss** (popular), a stupid, blundering fellow.

**Blunt** (thieves), money.

When the slow coach paused, and the gemmen storm'd,

I bore the brunt—

And the only sound which my grave lips form'd

Was *blunt*—still *blunt*!

—*Lord Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

"Take care of your watches, gentlemen!" said the polite policeman, endeavouring to divide the mob.

"Take care of your *Blunt*, you devils!" yelled the gallant Primrose Leaguer, who had come to see the fun.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

By some the word is derived from Mr. John Blunt, the

chairman of the South Sea Company, the famous bubble by which a few fortunes were won, and many fortunes were lost, in 1720. By others it is thought that the word originated in the French *blond*. But *blunt* (sometimes varied to *the blunt*) is more probably derived, as the latter appellation implies, from an allusion to the blunt rim of coins or to their hardness, as in the phrase "hard cash," "soft" being bank notes, and "stiffs" cheques or bills.

**Blunted** (popular, and thieves), possessed of money.

**Bly-hunka** (tinker), a horse.

**B. N. C.**, Brasenose College, Oxford.

**Board, to** (military), to borrow.

**Board him** (nautical), a colloquialism for I'll ask, demand, or accost him (Admiral Smyth). Shakspeare makes Polonius say of Hamlet:—

"I'll *board him* presently."

To "*board him* in the smoke," means to take a person by surprise, from the simile of firing a broadside and taking advantage of the smoke to board.

**Boarding school** (old cant), the name given by thieves and similar characters to Newgate or any other prison. "To go to *boarding school*" was to go to gaol. French thieves call a

prison "pal" "un aminche de collège."

**Boat** (thieves), originally to transport, the term is now applied to penal servitude. To "get the boat" or to "be boated" is to be sentenced to a long term of imprisonment equivalent to transportation under the old system (Hotten). To *boat* with one is to be a partner in some crime, to be an accomplice.

"Does he *boat* with you?" "Yes, and he's an artist. Only last night, down at the Albany break-up, he buzzed a bloke and a shakester of a reader."—*On the Trail*.

(Military), a good *boat* is a soldier who spends his money freely with his poorer comrades.

**Bob** (general), a shilling. Origin unknown. Perhaps from a simile in allusion to the meaning of *bob*, formerly bait for fish, the coin being looked upon in the light of a bribe. "Bobstick," old slang for a shilling; would in that case be the fishing-rod. Compare with "palm-oil," both money and bribe, and the French slang *huile de mains*, same meaning. Also with *graisse*, money, from the phrase "*graisser la patte*," to bribe. It is curious to note that *bob* is a blow, and "blow" slang for a shilling.

The jolliest fellow you ever met  
Is a dismal man at home;  
The wittiest girl in society's set  
Will with headaches her wit atone.  
The man whose graces a court would  
adorn

Is tied to a desk from night till morn;  
And the man who would lend his last  
*bob* to a friend

Never has the first *bob* to lend.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Popular), *bob!* stop! the response to the request "say when," while spirits are being poured into one's glass.

"*Bob* a nob," a shilling a head.

*Bob*, in old slang, signified a shoplifter's assistant, to whom the stolen goods were passed, and who carried them away. "All is *bob*," i.e., all is safe. From a Cornwall term *bob*, pleasant, agreeable. A variant of "all gay," and "all serene."

"To shift one's *bob*," to go away.

(Public schools), "dry *bob*," a boy who devotes himself to cricket or football, or any other games on "dry land," in opposition to "wet *bob*," one who gives himself up to boating.

The friendly rivalry between England and America led some while ago to a contest between the "wet *bobs*," to use an Eton phrase, of either country, and it was only fair that the "dry *bobs*" should show what they could do.—*T. Ogilvie: Imperial Dictionary of the English Language*.

"Dry *bob*" also refers to fruitless coition.

Resolved to win, like Hercules, the  
prize . . .

The cheating jilt, at the twelfth, a *dry bob* cries.

—*Earl of Rochester's Works*.

**Bob my pal** (rhyming slang), a "gal," girl.

**Bobachee** (Anglo-Indian), a cook; a vulgar or slang form of *bā-*

*warchi*, a high dignitary at the Mongol court, a taster and carver to some great man. *Bobbaeky canvah*, cook-house.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Bobber** (popular), a fellow-workman, mate. Also a variant of “bob,” as in the phrase “two bobber,” a florin.

So down I gets and finds a two bobber. My mate gives me the wink, but the slavey’s on the job, so I say, “Oh, miss, if I ain’t found a two bobber.”—*Sporting Times*.

**Bobbery** (Anglo-Indian). This word comes from the East, but its origin is doubtful. The authors of the “Anglo-Indian Glossary” declare that it is common for Hindus when in surprise or grief to exclaim, *Bapre!* or *Bapre bap!* “Oh, Fathers!” This is imitated in Anglo-Indian by *Bobbery Bob!* Ladies in the United States also sometimes exclaim, “Fathers!” with or without “merciful,” or “good” as a prefix. *Bobbery* generally signifies a row, a disturbance. It is even more common as “bobbely” in pidgin English, but it is very doubtful indeed whether it originated, as some think, in the Cantonese *pa-pi*, a noise.

I’ll bet a wager there’ll be a *bobbery* in the pigsty before long.—*Marryat: Peter Simple*.

It also means in India “pack,” a pack of hounds or dogs of all kinds without distinction.

What a Cabinet has put together—a regular *bobbery-pack*.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Bobbin** (common). “That’s the end of the bobbin.” A phrase equivalent to saying, “That’s the end of it,” when all the thread is wound off a bobbin or spool. The French say “être au bout de son rouleau.” (American), *bobbin’ around*, a slang phrase meaning going about, here and there, casually. It rose from the refrain of a song which was popular in 1850. In another lyric the following allusion was made to a report that the King of Belgium had proposed marriage to Miss Burdett-Coutts and been rejected.

So the King of the Belgines went in and got sold

When he hoped for a fortune in silver and gold,

Which shows that great mon-i-archs sometimes are found

Runnin’ after rich ladies and bobbin’ around.

If I ketch him *bobbin’ round* arter our Nancy here agin, I’ll just set the dorgs on him—though I don’t believe a decent dorg would want to bite such an everlasting slink as he is.—*Sunday Paper*.

*Bobbing around* is evidently a variation on “bobbing up and down,” rising and falling, here and there, like a fisherman’s bob in the water.

**Bobbing** (public schools), “dry bobbing” applies to all sports on terra firma, and “wet bobbing” to aquatics.

**Bobbish** (common), smart, spruce, or in good order, fair. From a Cornwall term *bob*, pleasant, agreeable.

"'Ow are yer, pretty *bobbish*?" "I'm much as usual, thankec."—*Punch*.

**Bobbles** (popular), the testicles.  
From the same word signifying in Cornwall, stones, pebbles.

**Bobby** (general), a policeman; otherwise "peeler, cop, or copper, blue-bottle, pig, reeler, crusher, frog, fly-cop," &c.

The cook, she, when  
The *bobby's* on his beat,  
Oft lightens master's larder  
Of the pudding and the meat.

—*Song*.

"If you want a thing done, you should do it yourself,"

Is an excellent maxim, no doubt in its way;

But, when citizens willingly part with their pelf,

They're entitled to claim some return for their pay.

Bull does not pay *Bobbies* to lounge on their beats,

And leave him at last to look after his streets.

—*Punch*.

Some thirty years ago the man in blue (journalistic) was still sometimes called "*bobby* peeler," a fact which bears out the generally admitted origin of *bobby* from Sir Robert Peel, to whom the establishment of the force was due, in 1829, and who replaced the old "Charlies" (so called from Charles I., in whose reign the system was reorganised), who then acted as constables and night-watchers in the metropolis. According to Hotten, the official square-keeper, who is always armed with a cane to drive away idle

and disorderly urchins, has, time out of mind, been called by the same urchins, "*bobby* the beadle."

**Bobby twister** (thieves' slang), a burglar who would hesitate at nothing, even to shooting any policeman who might be endeavouring to capture him. A noted *bobby twister* was the famous burglar Peace, whose diurnal avocations were certainly in keeping with his name, as he was considered a highly respectable citizen. He was, or pretended to be, a teetotaler, and, it is said, a member of the Salvation Army. His respectability ended on the gallows.

**Bob-cull** (thieves), good fellow.

"Where be you going, you imp of the world?" cried the dame. "Get in with you, and say no more on the matter; be a *bob-cull*—drop the bullies, and you shall have the blunt!"—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

*Bob* is a provincial term, signifying pleasant, agreeable.

**Bobs** (schools), huge beer jugs.

Only those "juniors" attended whose office it was to bring away the portions of bread and cheese and *bobs* of beer for consumption in the afternoon.—*T. A. Trollope: What I Remember*.

**Bobstick** (old), a shilling. *Vide* BOB.

**Bobtail** (old slang), a licentious, immodest woman of the very lowest character. One who exposed her person in public. Also an impotent *debauchee*.

**Bob White** (American), a popular but not a slang name for the quail, whose notes are supposed to resemble the words *Bob—White*, with a pause between the two words and a strong accent on the *White*. It is just two-thirds of the song of the whip-poor-will.

The American farmer has watched his birds through the cycle of the year; has listened to the "Ah *Bob White!* ah *Bob White!*" that with the fall of the apple-blossoms begins to fill the air.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

**Bodier** (pugilistic), a blow on the sides of the body, otherwise known as a "rib-roaster."

**Bodkin** (common), an old word still in use, with the sense of dirk, dagger. (Sporting), a person who takes his turn between the sheets on a night when the hotel has twice as many visitors as it can comfortably lodge (Hotten's Dictionary). (Common), to "ride *bodkin*," any one sitting between two others in a carriage, is said to "ride *bodkin*."

Then he called a hansom, and expressing his willingness to "be the *bodkin*" (*Anglicè*, ride in the middle), ordered the jehu to drive to Middlesex Street.—*Sporting Times*.

**Body-slangs** (thieves' cant), fetters for the body.

*Body-slangs* are of two kinds. Each consists of a heavy iron ring to go round the waist, to which are attached in one case two bars or heavy chains, connected with the fetters round

the ankles, in the other case a link at each side attached to a handcuff. Into these the wrists are locked, and thus held down to the prisoner's sides. The latter are now only to be found in museums.—*Vaux*.

**Body snatcher** (old), a bailiff or runner; a violator of the grave; an undertaker.

**Bog** (prison), the farm works at Dartmoor where much land has been reclaimed. *Bog gang*, the party of convicts detailed for this work. (Common), a privy. Originally printers' slang, but now very common. "To *bog*," to ease oneself. (Tinker), see **BOGH**.

**Bogey**, often called **bug-aboo**, a word existing in different forms in many languages. As both God and Devil may be found in *Deus*, *Devas*, divine, *Diabolus* and the gypsy *Duvel* or *Devlis* (both meaning God only), so we have the divinity as *Bog* in Russian, and in the Celtic *bug*, a spirit or spectre, while in English *bugge* or *bug* is in two senses a terror, as the famous Bugge Bible and Spenser's "Faerie Queene" bear witness. The *bogey* or *bug-aboo* is an imaginary horror or monster with which vulgar, wicked, or foolish people were, and perhaps still are, accustomed to frighten children at night. It is probable that *aboo* is the common old Irish war-cry, which was said



to be so terrifying that it was formerly prohibited by law. This *aboo* was well-known and much talked of during the time of Elizabeth. On August 2, 1887, Mr. Courtney in Parliament invented a new form of the word.

Mr. Courtney, though a partisan of the undertaking, urged that a division should be taken at once to save time. He described the speech of Baron H. de Worms as a combination of *bogeyism* and *fogeyism*. (A laugh.) Mr. W. H. Smith and Mr. J. Morley joined in the appeal to close the discussion.—*Saint James's Gazette*.

(Common), one's landlord, called by the French "Monsieur Vantour." (Studios), a painting is said to be *bogey* when sombre tints predominate.

**Bogh** (tinker), to get, hold, make work. This appears to be a very general sort of a verb.

**Bog oranges** (common), potatoes, from the fact that potatoes form the chief diet of Irish peasants.

**Bog-trotter** (now recognised), an Irish peasant. "Bog-trotting," applied to an Emerald, or to any one who lives among marshy moors.

The impudent *bog-trotting* scamp dare not threaten me!—*Thackeray: Pendennis*.

**Bogue, to** (American), to apply one's self very earnestly, to make every effort. "I don't git much done without I *bogue* right in along with the men" (Bartlett). *Boege*, a bow, or a course in Dutch, is used exactly in this

sense, as "het over alle *bogen* wenden," to try everything, to leave no stone unturned. Also in Dutch *bogen*, to pride one's self on employing energy in action.

**Bogus** (American), anything like a sham, a fraud, a counterfeit, or a humbug. *Bogus* money, *bogus* banks, &c.

One of the *bogus* petitions in favour of the coal and wine dues unearthed by Mr. Bradlaugh is purported to be signed by no less than thirteen racehorses!—*Funny Folks*.

The story which derives the name from one *Borghese*, who a generation ago flooded the West with counterfeit money, is, like most American derivative stories given in newspapers, extremely doubtful. As soon as an expression becomes popular, ingenious artists in literary *supercheries* at once manufacture for it a history. *Bogus* is from a cant term applied to counterfeit coin. This word is widely current in the United States, whence it has been recently imported by English newspaper writers. Among the tinklers or tinkers, a kind of Scottish gypsies, *bogus* means counterfeit coin, from *bogh*, to make, and the Romany termination *us*. Wilson declares that there are numbers of these tinkers in America. Dr. C. Mackay is of opinion that it was introduced in America by Irish immigrants from *boc*, pronounced *boke*, deceit, fraud.

**Bohn** (Yale College), a translation, or a pony from *Bohn*, the name of well-known London publishers, who issued a series of translations of the Classics, the use of these becoming very common in the States; a *Bohn* was generally adopted as a name for a translation.

'Twas plenty of skin with a good deal of  
*Bohn*.

—*Songs of the Jubilee: Yale College Magazine*.

**Boiled shirt** (Australian diggers) a clean shirt or "clean biled rag," as Mark Twain puts it, boiling being a primitive way of washing shirts.

John rode home with a depressed mind. As he passed the public-house which had proved the lion in the old man's path, he saw the publican, a bloated, greasy-faced man, a villainous low forehead, and a prize-fighting look, walking up and down the verandah in a *boiled shirt*.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Boiler-plated** (American) originated in iron-clad. Utterly impenetrable, irresistible, not to be affected.

He gave me a look of *boiler-plated* reproach, clapped on his hat, and was off without another word.—*Mr. and Mrs. Bowser*.

**Boilers** (Royal Military Academy), boiled potatoes as opposed to "greasers," fried potatoes.

**Boiling** or **biling** (common), the "whole *boiling*," the whole party, or entire quantity.

The last mile, he said, tho' the shortest one of the whole *bilin'*, took the longest to do it in by a jug full.—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker*.

A phrase probably derived from the kitchen, and a stew or broth of many ingredients. It is a phrase more common among Irish than among English or Scotch people, though not wholly unknown to either. The Irish pronunciation is "biling" or "bilin'." The term is extensively used in America, and is sometimes varied to the "whole gridiron of them," applied to a party. The latter is Irish.

**Boilum tea** (pidgin), to boil tea.

Blongy my dis tim *boilum you tea*, mumpa one first chop *fitce-fitce!* (quick!)  
Talkee dat sa-van (servant) he is savvy how *boilum tea*.—*Pidgin Talkee*.

**Boko** (common), a nose.

An expert in nazography declares that a pale nose usually belongs to the selfish, cold-hearted man; whilst the highly-coloured *boko* is characteristic of the sanguine temperament usually possessed by the man who is hopeful that a free drink is looming in the distance.—*Fun*.

Originally a large nose, possibly from *bcaik*, old slang for a nose, or from the old English *boche*, *boke*, a swelling.

**Boler, bowler** (Winchester), stiff felt hat or pot hat.

**Bolly** (Marlborough) is used by the pupils with the signification of pudding.

**Bolt**, to (colloquial), to make a sudden and rapid movement, for haste, alarm, perplexity, or other cause of expedition. To *bolt* one's food is to swallow without mas-

tication; to *bolt* is to run away, to decamp, to disappear. The term, according to Grose, is borrowed from the rabbit-warren, because the rabbits *bolt* when a ferret enters into their burrows. But the derivation is probably from *bolt*, the ancient and not yet obsolete word for an arrow, as in the current proverb "a fool's *bolt* is soon shot," so that to *bolt* is to move as swiftly as an arrow. (Prison), "getting the *bolt*," being sentenced to penal servitude.

"Long Bill expects *bolt*" informs the sympathetic or rejoicing reader that one William — expects to be sentenced to penal servitude.—*Rev. J. W. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Bolted** (nautical), "I've been through the mill, ground and *bolted*." That is, "You can't gammon me; I'm too old a bird to be caught with chaff." *Bolted* in this case signifies sifted.

**Bolt-in-tun** (London thieves), bolted, run away, got away, one of the puns that cant and slang are so fond of. Cf. "COBBLER," "BILLIARD SLUM," &c.

Vaux in his Memoirs says:—"A term founded on the cant word 'bolt,' and merely a fanciful variation very common among *flash* persons, there being in London a famous inn so called. It is customary when a man has run away from his lodgings, broken out of jail, or made any other sudden movement, to say 'the *Bolt-in-tun* is concerned,' or 'he's gone to the

*Bolt-in-tun*' instead of simply saying, 'he has bolted,'" &c.

**Bolt the moon, to** (common), to cheat the landlord by taking away goods or furniture without paying the rent; literally to extinguish the moon and take advantage of the darkness thus produced. "To shoot the moon" is more common.

**Bolus** (common), an apothecary.

**Bombay duck** (Anglo-Indian), a small fish called the bummelo or bumbalow, which is caught on the Indian coasts. When dried it forms the well-known *Bombay ducks*, seen so frequently among grocers' delicacies in England.

**Bombo** (nautical), weak, cold punch.

**Bona** (theatrical), good, varied to "rumbo."

**Bonanza** (American), a Spanish word, originally applied to profit, benefit. A profitable silver mine or a share in it is a *bonanza*. Now applied generally to money.

At last the train came, and the guard on the train handed me a heavily-sealed envelope, remarking as he did so—

"Be careful of that, Branthwaite. There's a *bonanza* in that package if it were yours or mine."

"Money?" I asked.

"Yes; twenty thousand dollars."—*American Story.*

But a *bonanza* with millions in it is not struck every week.—*Scribner's Monthly.*

**Bonas** (popular), belles. The difference between *donnas* and *bonas* is thus stated in a music-hall ballad:—

Girls are in vulgar called *donnas*,  
Some are called Miss and some Mrs. ;  
The best of them all are called *bonas*,  
The whole jolly lot's fond of kisses.

—*Broadside: O Fred, don't be so frivolous.*

**Bonce** (various), the head, called also "crust, chump." From *bonce*, a marble of larger size than ordinary, used by boys. The French slang for head, *bille*, literally a marble, bears out this derivation.

**Bone** (American), a fee; to *bone*, to pay a fee, or rather bribe, called *bone*, at the custom-house to induce the officials not to examine passengers' luggage, or to let it off lightly. From the slang *bone*, derived either from the French *bon*, or, as Murray suggests, from the middle English *boon*. This word is used with the sense of good by English vagabonds.

◇, their hieroglyphic for the word, chalked by them on houses and street corners as a hint to succeeding beggars.

(Masonic), a corruption of the Hebrew word for builder.

(Common), to *bone*, to steal, to pilfer, to purloin. Probably derived from *bon*, good, or, by extension of meaning, to seize on a good thing.

The while within the pocket of her gown  
Childe Alice deftly placed the purse she'd  
*boned.*

Alas! its contents were not worth a  
"brown;"

His winnings all were "stumers," and  
she groaned.

"The world is too much with us!" poor  
Childe Alice moaned.

—*Bird of Freedom.*

This word, according to the Glossary of Cant in Bampfyle's Moore Carew, also signifies to apprehend, to arrest, to take into custody, to "nab." Compare with the French cant phrase "être le bon," which has the same meaning.

(American cadets), to study hard; possibly a playful allusion to the more universal slang meaning of the verb "to *bone*," the meaning of course being to convey the idea of acquiring knowledge by *force*—an appropriate reading of the word for the cadets of West Point—but more probably from Bohn's translations. For other derivation, see **BOONDER**.

**Bone box** (old slang), the mouth; the teeth are now called the "ivories."

**Bone-crusher** (South African), a heavy bore rifle for killing big game.

African game require *bone-crushers*; for any ordinary carbine possesses sufficient penetrative quality, yet has not the disabling quality which a gun must possess to be useful in the hands of an African explorer. — *H. Stanley: How I found Livingstone.*

**Boned** (thieves), taken into custody. To *bone* is to take what does not belong to one. There is therefore a world of dry

humour in the thief saying that he has been *boned* or stolen by the policeman when taken into custody.

Tell us how you was *boned*, signifies tell us the story of your apprehension, a common request among fellow-prisoners in a jail, which is readily complied with as a rule; and the various circumstances therein related afford present amusement and also useful hints for regulating their future operations, so as to avoid the like misfortune.—*Vaux*.

**Bone-grubber** (common), a person who hunts for bones in dust-holes, or any spot where refuse is thrown.

The *bone-grubber* and the mud-lark differ little in their pursuits.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

The term was also applied to a resurrectionist. Cobbett was therefore called a *bone-grubber* because he brought the remains of Tom Paine from America (Hotten).

**Bone-lazy** (common), excessively or hopelessly lazy.

**Boneless**, a ghost, a shadowy and impalpable spectre or apparition.

**Bone muscle, to** (American cadets), to frequent the gymnasium; frequently to take exercise there.

**Bone-picker** (common), a footman.

**Boner** (Winchester), a blow given with the fist on the lowest vertebra.

**Bones** (medical), the *bones* of the human skull. "Do you know your *bones*?" *i.e.*, are you familiar with the anatomy of the human skeleton. (Stock Exchange), Wickens, Pease & Co.'s shares.

So now we shall soon have our "crackers,"  
And likely enough our "cheroots,"  
While our *bones* can be sent to the  
"knackers,"  
And then we have sweet "Sarah's  
boots."

—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(Common), to rattle the *bones*, to play at dice.

**Bone setter** (old), a hard or fast trotting horse.

**Bone shaker** (common), a name given to the old-fashioned bicycle, which was a clumsy wood machine, and was superseded by the spider steel machine, which is now being superseded in its turn by the smaller "Safety."

**Bone shave**, the sciatica or rheumatic gout in the sciatic nerve. According to Mr. Thomas Wright in his *Archaic Dictionary*, the peasantry of Exmore had a charm for the supposed cure or relief of this malady, consisting in the repetition of the following doggerel lines as the patient lay on his back on the brink of a brook or river, with a staff by his side between him and the water.

*Bone shave* right,  
*Bone shave* straight.

As the water runs by the stone  
Good for *bone shave*.

**Bone standing** (American cadet), to *bone standing*, to study hard for a class position (O. E. Wood: United States Army).

**Bong** (Australian blackfellows' lingo), dead. This word is a specimen of the pidgin-English, stuffed with native words, in which intercourse is carried on with the blacks on stations.

"Yohi," said the boy, still sitting on his horse, "altogether *bong*" (dead), "one fellow bail *bong*" (one not dead). "Which one bail *bong*?" demanded John in terror. "Missis bail *bong* ony, cawbawn frighten" (Missis not dead, only dreadfully frightened).—A. C. Grant: *Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Bonger, bānger** (gypsy), to bend, bow, duck, dodge, to twist or turn; *bongo*, bent, turned, unwilling, sinister, crooked, evil, distorted, awry. "O *bongo* yākk"—"The evil eye." "O *bongo* wast"—"The left hand." "A *bongo* zī" (or see)—"A crooked, evil heart." "O *bongo* rikk o' the drom"—"The left-hand side of the road."

**Boning** (American cadets), *boning* the adjutant, a violent or immoderate assumption of a military air or bearing; a swaggering military fillibuster; a Bombastes Furioso. *Boning* demerit, said of a cadet who avoids giving cause for being reported to the authorities (O. E. Wood: United States Army).

**Bonnet** (thieves), a pretext or pretence. Vaux defines it thus:

—"A concealment, a pretext, a pretence, an ostensible manner of accounting for what you really wish to conceal; as a man who lives by depredation, will still outwardly follow some honest employment, as a clerk, porter, newsman." One who metaphorically *bonnets* or *blinds* other people; a *bonnet* or *bonneteer* is also a sham bidder at auctions; a confederate in thimble-ripg or three cards; one who pretends to buy of a crocus pitcher or street medicine vendor so as to entice purchasers. In French, *bonneteur* is one who is profuse of compliments and bows; hence a swindler who tries to wheedle people out of their money; also a three-card trick sharper. To *bonnet* for a person, is to corroborate any assertion he has made, or to relate facts in the most favourable light, in order to extricate him from a dilemma, or to further any object he has in view.

(Common), to smash a man's hat over his face, a favourite amusement of London roughs.

Two young men who . . . varied their amusements by *bonneting* the proprietor of this itinerant coffee-house.—*Dickens: Sketches*.

**Bonneteer** (thieves), a crushing blow on the hat.

**Bonnets so blue** (rhyming slang), Irish stew.

**Bono**, good. (East), *bono* Johnny, an Englishman.

**Booby-hutch** (thieves), the police-station.

**Booby-trap** (Winchester), the door of a room is left open, and on the top are placed some big books and a wet sponge, so that when it is pushed the whole falls on the head of whoever opens it. This time-honoured species of practical joking is not confined to Winchester.

Books were closed, *booby-traps* scattered, sofa-pillows restored to their legitimate places.—*Chambers's Journal*.

**Boodgeriee** (Australian bush slang), a blackfellow's word for "good," incorporated into the slang of the white. Used principally in the pidgin-English, in which the whites carry on their conversation with the blacks. A very common word.

What was his fate then might be mine in a few minutes. I determined to keep still and wait for what might turn up. Presently I heard bushes rustling some distance behind, and the voice of a black-fellow, uttering in that strange tone in which the wild savage first pronounces English words—*boodgeriee* (white fellow, good, good white fellow).—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Boodle** (American), booty, profit, perquisites, plunder. Commonly used with regard to government transactions, contracts, &c., by which the public are cheated.

'Twas Yankee doodle once I swore,  
But it is Yankee *boodle* now.  
—*American Paper*.

This word in the United States is applied among thieves only to counterfeit or bad money. The

*boodle* carrier is the man who carries the counterfeit or "queer," while the shover passes it off. "At the first sign of trouble the *boodle* carrier vanishes, leaving nothing to criminate his com-rogue" (*New York Slang Dictionary*).

(American political), *boodle* explained by quotation.

In the States the money used for electioneering purposes is known as *boodle*, "sinews of war," and "living issues."—*Cornhill Magazine*.

*Boodle* has also the signification of property, wealth; unquestionably from the Dutch *boedel*, household stuff. Also an estate left by persons deceased. (Popular), a stupid noodle (Murray).

**Book** (literary), the libretto of an opera.

This piece will be followed by a new comic opera called "Compère Guillery," by H. Perry, the *book* being by Messrs. Julian Perry and Paul Burani.—*Sporting Times*.

(Turf), an arrangement of bets against certain horses marked in a pocket-book made for that purpose. "Making a *book* upon it," is a common phrase that a man is prepared to lay the odds against the horses in a race. "That does not suit my *book*," *i.e.*, does not accord with my other arrangements (Hotten).

**Booked** (common), disposed of, caught.

**Book-form** (turf), the relative powers of speed or endurance of race-horses as gauged by the

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"book," *i.e.*, the published record in the calendar of races past.

### Bookies (turf), the bookmakers.

The *bookies* came down like wolves on the fold

To try and secure all the "Jubilee" gold.  
Some plumped for St. Mirin, but wrongly  
had reckoned,

For Annamite won, and the "Saint" was  
but second. —*Turf.*

Past Epsom's Spring, again we try

Our luck with *bookies* and with horses  
On yet another field, where lie

The mysteries of the Guineas' courses.  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

The toughest *bookie*, as well as the airiest  
turfite, will be sorry to hear of the death  
of a genial fellow.—*The World.*

**Books (Winchester).** There are prizes given at the end of each half by Lord Saye and Sele to the two seniors in each division. These are called the *books*. To get *books* is to obtain one of these prizes. 'When a part or division are saying a lesson, the pupils sit at one end of "school," in three rows; they are then said to be "up to *books*." The Don sits in his chair with his side towards them, and the "man" who is saying the lesson stands in front of him.

**Books (card players),** a pack of cards.

**Boom (American),** properly the distant sound as of thunder gradually increasing in intensity. This word, from being a favourite one in American oratory, began to be applied in 1880 to any great advance or rise in

business or politics. A great *boom* in cotton refers to an advance in price and greater activity in the market, while the first rumour that a certain man will obtain a nomination to office may be announced in a newspaper in large letters at the head of a column as, "A *boom* for Smith!"

**A BOOM FOR HILL.**—A movement is on foot in Washington to organise a David B. Hill *boom* for the Presidency.—*Chicago Tribune.*

In the present case many influences seem to work in the direction of a *boom*.—*Truth.*

Some Prospero waved his magic wand, the world made discovery that it was positively languishing for want of more copper and tin, all visible supplies were eagerly bought up, and the great mining *boom* of 1887 was fairly started.—*Globe.*

(Journalistic), a *boom* refers to the publication in a newspaper of some correspondence which will raise up a polemic, and, by thus attracting the attention of the public, increase the sale of the paper.

The latest *Daily Telegraph boom*—"Our Daughters"—is going on merrily, and the views of the various young ladies are distinctly interesting to note.—*Globe.*

(Nautical), to "top one's *boom* off," to be off or start in a certain direction.

**Boomah (Australian),** a very large kind of kangaroo. This word is probably a mistake of Colonel Munday's. He heard the kangaroo called a boomer because of its enormous size: the word was strange to him, and he



imagined it to be a variety of kangaroo, and not a slang word expressive of size.

An officer from Van Diemen's Land told me that he had once killed in that colony "a kangaroo of such magnitude, that being a long way from home, he was unable though on horseback to carry away any portion except the tail, which alone weighed thirty pounds. This species is called the *boomah*, and stands about seven feet high."—*Lieut.-Col. Munday: Our Antipodes.*

**Boomer** (American), a very big specimen, a huge snake or kangaroo.

And should you ask how such a one  
A mighty hunter grew,  
So many flying does outsped,  
So many *boomers* slew.

But suddenly the vision passed,  
And Bill became aware,  
That he was in the *boomer's* arms,  
And bounding through the air.  
—*J. B. Stephens: Marsupial Bill.*

A very great lie, a very big flea; a very long hit at cricket would be described as a *boomer*, or a regular *boomer* (used by "slangy" Australians). A *boomer* is probably that which makes a big boom or noise, and so something very big. We have the same metaphor in "a great gun."

**Boomerang** (American), properly a carved flat weapon used by the natives in Australia, which, when thrown, returns to the thrower. In American journalism the word is frequently used to indicate some evil measure, or act, or falsehood, which, like

a curse, has "come home to roost," or recoiled on the head of its author. The title, "A Bourbon *Boomerang*," in an American newspaper, means that the Democrats have been injured by some scheme they had formed against the Republicans.

**Boomeranging** (Australian), hitting or killing with a boomerang. A slang participle, coined from the native word boomerang.

War shouts and universal *boomeranging*.

—*J. P. Stephens: A Picaninny.*

**Booming** (Australian), large, astonishing. For derivation *vide* **BOOMER**.

Look at that *booming* guana! He has been feeding sumptuously on the carrion. He is watching us with his "glittering eye," his head up, his vicious tongue darting out now and then like a serpent's fangs.—*A. C. Grant.*

**Boom-ja-lang** (American), a mysterious slang word, which seems to mean the same as the Spanish *funcion*, business, or what is going on.

"Twas right in the middle of the *boom-ja-lang*,

All on a summer day.  
Rip Sam! set her up again;  
Set her up again! set her up again.  
We're all of the Choctaw tribe.

—*Song, 1860.*

**Boom-passenger** (nautical), a convict on board ship. Derived from the circumstance that prisoners on board convict ships were chained to, or were made

to crawl along, or stand on the booms for exercise or punishment (Hotten).

**Boonder, boulder** (American), a scrubbing-brush. (New York), Dutch, *boender*, a brush. "A rubber, a rubbing-brush. *Boenen* to rub with a brush," implying diligence. Hence the Americanism to *bone it*, to *bone into it*, to apply one's self, to scrub away hard.

**Boost, to** (American), to push up. Generally used in the sense of giving one a lift; "give me a *boost*," as one boy when climbing a tree says to another.

The bull was actually tearing up the earth and *boosting* up the sand like a whirlwind.—*Mark Twain: Roughing It*.

**Booth** (thieves), a house; to "heave a *booth*," to rob a house.

**Booth - burster, barn - stormer** (theatrical), a loud actor, of the good old-fashioned "horse-dung and sawdust" type. The late T. B. Chatterton used to term it "gut acting."

**Booting** (military), punishment inflicted by the men with a surcingle or strap.

**Boot joe** (military), musketry drill.

**Boot-leg plan** (American), by evasion or trickery, in reference to the saying that "the *boot* is on the other leg," *i.e.*, not as

one would naturally understand an assertion.

There is as much whisky consumed in Iowa now as there was before, but less beer, throughout the State "for medical purposes only," and on the *boot-leg plan*, and saloons run openly in the larger towns in defiance of the laws.—*Omaha Herald*.

**Boots** (common), man or boy who cleans boots at an hotel. The term has ceased to be slang.

Well, I must do my best, the post of *boots* My office, which I used to think sublime, This sort of thing scarcely suits.

—*Punch*.

A "bootcatcher" was a provincialism applied to a man at an inn whose duty it was to pull off the boots of travellers.

To "buy any one's old *boots*," to marry or keep a cast-off mistress.

**Booze** (common), drink; to *booze*, to drink heavily. To be "on the *booze*," to be out on a drunken jollification, going from one public-house to another. The word is derivable from "bouse," to drink deep or carouse. In Wright's Archaic Dictionary "boose" is defined as meaning, in some of the rural districts, a cattle "trough," where kine and horses drink. In Warwickshire and Leicestershire the trough is called a "booson." Some etymologists derive this from the Hindostani *booz-a*, drink, and others from the Dutch *buyzen*, to tipple—with more reason, as the term was good English in the fourteenth century.

Thomas Harman, in his "Caveat, or Warening for Common Cursetors," 1568, has *bouse* for drink, and *to bouse* for to drink.

"I say by the Salomon I will lage it of with a gage of bene *bouse*; then cut to my nose watch. Why, hast thou any lowre in thy bonge to *bouse*?"—"I say by the mass I will wipe it off with a quart of good drink, say what you will to me. Why, hast thou any money in thy purse to drink?"

To be *booazed*, to be drunk.

**Boozer**, or **booser** (popular), one fond of potations, a drunkard.

This landlord was a *boozer* stout,  
A snuff-taker and smoker.  
—*Wolcot*: *Peter Pindar*.

**Boozing cheat** (thieves), a bottle.

**Boozing ken** (popular), a public-house.

**Boozington** (Australian prison slang), a drunken man. In England, Lushington (one who luses or drinks) is the equivalent term.

**Boozy** (popular), partially intoxicated; what the vulgar colloquialism calls the "worse for liquor," or "disguised in liquor." Formerly not slang.

**Borak** (colonial), to "poke *borak*," applied in colonial conversation to the operations of a person who pours fictitious information into the ears of a credulous listener (*Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, vol. iii. p. 476).

**Bordeaux** (pugilistic), blood, termed also "claret, Badminton."

**Borde** (old cant), a shilling. Probably originated in the term "bord," formerly a duty paid in fairs and markets for setting up tables, boards, and stalls.

**Bord you** (nautical), a phrase used to claim the next turn after one who is drinking. Used also in Norfolk by harvesters.

**Bore, to** (pugilistic), to drive an opponent on to the ropes of the ring by sheer weight.

Mollineux tried to *bore* down his opponent by main strength; Cribb determined to prevent him if possible by repeating some desperate blows on the head.  
—*Thomas Cribb*: *Pugilistica*.

(Athletics), to push an opponent out of his course.

**Boring** (turf), when a horse in running hangs upon another so as to interfere with his chance of winning, the process, whether intentional on the part of the jockey or the result of the exhaustion or bad temper of the animal, is called *boring*. It usually leads to recrimination, and occasionally to disqualification.

**Born weak** (nautical), when a vessel is feebly built, she is said to have been *born weak*.

**Bosh** (colloquial), nonsense.

This gentleman whispered to his comrade the — (I believe of Eastern derivation) the monosyllable *bosh*!—*Thackeray*: *The Adventures of Philip*.

"This well-known word is alleged," say the authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary, "to be taken from the Turkish *bosh*, signifying empty, vain, useless, &c. (Redhouse's Dictionary); but we have not been able to trace its history or first appearance in English." *Bosh* in English, and all other gypsy dialects, means a noise or sound of any kind, and is also used in all the senses of the Turkish word to denote emptiness, just as we might say "that is all talk." "Hatch your bosh," or "bosherin," stop your noise, is quite the same as stop your *bosh*. And as the English gypsy *bosh*, in fact, comes rather nearer to the English slang word than the Turkish, it seems most likely that the Romany supplied it. *Bosh* or *bāsh* in gypsy has also the meaning of music, and is applied to a violin. It was, and may yet be, a test of a "traveller's" proficiency in gypsy habits, or in the Romany language, to put to him the following verse:

"O can you rokker Romanis?  
O can you kill the *bosh*?  
O can you jā to staruben?  
O can you chin the kosh?"—

*i.e.* "O can you talk Romany?  
O can you play the fiddle?  
O can you go to prison?  
O can you cut the wood?"

The last line refers to making skewers or other articles of wood—the last resort for a gypsy when poor.

**Bosh faker** (itinerants), violinist.

*Bosh* is gypsy for a violin. A great many expressions used by the lowest class of actors are from the gypsy. Also *boshman*.

**Bosh lines** (showmen), literally violin strings, explained by quotation.

Both of these men have Marionette frames, and are Marionette performers in addition; and invariably charge more for their engagement when working the Marionettes, or "*bosh lines*," as they call them, as well.—*Tit Bits*.

**Bos-ken** (tramps), a farm-house.

**Bosky** (popular), drunk; from *bosky*, swelled, in fact, "tight."

Reminding Corinthian Tom and Jerry Hawthorn of the Oxonian and his inclination to get *bosky*.—*Punch*.

**Bosman** (tramps), a farmer. Dutch.

I've seen the swell *bosmen* buy the pills to give the people standing about, just to hear the crocus patter.—*Henry Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Boss**, an American and colonial term extensively used in England by all classes in a variety of meanings, such as master, head.

*Boss* horse-shoers now charge fifty cents extra for shoeing, to meet the demands of the journeymen.—*The Weekly Bulletin, San Francisco*.

You want a *boss* cook and a beauty, don Cabeza, eh! Well I guess I am both. What'll you give me to come to the mine and cook?—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

The station-*boss* stopped dead still and glared at me speechless.—*Mark Twain: Roughing It*.

Much philological research has been devoted to establish the

complete etymology of this word, it being held that it is connected with *boss*, a round, salient protuberance which rises, so to speak, in a superior manner above the surrounding surface; but most philologists agree in deriving it from the Dutch *baas*, master; *den baas spelen*, to play the master, to domineer, to lord it, the pronunciation of *baass* and *boss* being the same. And this origin is borne out by the circumstance that the French argot has *beausse* for the master of a house, rich citizen, man of importance, which was borrowed from Flemish vagabonds and thieves. In Norfolk *boss* is used in the sense of master, or one who can beat and overcome another. In the North of England "bossock" and "bossy" mean large, fat, with a large belly. The last word bears a close resemblance to the French *bossu*; but of course a "bossy" man and a *bossu* differ in respect of the position of the protuberance.

In America *boss* is also used as an adjective with the sense of principal, large, fine, as a *boss* lot of apples.

Many a time have I let the "boss mine," or the "boss ranch" slip through my fingers!—*F. Francis: Saddle and Mocassin.*

*Boss* is often used as a verb, with the signification to own, manage, superintend, conduct.

Our gallant chief, *bossing* the situation as usual, insisted upon the National Anthem being played at the conclusion of the sport, and subsequently called for three cheers for the Queen.—*Sporting Times.*

"Old Blivins, who *bossed* the local sheet,  
And the lawyer who worked for beer  
as a fee;  
In a maudlin state wandered down the  
street,  
Having had a dejected kind of spree."  
—*Keighley Goodchild: Waif.*

In short, with no other counteracting force than an old lady and a youth of eighteen, it is easy to see that a "freebooter" like the Captain *bossed* the show, just as he had done at the Pantheon.—*Sporting Times.*

He was *bossing* the cooking himself that evening, and at that moment was engaged in stirring some beans that he was frying in the Mexican style, bacon-fat being substituted for lard.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Mocassin.*

"*Bossed* his own shoes," managed his affairs personally.

At any rate, the elder Hegner has hitherto *bossed his own shoes*, &c.—*Truth.*

The Australian employé generally speaks of his master as the *boss*, though he seldom would address him as *boss* except when the master is really in the same station of life as himself. It is disrespectful to address a man as *boss* in Australia. The "Larrikin" is rather fond of prefacing his impertinences to passers by with, "I say, *Boss.*"

I remember a certain South Australian aide-de-camp, who was a tremendous "masher," coming over to Melbourne for "the Cup." He was wearing one of those stiff-starched four-inch collars, irreverently styled "jampots," and was saluted in Bourke Street on the "Cup night" with "I say, *Boss*, how much for the celluloid?" from an individual who was not to be crushed by a withering glance through a deliberately screwed-in eyeglass.

—*D. B. W. Sladen.*

"The Darky *Boss*: the 'trashy white,'  
a 'brudder,'

Man at the prow and woman at the  
rudder."

—*J. B. Stephens: Macaulay's New  
Zealander.*

Cabmen use the term with  
the sense of the "fare," in Paris  
*le bourgeois* (which has also all  
the other meanings of *boss*).

Who is a gentleman? On returning  
from the Lichfield Coursing Meeting the  
other evening, one of the runners with the  
telegraph messages from the ground to the  
Lichfield telegraph office was given a ride  
home, and when nearing Lichfield it was  
discovered that some one was seated in  
front by the side of the coachman. The  
*boss* wanting to know who it was, asked  
the boy what gentleman that was riding  
by the side of the driver, and the reply  
was as follows, "He's no gentleman, sir,  
he's only a policeman."—*Bird o' Free-  
dom.*

"*Boss* of the shanty," master,  
manager of the place.

The young man who lives not far from  
Burdett Road, who sports a P. and O.  
cap, and wore a C. medal at the Poplar  
early closing concert, should have strutted  
about so. Was he looking for the fair  
young lady, or did he fancy himself "*boss*  
of the shanty."—*Toby.*

*Boss* of the show, manager of  
a theatre, music-hall, circus, or  
a man who gives an entertain-  
ment.

Miss Leonora Bradley, well known in  
America, will open shortly in London, at  
a West End theatre, with a new play  
called "Jess," written by the authors of  
"My Sweetheart." Eugène C. Stafford  
will be *boss* of this show, of which report  
speaks highly.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Popular), to *boss* anything,  
to make a mess of it, to spoil it.

**Bossaroo**, used by J. B. Stephens,  
the Australian comic poet, as an  
abbreviation of "Boss Kanga-  
aroo.

Ringed by the fathers of the tribe,  
Surrounded, yet alone,  
The *Bossaroo* superbly posed  
Upon a granite throne,  
A very old "old man," who had  
Four generations known.

—*J. B. Stephens: Marsupial Bill.*

**Bossers** (common), spectacles;  
because (specially in the case  
of short-sighted persons) they  
make one look "boss-eyed" or  
squinting, or from the studs on  
horses' blinkers.

**Boston** (American), an expres-  
sion which owes much of its  
meaning to the tone and accent  
with which it is uttered. Some-  
times it is *Bosting*, the nasal  
Yankee form of the word. It  
is meant to satirise provincial  
vanity, and the peculiar form  
of priggishness which is de-  
clared by envious New Yorkers  
and others to be characteristic  
of "the hub of the universe."  
The city of Boston unquestion-  
ably is, as regards literary cul-  
ture, far in advance of any city  
in America, a fact of which its  
indwellers are by no means  
ignorant.

**Boston culchaw** (American). It  
is declared by the dwellers in  
the other (doubtless envious)  
cities of America that the in-  
habitants of Boston are so proud  
of their "culture," that how-  
ever excited or unruly they may

become, any person can at once call them to order by referring to it. In a letter from the Hub to the *Chicago Tribune* there is a detailed and apparently perfectly truthful narrative of two "ladies," or at least "women of wealth," who began to quarrel furiously in a shop over a counter for a shilling handkerchief. The bystanders, and finally all the people in the place, were soon in a furious row, when a tall, dignified man, observing that there was a stranger present, restored quiet as by a miracle. All that he did was to utter in an absent-minded way, "*Boston culchaw—ahem!*" There was a sudden silence—a marked sensation, as if an electric current had in a second struck every heart—and the ladies, forgetting the handkerchief, at once retreated. It is said that the police experience no difficulty in stopping dog-fights, "plug-masses," or rows in the lowest taverns; they have but to cry, "Is *this* æsthetic? Is *this* becoming *Boston*?" Happy the city whose detractors can find in it no worse subject of ridicule than its devotion to culture.

**Botany Bay** (Oxford), a name for Worcester College, Oxford, given in reference to the situation of the building, which is at some distance from the centre of the town.

(Prison slang), penal servitude generally, but going out of use,

as transportation, which began in 1787, ceased in 1867. *Botany Bay* (now known as New South Wales) first received convicts in 1787.

**Botch** (old), a nickname for a tailor. From to *botch*, to patch up clumsily.

**Bottle** (sporting), it turned out no *bottle*, did not turn out well, failed. (Popular), *bottle-headed*, stupid.

**Bottle-arsed** (printers), type that is thickened at the bottom or feet is thus described. This circumstance arises from the fact of it being worn by continual impression, and sometimes hastened by improper "planing" down or levelling, preparatory to laying the form on for printing.

**Bottle-holder** (pugilistic), one of the seconds attending a prize fight in the ring, who takes charge of the water bottle and holds the combatant on his knees between the rounds, whilst the other sponges and otherwise attends to him.

Lord Palmerston was so nicknamed after a speech he made when Foreign Secretary.

The noble Lord told the deputation that the past crisis was one which required on the part of the British Government much generalship and judgment, and that a good deal of judicious *bottle-holding* was obliged to be brought into play. The phrase *bottle-holding*, borrowed from the prize-

ring, offended a good many persons.—  
*Justin M'Carthy: A History of Our Own Times.*

**Bottle of spruce** (rhyming slang),  
a deuce, slang for twopence.

**Bottling** (theatrical), the same as  
applies to hobbing.

**Bottom** (common), spirit placed  
in a glass before water is poured  
in.

(Up country Australian), the  
scrubby, swampy ground in the  
*bottom* of a depression or valley.  
Mostly used in compounds such  
as ti-tree (tea-tree) *bottom*.

It led

Into a forest track which oft  
Was blocked by tea-tree *bottom* soft  
Or fallen trunk, compelling them  
To make detours, and thrice a stem  
Some inches through must needs be  
topped

On pain of being wholly stopped.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: A Summer  
Christmas.*

*Bottom-growths* is good Eng-  
lish for grass growing on low  
lands.

(American), "soda and dark  
*bottom*," soda and brown brandy.

**Bottom dollar** (American), last  
dollar.

We'll go our *bottom* dollar.—*Sporting  
Times.*

**Botts** (popular), the colic. Pro-  
perly small worms in the rec-  
tum of a horse.

**Botty** (popular), conceited. (Nur-  
sery), a contraction for an inf-  
ant's posterior. The French  
equivalent is *tutu*.

**Boughs, up in the** (old), in a  
passion. ]

**Bounce** (common), cherry-brandv.  
(Popular and thieves), a bully or  
swell; a "rank *bounce*," a great  
swell. To *bounce*, to swindle,  
to cheat by false representa-  
tions.

You will get no cheque or anything else  
out of us, so you had better travel down  
to Dover under the seat; and if you can't  
*bounce* the "Johnnies" on the boat, you'll  
have to swim from Dover to Calais.—  
*Sporting Times.*

(American), *bounced*, dis-  
missed, turned out; "given the  
G. B.," i.e., grand *bounce*, to  
be turned out with great in-  
dignity.

**Bouncer** (popular), a swindler, a  
person who steals whilst barg-  
aining with a tradesman, a  
large, stout man or woman.

(Prison), a male companion  
of a prostitute, who lives on  
her gains, and who, by in-  
timidation and threats, extorts  
money from men whom she en-  
tices.

(Naval), a gun that kicks vio-  
lently when fired.

**Bouncing cheat** (old cant), a bottle,  
probably from the noise made  
when opening it and drawing  
the cork, or a corruption of  
*boozing-cheat*.

**Bounder** (university), a student  
whose manners are despised by  
the *soi-disant élite*, or who is



beyond the boundary of good fellowship; also a dog-cart.

(Society), a swell, a stylish fellow, but of a very vulgar type.

I said something one day about my own attire, and she remarked that if I ordered the particular hat I desired I should be taken for a *bounder*; and when I asked what that meant, she said, "Oh, a toff, you know." Feeling that my ignorance had better be displayed no further, I departed by the next train.—*St. James's Gazette: Culture of the Misses.*

A *bounder* comes above the sunset hill,  
 Who'll come and make his stay;  
 For he's the snipe with writs who is possest,  
 No human force can chase that dun  
 away.

He is the boss! and in possession still.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

Also a four-wheeled cab,  
 otherwise known as a "growler."

**Bound to be had** (popular), destined to be outwitted or cheated.

Sold again! What a shame! it is really too bad,

The way that I'm treated is certainly sad,  
 'Tis my phiz that they quiz like my mother  
 and dad,

So wherever I go I am *bound to be had.*

—*F. Caughan: Ballad.*

**Boung, bong, or bung** (old cant), a purse, and also for a pickpocket. A corruption of the English *bouquet*, wallet.

**Boung nipper** (old), a pickpocket, or, as they were then called, "cut-purses."

**Bounty jumper** (American), a soldier who deserts to enlist into another regiment for the sake of the bounty.

*Manager of Caledonian Sports*—"In what line are you a contestant?" *Applicant*—"I am a jumper." "Ah, you have made a record?" "I made a pretty fair one during the war, I jumped the *bounty* five or six times.—*Philadelphia Call.*

**Bourbon democrats** (American), according to their Republican opponents, the Democrats, especially those of the South, are like the Bourbons, because they have "forgotten nothing, and learned nothing," since the war.

**Bouse, or booze out** (naval), a good *bouse out* is a good feed, a "tightener."

**Bousing-ken** (old cant), tavern, ale-house, modernised into "boozing-ken."

"And byng to rome vyle, to nyp a bong; so shall we haue lowre for the *bousing-ken.*"—*Harman: A Caveat.*

*i.e.*, "And let us away to London, to cut a purse; so we shall have money for the ale-house."

Forting thinks the term is a gypsy corruption of the Hindostani *booz*, drink, and *khana*, house. *Bousin*, or *bousingot*, in the slang of French sailors, is a drinking place or "lush-crib," from the Dutch *buyzen*, to tipple.

**Bovine heart** (medical), not the heart of an ox, but a human heart, which, owing to disease of one set of valves, has become so much enlarged as to equal in size that of an ox.

**Bow-catcher** (popular), a corruption of *beau-catcher*, a small

curl which formerly was worn twisted on the temples. French "accroche-cœurs" (*rouflaquettes* in the case of prostitutes' bul-  
lies), and American "spit-curls."

**Bowery boy** (American, specially New York), for many years the rough or rowdy of New York was called the *Bowery boy*, from a street, the Bowery (Dutch *Bouwerie*), which he was supposed to peculiarly affect.

When I first knew it both the old Bowery Theatre and the old *Bowery boy* were in their glory. It was about that time that Thackeray, taking some notes in Gotham, had an encounter with the *Bowery boy* that seems to have slipped into history. The caustic satirist had heard of the *Bowery boy*, as the story goes, and went to see him on his native heath. He found him leaning on a fire hydrant, and accosted him with, "My friend, I want to go to Broadway." Whereupon the *Bowery boy*, drawing up his shoulders and taking another chew on his cigar, "Well, why the — don't yer go, then?"—*Chicago Tribune*.

In New York other species of roughs were termed "dead rabbits," "five pointers," and "Water-Street rats;" the roughs of Baltimore were known as "blood tubs" and "plug uglies," in Philadelphia as "shifflers" and "moyamensings," and in New Orleans as "tigers" (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Bowled** (Winchester), synonymous with "cropped," or "cropped," that is, turned in for a lesson at "standing up," when

at the end of cloister time all below senior part have to repeat eight lessons, that is, from 150 to 400 lines.

**Bowled out** (thieves), convicted; a metaphor taken from cricket, where the batsman's innings is concluded for good when he is *bowled out*.

A man who has followed the profession of thieving for some time, when he is ultimately taken, tried, and convicted, is said to be *bowled out* at last; to *bowl out* a person in a general sense, means to detect him in the commission of any fraud or peculation, which he has hitherto practised without discovery.—*Vaux's Memoirs*.

**Bowles** (popular), shoes.

**Bowl out, to** (general), to put out of a game, to detect.

**Bowl the hoop** (rhyming slang), soup.

**Bowly, bowry** (Anglo-Indian), a well. These in India are often grand and beautiful structures, the water being reached by broad flights of stairs, with resting-places here and there.

To persons not familiar with the East, such an architectural object as a *bow-lee* may seem a strange perversion of ingenuity; but the grateful coolness of all subterranean apartments, especially when accompanied by water, and the quiet gloom of these recesses, fully compensate in the eyes of the Hindu for the more attractive magnificence of the *ghâts*. Consequently the descending flights of which we are now speaking, have often been more elaborate and expensive pieces of architecture than any of the buildings above ground found

in their vicinity.—*Fergusson: Indian and Eastern Architecture, Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Bows** (nautical), wide in the bows, having large hips and posteriors. To have a large “barge,” same meaning.

**Bowse**, or **bouse up the jib** (nautical), an old phrase, meaning to tittle. “Bowsing his tib or jib” is said of a man who has been drinking freely.

**Bowsprit** (old), the nose. The analogy is evident between the most prominent part of the face and the *bowsprit* of a vessel. More modern are the “boko,” “conk,” and “smeller.”

**Bow-wow** (old), a contemptuous term for a man born in Boston, Mass. It is possible that this meaning was in the first place derived from *bow-wow*, a servile personal attendant.

**Box** (common), to be in the wrong *box*, to be mistaken. The expression is old, and has passed into the language.

“Sir,” quoth I, “if you will hear how St. Augustine expounded to that place, you shall perceive that you are in a *wrong box*.”—*Ridley*, 1554.

(Thieves), cell.

In a *box* of the stone jug I was born,  
Of a hempen widow the kid forlorn,  
Fake away!

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

To *box* (Australian station slang), to join, or mix.

It now was time to mark the lambs,  
And make young ewes distinct from rams.

While he the overseer would come  
With full hands from the station home,  
From which they'd start at break of day,  
And do the marking in a day;

And still he cautioned each to heed,  
And look out as he did proceed.

“Now, mind yourselves, for if you *box*,  
You'll play the mischief with the flocks.”

—*Dugald Ferguson, N.Z.: The Lambs,*  
in “*Castle Joy and other Poems.*”

**Boxed in** (thieves), explained by quotation.

When there were three in a job there would always be one outside to look out, not only for any person coming along, but for lights in the windows, showing that somebody had been disturbed, in which case it was easy for him to whistle a warning to his pals to clear out. But the single-handed man lacked these various advantages. It was neck or nothing with him when he was once *boxed in* (when he entered a house), and a revolver was his best safeguard.—*J. Greenwood: A Converted Burglar.*

**Box Harry**, to (commercial travellers), to go without dinner for want of the money to procure it, or having dinner and tea at one meal to save expense. Formerly, it is said, truants confined at school, without fire, fought or boxed a figure nicknamed *Harry* (probably the devil), which hung in their room, to keep themselves warm. That may be the origin of the phrase. In Lincolnshire, to *box Harry* is to be careful after being extravagant. To *box* the devil on account of one's poverty strongly reminds one of the French “tirer le diable par la queue,” to be “hard up.”

**Box hat** (common), a silk hat, termed also a "chimney-pot."

**Box of dominoes** (popular), the mouth.

**Box the Jesuit, to** (old), a term to express a secret vice.

**Box-wallah** (Anglo-Indian), a hybrid Hindu word, from *bakas*, or the English box, and *wala*, a pronominal termination. A *box-wallah* is a small pedlar, who sells cheap wares, and who corresponds closely to many of his cousins, the peddling gypsies of England.

**Boy** (society), champagne, probably derived from the term "lively *boy*," which is often applied to a young man brimming over with animal spirits.

To be let, cheap, in the Royal Exchange, a small, well-fitted office, with use of *boy*. Suitable for stockbroker or solicitor.—X., care of Leathwait & Simmons, advertising agents, 1 Pope's Head Alley, E.C. X. can send us particulars at once. Pommery 74, extra sec., is our favourite kind of *boy*, but there aren't many brands that we aren't equal to tackling at this establishment.—*Sporting Times*.

(Popular), a hump on a man's back. A hunch, or hump back man is sometimes spoken of as if he were two persons—"him and his *boy*."

(Anglo-Indian and pidgin), throughout the East personal servants of any age are called *boys*. The authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary observe that similar uses of the word are to

be found in the Vulgate, also in the Arabic, and German literature, while Shakspeare makes Fluelen say—

"Kill the *boys* and the luggage! 'tis expressly against the laws of arms!"

In pidgin-English a servant is *boy*, whilst *boy* in the ordinary sense is "one small *boy*." In Tonkin the word is used by the French with a like signification.

**Boycott, to** (general), a now generally accepted term, used with the signification of to send to Coventry, to stand aloof. The French equivalent is "mettre en quarantaine."

"Why, Mabel, dear, I have not seen you for the last ten days: surely you don't mean to *boycott* Regent Street?"

"I don't want to *boycott* Regent Street, but they may want to *Endacott* me."—*Sporting Times*.

From Captain Boycott, an Irish landlord, who lay under a kind of excommunication, all labourers being forbidden to work for him under penalty of some fearful punishment.

**Boys** (turf), the crowd of "rampers," "brief snatchers," "weshers," "magsmen," "lumberers," and other rogues who flourish on every racecourse.

I should think that there is hardly a bookmaker in Tattersall's, or even one of the ready-money fraternity, who would not willingly subscribe to a fund for the laudable purpose of cleansing the rings from those foul abominations, those criminal scoundrels known as the *boys*. These vermin rob the public annually of thousands

of pounds, and divert from the pockets of the bookmakers a perfect river of gold.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

The *boys* is also a designation occasionally applied to the ring. "He is not on terms with the *boys*," means that the person alluded to has lost more money than he can pay, and does not venture within hail of the book-makers.

**Brace, to** (American thieves), to get credit by swagger. To *brace* it through, to do a thing by sheer impudence.

**Bracelets** (police), handcuffs. Its equivalent is used in French slang.

"You'd better slip the *bracelets* on him, Jim." The fellow on my left produced a pair of handcuffs.—*Miss Braddon: Robert Ainsleigh.*

"Ah, but I do!" exclaimed the detective, suddenly seizing the trembling wretch. "Come, let's slip the *bracelets* on."—*G. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds.*

**Brace of shakes, in a** (popular), in a moment.

**Brace up, to** (thieves), to pawn stolen goods. Hotten so defines it, but Vaux says: "To dispose of stolen goods by pledging them for the utmost you can get at a pawnbroker's is termed 'bracing them up.'"

**Bracket-faced** (old), of displeasing features, hard-visaged or ugly.

**Bracket-mug** (popular), a very ugly face, *mug* being slang for face.

**Brads** (thieves), halfpence, money. Hotten says, *brads*, money; Vaux, "*Brads* are halfpence, also money in general." Properly *brads* are a kind of nails used by cobblers.

"Get anything?"

"Get anything? Not a *brad*, s'welp my never. The old bloke vhas a sittin' up a sharpenin' his scissors."

"But you must a' got something?"

"Vhell, yes—I vhas lucky to get out without bein' made a sheeny myself."—*Sporting Times.*

**Brag** (thieves), a money-lender at exorbitant interest, a Jew.

**Brain-pan** (medical), the skull-cap, the calvaria, also the skull itself. (Common), the head, called also "nob, nut, knowledge-box, canister, chump."

**Bramble**, a Kentish term for a lawyer.

**Bramble-gelder.** In Suffolk a derisive appellation for an agriculturist (Hotten).

**Bran** (popular), bread. French soldiery call it *boule de son*.

He purchased . . . a half-quartern loaf, or, as he himself expressed it, a fourpenny *bran*.—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Branded ticket** (nautical), a discharge given to an infamous man, on which his character is given, and the reason he is turned out of [the service (Admiral Smyth).

**Brandy coatee, brandy** (Anglo-Indian), a cloak, a coat for the rain.

Barani-kurti seems to be a kind of hybrid shaped by the English word "coat," though *kurti* and *kurta* are true Persian words for various forms of jacket and tunic.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Brandy-faced** (popular), red faced. Is generally said of one who is in the habit of drinking spirits in excess.

**Brandy pawnee** (Anglo-Indian and English gypsy), brandy and water. From *pānī*, Hindu and Romany, for water. In England "parny" is a common slang word for water.

I'm sorry to see you, gentlemen, drinking *brandy pawnee*. It plays the deuce with our young men in India.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes*.

**Bran-mash** (army), bread broken up and soaked in coffee or tea at breakfast, or the evening meal, which consists of dry bread only, as the regular ration, men in funds adding red herrings, eggs, and other savoury condiments according to choice. See FLOATING BATTERIES.

**Brass** (colloquial), impudence, "cheek," from the immovable hard-set countenance of a bold, impudent person, the *front d'airain* of the French expression abbreviated into *avoir le front de . . .*, to have the audacity.

She in her defence made him appear such a rogue upon record, that the Chief

Justice wondered he had the *brass* to appear in a Court of Justice.—*North: Examen*.

It is said of an impudent person that his face has been "rubbed with a *brass* candlestick," or that he is as "bold as *brass*."

"He died damned hard, and as bold as *brass*," an expression commonly used among the vulgar after returning from an execution.—*George Parker: Dictionary of Cant*.

(Popular), money generally.

But my *brass* all went to  
Old Nick, and the rent too,  
For I backed Sorrento—  
No Sunday dinner.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

"It's no good being proper in this world," said the first housemaid. "*Brass* can do better than the gold what has stood the fire," said the second.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Brass bound and copper fastened** (nautical), a term applied to a midshipman when in uniform.

**Brasser** (Blue Coat School), a bully.

**Brass knocker**, a phrase used among professional beggars and tramps to signify the broken victuals, which they unwillingly receive instead of money, and commonly throw away on the roadside as soon as they are out of sight of the donors.

**Brassy** (popular), impudent.

No, Mister Gattle, Betty was too *brassy*,  
We never keep a servant that is saucy.

—*Wolcot: Peter Pindar*.

**Brazen-faced** (common), impudent, shameless. See BRASS.

**Bread, or hard tack** (nautical), biscuit. *Bread* being termed "soft tack."

**Bread-and-butter fashion** (prostitutes), that is, one (slice) upon another. It was said of two persons caught in the act that "they were lying bread-and-butter fashion."

**Bread-and-butter warehouse** (old cant), Ranelagh Gardens was so called. See BREAD-AND-BUTTER FASHION.

**Bread and meat** (military), the commissariat.

**Bread bags** (army), those connected with the victualling department. Formerly termed "muckers;" French soldiers call them *riz-pain-sel*.

**Bread barge** (nautical), the tray in which biscuit is handed round.

**Bread-basket** (popular), the stomach.

... The point of a sharp instrument driven right through, close to my knees, with the exclamation, "What do you think of that now in a policeman's *bread-basket*?"—*C. Kingsley: Alton Locke*.

When you can't fill the *bread-basket*, shut it: go to sleep.—*Reade: Never too late to Mend*.

**Bread-picker** (Winchester), a nominal office, excusing the holder from fagging.

**Bread-room** (nautical), an old term for stomach.

The waiter returned with a quarter of brandy, which Crowe . . . started into his *bread-room* at one cant.—*Smollett: L. Greaves*.

**Bread-room jack** (nautical), purser's steward help.

**Break** (prison), a collection made in aid of one awaiting trial or recently discharged. Literally, pause in street performance when the hat goes round.

The mob got me up a *break* (collection), and I got between five or six foont (sovereigns).—*Rev. J. Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Break or crack one's egg**, to (cricketers), to make one's first run, thus avoiding the "duck's egg."

**Breaking the balls** (billiards), commencing the game.

**Breaking up of the spell**, the (thieves), explained by quotation. *Vide SPELL*.

*The breaking up of the spell* is the nightly termination of the performance at the Theatre Royal, which is regularly attended by pickpockets of the lower order, who exercise their vocation about the doors and avenues leading thereto, until the house is emptied and the crowd dispersed.—*Vaux's Memoirs*.

**Break o' day drum**, a tavern which is open all night.

**Break out all over** (American), a common slang phrase, borrowed from the medical vocabulary. Thus if a man were in a great

rage, it might be said that his wrath broke out all over him, or that he smiled from his feet to his eyes. In the following anecdote it is applied to an excessive development of piety.

“‘Get down the Bible, we're going to have family prayer.’ ‘Why! are you going to have family prayer before you have religion?’ she asked. Grigger said he wanted it and the minister said if he'd do before he got it as he thought he'd do after he got it he'd have it. Well, Grigger could not get the idea into his head. But Grigger stuck to it, and in a few weeks Grigger was the finest case of religion I ever saw. *It broke out all over him.*”

**Break shins, to** (common), to borrow money. The French slang equivalent is “*donner un coup de pied dans les jambes.*”

**Break the molasses jug, to** (American), to make a mistake and come to grief.

Right, dar's whar he *broke his merlasses jug.*—*Uncle Remus.*

**Break the neck of anything, to** (common), a phrase signifying that the greater portion of any task has been accomplished.

**Breaky - leg** (popular), strong drink. The French slang says of a man who has had too much drink that he has “*une jambe de vin.*” (Thieves), a shilling, from the expression “to break shins,” which see.

**Breast fleet** (old slang), Roman Catholics were once known by this name. So called from the

practice of making the sign of the cross on their breasts.

**Breeched** (common), to be well off. The French say of a bankrupt that he is unbreeched, *déculotté.*

(Schoolboys), to be *breeched*, to be flogged.

**Breeches** (colloquial), a wife who usurps her husband's prerogative is said to “wear the *breeches.*” French, “porter la culotte.”

**Breeze** (common), a quarrel or disturbance—generally “to kick up a *breeze.*”

**Breezy** (American), cool.

Not since the original enemy of mankind stood up and rebuked sin have we seen such an exhibition of what might be called *breezy* chic (pronounced in this instance cheek) as that exhibited by Carter Harrison, Mayor of Chicago, in coming to New York to give us points on municipal government.—*New York World.*

**Brekker** (Oxford), breakfast. See FOOTER.

**Brevet-wife** (common), an unmarried woman, who is represented as married to the man with whom she cohabits.

**Brew, to** (Marlborough), to have some refreshment in the afternoon at about four o'clock.

**Brewer's horse**, old cant name for a drunkard. A vulgar stanza on this subject was popular about a hundred years ago or more:—



"I wish I were a *brewer's horse*  
 But six months of the year,  
 I'd take my fill of honest stuff,  
 And drink up all the beer.  
 When that was done, what should I do  
 My thirst to satisfy,  
 I'd eat up all the corks and bungs,  
 Give up the ghost and die."

**Brian o' Linn** (rhyming slang),  
 gin.

**Brick** (colloquial), a term of commendation applied to a particularly honest, good, jolly, brave, or spirited person.

Steerforth approved of him highly, and told us he was a *brick*.—*Dickens: David Copperfield*.

It is used sometimes with an adjective prefixed, as an "out-and-out *brick*," a "regular *brick*."

Another familiar word in the university slang is a "regular *brick*," that is, a jolly good fellow, and how the simile is logically deduced is amusing enough. A *brick* is "deep red," so a "deep read" man is a *brick*; a deep read man is in university phrase a "good man;" a good man is a jolly fellow with non-reading men, *ergo* a jolly fellow is a *brick*.—*Hallberger's Illustrated Magazine*.

It is evident that the figurative sense of the word is in allusion to the shape of a *brick*. In English and other languages straightforwardness is always identified with squareness. "He answered you as square as a *brick*." "He did it on the square."

**Brickfielder** or **brickduster** (Australian), a dust storm, a kind of whirlwind frequent in Australia during the summer time.

Identified by Lieut.-Col Munday with the "southerly burster," so called from the brickdusty feel of the grit with which the wind charges itself as it rolls up the storm.

In October 1848, as I find by my diary, I witnessed a fine instance of a nocturnal *brickfielder*. Awakened by the roaring of the wind I arose and looked out. It was bright moonlight, or it would have been bright but for the clouds of dust, which, impelled by a perfect hurricane, curled up from the earth and absolutely muffled the fair face of the planet. Pulverised specimens of every kind and colour of soil within two miles of Sydney, flew past the house high over the chimney tops in lurid whirlwinds, now white, now red. It had all the appearance of an American prairie fire, barring the fire. . . .

One of the greatest miseries of the "southerly burster" is that (welcome to all animated nature as are its cooling airs) its first symptoms are the signal for a general rush of housemaids to shut hermetically every aperture of the dwelling. The thermometer in the drawing-room and one's own melting mood announce some 86° of heat, while the gale driving so refreshingly past your windows is probably 30° lower; but if you have any regard for sight and respiration, for carpets, chintz, books, and other furniture, you must religiously shut up shop until the chartered libertine, having scavenged the streets of every particle of dust, has moderated its wrath. Even then, however well fitted may be the doors and windows, the volatile atoms will find their way everywhere, to the utter disturbance of household and personal comfort.—*Lieut.-Col. Munday: Our Antipodes*.

The climate of Queensland is very hot. In summer the heat is Indian; and it is a moist, that is to say, an exhausting heat, whereas the summer temperature in other parts of Australia is comparatively dry; drier in South Australia and Victoria than in New South Wales, but when *brickfielders* or dust storms are not blowing, endurable.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Brick in the hat** (common), intoxicated, top-heavy. The derivation is obvious.

**Bricklayer's clerk** (nautical), a contemptuous expression for lubberly people pretending to having seen better days, but who were forced to betake themselves to sea life.

**Bridge** (card-sharpers), a cheating trick at cards, by which any particular card is cut by previously curving it. French card-sharpers term it "faire le pont."

I've found out the way that Yankee fellow does the king. It's not the common *bridge* that everybody knows.—*Charles Lever: Davenport Dunn.*

To *bridge* a person or throw him over the *bridge*, is, in a general sense, to deceive him by betraying the confidence he has reposed in you. In the game the confederates so play into each other's hands that the victim must inevitably be "thrown over the *bridge*."

**Bridle-cull** (old cant), a highway-man.

A booty of £10 looks as great in the eye of a *bridle-cull*, and gives as much real happiness to his fancy, as that of as many thousands to the statesman.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild.*

**Brief** (prison), a note or letter.

"Just look what I've had sent me. An order to go over the Bank of England." . . .

"Can't you alter the *brief*, to admit three?"

"Oh lor, no; wouldn't try it on; might queer the pitch before starting."—*Bird o' Freedom.*

*Brief* is a survival of an old English term of common ecclesiastical use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In French *brief*, both from the Latin *brevis*. See rubric in the Prayer-book. Here *briefs*, citations, and excommunications are to be read. *Briefs* were circular letters issued by authority asking for charitable collections in all churches.

(Thieves), a ticket, pocket-book, pawnbroker's duplicate.

So I claimed (stole) them, . . . and guyed (ran) to the rattler (railway), and took a *brief* to London Bridge.—*Rev. J. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

"Take it from me," exclaimed the gentleman with the pink may twined round his hat, as he gracefully reclined on the seat of a third-class carriage in the Ascot "special," and leisurely sucked a piece of fried fish, "these 'ere six and sixpenny 'rattlers' may be all right in their way, but give me a thirty-two-blow weekly *brief*! They goes at twice the bloomin' speed, an' you meets a different class o' company!"—*Bird o' Freedom.*

I have snatched at *briefs*, the property of others,

But the punishment was too much to sustain.

Oh send your boy a pound, thou best of mothers;

I'll refund it when the Gee-gees run again.

—*When the Gee-gees Run Again.*

**Briefs** (cardsharper's), cards constructed on a cheating principle. Like the German *Briefe*, which Baron Heinecken says was the name given to the cards manufactured at Ulm. *Brief* is also the synonym for a card in German slang, and *briefen* means to play at cards.

**Brief snatchers** (thieves), pick-pockets who devote their attentions to pocket-books on race courses.

**Brigh** (thieves), pocket. Probably from breeches, but closer in form to the Gaelic *brìgis*, whence the French *braies*, breeches, and *brayette* or *braguette*, flap of breeches, which formed a convenient receptacle for small articles when pockets had not superseded the pouch.

**Bright** (freemasons), an adjective applied to well-instructed masons.

**Bright in the eye** (popular), a mild state of intoxication.

**Brim** (old cant), a woman; (common), a violent and irascible woman. *Brim*, a very old English word for angry or enraged, is supposed to be from the raging or roar of the sea. Anglo-Saxon *brim*, surf, surge on the shore.

She raved, she abused me, and splenetic was;

She's a vixen, she's a *brim*, zounds! she's all that is bad.

—*Whim of the Day*, 1799.

**Brimstone** (old cant), an abandoned rogue, or prostitute; (common), a violent, irascible woman.

The *brimstone* swore I beat her husband, and so I paid for meddling.—*Johnston: Chrysal*.

Confound the woman . . . was there ever such an aggravating *brimstone*!—*J. Greenwood: Almost Lost*.

**Bringing down the house** (theatrical and journalistic), eliciting thunders of applause.

**Bring on your bears!** (American), a common form of challenge. It is said that a small boy in the Far West, who lived in a place where bear-killing was a favourite amusement, was very much struck at hearing for the first time the story of Elisha read from the Bible. The next day, while in his log-cabin home, he saw approaching an old man on whose pate not a hair could be seen. He hastily took down his father's rifle and loaded it, sharpened the family bowie-knife, and roared at the ancient passer-by, "Go up, thou Bald-head!" Then looking defiantly up to heaven he cried, "Now, *bring on your bears!*" The *Chicago Tribune* (September 13, 1886) heads a defiant article to England with this exclamation.

**Briny** (popular), the sea. French slang, "la grande salée."

He delights in collaring a greenhorn, and after pouring into his willing ears tales of unutterable woe and adventures undergone on the *briny* . . .—*H. Evans: The Brighton Beach Loafer*.

**Brisket-beater** (popular), a Roman Catholic (Hotten).

**Brismelah** (Anglo-Yiddish), the ceremony of circumcision. *Be-ris*, a covenant; *beris hamiloh*, the covenant of circumcision.

The practice, however, of putting round the hat at *brismelaks* has fallen off consi-

derably. At one place I know of, where they have a annual baby every Purim, the family Mohel had become such a nuisance with his begging that at the last *brismelah* they couldn't get enough Yidden for mezooman, let alone minyan, and if it hadn't been for the potman calling from the Cat and Trumpet they'd never a been able to bring the *brismelah* off at all.—*Sporting Times*.

**Bristol milk** (old), sherry. Bristol was the chief port at which vessels from Spain carrying cargoes of this wine used to arrive—hence the name.

**Broach the claret, to** (pugilistic).

'Twas not till the tenth round his *claret*  
was *broach'd*,

But a pelt in the smeller, too pretty  
to shun,

If the lad even could set it going like  
fun.

—*Tom Cribb's Memorial to Congress*.

**Broad and shallow** (popular), an epithet applied to the so-called "*Broad Church*," in contradistinction to the "High" and "Low" Churches (Hotten).

**Broad bottom.** Explained by quotation.

A coalition Government in the last century was known by the apt nickname of the *Broad Bottom*. Walpole, writing Mann in 1741, says: "The Tories declare against any further prosecution—if Tories there are, for now one hears of nothing but the *Broad Bottom*; it is the reigning cant word, and means the taking all parties and people indifferently into the Ministry."—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Broad brim** (common), originally a Quaker, thus called from the peculiar hat worn by the "friends." Now used in reference to quiet, sedate men.

A veteran correspondent, who inspired "The Druid" with many of his paragraphs, writes us that Mr. W., the breeder of Fair Alice, did not stand alone as we imagined, and that Mr. K., the owner of Priscilla Tomboy, was also a *broad brim*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Broad cooper** (brewers), a person employed by brewers to negotiate with publicans (Hotten).

**Broad faking** (card-sharpers), playing at cards, or doing the three-card trick on race-courses, &c.

**Broads** (popular and thieves), cards.

"Yes, he was a red hot 'un," quoth the Horticulturist, "and at the *broads* he was unrivalled. But he played it too thick at Brighton that week."—*Sporting Times*.

He then took another business at Walworth, and got on well while he forswore the "*infernal broads*," as he called them.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co*.

**Broadsman** (thieves), a card-sharper.

**Broady** (tailors), among East End tailors broadcloth is so called. Also a general term for cloth.

Gentlemen finding their own *broady* can be accommodated.—*A Slang Advertisement*.

"*Broady* workers are men who go round selling vile shoddy stuff under the pretence that it is excellent material, which has been got 'on the cross,' that is, 'stolen'" (Hotten).

(Thieves), *broady*, anything worth stealing.

**Brock, to** (Winchester), to bully. Literally, to badger. From *brock*, a badger.

**Brockster** (Winchester), a bully.

**Brogan** (American), coarse, strong shoes. From *brogues*, coarse shoes, which, according to Kennett, are shoes made of rough hide used by the wild Irish. Irish *brog*, a shoe.

**Broiled crow, to eat** (American). A newspaper editor who is obliged by his party, or other outside influences, to advocate principles different from those which he supported a short time before, is said to *eat broiled crow*, more commonly "to eat crow."

**Broke** (common), hard-up, reduced to one's last sou.

There was a young plunger, who smartly  
Snapped up the big books about Martley;  
Then came the *fiasco*,

And Ben cried "Carrasco!  
I'm bested, *broke*, busted—or partly!"  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Broke her leg** (American), said of an unmarried woman who has had a child. In French theatrical slang, a lady who is *enceinte* "ar mal au genou," the result of a *faux-pas*.

**Broken.** When a corporal at the R. M. Academy is reduced for some irregularity or misconduct he is said to be *broken*.

**Broken knees** (popular), a woman who has made a slip, or been

seduced, is said to have *broken knees*. The Germans say she has "lost a shoe." The analogy existing in each language between the phrase and the language of the stable is curious.

**Brolly** (Winchester), a corruption of umbrella. The term is used also at the universities.

I saw great Goshen stamping on the pave,  
I saw that famous man his *brolly* wave;  
I heard a naughty word, and I am free  
To own that that same word began with D.  
—*Funny Folks*.

**Broncho** (American), wild or savage, unruly. A Western term derived from the *broncho* or mustang, an unruly brute.

"Oh! I don't know. He'd been singing the music to 'em" (imitating them). "Sam's too *broncho*."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Broom it, to** (old slang), to run away.

**Broomstick** (common), to be married "over the *broomstick*," to live as man and wife without being married.

Young ladies had fain single women remain,  
And unwedded dames to the last crack of doom stick,  
Ere marry by taking a jump o'er a *broomstick*.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

An allusion to a marriage ceremony performed by both parties jumping over a broomstick.

**Broomsticks** (thieves), insolvent bail. Called also "queer-bail," "straw bail," "Jew bail," &c.

“Queer-bail are persons of no repute, hired to bail a prisoner in anyailable case. These men are to be had in London for a trifling sum, and are called *broomsticks*” (Vaux’s Glossary).

**Brosh** (American), brittle. Dutch, *brós*, frail, brittle. A New York word.

**Brother-chip** (popular), originally fellow-carpenter. Almost general now as brother tradesman of any kind.

**Brother smut** (popular), used in the phrase “ditto *brother smut*,” equivalent to *tu quoque*. Sometimes “ditto smut” when addressed to a woman.

**Brother starling** (old slang). “He’s a *brother starling* of mine,” *i.e.* he cohabits with the same mistress and shares her favours.

**Brown** (popular), halfpenny.

My father he is on the seas, my mother’s  
dead and gone,  
And I am here, on this here pier, to roam  
the world alone;  
I have not had, this live-long day, one  
drop to cheer my heart,  
Nor *brown* to buy a bit of bread with, let  
alone a tart.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

How much ha’ we took to-day, Jim?  
Why, not a single *brown*,  
And our show was one o’ the best  
Once, and we rode from town to town.  
—*George R. Sims: Ballads of Babylon*.

I took Parr’s pills, which brought on  
premature old age; and here I am, as you  
sees, a wicktem to misfortune. My heart

is busting for a buster, my mag is for a mag. So throw down your *browns*, kind-hearted Christians, and be done *brown* and “no mistake.”—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn*.

(Common), to “do it *brown*,”  
to do well or completely.

What with “cabbys” and with “wires,”  
When anything transpires

To send the market either up or down,  
In aerated “Breads,”

Or “Shores,” or “Yanks,” or “Reds,”

In slang we really do it rather *brown*.

—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(Popular), to *brown*, to understand.

“I can *brown* almost any poetry,” said George, “but not *Browning*.”—*Newspaper Story*.

And when they ask me if I *brown* such language, I ne’er hear or read as to *browning*; I’m done *brown* instead.—*T. K. Symms: The Age of Betting*.

**Browns and whistlers** (thieves), explained by quotation. “*Browns and Whistlers* are bad halfpence and farthings (it is a term used by coiners)” (Vaux’s Glossary).

**Brown Bess** (common), the old Government regulation musket. Soldiers of all nations are fond of giving names of persons to their weapons. The French troopers sometimes call their sword “*Jacqueline*,” and most of the siege guns during the siege of Paris in 1870 had been nicknamed in the same manner by the sailors who manned the forts, their favourite being a very large gun called “*Joséphine*.” “To hug *brown Bess*,” to serve as a private soldier. (Rhyming slang), yes.

**Brown Bessie**, an old word for a woman of easy or uneasy virtue. Also *black Bess*.

Things proffered and easie to come by diminish themselves in reputation and price, for how full of pangs and dotage is a wayling lover, for it may bee some *brown Bessie*.—*Dore's Polydoron*, 1631.

“*Bonny black Bess*” was a very popular scandalous ballad a century ago.

**Brown bill** (old), the old weapon of the English infantry.

**Brown George** (nautical), a hard and coarse biscuit.

**Brownie** (whalers), the polar bear.

**Brown Janet** (nautical), a knapsack.

**Brown Joe** (rhyming slang), no.

**Brown papermen** (popular), explained by quotation.

But the little nick (a gambling-house) is what we call only *brown papermen*, low gambling, playing for pence, and a shilling being a great go.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Brown stone** (American), beer.

**Brown talk** (common), conversation of an exceedingly proper character.

**Brown typhus, brown titus**, and in America **brown creeturs**, an attempt at the pronunciation of bronchitis, or the names frequently given by the lower orders to that common disease. These misnomers are sometimes most amusing, as, for in-

stance, a poor woman had been told she had *myxœdema*, and informed a second medical man that her first doctor had said that she had got *Nicodemus*; but, she added, he could not cure it.

**Brownny** (thieves), a penny.

Dols. is *brownies*, as we call 'em sometimes, that's pence.—*Hamilton Airdé: Morals and Mysteries*.

**Browse, to**, to enjoy oneself, to idle about, to loll in the sun. French *faire son lézard*. The expression is much used by gentlemen cadets of the Royal Military Academy. In the United States, to eat here and there, now and then, an expression of Abraham Lincoln's.

**Bruiser** (prison), the bully who is a hanger-on of prostitutes.

The *bruiser* is the nearest approach to Dickens' hero, Bill Sykes.—*Michael Davitt: Leaves from a Prison Diary*.

(Common), a pugilist. (Pugilistic), a prize-fighter. (Popular), one fond of fighting.

C., who is known in the neighbourhood as a “great *bruiser*,” pleaded that he made a mistake, and thought Conway was molesting the woman, who he also mistook for his wife. He goes to jail for six weeks.—*Echo*.

**Brum** (Winchester), stingy, mean. Probably an abbreviation of Brummagem. (Popular and thieves), a counterfeit coin. Also Birmingham.

We have just touched for a rattling stake of sugar (large stake of money) at *Brum*.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Brumby** (Australian), a wild horse.

**Brummagem** (common), Birmingham, applied to anything vulgar or counterfeit.

Those may be *Brummagem* or Manchester manners, but they won't go down here.—*Rhoda Broughton: Cometh up as a Flower.*

Never let yourself be deceived by *Brummagem* and paste.—*Miss Thackeray: Old Kensington.*

He whipped out his *Brummagem* blade so keen,

And he made three slits in the buffalo's hide,

And all its contents, through the rents and the vents,

Come tumbling out,—and away they all hied!

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

*Brummagem* was originally spelled *Bromidgham*, and its first connection with anything spurious or sham came from the so-called Bromidgham groat, a counterfeit fourpenny piece. It was subsequently applied to a person who was neither Whig nor Tory (Halliwell).

**Brummagem buttons** (popular), counterfeit coin.

Want change for a fiver—bad silver, *Brummagem buttons*, won't do.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

**Brums** (Stock Exchange), London and North Western Railway stock.

We kneel at the feet of our "Nancys,"

We load them with "cottons" and "tapes,"

If anything tickles our fancy,

We buy them *Brums*, "Caleys," or "Apes."

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

(Popular), the inhabitants of Birmingham. From "*Brummagem.*"

The *Brums* must really look to the morals of their town a little more.—*Modern Society.*

Joe Capp is the most sensibly dressed man who goes racing. He wears a long, cool-looking alpaca surtout; but it was rough on Joe, after losing fourteen thick 'uns at Four Oaks, when a *Brum*, whom he elbowed out of the way, remarked—

"Don't think you're heverybody because you make your coat hout o' the pore bloomink slavey's Sunday skirt."—*Sporting Times.*

**Brung** (American), brought. A writer on Americanisms is slightly mistaken in saying that white men use it as a "very mild joke." It is very often a stinging insult, and the writer has seen a man in Boston very angry because he was asked in jest, "Where were you *brung* up?" The insult was in the intimation that the man was familiar with or in the habit of using such an expression.

**Brush** (popular), a house-painter.

**Brush, to have a** (old), to have sexual intercourse, when applied to women; also to run away.

**Brusher** (old slang), a bumper. "To drink a *brusher*" was to drink from a full glass. (Schools), an abbreviation of "*bum-brusher*," a schoolmaster.

**Brush up, to** (American), to humbug or flatter, to smooth, conciliate. Brushing up a flat,



“prancing,” flattering (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Brydport dagger** (old), explained by quotation.

Stab'd with a *Brydport dagger*, that is, hang'd or executed at the gallows; the best, if not the most, hemp (for the quantity of ground) growing about Brydport.—*Fuller: Dorset Worthies.*

**Bub, bubbly** (American), a term very commonly applied to a little boy. It came from Pennsylvania, where it was derived from the German *bube*, which is commonly abbreviated to *bub*.

“‘*Bub*,’ he said to a little shaver coming out of the savings-bank with a book in his hand, ‘are you saving money?’

“‘Yes, sir.’

“‘How much have you got in the bank?’

“‘Eight cents, sir. I did have thirteen, but father got in straitened financial circumstances and I had to draw five.’”

**Bub** (thieves), strong malt liquor; generally drink.

Ay, *bub* and grubby, I say,

Lots of gatter, quo’ she, are flowing.

—*W. Maginn: Vidocq’s Slang Song.*

Also a brother.

**Bubber** (American), applied to any woman (old or young) with full, well-rounded breasts, or *bubbies*, whence the term.

**Bubble-buff** (old), a bailiff.

**Bubbley jock** (popular), a turkey; a stupid, boasting person.

**Bubbling squeak** (army), hot soup. Properly, *bubble and squeak* is a dish composed of pieces of cold

boiled meat and greens, afterwards fried, which have thus first bubbled in the pot, and then hissed or squeaked in the pan.

**Bubs, bubbies** (common), a woman’s breasts. From *bub*, drink.

**Buck.** This almost obsolete word, for what the French called a *petit-maitre*, and more recently *daim* (literally *buck*), has been gradually superseded by “blood,” “dandy,” “maccaroni,” “swell,” “Bond Street lounge,” “exquisite,” “dude,” and “masher.”

(American, cards), a device for securing a good ante at poker or brag. The player whose turn it is to ante, instead of putting up money, puts up a knife, key, or any small article, saying, “I ante a *buck* worth \$5,” or whatever sum he chooses to name. If he has not won it back himself when he retires, he must redeem it from the possessor at the price named. The peculiarity of the *buck* is that whoever holds it must ante it when it comes to his turn. Whenever it is desired to bring the game to a close, a good finish is secured by agreeing to “chase the *buck* home,” *i.e.*, whoever wins it has the next deal, and consequently antes it. The game stops as soon as the *buck* has been won back by the player who originally started it.

(Cabdrivers), a sham “fare”

in a cab. A *buck* is a man who rides in a cab ostensibly as a legitimate fare, to enable the cabman to proceed to some destination to which he is not allowed to take an empty cab. Many of the semi-private thoroughfares of London are closed to empty cabs.

Mr. —, on behalf of the United Cab Proprietors' Protection Association, said it often occurred that the men who were so conveyed were *bucks*—men who rode in a cab ostensibly as legitimate fares. In reality they acted in collusion with the driver to evade the police regulations, especially with regard to theatres.—*Standard*.

(Popular), a sixpence. The word is rarely used by itself, but as in the phrase, "two and a *buck*." More frequently "two and a kick." Possibly from the gypsy *bāk* (pronounced buck), luck, as it is always asked for for luck.

(Old slang), to "run a *buck*," to poll a bad vote at an election. This phrase is of Irish origin.

(American), to *buck* is to butt against, to oppose.

Yer oughter be ershamed o' yerse'f ter persecute 'ligion in dis way. W'y how de work o' de Lawd gwine ter prosper when de white folks *bucks* ergin it dis way? I'se sorry fur yer, fur old Satan got his eye on yer, sho.—*Arkansaw Traveller*.

To rear up, to jump like a *buck*, to jump and "cavort." Applied to a peculiar leaping of Western horses. Dutch, *boken maken*, to cut capers; *bokstavast*, leap-frog.

The term is used also in South Africa and Australia.

I don't think that we have a beast About the place that *bucks* the least.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: A Summer Christmas*.

(Banking), "to *buck* an account" is to make an account balance without carrying it out properly, *i.e.*, to cook the accounts.

(Californian), in the Californian vernacular this signifies to play against the bank, as, *e.g.*, in faro, that is, to sweep the tables, or clean out or gut the croupier.

I don't like your looks at all, I'd *buck* against any bank you ran all night.—*Bret Harte: Gabriel Conroy*.

(Winchester College), "to *buck* down" is to be unhappy, whilst to "*buck* up" is to be glad.

(Anglo-Indian), to talk egotistically, to prate and chatter, to let one's tongue run loose. From the Hindu *baknā*.

And then he *bucks*, with a quiet stubborn determination that would fill an American editor or an Under Secretary of State with despair. He belongs to the twelve foot tiger school, so perhaps he can't help it.—*Ali Baba*.

**Buck-bail** (thieves), bail given by a sharper for one of his own gang.

**Buck fitch** (old), an old man of abandoned habits, an old *roué*. A "*buck* face," an injured husband, alluding to the horns.

**Buck or fight the tiger**, to (American), to gamble. Derived from the parti-coloured divisions or stripes on a gambling table.

This little oil town, on the line of the Olean, Bradford, and Warren Railroad, and partly in Pennsylvania and partly in New York, is the greatest poker-playing place in the entire northern oilfield. It is a town in which all the residents "*buck* the festive *tiger*."—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Buckeen** (Irish), a bully, an inferior sort of squire.

There were several squireens or little squires, a race of men who have succeeded to the *buckeens* described by Young and Crumpe.—*Miss Edgeworth: Absentee*.

**Bucket** (American), an anonymous letter. (Common), to "give the *bucket*," to dismiss, to dismiss from one's employ.

He were sore put about because Hester had gi'en him the *bucket*.—*Mrs. Gaskell: Sylvia's Lovers*.

(University), to *bucket* is to scoop the water instead of pulling the oar steadily and fairly through.

(Popular), to *bucket* a person, to deceive, ruin him. To kick the *bucket*, to die.

"Fine him a pot," roared one, "for talking about *kicking the bucket*. He's a nice young man to keep a cove's spirits up, and talk about a 'short life and a merry one.'"—*C. Kingsley: Alton Locke*.

Dr. Brewer gives the following explanation: "A bucket is a pulley. . . . When pigs are killed they are hung by their hind legs on a bucket . . . and oxen are hauled up by a pulley. . . . To kick the *bucket*

is to be hung on the bulk or *bucket* by the heels."

**Bucket afloat** (rhyming slang), a coat.

**Bucket-shop** (American), a *bucket* has in America several meanings, all indicating underhand or concealed dealings. The term is applied to low grogeries, and also to places which advertise as below cost flashy goods which are sold at a large profit. Low, swindling, gambling places, or lottery offices, also bear this name, and in Chicago it appears from the following extract to be borne by broker establishments where "corners" are manipulated.

The latest story out to account for the recent strength in the wheat market, is to the effect that it is the result of a combined effort to "burst the *bucket-shops*."

(Stock Exchange), the office of an outside broker of doubtful character.

A disreputable gambling case which came before the Divisional Court yesterday is noteworthy for the remarks made on "the vice of gambling in stocks and shares" by two judges. A gambler had sued a firm of *bucket-shop* keepers for profits alleged to have been made on "certain transactions," and the latter coolly pleaded the statute against wagering and gaming in defence.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**Buckhara** (American), a California name for a cattle driver. It is the Spanish *vaquero*.

**Buckhorse** (pugilistic). "A smart blow or box on the ear; derived from the name of the celebrated

“bruiser” (John Smith, alias *Buckhorse*, fought on the stage 1732-46), according to Hotten's Dictionary.

**Buckle, to** (Scottish), to marry, a vulgarism used by D'Urfey in his imitation of a Scotch song, popular in the time of Charles II., “Within a mile of Edinburgh Toun.” The phrase is still current in England among the lower classes, among whom to be “buckled” not only means to be married, but to be taken into custody.

**Buckle-beggar** (old), a man who officiated as a clergyman to perform the marriage ceremony in the Fleet Prison; also a hedge-priest, who performs the ceremony of marriage among tramps and gypsies.

**Buckled** (thieves), imprisoned. French slang, *bouclé*.

Why, I was *buckled* because I got drunk. It was a pure accident. Had I followed my usual work I should never have fallen.—*Evening News*.

**Buckler**, a collar (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Buckra yam** (West Indian). As in negro eyes “the white man,” or *buckra*, is the synonym of something superior and beyond him in the scale of being, so the word has come to mean anything good. Thus *buckra yam*, good yam; *buckra cloth*, good cloth. A “swanga *buckra*”

is a specially well-dressed white man.

**Bucks** (West Indian), the cognomen of the aboriginal inhabitants of British Guiana—the South American Indians.

**Bud** (American), a “society” word for young lady debutantes, or “come outers,” in their first season.

There's nothing so beautiful to me as a beautiful girl. I doubt if any man can better understand or be more truly in love with the dear perfectness of nature than I am. O girls, *do* appreciate girls. At my last ball the kids (youths) were tearing around . . . but even the shyest and greenest of *buds* knows that the admiration of the kid isn't worth having, it is so easy to get and as hard to get rid of.—*Madge: Letter in the New York World*.

**Budge** (thieves), a thief; especially one who sneaks into a shop and is locked in, thus getting a chance to admit an accomplice. Formerly a pickpocket. Probably from *bouget*, *budge*, *budget*, a sack, pouch, wallet. A drink.

**Budge, the sneaking** (old slang), robbing private houses of light small articles, such as coats, hats, &c.; now called “area sneak” or “hall sneak.” “*Budge clothes*,” lambs' fur formerly used for trimming the robes of Bachelors of Arts (Halliwell). Standing *budge*, a thief, scout, or spy.

**Budger** (thieves), a drunkard.

**Budgerow** (Anglo-Indian). Hindu, *bujra*. A heavy keelless barge, formerly much used by Europeans travelling on the Gangetic rivers (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

The *bujra* broad, the *bholia* trim,  
Or pinnaces that gallant swim  
With favouring breeze, or dull or slow,  
Against the heady current go.

—H. H. Wilson in *Bengal Annual*.

**Budging-ken** (thieves), a public house, the "cove of the *budging-ken*" being the landlord.

**Budmash** (Anglo-Indian), a bad, worthless fellow; a scoundrel.

Gamblers, cut-throats, *budmashes* of every description. — *Bosworth Smith: Life of Lord Lawrence*.

**Budzat** (Anglo-Indian), from the Persian *badzat*, evil race. A low fellow, a "bad lot," a black-guard.

Why the Shaitan (devil) didn't you come before, you lazy old *budzart*? — *Anglo-Indian Glossary: The Dank Bungalow*.

**Buff** (tramps), among the tramping fraternity a *buff-ball* is a dancing party, characterised by the indecency of those who attend it, the *costume de rigueur* being that of our first parents.

The most favourite entertainment at this place is known as "*buff-ball*," in which both sexes—innocent of clothing—madly join, stimulated with raw whisky and the music of a fiddle and a tin whistle. — *James Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

(Old slang), to "stand *buff*," to bear the brunt, to pay the piper; also "to boast," given as a very old word by "Batman upon Bartholome," 1582.

To *buff*, defined by Hotten as simply meaning to swear to; but the following, from the New York Slang Dictionary, gives the spirit of the word very accurately: "Buffing it home is swearing point-blank to anything, about the same as bluffing it, making a bold stand on no backing."

**Buffer** (common), a man, a fellow.

But aged, slow, with stiff limbs, tottering much,  
And lungs that lacked the bellows-mender's touch,  
Yet sprightly to the scratch both *buffer*s came.

—*Tom Cribb's Memorial to Congress*.

I'll merely observe as the water grew rougher,  
The more my poor hero continued to suffer,  
Till the sailors themselves cried in pity, Poor *buffer*!

—*Ingoldstby Legends*.

Also a merry companion with a spice of the rogue in him, the Falstaff of a century ago. *Buffer* or *buffard* is a provincialism for a foolish fellow. In Dutch, *boef* or *boefer*, means, according to the Groot Wordenboek der Engelsche en Nederduytsche Jaalen of William Sewell, "a rogue, knave, or wag," which is identical both in sound and meaning with the English word

(Popular), a dog, from the old cant word *bufe*, a dog. (Old cant), a smuggler, a rogue, a cheat; also a dog. *Buffer*-nabber, a dog-stealer. (Nautical), *buffer*, a navy term for a boatswain's mate, one of whose duties it was to administer the "cat." From the obsolete English to *buff*, to strike. It has been suggested, however, that *buffer* is of Dutch origin. Teirlinck (Woordenboek van Bargoensch) gives *baf*, a blow; *baffen*, to strike with the fist, adding "Klanknabootsend idiotisme van dagelijksch gebrink in Vlanderen."

**Buffle-headed** (popular), stupid and stolid as a buffalo or ass. Synonymous with "pig-headed," stupidly obstinate.

You know nothing, you *buffle-headed*, stupid creature.—*Wycherley: Plain Dealer*, 1677.

**Buffs** (common), the 3rd regiment of foot in the British army. From their facings.

**Buffy** (common), intoxicated.

Flexor was fine and *buffy* when he came home last night.—*Shirley Brooks: The Gordian Knot*.

**Bug** (American and English thieves), a breast-pin; *bugger*, a pickpocket, or one who makes a specialty of snatching away breast-pins, studs, &c.; *bug-hunter*, the same.

The chips, the fawneys, chatty-feeders, The *bugs*, the bouns, and well-filled readers.

—*On the Trail*.

*i.e.*, The money, the rings, spoons, Breast-pins, purses, and well-filled pocket-books.

(American and older English), *bug*, which in England is now limited to the *Cimex*, politely termed a Norfolk Howard, is in America still applied to all varieties of the *Coleoptera* and many other insects.

"Oh, Fred, what's that ticking noise? Do you think it's the death watch mamma was reading about before she put us to bed?" "Bessie, don't be a little goose. It's only a *bug*, anyhow. Maybe it's not even a *bug*—only the bed-ticking."—*Philadelphia Call*.

(Old slang), to *bug*, an old phrase in use at one time among journeymen hatters to signify the substitution of good material with inferior stuff. Bailiffs who accepted money to delay service of writs were also said "to *bug* the writ."

**Bug or bug over, to** (thieves), to deliver, give or hand over. Vaux instances: "He *bug'd* me a quid," *i.e.*, he gave me a guinea; "*bug over* the rag," *i.e.*, hand over the money.

**Bugaroch** (American thieves), pretty (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Bug blinding** (army), white-washing, a process calculated to destroy, or at least to remove the superficial traces of vermin

that are a perfect pest in the more antiquated barracks, especially in warm climates.

**Bugging** (American), taking money from a thief by a policeman. This indicates the existence of an old word "bug" for money as well as valuables. In Dutch slang, *bucht* is money.

**Buggy** (old cant), a leather bottle. It now signifies a gig or light chaise.

**Bug hunter** (thieves), a thief who plunders drunken men.

**Bug juice** (army), ginger ale. In America applied to very bad whiskey.

**Bugle it, to** (American cadet), to abstain from attending class and reciting until the bugle sounds for attention.

**Bug walk** (popular), a bed.

**Build, to** (or it) (American), said of a man who is slow to move, or of an affair which requires great exertion. It is taken from a boy's trick of putting a coal under a tortoise to make it walk.

"I have a letter of introduction to Mr. Samuel Slump," said a stranger in a Western town to a citizen. "Can you tell me if he is a man of drinking habits?" "Wall, stranger," replied the citizen, expectorating copiously, "I wouldn't go so fur as to say that Sam is a hard drinker, but I reckon if you ask him to go an' take suthin', you won't have to *build a fire under him* to git him started."

(Nautical), to "*build a chapel*" is to turn a ship round through bad steering.

**Building spots for sale** (American), used of any imperfect person or thing.

**Built that way** (common), "not *built that way*," not in one's line.

Black Moustache addresses the divinity as "Popsic," and she calls him "Bob." During the evening they have *impromptu* dancing. Smith can't dance; he isn't *built that way*, and Miss Jones says that Black Moustache waltzes delightfully. All of which means that the following week is one of agony for young S., who moodily meditates leaving England for ever, and straightway abjures the harmless necessary shave.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Bulgarian atrocity** (Stock Exchange), Varna and Rustchuk Railway 3 per cent. obligations.

And we've really quite a crew  
Of fancy names to represent a share . . .  
But fancy, by the way,  
Now, in the present day,  
A Varna's a *Bulgarian atrocity*.  
—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

**Bulge** (American), properly to *bulge* is to swell out, and *bulge* is a swelling or belly. In the United States the words are extended and amplified in many ways. Thus there is a story of a man who, being tried for shooting his neighbour, pleaded that he had only aimed at the *bulge* of his shirt where it "bagged out" above his trousers. "To get the *bulge*" on a man, appears to mean to have the better of him. As *bulge* conveys the idea of swelling or inflation

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or expansion, it is much used to indicate magnitude or extravagance. Thus to go "*bulging* about" conveys the same idea as "splurging" (which see).

**Bulger.** This English word, signifying a large object or creature, is much more extensively used in the United States than in the mother-country. "New York is a *bulger* of a place," said Colonel Crockett in 1835. At Princeton College (New Jersey) the largest and heaviest of the students is familiarly called *būlger*. The negro minstrel word *būlgine*, for a locomotive, appears to be a compound, the first part of which is derived rather from *bulge* than "bull," as implying bigness.

I got on board de telegraf an' floated  
down de ribber,  
De 'lectric fluid magnified and killed five  
hundred nigger.  
De *bullgine* burst, de steam went off, I  
really tough I'd die;  
I shut my eyes to hold my breath—  
Susanna don't you cry!  
—*Song of O Susanna.*

**Bulk and file** (old), two thieves working together. The *bulk* jostles the victim against the *file*, who robs him of his money or watch.

**Bulker** (old cant), a street-walking prostitute; from "bulk," that formerly signified the body.

She must turn *bulker* (when her cloathes are worn out), at which trade I hope to see you suddenly.—*Ravenscroft*, 1670.

**Bulky** (Winchester College), generous, open-handed, as opposed to "brum."

**Bull**, now recognised and applied to a blunder, formerly meant any kind of rough, blundering, or foolish jest or trick, and is of the same root with *bully* in its sense of a clown or merry-maker. Old Dutch *bollaert* (Skeat), "a jester or a gyber." Swedish *bullra*, to make a noise. *Buller* in Anglo-Norman means an equivocator or deceiver, which unmistakably indicates the existence of *bull* in the modern sense.

The sexte case is of fals *bullers*,  
Baith that tham makes and that tham wers.  
—*MS. Cottan. Vespasian*  
(*Hallwell*).

The term *bull-calf* itself (Shakspeare), and *bull-finch*, a stupid fellow (North Country), all indicate the association with blundering and stupidity which is implied by *bull*. The word was first specially identified with Hibernian mistakes by Miss Edgeworth in her "Essay on Irish Bulls." (Popular), a roaring horse.

(Popular and thieves), a crown, an abbreviation of its former appellation, a bull's eye.

. . . Then giv' me a little money, four half *bulls*, wot you may call half-crowns, and ses, hook it!—*Charles Dickens.*

(Prison), rations of meat; an uncomplimentary reference to the toughness of the beef supplied. The French slang has



*bidoche*, for meat, from *bidet*, a pony.

(Stock Exchange), explained by first quotation.

Berliner is puzzled by the terms *bull* and "bear," that he often sees in the papers in connection with the Stock Exchange. . . . These terms are as old as the time of the South Sea Bubble, 1710. A man who contracted to sell stock of which he was not possessed was called a "bear," in allusion to the proverb, "Selling the skin before you have caught the bear," and he who bought, without intending to receive the stock, was called a *bull*, by way of distinction. To *bull* the market is now to raise the price of stock when operating for a sale, while to "bear" it is to use every effort to depress the price of stock in order to buy it.

So was the huntsman by the bear oppressed,  
Whose hide he sold before he caught the beast.

—*Tit Bits*.

A man was complaining that he had lost all his money through gambling on the Stock Exchange. A friend ventured to ask him if he had been a *bull* or a "bear"? and was told "Neither, I was an ass."—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(American thieves), a locomotive.

. . . Had just touched a bloke's leather as the *bull* bellowed for the last time.—*On the Trail*.

**Bull and cow** (rhyming slang), a row.

**Bull-dance** (nautical), a dance without women; also called a "stag-dance."

**Bull-dog** (university), one of the duties of the university proctors is to promenade the town in search of offending undergraduates. Certain men, who are

termed *bull-dogs*, accompany him. Their duty is to chase the offender, whose ingenuity in evading capture gives rise to many amusing stories. Many a long race too often ends in finding their prey is an outsider, whom they have no interest in catching.

The proctor's satellites, vulgarly called *bull-dogs*.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

I don't mean the college *bull-dogs*, they don't interfere with us, only with women.—*H. Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

(Old slang), a pistol, now a short thick revolver.

"I have always a brace of *bull-dogs* about me." . . . So saying, he exhibited a very handsome, highly-finished, and richly mounted pair of pistols.—*Sir W. Scott: St. Roman's Well*.

(Nautical), the great gun which stands "housed" in the officers' wardroom cabin. General term for main-deck guns.

**Bull-dog blazer** (American), a short thick revolver.

The manager laid down a large cane he had in his hand, and picked up instead a trusty *bull-dog blazer*, as he said—

"Young man, I don't think you can be of any service to me, and you'd better slide."

"Assuredly; but you don't happen to have a shilling you could lend me?"

"No, I don't," and the manager cocked the revolver.

"Well, say; let me into the show, will you?"—*Green Room*.

**Bull-doze, to** (American), to compel a person to do anything, or to influence his conduct by cruelty or brute force. It is

derived from a Southern word meaning a whip or cowhide, or species of "kurbatch," made from the *glans penis* of a bull. It is said that negroes were whipped almost to death with this, or *bull-dozed* to make them vote the Democratic ticket. It is now extensively used in the United States, to express compulsion of any kind, especially in politics.

**Bull-dozer** (American), a revolver. Used to mean a persuader, something to enforce an argument by personal violence. *Vide* BULL-DOZE.

**Bullet** (army), discharge upon the spot, without a moment's notice.

(Printers), see DRY-UP, and QUI. According to Savage's "Dictionary of the Art of Printing," 1841, a workman was said to have got the *bullet* when he was discharged *instantly*—without the customary notice on either side.

**Bullets** (cards), in American brag, are aces; sometimes called white aces, in contradistinction to aces made up by holding braggers. The highest hand in the game is three white (or real) aces, the next highest is "two *bullets* and a bragger," which cannot, of course, occur in the same round in which three real aces are held, though another player may hold two other *bullets* and a bragger at the

same time. Hence the expression "the serene confidence which a Christian feels in the three white aces."

**Bullfinch** (provincial), a corruption of "bull fence," a stiff fence able to keep bulls out of or in a field.

The third fence was a teaser, an ugly *bullfinch* with a ditch on the landing side.—*Guy Livingstone.*

Also a stupid fellow.

**Bulljine** (nautical) a locomotive is so called by sailors. Termed "bull" by American thieves.

**Bull-money**, a vulgar phrase for money extorted by a chance witness from the man detected in the fields, the woods, the seashore, or other lonely place, in the act of carnal copulation.

**Bullock's heart** (printers), see TOKEN. This is a term of contempt that pressmen apply to a single "token," or order to print, of two hundred and fifty copies only, the lowest paying number in the scale of prices. This expression is due to the circumstance that it is not a "fat" but a "lean" job, hence the comparison to a *bullock's heart*, which, unless suffering from "fatty degeneration," is the essence of leanness.

**Bullock's horn** (rhyming slang), in pawn.

**Bullocky** (Australian, upcountry), a bullock-team driver. In the

bush all the heavy hauling is done with bullock-drags. It is quite a common sight up the country to see teams of a dozen and upwards. *Bullockiers* in Australia are as proverbial as bargees or Billingsgate fishwives in England for the forcibleness of their language.

"When you make Mokepilly," quoth one of the sunburnt *bullocky* men, "keep on by the brush fence, and that will take you right into the gap. Gee hup, Streaky; ya-hoy-ya, Storb'ry."—*T. C. Work: Australasian Printer's Keepsake*.

**Bull party**, an assembly, gathering, or dinner party of men only.

**Bull puncher** (American), a word defined as follows by one who was himself of the calling:—

He followed the profession of a *bull-puncher*; that is, he went in charge of the cattle destined for slaughter and "canning" in the distant North, and made money at it, being steady and trustworthy, and no drinker.—*Morley Roberts: The Western Avernus*, 1887.

**Bull's-eye villas** (military), the small open-air tents used by the volunteers at their annual rifle contest held on Wimbledon Common.

**Bull's feathers**, horns. To describe a man as wearing *bull's feathers* was to represent him as a cuckold.

Three crooked horns, smartly top-knotted with ribands; which being the ladies' wear, seem to intimate that they may very probably adorn, as well as bestow, the *bull's feather*.—*Richardson: Clarissa Harlowe*.

The attribute of horns to a cuckold is of remote antiquity, and is supposed by symbolists of the school of Creuzer and Faber to be derived from the horns of cattle, also of the new moon, at which time festivals were held in Assyria, where all women were in common, and men who were among the initiated bore the symbol and were compared to oxen. Horns as worn on the head were suggestive of feathers in a cap, hence *bull's feathers* (Charles G. Leland, U.S. Notes).

The French have a corresponding expression: "planter des plumes de bœuf."

On me dit qu'elle est bien gente  
Qu'elle est douce comme un agneau.  
Par ma foi! j'ai peur que'implante  
Plumes de bœuf à mon chapeau!  
—*Song*.

**Bull the cask, to** (nautical), to pour hot water into an empty rum puncheon, and let it stand until it extracts the spirit from the wood. The mixture is drunk by sailors in default of something stronger.

**Bull-traps**, thieves or swindlers who personate policemen (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Bully** (American), often applied in a commendable sense by the vulgar; as, for instance, a *bully* fellow, a *bully* horse.

Hope you had a pleasant nap, *bully* place for a nice quiet snooze.—*Bret Harte: Poems and Prose*.

The captain said she was a *bully* boat.—*Mark Twain: Roughing it.*

"Now," said he, "Slick, my *bully*, I think I see a smart chance of doin' a considerable stroke of business to Nova Scotia, in the smugglin' line.—*Sam Slick.*

*Bully* for you, for me, is a commendatory phrase.

That's *bully*, plenty *bully* for me. Just you gimme the hundred dollars.—*Mark Twain: Tom Sawyer.*

This word has two distinct meanings: (1.) A braggart, or a man who terrifies and threatens. (2.) The older form, still common, applied to any person or thing which is pre-eminently excellent, *e.g.*, a *bully* horse, "that's *bully*." The *Bully* Bottom of Shakspeare implies a compliment. In Dutch slang *bol* has the same meaning, a head, a leader; as one might say, the *bully* of the crowd. Also an intelligent person. "Boll, 'een man met eenen goeden kop. Bol van de kit, man, of meester van het huis," *i.e.*, "A man with a good head, the master of a house." The word came into Dutch as it did into German slang, from the German-Hebrew, *bal* meaning literally man, but always used to indicate a master, director, or superior.

(Common), a *bully*, a stone or lump of lead tied in the end of a handkerchief (New York Slang Dictionary).

(Football), a scrimmage.

"Change!" was called, and after the first *bully* the ball was rushed down the ground to the chalk line of good calx,

where a *bully* was formed, after which it was walked into calx and five shies obtained before time was called.—*Sporting Life.*

**Bully-beef** (army), tinned meat; supposed to be made of old bull. The "iron ration," as it is often called, either from its toughness, or the cases of tin or other metal in which it is preserved. (Nautical), boiled beef.

**Bully-boss** (American), the landlord of a sporting crib, tavern, or brothel. Derived in all probability from *bully* and *boss*, but also agreeing remarkably, though by chance, with the *baal habos*, or "master of the house" of the Jews, which is commoner as *bal bos*; hence the Dutch thieves' slang, *balleboos* (*bāās*), head man of any kind. This is a very curious instance of words of similar forms derived from radically different sources.

**Bully-buck** (old slang), a man retained by the keepers of brothels, being paid by them to assist in enforcing exorbitant demands on those frequenting such places. Sometimes it was pretended that they were the husbands of some of the inmates, in order by threats of exposure to extort money from simpletons supposed to have been discovered *in flagrante delicto*.

**Bully-cock** (old slang), a man who, for the purposes of robbery and theft, fomented a quarrel between people, to cloak his nefarious designs.

**Bullyrag** (American and English), to abuse, revile, or scold vehemently. From the Dutch *bulder-ar*, a blusterer; *bulderaren*, to rage, to bluster, to roar; *bulderarig*, blustering, and *raak*, hitting.

*Bully-rook* or *rock*, a braggart, occurs in Shakspeare, where it is certainly of Dutch origin, *e.g.*, *buller-brook*, a boisterous fellow. *Bulbra*, Swedish, to make a noise.

*The C. C.* Well, he's blowing her up; "Look 'ere, Matilda," he sez, "I'm 'anged if they 'aven't bin and let the Throne-room fire out again!" And she sez, "It's no use *bullyraggin'* me, Billiam; speak to the Lord 'Igh Chamberlain about it—it's 'is business."—*Punch*.

**Bully-trap**, a trap for bullies and blackguards; applied to a man of mild and gentlemanly appearance and demeanour, who, if attacked by a bully, shows unexpected spirit, courage, and determination, and proves more than a match for his assailant.

**Bum** (public schools), a birching; termed also a belting. (Army), "cherry bums," the hussars, the allusion being obvious. The French chasseurs go by the nickname of *culs rouges*.

(Obsolete), *bum* or "bummy," a contraction of bum bailiff. Thus called because he follows the man he has to serve with process.

Here lies John Trull, by trade a *bum*;  
When he died  
The Devil cried,  
"Come, John, come."

To *bum*, to arrest a debtor.

The word, according to Blackstone, is a corruption of "bound" bailiff; but this has been denied, as *bum bailiffs* are no more "bound" than other officers of the law to do justice. Todd quotes passages to prove that it arose from the pursuer catching hold of a man by the tail or hinder part of his garment.

**Bumble** (common), a beadle, from Dickens' character in "Oliver Twist,"

**Bumble-crew** (journalistic), corporation.

Then spake the chairman to the rate-payers:—

The shindy of to-day exposes all  
The apish antics of a *bumble crew*,  
The worst this town containeth.  
—*Punch*.

**Bumbo** (old), brandy, water, and sugar; also a negro term for the private parts of a woman.

**Bum-brusher**, an opprobrious name for a schoolmaster.

Dionysius was forced to turn *bum-brusher* in my own defence, a condition which best suited with a man that delighted in tyranny and blood.—*T. Brown: Works*.

Derived from the too common practice of pedagogues who flog boys with or without reason. The historical *bum-brushers* date from the days of James I. of England and VI. of Scotland—whose tutor, Buchanan, had no greater re-

spect for his royal person than for that of other boys, except on the infrequent occasions when he flogged him vicariously—and from Drs. Busby, Keate, and Arnold in more modern times. In the Glossary to the "Life and Adventures of Bampfylde Moore Carew" it is said that the word "flaybottom" is bestowed upon a flogging pedagogue. It has been suggested that the word is a pun, and a corruption of *phlebotomus*, letting blood, but the word itself gives evidence of its more humble origin.

**Bum-charter** (thieves), hot bread and water.

*Bum-charter* is a name given to bread steeped in hot water by the first unfortunate inhabitants of the English Bastille, where this miserable fare was their daily breakfast, each man receiving with his scanty portion of bread a quart of boiled water from the cook's coppers.—*Vaux's Memoirs*.

**Bumchik** (provincial), inferior beer for harvest labourers.

**Bum-curtain** (University), short or ragged academical gown.

**Bumf** (schoolboys), paper; an abbreviation of "bum-fodder." A *bumf-hunt* is a paper-chase.

**Bum-fidget** (old), a restless, uneasy person who cannot sit still.

**Bumkin**, or **bumpkin**, a stupid lout, or rustic. From Old Dutch *boomken*, a tree or log. Since

the English term also signified a thick piece of wood, it was readily applied to a blockhead. In French, *bûche*, a log, has also the signification of blockhead.

**Bummares**, unrecognised hangers-on at Billingsgate Fish Market, who act as middlemen between the wholesale and retail dealers, and who make a profit out of both parties. The word is usually derived from the French *bonne marée*, the good tide or product of the sea.

The *bummarce* is the jobber or speculator on a fish exchange.—*Henry Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Bummer** (turf), a heavy loss. (American), a slow, lazy fellow; in the French argot, *chie-debout*, a loafer.

The auctioneer . . . never got a bid—at least never any but the eighteen dollar one he hired a notoriously substanceless *bummer* to make.—*Mark Twain: Roughing It*.

San Francisco is the elysium of *bummers*. Nowhere can a worthless fellow, too lazy to work, too cowardly to steal, get on so well.—*Scribner's Monthly*.

(American), one who sponges upon his acquaintances.

In California, men who profess to be journalists, and so obtain free drinks, are called literary *bummers*.—*Hotten's Dictionary*.

*Bummer* is of Pennsylvania origin, from the German word *bummeler*, meaning the same. During the war the term was applied to the camp-followers

or semi-deserters who followed the Federal army. These irregular heroes, who sometimes rendered good service by fighting desperately, are commemorated as indomitable marauders in the "Breitmann Ballads."

Dey spurred on, dey hurried on, gallopin  
shtrait,  
Boot for Breitmann help coomed yoost a  
liddle too late,  
For ash de Lawine goes smash mit a bound,  
So on to de *bummers* de repels coom down.  
Heinrich von Schinkenstein's tead in de  
road,  
Ulrich aus Gailingen's deadt ash a toad,  
Und Sepperl—Tyroler—shpoke nefer a  
wordt  
But yoost "Mutter Gottes!"—and died  
in de ford.

**Bump, making a** (boating, university), catching the boat in front and knocking against it, the boats being arranged two lengths apart in the race in their previous order of merit.

The chances of St. Ambrose's making a *bump* the first night were weighed.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

**Bumper** (theatrical), a very full house at a popular performance. The word *bumper*, for a full glass of liquor, from which the theatrical term is derived, was in the early days supposed to be derived from toasts drunk to the health of the Pope, the "bon-père" of all true Catholic Christians. This explanation is no longer generally accepted, since the word is rightly regarded as a corruption of bombard, a drinking vessel, but originally signifying a cannon.

This derivation is borne out by the circumstance that the French call *canon* a glass of wine drunk at a wine-shop.

**Bum perisher**, or **shaver**, a short-tailed coat, termed *rasc-cul* in French slang.

**Bumping races** (university). In the eight-oared races at the universities the competing boats start one behind the other at a given distance. When a boat *bumps* (*i.e.*, touches any part of) the boat in front, it takes the other's place in the next race. The races are always rowed in two divisions, about twelve to fifteen in each, and the head boat in the lower division is the last boat in the first division, and is called the sandwich boat. The first boat in the first division is called the Head of the River.

**Bump supper** (university), explained by quotation.

A *bump supper*, that is, a supper to commemorate the fact of the boat of one college having, in the annual races, "bumped" or touched the boat of another college immediately in front.—*Cuthbert Bede: Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*.

**Bumptious** (common), apt to take offence, quarrelsome without adequate provocation. Evidently from "bump," which Skeat derived from "boom," to make a hollow sound. Dutch, *bommen*, one who roars or resounds at once, to swell up or bounce.

I heard that Mr. Sharp's wig didn't fit him, and that he needn't be so "bounce-

able"—somebody else said *bumptious*—about it, because his own red hair was very plainly to be seen behind.—*Charles Dickens: David Copperfield.*

**Bumsquabbled** (American), crestfallen.

The judge said . . . he had got too much already, cut him off the other two-thirds, and made him pay all costs. If he didn't look *bumsquabbled* it's a pity.—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker.*

**Bumsucker** (society), a very vulgar expression in common use among men in society for a toady. One who is a hanger-on and flatterer of great men, and who will do their dirty work for them. In French, *lèche-cul*.

**Bum-trap** (old), bailiff.

The noble *bum-trap*, blind and deaf to every circumstance of distress, greatly rises above all the motives to humanity, and into the hands of the jailor resolves to deliver his miserable prey.—*Fielding: Tom Jones.*

**Bun** (American), a fellow who cannot be shaken off. (Common), to have the *bun*, to get the better of, to surpass.

O Lord! to think I deemed myself most fly.

This infamie most surely has the *bun*!  
—*The Sporting Times.*

**Bunce** (trade), commission from tradesmen and others, blackmail, sums of money, of which both the employer and employed are defrauded by the middle man, through whose hands the money passes at some time or

other prior to reaching its destination. In large theatres there are frequently four or five hundred persons employed in various departments, and the head of each department holds his own treasury.

(Turf), profit, interest on money.

(Popular), money.

For though I am neither a fool nor a dunce,  
Whatever I prig other folks get the *bunce*.

—*T. Browne: Unlucky Individuals.*

The boys *will* try it on for their *bunts*.  
—*L. L. and L. P.*

According to Hotten from *bon* or *bonus*, probably the latter.

**Buncer** (trade), one who *bunces* or exacts *bunce* (which see).

**Bunch** (common), a blow. (American), to *bunch*, to gather up, purse up.

The speaker *bunched* his thick lips together like the stem-end of a tomato.—*Mark Twain: The Gilded Age.*

**Bunch of fives** (popular), the fist.

M'Auliffe does not seem to appreciate the honour of standing up to Carney again. He says he won't be ready for three months. One taste of the Birmingham boy's quality seems to have been quite sufficient for the American lightweight champion. It is extremely improbable that M'Auliffe will ever again come within reach of Carney's *bunch of fives*.—*Sporting Life.*

**Bunco.** *Vide* BUNKO.

**Buncombe** or **bunkum** (American), talking big, affecting en-



thusiasm, but always with an underhand purpose. Sometimes used, especially in England, to denote mere magniloquence. Mr. Hotten has made the discovery that "it arose from a speech made by a North Carolina senator named Buncombe." The truth is that these are two words, of the same sound but of entirely different origin, and with different meanings. One originated, it is said, as follows (*vide* Bartlett): A member of the House of Representatives, when making a windy speech about nothing then before the House, being asked why he did so, replied that he was speaking to or for *Buncombe*. But long before this story arose, it was usual in New England to express great approbation or admiration of anything by calling it *bunkum*, and this was derived from the Canadian French, "Le buncum sa" ("il est bon comme ça"), "it is good as it is." There was a negro song fifty or sixty years ago with this refrain:—"Bom-sell ge mary, lebrunem sa." This is presumed to be negro Canuck-French for "Mam'selle je marie, elle est bonne comme ça."

The *bunkum* bestowed at Threadneedle Street Board.

—Punch.

Another American importation is *bunkum*, a word generally used to signify empty, frothy declamation. It is said to be derived from the action of a speaker who, persisting in talking to an empty house, said he was speaking to *Buncombe*, the

name of the place in North Carolina which he represented.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Buncomise, to** (journalistic), to talk twaddle.

Experience has taught me the inutility of interviewing. You set a man at once at weighing his words, and he either gammons you intentionally, *buncomises*, or is reticent, so as to be of no service.—*A Forbes: My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*.

**Bund** (Anglo-Indian), an artificial bank or wharf.

"This term is also naturalised in the Anglo-Chinese ports. It is there applied to the embanked quay above the shore of the settlements" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Bunder** (Anglo-Indian). Persian *bundar*, a seaport landing-place, harbour, or custom-house.

**Bundling** (old), a custom of unmarried people of different sexes, or lovers, sleeping together, but with clothes on, or under such conditions that coition is supposed not to take place. It has been described by Wright as Welsh, by Bartlett as American, but it is to be found anywhere or everywhere in the world among the commoner sort of people (and occasionally among the other class), when opportunity presents itself. Mr. Bartlett thinks it is not now practised in the United States. He evidently does not know the Pennsylvanian Dutch or New England, where the custom still prevails.

Washington Irving acted rather unfairly when he described *bundling* as something which the Dutch learned from the Yankees, since it was in full bloom in Holland at the time of which he wrote, and is thus described by Sewel (1797):

“*Queeston* is an odd way of wooing usual in some sea towns or Isles of Holland, after this manner. When the wench is gone to bed, the fellow enters the room and lays himself down in his clothes upon the blankets, next unto her, with one window of the room open, and thus he talks with her, very innocently—as it is reported.”

It is said of a damsel in Connecticut, who expected her lover to come and *bundle* with her, that her mother bade her put both her legs into a pillow-case, and tie it round her waist. The next morning she asked her if she had kept her “limbs” in the bag, to which Miss Innocence replied, “Ma, dear, I only took *one* out.”

**Bung** (common), a brewer or a landlord of a beerhouse.

*A Peerage and a Beerage.*—Within the last few years several “bungs” have been made Peers. There is no particular objection to this, for brewing is just as likely to produce an individual who is so thoroughly impregnated with legislative wisdom that he will propagate legislators, as shooting pheasants, or any of the other occupations to which those who become Peers generally devote themselves, and a beerage is as glorious an institution as a Peerage. The only difficulty seems to me to be this: The title becomes a sort of Government

guarantee that the beer of its possessor is good, and, therefore, any one whose beer is up to par ought to have a right to claim a Peerage, for otherwise competition will not be carried on between the *bungs* under fair conditions.—*Truth*.

A pickpocket, sharper, a purse. This very old English cant word is still in use among American thieves in the phrase “to go *bung*,” which is the same as “to go bang,” derived from the popping of a cork, or the *bung* of a barrel; lost, gone.

In this case the title of the “Queen’s Fund” has been sufficient to damn what otherwise, beyond doubt, would have been a widely beneficial charity. It cannot be thought, however, that the Queen herself will be consumed with sorrow even if she does happen to hear that this abortion has “gone *bung*.”—*Australian Journal*.

(Pugilistic) to give, pass, hand over; “*bung* over the rag,” hand over the note. (Popular), in a public-house game called “cod ’em,” when one of the opposite party suspects the *piece* to be in any particular hand, he places his own over it and exclaims “*bung* it here,” *i.e.*, give it up.

**Bunged peeper** (common), an eye closed by a blow.

There is, I think, no natural connection between the *bung* of a barrel and an eye which has been closed by a blow. But when we reflect on the constant mingling of gypsies with prize-fighters, it is almost evident that *bongo* may have been the origin of it. A *bongo yakko* (or *yak*), means a distorted, crooked, or in fact a *bunged eye*. It also means lame, crooked, or sinister.—*The English Gypsies and their Language*.

To bung is good English for to close up.

**Bung-juice** (thieves), porter or beer (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Bunk** (American), a wooden case or bench "which serves for a seat by day and a bed by night" (Bartlett). In America denotes generally a rough bed or place for sleeping. Dutch, "slaap *bānk*," a settle-bed, or press-bed. American, "to *bunk*."

. . . And so pass over the rest of his voyage by saying that he was confined to his *bunk*, and saw no more of it.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe.*

**Bunker** (popular), beer. (American), large, fine, remarkable. East of England, *bonker*. This word suggests a possible origin of Buncombe.

**Bunko, bunco** (American), from the Italian *banco*, a bench or bank. A game at cards, like three-card monte, and is usually simply a swindle. It is described by Inspector Byrnes, Chief of Detectives in New York, substantially as follows. It is apparently so simple and honest that the shrewdest men are readily induced to try it, and are thus fleeced. There are forty-three spaces upon a *bunko* "lay out," forty-two are numbered, and thirteen contain stars also (no prizes), one is blank, and the remaining twenty-nine represent prizes ranging from

two to five thousand dollars. The game can be played with dice or cards. The latter are numbered with a series of small numbers ranging from one to six, eight of which are drawn and counted, and the total represents the number of the prize drawn. Should the victim draw a star number he is allowed the privilege of drawing again by putting up a small amount of money. He is generally allowed to win at first, and later on the game owes him from \$1000 to \$5000 (*i.e.*, from £200 to £1000). This is when he draws the conditional prize, No. 27. The conditions are that he must put up \$500 (£100), or as much as the dealer thinks he will stand. This is explained to him as necessary to save what he has already won, and to entitle him to another drawing. To inveigle men to play *bunko*, the most extraordinary pains are taken, and the *bunko*-steerers or "touts," who seek for victims, are selected from the most gentlemanly-looking, well-educated persons that can be found. There are innumerable instances of lawyers and others, who knew the world well, and who were perfectly on their guard as to *bunko*, being taken in by it, and half ruined. Its extraordinary vogue in the United States justifies this detailed description of it as *præmonitus*, *præmunitus*. The writer is well acquainted with an English gentleman who, while travelling in the United

States, was "bunkoed" out of several thousand dollars.

**Bunkum.** See BUNCOMBE.

**Bunny grub** (Cheltenham College), green vegetables, called "grass" at the Royal Military Academy.

**Bunon** (Anglo-Indian), applied to any humbug, "anything fictitious or factitious," a cram, a shave, a sham (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

You will see within a week if this is anything more than a *bunon*.—*Oakfield*, ii. 58.

**Bun-struggle** or **worry** (army), a tea meeting; an entertainment to which benevolent souls occasionally invite the soldiers in a garrison, but which has generally smaller attractions for them than the canteen or public-house.

**Bunt** (common), an apron, properly sail canvas; to *bunt*, to jostle.

**Bunter** (common), a street-walking thief, a prostitute.

**Bunts.** See BUNCE.

**Burick** (Australian convicts' slang), a whore. Introduced into Australia by the convicts transported thither.

*Burick* is a prostitute, or common woman.—*Vaux's Memoirs*.

**Burking** (army), dyeing the moustache and whiskers. It was at one time the custom for the whole of the men in smart

cavalry regiments to dye their moustaches, &c., black, to *burke* or suppress their natural colour. This was for the sake of uniformity. Fashion in hair has always been a feature in military life. As in the past each corps prided itself on its own peculiar arrangement of pigtail and powder, so now there are regiments in which public opinion demands a hard and fast rule about hair. Few will tolerate whiskers; Piccadilly weepers, Dundrearies, as they were once called, are universally despised; and where the beard is permitted to be worn, as in India, its dimensions and trimming are often the subject of precise regulations. *Burking* meant formerly to stifle, from Burke, who was hung in 1829 for murder by suffocation of persons whose bodies he sold to surgeons for dissecting.

**Burn** (thieves), cheat; *burners*, swindlers with dice and cards; *burnt*, infected with venereal disease (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Burner** (old slang), an acute form of a certain stage of a contagious disease.

**Burr, to** (Marlborough College), to fight.

**Burra-beebee** (Anglo-Indian), a great lady, a grande dame, a lady-swell. (Gypsy), *bāro beebee*.

This is a kind of slang word applied in Anglo-Indian society to the lady who claims precedence at a party.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

The ladies carry their *burra bibi-ship* into the steamers when they go to England. My friend endeavoured in vain to persuade them that whatever their social importance in the City of Palaces, they would be but small folk in London.—*Viscountess Falkland: Chow-Chow*.

**Burra khana** (Anglo-Indian), a grand feast, a big dinner. In English gypsy, *bāro habben*, from the same Indian roots.

**Burra sahib** (Anglo-Indian), the chief, or head, or master. A great man.

**Burst** (sporting), lively pace, smart race, spurt.

During "a good *burst*" one of the hunt lost both "sight and sound" of the pack, and riding along almost disconsolate overtook a "yokel," and at once asked him if he had seen the "hare and hounds."

"Ees, zir, I seed a dog chasing a hare."

"Which way were they going?"

"Ah, zir, I can't tell 'ee that; all I could see was the dog was having the best of it."—*Sporting Times*.

**Burying** (old cant), "*burying* a wife" signifies the feast given by an apprentice on the completion of his term of apprenticeship, and becoming a free man, to set up in business for himself. (Common), "*burying* a moll," forsaking a wife or mistress.

**Bus** (common), abbreviation of omnibus.

An experiment was recently made of a female omnibus conductor on the new line

between Piccadilly Circus and King's Cross. She only lasted a day. Most probably she met with an offer of marriage and closed her connection with one *bus* to get another as legitimate.—*London Court Journal*.

(Theatrical), contraction of "business." Pronounced *biz*. The dramatic action of a play is described in all written parts as *bus*. The dumb show described in Hamlet is all *biz*. *Biz* is also applied to the commercial affairs of the theatre. as "good *biz*" or "bad *biz*." (Anglo-Indian), *bus!* "Enough!" "Hold hard!" "Stop there!" "That will do!" "Hold your horses!"

(American), "to *buss*," to punch, probably from "burst." "I'll *buss* your head" is a common threat.

**Bushed** (up country Australian), lost in the bush or uncleared country primarily, and hence bewildered.

Despard was on these occasions always accompanied by one of the boys, for John feared that he might get *bushed*; but he himself and the other boy went separately.—*A. C. Grant*.

(Common), "*bushed* on," much pleased. "I am awfully *bushed* on," that takes my fancy.

(Old slang), applied to a poor man without money. "He's completely *bushed*," *i.e.*, destitute.

**Bushel**, to (American), to repair garments. German *büßen*, to mend, hence "busheler," a

tailor's assistant, whose business it is to repair garments (Bartlett).

**Bushel-bubby** (old slang), a large and full-breasted woman.

**Bushwhackers** (West Indian), men who squat alive in the "bush," leading an idle, useless existence.

(American), during the Civil War guerillas or irregulars were called "bushwackers." To "bushwack" a boat is to draw it along by seizing the bushes on the banks.

**Bushy park** (rhyming slang), a lark. "A man who is poor is said to be 'in bushy park,' or 'in the park'" (Vaux's Memoirs).

**Business** (theatrical), the movements of the actors, their look and tone.

The success of one of these pieces depends not upon verbal joking, good or bad, but upon *business*.—*Saturday Review*.

Playing well or ill, according to the mood in which she may happen to be, an actress of Madame Bernhardt's *trempe* naturally varies her *business*.—*Times*.

(Singers), singing professionally.

She began her *business* in a deep sweet voice.—*Thackeray: History of Pendennis*.

(American), "the *business-end*," the end of any object which is put to practical use. The *business-end* of a mule is his heels.

If, on an occasion of this nature, one stationed himself behind the door, and, as a sort of preliminary warning to the others,

greeted the first interloper with the *business-end* of a boot-jack, he would be morally certain of a lively one-sided misunderstanding that might end disastrously to himself.—*J. Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle*.

**Busk, busking** (trade), explained by quotation.

They obtain a livelihood by *busking*, as it is termed, or, in other words, by offering these goods for sale only at the bars or in the tap-rooms and parlours of taverns.—*H. Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

From a furniture carter of this description I received some most shocking details of having to *busk* it, as this talking about goods for sale is called by those in the trade.—*H. Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

(Low actors), getting one's living on the road, by recitations in tap-rooms, &c.; probably from *buskin*.

*Busking* is going into public-houses and playing and singing and dancing.—*H. Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

(Tramps), singing.

**Buskers** (popular), men who go about performing, singing, or playing in a low way in the streets or in public-houses.

Then Mary Jones happened to meet  
A tumbler whose real name was simply  
John Brown,

While slanging one day in the street.  
His form so attractive, his figure so neat,  
So unlike common *buskers* was he,  
So pleasing his tricks she enchanted became,  
And soon forgot all about me.

—*J. Lloyd: The Flying Lady*.

**Buss.** See **BUS**.

**Bust** (thieves), a burglary.

“Fatty Bill, from City Road, rem. for a *bust* ex. 2 years,” means that William . . . has been compelled to leave his congenial haunts in the City Road as he is remanded for a burglary, and anticipates two years’ hard labour.—*Rev. J. W. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(Royal Military Academy), to go on the *bust*, to go to town for amusement.

(American), a burst, a frolic, a debauch, a spree. The reference in the following paragraph is to an American Minister to Mexico, who was said to have indulged in a *bust* of unwonted magnitude.

An article has appeared recently upon “*Busts* of the Vice-Presidents.” Something upon the *busts* of Foreign Ministers would possess more of current interest.—*Omaha Herald.*

(Thieves), to *bust*, to inform, to “split;” to commit a burglary. (American), to destroy.

They was by this time jined by a large crowd of other Southern patrits, who comenst hollerin, “Hang the bald-headed aberlitionist, and *bust* up his immoral exhibition!”—*Artemus Ward.*

**Buster** (popular), a small new loaf, termed also “burster;” a “penny-worth of bees-wax and a penny *buster*,” *i.e.*, bread and cheese.

I can't get at it, I can't get at it,  
I like the faggots tho' they smell.  
But now the penny's down the well,  
I can't get at it, I can't get at it.  
I thought I'd have a *buster* but it's all  
no go!

—*Song.*

(American), anything large in size, a drinking bout, a man of great strength.

He tackled some of their regular *busters* and they throwed him.—*Mark Twain: Dry Diggings.*

(Australian), southerly *buster*, southerly wind of great violence.

(Thieves), a burglar. (Common), anything large, of extra size; a spurt.

At frequent intervals during the day, the cattle, animated by a sudden impulse, broke back and made a determined charge through the drivers, with their heads turned homewards. Whenever this took place, the overseer, after turning them round, gave the mob a *buster* at a severe pace during the next half hour to take the wind out of them.—*Nichols: Wild Life and Adventure in the Australian Bush.*

Wot odds arter all? We're jest ditto: I'm not bad at bottom, sez you.  
Well, thank ye for nothink, my joker. As long as I've bullion to blue,  
I mean to romp round a rare *buster*, lark, lap, take the pick of the fun,  
And, bottom or top, good or bad, keep my heye on one mark—Number One!

—*Punch.*

**Bustle**, a dress-improver, the protuberance behind on a woman's dress. Before 1855 and 1856 ladies had begun to wear crinoline and skeleton skirts. Then came the *bustle*, an artificial appendage intended to produce the impression that the wearer had a full *glute x maximus* or *séant*. Of late it has assumed enormous dimensions, far surpassing anything characteristic of the most fully developed Hottentot Venus.

“Nothing has outstripped the *bustle* in its gigantic strife for prodigious excellence. It is remarkable that this form of fashion,

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which has never been literally to the front, has still left all other rivals behind. . . . We can recall when this startlingly reproductive fruit received the distinct impetus which has borne it through successive stages to the present extraordinary condition of development." (The writer here displays great knowledge in proving that it was the use of *bustles* during the American war, as places for concealing valuables, which led to their increase in the United States.) "At this crisis the *bustle* played a historic part. It became a safe deposit vault for imperilled jewellery and plate.

"When the *bustle* shall have been developed to its probable limit, the lady who wears one will certainly escape recognition, if not observation. Our attention was lately called to a *bustle* of the pneumatic species. This is a graft of the bulb variety, and is filled with atmospheric oxygen, and it was propelling a young lady before it, much as a perambulator is advanced by a nurse. This *bustle* was the admiration that day of the entire city of Augusta. She wore a terra-cotta chimney-pot hat, and what with the pneumatic *bustle*, the beautiful creature closely resembled a rural summer cottage with a stove-flue fixed at one end."—*History of the Bustle: Greensboro (Ga.) Home Journal.*

(Popular), money.

To *bustle*, to tie up into bundles or to make bunches.

**Bustled** (common), confused, puzzled.

**Busy-sack** (popular), a carpet-bag.

**Butcha** (Anglo-Indian), the young of any animal.

**Butcher**, the (American), a boy who is allowed to pass through the line of "cars" or carriages on a railway for the purpose of selling a great variety of articles.

He is generally considered, to judge by the tenor of the remarks and anecdotes in the newspapers, as an intolerable annoyance. He leaves with every passenger, *volens volens*, newspapers, books, sweets, fruit, toys, &c., all of which must be carefully guarded, or returned if not purchased, under the penalty of incurring that unlimited "sass" in which youths of his class are generally so proficient. The following incident, from the *Detroit Free Press*, gives a faithful picture of the temptations offered by the *butcher* :—

On a Michigan central train the other day as the *butcher* came into the car with a basket of oranges, an old man, whose wife sat beside him, was very anxious to buy half-a-dozen, but she waded the boy on with, "He can't have 'em. He never eats one without the juice runs down on his shirt bosom."

(Common), the king at cards, called *un bœuf* in French slang.

(Prison), the *butcher* is a nickname for the doctor. Otherwise termed "sawbones," "croaker."

**Butcher's dog** (common), "to lie like a *butcher's dog*," *i.e.*, by the beef without touching it, is to lie beside a woman without sexual intercourse.

**Butcher's mourning** (popular), a white hat with a mourning band.

**Butler-English** (Anglo-Indian), a kind of pidgin-English spoken in the Madras Presidency. ;



**Butteker**, a shop, from the Italian *bottega*. A curious variation of this word is "butter-ken," Gypsy, *bütteka* or *boodika*.

**Butter, to** (common), to praise a person too flagrantly; "to pass the *butter* boat," is to indulge at public dinners in laudatory toasts of the prominent or distinguished persons who are present. The phrase has its counterpart in the Scottish proverb, "Claw me and I'll claw you." From *elire*, to praise, and signifying "Praise me and I'll praise you." The English proverb, "Fine words *butter* no parsnips," took its rise in a kindred idea.

I'll *butter* him, trust me. Nothing comforts a poor beggar like a bit of praise when he is down.—C. Kingsley: *Two Years Ago*.

**Butter a bet, to** (old slang), to increase it by twice or thrice its first amount.

**Buttered bun** (old slang), a woman who, directly after cohabitation with one man, allows another to embrace her.

**Butter fingers** (cricketers), an epithet applied to a "fielder" who does not hold a ball which he ought to catch.

**Butter flap** (rhyming slang), a trap, light cart.

**Butterfly** (nautical), a sailor's name for a river-*barge*.

**Buttock** (common), a street-walker, a common prostitute.

You jade! I'll ravish you! You *buttock*! I'm a justice of the peace, sirrah! —*Soldier's Fortune*, 1681.

The bands and the *buttocks* that lived there around,  
Came flocking hither.

—*Poor Robin*, 1694.

Wi' ruefu' face an' signs o' grace,  
I paid the *buttock* hire;  
The night was dark, and through the park  
I couldna' but convoy her.

Robert Burns: *On the Cuttie Stool*.

**Buttock and file** (old cant), a shop lifter.

The same capacity which qualifies a mill-ben, a *bridle-cull*, or a *buttock and file* to arrive at any degree of eminence in his profession would likewise raise a man in what the world esteems a more honourable calling.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

**Buttock and tongue** (old slang), a scolding, shrewish wife.

**Buttock-ball** (old slang), cohabitation.

**Buttock-broker** (old slang), a procuress, and in society a match-making woman.

**Buttocking-shop** (common), a brothel. The corresponding expression in the French slang is *magasin de fesses*.

**Button** (old cant), a shilling, now a bad one. (Streets), a decoy sham purchaser.

The Cheap Johns have a man or a boy to look after the horse . . . and sometimes at a fair to hawk or act as a *button* (decoy) to purchase the first lot of goods put up.—H. Mayhew: *London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Button-buster** (theatrical), a really humorous low comedian, one

who excites the risible faculties so strongly that the auditors laugh until they burst their buttons.

**Buttner** (card-sharpers), a confederate who entices "pigeons" into playing.

**Button on** (printers), see PAN ON and CHOPPER ON. An expression frequently used by printers, equivalent to "making buttons," "fit of the blues," or "down in the dumps."

**Button pound** (provincial), money, literally money that can be pocketed.

**Buttons** (common), a page.

Our present girl is an awful slowcoach; but we hope some day to sport *buttons*.—*E. B. Ramsay: Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character.*

**Button up, to** (Stock Exchange, American). When in a falling market a broker has made an unprofitable purchase, and keeps the matter secret, he is said to *button up*.

**Butty** (Cheap Jacks), a partner. (Provincial), a companion or partner in a piece of contract work.

A *butty* collier is one who contracts with the mine owner to raise the coal at so much per ton, employing other men to do the actual work. The word is from the gipsy dialect. A "booty pal" is a fellow-workman, literally a "work brother." In the mouths of navvies or rough workman "pal" would soon be dropped, and *butty* would represent the original phrase.—*Eliczer Edwards: Words, Facts, and Phrases.*

(Army), comrade, chum. (Popular), a policeman's assistant.

**Buy a prop** (Stock Exchange), a recommendation signifying that the market is flat and there is nobody to support it.

**Buy his time, to** (American). Before the war slaves often bought themselves free by instalments, paying down so much money at a stated time. When, for instance, a slave had thus paid half the money, half of his time would be his own. It happened thus that a man of colour who was half redeemed fell into a flood and narrowly escaped drowning. On being asked what his thoughts were on finding himself so near death, he replied that he couldn't help thinking what a fool a man was to risk money "in such unsarten property as niggers." Many negroes also hired their own time, paying so much per day or week for it, trusting to earn more.

**Buz or buzz, to** (common), to share equally what remains in a bottle, or to pour out the last drops from a decanter.

Get some more port, whilst I *buzz* this bottle here.—*Thackeray: Vanity Fair.*

(American, according to Bartlett, but quite as much English), to pick pockets while engaging a victim in conversation, or while a confederate does so, i.e., while "buzzing" to him.

Scores of other visitors know to their loss how they were *buzzed*. The Plunger had his note-case, containing over £200 in notes, extracted from his fob.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

*Buz* in thieves' slang was originally to whisper; it is now common in the sense of talking confidentially or earnestly to anybody.

"I saw you talking to Blank on the corner over there."

"Yes."

"*Buzzing* you to vote for him?"

"Yes."

"But you can't do it."

"No."

"And you told him so?"

"Well, not right away."

"What were you waiting for?"

"Why, I didn't tell him so until I had asked for the loan of \$5, and he said he didn't have it."—*Detroit Free Press*.

(Popular), to talk, to make a speech.

Old bottle-blue *buzzed* for a bit, And a snuffy young Wiscount in barnacles, landed wot 'e thought a' it.

—*Punch*.

**Buz-bloke** (thieves), a pickpocket.

**Buz-cove** (Australian convicts' slang), most likely taken out to Australia by the convicts transported thither.

Vaux, in his "Memoirs of Convict Life in Australia," says: "*Buz-cove* or 'buz-gloak,' a pickpocket; a person who is clever at this practice is said to be a 'good buz.'"

**Buz-man** (thieves), a thief; an informer.

**Buznapper** (old slang), a constable, one who "knaps" or takes

"buzzers" or pickpocket. Also a young pickpocket.

**Buznapper's academy**, a school in which young thieves were trained. Figures were dressed up and experienced tutors stood in various difficult attitudes for the boys to practise upon. When clever enough they were sent on the streets. Dickens gives full particulars of this old style of business in "Oliver Twist" (Hotten).

**Buznapper's kinchin** (old cant), a watchman.

**Buzzard** (American), an oppressive, arrogant person, jealous of rivalry, and vindictive. The Wiggins alluded to in the following paragraph is a celebrated though not very successful American weather-prophet.

Wiggins pronounces Professor Proctor "a *buzzard* among scientists, devouring every young man whom he finds making any pretensions." If he can succeed in eliminating the pretentious Wiggins, the country will rise up as one man and call him blessed.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Buzzard dollar** (American), so called from the eagle on it, which captious critics think looks like a turkey-*buzzard*.

The waiters all expect something from you. They are very cunning, and always bring plenty of small change, so that if one is inclined to give he can find no excuse. They will take anything you give them, from a nickel up to a *buzzard dollar*, and look happy.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Buzzer** (thieves), a pickpocket.

**Buzz-gloak** (old), a pickpocket.

He who surreptitiously accumulates bustle is, in fact, nothing better than a *buzz-gloak*.—*Lord Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

**By-chop** (old), an illegitimate child.

**By George!** a vulgar ejaculation.

**By golly!** a mild oath.

**By gum!** (American), a mild oath.

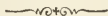
One night she was gone, *by gum!*

But as soon as ever I missed her,  
From the king, for a glass of rum,  
I bought her younger sister.

—*The Ballad of William Duff*.

**By Jingo!** (common), an exclamation denoting surprise, indignation, defiance. See JINGO.

**By the wind** (nautical), hard up, in pecuniary need.



**CAB** (common), a brothel. The term arises from the fact that four-wheeled cabs are sometimes used

for certain purposes.

The French argot describes a four-wheeled cab as *bordel ambulant*.

(University), explained by quotation.

Those who can't afford a coach, get a *cab*, alias a crib, alias a translation.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

(Tinker), a cabbage.

**Cabbage** (tailors and dressmakers).

This is given as a cant word for private theft by dictionaries of the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it is used now in a slangy sense only in reference to the purloining by tailors of pieces of cloth.

Did any one ever yet hear of a working tailor who was proof against misappropriation of his neighbour's goods, or, as he play-

fully designates it, *cabbage*? Is it not a standard joke in the trade this *cabbage*? Did one ever hear of a tailor being shunned by his fellow-workmen, or avoided by his neighbours, on account of his predilection for *cabbage*? Yet what is it but another word for "theft"?—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

Formerly *carbage*.

Lopez for the outside of his suite has paid;

But, for his heart, he cannot have it made;

The reason is, his credit cannot get

The inward *carbage* for his cloathes as yet.

—*Herrick: Hesperides*.

Wright gives the following definition of *cabbage* used as a verb, "to purloin or embezzle, as pieces of cloth, after cutting out a garment; properly and originally to cut off the heads of cabbages, and occasionally also such as are not our own but belong to others." This derivation is borne out by the old French *cabuser*, to deceive, cheat,

from *cabus*, a white-headed cabbage.

**Cabbage-head** (common), a soft-headed person.

**Cabbager** (common), a tailor. Formerly *cabbage* contractor.

**Cabbage-tree mob** (obsolete Australian slang), now called "larrikins," not quite equivalent to the London street rough or loafer, because they generally are or might be in prosperous circumstances. Thus called on account of the emblem of their order being the low-crowned cabbage-palm hat.

There are to be found round the doors of the Sydney Theatre, a sort of loafers known as the *cabbage-tree mob*, a class whom, in the spirit of the ancient tyrant, one might excusably wish had but one nose in order to make it a bloody one.—*Lieut.-Col. Munday: Our Antipodes.*

The modern larrikin has exchanged the *cabbage-tree* for a black wideawake felt hat (hence called the "larrikin hat"), which he wears with its brim turned down. The clothes he most affects are "shiny black," with a velvet collar, and his boots have ridiculously high heels.

**Cabbagites.** See CABBAGE-TREE MOB.

Unaware of the propensities of the *cabbagites*, he was by them furiously assailed for no better reason, apparently, than because, like "Noble Percy," "he wore his beaver up."—*Lieut.-Col. Munday: Our Antipodes.*

**Cab-bilking** (common), cheating a cabman out of his fare.

Some of the methods of *cab-bilking* are very artful and curious. One is to order a Jehu to set down a fare at a restaurant or tavern having a back entrance in another street, and to await the return of the latter for a few minutes. On this being done, the rider, after partaking of refreshments, decamps by that exit, to the loss and indignation of the driver, who often only learns that the hirer has defrauded him after waiting for a long time beyond that which he has been asked to stay.—*Globe.*

**Cabby** (general), driver of a cab.

No wonder Lord Ronald Gower is popular among *cabbies*. Last night he presided over the meeting of the Cabdrivers' Association, and in his speech he remarked that "he always gave *cabby* what he called the inevitable extra sixpence, particularly if he found that the driver was kind to his horse."—*Globe.*

**Cable-hanger** (nautical), a person catching oysters in the river Medway, not free of the fishery (Smyth).

**Cab-moll** (common), a prostitute in a brothel.

**Cabob, kibob, khabaub** (Anglo-Indian), used in Anglo-Indian households for any kind of roast meat. Properly it is applicable to small slices of meat on skewers, with slices of onion and green ginger between them, the whole being seasoned with pepper and salt, butter, &c. In a plainer form it is common in Venice, and perhaps in all parts of Italy.

**Cabobbled** (nautical), confused, puzzled.

**Caboodle** (American), a New England expression, originally used by coasting sailors. It means the entire party, all the set or clique. It is probably a slang modification of the Spanish word *cabildo*, which means the same thing.

**Cackle** (circus), the dialogue of a play. Some actors seek to derive this word from cacalogy. It is, however, far more likely to have been derived by the equestrian performers, who introduced and popularised it, from the more homely "cluck, cluck" of the humble barn-door fowl, after the process of laying an egg.

When manager of Astley's, the great Ducrow, who shared the hatred which his craft has always more or less entertained towards the actor, was wont to apostrophise the performers in his equestrian drama after this fashion: "Come, I say, you mummies" (see MUMMERS), "cut your *cackle*, and come to the 'osses!"

(Roughs), talk.

He was dabs at the *cackle*.—*Punch*.

**Cackle-chucker** (theatrical), the prompter, whose duty it is to "chuck out" the words, *i.e.*, to prompt the actors when they forget, or don't know the words—a matter of rare occurrence amongst the hierarchy of English actors. As a rule, the prompter is the hardest worked and the worst paid man in the

theatre. Notwithstanding his proverbial industry and ability, under no concatenation of circumstances has a prompter ever been known to "give the word" at the precise moment when it is wanted. One of our most famous stage-managers, a well-known tragedian, is wont to affirm with grim humour that he has observed during a prolonged experience that the first qualification for a prompter is "not to know how to prompt."

**Cackle merchant** (theatrical), the author of a play.

**Cackler** (popular), talker.

The captain was a good-looking fellow, and a good fellow, too. "He ain't much of a *cackler*," thought Susie, when they had sat together for a little while.—*Ally Sloper's Half Holiday*.

(Thieves), a fowl; "prig of *cackler*," one who steals fowls.

**Cackler's ken** (thieves), hen roost.

**Cackle-tub** (common), a pulpit. Very old slang, but still in use.

"Jack, he goes to church," said Hass, lifting her eyebrows dubiously, "I don't rightly know to what shop, and it's too far off, maybe, and I ain't got a prayer-book; but I sorter think if yer'll borrow Lucy's chair to wheel me, I'll go and sit under the *cackle-tub* in Little Bethel next Sunday.—*Savage: London*.

**Cackling-chete** (old cant), a fowl.

She has a *cackling-chete*, a grunting-*chete*, ruff pecke, cassan and poplarr of yarum.—*T. Harman: Caveat*.

*i.e.*, "She has a fowl, a pig, bacon, cheese, and milk porridge."

**Cackling - cove** (popular and thieves), an actor.

**Cackling farts** (old), eggs.

**Cad** (common). The word is hardly slang in some of its senses. It has various meanings, such as omnibus conductor.

The spirited proprietor, knowing Mr. Barker's qualifications, appointed him to the vacant office of *cad* on the very first application.—*Sketches by Boz (The First Omnibus Cad)*.

An 'Arry or street boy; a mean or ill-bred fellow; or one vulgar in feeling, to be met with, like the snob, in every class of society. Among a certain class, tradesmen, merchants, workmen.

Thirty years ago, and even later, the young men of the labouring classes were the *cad*s, the snobs, the blackguards.—*Kingsley: Alton Locke*.

At public schools and universities the term applies to townsmen. Possibly derived from "cadger," or Irish *cad*s, fustian, rag. More probably from *cadet*, used in a sense of inferiority. "Caddee" is a provincialism for under-servant, and in France, in the provinces, *cadet* is a nickname sometimes given to a poor, half-witted hanger-on, to a young farm-servant, or to an ass. "Un fameux *cadet*" is an expression used by the French in a contemptuous manner, and applied to a puny fellow who puts on airs. It has been suggested that *cad* comes from the Scotch *cadie*, a term for-

merly applied to the carriers of sedan-chairs. The character and occupation of these men were regarded with much contempt.

**Caddy-butcher** (popular), explained by quotation.

The calf . . . the veterinary surgeon had advised him to sell it to some *caddy-butcher*, i.e., one who buys horses to sell for horse meat.—*Standard*.

**Cade, the** (society), the Burlington Arcade. At certain times of the day this covered walk is the lounge of fast men of the town and the better class of the *demi-monde*.

**Cadge to**, properly to beg; supposed to be derived from *cadge*, a basket carried by beggars, in the same way that to beg is from "bag," originally to carry. Slangily applied to waiters who hang about for a gratuity.

Mr. — has, further, my congratulations on the excellence of the waiters employed. They are smart, don't *cadge*, and are models of civility.—*Sporting Times*.

(Scholastic), to try and get pupils or hints by sneaking means.

**Cadge-cloak** (old cant), a beggar.

*Cadge-cloak*, curtal, or curmudgeon, no Whip-Jack, palliard, patrico . . . nor any other will I suffer.—*Bampfylde Moore Carew*.

**Cadger**, properly a trickster, a tramp or vagabond who either begs or sells small articles by the way as he tramps from place to place.

The full extent of the society's usefulness, according to vulgar prejudice, is represented by the unfortunate *cadger* pounced on in the act of receiving alms, and carried before a magistrate to account for that enormous iniquity.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

Slang meaning explained by quotation.

I may here remark that amongst people of my born grade no one is so contemptuously regarded as he who is known as a *cadger*. The meaning they set on the word is not the dictionary meaning. The *cadger* with them is the whining beggar—the cowardly impostor, who, being driven or finding it convenient to subsist on charity, goes about his business with an affectation of profoundest humility, and a consciousness of his own unworthiness; a sneaking, abject wretch, aiming to crop a meal out of the despising and disgust he excites in his fellow-creatures.—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins.*

### Cadging, properly begging.

I've got my living by casting fortins, and begging, and *cadging*, and such like.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn.*

I don't say that they were all beggars—probably not more than a third of them were—but what one in vain looked for was the "jolly beggar," the oft-quoted and steadfastly believed in personage who scorns work because he can "make" in a day three times the wages of an honest mechanic by the simple process of *cadging*.—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

Slangily applied to cabmen when they are off the rank soliciting fares, or to waiters who hang about and fawn for a gratuity.

**Cady** (popular), a hat, from an old style resembling a barrel. "Cade," provincial English for a barrel or small cask.

**Caffre'stightener** (South African), bread or food of any kind, as distinguished from drink.

**Cag, to** (schoolboys), to irritate (Hotten).

**Cage** (thieves), a prison.

**Cagg, to** (military), to abstain for a certain time from liquor. Grose, in his "Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue," says, "This is a military term used by private soldiers, signifying a solemn vow or resolution not to get drunk for a certain time, or, as the term is, 'not till their *cagg* is out,' which vow is commonly observed with strictness;" *e.g.*, "I have *cagged* myself for six months," "Excuse me this time and I will *cagg* for a year." This term is also in use in Scotland.

**Cagmag** (popular), scraps, odds and ends of butcher meat, unpalatable food; properly an old goose.

**Cahoot, in** (American), to be intimately concerned with any one in an affair. There can be little doubt that it came from either the Dutch *Kajuit* or German *Kajüte*, or perhaps the same in Old Saxon, meaning a cabin, implying living or messing together. French *cahute*, a hovel, renders this more probable.

**Cain and Abel** (rhyming slang), a table.



**Cake** (American and provincial English), a man without much sense, or one wanting in ideas; not so much a fool as a mere nothing. A weaker form is expressed by saying, "He's a *cake* only half-baked." This expression is most frequently heard in Philadelphia.

"To take the *cake*," to surpass, excel, to be first in anything. This coincides oddly, though entirely accidentally, with a conjectured meaning of the origin of Pretzel (*q. v.*).

He's always up to doing folks,  
He's always on the wake;  
He's after profit when he jokes,  
On that "he takes the *cake*."  
—*Queer Bits*.

**Cakey** (popular), soft, foolish, or empty-headed; from the provincial English "cake," a foolish fellow.

**Cakey-pannum-fencer** (street), a street pastry-cook.

**Calaboose** (American), from the Spanish *calabozo*, the common name for a watch-house or prison, especially in New Orleans.

I went on board de oder day,  
To hear wot de boatmen had to say,  
Den I let my passion loose,  
An' dey jammed me fast in de *calaboose*.  
—*Negro Song*.

**Calculate, to** (American). Although it cannot be denied that many people in New England often use the word *calculate* as a synonym for "guess," to

express every form of thought, such as "to esteem, suppose, believe, think, expect, intend," &c., this is far from being universally the case. Calculation sets forth a more deliberate action of the mind, and is more associated with thought. A Yankee will generally *calculate* the chances of anything, when he would not guess them. *Calc'late*, which is nothing but the result of rapid conversation, may be heard in England as in America.

**Calf** (common), an idiotic or stupid person; *calf*-headed, cowardly.

She had a girlish fancy for the good-looking young *calf* who had so signally disgraced himself. — *Hamilton Aidé: Morals and Mysteries*.

**Calf-clingers** (popular), explained by quotation.

Ɔ Knee-breeches were just going out of fashion when I was a little boy, and *calf-clingers* (that is, trousers made to fit the leg as tight as a worsted stocking) were "coming in." — *J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Calf's-head** (popular), a white-faced man with a large head.

**Calico** (common), weak, lean.

In such a place as that your *calico* body had need have a good fire to keep it warm. — *Nathanael Bailey: Colloquies of Erasmus, Translated*.

How a shrewd, down-east Yankee once questioned a simple Dutchman out of his well-fed steed, and left him instead a vile *calico*-mare in exchange. — *Sala: The Seven Sons of Mammon*.

**Calico-bally** (American), a frequenter of calico-balls. About fifty years ago in Philadelphia it was usual to speak of balls frequented by factory girls as "slewers," and the commoner kind of grisettes as *calico* or dollar balls; hence *calico-bally* has come to signify, when applied to a young gentleman dissipated or fast, one who goes anywhere for amusement.

I once was a cobby and hack young man,  
And a little bit *calico-bally*;  
A picture-card-out-of-the-pack young man,  
And frequently music-hally.

—*Concert Hall Song.*

**Calico yard** (Australian), a kind of corral. The expression is used by drovers.

**California, Californians,** money. Term generally applied to gold only (Hotten).

**Call** (theatrical), big *call*, a warm *recall* before the curtain.

Charley played with all his old animation and grace, and got a *big call*.—*George R. Sims: Ha! Ha!*

To *call* a piece is to have it brought on in rehearsal after a first performance with a view to alterations.

(American), to have the *call*, to be preferred, have the chance, to be wanted.

Tall girls *have the call* now. They are the fashion this season.—*Detroit Tribune.*

**Call-a-go** (street patter), to leave off trying to sell anything and to remove to another spot, to desist. Also to give in, yield at any game or business. Pro-

bably from the *go* in cribbage (Hotten).

**Calle** (American thieves' slang), a woman's gown. German Hebrew *kalle*, a girl.

**Callee** (pidgin-English), curry. "No can chaw-chaw t'at *callee*."

**Callithumpian, Calliathumpian serenade** (American), a serenade after the fashion of a *charivari*, in which old kettles with sticks, gridirons, cows' horns or tin horns, penny trumpets, or anything that will make a horrible and discordant sound is employed. It is possibly from the Yiddish *calle*, a bride, and means bride-thumping or making a noise at a bridal, or from "call" and "thump."

Hartmann got married. . . . Hartmann's neighbours thought it would be a bright thing to give him a *calliathumpian serenade* . . . occasion. So they got under his window and blowed and snorted, and rung their dinner-bells, and brayed on their bark horns till there was a pause. Then Hartmann stuck his head outen the winder and said: "Friends, Romans, and fellow-citizens! I thank you for the honour of this musical treat, which I suppose to your ears is as good a one as can be given. But it wants one thing. It lacks the exhilarating tones of the shotgun, an' there it is, d——n you!" Saying this, he fired two barrels of small shot among 'em, and they scattered. The *serenade* was over.—*Phil. Hartmann and the Boys.*

**Call-party** (bar), given in hall by students called to the bar in the Middle Temple.

**Calp, kelp** (old cant), a hat.

**Cāmbra** (tinker), a dog.

**Camden-town** (rhyming slang), a "brown" or halfpenny.

**Camel's complaint** (city), the hump, *i.e.*, low spirits.

**Camesa** (thieves), a shirt or chemise. From the Spanish or Italian. Written also *kemesa*, as appears from the following quotation.

My thimble of ridge and my driz  
*kemesa*,

All my togs were so niblike and plash.  
—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

**Camister** (popular), a clergyman, from his wearing a white gown; "camisated," *i.e.*, one who is dressed with a shirt outward.

**Camp, to** (Australian), to floor, to put down. The metaphor here is the same as to "make," to "take a back seat;" to *camp*, to make to *camp*, implying that your rival cannot stand up to you. According to Wright *camp* is a provincialism meaning to contend, from the Anglo-Saxon *compan*.

At punching oxen you may guess  
There's nothing out can *camp* him;  
He has, in fact, the slouch and dress  
Which bullock-driver stamp him.  
—*H. Kendall: Billy Vickers.*

**Camp candlesticks** (military), empty bottles and bayonets, from the fact that in the exigencies of military life these articles are often used for the purpose.

**Camp-horse** (Australian). This term, peculiar to the East, is thus explained by Mr. Finch Hatton:—

Both my brother and Frank were very sound hands at cutting out, and they were both riding first-rate "camp-horses," so I watched them at work with the greatest interest. A *camp-horse* is one used for cutting out cattle on a camp, and very few horses are good at it; but the performance of a really first-class one is a sight worth seeing. Each man picks his beast, and edges him gently to the outside of the mob, on the side of the camp nearest the draft-mob. The instant the animal finds itself cut off from the camp, it makes the most desperate efforts to rejoin the herd, and the speed at which a bullock can travel, and the activity with which he turns, are marvellous.—*Finch Hatton: Advance Australia.*

**Can** (American), a dollar; a "canary" was very old English slang for a gold coin. A gold-piece is also called a "canary-bird" in New York.

**Canard**, now recognised. French *canard*, literally duck, and metaphorically false news. The first *canard* is said to have been the famous story illustrating the voracity of ducks. Thirty ducks were taken, one was chopped up fine, feathers and all, and the others ate it. Then a second was minced, and so on, till within an hour only one duck remained. Three similar stories are told by a French writer as to the origin of the term. Hence *canarder*, to humbug or spin yarns. "Donner des *canards*" is given in Hautel's

Dictionary (1808) with the meaning of to deceive.

"My dear," said Mrs. Snaggs to her husband, "what is a *canard*?" "Why, a *canard* is something one *canardly* believe, of course." "Oh, to be sure! Why couldn't I think of that?"—*Rare Bits*.

The announcement that appeared in these columns, to the effect that in future no advertisements from persons offering to give tips would be accepted by us, has given rise to the usual *canards*, and has brought into play the imaginative faculties of the "London Correspondent."—*Sporting Times*.

**Canary** (old), a sovereign, from the colour. French argot, *jaunct*.

**Canary-bird** (common), a mistress. (Thieves), a prisoner.

**Candle keepers** (Winchester College), the inferiors (all those who are not prefects) who have been longest in the school have certain privileges, as wearing a "cow-shooter," or round-topped hat. They used to be called "jolly keepers."

**Candlestick** (Winchester College), a corruption of candidate. Those who go in for the college entrance examination are termed *candlesticks*.

**Candlesticks** (London), the fountains at Trafalgar Square.

There was his pillar (Nelson's) at Charing-Cross, just by the *candlesticks* (fountains).—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Candy-pull** (American), a *candy-pull* is a party of both sexes at which molasses or sugar is boiled

and pulled by two persons (whose hands are buttered) to give it proper consistency, and then mixed and pulled again, till it becomes true *candy*. The term is used in slang in many ways.

The good old-fashioned amusement known as a *candy-pull* has had more or less of a revival in society this season. Whatever the time of its first advent, it was quite popular about twenty years ago as a society entertainment, but it seemed to run its course and died away. At that period *candy-pulls* were given in some of the most aristocratic mansions on Fifth Avenue, and the rollicking scenes were oftentimes quite democratic in the fun, however full-dressed might have been their presentation.—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

**Cane** (common), "to lay *Cane* upon Abel;" to beat with a cane.

**Cane nigger** (West Indian), a happy-go-lucky fellow, one devoid of care and anxiety. From the circumstance that in "cane time" the negroes are fat and happy. As "fat as a nigger in cane time" has become proverbial in Antigua.

**Caners** (fashionable). In the summer of 1886, at several watering-places, almost every young lady carried a *canc*. It was originally an American fancy.

**Canister** (common), a hat; also "canister cap."

Turning round, I saw my unfortunate beaver, or *canister*, as it was called by the gentry who had it in their keeping, bounding backwards and forwards.—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(Pugilistic), the head.

**Cank** (old), dumb, silent.

**Cannibals** (Cambridge), the training-boats for the Cambridge freshmen or the rowers themselves.

**Cannis-cove** (American), a dog-fancier. A word current in New York. In Dutch thieves' slang the Latin word *canis* is used for a dog, but, as the accent falls on the last syllable, it is thought to be derived from the French *caniche*. This is the more probable as the Dutch word is limited to small dogs.

**Cannon** (turf), the collision of two horses during a race; from billiards. Apparently on the *lucus a non* principle, the jockey bearing this name (Thomas Cannon) is celebrated for his scrupulous and honourable avoidance of such a mishap.

(Common), to *cannon*, to come into collision. French slang *caramboler*, literally to make a cannon at billiards.

Roaring with pain and terror, the boy *cannoned* into the very hand of a policeman, who seized him.—*Shirley Brooks: Sooner or Later.*

**Canon** (thieves), drunk.

One night I was with the mob, I got *canon* (drunk), this being the first time. After this, when I used to go to concert-rooms, I used to drink beer.—*Horsley: Jettings from Jail.*

*Canon*, literally having used the "can" freely.

The French slang for a glass of wine is *canon*. *Canonner*

is to drink wine at a wine-shop, or to be an habitual tippler; and *se canonner* is to get drunk.

*Canon* is a very common word in German for a drinking-cup. Hence he is "canonised," he is "shot," *i.e.*, he is drunk. "Er ist geschossen" (Körte Proverbs). The word is naturally confused with *can*, German *Kaune*, a tankard, and *canoncnstiefel*, or "cannon" (*i.e.*, long boots), which are a common pattern for tankards.

Who will not empty his boots like a *can*,  
He is indeed no German man.

—*Common Saying.*

**Canoodle, to** (English and American), to fondle, pet, dally, bill and coo.

I meet her in the evening, for she likes to take a walk

At the moment when the moon cavorts above,

And we prattle and *canoodle*, and of everything we talk,

Except, of course, that naughty topic love.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

Possibly from "cannie," gentle.

**Canoodler** (American), explained by quotation.

"Pray, good sir, what is a *canoodler*?"

"Tell you, mum, queer business, mum, but prosperous, money—heaps of it, mum, for you and me"—and he winked significantly, jerked up a chair and squatted in it, all in a breath. . . . Undeterred, he rattled on: "I'm an original thinker, mum. Invent business opportunities. Share'm with actors, and then we *canoodle*—divvy the profits. Me and Sheridan made a big thing on the Japanese advertising screen in 'School for Scandal.' Big thing."—*Green Room Jokes.*

**Cant** (pugilistic), blow, a “*cant* on the chops,” a blow on the face. (Tramps), explained by quotation.

We broke one window because the house was good for a *cant*—that’s some food—bread or meat, and they wouldn’t give it us.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

Also a gift, as a “*cant* of togs,” a gift of clothing. In these senses, from *cant*, to divide, as used by Jusser, p. 278. Hence *cant*, a sham.

(Thieves), to *cant* the cues, to explain a matter, to tell a story.

“But *cant* us the cues. What was the job?” “A pinch for an emperor’s slang. We touched his leather too, but it was very lathy.”—*On the Trail.*

**Canteen** (South African), a roadside tavern; natives often call all kinds of drink *canteen*.

**Canteen medal** (army), a good conduct stripe which is gained by absence from the defaulters’ book. The illusion implies that the bearer owes his stripe rather to a strong head than good resolution to keep away from the canteen.

**Canticle** (old slang), a parish clerk.

**Can’t say National Intelligencer** (American), equivalent to saying “he is drunk,” it being held that no one who is not sober can pronounce the name of this very old and respectable Washington newspaper. There is a

story in which the phrase originated—or which originated from it, to the effect that a father in Washington who had a dissipated son, always obliged him when he returned home at night to submit to this test. If he said *Nacial Intellencer*, he was obliged to sleep in the hay-loft of the stable.

**Canuck** (American), a Canadian. The origin of this word appears to be unknown. The derivation from *Connaught*, an Irishman, is far-fetched and doubtful. It may be possibly the first syllable of *Canada*, with an Indian termination, but this is mere conjecture. *Uc* or *uq*’ is a common Algenkin ending to nouns. It is probably an Indian word modified.

**Canvaseens** (nautical), sailors’ canvas trousers.

**Canvas town** (popular), the portion of Wimbledon Common occupied by the flags of the riflemen when encamped there—within the flags.

**Cap** (thieves), a false cover to a tossing coin. To *cap*, to assist as a confederate, especially of cardsharps. See **CAPPER**. (Universities), to *cap* the quadrangle, to cross the area of the college, cap in hand, in reverence to the “fellows” who sometimes walk there.

**Cape cod turkey** (American), salt fish. In the same way a “Yarmouth capon” is a bloater.

**Capella** (theatrical), a coat. From the Italian.

**Capeovi** (coster), sick, seedy.

**Caper** (American), a device, idea, or invention.

Langtry and Daly worked the Chinese Boy, but the Arab is a change, and then this trap *caper* knocks the newspaper fiends silly.—*New York Morning Journal*.

“The proper *caper*,” the last fashionable fancy, the latest “*comme il faut* device.”

Mind-reading is now *the proper caper*. “Take hold of my left hand and tell me what I’m thinking of,” said the head of the family to his confiding spouse. “Oh, yes,” said she, grasping his hand convulsively, “you are thinking about taking me to hear Patti.” She had to guess again.—*Boston Herald*.

(Streets), device, occupation for a living.

“Are you goin’ a tottin’?” “No.” . . . “Then what *caper* are you up to?”—*Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Caper-sauce** (common), to “cut *caper-sauce*,” to be hanged.

**Capers** (thieves), “merchant of *capers*,” a dancer.

And my father, as I’ve heard say,

Fake away!

Was a merchant of *capers* gay,  
Who cut his last fling with great applause.  
Nix my doll pals, fake away!

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

Also *caper* merchant.

**Capper** (American thieves), explained by quotation.

Gamblers are called knights of the green cloth, and their lieutenants, who are sent out after greenhorns, are called decoys, *cappers*, and steerers.—*New York Slang Dictionary*.

**Capper-clawing** (popular), a fight between females.

**Captain Copperthorne’s crew** (old slang), where every one wishes to rule the roast, or to take command.

**Captain Crank** (old cant), head of a gang of highwaymen.

**Captain Hackum** (old slang), a blustering bully, a Bombastes Furioso.

**Captain lieutenant** (old slang), the flesh of an old calf, meat that was neither veal nor beef. This phrase was of military origin, and was a simile drawn from the officer of that denomination. These men, while ranking as captains, only drew the pay of a lieutenant, and though not full captains were above the lieutenants.

**Captain Queernabs** (old slang), a man who was shabbily dressed and ill-conditioned.

**Captain Sharp** (old slang), a cheat, blackleg, or common swindler.

**Captain Tom** (old slang), the ringleader of a mob. Sometimes also the mob itself was so called.

**Cap your lucky** (American thieves), run away.

**Cap your skin, to** (thieves), to strip naked.

**Caravan** (old slang), a large sum of money, also a person swindled out of a large amount. (Pugilistic), a railway train, especially a train expressly chartered to convey people to a prize fight (Hotten).

**Caravanserai** (pugilistic), a railway station.

**Carcoon** (Anglo-Indian), a clerk, from the Mahratta *kārkaṅ*, a clerk (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

My benefactor's chief *carcoon* allowed me to sort out and direct despatches to officers at a distance who belonged to the command.—*Pandurang Hari*.

**Card** (popular), a character. A man may be a knowing, a downy, rum, or shifting *card*, or queer sort of *card*, according to circumstances.

Mr. Thomas Potter, whose great aim it was to be considered as a knowing *card*, a fast goer, and so forth.—*Sketches by Boz*.

The last time that he got run in,  
Is days about a week,  
And, on the charge of drunkenness,  
Was brought before the beak;  
He chaffed the magistrate and said,  
"You are a rum old *card*!"  
So forty shillings he was fined,  
Or else a month with hard.

—*G. Horncastle: The Frying Pan*.

(Common), a device, undertaking. A strong *card*, an undertaking likely to succeed. On the *cards*, likely, probable.

**Cardinal** (American), a lobster; *cardinal* hash, lobster salad (New York Slang Dictionary).

(Old), a lady's red cloak. Now mulled red wine.

**Cargo** (Winchester), explained by quotation.

Scholars may supplement their fare with jam, potted meats . . . or, better still, from the contents of *cargoes*, *i.e.*, hampers from home.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Carler** (New York thieves), a clerk.

**Carlicues, curlicues** (American), lively tricks, capers. The derivation from curly and cue seems to be due to a mere resemblance in sound, and an arbitrary combination. Bartlett suggests *caracole* (French), anagrams being common in colloquial language. The old word *carle-cat*, or *carlicat*, a male cat or kitten, may have influenced the formation of *carlicues*.

**Carnes** (popular), to heap up caresses, flatteries, compliments, and blandishments, with the view of deceiving the persons on whom they are lavished. The derivation is from *carne* or *cairn*, a heap or pile of stones. A similar idea led to the use of the phrase, "pile up the agony." The word is also "carnes," evidently from the gypsy *kāms*, often pronounced *karns*, meaning loves, likes, pets, &c. A *kām* or *karm*, which is nearer to the Sanskrit, is a desire, a love, &c.

**Carney**, flattery, hypocritical language. Supposed to be of Irish origin. To *carney* or come the



*carney*, to flatter, wheedle, insinuate oneself.

**Carnish** (thieves), meat, from the Italian *carne*; *carnish-ken*, a thieves' eating-house. In the French argot "carne" is tough meat.

**Carob** (tinker), to cut.

**Caroon** (costermongers), five shillings. Possibly from the Italian *corona*.

**Carpet** (common), to be called upon the *carpet*, or to be *carpeted*, to be scolded, reprimanded, to have to give an account of one's self.

Poor Percy was often *carpeted*, and as often he promised amendment.—*Mark Lemon: Golden Fetters*.

What looked to most people like a miscarriage of justice occurred in connection with the August Handicap, won by Rhythm. George Barrett, who rode the second, was *carpeted*, on the complaint of the apprentice Allsopp (inspired by his master), for foul riding.—*Sporting Times*.

(Masonic), the painting representing the emblems of a degree.

**Carpet-bagger** (popular), a term introduced from America. A man who seeks election in a place with which he has no connection (T. L. O. Davies).

Other *carpet-baggers*, as political knights-errant unconnected with the localities are called, have had unpleasant receptions.—*Guardian Newspaper*.

Synonymous with *carpet-bag* politician.

Wright gives the definition:

*Carpet-bagger*, an opprobrious appellation applied to a resident of one of the Northern States, who after the Civil War of 1861-65 removed to the South for temporary residence, and the promotion of personal and selfish ends.

**Carpet-bag recruit** (army), one of the better class who joins with his baggage, with other clothes in fact than those in which he stands.

**Carpet-swab** (popular), *carpet-bag*.

A little gallows-looking chap . . . with a *carpet-swab* and mucking togs.—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

**Carpet tom-cat** (military), an officer who shows much attention to, and spends a great deal of his time in the company of ladies.

**Carrier** (old), a tell-tale. (Thieves), a rogue employed to look out and watch upon roads, at taverns, &c., in order to carry information to his gang.

**Carrier-pigeon** (thieves), a swindler, one who formerly used to cheat lottery office-keepers; now used among betting-men to describe one who runs from place to place with commissions (Hotten).

**Carrion case** (popular), a shirt, a shift.

**Carrion-hunter** (old cant), an undertaker.

**Carrots, caroty-nob** (common), applied to a red-haired person.

"Here, one of you boys—you, *Carrots*—run to the 'Compasses' and tell Mr. Kiddy he's wanted." A sharp, red-haired lad darted off with the message.—*Mark Lemon: Loved at Last.*

**Carry, to** (old cant), to *carry* the keg is said of one easily angered. An allusion to *fery* spirits.

**Carry corn, to** (common), to bear success well and equally. It is said of a man who breaks down under a sudden access of wealth—a successful horse-racing man and unexpected legatees often do—or who becomes so affected and intolerant, that "he doesn't *carry corn* well" (Hotten).

**Carry me out!** (American), an expression of incredulity or affected disgust. It implies feeling faint and requiring to be carried out into the fresh air. It would be called forth by a bad pun, or an impossible story, or "blowing;" often preceded by "oh, good night," and sometimes intensified by the addition of "and leave me in the gutter."

**Carry on, to** (common), to make love to, to flirt openly.

Also to joke a person to excess, to have a great spree, to be lively or arrogant, or act in any out of the way manner.

There is a time in the life of every young lady when she feels like *carrying on*. No matter how modest, and pious, and truly good a girl may be, a day comes when she feels like doing something ridiculous, and creating a great laugh.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Cart** (turf), an owner is said to be "in the *cart*," or *carted*, when his horse is prevented winning by some fraud on the part of those in his employment. Instances are not wanting where the public have been put "in the *cart*" by an owner who resents their interference with his field of speculation.

(City.) When two or three fellows are playing at dominoes or cards, the one who has the lowest score but one, at any moment of the game, is said to be "in the *cart*." The lowest score is called "on the tail-board."

Also race-course: "traversed the *cart*," walked over the course.

**Carted** (old), signified taken to execution or whipped at the cart's tail.

**Carts** (popular), a pair of shoes; also "crab shells."

**Cart-wheel** (thieves), five-shilling piece. French slang has *roue de derrière* for a five-franc piece.

**Carvel** (New York thieves), jealous. Probably meaning also in love or wooing; from *carve*, to make love to. *Vide* Halliwell.

**Ca-sa** (legal), a writ of *capias ad satisfaciendam*.

**Casa, caser, carser** (costermongers and negro minstrels), a house, Italian. (Theatrical), a house. French slang has *case* with the same signification.

**Cascade** or **hang out** (theatrical), scenic effect at conclusion of scene or performance. (Popular), to *cascade*, to vomit.

**Case** (American), a dollar, good or bad. In England a bad crown piece. Hebrew, *kefef*, silver, *קֶפֶץ*; hence *kasch*, a head-piece (*i.e.*, a coin), and the Yiddish *caser*, a crown.

(Tailors), “*case of pickles*,” a hopeless *case*; “he is the greatest *case* evermore,” he is the worst man known, or, he is a most remarkable individual.

(Old), a brothel. Also a water-closet. (Thieves), a house.

**Caser** (thieves), explained by quotation. *Vide* CASE.

So one morning I found I did not have more than a *caser* (five shillings).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Cask** (society), a brougham.

**Cass, cassan** (thieves and roughs), cheese. From the Italian *cacio*. It is remarkable that this, the oldest slang for cheese, is still current among thieves in New York. It is found in nearly all the Latin, Teutonic, and Celtic languages. In old cant, *casson*. It is generally supposed to have been introduced by the gypsies.

Here's ruffpeck and *cassons*, and all of the best,  
And scraps of the dainties of gentry  
cofe's feast.

—*Broome: Jovial Crew.*

**Cassan.** See CASS.

**Cassie** (printers), wrinkled, stained, or outside sheets of paper. Old provincial, *cassen*,

cast off. From *casse*, to discharge, cashier. Latin, *cassare*, to break.

**Cast** (popular). Men in small boats who want to be towed behind steamers say “give us a *cast*” (Hotten).

**Castieau's hotel** (Australian thieves' patter), the Melbourne jail, so called from Mr. J. B. Castieau, the governor of the Melbourne jail.

He “caught” a month and had to “white it out” at “diamond-cracking” in *Castieau's hotel*.—*The Australian Printer's Keepsake.*

**Castle-rag** (rhyming slang), a “flag” or fourpence.

**Cast-offs** (nautical), landsmen's clothes.

**Castor** (common), a bicycle. Properly a small wheel.

Mr. C—, who being driven by a lady whose carriage was molested by cads on *castors*, climbed solemnly down, and . . . administered a well-deserved collective liding to the crowd.—*Sporting Times.*

**Cast up one's account, to.** *Vide* ACCOUNTS.

**Casual** (common), a tramp or poor man, who seeks shelter at night at a workhouse.

I have, at the risk of shocking the reader of delicate sensibilities, quoted at full the terms in which my ruffianly *casual* chamber fellow delivered himself of his opinion as to the power of “check” illimitable.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Cat** (popular), a drunken, fighting prostitute. The *puendum f.* In French, *chat*. Generally termed

by girls "pussy." Also contemptuously applied to a woman.

(Society), "an old *cat*," an old lady of malicious disposition, who has *une mauvaise langue*, and is always saying disagreeable things and telling ill-natured stories. *Cat*, or old *cat*, is often applied by servants to their mistress.

Well, look here, Jessie, I am determined to have some fun while the *cat's* away.—*Truth*.

"A tame *cat*" is a man in society who always has the *entrée* of a house and is treated almost like one of the family, and who, if a bachelor, is not looked upon as a likely suitor for one of the daughters, but is made general use of when a man is wanted in a hurry to fill up a vacancy.

(Thieves), lady's muff. To "free a *cat*," to steal a muff. To go out "*cat* and kitten" hunting, is stealing pewter pots from publicans. (Popular), to "shoot the *cat*," to vomit. (Tailors), to "whip the *cat*," to work at private houses. (Infantry), to "shoot the *cat*," to sound the bugle for defaulters' drill.

**Cat and kittens** (thieves), quart and pint pots.

**Cat and mouse** (rhyming slang), house.

**Catawampously** (American), fiercely, eagerly, violently. "*Catawampously* chewed up," completely defeated, utterly demolished.

There is something cowardly in the idea of disunion. Where are the wealth and power that showed us fourteen millions? Take to our heels before three hundred thousand slaveholders for fear of being "*catawampously* chewed up."—*Frederick Douglas: A Negro Orator*.

**Catch** (popular), or "a great *catch*," woman or man worth marrying. Generally applied to wealthy men and heiresses, or "warm" widows.

I am friends with her ma, I stand drinks to her pa,

They think I'm a *catch*, that is plain.

—*G. Horncastle: I'll See you again in the Morning (Ballad)*.

**Catch a bob, to** (American), a boy's expression for getting on behind and taking a ride gratis; getting a lift.

"Bob, what does your father do?" inquired a farmer of a lad who had *caught a bob* on his sleigh.—*American Newspaper*.

**Catch a lobster, to** (American), same as the English "to catch a crab."

She is not the first hand that *caught a lobster* by puttin' in her oar afore her turn, I guess.—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker*.

**Catch on a snag, to** (American), to meet one's superior.

In rough Western parlance a man who falls in with such a player (a man who, bearing a high reputation for all-round godliness, is a crack "poker" player) *catches on a snag*, and it is said that every one who visits the North-West comes across sooner or later the snag on which he is to catch.—*Cumberland: The Queen's Highway*.

**Catch bet** (popular), a bet made for the purpose of entrapping

the unwary by means of a paltry subterfuge (Hotten).

**Catchee** (pidgin-English), to get, have, own, possess, hold. "My look-see one piecee man *catchee* chow-chow"—"I saw a man eating." "My *catchee* waifo"—"I am—or am to be married." "My no *catchee* one flin inside allo t'at house"—"I have not one friend in all that family."

Suppose one man no *catchee* cash, he no can play at game;

Supposey pigeon no hab wing, can no make fly all same.

—*Wang-ti.*

**Catch-'em-alive** (common), paper smeared with a sticky substance to catch flies.

A picture-room devoted to a few of the regular shaky old saints, with such coats of varnish that every holy personage served for a fly-trap, and became what is now called in the vulgar tongue a *catch-'em-alive*, *O.*—*Charles Dickens: Little Dorritt.*

Also a small-tooth comb, alluding to the tenants in the hair of dirty people.

**Catch on, to** (common), imported from America; to accept an offer, to understand.

Randolph looked rather puzzled at first, but when he *did catch on* to the Archbishop's meaning, he had to be thumped on the back by his pal Chamberlain, to prevent him from choking.—*Funny Folks.*

"You *catch on*," is an invitation to take one's turn, to follow suit.

(Theatrical), a play is said to be *caught on* when successful.

**Catch on the hop, to** (common), to catch or find one by taking

one's chance when he is travelling or moving about. Also to catch unawares.

**Catch-pole** (old slang), a sheriff's officer.

**Catever** (popular), poor, bad, of doubtful quality. According to Hotten, from the *Lingua Franca* and Italian *cattivo*, bad. "Well, how's things: bona?" "No, *catever.*"

**Catfish death** (American), suicide by drowning.

Col. "Pat" Donan doesn't like the play of "Hamlet." Hear the eloquent adjective slinger: "I have no patience, much less sympathy, with a wretched weakling who goes around jabbering at dilapidated old ghosts in tin helmets and green gauze veils, under bogus moonlight; everlastingly threatening to do something, and never doing it; driving his sweetheart to lunacy and a *catfish death*, by his dime-museum freaks."—*Chicago Press.*

**Cat-heads** (old), a woman's breasts.

**Cat-lap** (common), weak drink.

**Cats' head** (Winchester College), the fag end of a shoulder of mutton.

**Cats' meat** (popular), the lungs.

**Cats' party** (familiar), a party to which none but those of the weaker sex are invited, and at which tea drinking and singing are indulged in.

She was once introduced to young M—. This was at a *cats' party* given by Mrs. — to a few ladies.—*Standard.*

It is likely Mr. Justice — thought it funny and appropriate to hint that a festivity was called a *cats' party* on account of the music.—*Town Talk*.

**Cats' water** (popular), gin, cat being here meant for woman.

**Cat's-skin earl** (parliamentary), one of the three senior earls in the House of Lords.

**Catting** (common), vomiting.

**Cattle** (popular), a kind. One talks of men being "*rum cattle*," "*queer cattle*," just as one talks of a man being "*a queer fish*" or "*a downy bird*."

But lawyers is *cattle* I feel to hate,  
And this one—I'd like to punch his head.

—*Keighley Goodchild: How Waif went to England*.

**Caucus** (American), lately introduced into England, originally a meeting of politicians called together to debate upon the claims of candidates for political or municipal offices, and agreeing to act together on the day of election.

What a *caucus* is, as popularly understood in England, needs no explanation; but the curious thing about the word is the seeming impossibility of ascertaining with any certainty its origin and derivation. The explanation generally given is that it is a corruption of "caulkers" or "calk-house." One authority says that the members of the shipping interest, the "caulkers" of Boston, were associated, shortly before the War of Independence, in actively promoting opposition to England, and that the word arose from their meetings in the caulkers' house or "calk-house."

Another derivation has, however, been proposed. In the "Transactions of the

American Philological Association, 1872," Dr. Hammond Trumbull suggests that the origin of the word is to be found in the native Indian *cau-cau-as-u*, meaning one who advises.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

It may be observed that the derivation of the word from "caulkers" is perfectly rational, and has been accepted for more than a century. There is a pun implied in the name ("caulker," a tremendous story, an overwhelming fellow) which probably aided to make it popular.

**Caught on the fly** (American), a phrase borrowed from ball play, but applied to being caught, interviewed, or otherwise arrested, while travelling.

Carter Harrison told that New York reporter that he "must be *caught on the fly*." According to his own umpiring, then, his New York speech was a foul bawl.—*American Newspaper*.

An English equivalent is "*caught on the hop*."

**Caulk, to** (nautical), to lie down on deck and sleep, with clothes on.

**Caulker** (society), a lie, derived from a "caulker," a stiff dram, that takes a considerable deal of swallowing, also supposed to be derived from "corker," a regular stopper. (Common), a stiff dram.

The Mobile officer joins us heartily in a *caulker*, and does not need to be pressed to take a little supper.—*Archibald Forbes: My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*.

**Caution** (general), any one who is peculiarly dressed, peculiar in his habits, or eccentric, some one who makes himself ridiculous. This word is an abbreviation of the expression "a *caution* to snakes."

Altogether he was a *caution* to look at.  
—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker.*

Also anything out of the common way.

Their win against Middlesex—who led off with a first innings of 301—by eight wickets is an example of one of their surprises, and what is vulgarly called a *caution*.—*Bailey's Monthly Magazine.*

**Cavaulting** (old), copulation.  
From the *Lingua Franca cavolta*.

**Cavaulting school** (old slang), a house of ill fame, a brothel.

**Cave-in** (American), to fall in. "A metaphor taken," says Hotten, "from an abandoned mining shaft," but it was used in America before 1849. Now generally applied to a failure, such as a bankruptcy, a collapse of stock speculations, or of political schemes.

That is what Colonel Sanderson and his colleagues in the representation of Irish landlordism call it—an absolute all-round *cave-in* on the part of the Government.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

It is also applied to any kind of indentation.

I went down dar wid my hat *caved in*,  
Du-da, du-da!

Came back home wid my pocket full of tin,

Du-da, du-da-day!  
—*Negro Minstrel Song.*

*Cave-in*, properly to "calve-in," a phrase introduced by Dutch navvies. Flemish *ink-alven*, to *cave-in*. Friesic *calven*, to calve as a cow, also to *cave-in*. The falling portion of earth is compared to a calf dropped by a cow (Skeat). From early times glaciers were called by the Dutch cows, and the icebergs which fell from them calves. The falling of the bergs was called calving.

**Cavort, to** (American), to kick up the heels like a horse at play, or to act extravagantly.

As long as there has been a stage for pretty women to *cavort* on, there have been impressionable youths to worship at the shrines of the pretty women.—*American Newspaper*

To move about in an aimless manner.

O Sal! yer's that derved fool from Simpson's, *cavortin'* round yer in the dew.  
—*Bret Harte: Penelope.*

**Cawbawn** (up-country Australian), spelt also *cobbon*, big, a word borrowed from the blacks, which has passed into bush-slang, and is generally used by bushmen.

"There," said Stone, pointing to the big house, "nobody has lived in the 'cawbawn humpy'—that is what the blacks call it—since Mr. Cosgrove went away."—*A. C. Grant: Bush-Life in Queensland.*

**Caxton** (theatrical), a wig.

**Cayuse** (cowboys), a horse.

**Caz** (thieves), cheese. See CASS.  
An easy dupe. As good as *caz*,  
easy to accomplish.

**Cedar** (prison), a pencil.

He was a "first-class" man, entitled to write every quarter. He provided *cedar* and a sheet of paper on which I wrote what was necessary.—*Evening News*.

**Century** (turf), a hundred pounds.

A little cheque for a *century* is the prize we offer this week for the successful accomplishment of the task of naming the first three.—*Sporting Times*.

**Cert** (turf), used in reference to a racing event thought to be about to have a successful issue.

A man who was burdened with debt  
Heard a *cert* and heavily bebt,  
But what should have won  
So badly did ron  
That quickly the man had to "gebt."  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Certainties** (printers). See UNCERTAINTIES. A vulgarism applied to infants of the male sex.

**Chaff-cutter** (old), slanderous tongue, slanderer.

**Chaffer** (popular), the mouth; a great talker.

One of these men had a wife who used to sell for him; she was considered to be the best *chaffer* in the row; not one of them could stand against her tongue.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

To "moisten one's *chaffer*," to have a drink.

**Chaffy** (Blue-coat School), spruce, amiable.

**Chai, chy, tchai** (gypsy), girl, woman; Romany, *chi*, a female gypsy.

**Chairus, cheirus, chyrus** (gypsy), time. Bonar gives this word also for "heaven."

**Chal** (gypsy), (pronounced *tchal*, *ch* as in church), a lad, a gypsy. Hotten says this was the old Romany term for a man, but it is as much in use as ever. A woman is not a *chie*, but a *chy* or *chai*, to rhyme with *why*.

**Chālava** (gypsy), I touch.

**Chal droch** (tinker), a knife.

**Chalk** (turf), unknown or incompetent. The names of most jockeys are printed on slides, which are kept ready at every race-meeting for insertion in the telegraph-board. Formerly a certain number of slate or black slides were used, so that the name of a new jockey could at once be written thereon in *chalk*. Hence "a *chalk*-jockey" came to mean one unknown, or unfavourably known, to fame. His name was not considered worth printing. (Common), unknown, obscure.

A list of remarkably *chalk*-titled personages.—*World*.

(Tailors), *chalk!* silence!

**Chalk - farm** (rhyming slang), arm.

**Chalks** (popular), by *chalks*, by far, by many degrees.



In chatting, singing, and dancing,  
 Don't we pass each night away,  
 We beat by *chalks* your finest parties,  
 I'll a wager lay.

We are all jolly, &c.  
 —*Song.*

Also "long *chalks*," originally an expression used by tailors only, alluding to the chalk lines on garments.

"From your counsel's statement and the seeming honesty of your countenance," said the learned magistrate, "I was quite convinced that you were innocent; but the evidence of the last witness has quite upset all my previous convictions."

"I wish it would upset all mine," growled the culprit.

But it didn't by long *chalks*, and his address was Millbank for the next six months.—*Sporting Times.*

Also the legs. To "walk one's *chalks*," to go away.

The prisoner has fabricated his pilgrim's staff, to speak scientifically, and perambulated his calcareous strata. "What?" Cut his stick, and walked his *chalks*.—*Kingsley: Two Years Ago.*

**Chalk, to** (nautical), to make one pay his footing or stand treat. At sea it is the custom the first time a new comer goes up a mast for some old hand to chase him up and try to get near enough to him to *chalk* his shoes. If he succeeds the new comer is expected to pay for a bottle of rum.

**Chalk up, to** (Australian slang, less frequent in England), to debit to a person. Undoubtedly the expression arose from the custom of the keeper of an ale-house making a note of the various

drinks consumed in a drinking bout, by scribbling them down with *chalk* upon the wall.

Whole weeks and months of hard-earned gold, by ounces and even pounds weight at a time, disappeared at these haunts, in a mazy account and reckoning between a landlord and his customer, *chalked up* during successive days of intoxication.—*W. Westgarth: Victoria late Australia Felix.*

(Common), *chalk* it up, put it to my account.

**Cham** (gypsy), cheek, leather, tin. *Chammerdino*, a slap on the cheek.

**Chamberlain** (Winchester College), the brewer of the college and school.

**Chamber of Horrors** (Parliamentary), the Peereses' gallery at the House of Lords, from its being railed round as if it contained objectionable or repulsive inmates.

There could be no doubt as to the inconvenience, the gallery being generally known as the *Chamber of Horrors*.—*Daily News.*

**Chammy** (society), champagne, termed also "cham," or "boy," and sometimes "fizz."

**Champagne Charley** (popular), any dissipated man or noted drinker of "fizz." The name of a song which appeared in 1868, which was set to a very pleasing and original air. The original *Charley* is said to have been a wine-merchant, who was in the habit of making presents of

bottles of *champagne* to all his friends.

**Champion**, very commonly used in America to signify pre-eminence. An exemplary humbug is described as "a *champion* fraud." A noisy candidate for office was denounced by a Chicago newspaper as "the *champion* gas-bag."

**Champ up**, to (popular), to tear up, pull upwards.

**Chancer** (tailors), one who exaggerates, or lies. Also one who attempts anything and is incompetent.

**Chancery**. To get a man's head into *chancery* is to get it under your arm so as to pummel it at ease. The allusion is obvious.

**Chance the ducks** (popular), an ironical phrase signifying "come what may" (Hotten).

**Chance your arm** (tailors), try, let it go, chance it.

**Chaney-eyed** (popular), with but one eye, or eyes like those of a Chinese, as *chaney* is sometimes used as a corruption of China.

It is another prisoner, who replaces the last individual—a "wall-eyed" or *chaney-eyed* prisoner, with an open mouth.—*The Graphic*.

**Chant** (old cant), an advertisement.

**Chant**, to (popular), to talk, inform, cry up, sing ballads, &c.; *chanting-coves*, reporters.

**Chanters** (popular), explained by quotation.

As long as one can remember, gangs of men have perambulated the highways in the frosty months, but until recently they were invariably *chanters* with a legend of coming all the way from Manchester. But song is eschewed in modern times.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Chanty** (nautical). "There are two kinds of sea songs: those which are sung at concerts and in drawing-rooms, and sometimes, but not very often, at sea, and those which are never heard off shipboard. The latter have obtained in this age the name of *chanty*, a term which I do not recollect ever having heard when I was following the life. It is obviously manufactured out of the French word" (W. Clark Russell).

**Chapel** (printers). As various references are made to matters arising out of the *chapel*, it is necessary to describe this institution. Technically, it refers to the meetings of the workmen to discuss trade matters, to settle disputes, and to consider charitable appeals, &c., and various rules are enforced for the guidance of the workmen and maintenance of good feeling amongst themselves. It has been supposed that the term arose from the fact that Caxton established

- the first printing-press in this country in Westminster Abbey. The officers of these chapels usually consist of a "father" and "clerk."
- Chapel of ease** (common), the water-closet.
- Chapper - cot** (Anglo - Indian). Hindu, *chappar-khat*, a bedstead with curtains.
- Chappie** (society), a term of endearment in use among the "mashers" of society when addressing their friends and acquaintances, much in vogue lately. A dandy.
- I am going to send this correspondence to *Punch*. Ta! ta! dear old *chappie*.—*Punch*.
- He was a harmless-looking *chappie*.—*Sporting Times*.
- Chapt** (old cant), thirsty.
- Char** (gypsy), grass.
- Charl-chorl** (gypsy), to pour out, vomit; *chorl it avree*, pour it out.
- Charge, to** (Winchester College), to run at all speed.
- Charing Cross** (rhyming slang), horse.
- Chariot-buzzing** (thieves), picking pockets in an omnibus.
- Charles, his friend** (theatrical), the walking gentleman, or secondary interesting young man of a play.
- Charley** (thieves), a gold watch; probably from the old word *Charley*, the watch or a watchman. (Tailors), the nap on a "faced" cloth, also a round-shouldered figure.
- Charley Bates' farm.** See BATES' FARM.
- Charley Lancaster** (rhyming slang), handkerchief, pronounced "handkercher."
- Charley-pitcher** (thieves), one who plays to win watches, or charleys. A *pitcher* is one who works the streets. In San Francisco in 1849 there were open-air monte players who only took watches for a bet. A sharper who entices countrymen into playing at some swindling game, such as "prick the garter" or "thimble-rig."
- Charley Prescott** (rhyming slang), a waistcoat.
- Charlie** (old), a name for a watchman.
- It was the duty of the watchman to call the hours, but no voice of any vigilant *Charlie* had as yet saluted the ears of Lowry.—*Turnpike Dick, or the Star of the Road*.
- Charlies** (Winchester College), thick string gloves, called thus from the Rev. Charles Griffith. (Popular), a woman's breasts, also "bubbies," "dairies."
- Charm** (thieves), a picklock.

**Charpoy** (Anglo-Indian), explained by quotation.

We must send down to the bazaar, and get tables, chairs, and *charpoy*s (bedsteads).—*W. H. Russell: My Diary in India in the Years 1858-59.*

**Charrshom, chershom** (tinker), a crown.

**Charter the bar, charter the grocery, to** (American), to buy all the liquor in a groggery or "rum-mill" and give it away freely to all comers. This is not an uncommon occurrence in the South and West.

This fine Arkansas gentleman raises several hundred bales;

Unless through drought, or worm, or some other contingency, his crop runs short and fails;

And when his crop is ginned and baled, he puts it on board a boat,

And *charters the bar*, and has a devil of a good spree while down to New Orleans he and his cotton float.

—*Albert Pike.*

Bolus was no niggard. He would as soon treat a regiment or *charter the grocery* for the day as any other way.—*J. G. Baldwin: David Bolus, Esq.*

**Chat** (thieves), a house; from chattels, or château.

I had not been at Sutton very long before I piped a slavey (servant) come out of a *chat* (house), so when she had got a little way up the double (turning), I pratted (went) into the house.—*Rev. J. W. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

"That's the *chat*," the proper words to use; the state or facts of a case.

Has the gentleman any right to be in this room at all, or has he not? . . . That's the *chat*, as I take it.—*Anthony Trollope: Orley Farm.*

**Chat-hole** (prison), a hole in the wall, made to carry on a conversation.

**Chats** (theatrical), properties; short for chattels. (Popular), lice. In this sense *chats* is probably from *chatel*, meaning cattle.

(Stock Exchange), London, Chatham, and Dover Railway stock.

**Chatta** (Anglo-Indian), an umbrella.

**Chatterers** (common), the teeth.

**Chattering** (prize ring), a blow on the mouth.

**Chatter broth** (old slang), a tea party.

**Chatty** (popular), filthy, lousy. A *chatty*, a lousy person; a "chatty doss," a bed with vermin. *Vide* CHATS.

**Chatty-feeder** (thieves), a spoon. *Vide* CHATTY.

**Chaunt or chant, to**, to take worthless horses to fairs and sell them by false representations.

Jack Firebrand and Tom Humbold . . . was here this morning *chanting* horses with 'em.—*Thackeray: Virginians.*

To *chaunt* the play, to explain the tricks and devices of thieves.

**Chaunted upon the leer** (old cant), an advertiser.

**Chaunter** (street), a man who sells ballads, last dying speeches, &c., in the streets. Street ballad singer.

The running patterer . . . is accompanied generally by a *chaunter*. The *chaunter* not only sings, but fiddles.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

A dealer who takes worthless horses to fairs and sells them by false representations.

**Chaunter-cull** (street). There are rhymsters who carry on a trade in London—though the headquarters appear to be in Birmingham—who write ballads to order on any subject, to be sung in the streets, on events that may interest the public: murders, executions, elopements, breaches of promise, suicides, or horrible railway accidents. The honorarium paid to these self-styled poets is said to vary from half-a-crown (the minimum) to three half-crowns (the maximum).

**Chauvering donna** (theatrical), a prostitute. *Chauvering* is cant for sexual intercourse. Also, “columbine, knofka.”

**Chauvering moll** (old cant), a prostitute.

**Chaw** (university), a trick; to *chaw*, to deceive. (American), to use up.

**Chawbacon** (common), a country clown, a rough, rude, uneducated rustic, a clodhopper; sometimes colloquially desig-

nated as “Giles” or “Hodge,” from the supposed prevalence of these patronymics among the rural population.

The *chaw-bacons*, hundreds of whom were the Earl's tenants, raised a shout.—*Savage: R. Medicott*.

**Chaw-buckt** (Anglo-Indian), a whip. Hindu, *chabuk*; gypsy, *chuckni*.

Ye same day Ramgivan was brought forth and slippered, the next day he was beat on ye soles of his feet, ye third day *chaw-buckt*, and ye 4th drub'd till he could not speak, and all to force a writing in our names for Rupees 50,000.—*Hedges*.

**Chaw over, to** (popular), to repeat one's words with a view to ridicule (Hotten).

**Chaws** or **chores** (American), small jobs. The handy man does *chores*.

Very early in the morning there is an unpleasant operation to be performed, called “doing *chaws*,” in the simple language of the farm. This luckily applied only to Charlie and Mr. C., who, I believe, except during the busiest part of the year, work the 300 acre farm without help. “Doing *chaws*,” by the way, means feeding the creatures generally.—*Phillips-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

(Popular), to have a bit of *chaws* refers to copulation.

**Chaw up, to** (popular), to finish one up. “Chawed up,” done for.

I felt as if I could *chaw* him right up, I was so mad.—*Sam Slick: The Clock-maker*.

**Cheapside** (old slang), “He came at it by way of *Cheapside*,” that

is, little or nothing was given for it.

**Cheat or nubbing-cheat** (thieves), the gallows.

See what your laziness is come to; to the *cheat*, for thither will you go now, that's infallible.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

**Chee** (pidgin), long; probably an abbreviation of *muchee* "much," "China-boy no stoppee chee tim."

**Chee-chee**, (gipsy), nothing, less, superfluous, also equivalent to "be silent."

**Cheek** (common), assurance, impudence. Probably from the habit of impudent persons of putting their tongue in their *check*.

Although she was neither good-looking  
nor young,  
And her virtues, if any, unknown and  
unsung,  
She'd a dangerous eye, and an eloquent  
tongue,  
And a *check* that was something  
sublime.

—*Sporting Times*.

Also, share or portion.

**Cheeks** (common), the posterior.

**Cheeky** (common), impudent.

Boys give me a good deal of annoyance, they are so very *cheeky*.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Cheese** (society), "quite the *cheese*," varied to the "Stilton," or "real Stilton," synonymous with quite the thing, from the Hindostani or Anglo-Indian *chiz*,

thing. Sometimes *cheese* is used as a derisive nickname for any man who has pretensions to being smart. (Schools), an adept; one boy will talk of another being an awful *cheese* at bowling, fives, Latin verses, &c. (R. M. Academy), hard *cheese*, equivalent to "hard lines," no luck; especially used at billiards. (Popular), *cheese* it, leave off. A corruption of cease.

I was just entering upon one of my own composition, when, sir, I was vulgarly requested to *cheese* it.—*Sporting Times*.

(Thieves), "*cheese* your barrikin," hold your noise. (Ninepins), the ball.

He sent the damaged *cheese* skimming and cannoning among the four great pins.—*Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co*.

**Cheese boxes** (American), the nickname given by irreverent Confederates to the ironclads of the Monitor type then (at the time of the Civil War) just invented. They, however, spoke even as disrespectfully of their own unsuccessful attempts at a similar class of vessel, calling them "tinclads."

**Cheese-cutter** (common), an aquiline nose; also a large, square peak to a cap. *Cheese-cutters*, bandy legs.

**Cheese-knife** (army), sword.

**Cheesemongers**, once a popular name for the First Lifeguards (Hotten).

**Cheese-toaster** (army), a sword.

I'll drive my *cheese-toaster* through his body.—*Thackeray: The Virginians*.

**Cheesy** (society), excellent, smart, varied sometimes to "rare Stilton," which might be said to be the square power of *cheesy*.

**Che-muck** (American), food; taken from the Indians of the North-West, and now current among the miners.

**Cherpin llyower** (tinker), book. "*Cherpin* appears to be vulgar. *Llyower* was on second thought declared by Owen to be the right word." Gaelic, *leabhar*.—*The Gypsies*. Vide **LYESKIN CHERPS**, telling fortunes.

**Cherry** (thieves), a young girl.

**Cherry-bums** (army). Vide **BUM**.

**Cherry-merry** (Anglo-Indian), a present of money.

**Cherry-merry-bamboo** (Anglo-Indian), a beating, a term probably invented by sufferers with very thick hides indeed.

**Cherry pie** (common), this term was formerly used with the sense of the more modern "tart," or girl.

**Cherry-pipe** (thieves), a woman. Pipe is rhyming slang for ripe.

**Cherry-ripe** (rhyming slang), a pipe.

**Chestnuts** (American and English), an exclamation used in reference to stale news.

The thing's got so bloomin' stale, I was afraid you'd yell *chestnuts* at me if I said anythin'.—*Sporting Times*.

**Chete** (old cant), this word was extensively used by the vagrant classes in reference to anything. Teeth were called "cracking" or "crunching *chetes*," swine "grunting *chetes*," a knife a "cutting *chete*," or the gallows a "hanging" or a "topping *chete*." To strike some *chete*, to steal something.

This word is used as an affix in the formation of names (Turner), and is equivalent, not to the gypsy *engro*, which means an active agent, but to *engree*, denoting "a thing." Thus *nab-chete*, a hat, literally a head-thing; a *cackling-chete*, chicken; *hearing-chetes*, ears. Possibly of Gypsy-Indian origin in common with the Anglo-Indian *chiz*, corrupted to *chitz*. *Chit* and *chitter* have also the meaning in gypsy of "a rag, a bit, a piece." It may, however, be derived from the root of *chattel*; M. E. *chatel*, property (also cattle); Old French *catel*. This would lead to the Low Latin *capitale* (Skeat), but there is possibly a different root in common with the Westmoreland *chat*, a fragment, *i.e.*, a thing or bit.

**Chew** (prison), a bit of tobacco.

A piece as large as a horse-bean, called a *chew*, is regarded as an equivalent for

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a twelve-ounce loaf and a meat ration.—*Greenwood: Gool Birds at Large.*

(American), to *chew* oneself, expressing vexation.

Say, do you know it's fairly rank to be back at school. Could *chew* myself. I hate it so.—*Springfield Republican.*

**Chewgah bag** (Australian black-fellows), the wild bee's store of honey.

**Chewing the cud** (common), the habit of chewing tobacco. It is curious to note that amongst the farmers and stock-keepers of Surrey the *cud* is called a *quid*—hence perhaps “a *quid* of tobacco.”

**Chewing the rag or fat** (army), grumbling.

Some of the “knowing blokes,” prominent among whom will be the “grouzers,” will, in all probability, be *chewing the rag or fat*.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks.*

**Chew it, to** (cowboys), to eat.

**Chic** (society), elegant, dashing, perfect. French, *chic*. For the various significations of the French word, *vide* Barrère's “Argot and Slang.”

One of the most *chic* functions of the present season in Paris was the dinner given last Wednesday by Princess Mathilde.—*The World.*

**Chice.** *Vide* SHICE.

**Chicken** (Anglo-Indian), embroidery. *Chicken-walla*, a pedlar of embroidery. Persian, *chikin*, art needlework.

(Common), a term, applied to

anything young, small, or insignificant; “*chicken stakes*,” small paltry stakes (Hotten).

**Chicken-butcher** (old slang), a poulterer.

**Chicken fixings** (American). Bartlett defines this as chicken-fricassee, but it is often used to denote chickens prepared in any way. The common expression “corn-bread and common doins, or wheat-bread and *chicken-fixins*,” intimates as much.

**Chicken Nabob** (old slang). If a man returned from India with a larger fortune than £50,000 or £60,000 he was called a *chicken nabob*.

**Chickerleary cove** (coster), an exceedingly sharp man.

**Chi-ike** (roughs), a street salute, a loud word of hearty praise, a cheer.

Now join in a *chi-ike*—the  
Jolly we all like,

I'm off with a party to the Vic.

—*Vance: The Chickerleary Cove.*

**Chi-iked** (tailors), chaffed unmercifully.

**Chik, chick** (gypsy), dirt, clay, ashes, sand. *Chikkli covvas*, objects of earthenware. *Sār chikklo*, all dirty.

“Beshdom adoi akonya,  
Te sār mán ásti dikk  
Sas kálo müllo wongur  
Te pāno, müllo *chikk*”—

“I sat there alone, and all one could see was black dead coals, and white dead ashes.”

—*O. Patteran.*



(Anglo-Indian), an abbreviation of *chicken*, or four rupees.

**Children's shoes** (popular), to "make *children's shoes*," to be made nought of (Hotten).

**Chill, to** (popular), to warm. From the expression to "take the *chill* off;" "chilled beer" for warmed beer is a very usual term.

**Chilo** (pidgin English), child.

Ping-Wing, he pie-man son,  
He velly worst *chilo* allo Canton,  
He steal he mother picklum mice,  
An' thlowee cat in bilin rice.  
Hab chow-chow up, an' "Now," talk he,  
"My wonda' where he meow-cat be!"  
—*The Song of Ping-Wing.*

**Chimany, chummeny** (gypsy), something, anything. *Dé mandy chomany*, "Give me something."

**Chiming** (thieves), praising a person or thing that is unworthy, for the purpose of getting off a bad bargain.

**Chimleyco** (popular), Pimlico.

If you're stopping  
Down in Wapping,  
Rotten Row, or *Chimleyco*.  
—*Song: There's a lot of fun in London.*

**Chimmel** (tinker), a stick.

**Chimmes** (tinker), wood or stick.  
*Vide* CHIMMEL.

**Chimney chops** (old slang), a name given to a negro.

**Chimney-pot** (common), a silk hat.

An excellent life-preserver may be made in a few seconds in the following manner: Lay a silk handkerchief on the ground and spread it open. Then place on it, brim downwards, a hat of the "*chimney-pot* sort," and tie the four corners of it together over the crown of it. The article so prepared may then be thrown to the drowning person; or, better still, it may be taken to him by some one that can swim.—*Ross's Variety Paper.*

**Chimney-sweep** (common), a black draught.

**Chin** (American thieves), a child; probably an abbreviation of *kinchen*. (American), to *chin*, to chat.

He was a worker, and liked nothing better than to get into a circle of young cow-punchers and *chin* and josh with them.—*Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

(Gypsy), to cut or write. This suggests the Indian cutting or graving all letters on palm-leaves, &c. (Hindu, *chink*, a scar.) *Chinamāngri*, a letter.

**Chinas** (Stock Exchange), Eastern Extension Telegraph Shares.

**China Street** (thieves). According to Vaux, *China Street* is a cant name for Bow Street, Covent Garden—where the celebrated police court is situated.

**Chinche, chints**, a bug. The authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary say that "this word is now quite obsolete both in India and England." But it has always been familiarly used as it now is in the United States, not as an euphemism, but as

the correct original Spanish word. It is remarkable that "bug" was originally a figurative and perhaps polite term for *chinche*.

**Chin-chin** (pidgin-English), a term derived from the Mandarin (standard dialect) *ts'ing, ts'ing*; Cantonese, *ch'ing, ch'ing*, equivalent to "thank you," or a polite "adieu" or salutation. In pidgin it is used for worship, prayer, or to make a request.

**Chin-chopper** (popular), a blow under the chin.

**Chine, choon, chen, chone** (gypsy), the moon.

**Chingarer, chingers** (gypsy), sparks. Hindu, *chingi*, spark.

**Chinger** (gypsy), to tear, split, scold, or quarrel; through.

**Chingerben** (gypsy), contrary, opposite.

**Chink** (thieves), money.

At knock'emsdown and tiddlywink,  
To be a sharp you must not shrink,  
But be a brick and sport your *chink*.  
—*The Leary Man*.

**Chinkers** (thieves), money.

Are men like us to be entrapped and sold,  
And see no money down, Sir Hurly-Burly?  
We're vile crossbow-men, and a knight are  
you,  
But steel is steel, and flesh is still but flesh,  
So let us see your *chinkers*.

—*Taylor: Philip Van Artevelde*.

Also handcuffs and shackles  
united by a chain.

**Chin-music** (English and American), talk, conversation.

"I am not," he said, "going to orate. You did not come here, I guess, to hear me pay out *chin-music*."—*The Golden Butterfly*.

(Common English), talking, speechifying.

But, bless yer, my bloater, it isn't all *chin-music*, votes and "'Ear, 'ear!" Or they wouldn't catch me on the ready, or nail me for ninepence. No fear!  
—*Punch*.

Also *chin* play.

**Chinqua soldi** (low theatrical), fivepence. From the Italian.

**Chinse** (Winchester College), a chance.

**Chin-wag** (common), officious impertinence (Hotten).

**Chip** (American journalism). Local items in newspapers are called *chips*, and sometimes the term is applied to the reporter who collects them. It was once suggested in a newspaper office in Philadelphia that the city reporters should be called "five-six," and the local editor, "seven-eight," in accordance with the well-known rhyme:—

Five, six—pick up *chips*;  
Seven, eight—lay them straight.

(American), to *chip*, to understand.

I knew at once that they had got scared, and had trenched up like a bevy of quails; so I said to Jim, "Now you let me do the talking, when they begin to sing 'Indians'—don't you *chip*?"—*Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Chip in** (American). Defined by Bartlett as meaning to contribute. He gives no etymology for the word. It has also another meaning, *i.e.*, to take shares in and contribute, as if ten men were all to *chip in* on any undertaking. Supposed to be derived from "chips," the counters which represent money in gambling. As implying concealment, in a slangy sense, it probably was something to the gypsy *chipper*, to hide; Hindu, *chipana*. *Tan chipána*, to hide the body, *i.e.*, one's self.

**Chipper** (American), lively. Possibly from "chippernigns," "chip-muk," or "chip-munk," a proverbially lively little squirrel. (*Sicurus striatus*, or striped squirrel.)

**Chippy** (common), unwell.

He was *chippier* than ever after a jamboree of abnormal magnitude.—*Sporting Times*.

**Chips** (popular), money.

She admitted for me she might possibly care.

*Chips*, eh? I'm no mash for a tinker.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also a nickname for a carpenter.

**Chiriclo** (gypsy), a bird. *Romany chiriclo*, "the gypsy bird," *i.e.*, the water-wagtail. It is said that whenever one sees a water-wagtail he will soon after meet with gypsies. *Kālo chiriclo*, a blackbird or crow; sometimes pronounced *chillico*.

**Chirki, shirki** (gypsy), a star. *Chirki* or *shirki*, a star in Romany, may possibly have something in common with the Persian *chirkh*, meaning the sky, or *chiragh*, a lamp.

**Chirp, to** (thieves and roughs), to talk.

I firmly resolved to *chirp*, when I was taken before the magistrate to give evidence, as little as possible.—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

Also to inform.

**Chirper** (journalistic), a singer.

The gentle damsel informed the votive vocalist that she could not sleep at nights through thinking about burglars, and contemplated purchasing a revolver. "Don't be rash," said the *chirper*.—*Fun*.

**Chirpy** (American), cheerful, like a lark, in fact.

**Chirruper** (popular), an additional glass.

**Chisel, to** (common), properly to cut close as in a bargain, &c., to cheat in a small way; for instance, to try to sell second-hand or soiled goods for new ones. (Winchester College), to cheat; a *chisel*, a cheat.

**Chit** (Anglo-Indian), a letter, note, certificate, or pass. It is remarkable that for nearly a century different writers in India speak of the habit of writing notes on all occasions, as if every person in the country were a Micawber.

These incessant *chits* are an immense trouble, but the ladies seem to like them.—*Letters from Madras* (vide *Anglo-Indian Glossary*).

(Pidgin-English), same.

Empelo posha he name topside galantee *chit* (the Emperor wrote his name on a grand letter).—*The Woolly Hen*.

(Clubs), orders for drinks, &c., given at clubs.

**Chitterlings** (old), the shirt frills formerly fashionable.

**Chitti** (gypsy), nothing, trifling.

**Chitty** (tailors), an assistant cutter or trimmer.

**Chitty-faced** (popular), said of one who has a childish look, like a *chit* or infant.

**Chiv** (gypsy) to put, place, fix, throw. “*Chiv* lis adré”—“Put it in.” “*Chiv* lis avri”—“Throw it away.” “*Chivella* o chiriclo adré lestis tan”—“She puts the bird into his cage” (*i.e.*, “tent”). To goad, chase, drive about. In this sense probably from *chiv*, a sharp-pointed knife or goad. Hence, the English slang word, to “chivy.” “*Chiv* apré,” to put or throw up.

(Tinker and Romany), a pointed knife. In gypsy generally a *churi*.

Beruna, gibel a *chiv* for the gentry cove.—*Disraeli: Venetia*.

**Chivalry** (old), coition. To do an act of *chivalry*, to have connection with a woman. More modern is to “ride,” with the same sense. Old French writers termed this *chevalcher*.

**Chive** (thieves), a knife; from the gypsy to *chive*, to stab.

We had a fight and he put the *chive* into me.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Chive fencer** (popular), a street seller of cheap cutlery.

**Chivy** (thieves), the face; to *chivy*, to scold.

**Chlorhin** (tinker), to hear.

**Choakee**. See CHOKEY.

**Chocolate gale** (nautical), a brisk N.W. wind off the West Indies and Spanish Main (Smyth).

**Choke-jade** (turf), a dip in the course at Newmarket a few hundred yards on the Cambridge side of the running gap in the Ditch.

**Choke off**, to (common), to get rid of.

“We are so terribly troubled with beggars. . . .” “Don’t know how to *choke* ’em off, my dear? Why, give ’em pudding crust, cake, and dumplings of your own making to be sure.”—*Fun*.

**Choker** (prison), a cell. *Vide* CHOKI.

There was not a spare potato but what he seized as soon as the dinner tins were put outside the door by the prisoners, and as a rule he was summarily marched off to *choker* for stealing food intended for Her Majesty’s pigs. *Choker* had no terror for this Chancery barrister—he rather liked it.—*Evening News*.

Also a garotter. (Common), a cravat.

He looks when walking—pretty pet !  
With gait still stiffer than his *choker*,  
As if he'd swallowed for a bet,  
Or by mistake, the kitchen poker.

—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*.

“White-*choker*,” a white tie.

We have what Mugford calls a *white-choker* dinner to-day.—*Thackeray: The Adventures of Philip*.

Also a clergyman.

**Chokey** (popular and thieves), prison. Vide **CHOKI**.

And didn't a bobby claw 'old on me . . . and gits me a week in *chokey*, cos he said I was a priggin'.—*H. Evans: The Brighton Beach Loafer*.

In prisons *chokey* refers specially to the punishment cell.

(Anglo-Indian), a chair.

Don't throw yourself back in your burra *chokey* and tell me it won't do.—*Warren Hastings to G. Vansittart*.

Also a police station, a custom or toll house. Hence watching or mounting guard is called *chokey*.

**Choki**, or **chokie**, the guard-room. The lock-up or prison for misconducted or drunken soldiers, which is part and parcel of the guard-house, and under the charge of the barrack guard; generally a dark, gruesome place, with no furniture but the guard bed, the “little soldat” of the French army, a standing wooden erection, fixed, and on a slope, with a raised wooden pillow at one end. It is the father of the plank bed, the only bed for short-term prisoners in modern prison disci-

pline. *Choki* is Anglo-Hindu-stani, derived from *chank*, the market-place near the gate in which Orientals, like our mediævals, lodged their captives.

**Chokidar** (Anglo-Indian), a watchman; sometimes a police attendant.

**Chokka** (gypsy), shoe or boot. Hindu, *charka*.

**Chokra**, **chuckoroo** (Anglo-Indian), a boy, a youngster, especially one employed about a household, or a regiment.

**Chone** (gypsy), the moon. Also *chen*.

“Tu shan i *chone* odre o hev  
Miri deari kāmeli rani,  
Te waveri foki shan o bav  
Kun gāv'la tut' fon mán 'y”—

“The moon which passes o'er the sky,  
My darling, seems like thee,  
And other folk are but the clouds  
That hide thy face from me.”

**Chonkeys** (popular), explained by quotation.

*Chonkeys* are a kind of mince-meat baked in crust.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Choomer** (gypsy), a kiss. Plural, *chūmya*, kisses.

“Si miri *chūmya* shan kushti to hā  
Tu nasti hatch bockalo, deari ajā”—

“If kisses of mine were good to eat,  
You shouldn't go hungry long, my sweet.”

**Chooops** (Anglo-Indian), keep silence; a corruption of *choopraho*.

**Chootah** (Anglo-Indian), small, insignificant.

**Chop** (pidgin and Anglo-Indian), properly, a seal, stamp, or impression. Used to indicate quality, as in "first *chop*," *i.e.* stamped or branded, or marked as the best. Hindu, *ch'hāp*. It is used on the Eastern seas also for certificate, pass, license, signature. *Chop*-house, a custom-house.

Wang he go to fi'st *chop* coffin,  
To be mand'lin an' chin-chin um !  
—*Wang the Snob*.

**Chop, to** (turf), to beat. Essex dialect, *chop*, to flog. From *chop* or *chap*, to cut.

Another in John Dawson's stable is likely to be very handy here, and that one is Hawthorn, who created such a sensation when she *chopped* the mighty Salisbury at York the year before last.—*Sporting Times*.

(Sport), to outstrip, catch.

A certain meet where, after *chopping* their fox, poor Reynard's carcass was "pinched" by a Brummagem rough.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Chop-chop** (pidgin), quick, quickly, make haste, look sharp. Cantonese, *kǎp - kǎp*; Mandarin, *kíp-kíp*. "In the Northern dialects *kwai-kwai*, quick, quick, is more usual" (Bishop Moule).

That nightey tim begin *chop-chop*,  
One young man walkee, no can stop,  
Maskee snow, maskee ice,  
He cally flag wit' *chop* so nice—  
Top-side galow !

—*Excelsior*.

**Chopper, chopping blow** (boxing), a short, downward blow with the knuckles, delivered from the elbow. One of the most clumsy, ineffective, and most easily parried blows that could be resorted to. It was nevertheless a favourite with Slack (champion, 1750-60).

**Chopper on** (printers). A man when miserable or "down in the dumps" is said to have a *chopper on*.

**Chopping girl** (old slang), a very young female who exhibits sexual precocity. One who has *la cuisse gaie*, as the French slang humorously expresses it.

**Choppy** (American), applied to a broken, hillocky county.

**Chops** (popular), the mouth. A "wipe in the *chops*," a blow on the face; "down in the *chops*," sad. *Chops* is a nickname given by schoolboys to one who has well-developed maxillaries.

**Chōr, chār** (gypsy), grass. Hindu, *chara*, fodder.

**Chore** (gypsy), a thief, to steal. "Kai did tute *chore* adovo?"—"Where did you steal that?" Hindu, *chor*, a thief.

**Chores** (American), odd jobs. A "choreman" is a handy man, a Jack of all trades.

Their carpenter was dead, and I am a handy man, so I took his place. Then made a few dollars doing *chores* around.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Choring** (Scottish thieves), stealing. From the gypsy.

While outside the cells he heard . . . ask "What she was in for?" Maciver replied, "Choring, me and Maggie Devaney." He took that to mean stealing.—*Scottish Newspaper*.

**Chōro** (gypsy), poor; also *churero* and *chúridir*, poorer. "Mandy's a *churedo*"—"I am a poor man." This word is confused with *choredo*, one not of pure gypsy blood, and stolen; e.g., *churedo* or *posh an' posh*, half and half, also a poor person.

"Oh, mandy shom *choro* te kálo;  
Oh, mandy shom kek pensa rye"—

"Oh, I am poor and black;  
Oh, I am not like a gentleman."

—*Gypsy Wooing*.

**Chortle** (popular), to howl.

**Chota-hazry** (Anglo-Indian), "little breakfast;" refreshment taken early in the morning, corresponding to the auroral mint julep or pre-prandial cocktail of Virginia. An ante-breakfast.

The small meal commonly known in India as *chota-háziri*, and in our English colonies as Early Tea.—*Waring: Tropical Resident*.

**Chouse** (schools). It is a regular *chouse*, signifies it is a great shame.

The boy . . . was told that what he had done was an awful *chouse*.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton*.

(Common), to *chouse*, to cheat out of one's share or portion. Supposed to be derived from

the Turkish *chiaous*, an interpreter, on account of a gross fraud committed by one on Turkish merchants in London.

**Chout** (East End, London), an entertainment (Hotten).

**Chovey** (costermongers), a shop.

**Chovihani, chovihan** (gypsy), a witch, a wizard. Hindu, *choihani*. "Miri diri bibi ma kamāra bütidiro tevel chovihani"—"My dear aunt, I would like to become a witch."

**Chowdar** (Anglo-Chinese), a fool.

**Chow-chow** (pidgin-English), to eat, or food of any kind. This is the chief definition, but the word is also specially applied to a kind of sweet preserve made of many things, and has thence been somewhat incorrectly taken to mean a medley of trifles of any kind. Also *chow-chow*, "to have a meal." In the Mandarin dialect *chi-fan*, showing that the radical of the word means to eat, and not a mixture.

"Littee Jack Horna,  
Makee sit inside corna,  
*Chow-chow* he Clismas-pie;  
He puttee inside t'um."

We ate *chow-chow* with chopsticks on the celestial restaurants.—*Mark Twain: Innocents at Home*.

The word *chow-chow* is suggestive especially to the Indian reader of a mixture of things good, bad, and indifferent; of sweet little oranges and bits of bamboo stick, slices of sugar-cane and rinds of unripe fruit, all concocted together . . . into a very tolerable confection.—*Bombay Quarterly Review*, 1858.

**Chowing or chipping** (theatrical), incessant talking, grumbling.

**Christening** (thieves), *christening* a watch is altering the name of maker and number.

**Christians** (Cambridge University), a name given to the members of Christ's College, Cambridge.

**Chuck** (Westminster School), a schoolboy's treat.

(Military), mealy bread. (Nautical), hard *chuck*, sea biscuit. (Popular), explained by quotation.

A labourer will term a fellow he dislikes "a beggar who eats *chuck*," *chuck* being a low-priced part of the carcase.—*Standard*.

Also bread and meat.

(Common), the *chuck*, turning out of doors, dismissal.

And I shall get the blooming *chuck* as well as fourteen days.—*Sporting Times*.

**Chuck, to** (popular), to eat.

Mo and his man were having a great breakfast one morning. . . . Mo exclaimed to his man, "*Chuck* rumbo (eat plenty) my lad."—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

To turn out of doors, used specially in reference to drunken men forcibly ejected from public-houses.

There's one on 'em a-sitting next to me . . . let's *chuck* him.—*Sporting Times*.

To *chuck* or *chuck* up, to give up the game or attempt, from the custom of throwing up the sponge at a prize fight.

The rest of us can *chuck* up work indefinitely.—*Sporting Times*.

**Chuck a fit, to** (popular), to pretend to have a fit.

He suddenly tumbled across Stephens and Pascal's "Words and Music for Children of all Ages," and he nearly *chucked a fit* when he saw that No. 9, described as a drinking song, was called "Ginger Beer," and in praise of that fluid!—*Sporting Times*.

**Chuck and toss** (popular), tossing for halfpence.

They frequently had halfpence given to them. They played also at *chuck and toss* with the journeymen, and of course were stripped of every farthing.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Chuck a stall, to** (thieves), explained by quotation.

I said to my pal, "*Chuck me a stall* and I'll have that." What did I mean? Why, keep close to me, and cover what I'm doing.—*Greenwood: Seven Years' Penal Servitude*.

**Chuck churches** (old slang), those who dealt simoniacally in the sale of livings were so called.

**Chucked** (prison), acquitted or released. "7, or the *chuck* for a clock," inscribed on a prison wall, meant that the writer expected seven years' penal servitude, if he was not acquitted, on the charge of stealing a watch.

Rit from 7 dials; remanded innocent on two charges of pokes, only out 2 weeks for a drag, expects to be fullied or else *chucked*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.



(Popular), disappointed, thrown out, sold, reprovéd.

*Chucked* again, *chucked* again!  
Whatever may happen I get all the blame.  
Wherever I go, it is always the same—  
Jolly well *chucked* again!

—*Yardley: Chucked Again.*

*Chucked in*, into the bargain.

Went to one on 'em yesterday, Charlie; a regular old up and down lark.  
The Pallis free gratis, mixed up with a old country fair in a park,  
And Rosherville gardens *chucked in*.

—*Punch.*

**Chucked up** (prison), discharged from jail.

When I was *chucked up* they took me to an old Jew's in Dudley Street for my clothes.—*Evening News.*

**Chucker** (cricketers), a bowler who throws the ball instead of bowling it. Also one who volunteers to play, and does not keep his promise.

(Common), *chucker*, or *chucker out*, a waiter or potman whose duty it is to turn drunkards out.

'Tis midnight—the *chucker* his duty has done;

In the gutter lies Liza—she's been in the "sun."

—*Sporting Times.*

Used figuratively.

Lord Grey was about to resume his rôle of *chucker out* to the proposed measure of his own party.—*Punch.*

(Anglo-Indian), *chucker*, a quoit.

**Chuck in** (popular), to challenge; from the prize-fighting custom of throwing a cap into the ring. Nearly obsolete.

**Chucking a curly** (military), going sick without cause. To "chuck" a fit is a common slang expression for counterfeiting one, and the *curly* may be traceable to the contortions and convulsions of the supposed sufferer, who is all curled up as he lies writhing on the bed or floor.

**Chucking a jolly** (costermongers), ironically praising a greenhorn, or the goods of a comrade.

**Chucking rocks** (American), throwing stones.

**Chuckle-head** (popular), a man with a large head, a dunce.

**Chuck-me-dos** (bird fanciers), a variety of singing-bird, in imitation of its notes.

Talk about yer Middlesex rubbish, with their toll-loll-loll-kiss-me-dears; they don't touch yer reg'ler good *chuck-me-dos* by any number of chalks.—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Chuck the dummy, to** (thieves), to feign an epileptic attack or a fit. In prisons the expression applies to one who feigns an epileptic fit in order to be removed to the infirmary.

**Chuff it** (popular), be off.

**Chull** (Anglo-Indian), make haste. An abbreviation of the Hindostanee *chullo*, go along.

**Chummage, chumming-up** (old), a custom amongst prisoners before imprisonment for debt was abolished. When a fresh man was admitted to their number, rough music was made with poker, tongs, sticks, and saucepans. For this ovation the initiated prisoner had to pay (Hotten).

**Chummy** (popular), chimney-sweep. Also a low-crowned felt hat.

**Chump** (popular), for chum.

Fancy, old *chumpf*,  
Me doing the sawdusty reglar, and follering  
swells on the stump.

—*Punch*.

A hard-headed fellow; the head. "Off his *chump*," insane.

Old gentleman *off his chump*—runs away.—*Sims: Social Kalcidoscope*.

(American), a *chump*, a fellow, chap.

We believe that he is the man to put on the turf with John L. with bare fists, and stop the big *chump's* noise.—*New York National Police Gazette*.

**Chump of wood** (rhyming slang), no good.

**Chunk** (streets), explained by quotation.

Here they gambol about like rabbits, until somebody raises the cry, "Nix! the *chunk*" (the slang term for School Board officer).—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places*.

**Chunks** (American), large quantity.

Look here, pard, we've struck it this time; *chunks* of it!—*New York Star*.

**Church**, a term of endearment.  
"My *church*," my dear!  
(Thieves), to "*church* a yack,"  
*vide* CHRISTENING.

**Churched** (common), married.

"If it were not for the women, I fear few churches would be wanted." "Of course not, there'd be no one to be *churched*."—*Sporting Times*.

**Chu-shung** (pidgin), Chinese *sheon-chu-shang*, "you little beast" or "animal." Often used jestingly in conversation with flower-boat girls.

She talkee, "Who men you come dis side? My pay you flog gum, *sheon-chu-shang*, you littee beasts—*san-ne-ko-tow*—my cuttee off your head!"—*The Little Wife*.

**Chuzzle, to** (popular), cheat, circumvent.

**Cig** (American), a cigar.

Dancing the jig,  
Every fellow with a *cig*,  
And a *cig* of confounded bad tobacco.  
—*Broadside*.

**Cinch** (American), to subdue, get the better of, extort, impose upon.

My father is wealthy, and I think I can *cinch* him for five hundred dollars.—*Denver Republican*.

(Thieves), to put the screw on any one.

**Cincinnati olives** (American), pigs, because a large quantity of olive oil is manufactured out of Cincinnati lard.

**Cinder** (common), a dram of spirits mixed with seltzer or soda water. (Sporting), the *cinder*, the running path.

At Lords' wickets, or Lilley Bridge *cinder*.—*Funny Folks*.

**Cinder grabber** (popular), a servant maid.

**Circumbendibus** (common), in a roundabout way. A long yarn.

**Circus cuss** (thieves), circus rider.

**City college** (thieves), Newgate prison.

**Civil rig** (beggars), a trick of beggars to obtain alms by over civility.

**Civvies** (army), a suit of *civvies*, *i.e.*, civilian's clothes.

**Clack** (popular), the tongue, speech; to *clack*, to talk idly, to chatter.

**Clack box** (common), a garrulous person.

**Clacker** (popular), talk, chatter, also pudding or pie crust.

I hope we've got plenty of *clacker* for Christmas if we haven't got anything else.—*Rare Bits*.

**Clack-loft** (popular), a pulpit.

**Cladder** (old), a male flirt.

**Claggum** (popular), boiled treacle hardened. From "clog."

**Claim** (Australian and American), a miner's allotment.

The hill is systematically honey-combed with *claims* old and new.—*L. Work: Australian Printers' Keepsake*.

(Thieves), to *claim*, to steal.

**Clam butcher** (American), a man who opens *clams*.

**Clank** (thieves and tramps), a tankard.

Tip me the *clank*, like a timber-mort as you are.—*Disraeli: Venetia*.

**Clanker** (old cant), silver plate.

**Clapper** (popular), the tongue; more especially that of a loquacious person.

**Clapper-dudgeon** (old cant), a beggar born.

**Claras** (Stock Exchange), Caledonian Railway stock.

For we have our Sarahs and *Claras*,  
Our Noras and Doras for fays.

—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

**Claret** (pugilistic), a term which has become general for blood.

If you spill  
One drop of his *claret* that's not in your  
bill,  
I'll hang you. By jingo! I will.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

To tap the *claret*, to draw blood.

**Claret-jug** (pugilistic), now common for the nose.

What, oh what's the meaning of that  
chappie's blackened eyes?

On his *claret-jug*, I ask you, what's that  
variegated rise?

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Classy, clashy** (Anglo-Indian), a common sort of person, a tent-pitcher, a chain-bearer.

**Claw** (prison), a lash of the cat-o'-nine tails.

Oh! cuss that old Kerr, who condemned me to twenty-five *claws* with the cat.—*Greenwood: A Night in a Work-house.*

**Claw-hammer** (common), dress coat. In French slang, *queue de pie*, or *sifflet*.

The black *claw-hammer* coat was generally worn.—*Standard.*

**Claws for breakfast** (prison), a humorous expression for the infliction of the cat, which usually takes place in the morning.

. . . A ruffian being uncertain as to the morning when he is to have, as he himself would say, *claws for breakfast*, is in the habit of lying night after night in a sweat of terror.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Clean** (thieves), expert, smart. In French, *un soldat propre* is a smart soldier.

**Clean out, to** (common), to take or win all one has; to ruin.

Ah! . . . he has *cleaned me out*, but I can go and earn some more when I like.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Clean skin** (Australian), the term for unbranded and wild-bred cattle which have escaped to the scrubs.

In such a country it was perfectly hopeless to dream of getting any of the *clean skins* home to the yards.—*Finch Hatton: Advance Australia.*

**Clean straw** (Winchester College), clean sheets. Formerly the beds had a straw mattress, hence the expression.

**Clean the slate, to** (popular), to pay off all debts.

And everything comes right some day. Though "thirty-five per cent." is hot, 'Tis cheap when pa pays all the shot!

Let hatter, tailor, fellahs wait,  
A wife with cash will *clean the slate.*

—*Ballad: Tra la la.*

**Clear** (thieves), drunk.

**Clear crystal** (popular), spirits generally, but more correctly probably gin or whisky only.

**Cleave** (old slang), one that will *cleave* is said of wanton and forward women, such as would throw themselves at a man without waiting for favour to be asked of them.

**Clerked** (old), imposed upon.

**Clerk's blood** (old), red ink. A common expression of Charles Lamb's.

**Clever-shins** (schools), a sly fellow.

**Cleymans** (old cant), artificial sores made by beggars to impose upon people.

**Click** (popular), a blow; to *click*, to snatch.

*Clicks* in the gob, blows on the mouth.

. . . What with clouts on the nob.  
Home hits in the bread basket, *clicks* in the gob.

—*Moore: Tom Crib's Memorial.*

**Clicker** (printing), a person in a printing-office who is at the head of a certain number of compositors for a particular division of work or otherwise. It is also used in the shoemaking trade. (Trade), a female touter at a bonnet-shop, or the servant of a salesman who stands at the door. (Popular), a knock-down blow.

**Clift**, to (thieves), to steal.

**Clinch** (popular and thieves), to get the *clinch*, to be imprisoned.

**Clincher** (general), a settler.

**Click** (military), another term for guard-house, derived evidently from the *Clink*, one of the ancient London prisons, that of Westminster. Sir Walter Scott, in "Peveril of the Peak," makes Jem *Clink* one of the warders in Newgate.

(Thieves), plate.

He wouldn't have been hobbled but the melting-pot receiver proved his selling the *clink* to him.—*G. Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Clinker** (common), any thing or person that is first-rate, equivalent to a "stunner."

The yellow-haired girl at the bar. A *clinker*, ain't she? gave me these (cigars), and they are 'orrid bad.—*Ward or Wife.*

(Thieves), a chain.

**Clinkerum** (old), the gaol. From the old prison called the "Clink."

**Clink-rig** (thieves), stealing tankards from public-houses.

**Clipper** (general), something very good, very fast, above the average. Derived from the swift-sailing ships called opium and tea *clippers*.

There must be a new horse bought, not a knacker's sort of horse, mind yer, but a regler *clipper*; a chestnut; goes like steam, Sam ses it do.—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins.*

**Clipping** (general), excellent. A "*clipping* ball," a "*clipping* good chap." *Vide* CLIPPER.

**Clishpen** (tinker), to break by letting fall.

**Clisp** (tinker), to fall; let fall.

**Cloak-twitchers** (old cant), thieves who robbed passers-by of their cloaks. The old French *tire-laine*.

**Clobber** (popular and thieves), clothes. A corruption of that word, with a change of syllable.

If you are hard up always tell the dear things that you are a gentleman's valet. This will account for your good *clobber*.—*Sporting Times.*

Next morning I got up about seven, and went home to change my *clobber*, and put

on the old *clobber* to work with the kipsy.  
—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Clobbered up** (popular and vulgar), dressed up.

“D’you know, if you were *clobbered up* I shouldn’t mind taking you out?” She promised to be presentable. In her own words, she said, “I’ll come *clobbered up* like a dukess.”—*Fun.*

(Theatrical), patched up;  
shabby-genteel get up.

**Clock** (English and American), a watch.

When you have the *clock* safe in your hand, break the little ring that holds it to the chain, using both hands to do it, and then drop the sucker (victim) into his chair (seat) again, and say, “Wait here till I bring you a cab.”—*Philadelphia Press.*

**Clock-calm** (nautical), perfect calm.

**Clod-crushers** (American), an epithet used by Americans to describe the large feet which they believe to be the characteristics of Englishwomen as compared with those of their own country, an opinion shared by other foreign critics as well; but in reality the question is one that rests wholly on the art of the shoemaker, and it is a fact that English ladies of fashion (who generally show greater regard for the appearance of their nether extremity, from the garter downward, than their more humble and plain sisters usually do) can favourably compare, in that respect at least, with any of the dainty,

neat-ankled, light-tripping ones of New York or Paris. At any rate they take more wholesome exercise in the fresh air, and if they fail to satisfy to the same extent the eye of the artist or the voluptuary, they are able to walk greater distances without groaning at every step, and decidedly have the advantage at “crushing clods.”

(Common), large feet.

**Cloister-roush** (Winchester College). Formerly in cloister-time two halves of the school used to rush from the ends of the school at each other. To run “cloisters”: when a man in junior part is put into senior part without passing through the middle one he is said to “run cloisters.”

**Clothes, coloured** (army), plain clothes as distinguished from uniform. More particularly in the infantry, and the expression “coloured” is probably ironical, plain clothes, or mufti, being as a rule less strongly coloured than the crimson livery of the Queen. The expression has official sanction, however, and is often used at courts-martial, when a prisoner is charged with having “absented himself without leave, until apprehended in ‘coloured clothes,’” &c. &c.—out of uniform, that is to say.

**Clothes-pin** (American), that’s the sort of *clothes-pin* I am, *i.e.*, that’s the sort of man I am.

**Cloth-market** (old), a term for a bed, quaint but not slang.

Miss, your slave; I hope your early rising will do you no harm: I find you are but just come out of the *cloth-market*.—*Swift: Polite Conversation*.

An old French corresponding term is *halle aux draps*.

**Cloud-cleaner** (nautical), an imaginary sail carried by a Yankee bottom.

**Clout** (common), a blow. A "clout in the chops," a blow on the face. (Thieves), a pocket-handkerchief.

**Clouting** (thieves), stealing handkerchiefs.

**Clow** (Winchester College), a box on the ears; to *clow*, to box one's ears.

**Clower** (old cant), possibly allied to the Gaelic *cliah*, a basket; termed "kipsy" by English thieves.

**Cloyer** (old cant), one who attempted to share in the profits of a robbery or a swindle in which he bore no part.

Then there's a *cloyer* or snap, that dogs any new brother in the trade, and snaps; and will have half in any booty.—*Roaring Girl: Sixteenth Century*.

**Club, to** (military), to get a party of men or troops into a confused mass through a blunder when manœuvring.

**Cly** (thieves), pocket.

To his *clies* my hooks I throw in, and collar his dragons clear away.—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song*.

Old cant, *elye*, to take, to seize, from old English *deyes*, claws. *Cly* is provincial for money. To take, steal, money, pocket seem to be interchangeable terms in various slang languages.

*Cly* in old cant had also the signification of sack, basket, possibly from Gaelic *cliah*, basket.

**Clye, cly, to** (old cant), to take, to seize.

Gerry gan, the ruffian *clye* thee.—*T. Harman: Caveat*.

To *cly* off, to carry away.

Here safe in our skipper let's *cly* off our peck,

And bowse in defiance o' th' Harman-beck.  
—*Broom: Jovial Crew*.

Also *cly*, to steal.

**Cly-faker** (thieves), a pickpocket.

They were gentlemen sharpers, and not vulgar cracksmen and *cly-fakers*.—*Lytton: Pelham*.

This may be from *cly*, a pocket, as suggested, but it is worth noting that in Dutch thieves' slang, *kleifokker* is a thief who wanders about, derived from *fokker*, one who goes about, and *kleif*, silver. *Vide* CLY.

**Cly-faking** (thieves), picking pockets. *Vide* FAKE.

"What is *cly-faking*?" . . . "Why, a priggling of wipes, and sneeze-boxes, and ridicules, and such."—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe*.

**Cly the jerk, to** (old cant), to stand in the pillory.

R

**Coach** (university and public school), the private tutor by whose aid a student is "driven" through his examination at the university. It is now no longer peculiar to the university.

He was a student at Christ Church and a Fellow of Merton, and in early life was a very successful *coach* at Oxford.—*The World*.

A tutor not connected with a college is sometimes termed a "rural *coach*."

(General and sport), to *coach*, to instruct, to "drive," to prepare a man for an examination; a word which has now almost attained to a recognised place in the language.

I *coached* him before he got his scholarship; he ought to have taken honours before Easter, but he was ill.—*G. Eliot: Deronda*.

Also to instruct in physical acquirements, such as boating, &c.

He had already been down several times in pair-*oar* and four-*oar* boats, with an old *oar* to pull stroke, and another to steer and *coach* the young idea.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

**Coaching** (common), instructing. An almost recognised word.

There is no sport which is healthier . . . than rowing under proper *coaching* and supervision.—*Standard*.

(Rugby), a flogging.

**Coach-wheel** (popular and thieves), a crown piece; French slang *roue de derrière*.

**Coal, cole** (common), money; "post the *cole*," put down the money.

**Coaling** (theatrical), a *coaling* part, a part which is popular with the audience—one which elicits great applause; *coaling* lines, telling speeches.

It was customary some years ago, when a young actor achieved a success in a part of this character, for some ancient idiot to put a piece of coal in the youngster's dressing-place. One fails to see the fun of this.

Hotten says *coaling*, profitable, very good, is derived from *coal*, money.

**Coals** (common), to "pull over the *coals*," to scold. (Nautical), to "take one's *coals* in," to catch a venereal disease.

**Coal-scuttle** (American), a nickname for the peculiar bonnet worn by Quakeresses, which was exactly the shape of an old-fashioned coal-scuttle. Some years ago coal-scuttle bonnets were worn in England. *Vide* Leech's sketches.

There was Miss Snevellici . . . glancing from the depths of her *coal-scuttle* bonnet at Nicholas.—*Dickens: Nicholas Nickleby*.

**Cob** (popular), a piece of bread baked in a round form for dinner.

(English prisons), a dark punishment cell.

**Cob, to** (schoolboys), to catch or detect. *Cob* is probably a corruption of the cant word "cop," from the gypsy *kap*.

(Popular), to deceive, humbug.



**Cobble-colter** (tramps and gypsies), a turkey.

Come, old mort, tout the *cobble-colter*.  
 . . . And Beruna, flick the panam.—  
*Disraeli: Venetia.*

**Cobbled** (schoolboys), caught or detected. *Cobbled* is a variation of "cobbed." *Vide TO COB.*

**Cobbler** (Australian shearers' slang), the last sheep. This term is very widely spread in Victoria. It is a pun of the shearers. The *cobbler* is the man with the *last*, and therefore they call the *last* sheep the *cobbler*.

**Cochineal dye** (pugilistic), blood.

He would kindly inquire of one gentleman, "What d'ye ask for a pint of your *cochineal dye*?"—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Cock** (racing), "a *cock* horse," properly a child's rocking-horse, is a horse kept in the betting quotations to deceive public backers, though known to the private layers against him that he has no chance of winning.

(Tailors), a good *cock*, one who thoroughly understands how a garment should be made. A poor *cock*, the reverse.

(Thieves), an abbreviation of "cockney."

(Pugilistic), a man knocked out of time; used in the phrase "knocked him a *cock*." From the expression "to knock into a cocked hat."

(Printers), *vide* JEFF and THROW. When throwing or jeffing, should one or more of the nine quadrats not fall flat, but lodge crosswise on another,

it is termed a *cock*, and the thrower is allowed another turn or chance.

(Popular), to *cock*, to smoke (Hotten).

**Cock a ball, to** (cricketers), to throw a ball under-handed.

**Cock-a-brass** (old cant), a confederate of card-sharpers who remains outside the public-house where they are operating. When they have left, *cock-a-brass* protects their retreat by misleading statements to the victim on the direction taken by them.

**Cock-a-hoop** (common), in high spirits; alluding to a victorious cock crowing. This is borne out by the French, "se dresser sur ses ergots," to be elated or to look proud and defiant.

**Cock and hen club** (common), a free and easy gathering where persons of both sexes are admitted. One composed exclusively of males is a "stag party," whereas a gathering of females who do congregate for the purpose of drinking tea and gossiping is termed a "cat party."

**Cock and pinch.** The old beaver hat cocked back and front, and pinched at the sides.

**Cockatoo** (Australian up-country). Also *cockatoo* farmer or settler, a small settler. Sometimes termed *cocky*. So called to compare them with the common sulphur-crested white *cockatoos*, which come down on the newly sown cornfields in myriads.

The *cockatoo* settlers or free selectors fight desperately for the privilege of picking out any piece of land they may fancy. —*Grant: Bush Life in Queensland.*

A *cockatoo* fence is one on a *cockatoo's* farm.

The trees themselves, . . . woven with their branches into the stout *cockatoo* fence. —*Blackwood's Magazine: C. T., Impressions of Australia.*

**Cocked hat** (common), "knocked into a *cocked hat*," completely beaten, smashed, out of shape.

**Cocked his toes** (thieves), dead.

**Cocked it** (tailors), examined it, saw it, spoke of it.

**Cocker** (low), my *cocker*, my good fellow.

"I'm on, my *cocker*," I sez. "Giv' us your 'and on it, my pippin, and arf a quid on account."—*H. Evans: The Brighton Beach Loafer.*

**Cock-eye** (popular), one who squints.

**Cockles** (popular), more a vulgarism than slang. Literally the wrinkles.

In Bermondsey not long ago there lived a little dame;  
She was the *cockles* of my heart, and Nancy was her name.

—*Nancy Fancied a Soldier.*

**Cockneyshire** (tailors), London.

**Cock-quean**, a female cuckold, or a wife whose husband goes with other women. A beggar or cheat (Wright).

Queene June, not a little wroth against her husband's crime,  
By whom she was a *cock-quean* made.  
—*Warner: Albion's England.*

**Cockroaches** (old slang), to get *cockroaches*, a phrase used at one time to describe the practice of secret vices.

**Cockrobin shop** (printers), a small printing-office where common work is done, and where labour is badly paid for, is usually described as such. From the fact that some cheap printers were noted for the issue of fly-leaves, on which were printed stories, such as the "Death of Cock Robin."

**Cocks** (common publishing slang). According to Hotten, "fictitious narratives in verse or prose of murders, terrible accidents, &c." They are the topical legends of the street. The suggestion that the term is derived from a "cooked" statement is very far-fetched; that it came from a "*cock* and bull story" is at least ingenious. It is possible, though not proved, that, as these narratives were originally chiefly sung in a dull chant, the proverbially wearisome and monotonous songster, the cuckoo, gave the original name to these *cock*-minstrels and their wares. The Dutch say of such a vocalist, "Hy zingt den Koekeeks zang," he sings the cuckoo's song—"he harps always upon the same string."

(Pugilistic), blows.

**Cock-sure** (popular), certain, confident. Probably an abbreviation of "cocky-sure," *i.e.*, confident, as a "cocky" fellow. It has been suggested that the origin ought to be sought in the old practice of cock-throwing. Shakespeare uses the expression in the sense of "sure as the cock of a fire-lock."

We steal as in a castle, *cock-sure*. . . .  
We walk invisible.—*Henry IV.*

**Cock-up** (printers), a term for superior letters or figures, such as used for abbreviations, *i.e.* "Mr." or "A1," &c.

**Cocky** (common), saucy.

**Cocky.** *Vide* COCKATOO.

**Cocoa-nut** (common), the head.  
French slang, *le coco*.

**Cocum** (common London slang, also Yiddish). In Hebrew *chochum*, *chochem*, or *cochem*, crafty, learned, wise, or a wise man. According to Hotten the English slang term means shrewdness, ability, luck. "Jack's got *cocum*," he's safe to get on. Among themselves German thieves call one another by this name. Mr. Hotten does not recognise any Hebrew origin for the word, and suggests that it is "allied to the Scottish *keek* and German *gucken*, to peep or pry into." In Yiddish *cochemer* or *cochem*, pronounced almost like *cocum*, means wisdom; *cochum-wirth*, a thieves' landlord; *coch-*

*mas Schlaumauch*, the wisdom of Solomon.

"Wie grau seinen deine werk, got, ale hastu gemacht mit *chochmah*, die welt is vul deine akufte, du hast sei beschafen."—*Polish-German Yiddish Translation of the 104th Psalm, cited by Grünbaum.*

(Theatrical), wariness, to "fight *cocum*," to be cautious.

(Booksellers), a sliding scale of profit in the book trade in cases where the books are not marked, according to your customer.

**Cod** (popular), a fool; to *cod*, to chaff, hoax. An idiom imported from the sister isle.

She threw a plaice right in my face,  
And told me to depart.

I thought that she was *codding* me,  
And told her I should stop.

She lifted up her lovely foot,  
And kicked me out of the shop.

—*Barrett: Old Jones's Gal.*

(Thieves), a purse. Gaelic *cod*, a bag.

(Tailors), a drunkard; on the *cod*, drinking and neglecting work. From *coddle*, a provincialism for to indulge.

**Codd** (Charterhouse), probably from *codger*, an old pensioner.

Yonder sit some threescore old gentlemen, pensioners of the hospital, . . . the Cistercian lads called these old gentlemen *codds*.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes.*

**Codding** (Irish schoolboys), nonsense, humbug, chaff.

**Coddom** (popular), explained by quotation.

The convicts take advantage of that to the extent sometimes of playing a gam-

bling game called *coddom*. It is simple enough. They play three or four a side, the implement being a button or a peculiar-shaped small piece of stone, "guess whose hand it is in" being the principle.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Years' Penal Servitude.*

Hotten gives "*coddam*, a public-house game, much affected by medical students and cabmen."

**Codging job** (tailors), a garment to repair.

**Cod-lasher** (theatrical), a kind of suspender used by tight-rope dancers, acrobats, pantomimists, &c., to protect the crutch. From *cods*, which see.

**Cods** (common), the testicles. *Cod* properly is a pad and bag for the testicles. Gaelic *cod*, a bag.

**Cofe** (old cant), fellow.

What, stowe your bene, *cofe*.—*T. Harman: Caveat.*

**Coffee-mill** (common). The mouth is so termed, but the phrase is rarely heard now, having given place to others. (American), explained by quotation.

One of the old-pattern Colts, with the barrels revolving; the ancient *coffee-mill* or "pepper-box."—*H. L. Williams: Buffalo Bill.*

French slang has *moulin à café* for a mitrailleuse.

**Coffee-shop** (popular), the W.C. Also a coffin.

**Coffin-ships** (nautical), any leaky cranky unseaworthy vessels.

**Cog** (old cant), a tooth. (Sharpers), to *cog*, to cheat at dice. (Schools), to cheat at examinations by using cribs or other sources of information. A perfectly recognised word in the sense of deceive, cheat generally; hence *cogs*, loaded dice.

**Coge, or coag it, to** (American), according to Bartlett, refers to the habitual and excessive use of ardent spirits. *Cogue*, to drink drams (Wright). From provincial English *cogue*, a dram.

**Coguing the nose** (nautical), making comfortable over hot negus or grog. From provincial English *cogue*, a dram.

**Coker.** *Vide* CLANKER.

**Cold blood**, a house licensed for the sale of beer "not to be drunk on the premises" (Hot-ten).

**Cold coffee** (common), misfortune. (Oxford), a trumpery affair.

**Cold comfort** (traders), said of articles sent out on approval and returned.

**Cold cook** (popular), an undertaker (Hotten).

**Cold deck** (American), a prepared pack of cards, played on a green board.

**Cold meat** (popular), a corpse.

**Cold meat box** (popular), a coffin.

**Cold pig** (popular), a dash of cold water to waken an indolent servant or lazy person in the morning.

He never threw cold water over her when she was in bed. Mr. Justice remarked that no doubt many of them knew what *cold pig* was.—*Daily News*.

(Thieves), a person who has been robbed of his clothing. A corpse.

(Commercial), returned goods.

**Cold shake** (American), a cold period of weather, also used sometimes in reference to fever and ague. As a figure of speech it is applied to cold and reserved conduct. "It gives me the *cold shakes* just to look at her—she's so frozen up an' dignerfied."

**Cold tea** (common), brandy. In use also during the last century. The *Spectator*, *Tatler*, and *Guardian* often allude to a "keg" of *cold tea*.

**Cold thing** (American cadet), to have a *cold thing*, to have a certainty, to be entirely confident of anything.

**Cold water army** (common), a facetious name given to the fraternity of teetotallers.

An old stager was compelled by his worthy spouse to join the *cold water army*, which he did, promising not to touch a drop of anything except in sickness. He has never been well since.—*Diprose: Modern Joe Miller*.

**Cold without** (common), spirits with cold water and without sugar.

I laugh at fame. Fame, sir! not worth a glass of *cold without*.—*Lytton: My Novel*.

**Cole** (popular), money. *Vide COAL*.

Moreover, the whole of the said cash or *cole* shall be spent for the good of the old woman's soule.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Colfabis**, a Latinized Irish phrase, signifying the closet of decency, applied as a slang term to a place of resort in Trinity College, Dublin.

**Colinderies** (society), modern term for the Colonial Exhibition, used as an abbreviation.

**Colla, cullo** (gypsy), a thing, things. "Chiv yer *cullos* adre the wardo"—"Pitch your things into the waggon!"

**Collar** (common), "out of *collar*," out of cash, not in training; a phrase borrowed from the stable. Also out of work.

A decent allowance made to seedy swells, head robbers, and flunkeys out of *collar*. (Slang advertisement.)

To *collar*, to seize, to steal.

(Thieves), "to *collar* his dragons," to steal his sovereigns.

**Collar day** (old), hanging day.

**Collaring the big bird** (theatrical), getting hissed. An allu-

sion to a goose's mode of expressing angry dissatisfaction.

**Collar work** (common), hard work; an uphill journey.

And when Lucca was reached there were still fourteen miles, nearly all *collar work*, between that and the baths.—*Trollope: What I Remember.*

**Collector** (old cant), a street robber.

**Colleger** (University and schools), the square cap worn by university men, or by boys at public and other schools.

**Colley** (theatrical). Actors and others connected with the stage speak of the columbine as *colley*.

**Colly-wobbles** (popular), rumblings in the intestines; the belly-ache. A probable origin is *colic-wobbles*, the latter word from to *wobble*, *i.e.*, to shake from side to side. But it should be noted that *colly* is a provincialism for anything irregular, uneven, wrong.

**Colo** (pidgin), cold.

Hab lib in *colo* land,  
Hab stop where we belong,  
What tim much solly in-i-sy (*inside*,  
in her heart),  
She makee dis sing song.  
—*The Princess in Tartary.*

**Colonial** (Australian and American), unsettled, because in the early days of the colonies men

dressed and behaved unconventionally, and life and property were by no means so secure as they are now. Also rude, rough, ungainly, awkward, used in this sense more in England than in Australia. An Englishman will say very or thoroughly *colonial* in a contemptuous way.

**Colours** (prize ring), the handkerchiefs, displaying some definite colour or pattern, chosen by prize-fighters as their distinguishing badges on the day of a contest. The third "rule of the ring," as revised by the Pugilistic Association, lays down:—"That every man shall be provided with a handkerchief of a colour suitable to his own fancy, and that the seconds proceed to entwine these handkerchiefs at the upper end of one of the centre stakes of the ring; that these handkerchiefs shall be called the *colours*, and that the winner of the battle at its conclusion shall be entitled to their possession as the trophy of victory."

There was, among the greater favourites, the "bird-eye" wipe, the wipe or handkerchief of any colour with spots, but generally with white ground and blue spots; the "blood-red fancy," all red; the "yellow man," all yellow; the "yellow fancy," yellow with white spots; the "cream fancy," with coloured pattern on a white ground; the "blue Billy," with a white pattern on a blue ground; and

many more. Among the *colours* specially associated with the names of pugilists are the "Belcher" (*Jem*, the champion), dark blue ground with a spot in the middle of darker hue, and large white spots; the "Randal's man," green, with white spots; "King's man," green, with yellow pattern.

(Australian miners), originally the gold visible after washing, either good or poor *colour*, as the case may be, but the expression is generally used that there is just enough to show the presence of gold.

**Colquarron** (old cant), a person's neck. From *cole*, Anglo-Norman for neck, and *quarron*, cant for body. *Vide* QUARRON.

**Colt**, a juryman at his *début*; properly a person without experience. (Cricketers), a young inexperienced player, a professional at his first season. (Thieves), a young thief. (Popular), to *colt*, to make one pay for his footing. Hotten gives the definition "to make a person free of a place, which is done by his standing treat, and submitting to be struck on the sole of the foot with a piece of board." This is a relic of the old London 'prentice days, when it was an exaction of money, usually spent in ale, termed *colt* ale, paid by an apprentice at the commencement and expiration of his apprenticeship.

**Colt-man** (American), a man who keeps horses specially for burglars.

**Columbine** (theatrical), a prostitute.

**Columbus** (theatrical). One would have thought that this illustrious navigator would naturally be associated with some new and successful discovery, nevertheless a "regular *Columbus*" is synonymous with hopeless "frost," or utter failure.

**Comb-brush** (old), a lady's maid.

The maid who at present attended on Sophia was recommended by Lady Bellaston, with whom she had lived for some time in the capacity of a *comb-brush*.—*Fielding: Tom Jones*.

**Comb-cut** (common), mortified, like a cock disgraced by the deprivation of his comb.

**Comb down**, to (Australian), to ill-treat, thrash. Like the French "donner une peignée."

. . . Narrating how he had copped the old — on the hop and *combed* him down to rights.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Combing the cat** (nautical), the boatswain, or other operator, running his fingers through the cat-o'-nine-tails to separate them (Smyth).

**Comb the hair**, to (common), to scold; French "laver la tête."

The process called *combing his hair* for him is said not to be uncommon in married circles.—*Globe*.

**Come down to** (common), to pay.

Do you keep the gentleman in dis-course while I speak to the prisoner and see how he can *come down*.—*Johnston: Chrystal*.

**Come it over, to** (popular), to deceive by wheedling, to rule by assumption of superiority or otherwise.

Don't try to *come it over* me like your sister *comes it over* you.—*Greenwood: Almost Lost*.

**Come it, to** (thieves), to inform; also to be quiet.

He heard one of the others say in reply, "*Come it*," meaning to tell—to be quiet.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Pugilistic), to show fear.

**Come on** (turf), said of a horse that has improved, is in good form.

He was at one time last year a few pounds in front of —, and if he has *come on*, that form would give him a considerable charm.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Come souse, to** (pugilistic), to fall.

As it was, Master Georgy *came souse* with the whack,  
And there sprawled, like a turtle turned queer on its back.  
—*Tom Cribb's Memorial to Congress*.

**Come this-side** (pidgin-English), arrived here. "Just now hab got two piecee joss-house man *come this-side*."

**Come, to** (popular), to practise, to understand.

We ain't two by ourselves as *comes* that dodge.—*Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co*.

(Prostitutes), refers to ejaculation.

**Comical** (popular), a napkin.

**Coming it at the broads** (card-sharpers), explained by quotation.

People whose education has been neglected might possibly have failed to understand that *coming it at the broads* or at the box meant in common parlance playing cards or dice.—*The Bat*.

**Coming it strong** (popular), carrying things to an unreasonable degree; exaggerating.

He here shook his head—right little he said,

But he thought she was *coming it* rather too *strong*.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Coming the old soldier** (popular), to trick one by false representations, such as are made by a rogue who pretends to be an *old soldier*.

Permit me, if you and your two friends think of *coming* what is vulgarly called the *old soldier* over me, to make you understand that you had better abandon the intention.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

**Commission** (old cant), a shirt; Italian, *camicia*. In more modern slang a "mish."

Clean linen yields a shirt before we rise,  
Which is a garment shifting in condition;  
And in the canting tongue is a *commission*.  
—*Taylor's Works*.

**Commister.** *Vide* CAMISTER.

**Common bounce** (prison), one who makes accusations of unnatural crime, employing lads as decoys.

To do most professional thieves justice, they never speak of these unique wretches



except in terms the most contemptible.—*Michael Davitt: Leaves from a Prison Diary.*

**Common doings** (Americanism), plain, wholesome fare, as distinguished from dainties.

**Commoner** (old cant), a novice; greenhorn.

**Commoner grub** (Winchester College), a dinner given by college to commoners when cricket matches are over.

**Commonise, to** (Oxford University). Two or more are said to *commonise* when they have their meals together. *Commonising* means strictly that each should bring his "commons."

**Common jack** (army), low prostitutes are thus termed by the military in Woolwich, and probably in other garrison towns.

**Common plugs** (American), the common rut of mankind—the *οἱ πολλοί*—sometimes the great unwashed, but more commonly very ordinary people indeed, neither the big-wigs nor the dregs of society.

Many will meet us in the depths of the forest and go away thinking that we are just *common plugs*, of whom the world wots not; but there is where they fool themselves.—*New York Mercury.*

**Communicator.** Agitate the *communicator*, ring the bell.

**Communion bloke** (prison), a religious hypocrite.

He was a *communion bloke*. This was the pious gentleman.—*Evening News.*

**Comp.** (printers). *Vide* GALLEY-SLAVES. Generally applied to compositors as an abbreviation, but originally the short term for companion used both by pressmen, who work in pairs, and by compositors who work in companionships; nowadays accepted as the abridgment of compositor only.

**Comped** (printers), set up or composed matter; abbreviation of word composed.

**Competition wallah** (Anglo-Indian), members of the Civil Service who have entered it by the competitive system.

The *competition wallah* . . . dins perpetually in our ears the greatness of India.—*Saturday Review.*

**Compo.** (printers), abbreviation for the composition of which printing rollers are made—principally of treacle and glue. (Nautical), a sailor's monthly wages.

**Compradore** (pidgin), from the Portuguese *comprador*, a purchaser. Formerly used in India, where it originated, now in general use only in Chinese-English. The *comprador* of the present day is a steward or butler, who manages all the household affairs, supplying by contract, not only furniture and provisions, but even servants.

An' Massa Coe feel velly sore,  
 An' go an' scold he *compladore* ;  
 An' *compladore* all hollor shook,  
 Lun dunny stairs an' bang he cook.  
 —*Mary Coe.*

**Compresado** (gypsies), an informer.

**Con** (Winchester), from *κονδυλον*, a knuckle—a blow on the head given by the knuckles or any hard substance.

**Concaves** and **convexes** (card-sharpers), cards cut in a particular way, and thus contrived for cheating.

**Conchers** (up-country Australian), tame or quiet cattle.

**Condog** (popular), to agree with. A variation from *concur*.

**Confab** (society), conversation, generally of a private nature.

**Confederate** (Texas), “you're mighty *confederate*,” a phrase used by a Texan when he wishes to express the strongest possible approval of some sentiment or thing.

**Confidence dodge** or **buck** (common), explained by extract from *Daily Telegraph*:—

“ . . . Swindled him out of his watch and chain by means of that ten thousand times repeated rogue's device, the *confidence* trick. It was the old game pure and simple—the threadbare hocus-pocus of inviting the victim, a per-

fect stranger, to ‘come and have a drink,’ and while the friendly glass is being discussed in comes another man, who joins in the conversation, and, in a casual way, mentions that he has just inherited several thousand pounds, and that, as a thank-offering, he should like to give away, by deputy, a few hundreds to the deserving poor, and is ready to hand over the largess there and then to any person who can show to his satisfaction that he is of an unsuspecting disposition; the same to be proved by his entrusting the money and jewellery he may happen to have about him to his, the benevolent legatee's, keeping, while the latter goes away for half-an-hour or so with the same.”

**Congee, conjee** (Anglo-Indian), rice water; from the Tamil *kañshi*, “boilings.”

**Conk** (common), nose.

His “dexter ogle” has a “mouse;”  
 His *conk's* devoid of bark.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

“Conky” is a nickname given by schoolboys to one with a prominent nose. The great Duke was called “Old Conky.”

**Conscience** (theatrical), a kind of association in a small company for the allotment of shares in the profits, &c. The man who is lucky enough to have a concern of his own, generally a very small affair, however badly

he may act, must be the leading man or first low comedian, perhaps both. He becomes the manager, of course, and thus has one share for "fit-up," one for scenery, one and a half for management, one for wardrobe, one and a half as leading man; and the same is given to the wife, who, of course, will not play anything but the juvenile lead, but who at any other time would be glad to play first old woman. Thus the manager takes nearly all the proceeds.

**Consonant choker** (society), one who cannot pronounce his R's and his G's.

**Consoo** (pidgin), consul.

My makee first-chop pidgin long-side dat *consoo* man, dat man no lawts (lazy), he blongy plenty smart inside.—*Newspaper*.

**Constable** (common), to outrun or overrun the *constable*, to get into debt.

Harkee, my girl, how far have you overrun the *constable*? I told him that the debt amounted to eleven pounds.—*Smollett: Roderick Random*.

**Constician** (theatrical), an orchestral musician.

**Consumah, khansama** (Anglo-Indian). Persian, *khansaman*, house-steward, or provider, or butler.

"I have taught my *khansama* to make very light iced punch."—*Jacquemont: Letters*.

**Contango** (Stock Exchange), corruption of continuation, a re-

newal of a bargain, a speculative sale or purchase. The premium paid by a buyer of stock to the seller, when upon selling day he wishes the bargain to remain open.

B stands for broker, for bull and for bear, C's the *contango* that's paid by the bull.

—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

**Continent** (Winchester College), to be *continent*, is to be on the sick-list. *Continent* work, work done while on the sick-list.

**Continental damn** (American), a term applied at a very early time in the Republic to anything utterly worthless, and supposed to have originated in some allusion to the Continental currency or American assignats.

Not to care a *continental*, not to care a damn.

**Continuations** (common), trousers or breeches.

**Convenient** (old cant), a mistress.

**Convey, to** (thieves), to steal.

But as I am crack, I will *convey*, cross-bite, and cheat upon Simplicius.—*Marton*.

**Conveyancer** (thieves), a thief, a pickpocket.

**Conveyancing** (common), stealing; picking pockets.

The green youth who attempted to decamp with —'s watch . . . was properly punished for his verdancy in the art of *conveyancing*.—*Modern Society*.

**Conveyer** (old), a thief. The expression is used by Shakspeare

in *King Richard II.* The French argot has the correspondent *emporteur*, with a like signification.

**Cooked** (society), done, defeated, finished up, exhausted.

**Cook his goose, to** (common), to kill, ruin a person.

Thus abstinence, which *cooks the goose*,  
At length Sal's life has doffed.  
—*A Song: Drunken Sally.*

Also to worst one.

Billy's too big in the Westphalia's gig-lamps, you're the boy to *cook* Fosbrooke's goose.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Cook, to** (artists), to dodge up a picture. Artists say that a picture will not *cook* when it is excellent and unconventional, and beyond specious imitation (Hotten).

(Colloquial), to prepare, tamper with, as to *cook* accounts, returns.

A fixed percentage on every backer's pound, and the off-chance of *cooking* the returns.—*Sporting Times.*

I hate my Lady, because she has locked my *cooked* accounts in the bower saloon.—*Punch.*

**Cool** (common), used in reference to a large sum of money.

Suppose you don't get sixpence costs, and lose your *cool* hundred by it.—*Miss Edgeworth: Love and Law.*

**Coolaman** (Australian blackfellows), a word adopted from the blacks by the whites to describe a blackfellow's drinking vessel, and then applied generally.

A few broken gourds . . . and a cracked *coolaman* were to be seen here and there.—*A. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland.*

**Cooler** (American), prison. So called on account of its being a fit place for getting sober or cooling down; or from *cooler*, a large tub, as in quotation.

They came near soaking him in the *cooler*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

(Popular), a glass of beer after drinking spirits. Also a woman.

**Coon** (American), short for racoon, a man. The term first became general nearly fifty years ago. A gone *coon* (also English), one who is ruined, lost.

**Coon's age** (American), a very popular expression to signify a long time, the racoon being regarded as a very long-lived animal.

I saw Miss Jones inside the stage,  
'Tis now an hour or so,  
It seems to me an old *coon's age*  
Since I beheld her go.

—*Newspaper Ballad.*

**Coop** (streets), prison, abbreviation of hen-coop.

You say that you have been in the *coop* as many times as I have.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**-Cooper, to** (American), to understand.

Why on earth nature made you in the shape she did is more than I can *cooper*.—*American Newspaper.*

Possibly from a metaphor, I cannot *cooper*, I cannot grasp, that is beyond my capaciousness, comprehension. Else from *co-operate*, with the sense of concur.

(Thieves), to destroy, spoil, forge; to *cooper* a manniker, forge a signature. *Vide* COOPERED.

**Coopered** (turf), a horse that has been hocused or otherwise purposely injured so as to prevent him from running, was formerly said to be *coopered*. The expression is sometimes used now as in quotation.

Till they served him up a "*coopered* job,"

And then of course he came

A most conclusive "smasher."

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Tramps), a *coopered* place, a house that has been spoilt by too many tramps calling there (Hotten).

*Coopered*, in the sense of falling in, ruined, is possibly allied to the Scotch *cowp*, to tumble over.

**Coorsy** (Anglo-Indian), a chair; Arabic *kursī*.

**Cooter**. *Vide* COUTER.

**Cop** (thieves), a policeman. *Vide* TO COP.

Wen that *cop* got his hand on my collar, he ought to 'ave knowed like a shot, By the Astrykan only, that I wasn't one of the Socherlist lot.

—*Punch*.

The *cops*, the police.

Then, as them cowards of *cops* 'ave as much on their 'ands as they kin do with, now's the time for a bit of a loot!—*Punch*.

(Anglo-Indian), *cop!* beware; an abbreviation of coprador.

**Cop-bung** (thieves), a warning cry when the police make their appearance.

Johnny Miller, who was to have his regulars, called out *cop-bung!* for, as you see, a fly-cop was marking.—*On the Trail*.

**Cop busy** (thieves), the act of handing plunder to a confederate, so as to have nothing about one when arrested.

**Cop, to** (popular and thieves), to take, arrest, steal, catch.

I'm right Tory right down to my boots, at a price, and I bellered, "'Ear, 'ear!" But they don't *cop* yours truly with chaff none the more, my dear Charlie, no fear.

—*Punch*.

"Here, *cop*." I did not understand what he meant by the phrase. . . . I did not attempt to *cop*. Suddenly I saw three boiled potatoes, a pudding, and a six-ounce loaf roll on the floor.—*Evening News*.

(Sporting), to win, to get money; a dead *cop*, a sure method of arriving at this result.

To *cop* is derived by Hotten from Latin *capere*; more probably it comes from the gypsy *kap* or *cop*, to take; Scotch, *kcp*; Gaelic, *ceapan*.

**Coppas** (gypsy), blankets, coverings, tiles.

**Copper, cop** (popular and thieves), a policeman; from "to cop," which see.

"Then three *coppers* came." "*Coppers, coppers*, what are they?" Witness: "Policemen, your worship."—*Standard*.

**Copperheads** (American), properly poisonous serpents. The term was applied by the Federals to the peace party.

**Copperman** (Australian prison), a policeman.

**Copper nose**, the vulgar term for *acne rosacea*, the red, enlarged, pimply nose of chronic alcoholism.

**Coppers** (popular), mouth; especially a parched one after potations.

A fellow can't enjoy his breakfast after that without something to cool his *coppers*.—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

"Hot *coppers*" is a phrase for a mouth parched by excessive drinking, or "as dry as a lime basket."

**Copper, to** (gaming), when playing at faro, to cover a stake with a small check, which signifies that the card selected is backed to lose, not win.

Oh, d—n Squito! It seems like she'd *coppered* me. Ever since she—since I seen that gal, luck's gone dead against me.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Copus** (Cambridge University). Talking Latin at table, or similar improprieties, are followed by the infliction by the students of

a fine. A *copus*, or quart of ale, is a common penalty.

**Corduroy - road** (American and Australian), a road made of branches and logs laid side by side. The branches stand out like the ribs of corduroy.

**Cork** (common), a bankrupt. "Probably," says Hotten, "intended to refer to his lightness, as being without ballast."

(Pugilistic), "to draw a *cork*" is to "tap the claret," *i.e.*, to give a bloody nose.

(Army), Captain *Cork*, applied at mess when any one is slow in passing round the bottle.

**Corkage** (hotels), a sum charged per bottle to persons providing their own wine. This term can hardly be considered as slang, but as a word unrecognised by dictionaries.

**Corker** (theatrical). A regular *corker* is a duffer; an imbecile; one who corks or bottles up another actor's effects, or ruins a play.

(English and American), something that closes up or settles a question; something unusually large, remarkable.

The Crown Prince's lunch-bill was rather a *corker*;

No wonder His Highness refused for to pay. —*Fun*.

Also first-rate; at the top of the tree.

Jake Kilrain is a *corker*, and ought to have the championship of the world.—*New York National Police Gazette*.

**Corks** (popular), a butler, alluding to his functions. Also money; though originally a nautical term, this is very much used by printers.

**Corned** (colloquial), intoxicated. From over-indulgence in drink strong enough to "corn" one (Wright). "Possibly from soaking or pickling oneself like *corned* beef," says Hotten. It has been suggested that it is from the Keltic *corn*, French *corné*, a horn used formerly as a drinking vessel. As we say that a man is in his "cups," it is possible that our very remote ancestors said of him that he was horned or *corned*, but it is almost beyond doubt that the term is an Americanism from *corn*, a very common name for whisky. (Tailors), pleased.

**Corner** (common), to get a *corner* is to get the entire control of a stock, and so make it impossible for others to complete their bargains or to purchase.

He had been mixed up disadvantageously in a recent *corner* in marbles.—*Punch*.

(London), the "*Corner*," Tattersall's horse repository and betting-rooms, which was at Hyde Park Corner. (Thieves), a share—generally a share in the proceeds of a robbery.

**Cornered** (tailors), in an inextricable dilemma; for instance, a man makes a garment which is already paid for, and pawns it,

spends the money, and can't raise the amount to release it when wanted.

**Cornish duck** (city), a pilchard. "It fries in its own grease."

**Cornstalks** (Australian), the settlers, especially the girls, so called because their average height is very great, though they are fragile.

We talk of *cornstalks* or "slab-sided Yankees," and have in our minds a tall but rather thin figure as representative of Australasia and America.—*Globe*.

**Corn-stealers** (American), the hands.

"How is you been, my old Bullock?" and he squeezed his *corn-stealers* till the old gineral began to dance like a bear on red-hot iron.—*Sam Slick: The Clock-maker*.

**Corporal Forbes** (Anglo-Indian), a soldier's name for cholera morbus.

We are all pretty well, but a great quantity are in hospital with *Corporal Forbes*.—*Shipp's Memoirs*.

**Corpse provider**, a facetious name for a physician.

"Doctor," cried the happy mother, as she waltzed into the consulting-room of the Brixton *corpse provider*, "I wish to consult you about my baby's legs."—*Sporting Times*.

**Corpser.** *Vide TO CORPSE*,

**Corpse-reviver** (common), a dram of spirits.

There was a general rush for wet towels and *corpse-revivers*.—*Sporting Times*.

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**Corpse, to** (theatrical), to confuse, to put out fellow-actors by sticking fast in the dialogue; kill a scene through ignorance, wilfulness, or stupidity. A contrepemps of this kind is called "a regular corpse."

**Corroboree** (up country Australian), to boil; a word borrowed from the natives, who thus call one of their wild dances. Whites generally use it in the sense of disturbance, hence it is said that a kettle *corroborees* when it boils.

**Corybungus** (pugilistic), backside.

**Cosh** (popular and thieves), a stick of any kind, but more especially a policeman's baton. From the gypsy *kāsh*, corrupt form *kāsh*, meaning wood in any form.

The officer . . . sought to give the finishing *coup de grâce* with his *cosh* . . . and it split the baton.—*Evening News*.

**Cossack** (popular), a policeman.

**Costard** (popular), the head; a very old word, used by Shakspeare in King Lear.

**Coster bloke** (popular), a costermonger.

I feels the tears come down my cheeks,  
when I 'eerd him 'owl and wail,  
"And," sez I, "I'm a simple *coster bloke*,  
but my 'art's right as the mail."  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Cot**, a term of opprobrium for a woman. Heard in Kentish

watering-places for the most part.

**Cotton lord** (common), a Manchester manufacturer or dealer in cotton.

**Cottonopolis**, Manchester (Hotten).

**Cottons** (Stock Exchange), Confederate Dollar Bonds.

**Cotton, to** (common), a colloquialism in the sense of to like, agree, be attached (literally to adhere, cling to, like cotton to cloth), but used in a slangy sense as in quotation.

For when once Madam Fortune deals out her hard raps,

It's amazing to think how one *cottons* to drink!

At such times, of all things in nature, perhaps

There's not one that is half so seducing as schnaps.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Couch a hogshead, to** (old cant), to lay down to sleep.

I *couched a hogshead* in a skypper this darkemans.—*T. Harman: Caveat*.

**Council of ten** (popular), the toes of a man who turns his feet inward (Hotten).

**Counterfeit crank** (old cant), a rogue who shammed epilepsy. From the German *krank*, sick.

Those that do *counterfeit the crank* be young knaves and yonge harlots, that depely dissemble the falling sickness.—*T. Harman: Caveat*.



**Counter-jumper** (common), a shopman, a draper's assistant.

"Sir, you should know that my cheek is not for you." "Why," said he, stifling his anger, "it seems free enough to every counter-jumper in the town."—*C. Kingsley: Westward Ho.*

**Counter-skipper** (popular), a variant of "counter-jumper," a shopman.

**Counter, to** (pugilistic), to strike.

His kissing traps *countered*,  
His ribs roasted.

—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Count noses, to** (parliamentary), to take the number of a division.

**County crop** (prison), hair shortened to about an inch, which used to be the rule in all prisons, but is now confined to convicts. The expression is therefore now a misnomer, as county prisons no longer exist since the Government took all over in 1877, and prisoners are not thus cropped, as it would continue their punishment by marking them out after their discharge.

**Couple-beggar** (old cant), a low fellow, who officiated as a clergyman in performing marriages in the Fleet prison.

**Couranne** (theatrical), from *couronne* or *corona*, five shillings.

**Court card** (old slang), a beau.

**Court martial** (schoolboy), the practice of tossing in a blanket for a practical joke.

**Couter** (popular), a sovereign. From gypsy, *cutto*, literally a piece.

**Cove** (popular and thieves). In old cant, "cofe," "cuffin," a man; also landlord.

He's a rum dog. Don't he look fierce at any strange *cove*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

Besides, I am that sort of *cove* the swells so much admire.—*Toby.*

This word Hotten connects with "cuif," a North of England word for a lout or awkward fellow. This seems to be borne out by the circumstance that in most cant languages man and fool are synonymous, but it has been suggested to be more probably from the Romany *cova*, a thing, the term being almost indefinite in its applicability. "It is," says Pott, "a general helper on all occasions, is used as a substantive and an adjective, and has a far wider scope than the Latin *res*. Thus *cove* means that man; *covi*, that woman." The derivation from the German *kopf*, a head (not applied directly to individuals except as in English), has also been suggested. (Australian station), the *cove*, the master, or overseer.

**Covent Garden** (old slang). This place seems to have acquired at

one time a most unenviable notoriety, for it entered considerably into the vicious slang of fifty years ago. Thus "the *Covent Garden* ague" was a certain venereal disease; a "*Covent Garden* abbess" was a procuress; and prostitutes were nicknamed "*Covent Garden* nuns." (Rhyming slang), a farthing pronounced farden.

**Cover** (thieves), an accomplice who "fronts" or covers a pick-pocket while he is operating. (American), to *cover*, to drink.

An Englishman drinks rum fustian, imagining that he is *covering* a fancy mixed drink.—*American Newspaper*.

**Cover-down** (thieves), a tossing coin with a false cover. Obsolete.

**Covess** (old cant), explained by quotation.

. . . Well acquainted with the cove and the *covess*—that is, the landlord and landlady.—*J. Parker: Variegated Characters*.

**Covey** (popular and thieves), a man or boy. *Vide* COVE.

Hullo, my *covey*! what's the row?—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

"Can't you repay me that five bob now?" "You'd only booze it if I did." And the *covey* will have to wait.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Coving**, theft of jewellery by palming it as a conjuror does.

**Covo** (gypsy) (for *aeóvo*), this; this person or thing. *Covo*, "this man;" *covi*, "this woman."

**Covva, cuvva** (gypsy), a thing; often pronounced *cover*, "up to all the *covvas*," up to all the tricks, games, devices, or "rigs."

**Covvaben** (gypsy), an incident.

**Cow** (nautical), a gay woman. *Vache*, in the French slang, has the same signification. (Turf), one thousand pounds.

**Cowan**. In ordinary slang a spy, a sneak, a prying informer. It is a term given by the Freemasons to all uninitiated persons, and is probably the Hebrew word *cohen*, כהן, a priest, from the opposition and oppression which the Freemasons have endured from the Catholic Church. *Cowan* is not an uncommon form of "Cohen" as a name among Jews. The derivation of *Cowan* from the Greek *κύων*, a dog, is a great injustice to the Freemasons, who have never regarded or treated the uninitiated as dogs.

**Cow and calf** (rhyming slang), to laugh.

**Cow-boy** (American), cattle herder or drover of Texas and South-Western States. The term was applied during the revolutionary war to so-called Tory partisans in the State of New York, but who were no better than brigands, plundering both sides.

**Cowcamp** (American), explained by quotation.

. . . Were a number of *cowcamps*, where recently settled stockmen kept watch and ward over herds of long-horned Texas cattle, which grazed along the river or on the *mesas* above.—*The Youth's Companion*.

**Cow-chilo** (pidgin-English), a girl, *i.e.*, *cow-child*. A boy was termed *bull-chilo*. These terms are becoming obsolete, but are often used in fun to chaff Chinese.

In he city of Whampo  
Lib Joss-pidgin man name Coe,  
Massa Coe he missionaly,  
Hab got one *cow-chilo* Maly.  
—*The Ballad of Mary Coe*.

**Cow-cow** (pidgin), to be very angry, to scold (Hotten).

**Cow juice** (popular), milk; the term is also used by school-boys.

**Cowlick** (popular), lock of hair twisted forward from the ear, rarely seen now.

**Cow-oil**, or **cow-grease** (pidgin), butter. Obsolete, but literally translated from the Chinese.

**Cows and kisses** (rhyming slang), mistress or missus; the ladies.

Come, *cows and kisses*, put the battle of the line on your Barnet fair, and a rogue and villain in your sky-rocket.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Cowshooter** (Winchester College), a round-topped hat, worn only by prefects, "bluchers" (rank-

ing next to prefects), and "jolly-keeps," or old students.

**Crabs** (thieves), feet; to move one's *crabs*, to run away.

I crossed a crusher at the landyard. . . . I moved my *crabs* like a bull.—*On the Trail*.

(Dice players), a pair of aces.

**Crabshells** (popular), shoes.

**Crack**, a recognised colloquialism, used as an adjective, meaning first-rate.

Captain Cadsby, as he loved to call himself, was the *crack* shot of Doltshire.—*Truth*.

(Sport), a *crack*, an adept.

Lawn tennis at Cannes . . . the doings of the *cracks*, we know, interest many of our readers.—*Pastime*.

(Turf), the *crack* is the favourite in a race.

The extraordinary fluctuations in the betting which drove the *crack* from 6 to 4 to 10 to 1 the night before the race.—*Sporting Times*.

(Old), a *crack*, an insane person, a boaster.

(Popular), a *crack*, a prostitute; to *crack* up, to extol, to puff (obsolete English, but used in a slangy sense); in a *crack*, in an instant; to *crack*, to inform.

(Thieves), a *crack*, a burglary.

Here . . . success to the *crack*.  
—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

To *crack* a crib, to commit a burglary.

I mean to *crack* a crib to-night,  
But, pals, don't *crack* on me.  
—*Ballad: Bates' Farm*.

The crib's barred up at night like a jail ; but there's one part we can *crack* safe and softly.—*Dickens : Oliver Twist.*

(Tinker), *crack*, a stick. Not "modern gypsy," as declared by Hotten.

**Crack a bottle, to** (common), to drink a bottle of liquor.

**Crack a whid, to** (thieves), to talk.

**Cracked nut** (common), the head of an insane person.

An enthusiastic poet begs Mr. — to lift up his "crested head." *Cracked nut* would, practically speaking, be more to the point.—*Fun.*

**Cracked up** (common), ruined, "gone to smash."

**Cracker** (common), an untruth consequent on boastful or improbable statements. The older form is "crack," alluding to high-sounding language, as in "crack up," to loudly extol, puff up. It has been suggested that "crack" is from the Gaelic *crac*, to talk. The French *une craque* is a mild untruth, or a gasconade, and in the latter sense it is synonymous with *cracker*. Le Baron de Crac is the French Munchausen, the hero of a volume of travels, who meets with the most marvellous adventures, the type of a boastful, gasconading, story-teller.

**Crackey** (popular), an ejaculation. A corruption of "crikey," which see.

**Cracking a crust** (common), rubbing along in the world ; " *cracking a tidy crust*," means doing very well. This is a very common expression among the lower orders (Hotten).

**Crackling** (Cambridge University), the three velvet strips worn on the sleeve by members of St. John's College, Cambridge, called "hogs."

**Crack-pot** (American), pretentious, petty, a small person of little account.

I'm a *crack-pot* in the city . . .  
All the barmaids at me titter  
When I call for mild and bitter,  
They say I am their little

Bit of *crack-pot* jam.

—*A Catnach Ballad : The Crack-Pot in the City.*

**Cracksman** (thieves), a burglar.

Some mortals disdain the calm  
blessings of rest,

Your *cracksman*, for instance, thinks  
night-time the best.

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

**Cram, crammer** (common), a lie.

My little friend . . . pulled my nose  
for telling what he called a beastly *cram*.—  
*Punch.*

That was the *crammer* I told him, and  
furthermore . . . I piled it up a bit.—  
*Greenwood : Left in a Cab.*

To *cram*, to lie ; also to acquire or impart instruction hastily in view of an approaching examination. This is an almost recognised term.

A very clever lad can dispense with the expense of being *crammed*.—*United Service Gazette.*

To *cram up* one, to ply him with falsehoods.

(University), a *cram*, a translation.

The infatuated Mr. Bouncer madly persisted . . . in going into the school clad in his examination coat, and padded over with a host of *crams*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Crammer** (common), a falsehood; a liar; one expert in “cramming,” *i.e.*, preparing hastily candidates for examination; the head of a “cramming” establishment.

**Cramped, crapped** (popular and thieves), killed or hanged.

**Cramping cull** (old cant), the executioner.

**Cramp in the hand** (popular), stinginess or meanness.

**Cramp words** (old cant), sentence of death.

**Cranberry eye** (American). When a man's eye is bloodshot, generally from drinking alcohol, he is often called a boy with a *cranberry eye*. The American cranberry is very much larger than the English variety, and bears a resemblance to an inflamed optic.

**Crank.** *Vide* COUNTERFEIT CRANK. (American), insane, eccentric, or a monomaniac. (Old), gin and water.

**Crap** (old cant), money; the gallows.

And what if at length, boys, he come to the *crap*?

Even rack-punch has some bitter in it.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

To *crap*, to hang.

(Printers), applied to “pie,” or mixed-up type, that a compositor neglects to clear away; equivalent to the popular name for excrement.

(Popular), to *crap*, to ease oneself.

**Crapping casa** (low theatrical), the W.C.

**Crapny** (gypsy), a turnip, a button or nail head. Sometimes *krafny*.

**Crawl** (tailors), one who uses undignified means to curry favour with an employer or foreman.

**Crawler** (common), explained by quotation.

Every hansom-cab, or *crawler*, is in itself an express waggon on a small but sufficient scale.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also a cab which goes slowly to pick up fares. A mean, contemptible fellow.

**Craw-thumper** (popular), a Roman Catholic (Hotten). In America a native of Ireland, *i.e.*, Irish Catholic.

Wanted a servant-maid. No pulings or *craw-thumpers* need apply.—*Philadelphia Public Ledger*.

**Craze** (common), used in reference to anything in great vogue that is “the rage” for the time being.

It was a *craze* on both sides and it passed. During the *craze* S. and M. had their photographs taken together, and the double picture sold somewhat furiously.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Crazy quilt** (American), properly a quilt made of all kinds of patches. Figuratively a confused and mixed political party.

**Cream-jugs** (Stock Exchange), Charkof-Krementschug Railway Bonds.

Oh! supposing our *Cream-jugs* were broken,  
Or "Beetles" were scuring the "Babies."  
—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Cream stick** (popular), the penis.

**Creamy** (common), excellent.

**Creeper** (prison), one who curries favour by hypocrisy and tale-bearing.

**Creepers** (popular), lice. (American), the feet.

**Creeps** (common), explained by quotation.

Each of those four men was immediately seized with that cold, peculiar thrill, commonly called the *creeps*.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Cri**, short for Criterion.

But the youth was hard-hearted, and soon he departed,  
And wandered away to the *Cri*.  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Crib** (popular and thieves), a house, room.

They separated in the garden after they had cracked the *crib*.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn.*

The term is used by others in a disparaging sense for a place, house, situation, restaurant. (Schools), a literal translation of an author. Possibly from the meaning of to *crib*, to crowd together, to confine in a small space, as "cram," synonym of *crib*, or from the slang signification to cheat, to pilfer. To *crib*, to cheat at an examination by using a *crib*, more generally to cheat by plagiarism. (Common), to *crib*, given by Webster as a recognised word but used now in a slangy sense, to pilfer.

It is not stealing, at least it does not seem like stealing . . . it is at most only *cribbing*.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

(Old cant), *crib*, the stomach.

**Cribbage-faced** (common), is said of a person marked with the small-pox.

**Cribber** (military), a grumbler; a cavalry term evidently from the expression "crib-biter," given to a horse which gnaws at its crib or manger, quarrelling with his last meal and his difficulty in digesting it.

**Crib-biter** (common), an inveterate grumbler. *Vide* CRIBBER.

**Cribcracker** (thieves and popular), a burglar.

The little boys . . . delight in gossip concerning his talents as a *cribcracker* and his adventures as a pickpocket.—*Sims: How the Poor Live.*

**Crikey** (popular), an exclamation denoting astonishment, a corruption of Christ.

"Well, I'm blown!" he added. "This here's a free country, and a cove ain't to swear at his own gal, oh, *crikey*."—*Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds*.

**Crimum** (tinker), sheep.

**Crinkum-crankum** (old slang), a woman's private parts.

**Cripple** (popular), a bent sixpence. (Common), an awkward or dull person.

**Crisp** (common), a banknote.

He . . . cashed a cheque for £100 and handed over the *crisp*.—*Modern Society*.

**Croaker** (old slang), a fourpenny piece. (Common), one who takes a desponding view of everything. (Popular), a beggar, a corpse.

Well . . . it won't perhaps send you into hysterics to hear that Dave is as good as a *croaker*.—*J. Greenwood: Almost Lost*.

(Prison), the doctor.

One man who had put his name for the "butcher" or *croaker*, would suddenly find that he had three ounces of bread less to receive and then a scene would ensue.—*Evening News*.

**Croak, to** (thieves), to die, to kill.

**Croakumshire** (old slang). This nickname is said to have been given to Northumberland because of the difficulty people in that county have in pronouncing the letter *r*, which imparts a

somewhat rough tone to the voice.

**Crock** (common), the original meaning is that of a slow, worthless horse, but in society it is also applied figuratively to a slow, foolish, good-for-nothing person, as in the phrase, "that girl is a regular *crock*." In sporting and university language it is also used in reference to a duffer, a lazy bungler.

The delinquents still rowed their blades like giants and nowhere in the boat was a *crock* to be seen.—*Referee*.

With reference to the original meaning of *slow*, worthless horse, *crock* is allied to *creep*, Anglo-Saxon *crocpan*, and old High Dutch *kriochan*. But it is curious to note that in German slang *krieg* is a horse, and that the German *ross*, a horse, has given the French *rosse*, a slow, good-for-nothing horse; this word being used with the same figurative meaning as *crock*, applied to persons.

**Crocker** (sporting), a spaniel employed in beating underwood for small game.

**Crockets** (Winchester College), the word for cricket. To "get out *crockets*" is to get out with a "duck's egg," that is, without having made any runs. "Small *crockets*" is the name given to a game played with an india-rubber ball and a plain deal bat about two inches broad.

**Crocodile** (university), a girls' school walking two and two.

**Crocus, croakus** (popular and thieves), a quack; *crocus-chovey*, an apothecary's shop; *crocus-pitcher*, a street seller of medicines.

(Army), *crocus*, an army or navy surgeon. From "croak," to die, which has given the prison slang "croaker" for a doctor.

**Crone** (circus), a clown. From a provincialism, *cronny*, merry.

**Cronker** (tailors), the foreman.

**Crook** (thieves and popular). On the *crook*, by dishonest means; the reverse of "square." Got on the *crook*, stolen. Hence a *crook* is a thief, both in England and America.

CHICAGO *crook*.—"Good news, Jim."  
... FELLOW *crook*.—"What's up?"—*Tit-Bits*.

No *crook* gets any good out of his boodles.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Crookback** (old slang), a six-penny piece, from some of these coins being much battered.

**Crooked** (thieves), stolen. *Vide* CROOK.

**Croop** (popular), stomach; for crop.

**Cropper** (common), a heavy fall; to tumble "neck and crop."

He was far more shaken by his *cropper* than in any round of his memorable fight

with Bungaree or any other opponent.—*Sporting Times*.

To "come a *cropper*," to have a heavy fall. Also said of a man who experiences a decided failure.

There was a steeplechase for gentlemen riders, over which all the sharps came a *cropper* through backing Sufflet.—*Sporting Times*.

**Croppie** (prison), one who has had his hair cut in prison. The term was applied to Irish rebels in 1789, and formerly to those who had their ears cut off by the executioner. Puritans went by that name on account of their short hair.

**Cropped** (Winchester College), to be *cropped* is to be turned in a lesson.

**Cross** (thieves). To be "on the *cross*," to be a thief; to get a thing on the *cross* is to obtain it surreptitiously, the reverse of "on the square."

The young woman is Bess, and perhaps she may be on the *cross*, and y' don't go to say that what with flimping and with cly-faking, and such like, she mayn't be wanted some day.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe*.

Hence, a *cross*, a thief; termed also "cross man," or "cross cove."

It reminds us too of the "plants" and *crosses*, and of the lowest of the low who supported pugilism.—*Punch*.

(University), to *cross*, putting a *cross* against a man's name for not paying his bills to the bursar, or cutting chapel lectures, &c.



**Cross chap** (costermongers), a thief.

**Cross cove** and **mollisher** (thieves), a man and woman who are in partnership for purposes of robbery.

**Cross-crib** (thieves and roughs), a house frequented by thieves.

**Cross-cut**, and **tip and sifter** (American), mining terms from California expressive of motions or methods in washing gold. These terms were at one time commonly applied in slang in many ways.

**Cross-drum** (thieves), a thieves' tavern.

**Cross-famming** (thieves), robbing a person of his scarf-pin; "from the position of the arms in the act," says Hotten. *Vide* FAM.

**Crossing the damp-pot** (tailors), going to America.

**Cross-kid**, to (thieves), explained by quotation.

A reeler came to the cell and *cross-kidded* (questioned) me.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Cross-roader** (American), a man whose ways are doubtful or dishonest.

. . . For the simple purpose of being introduced to the club, there to "fleece the suckers," who never suspect they are playing against a *cross-roader*.—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Crow** (thieves), a man who watches while another creeps into houses,

down areas, or into shops. (Common), a regular *crow*, an unexpected piece of luck, *i.e.*, something to *crow* over. "I have a *crow* to pull with you," a complaint to make, or misunderstanding to clear up. (American), to eat *crow*, to recant, to humiliate oneself.

In America, a right-about movement of this character is described as eating *crow*.—*St. James' Gazette.*

**Crowder** (tinker), a string.

**Crowders** (theatrical), large audiences.

**Crow-eater** (colonial), a lazy fellow who will live on anything rather than work.

**Crowsfoot** (prison), the Government mark of the broad arrow, which is stamped in black paint on prison clothing as a means of detection in case of escape.

**Crug** (popular), food. (Christ Hospital), bread.

He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*.—*Lamb: Essays.*

**Crummy** (army), dirty; applied amongst soldiers to a man's appearance. (Thieves), with well-filled pockets. Also lousy. A "*crummy* doss."

**Crumpet face** (popular), a face with smallpox marks.

**Crumpler** (common), cravat.

If I see a boy make to do about the fit of his *crumpler* . . .—*Blackmore: Lorna Doone.*

**Crutch** (Winchester College), a name given to the school carpenter.

**Cry of things** (popular), a great number of things; "a cry of pears."

**Cry matches** (American), a slang exclamation of surprise. Its derivation is improbably given as "crime hatches." By some "cry" is considered as equivalent to *Christi* or *Christ*, but the phrase is altogether obscure.

**Crusher** (popular), a policeman; from the slang term "to crush," to run.

To bonnet a lot of old blokes,  
And make petticoats squeal is good  
biz,  
But a *crusher's* 'ard knuckles a  
crunching yer scrag? no,  
I'm blowed if that is!

—*Punch.*

**Crush, to** (popular), to run. Possibly from "beetle-crusher" (which see).

**Crust** (theatrical), the head.

**Crusty beau** (old slang), a fop who makes up with paint and cosmetics.

**C's, the three** (prison), the Central Criminal Court.

**C.T.A.**, (circus and travelling showmen), the police.

**Cuckoo** (society), a fool.

**Cud** (Winchester College), handsome, pretty. Probably from *kudos*. (Popular), a piece of tobacco chewed, a "quid."

**Cuddling** (prize-fighters), wrestling.

It was said by some cavillers that there was too much wrestling, or, as they called it, *cuddling*.—*Punch.*

**Cue despiser** (theatrical), said of an actor who is careless in taking up his *cue*, thereby damaging the performance.

**Cue, to** (thieves), to obtain goods on credit which you never mean to pay for, synonymous with "going upon the letter Q," "the mace."

**Cuff** (tailors), one who feigns religion, or is religious.

**Cuffer** (military), a lie; spinning a *cuffer*, telling an exaggerated, grossly improbable story; one that *cuffs* or beats any story. (American thieves), a man, rustic. From old English cant *cofe*, or the Yiddish *kaffer*, a stupid fellow; *kaffori*, Hebrew for a peasant.

**Cuff shooter** (theatrical), an impudent and presuming tyro, who gives himself airs, and thinks more of his "cuffs" than his cues.

**Cuffy, cuftee** (West Indian), a word generally applied to

negroes, and which was at one time a very common name among them. Literally it means "Thursday." Among the Guinea and Dahomey negroes every man receives a name from the day of the week on which he is born. Hence the frequency of Quashee, *Cuffee*, Juba, &c. The latest *Cuffee* introduced to the British public was King Coffee Calcolli.

The fine dash of Virginia upper *cuffyism*, it is gone, gone for ever. Sambo has settled down into a simple bourgeois.—*Putnam's Magazine*.

**Culing** (thieves), an abbreviation of reticuling; snatching reticules from the seats of carriages at races.

**Culio** (pidgin), a curio, a curiosity. The common term "curio" was borrowed from this Chinese abbreviation:

One time two piecay Flunsee (Frenchmen) make walkee in Canton,  
Look-see one piecay *culio*-shop—a first chop numpsi one.

—*L'Oiseau*.

**Cull, cully** (popular and thieves), a man or boy.

Now the darky shines on 'em, you see what famous togs the *cull* has on.—*Ainsworth: Auriol*.

*Cully* had formerly the signification of greenhorn, fool, dupe, milksop, and was a recognised word; it is used by Addison and others.

Your royal *cully* has command  
Only from you at second hand.  
—*Earl of Rochester: Works*.

Evidently an abbreviation of "cullion," French *couillon*.

(Theatrical), actors sometimes address one another as *cully*, or "laddie."

"Where's your wife, old boy?" inquired a friend of a well-known comedian on tour.  
"Don't know, *cully*."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Rum *cull*, the manager.

**Cully gorger** (theatrical), the manager of a theatre. According to Baumann, a brother actor.

**Cum annexes** (West Indian), the members of one's family.

**Cum-shaw** (pidgin), a present of any kind, a gratuity, a *pourboire* or *baksheesh*. "According to Giles it is the Amoy pronunciation (*kam-siā*) of two characters signifying 'grateful thanks'" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

Mashee, he no givee dat Chinee man *cumshaw*, not one little *nip tee cashee* (one very small coin), he too smallo man inside, he no makee plopa fashion—p'ho!—*The Talking Ducks*.

**Cundum** (old), appliance for the prevention of infection in sexual intercourse. The word is used by the Germans. Said to be derived from one Condom, who lived in the reign of Queen Anne, and was noted for selling what is now called "French letters." French, *capotes anglaises*.

**Cunnels, dunnovans** (tinker), potatoes.

- Cup and saucer players** (theatrical), a term of derision invented by the pessimists for the purpose of depreciating the artists associated with the performance of the late T. W. Robertson's comedies.
- Cup-tosser** (popular), a person who professes to tell fortunes by examining the grounds in tea or coffee-cups (Hotten).
- Cure** (common), a curious, eccentric, odd person. Imported from America; was used with that sense twenty-five years ago. More generally now a humorous, comical person. Derived from an eccentric American popular song called "The Cure."
- Curious, to do** (popular), to do anything out of the ordinary. "Look at that man tumbling about. He's doing *curious*."
- Curl up** (popular), be silent.
- Currants and plums** (rhyming slang), thrums; slang for three-pence.
- Currency** (Australian), persons born in Australia, natives of England being termed "sterling."
- Curro** (gypsy), a cup or tankard.
- Curse of Scotland** (Scotch), the nine of diamonds. Many derivatives have been suggested, and Hotten says the most probable is, that in the game of Pope Joan the nine of diamonds is the pope, of whom the Scotch have an especial horror.
- Cursetor** (old cant), a tramp, vagabond.
- Curtail** (old cant), second in command in the fraternity of vagabonds.
- Curtain** (theatrical), a strong situation at the end of an act, which, when the *curtain* descends, elicits a burst of applause, and causes the *curtain* to be taken up again.
- Curtain-raiser** (theatrical and journalistic), a short play performed before a more important one. Corresponds to the French "lever de rideau."  
"Love and Politics" was produced as a *curtain-raiser* at the Opera Comique on Thursday.—*The Referee*.
- Cuse** (Winchester College), a book in which the marks of each division are recorded.
- Cushion-smiter** (popular), a clergyman or preacher.
- Cushmawaunee** (Anglo-Indian), never mind.
- Cuss** (American), a man.  
A durned nasty old *cuss* he is, and don't you forget it.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.  
It is not always used disparagingly; a tough *cuss* is a bold, indomitable man.

It is said that the teamster . . . considered himself to be entitled to be called a tough *cuss*.—*Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Cussedness** (American), evil-mindedness, innate depravity. To do a thing out of pure *cussedness* is the same as to do it for mere mischief, without reason or excuse. Also audacity.

He . . . resolved to be present in his seat out of what may be characterised as pure *cussedness*.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Cuss out, to** (American), to subdue or silence an opponent by overwhelming severity of tongue. "He *cussed* him out," *i.e.*, used such violent language (not necessarily profane) as to verbally annihilate him.

**Customer** (common), generally used in such phrases as a "queer, or rum *customer*;" a curious fellow, or one difficult to deal with; an "ugly *customer*," a dangerous person or animal. (American thieves), a victim.

**Cut** (old), tipsy. (Society), a step, a stage, as "she is a *cut* above me."

**Cut a shine, to** (popular), to play pranks, amuse oneself boisterously.

I smoke her havannas and lower her  
wine,  
At times with her money I *cut* a rare  
*shine*.

—*Song.*

**Cut and dried** (thieves), the phrase refers to a robbery which has been duly planned.

Some time after that affair with the fence, one of the mob said to me, "I have got a place *cut and dried*; will you come and do it?"—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Cut bene, to** (old cant), to use pleasant words.

**Cut capers, to** (common), to behave in a disorderly, improper manner.

**Cut dead, to** (common), to break off all connection with an acquaintance or friend.

But he could not get these books without Dr. Wycherley, and unfortunately he had *cut* that worthy *dead* in his own asylum.—*Reade: Hard Cash.*

**Cut didoes, to**, synonymous with *cut capers* (Hotten).

**Cut dirt, to** (American), to run away very rapidly.

He jump up fo' sartin—he *cut dirt* and run,

While Sambo follow arter wid his  
"tum, tum, tum."

—*Negro Song of 1829.*

**Cut down** (American), deprived, brought low, poor.

**Cut in, to** (society), take a share in, to try for.

Most of the students will *cut in* for a prize.—*School Magazine.*

**Cut into, to** (Winchester College), to hit one on the back with a "ground ash" or stick used by prefects in the exercise of their functions.

**Cut it fat, to** (popular), to show off, exaggerate.

They've mustered in great force, and no mistake. I'm blest if they ain't *cut it fat*.  
—*Funny Folks*.

**Cut of one's jib** (common), one's appearance.

**Cut one's lucky** (popular), to go away, to run off; to make a "lucky" escape (Lat. *feliciter evasit*).

**Cut one's stick, to** (common), to depart; literally, procure a stick for a journey. Or a corruption of *up stick!* i.e., tent-pegs, often done in a great hurry.

Far off a man appeared; and by his guise  
I knew him for a keeper! . . .  
. . . I fled!—fast as I could  
I went!—in fact, again, and it was wise,  
I *cut my stick*.

—*Fun*.

**Cuts** (tailors), "small *cuts*" are small scissors, button-hole scissors.

**Cut saucy, to** (tailors), to cut a garment in the height of fashion.

**Cutsum** (pidgin), custom; a word extensively applied to law, habits, usage. "Dat blongy olo *cutsum*," is continually heard from Chinese, when asked the reason for anything.

So it blongey olo *cutsum*—which neva' wailo way,  
Allo baba' (all barbers) hab got stickee in  
China-side to-day.  
—*Ahong and the Mosquito*.

**Cutter** (old), a cutpurse. Hotten says this ancient cant word now

survives in the phrase, "to swear like a *cutter*." *Cutter*, according to Vaux, was applied to a man in the habit of drawing a knife in a quarrel.

**Cut that** (popular), be quiet.

**Cut the line** (printers), see **LINES ON**. When a companionship of compositors fall short of work they *cut the line*, i.e., all the men leave work till sufficient is provided for the whole. The reference is to the fact that piece hands working in companionships are paid by the number of lines composed, according to size and width.

**Cut the line, string, to** (thieves), to cut a story short, to end a story.

**Cutting** (Australian and American), separating cattle from a herd and lassoing them.

I had been furnished with a trained *cutting* pony, reported to be one of the best in the valley. . . . It was only necessary, after having shown him a cow or a calf getting away from the herd, to give him his head, and at full speed he started for it immediately.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Cutting his eyes** (thieves), getting suspicious.

**Cutting his own throat** (Stock Exchange) is said of a man who buys or sells stocks, and immediately re-sells or re-purchases them at a loss.

**Cutting his painter** (nautical) is said of a man who makes off

suddenly or clandestinely, or dies. French sailors use the corresponding expression *déra-linguer* with the same sense.

**Cutting it fine.** *Vide* FINE.

**Cutting shop** (popular), a place where cheap inferior goods or material are retailed.

**Cutting the wind** (military), sword drill.

**Cutting-trade** (trade), one conducted on competitive principles, where the profits are very closely shaved (Hotten).

**Cutting up** (popular), acting in an eccentric or daring manner. To *cut up* shindies was the first form. The expression has extended to the United States.

**Cuttle-boung** (old cant), a knife used for cutting purses.

**Cutto** or **cutter** (gypsy), a piece, bit, rag, or drop. *Cutters o' brishno*, "drops of rain;" *yeck cutter o' levinro*, "one drop of ale." *Cutteréngrīs*, bits, pieces. *Engrī*, equivalent to a thing or one thing, like the "one piece" of Pidgin, is often quite needlessly post-fixed to a noun in Romany. (Hindu, *katra*, a drop.) Hence *cutter*, a (gold) piece, a sovereign.

**Cut, to** (common), to run away. Generally to "cut and run." Abbreviated from "cut his stick," or from an idea of severance, separation, as in the phrase "cutting one's painter," going away.

Excuse me, you fellows, I must *cut* off home.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Simply shook him . . . bade him to *cut* it quick.—*Town Talk*.

(Trade), to compete in business (Hotten).

(Old cant), to speak.

**Cutty** (common), a short-stemmed clay pipe.

"Wot's the matter?" cried the sandman, who had lighted a *cutty*, and was quietly smoking it.—*Ainsworth: Auriol*.

**Cutty-eyed** (thieves), one who looks suspicious.

**Cutty-sark** (Scotch), a short chemise.

**Cut up** (common), vexed; to *cut up*, to come up; generally to turn out, well or otherwise; to become; to *cut up* well, *vide* CUT UP FAT. (Thieves), to *cut up*, to divide the plunder.

**Cut up fat, to** (common), to leave at one's death a good estate.

**Cut up rough, to** (common), to give signs of great displeasure, to become violent, evilly disposed.

Well! . . . I'm not so sorry, after all, that they *cut up rough*, and ploughed me.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Cut up rusty, to** (popular), to become unpleasant, angry, rough.

**Cut up shines, shindies, to** (popular), to play tricks, pranks (Hotten).

**Cut your own grass, to** (prison), gain your own living.

**Cymbal** (thieves), a watch.

T



(tramps and beggars),  
a detective.

Still I play shoeblack odd times. I have a few friends among the *D's* (detectives), who give me the job to watch a house occasionally. Then I take up the box and brushes and place myself in a suitable position. It pays well while it lasts. Nor is it the only way in which my friends the *D's* find me useful. I have free entry into all sorts of haunts, and can go and come as I like without arousing suspicion.—*Thor Freddur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

**D's, the two** (army), short pay. The residue left a soldier, part of whose pay is stopped by sentence of court-martial for "spouting" or pawning his kit. However large the amount to be recovered, he must be allowed to retain twopence, 2d., as daily pay.

**D. H. F.** (cycling slang), really letters signifying a peculiar form of fork used for bicycles, and known as the "Double Hollow Fork." Applied to a man means a stupid ass.

**Dab.** In the slang of "water rats," *i.e.*, river thieves who plunder the bodies of drowned persons, the body of a poor ragged woman is called a *dab*; from *dab*, vulgarly used in contempt for a woman, as a dirty *dab*, a slut, *dabs* being rags.

(Theatrical), a bed.

(Common), to be a *dab* at anything is to be more than usually expert at it.

Sir Peter Lawrie, on a recent visit to Billingsgate for the purpose of making what he calls a piscatory tour, was much astonished at the vigorous performance of various of the real "live fish," some of which, as he sagely remarked, appeared to be perfect *dabs* at jumping.—*Punch.*

Generally supposed to be derived from "adept," but to *dab* means to strike gently, and a *dab* is therefore one skilful in dabbing, one with a light touch, a skilful hand, a "good hand" at, hence expert in.

In old cant the term "rum dabe" was applied to one expert at roguery. Literally, a "good hand;" possibly from German *tappe*, fist, paw, and this may be the origin of the modern *dab*. The French slang has *dab*, meaning master, chief, father.

(Costermongers' back slang), bad.

I've been doing awful *dab* with my tol (lot) or stock, haven't made a yennep (penny).—*Diprose: London Life.*

**Dab it up, to** (thieves), to cohabit with a woman. From *dab*, a contemptuous term for a woman. Also to agree.

**Dab out, to** (popular), to wash.

His wife at this moment advantaging herself of Sabbath leisure to *dab out* her solitary cotton gown.—*J. Greenwood: Undercurrents of London Life.*

**Dabster.** *Vide DAB.*

**Dab wash.** Among the lower classes a *dab wash* is a small intermediate wash between the large ones.



That great room itself was sure to have clothes hanging to dry at the fire, whatever day of the week it was; some one of the large irregular family having had what was called in the district a *dab wash* of a few articles forgotten on the regular day.—*Mrs. Gaskell: Sylvia's Lovers.*

**Dace** (American), two cents. From deuce.

**Dacha-saltee** (thieves and costermongers), tenpence. From the Italian *dieci soldi*.

What with my crippledom and thy piety, a wheeling of thy poor old dad, we'll bleed the bumpkins of a *dacha-saltee*.—*Reade: The Cloister and the Hearth.*

**Dacoit** (Anglo-Indian), a robber belonging to an armed gang which, according to law, must consist of at least five persons.

**Dad, daddy** (popular), father. In Welsh *tad*; Irish *daid*, ancient. He gets more like his *dad* every day.—*Street Song.*

**Dád, dádus, dádó** (gypsy), of Hindu origin, father; *dadéskro*, fatherly, pertaining to a father; “ap miro dadéskro wast!” by my father’s hand!

**Daddle** (popular), hand.

Werry unexpected pleasure! Tip us your *daddle*.—*C. Kingsley: Alton Locke.*

(Boxing slang), the fist.

With *daddles* high upraised, and nobbs held back,

In awful prescience of th’ impending thwack,

Both kiddies stood, and with prelusive spar

And light manœuvring kindled up the war.

—*Bell's Life in London.*

**Daddy** (theatrical), the comic old man of a company. According to Hotten, a stage manager. At sham raffles the *daddy* is a confederate who is, by previous arrangement, to win the prize. At casual wards the *daddy* is the old pauper in charge.

**Daffy** (popular), gin. Hotten says:—“A term used by monthly nurses, who are always extolling the virtues of *Daffy's* elixir, and who occasionally comfort themselves with a stronger medicine under *Daffy's* name. Of late years the term has been altered to ‘soothing syrup.’”

**Daftie** (tailors), one who says (or does) anything absurd.

**Dagger-cheap** (old), dirt cheap. “The Dagger was a low ordinary in Holborn, referred to by Ben Jonson and others; the fare was probably cheap and nasty” (T. L. O. Davies, Supplementary English Glossary).

We set our wares at a very easy price; he (the devil) may buy us even *dagger-cheap*, as we say.—*Andrews: Sermons.*

**Dago** (American), an Italian, derived by one authority from the Spanish *hidalgo*. As the word has been for a long time in use among sailors, who apply it to Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians, but principally to the former, there is little doubt but that it comes from *Diégo*, which is almost equivalent to Jack in the Spanish ports.

**Dags** (popular), a work, a job, a performance. "I'll do your *dags* for you," *i.e.*, I'll do your work for you. The word is a corruption of the old English and Lowland Scotch, and local in many English counties; *darg*, a day's work, as in the rhyme—

"I'll do my *darg*  
Before I arg,"

which is to say, "I'll do my work before I argue about it." The "Farmer's Encyclopædia," quoted in Worcester's Dictionary, defines "darg" or "dargue" as "the quantity of peat which one man can cut and two men wheel in a day."

**Dai, dye** (gypsy), a mother. *Dya!* oh mother! *Dyeskri dye*, maternal grandmother. *Bäbeli dye*, paternal grandmother.

**Daily Levy, the**, a nickname of the *Daily Telegraph*, in allusion to its proprietor, Mr. Levy Lawson.

**Dairies** (popular), a vulgar word for a woman's breasts. The allusion is obvious.

**Daisies** (popular and thieves), boots. Abbreviated from "daisy-roots," which see.

And there they set as dumb as mice, and me and Ginger a laying under the seats. Oh! it was a treat—with the 'eels of the copper's *daisies* just in front of my conk. But there was nothin' for it but to lay quiet.—*Sporting Times*.

**Daisy** (popular), jolly fellow.

We repeat, Billy allowed the operation to be carried out without even a verbal protest, very unlike him, and the robbers took away the gold box and complimented him on being a *daisy*. Border Chesterfields have not a word of heartier commendation in their energetic but limited vocabulary.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

**Daisy-cutter** (common), a horse that does not lift its feet much off the ground when trotting or galloping, or simply a trotting horse.

The trot is the true pace for a hackney; and were we near a town, I should like to try that *daisy-cutter* of yours upon a piece of level road (barring canter) for a quart of claret at the next inn.—*Sir W. Scott: Rob Roy*.

(Cricket), a ball bowled all along the ground, instead of with a proper pitch. Though perfectly fair, they are considered bad form. Termed also a "sneak."

**Daisy-kicker** (ostlers), the name ostlers at inns sometimes give each other.

**Daisyroots** (rhyming slang), boots.

The Windsor warrior was anxiously regarding his newly varnished patent leathers while yearning to cross from the Guards' Club to the Marlborough in muddy Pall Mall.

"'Ere you are, sir; jump in," roared cabby. "Sooner take you across for nothing than see you spile them lovely *daisyroots*."—*Sporting Times*.

**Daisyville** (thieves), the country.

**Dakma, to** (thieves), to silence.

I had to *dakma* the bloke to clay the swag. Patsy crowed for me, and that

was all the good it done me.—*On the Trail.*

**Dam** (up-country Australian), a pond for watering cattle. This is generally made by throwing up a bank across a hollow or little gully. When the floods come the escape of the flood-water is prevented.

The rain had been pouring down for weeks, as if to make up for the summer's drought. It had filled the *dams* and flooded the creeks, and the diggers were having a drunken bout.—*Keighley Goodchild: Waif.*

**Damber** (old cant), first *damber-cove*, a head-man.

**Dame** (Eton). At Eton the word *Dame* has no reference to the weaker sex. Any person, other than a classical master, who keeps a boys' boarding-house in College is a *Dame*. Thus all mathematical masters' houses are *Dames'* houses.

I am thankful to say that I did not attend the show. But I happened to see the World conducted back to his *Dames*, and the spectacle was gruesome. The punishment inflicted had been very considerable, and I do not think the World appeared in public for quite a fortnight.—*Sketchy Memories of Eton.*

**Damnation Corner** (Eton), explained by quotation.

Meanwhile, "regardless of our doom, we little victims played," or rather watched the play; we little knew what cruel fate awaited us, or that the present head-master of Eton and the Rev. F. W. Cornish lay in ambush for our outcoming behind that very sharp turn in the High Street, which, on account of its acute angle, and the consequent danger of being nailed

in shirking in old days, was somewhat flippantly termed *Damnation Corner*.—*Sketchy Memories of Eton.*

**Damned soul** (old slang). A clerk in the Customs House, whose duty was to swear or clear merchandise, used to guard against perjury by taking a previous oath never to swear truly; he was called a *damned soul*.

**Damper** (school), a suet pudding in use at schools, introduced before meat to take off the edge of the appetite. (Thieves), a shop till. To "draw a *damper*," to rob a till.

(Tailors), a "sweater," *i.e.*, one who gets as much work for as little pay as possible out of workmen.

**Damp-pot** (tailors), the sea.

**Dance, to** (printers). If letters drop out when the forme is lifted, the forme is said to *dance* (Academy of Armoury, R. Holme, 1688).

(Old), "*to dance* the Paddington frisk," to be hanged; also termed "*to dance upon nothing*." French "*danser une danse où i' n'y a pas d'plancher*."

Just as the felon condemned to die,  
With a very natural loathing,  
Leaving the sheriff to dream of ropes,  
From his gloomy cell in a vision elopes  
To a caper on sunny greens and slopes,  
Instead of the *dance upon nothing*.

—*Hood: Miss Kilmansegg.*

**Dancer or dancing-master** (thieves), a thief who gets on the roof of houses and effects

an entrance by a window. He has of course to pick his way carefully, and to be as neat in his steps as a *dancing-master*.

**Dancers** (thieves), a flight of steps or stairs.

Come, my Hebe, brack the *dancers*, that is, go up the stairs.—*Lytton: What will he do with it.*

**Dander** (low), to get up one's *dander*, or to have one's *dander* raised, to get suddenly into a passion; to burst or flare up. From the Dutch.

The fire and fury that blazed in her eyes gave ocular evidence of her *dander* being up.—*From the N. O. Picayune, cited by Bartlett.*

My *dander* got considerable riz at this, so I knocked the chap down as called me a confederate.—*Scraps.*

There is not the slightest proof that this is derived from raising the scurf or *dander* at the roots of the hair, as Bartlett thinks, though Americans, misled by the resemblance of sound, talk about "*dander* being riz." In Dutch *donder* is thunder, and *op donderen*, i.e., to get the *donder* up, is to burst out into a sudden rage, or, as Sewel explains, "like an infernal spirit;" to flare up; to blaze out in wrath.

**Dandy** (coiners), a counterfeit gold sovereign or half sovereign. The spurious coin is well made, and its composition includes some pure gold.

And it is not in paltry pewter "sours," with which the young woman has dealings,

but in *dandies*; which, rendered into intelligible English, means imitation gold coin.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

(American). This word, originally English, and manifestly taken from the ordinary word *dandy*, a fop, as a type of anything neat or fanciful, has been greatly extended in America.

The man who marries a woman simply because she is a *dandy* arrangement to have about the house does so from a pure business standpoint, and, in the end, if not compelled to support him, she has done better than many women I know of.—*Nasby.*

(Anglo-Indian), a boatman; also a kind of hammock-litter, in which travellers are carried.

In the lower hills, when she did not walk, she travelled in a *dandy*.—*Kinloch: Large-game Shooting in Thibet.*

(Irish), a small glass of whisky.

**Dandy-master** (coiners), a coiner who employs others to pass counterfeit coin.

The spirits obtained being mostly bottled and labelled, and unopened, find a ready sale at public-houses known to the *dandy-master*, so that no serious loss is experienced in that direction.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Dandy-rig** (West American), fashionable attire.

In the barber's shop that I entered the three chairs were all occupied. A slender, graceful, "interesting young man," of an Italian type of face, dressed in a blue shell-jacket bound with yellow, a good deal of loud jewellery, and a *dandy-rig* generally, operated on one customer.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Dang it!** (common), an evasive curse, but unlike its prototype,

Damn it! it is never used angrily.

**Danglers** (thieves), a bunch of seals.

And where the swag, so bleakly pinched,  
A hundred stretches hence?  
The thimbles, slang, and *danglers* filched  
A hundred stretches hence?  
—*On the Trail*.

**Darbies** (prison), handcuffs, irons.

“Stay,” cried he, “if he is an old hand he will twig the officer.” “Oh, I’m dark, sir,” was the answer; “he won’t know me till I put the *darbies* on him.”—*Reade: Never too Late to Mend*.

It is said that handcuffs, used to bind two prisoners together, were called a Darby and Joan.

**Darble** (old cant), the devil. From the French.

**Darby** (old cant), ready money.

**Dark** (common), secret.

It was evident to the Devonshire gentleman that the three traitors had agreed between them to keep quite *dark* a certain little episode of the afternoon enjoyment.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

(Prison), “getting the *dark*,” being confined in an absolutely dark cell. Probably abolished now. There was one at Clerkenwell Prison, but it was not used for at least the last ten years of that prison’s existence.

**Dark cully** (old slang), a married man who keeps a mistress, but for fear of detection only visits her secretly.

**Dark horse** (turf), a horse who has never run, or who having

run is supposed not to have exhibited his real powers in public. The sporting journals are kindly constant in their endeavours to throw light on this particular form of darkness.

The present year is likely to be memorable in racing records as the year of surprises. The first favourites have fared badly. The Derby was won by a *dark horse*; Ténébreuse, who carried off the Grand Prix last Saturday, was hardly in the betting.—*Standard*.

(American), a candidate who keeps his intentions in the background till he finds his opportunity.

**Dark house** (old), a lunatic asylum.

**Dark it, to** (tailors), to keep secret.

**Darkmans** (old cant), night.

Bene lightmans to thy quarromes; in what lipken hast thou lyped in this *darkemans*, whether in a lybbege or in the strummel?—*T. Harman: Caveat*.

*I.e.*, “Good-day to thee; in what house didst thou sleep last night, in a bed or on the straw?”

**Darkman’s budge** (old cant), a man who slips in unobserved into a house in the daytime to give ready entrance to his confederates.

**Darks** (nautical), nights on which the moon does not shine—much looked to by smugglers (Admiral Smyth).

**Dark ’un** (racing), equivalent to “dark horse,” which see.

**Darky** (American), negro.

In these days of schools and school-masters for the coloured people the number of those "who cannot tell their right hand from their left will presumably rapidly diminish; but before the *darky* of anti-bellum times quite disappears among the shades of things that are past . . . — *Harper's Magazine*.

Also twilight.

**Darned, darn it** (common), a corruption of and euphemism for damn. Of American origin.

"Two dimes," coolly replied Jonathan. "Two devils," snarled the customer; "why, I can get just as good cider here for five cents a glass." "No, you can't," drawled the Yankee. "There ain't a pint of cider, 'cept what I've got in that 'ere barrel, this side of Orleans. I'm *darned* if there is." — *Diprose: Book of Anecdotes*.

**Dash** (turf), to have a *dash* on a race is to exceed largely the speculator's ordinary limit of investment.

(Popular), to "cut a *dash*," to make a great parade, dress showily.

(African Coast *patois*) a present or gratuity. Guinea negro, *dass*.

**Dasher** (common), an extravagant or "fast" person.

She was astonished to find in high life a degree of vulgarity of which her country companions would have been ashamed. . . . These young ladies were *dashers*. — *Miss Edgeworth: Almeria*.

(Turf), one noted for his smartness.

With much regret I heard, during my visit to Newmarket, that Mr. —'s con-

dition still continues to cause his family and friends the gravest anxiety. Would I could write better news concerning the *dasher*, who is one of the best of good fellows. — *Sporting Times*.

**Dash my wig, dash my buttons**, senseless evasion of the honest word damn, used at a time when profane oaths were more fashionable than they have since become.

**Dashy, deva-dasi, dasis** (Anglo-Indian), girls devoted to dancing and prostitution in the idol temples, especially of Southern India.

"In Hindu *deva-dāsi* means slave-girl of the gods. The like existed at ancient Corinth under the name of *ierodouloi*, which is nearly a translation of the Hindu term. These appendages of the worship of Aphrodite were the same thing as the Phœnician *Kedeshoth*, repeatedly mentioned in the Old Testament. (E.g. Deut. xxiii. 18.) Such girls are mentioned in the famous inscription in Citium in Cyprus . . . under the name of *alma*, curiously near that of the modern Egyptian *alima*" (also *alma* or *almeh*). Dasis are the dancing girls attached to the pagodas. — *Nelson: Madura*.

**Daub** (low), a vulgar name for a painter; properly a coarsely painted picture, what the French call *croûte*.

**Davy** (popular), a corruption of affidavit.

Ay, ay, my young coon, said she, or a silver spoon either. I'll take my *davy* it's only pewter. — *Sam Slick*.

**Davy Jones** (nautical), a mythical character supposed to typify the depths of ocean. *Davy*

*Jones' locker*, the bottom of the ocean.

It has been ingeniously conjectured that the sea, which is so often the sailors' cemetery, was called Jonah's locker, that the prophet's name was corrupted into *Jones*, and *Davy* prefixed as being a common name in Wales (*Notes and Queries*). For other derivation, *vide* Dr. Charles Mackay's "Gaelic Etymology of the English Language."

Sailors sometimes call the devil "Old *Davy*." This appears to be a diminutive of devil.

Even in the appellations given him (the devil) by familiar or vulgar irreverence, the same pregnant initial prevails, he is the Deuce, and Old *Davy*, and *Davy Jones*.—*Southey: The Doctors*.

**Davy putting on the coppers for the parsons** (nautical), the brewing of a storm.

**Davy's sow, or David's sow** (popular). "As drunk as *Davy's sow*," completely drunk.

Grose says:—"David Lloyd, a Welshman, had a sow with six legs; on one occasion he brought some friends and asked them whether they had ever seen a sow like that, not knowing that in his absence his drunken wife had turned out the animal, and gone to lie down in the sty. One of the party observed that it was the *drunkest sow* he had ever beheld."

The term may have originated (a mere conjecture) in an allusion to Nell Gywn, one of the mistresses of Charles II. (nicknamed *David*—his father was called Nebuchadnezzar by the Roundheads), who was credited with every vice by the Earl of Rochester, and of whom he wrote:

. . . Madam Nelly,  
Whose first employment was, with open  
throat,  
To cry fresh herrings, even ten a groat.  
—*A Satire*.

Other synonymous expressions are, "drunk as a drum, as a wheelbarrow, sow-drunk, drunk as a fish, as a lord, as a piper, as a fiddler, as a rat."

**Dawk** (Anglo-Indian), transport, by means of relays of men and horses; the mail. To lay a *dawk* is to organise a postal or transport service.

During the mutiny of 1857-58, when several young surgeons had arrived in India, whose services were urgently wanted at the front, it is said that the Head of the Department to which they had reported themselves, directed them to immediately "lay a *dawk*." To which one, aghast, replied, "Would you kindly explain, sir—for you might just as well tell me to lay an egg."—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Dawk-bungalow** (Anglo-Indian), a resting-place or house for travellers.

I am inclined to think that the value of life to a *dāk bungalow* fowl must be very trifling.—*In my Indian Garden*.

**Daylights** (common), the space left in the glass, and between

the liquor and the rim; not permitted in ultra-council gatherings when a toast is to be drunk. The way on such occasions of the proposer of the toast was "no *daylights* and no heel-taps, but a full bumper."

(Popular), the eyes; to "darken one's *daylights*," to give a black eye.

Good woman! I do not use to be so treated. If the lady says such another word to me, damn me, I will darken her *daylights*.—*Fielding: Amelia*.

**Dead** (turf), certainty.

"Dealers in the *dead*" did well then; bet after bet was booked about horses which had no more chance of winning than "if they were boiled."—*Bailey's Monthly Magazine*.

**Dead-alive** (popular), a stupid, dull, slow fellow.

**Dead-amiss** (racing) is said of a horse that is incapacitated from winning a race through illness.

**Dead as a tent-peg** (popular), from the pegs being buried in the ground.

FIRST CLUBMAN.—"Hullo, Bob; heard the news about Macstinger, of the 'Mosquito'?" SECOND CLUBMAN.—"No; what's up?" FIRST C.—"Great Scott! it's a case of down, not up, dear boy. He's *dead as a tent-peg*. Poisoned himself last night."—*Fun*.

Varied to "dead as a door-nail," or "dead as a herring," "dead as small beer."

**Dead beat** (American), an impostor; a man who does not

intend to pay his share; an unprofitable sponger.

(Common), to be *dead beat*, to be utterly exhausted.

**Dead broke** (common), utterly ruined, penniless. (American), to *dead break*, to ruin at a gambling game.

This other, a man who had never touched a card, but learnt the game over-night and sat out a seven-hours' play with the chief gamblers, under the fire of their associates, *dead-broke* them, so that they quitted the camp laughed at by their own pals.—*H. L. Williams: Buffalo Bill*.

**Dead cargo** (thieves), plunder that will not recompense for the risk entailed.

**Deader** (army), a military funeral.

**Dead finish**, the (up-country Australian), excellent beyond measure; in Cockney slang an "out-and-outer." Death is a natural metaphor for completeness, for exhaustion or exhaustiveness; dead is a common prefix, expressing the same idea in "dead on," "dead-nuts," "dead certain," "dead beat," "dead heat."

"He's *the dead finish*—go right through a man," rejoins Sam rather. "Blessed if he didn't near skiver my hoss."—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Dead-head** (American), one who stands about a bar to drink at the expense of others.

Sitting on a bench outside the principal hotel are three or four hopelessly abandoned loafers, wearing plainly the stamp of *dead-head* on their shameless features,



waiting to be asked to drink, or listening eagerly for the not infrequent "shout for all hands."—*A. C. Grant.*

**Dead heat** (common), exactly even. Two men who are equal in anything are said to be a *dead heat*; from a racing expression.

Ay, so ends the tussle. I knew the tan-muzzle was first, though the ring-men were yelling "*dead heat*." A nose I could swear by, but Clarke said "the mare, by a short head."—*A. L. Gordon: How we Beat the Favourite.*

**Dead-horse** (popular), to "draw the *dead-horse*" is doing work paid for in advance. The term explains itself. Used also by sailors. Admiral Smyth says that "when they commence earning money again there is in some merchantships a ceremony performed of dragging round the deck an effigy of their fruitless labour in the shape of a horse, running him up to the yard-arm, and cutting him adrift to fall into the sea, amidst loud cheers." French printers call this *manger du salé*, to eat salt pork, that is, something that excites thirst; from the fact that workmen in this case, feeling disinclined for work, pay frequent visits to the wine-shop.

**Dead horses** (West Indian), shooting stars. The superstition of the negro mind imagines that shooting stars are the spirits of horses that have been killed by falling over ravines and precipices.

**Dead lurk** (thieves), breaking into a house when the inmates are at church.

**Deadly lively, to be** (common), to be factitiously or unnaturally jolly.

**Deadly nevergreen, the** (thieves), the gallows; said also to bear fruit all the year round.

**Dead man** (provincial), ground rising higher on one side of a wall than on the other. "There is so much *dead man* that the house is always damp."

(Popular), a scarecrow; a man made of rags. Possibly a corruption of "*dudman*," from cant term *duds*, for clothes, rags. Also an extra loaf smuggled into the basket by a baker's man, and disposed of by him.

**Deadman's lurk** (thieves), a crafty scheme laid by swindlers to extort money from the relatives of a deceased person.

**Dead marine, dead man** (popular), an empty bottle, implying that its contents have been alcoholic. The expression doubtless arises from the jealousy, dashed with a slight flavour of contempt, with which marines are regarded by sailors on board ship. The phrase survives in a famous old drinking-song, set to very spirited music by Jackson of Exeter—an admirable specimen of the ancient popular

melodies of England, and of which the well-known chorus was—

And he who will this toast deny  
Down among the *dead men* let him lie.

The word was formerly a *marine*, which, being used in a company at which William IV., then Duke of Clarence, was present, gave offence to an officer of that gallant corps, who asked the Prince what he meant by it. "I mean by *marine*," replied the Prince, with more readiness than was usual with him, "a good fellow who has done his duty, and is ready to do it again." The French term an empty bottle "un corps mort."

**Dead meat train** (common), a special train carrying corpses from Waterloo Station to the London Necropolis at Woking.

**Dead men's shoes** (common), property which can only be claimed after the decease of the holder.

**Dead nap** (provincial), a cheat, a downright rogue.

**Dead nip** (provincial), the failure of any petty plan or scheme.

**Dead nuts on** (popular Australian), very fond of. An amplification of the ordinary English slang "nuts on."

**Dead - oh!** (naval), is said of a man in the last stage of intoxication.

**Dead-on** (riflemen), straight on. A rifle-shot talks of the aiming being *dead-on* when the day is so calm that he can aim straight at the bull's eye instead of having to allow to the right or left for wind. He is said to be *dead-on* himself when he is shooting very well.

**Dead, on the** (common), on the teetotal tack. Dead is often used as a strengthening adjective, "dead proper," "dead sober."

**Dead season** (journalistic), the time when nothing is going on. For society this is the summer, or during Lent.

**Dead sow's eye** (tailors), a badly worked button-hole.

**Dead stick, to** (theatrical), to stop, to break down utterly in the midst of a performance. The most eminent actors have been subject to sudden and treacherous lapses of memory. Macready has been known to break down in *Virginius*—a character he had acted thousands of times. Charles Kean has broken down in *Othello* and *Melnotte*. On the first night of "*Henry IV.*" at the Queen's Theatre, Phelps *stuck dead* or *dead stuck* in *Henry IV.*, and the actor who played the Prince of Wales had to prompt his royal father.

**Dead stock** (common), unsaleable ware.

The youngest, who was a capless, shoeless little wretch, certainly not more than eight years old, had a "cigar-light" box tucked under his arm; another, a couple of years older, perhaps, carried the stump of a birch broom; while the third, who was the oldest and the hungriest, looking the most decently dressed, held in his hand a few local newspapers—dismally *dead stock*, considering the day and the hour.—*James Greenwood: Crackling's Dole.*

**Dead swag** (thieves), plunder that cannot be got rid of.

**Dead to rights** (police slang), employed by detectives when they have quite convicted a criminal, and he is positively guilty. "I've got him *dead to rights*." It is often employed in a more general sense to indicate certainty of success. It seems to have originated in America.

**Dead 'un** (thieves), a house unoccupied temporarily or altogether.

Me and the screwsman went to Gravesend and found a *dead 'un*, and we both went and turned it over.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(Thieves and roughs), a half quartern loaf. (Turf), a horse that may be laid against as if he were dead; possibly because he is not going to run, certainly because he is not intended to win.

"Racing men," said Mr. Justice Field, in a memorable case some years ago, "evidently have a morality of their own." And it is certain that there are bookmakers or commission agents—call them what you will—whose honour and rectitude is unquestioned in their own circle, but who, so

far from shrinking from the idea of getting money out of a *dead 'un*, will jump at the first opportunity.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Theatrical), a super who plays for nothing. The mistakes that are made in crowds and full scenes is often accounted for by the fact that a super who has attended all rehearsals is shunted at a moment's notice to make room for the *dead 'un*, who sometimes pays the super master for the privilege of getting behind the scenes as well.

(Popular), to make *dead 'uns*, explained by quotation.

Man has a desire to peck a bit; consequently he must in a measure depend upon rogues in grain, the miller, and the baker; and this rule therefore teaches the art and mystery of making what are called *dead 'uns*; that is, to charge not only for what you deliver, but for what you do not.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn.*

**Dead-wood earnest** (American), quite earnest.

- No! oh, good licks, are you in real *dead-wood earnest*.—*Mark Twain: Tom Sawyer.*

**Dead wrong 'un** (common), a very dishonest fellow, a cheat.

"Don't you ever speak to that man," said the Immaculate One, "he is a *dead wrong 'un*. Plays cards, and has big pockets and little fingers. Cheats. Once went into the card room with six coups ready put up in his pocket."—*Sporting Times.*

**Deal suit** (popular), a deal coffin supplied by the parish.

**Deaner** (thieves), shilling.

I know what I will do; I will go to London Bridge rattler (railway) and take

a *deaner* ride and go a wedge-hunting (stealing plate).—*Rev. J. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

It has been suggested that '*deaner* is from *denier*, but more probably it is a corruption of the Yiddish *dinoh*, a coin.

**Deansea Ville** (old cant), the country; *Deansea Ville* stampers, carriers.

**Death-hunter** (street), a man who sells dying speeches or confessions of executed criminals. Also an undertaker.

**Death on** (Australian), good at. The metaphor is probably that of completeness. *Vide* DEAD FINISH. "*Death on rabbits*," would mean a very good rabbit shot; "*death on peaches*," greedy of peaches. The phrase is common in the United States, where a lady over fond of finery is said to be *death on dress*.

**Death-trap** (journalistic), a theatre or other place of amusement made to contain large numbers of people. The expression became general after the burning of several such edifices in 1887.

*Our* laws, too, would enable us to punish persons whose negligence and inattention have been the causes of disaster; but then, as Mr. Punch reminds us, we never think of trying a railway director for a railway accident, or a theatrical lessee and his architect (to say nothing of a bench of magistrates) for erecting or

licensing a *death-trap*.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Debblish** (South Africa), a penny.

**Deck** (Anglo-Indian), a-look, a peep. Hindu *dekh-nā*, to look. "*Dek-ho*, you 'bud-mash!'" In English gypsy, *dikk*. *Dick-ing*, from the gypsy is common English slang for looking.

(American), a pack of cards. Formerly used in England. From the expression "to *deck* out."

**Decus** (old slang), a crown-piece; from the motto on the edge, *Decus et Tutamen*.

**Dee** (tramps), a pocket-book; termed "reader" by thieves. Probably an abbreviation of *dummy*, which see. (Popular), a penny.

KYDDER.—Hullo, Sneyde, old man, where are you going?

SNEYDE.—Inside, to see our "uncle," and get a bob on this. (*Shows his waist-coat done up in newspaper.*)

KYDDER.—We're both down on our luck again, then. I've just taken in (*looks round*)—ahem!—the blankets from my lodgings. I'll wait till you come out. (*Waits till Sneyde comes out.*)

SNEYDE.—He's a hard nail, he is. I've only got nine *dee* out of him.—*The Referee.*

**Deen** (Anglo-Indian). Arabic *dīn*, religion; faith.

About the worst curse that you can lay out on a Mahometan is "*Zen-ül dinak!*" "*Curse your religion!*" A native who will bear with a placid smile the information that his mother was a social evil of

the most revolting type, and that he and all his relations, like all their ancestry before them, are and were pigs, destined to devour nameless dirt in Sheol, will nip out his cheese-knife and go for your vitals should you cast any reflection on his faith. Even for him "there are choras," not of muslin, but Muslim.—*Travels in Egypt*.

**Deerstalker** (society), a wide-awake hat.

**Del** (gypsy), to give, kick; also to hit, as one says, "give it to him," but more precisely *deller*, done, draw; *dellin*, hitting or kicking; *dellin leskro*, "a givin' of him;" *dellemengro*, a horse that kicks.

**Delaben** (gypsy), a gift.

**Delicate** (begging impostors), a sham subscription-book.

**Dell** (old canting), a young wench. Brome ("A Jovial Crew, or the Merry Beggars," 1652) gives this word. In Old Dutch slang *dil*, *del*, and *dille* also mean a girl. *Dielken*, *fille de joie* (Derembourg). *Thiele*, a Jewish girl, especially a young one. In German-Hebrew *dilla* also means a maiden. It is possible that *dilly-dally*, in the sense of philandering and amorous trifling, is derived from *dill* or *dell*. Finally the gypsy has *del* (lit. to give) in the sense of sexual union, "*Del adré o minj*."

**Deloll** (Anglo-Indian), a broker. In Egypt a pedlar of old clothes, a street dealer.

**Delving it** (tailors), hurrying, keeping the head down, sewing fast.

**Demand the box, to** (nautical), to call for a bottle.

**Demaunders for glymmar** (old cant), explained by quotation.

These *demaunders for glymmar* be for the most parte wemen, for *glymmar* in their language is fyre. These go with fayned lycences and counterfayed writings, hauing the hands and seales of such gentlemen as dwelleth nere to the place where they fayne themselues to haue bene burnt, and their goods consumed with fyre.—*Harman: Caveat*.

**Demi-rep** (old), a woman of questionable character—abbreviation of "demi-reputation."

. . . arrant rascals, male and female . . . *demi-reps* and lorettes, single and unmarried.—*Quarterly Review*.

**Dem keb** (London), a hansom; a "masher" phrase from Gilbert's "Wedding March." "Let's take a *dem keb*."

**Demmy cit** (American cadet), a townsman (cit., citizen) who is dressed as a gentleman.

**Demon chandler** (nautical), one who supplies ship's stores of a worthless character—often utterly unfit for use and food.

I snubbed skipper for bad grub, rotten flour to eat,

Hard tack full of weevils; how *demon chandlers* cheat!

Salt junk like mahogany, scurvyng man and boy.

Says he, "Where's your remedy?"  
Board of Trade, ahoy!

—*Sailors' Language*.

**Demons** (Australian), prison slang for police. "The *demons* put pincher on me," I was apprehended.

**Dempstered** (old cant), hung; from "dempster," the executioner, so called because it was his duty to repeat the sentence to the prisoner in open court. This was discontinued in 1773.

**Denounce, to** (American). In the West to pre-empt land, to announce a title to it.

You ain't got no right to come prospecting around now. I've *denounced* it all—it's all mine.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Dep** (popular), a deputy. (Christ's Hospital), a Grecian.

**Derby darlings, or D.D.'s** (American), a term applied to women who wear Derby hats.

The late decidedly masculine tendency in fashionable female headgear has brought out a new type of girl of the period and coined a new phrase to describe her. The girls who promenaded up and down Chestnut Street these fair autumn days, arrayed in men's stiff hats, are now called *Derby girls*, or *Derby darlings*. This is occasionally abbreviated into *D.D.* in such forms as "there goes a *D.D.*," or "she's a regular *D.D.*."—*Philadelphia Times.*

**Derbyshire neck**, a term for the goitrous neck, owing to its prevalence in Derbyshire.

**Derrey** (thieves), an eye-glass; hence the expression used by tailors to "take the *derrey*," to quiz, ridicule.

**Derrick** (old cant). In the days prior to the appearance in public life of the better known Jack Ketch, *Derrick* signified the hangman, from the supposed name of a then existing functionary. The word occurs in "The Bellman of London," an old play, published in 1616, the year of Shakspeare's death.

"He rides circuit with the devil, and *Derrick* must be his host, and Tyburn the inn at which he will alight."

*To derrick*, "a cant term for setting out on a small but not over-creditable enterprise. The act is said to be named from a Tyburn executioner" (Admiral Smyth).

**Derwenter** (Australian), a convict. So called from the River Derwent, in Tasmania, which, like New South Wales and West Australia, was originally a convict settlement. *Cf.* "Vandemonian" and "Sydney-sider."

**Despatchers** (gambling cheats), according to Hotten false dice with two sets of numbers, and, of course, no pips. So called because they bring the matter to a speedy issue.

**Detrimentials** (society), a very common term in society for those who are not well off, and therefore detrimental as husbands.

**Deuce** (popular), twopence. From the French.

**Deux wins** (old cant), twopence.

**Devil**, a barrister who does work for another, termed "devilling." The *devil* gets up the case for a senior in large practice, generally without any remuneration. It is almost also an official designation. The Attorney-General's *devil* for the Treasury is a post of £1500 a year. The Attorney-General has also *devils* in Chancery, as, for instance, the "charity *devil*," for the matters in which he is officially concerned. The Attorney-General's *devil* in the Treasury, after a certain probation, is often promoted to the bench. He is, in fact, a sort of junior Attorney-General. On circuit, no one is allowed to *devil* for another unless he is a member of the same circuit, and the barrister for whom he *devils* is actually engaged in some other court on that circuit (Huggins).

(Printers), a printer's junior apprentice or errand boy.

(Literary), explained by quotation.

"Who are you?" I asked in dismay.

"I'm a *devil*." . . .

"A what!" I exclaimed with a start.

"A *devil*. . . . I give plots and incidents to popular authors, sir. Write poetry for them, drop in situations, jokes, work up their rough material: in short, sir, I *devil* for them."—George R. Sims: *The Author's Ghost*.

**Devil a plebe**, to (American cadets), to victimise or revile a new cadet.

**Devil and Tom Walker**, the (American), an old saying once

common in New England to the effect that it "beats the *devil* and *Tom Walker*," or "he fared as *Tom Walker did with the devil*." In the Marvellous Repository, a curious collection of tales, many of which are old Boston legends, there is one of *Tom Walker*, who sold himself to the *devil*. The book was published about 1832.

**Devil-dodger** (popular), clergyman.

These *devil-dodgers* happened to be so very powerful (that is, noisy) that they soon sent John home crying out, he should be damn'd.—*Life of J. Sackington*.

**Devil drawer** (old slang), a poor, miserable artist.

**Devils** (common), small wheels soaked in resin, and used for lighting fires.

**Devil's among the tailors**, the (common), *i.e.*, there's a disturbance going on. "This phrase," says Mr. Edwards, "arose in connection with a riot at the Haymarket on an occasion when Downton announced the performance for his benefit of a burlesque entitled 'The Tailors: a Tragedy for Warm Weather.' At night, many thousands of journeymen tailors congregated in and around the theatre, and by riotous proceedings interrupted the performances. Thirty-three of the rioters were brought up at Bow Street the next day. A full account of the proceedings will be found in *Biographica*

*Dramatica* under the heading 'Tailors.'

**Devil's bedposts** (common), the four of clubs.

**Devil's book** (common), cards.

Damn your cards, said he, they are the *devil's book*.—*Swift: Polite Conversation*.

**Devil's claws** (prison), explained by quotation.

A Scotch cap, worsted stockings, and a pair of shoes, completed the uniform of a full private in Her Majesty's Convict Service. This uniform was decorated all over with the *devil's claws* (the broad arrow).—*Evening News*.

**Devil's daughter** (common), a scolding, shrewish wife.

**Devil's delight**, a disturbance or quarrel of more than usual vehemence. To "kick up the *devil's delight*" is to indulge in drunken and obstreperous joviality.

**Devil's dust**, scraps and remnants of old woollen garments sent to the mill to be remanufactured in the semblance of good cloth, commonly known among manufacturers—who use the word satirically—as "shoddy."

**Devil's golden tooth**, the (American). "One would think he'd found the *devil's golden tooth*," a common saying in Massachusetts. Founded on a story to the effect that Kidd, the pirate, once obtained from the devil his eye-tooth, which had the power of changing all metals

into gold. The losing and finding of this tooth by several persons forms the subject of a popular tale.

**Devil's guts** (old slang), a term given by farmers to the surveyor's chain.

**Devil's livery** (nautical), black and yellow. From the colours being used for mourning or quarantine.

**Devil's Own**, the Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers.

**Devil-scolder** (popular), a clergyman.

**Devil's sharpshooters** (American), a nickname given by "the church militant" to those of the clerical party who in the Mexican War belied their cloth and profession; also to any person favouring unjust war.

**Devil's teeth** (common), dice.

**Devil to pay**, the (common), an allusion to the legendary tales of the Middle Ages, in which, in exchange for the enjoyment of unlimited wealth, power, or other earthly advantage, a man was supposed to have sold his soul to the devil.

**Devil to pay and no pitch hot** (nautical). The seam which margins the water-ways was called the "devil." Why, only caulkers can tell, who perhaps found it sometimes difficult for their



tools. The phrase, however, means service expected, and no one ready to perform it. Impatience and naught to satisfy it (Admiral Smyth).

**Devotional habits** (common) is applied to a horse inclined to "say his prayers," that is, apt to fall on his knees.

**Dew-drink** (labourers), an early drink. French, "une goutte pour tuer le ver," the worm being thought to be more than usually thirsty in the morning.

**Dewskitch** (popular), a severe thrashing; perhaps from "catching one's due."

**Dial-plate** (common), the face. "To turn the hands on his *dial-plate*," i.e., to disfigure the face.

**Dials** (prison), members of the criminal class who live about the Seven Dials in London.

**Diamond-cracking** (Australian thieves' patter), stonebreaking. The metaphor is obvious, breaking "those precious stones."

He caught a month and had to white it out at *diamond-cracking* in "Castieau's Hotel."—*The Australian Printers' Keef-sake*.

In England, *diamond cracking* refers to working in a coal-mine.

**Diary, to** (American thieves), to remember.

**Dib** (common), a portion or share.

**Dibs** (common), money.

The — trots round with a tin plate or a royal dish-cover, and collects *dibs* for the Imperial Institute. He exhibits himself at football matches and Church bazaars on consideration of nailing the coin for his pet scheme.—*Modern Society*.

So called, says Hotten, from the knuckle bones of sheep, which have been used from the earliest times for gambling purposes when money was not obtainable—in one particular game five being thrown up at a time and caught on the back of the hand like half-pence. This resembles the common children's game of "jackstones." The French call it "jeu des osselets." (Thieves), "flash your *dibs*," show your money.

**Dick** (military), the penis.

**Dick, dikk, to** (gypsy, also common cant), to see, to look. Hotten says this is "North country cant," but it is found in all gypsy dialects. (Hindu, *dekhna*.) *Dikkaméngro*, a looking-glass, also *dikkaméngri*, both referring to anything used in connection with seeing, such as spectacles, lorgnons, or telescopes. The latter would be a *dūro-dikkaméngri*—a far-seeing. *Tu sāste dikkavit*, you should have seen it.

*Dick* at the Garjers (gorgias)  
The Garjers round mandy,  
Trying to lel my meriben  
My meriben away.

*I.e.*, "See the gorgios round me trying to take my life away."

*Dick-kālo*, to look black,

frown; *dick-dūm*, I saw (seldom heard); *dick-pāli*, look back, recall.

**Dicker** (American), exchange or barter.

It may be for their interest to make the *dicker*.—*New York Tribune*.

**Dick in the green** (thieves), weak, inferior, poor. A pun on the word "dicky," as bolt-in-tun is on "to bolt."

*Dicky*, or *Dick in the green*, very bad or paltry; anything of an inferior quality is said to be a "*Dicky concern*" (*Vaux's Memoirs*).

**Dick's hatband, as queer as** (provincial), anything strange or peculiar. This phrase, which Bartlett claimed as an Americanism, is in reality an English provincial simile, and correctly given is, "*As queer as Dick's hatband made of pea straw that went nine times round, and would not meet at last.*" The origin of the phrase may be due to the oddness of using such a material for the purpose.

**Dick, up to** (popular), all right, up to the mark, good and satisfactory.

**Dicky** (common), middling, inferior.

And how's the fielding?

*Dicky!*

'Tis there you'll have the pull that wickets sticky

Or cut up, through the influence of weather,

Can't neutralise.

—*Punch*.

It's all *dicky* or *dickey* with him, it's all over with him.

'Tis all *dickey* with poor Father Dick; he's no more.

—*Ingoltsby Legends*.

(London slang), smart, a swell.

(Popular), explained by quotation.

"I saw a laden waggon bearing the name of one of the cheap advertising firms you speak of." . . . "Ah, bearing the name . . . you saw a waggon wearing a *dicky*, you mean—a false front plate with a name on it which slips on and off like them on the wans that the pianoforte-makers borrow."—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps*.

(Theatrical), "*dicky domus*," literally a bad, poor house, one with a small audience.

**Dicky birds** (theatrical), a generic term which includes vocalists of every description, from Madame Patti down to a singer in the chorus.

**Diddeys** (common), a woman's breasts. The word is really a provincial term for a cow's teats.

**Diddle, to** (vulgar), to have sexual commerce. It signifies properly to "dredge;" also to cheat in an artful way.

O that Tommy Riddle,  
What played upon the fiddle,  
Has managed for to *diddle* me  
Of my true love.

—*Popular Song*.

**Diddler** (common), an impecunious scamp, a swindler. See Jeremy Diddler (Kenny's farce of "Rais-

ing the Wind"), or his more modern prototype, Jingle, in "Pickwick."

**Didoes.** *Vide* TO CUT DIDOES.

**Die-by-the-hedge** (provincial), inferior meat of cattle which have died and not been slaughtered.

**Die in one's shoes, to** (common), to be hanged. The metaphor is not happy, as men may die elsewhere than on the gallows with their boots on.

And there is M'Fuze, and Lieutenant Tregooze;  
And there is Sir Carnaby Jenks, of the Blues,  
All come to see a man *die in his shoes!*  
—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

**Dientical** (American), a frivolous anagram for "identical," but often heard.

**Die, or dee** (thieves), a pocket-book, but specially the dummy or pocket-book stuffed with flash bank bills used by a "dropper."

**Dig** (common), a blow with the fist, or tips of fingers, as "a *dig* in the eye," "a *dig* in the ribs."

**Dig a day under the skin, to** (popular), to shave at such a time as to make it serve for two days.

**Dig, full** (popular), the full allowance of pay.

**Diggers** (popular), the finger-nails.

"If you do," returned Bill, "I will fix my *diggers* in your dial-plate and turn it up with red."—*On the Trail.*

Also spurs, or the spades on cards.

**Diggers' delight** (New Zealand), large brown felt hat worn by diggers in New Zealand.

**Diggings** (common), place or habitation. Of American origin.

I'm a daisy, dear boy, and no 'eeltaps! I wish the *St. James's* young man  
Could drop into my *diggings* permiskus;  
he's welcome whenever he can;  
For he isn't no J., that's a moral; I don't bear no malice; no fear!  
But I'd open 'is hoptics a mossel concernin' my style and my spere.  
—*Punch.*

**Dignity, a** (West Indian), the name given by Europeans to a negro ball, the designation being probably derived from the ludicrous pomposity of the negro character. The blacks are very chary of admitting strangers, and especially white people, as eye-witnesses. Oftentimes they degenerate into a scene of the wildest debauchery.

**Dikk** (Anglo-Indian), worry, botheration.

And Beaufort learned in the law,  
And Anderson the sage,  
And if his locks are white as snow,  
'Tis more from *dikk* than age.  
—*Wilfred Heeley.*

In English gypsy the word is *dukk*, more frequently *dush*.

**Diklo, diclo** (gypsy), a handkerchief, cravat. *Men-diclo*, a neck-tie.

**Dildoes**, more commonly known now as "the broom handle." An instrument made of various soft pliable substances, and resembling the male pudendum, used by women who, possessing strong amatory passions, and forced to celibate lives, are afraid of pregnancy following natural copulation. In this connection the female pudenda is called "a broom."

Such a sad tale prepare to hear,  
As claims from either sex a tear,  
Twelve *dildoes* meant for the support  
Of aged lechers of the court  
Were lately burnt by impious hand,  
Of trading rascals of the land,  
Who, envying their curious frame,  
Exposed these Priaps to the flame.

—Butler: *Dildoides* (occasioned by  
burning a hog'shead of *dildoes*  
at Stocks Market, 1672).

(Old slang), to *dildo*, to play wantonly with a woman.

**Dilly** (popular), a night-cart.

**Dilly-bag** (Australian up-country), a blackfellow's wallet.

Their own *dilly-bags* have nothing of value or interest in them. Some locks of hair rolled up in thin slips of bark, probably belonging to a deceased friend; a piece or two of crystal for magic purposes; two or three bones, and some fat which the troopers who, from their own upbringing, are authorities on such things, pronounce human; a primitive-looking bone fish hook or two, and some string made of opossum hair—that is all.—A. C. Grant.

**Dimber** (old cant), pretty, neat.

**Dimber cove** (thieves and gypsies), a gentleman.

"Tis a *dimber cove*. Come, old mort,  
tout the cobble-colter; are we to have  
darkmans upon us?—*Disraeli: Venetia*.

**Dimber-damber** (old cant), very pretty; a very clever rogue; head of a gang. (Dekker gives *dambet*, a rascal, rogue.)

No *dimber-damber*, angler, dancer,  
Prig of cackler, prig of prancer.

—*Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew*.

**Dimmock** (popular), money. The derivation is evidently from the small coin "dime," worth ten cents in United States coinage.

**Dimmocking-bag**, a bag used for collecting subscriptions in small sums for any special object; also the special savings bank of the individual who usually hoards his sixpence for a particular object, as at Christmas time for the Christmas feed.

**Dinahs** (Stock Exchange), Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Ordinary Stock.

**Dinarly** (theatrical), coin, money, borrowed from the Spanish *dinero*; "nantie *dinarly*" signifies "no treasury to-day."

**Dine out, to** (popular), to go without dinner.

**Ding-bat** (American), money. The word *din* or *ding* seems to indicate value in several languages. *E.g.*, in Yiddish, *dinoh mimmaunus*, money questions. *Din*, judgment. (Yiddish), *din*

*we cheschbaum geben*, to settle accounts. In Dutch, *dingen*, to plead, to cheapen; *dingbank*, a judge's bench; *dinger*, one who pleads or cheapens.

**Ding boy** (old cant), a rogue or rascal.

**Ding-dong** (popular), in good earnest. To "set about a thing *ding-dong*" is to tackle it with vigour. An alliterative reduplication of *ding*, to beat, to strike, and also perhaps in allusion to the quick succession of strokes in ringing of bells.

**Dinged** (American), exceedingly. In the Southern States a man will say that he worked *dinged* hard. *Vide* DINGGONED.

**Dingers**, the cups and balls; or, in the French phrase, "gobelets et muscades," used by conjurors.

**Ding-fury** (provincial), huff or anger. A slang word very common in the provinces. "She flounced away in a *ding-fury*."

**Dinggoned** (American), a Western equivalent for "darned." In the South it takes the form of "dinged." They are all euphemisms for "damned."

Well, sir, that *dinggoned* show was more of a mystery to me the more I examined it, so I took Stack and Wirth out into the hall and explained my impressions.—*Superior Inter Ocean*.

**Dip** (popular), a pickpocket; to *dip*, to arrest, convict, be put in any way into trouble.

(Thieves), from *dip*, to pick a pocket, from the ordinary sense of the word. To *dip* a lob, to steal the contents of a till. Also to pawn.

**Dipped in the wing** (popular), winged, worsted.

I'm nipped in the bud, I'm *dipped in the wing*,

I'm weeded, I'm sold, I am every-thing

That is wretched, forlorn, and mad with despair,

Look at my head—only gaze at my hair.

—*Cecil Merrie: Only wait till you're Married.*

**Dipper, dipping bloke** (thieves), a pickpocket.

Off to Paris I shall go to show a thing or two

To the *dipping blokes* wot hangs about the cafés;

How to do a cross-fan for a super or a slang,

And to bustle them gendarmes I'd give the office.

—*Vance: The Chickaleary Cove.*

**Dips** (nautical), the purser's boy.

**Dirt-scrappers** (American), lawyers who in examining witnesses ask them all manner of needless questions relative to their past lives and inquire closely as to all their relations with women, &c., either with a view to making them appear immoral and discreditable, or, as is often really the case, to afford to the court and spectators the exquisite

pleasure of seeing a man or woman tortured and put to shame. A criminal case without any *dirt-scraping* has become of late very exceptional, both in England and in America.

**Dirty half hundred** (military).

The 50th Regiment was called so, partly from having black facings which gave a sombre look to the uniform. After the battle of Badajos it was changed to the "gallant half hundred."

**Dirty puzzle** (common), a slut.

**Discombobberated** (American), discomposed, upset, "flummoxed."

An' when he seen I'd killed a deer as slick as grease he was so *discombobberated* he couldn't speak.—*New York Sun*.

**Discommon**, or **discommune** (university), not to communicate; that is, to prohibit students dealing with certain tradesmen who have transgressed the rules of the University, a species of excommunication or "boycotting."

**Disguised in liquor** (common), a common phrase in the vernacular for one who is slightly intoxicated. The expression, though vulgar, is not without merit, as conveying the truth that a drunken man is not playing a real part, but has assumed a guise that is false and unnatural.

**Dish, to**, to circumvent, to ruin, to frustrate an enemy's or an op-

ponent's plans. The word was used by the late Earl of Derby on a memorable occasion, when he affirmed that such and such a measure would "*dish* the Whigs." It has been supposed that the word was used in the first instance as a corruption of "dash," "dash" itself being an euphemism for "damn," as in the vulgar oath, "dash my wig," for "damn my wig," but to *dish* most probably is only one of the many expressions connected with the kitchen, as "to cook his goose," to "give one a roasting," to "do brown," &c.

**Dishclout** (common), a dirty, unsavoury woman. When, however, a man marries his cook, and it is said that he has made a napkin of a *dishclout*, no other meaning is attributable except that a "mésalliance" has been made.

**Dispar**. The following explanation of this term is given by W. H. David. "The word 'sines,' the scholars' allowance of bread for breakfast or supper, and *dispar*, his portion of meat, have their origin in a Winchester College custom which prevailed in the last century. There being neither 'hatch' nor roll-call at the College Hall in these days, the provision for breakfast was laid out on a table, and the stronger took the lion's share, and left the weaker 'sines.' So again at dinner the double plate

of meat fell to the former as a matter of might, and the unequal moiety, the *dispar*, became the portion of the weaker junior."

**Diss** (printers), abbreviation for distribution, *i.e.*, printed off type—to be returned to its respective cases, and re-composed.

**Dissecting job** (tailors), a heavy alteration.

**Distiller** (Australian convicts' slang), one who is easily vexed and betrays his chagrin. *Vide* CARRY THE KEG. Probably not of colonial origin but introduced by transportees.

**Ditch and ditcher** (Anglo-Indian), slang terms applied in a disparaging manner to Calcutta and the "Calcuttians."

**Dite** (American), "I don't care a *dite*." Dutch, *duyt*, a doit, half a farthing. "Hy gelykt hem oop en *duyt*," there is not half a farthing difference between them.

**Dittoes**, a suit of clothes made all of the same cloth, in French "un complet." The term is pretty general.

**Ditty** (popular), bag; a corruption of the tailors' phrase, "a ditto bag," from the bag in which they keep miscellaneous articles for the repair of their clothes or shoes—for thread, tapes, buttons, needles, pins, nails, &c.

**Dive** (American), a drinking-saloon; a cellar-saloon.

An Ourayite recently passing through Canon City on Sunday was invited to go to the penitentiary to church services, and, accepting the invitation, found 385 convicts assembled, and among them, playing the violin in the choir, the young Italian who shot his mistress through the window of her house just back of the *dive* known as "220" here in Ouray about a year ago.—*The Solid Muldoon, Ouray, Colorado*.

**Dive into one's sky, to** (popular), to thrust one's hand in one's pocket.

"Yes, I know, Uncle, it's Mary Ann. I see you through the keyhole this morning when she brought up your shaving water."

Then Uncle Ben *dived into his sky* and brought up a nice bright Jubilee half-dollar, and little Willie went off to the confectioner's singing.—*Sporting Times*.

**Dive into the woods, to** (American), a common figure of speech for hiding one's self.

A female of the Salvation Army has invented what is called the "salvation kiss." Young men who have seen the female portion of the army will not seek salvation in this new form. They will *dive* still deeper *into the woods* when the army comes around.—*Norristown Herald*.

**Diver** (thieves), a pickpocket; he "dives into the skies" of other people.

**Divide the house with one's wife, to**, a quaint saying which signifies to turn her out into the street.

**Diving-bell**, a cellar tavern.

**Divous** (gypsy), a day. *O boro divoúsko divous*, the great day of judgment. Probably a contraction of *dívdeskro*, divine.

**Divvy** (American), to divide, share, or partake.

If Mexican robbers make a rush on an American ranch in Zapata, Frio, Cameron, Hidalgo, or Starr Counties, they are expected to *divvy* with the American gentlemen engaged in the same line of business before being permitted to cross the river peacefully.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Do** (popular), a *do* is a fraud, an imposition.

I thought it was a *do* to get me out of the house.—*Sketches by Boz*.

**Do, to** (common), to outwit, to pay out, to cheat. (Thieves), to *do* a place or crib, is to break into a house for the purpose of stealing.

I went in a place and touched for some wedge, which we *done* for three pounds ten.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Popular and thieves), “to *do for*,” to kill.

The prisoners had since stated that the stranger had bidden them to *do for* M. —, and then to take away everything which he might have about him.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Do a bit, to** (popular), to eat something.

When I asked her what she'd take,  
Her answer made me queer;  
She said, “I admit  
I can *do a bit*  
Of everything that's here.

Some mulligatawny soup, a mackerel, and a sole,

A banbury, a bath-bun, and a tuppenny sausage roll,

A little drop of sherry, a little pint of cham,  
A roley-poley pudding, with a pile of cakes and jam.”

—*Matilda Gorger: Francis and Day*.

**Do a guy, to** (thieves), to run away, to get out of the way.

It's a fact to be deplored, though it cannot be ignored,

That all of us are not well off for oof;  
And occasionally a Johnny, who is “gone” on some fair “honey,”

Hasn't cash enough to treat her like a toff.

When he tries to raise the wind, it's just possible he'll find

It difficult to keep within the law,  
Alas! he may be “fly,” but when it's time to *do a guy*,

He's sure to meet the bobby at the door.  
—*Sporting Times*.

(Workmen), to be away whilst supposed to be at work.

**Dobie** (Anglo-Indian), a man who performs the functions of a washerwoman; also a washerwoman.

**Dock** (old cant), to deflower (Harman); gypsy, *dükker*, to wrong, ravish, injure. *Dükker* or *docker* is often used without the terminal “er.” Turner derives it from the Gaelic *terraich*.

(Printers). This is colloquial for a man's weekly bill or “pole,” probably from the fact of its being subject or liable to be “docked” or curtailed by the person appointed to check the bills. (Winchester), to *dock*, to scratch out; to *dock* a book, to tear out pages from a book. (Popular), hospital.



**Docker** (law), a brief for defence handed by a prisoner in the dock to any barrister who by the etiquette of the profession is bound to take it, at the minimum fee of 23s. 6d.

**Doctor, the** (up-country Australian), the men's cook on a station. The title of the man who concocts one kind of mixtures and prescriptions is transferred to one who practises in another branch of the profession, which is thoroughly characteristic of Australian slang.

(Old), a decoction of milk and water, rum, and a spicing of nutmeg.

(Gamblers), *doctors*, false cards or dice.

"Here," said he, taking some dice out of his pockets, "here are the little *doctors* which cure the distempers of the purse."—*Fielding: Tom Jones*.

From to *doctor*, to poison, to falsify, to adulterate.

She *doctor'd* the punch, and she *doctor'd* the negus,

Taking care not to put in sufficient to flavour it.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

To "put the *doctor*" on one, to cheat him.

Perhaps ways and means may be found to put the *doctor* on the old prig.—*T. Brown: Works*.

(Popular), to "keep the *doctor*" is said of a publican who retails adulterated drinks.

**Dodderer** (provincial), a shaky, mumbling old man. The old English had to "doddle," signi-

fying to tremble, to shake, still used in the North of England.

He got up on an old mule which had served nine kings, and so mumbling with his mouth, nodding and *dodding* with his head, would go see a coney ferreted.—*Urquhart: Rabelais*.

French *dodcliner*, which has the root *dod*, oscillation, in common with the English equivalent; Italian, *dandolare*, to rock, to shake gently.

**Doddy** (provincial). This is applied in Norfolk to any person of low stature. Sometimes "Hodman dod," and "hoddy *doddy*, all head and no body." A "dod" is provincial for a rag of cloth, and to "dod" is to cut off, to lop.

**Dodgasted** (common), a milder form of damned.

"Well, what was it, anyhow?"

"It was one of those *dodgasted* electrical machines! Trying my nerves, you know!"

And when the boys had recovered, the funeral-monger had gone, and so had all the available drinks on the counter.—*Sporting Times*.

**Dodge** (common), a clever contrivance; a cunning, underhanded trick. A recognised term, but used in many slangy senses. Among the numerous *dodges* resorted to by tricky or dishonest persons are the "pamphlet *dodge*."

The "pamphlet *dodge*" is an established variety of the begging-letter man of trade. Two or three experts will club together to take advantage of a striking event or momentous political crisis, find out some

poor penny-a-liner in one of the haunts of such people, and get him to throw together forty or fifty pages on the particular subject, paying him miserable wages for the work.—*Tit-Bits*.

(Thieves), "delivered *dodge*."

Alfred sends his servant with goods to a customer, with orders to bring back the goods or the money. The servant takes the goods and hands in the bill, and the customer says, on reading the bill, "All right, put the goods down there," which the man does, expecting that the customer is about to pay the bill. When he has done so, the customer says he will call and pay his master; but on the man telling him he must take the goods back if the bill is not paid, the customer replies that he has delivered the goods, that they are now in the possession of the purchaser, and that if he touches them he will give him in charge of the police.—*Tit-Bits*.

The "tidy *dodge*," dressing up children so that they look tidy, and slowly walking about the streets with this genuine or borrowed family for begging purposes.

To *dodge*, to track one in a stealthy manner.

There's not the smallest danger in it . . . it's only to *dodge* a woman. . . . I can do that pretty well, I know. . . . I was a regular cutting sneak when I was at school.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Dodger** (common), a tricky person, a swindler. Dickens has immortalised the word by his character of the Artful *Dodger* in *Oliver Twist*. (Popular), a dram. (Provincial), a night-cap, hence the latter meaning. (American), this term, meaning a round roll or pat of maize-bread, is apparently derived from the same word as applied

to any object of a similar shape (e.g., in vulgar slang, the *penis*). In Dutch, *dag* or *dagje* (*en end-tje dag*) means a short bit of rope. *Dot* or *dotje* is also a ball of wool, cotton, &c., generally spoiled, decaying, or in a mass.

**Dodo** (old), a common expression for a fussy old man, or decrepit man.

**Dod-rottedest** (American), a euphemistic form of swearing; sometimes "dod-fetched," "dod-gasted."

Well, sir, there was the *dod-rottedest* machine you ever saw. A nice-looking man with black whiskers was turning away at a big 'balance-wheel made of champagne bottles.—*Superior Inter Ocean*.

**Dog** (society), a man; a gay *dog*, a jolly *dog*, a careless *dog*, &c. The word *dog* now has come to mean in society a gentleman of an amorous turn of mind, who has great success among the ladies.

(American), *dog*, *dog-goned*, God and God damned, as it is popularly explained; it being believed that *dog* is the word God reversed. "I'll be dogged" is the common form, and it is really never used to seriously signify anything so extreme as eternal condemnation. It is possibly a New York word, and may therefore be derived from the Dutch *daugen*, to summon to judgment, to arraign. If this be so, there

would be a very apparent connection with condemned.

**Dog biting dog** (theatrical), one actor ungenerously criticising another's performance.

**Dog-collar** (common), a stiff, stand-up collar, one of the kind much in favour among dandies.

**Dog-durned** (West American), a mild form of swearing. Probably an euphemism for God damned.

Bird declared that he would be *dog-durned* if he was going to run his interior (he called it by some other name) out a-driving the stock any further ahead—*durned* if he would.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Doggery** (American), a partial anagram of groggery. A low drinking place, a "rum-bucket-shop," a "dive," a "gin-mill," a "boozing-ken," a "rum-icile," a "drunkery."

Not one word can be justly said against the character or ability of any of the nominees. They are in every way immensely superior to their Democratic opponents, who number among them as far as the nominations have gone half-a-dozen *doggery*-keepers, a crooked ex-gager, a police-court shyster, and a railroad lobbyist. Two or three other *doggery*-keepers and a lobbyist or two and Van Pelt will be added before the Democratic nominations close. The "Reds" and the "side-show" people will hardly elect any of their men unless they are indorsed by the Democrats.—*Chicago Tribune.*

(Popular), nonsense.

**Dogs** (Stock Exchange), Newfoundland Land Co. Shares.

**Dog's body** (nautical), a kind of pease-pudding.

**Dog-shooter** (Royal Military Academy). Cadets thus term a student who accelerates, that is, who, being pretty certain of not being able to obtain a commission in the engineers, or not caring for it, elects to join a superior class before the end of the term. An allusion to a volunteer, called a *dog-shooter*.

**Dog's nose** (common), gin and beer; "so called from the mixture being as cold as a *dog's nose*," say several etymologists. It also applied to a man given to whisky.

**Dog's paste**, (popular), sausage, mince-meat.

**Dog's soup** (common), rain water.

**Dog stealer** (common), a facetious appellation for a dog-dealer, who is generally considered as deserving it.

**Dog's tail** (nautical), a name for the constellation Ursa Minor, or Little Bear.

**Dog-town** (American), a colony of prairie dogs.

The prairie dogs had colonised in a part of this, the upper end of the valley, and we traversed a *dog-town* some acres in extent, each underground habitation of which was marked by a little heap of excavated earth. *F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Doing a bishop** (army), turning out for parade at short notice,

and with small preparation for cleaning up, &c.

**Doing a bunk or doing a shift** (common), attending to nature's needs.

**Doing a nob** (circus and showmen), making a collection of money from spectators (Frost's "Circus Life").

Possibly from the gypsy *nobbet*.

**Doing a star pitch** (theatrical), sleeping in the open. French, "concher à l'hôtel de la Belle Étoile.

**Doing it on the d. h.** (common). I could do it on my *d. h.*, *i. e.*, on my head, is a vulgar assurance of being able to do a thing with the greatest ease.

**Doing out** (American thieves), a device by which a thief, if arrested with a confederate, pleads guilty but acquits the other.

**Doing polly** (prison), picking oakum in jail.

**Doings** (American), any kind of food, but in most instances applied to that of an ordinary sort.

Suppose you drop roun' ter-morrer an' take dinner wid me. We ain't got no great *doins* at our house, but I speak de old 'oman . . . kin sorter scramble roun' 'em git up sump'n.—*Uncle Remus*.

**Doing time** (thieves) refers to a term of imprisonment.

**Doldrums** (nautical and provincial), trouble, low spirits, worryment. "Jack in the *Doldrums*" was the title of a tale or novel. Applied sometimes to a stormy place, or where the weather or navigation is bad.

For then I must surely die,  
And my soul sail off to *Doldrum's* isle,  
Unless some one pities my pain  
And carries me down where the waters  
    boil,  
And pitches me in again.

—*The Song of the Merman*.

The term seems to have become general. Probably from dull (with the sense of doleful), and a facetious suffix, as in tantrums. For other derivations *vide* Dr. Charles Mackay's "Gaelic Etymology of the English Language."

**Dole** (Winchester College), a trick, stratagem; from the Latin *dolus*.

**Dollar** (city), a five-shilling piece.

**Dollop** (old slang), a lump, a share. To share, according to Hotten, derived from "dole up," to deal out in small portions. Dutch, *deal*, a share.

The old gal used to stow a whacking lot in a big pocket she had in her petticoat, and I used to put away a *dollop* in the busum of my shirt, which it was tied round the waist-bag hid underneath my trousers for the purpose. But, Lor' bless yer, sometimes the blessed trade would go that aggravatin' that we would both find ourselves loaded up in no time.—*Seven Curses of London*.

**Doll's christening** (provincial), a party consisting entirely of ladies.

**Dolly** (popular), silly, foolish.

“You are a chit and a little idiot,” returned Bella, “or you wouldn’t make such a *dolly* speech.”—*Dickens: Our Mutual Friend*.

(Society), a *dolly*, a prostitute, a street walker, short for *dolly-mop*; also a mistress.

Drink, and dance, and pipe, and play,  
Kisse our *dollies* night and day.

—*Herrick: Hesperides*.

More modern is “my tart” for “my mistress.”

(Anglo-Indian), Hindu, *dāli*, a present of fruit, flowers, and sweetmeats; also the daily offering of flowers usually made by the molly (*mali*) called “the molly with his *dolly*.” In some parts of India the *dolly* has grown into an extravagance consisting sometimes of bushels of fruit, nuts, and confectionery, with bottles of champagne and liqueurs.

(Tailors), a bit of cloth used as a sponge.

**Dolly-mop** (common), a tawdrily dressed servant girl, a semi-prostitute.

**Dolly-shop** (common), a pawnbroker’s shop of the poorest and lowest description. From the Yiddish *dal* or *dol*, poor, which suggested the hanging up a *doll* as a sign for such places.

“That’s a *dolly-shop*,” said the green-grocer; “sort of pawnbroker’s without a license, where they charge threepence in the shilling per week on what they lend you. The young ’un went there to raise a sixpence, I’ll be bound.”—*James Greenwood: Three Half-Crowns*.

**Dom** (Anglo-Indian), a very low caste, representing some very old aboriginal race. It was first suggested by Charles G. Leland that the origin of the Rom or gypsies should be sought in this caste, and recent researches by Grierson have gone far to confirm the conjecture. Thus D and R are convertible in the Hindu-gypsy dialects, e.g., *doi*, a spoon, and *roi*. And while *dom*, *domni*, and *domnipana* mean in India a *dom*, a female, *dom*, *romni*, *romnipana*, or *romnipen* have exactly the same meaning in gypsy as applied to gypsies and gipsydom.

**Do me proud** (American), equivalent to saying that one is complimented or made to feel proud.

“Sez he, ‘You’re an honour to your section.’ Sir,” I answered, “you *do me proud*.”

**Domine Do-little** (old slang), the name of an impotent old man.

**Domino** (nautical), “a common ejaculation,” says Hotten, “of sailors when they receive the last lash of a flogging.” The allusion may be understood from the game of dominoes.

**Domino thumper** (theatrical), a pianist.

**Dominoes** (popular), the teeth. French slang, *jeu de dominos*.

**Dommerar** (old cant), a variety of the mendicant tribe who pretend to be deaf and dumb.

These *dommerars* are leud and most subtyll people: the most part of these are watch men, and wyll neuer speake, vnlesse they haue extreame punishment.—*Harman: Caveat.*

**Domum ball** (Winchester College), a ball given by the superannuated college prefects on the evening after the "men" go home for the Midsummer holidays.

**Don**, a contraction of the Latin *dominus*. It is a university term for a man who has taken his master's degree. It is, however, generally confined to resident M.A.'s.

An "Oxford M.A." writes:—"This University has, I suppose, been always notorious for narrow-minded bigotry; but ought the general public to be allowed to suffer because Mr. —, as a robust Radical, is not easily stomached of the Tory *don*?"—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

(Winchester), a master.

**Dona, donah** (theatrical), a girl, a woman; from the Italian. The term is also used by tramps, London roughs, &c.

Of course you've been to — to see the pantomime,  
Where fairies sport in clothes so smart,  
in manner quite divine.  
Ofcourse you've seen the Fairy Queen,  
they call her Mademoiselle,  
Well, perhaps you won't believe it, but  
that *donah* is my gal.

—*Geo. Anthony: Mary turns the Mangle.*

**Donaker** (old), a cattle stealer.

**Done** (common), outwitted, cheated.

And immediately afterwards follows a well-known theatrical costumier, who has been *done* in the matter of fancy dresses by a gentleman connected with an amateur dramatic performance.—*The Graphic.*

*Done* also means exhausted, varied to "*done up*;" *done* for himself, injured or ruined himself.

Lord Randolph is much mistaken if he supposes that it is only an aristocratic friend here and there who believes that he has *done for* himself.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

**Done brown** (common), befooled, that is, completely done.

And they stared at each other, as much as to say,

"Hollo! Hollo! here's a rum go!

Why, captain!—my lord!—here's the devil to pay!

The fellow's been cut down and taken away!

What's to be done? We've missed all the fun!

Why, they'll laugh at and quiz us all over the town,

We are all of us *done* so uncommonly *brown*."

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

**Done-over** (popular), intoxicated.

**Done to death** (society), repeated *ad nauseam*.

Wasted a shilling in Bond Street by going to Harry Furniss' "Artistic Joke." Why Artistic? And, emphatically, why Joke? Caricature of Academy pictures *done to death* in comic journals with utmost regularity or many past years.—*Sporting Times.*

**Donkey** (nautical), a seaman's box in which he keeps his clothes.

(Printers.) Compositors are sometimes called *donkeys* by pressmen by way of retaliation for calling them "pigs."

(Streets), "Who stole the *donkey*?" This was and still is a common street cry in Houndsditch and the other Hebrew quarters of London when a man wearing a white hat makes his appearance. The low Jews had or have a notion that no one but a Christian—and certainly no Jew—ever wears a white hat. They also have a saying that the Founder of Christianity stole the *donkey* on the back of which He rode into Jerusalem. Hence the expression.

(Common), "Three more and up goes the *donkey*," that is, three pennies more and the *donkey* will go up the ladder. This phrase, used by mountebanks to denote that the performance will begin when the sum required is complete, is often said mockingly to a braggart to imply disbelief in accounts of his own wonderful performances.

**Donkey-riding** (popular), cheating in weight and measure.

**Donny** (prison), a woman. From the Italian *dona*.

**Don's week** (tailors), the week before a general holiday.

**Don't go off before you start** (American), a common exhortation to any one not to be in "too precious" or too great a hurry.

Well, hold on now, I'm goin' to tell you. *Don't go off before you start!* as de darkey said to de baulky mule.—*Brudder Bones*.

**Doodle-dasher** (low), one who practises onanism; *doodle* is the penis.

**Dookering** (gypsies), fortune-telling; from *doorik*, to prophesy.

**Dookie** (theatrical), a penny show or unlicensed theatre, usually fitted up in a large room or a cellar in a populous neighbourhood. The eminent tragedian, Charles Dillon, emerged from one of these in his youth, and handsome Conway, once the spoiled child of fashion, admired and idolised by the belles of Bath—notably by Madame Piozzi (Johnson's Mrs. Thrale)—found a temporary refuge at one of them when driven from the patent theatres by the brutal persecution of "that ferocious literary ruffian, Theodore Hook" (Byron). There are three or four performances a night at a *dookie*, and the audience is usually composed of juvenile harlots and thieves. Many of these places of resort still flourish at the East End.

**Dookin-cove**, a fortune-teller; from the gypsy *dookering* or *dukkerin*, telling fortunes.

**Door nail, dead as a**. *Vide* DEAD AS A TENT PEG.

**Door steps** (Whitechapel slang), slices of bread and butter. "I say, guvnor, give us a pennorth of weak and two *door steps*."

**Do over** (popular), said of any one who is intimate (carnally) with a woman.

**Dope, to** (American). Doping is the stupefying men with tobacco prepared in a peculiar way, as the gypsies of old were wont to use *Datura stramonium*. From old cant *dope*, a simpleton, dupe.

Nine out of ten saloons in the slums employ *doping* as a means to increase their illicit revenue.—*American Newspaper*.

**Dopey** (old cant), a beggar's trull; the podex; the buttocks; Scot-ticé, a *doup*.

**Doras** (Stock Exchange), South-Eastern Railway Deferred Ordinary Stock.

**Dose** (thieves), a sentence to imprisonment. To give a man his *dose*, or punish him, doubtless comes from a *dose* of medicine, but it is not impossible the Yiddish *dose*, *dosz* or *dasz* (Chaldaic), meaning the law, has influenced the word in this peculiar case.

(Old cant), a burglary.

**Doshed, I'm**, an exclamation of surprise, akin to "dashed."

**Doss** (tramps and popular), a bed.

As the sombre shades of evening begin to cast their darkening shadows over the earth, the majority of the troops will return to their respective quarters, and soon after nine o'clock the greater number will be comfortably tucked in *doss* (bed) for the night.—*Patterson: Life in the Ranks*.

Dr. Charles Mackay says:—"Hotten supposes it to be derived

from 'doze,' as a place to sleep in; or quite as likely," he adds, "from *dorse*, the back. It is, however, most likely from neither of these, but from the Gaelic *dos*, a hedge or bush under which tramps very often find their only available resting-place for the night—the money failing them to secure a shelter in a low lodging-house." According to Dr. Brewer, "*Doss* is a hassock full of straw, a bed—properly a straw bed. *Dossel* is an old word for a bundle of hay or straw." This derivation is the more probable, and is borne out by the French slang word *pieu*, bed, from *piau*, straw, straw bed, which has given *piausser* to sleep, modernised into *pioneer*. It also means sleep.

There is only about one of them in London where a fellow can do a comfortable *doss*, and that is St. Pancras's.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches in Shady Places*.

The author of "Sketches in Shady Places" remarks:—"Doss, slang term for sleep—meaning to 'lie on the back.' On examination it will startle one to find how many of these vulgarisms are derived directly from the learned languages."

**Dosser, the**, the father of a family. From provincialism *dos*, a "masher."

**Dossers** (common), explained by quotation.

The "'appy *dossers*" are the wretched people who roam about the street houseless, and creep in to sleep on the stairs, in the passages and untenanted cellars of the



lodging-houses with the doors open night and day.—*George R. Sims: How the Poor Live.*

**Doss-house** (tramps and thieves), a lodging-house, especially the common lodging-houses where beds are fourpence a night.

**Dossing-crib** (costermongers), a low lodging-house.

**Doss, to** (tramps, popular, &c.), to sleep. *Vide Doss.*

A newspaper sheet I will borrow,  
And make up my face very white,  
There will be a schlemozzle to-morrow,  
I shall *doss* in the Square to-night.  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Dossy** (popular), elegant; very *dossy*, in elegant style.

Joe Capp made a resolve a little while ago when on the eve of a mashing expedition to do the whole thing very *dossy*. "Ere dom it," said Joe, "yew la'ads all go about in shiny boots, steerewth an' all, and I'll have a pair, see if I woant."—*Sporting Times.*

An extremely elegant cloak was formerly termed a *dossal*. Hence perhaps the expression.

**Dot** (nautical), a ribbon; a *dot drag*, a watch ribbon.

**Do the high, to** (Oxford University), to walk up and down the High Street on Sunday evenings.

**Do time, to** (popular), to serve one's time in prison.

Burns is about fifty-seven years old, and has a national reputation as an expert cracksman. He has *done time* in Joliet,

Sing Sing, and Nashville, Tenn. He was pardoned from the latter institution one year ago, after serving three-quarters of a ten years' sentence.—*Inter Ocean.*

**Do to tie to** (American), trustworthy, fit to associate with.

The only safe class of citizens, the class that will *do to tie to*, are those who believe in the condign punishment of all crime—who believe that a Government is great, not in proportion as it forgives criminals, but in proportion as it punishes them and enforces law and order. It will be a dark day for the Republic when this class shall not outnumber both of the others combined.—*Indianapolis Journal.*

**Dots** (American), items of information.

"Lieutenant Arnold," he continued, "remarked he could give *dots* on a great many of them; that one—a very prominent one—naming him, was in the habit of visiting a house south of the avenue twice a week. I said that is none of our business; though we might know these things officially, we do not know them in any other capacity."—*Chicago Tribune.*

(Popular), money.

**Dotter** (low), a penny-a-liuer, a reporter.

**Dottle** (popular), a well-coloured black stump of a clay pipe.

**Dotty** (popular), cracked, silly.

She's sent away the chairs, and the carpet  
off the stairs,

I'm getting just as lean as any ghost;  
The bedstead and the drawers have been  
sacrificed because

She went *dotty* through that dreadful  
Parcels Post. —*Song.*

An appellation used for one's man by females of the lower classes or prostitutes.

**Double** (thieves), a turning in a road.

I had not been at Sutton very long before I piped a slavey come out of a chat (house), so, when she had got a little way up the *double*, I pratted (went) into the house.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Double-breasted feet** (tailors), club feet.

**Double-double, to put on the**, a process wherein a thief, having arranged with other thieves to lose a race, so that they may safely “lay” against him, deceives them and runs to win.

**Double event** (common), properly a technical term used on the turf when a man bets on both sides to meet either contingency—used in a slangy sense.

DEAR SIR—Unquestionably there is such a thing as luck. The other night I was under the impression that I should have two stalls for the Haymarket. I promised one to an aged Hebraic tart. As a matter of fact, I only got one, which, in the interests of your paper, I naturally filled. I thoroughly disenjoyed my evening, and the aged one won't speak to me now. Such a *double event* is only due to luck.—Yours sincerely,

SIR WALTER.

The Pooferies.

—*Sporting Times.*

**Double-finn** (low), a ten-pound note.

**Double lines** (nautical), ships' casualties. From the mode of entering in books at Lloyd's.

**Doubles** (printers). If a compositor repeats a line or sentence in composing, he is said to have made a *double*.

**Doublet** (thieves), a spurious diamond.

**Dough**, pudding at public and military schools.

**Dover** (hotel), a réchauffé; a corruption of “do over,” or do over again.

**Dovers** (Stock Exchange), South-Eastern Railway Ordinary Stock.

**Dowd** (popular), for dowdy; showily dressed.

But a crummy old Liberal *dowd*,

With bare shoulders by acres, old boy.

—*Punch.*

**Dowlas**, according to Hotten, a linen-draper. *Dowlas* is a kind of towelling.

**Dowlings** (Shrewsbury School).

There are four or five compulsory games a week (football) known as *dowlings* (δούλος).—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Down** (thieves), suspicion, alarm, or discovery which obliges one to desist from the business or depredation he was engaged in.

(Popular), to be “down in,”

to be at a low ebb, lacking in, out of. “Down in blunt,” lacking money. “Down upon one's luck,” unfortunate. Perhaps originally “down in one's luck.”

To be “down in the mouth,” dejected, disconsolate, crest-fallen.

But what have you got to say for yourself, why you should leave me here, *down in the mouth*, health, blunt, and everything else?—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

To be “down on one,” to be opposed to, to lose no opportunity for punishing, to maintain constant enmity or ill-will.

My pa is a bishop of spotless renown,  
On all that is naughty his reverence is  
*down*;

But I should delight in the sights of the  
town,

Yet am doomed to the utmost propriety!

—George Anthony: *The Clergyman's Daughter*.

**Down a pit** (theatrical), desperately smitten with a part.

**Down-easter** (West American), a person from the east.

A “wooden-mugged *down-easter*” with bushy eyebrows, and quick, twinkling eyes, who sang over and over again, “Oh, my little darling, I love you! Oh, my little darling, yes, I do!” had the second in charge.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Downed** (English and American), conquered, tricked, cheated. Literally not getting the upper hand.

“Then this money may ease your distress—

But I hope I'm not sold, 'tis the truth you have told?”

“The truth, sir!” she murmured.  
“M'yes!”

But therein she lied, 'twas a stratagem  
“wide,”

She'd a couple of pals in the “plant;”  
And the stranger was *downed*.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Downer** (popular), a sixpence. According to Barrow from the gypsy word *tawno*, or little one. The word seems, however, to be a variant of “deaner,” which see.

**Down on the bed rock** (West American), penniless.

I was mighty hard up at the time—right *down on the bed rock*—and it is just possible that I may have been monkeying with the cards a little.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Downs, the** (thieves), Tothill Fields' prison.

**Down the road** (popular), stylish, in fashionable style.

**Down to the ground** (English and American), thoroughly, completely; “right up to the handle,” that suits me *down to the ground*. It implies probably from top to bottom.

**Downy** (common), to do the *downy*, to keep in bed in the morning.

This'll never do . . . cutting chapel to do the *downy*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

(Popular and thieves), cunning, skilful.

Upper benjamins built on a *downy* plan.—*Slang Advertisement*.

“I suppose you don't know what a prig is?” said the Dodger mournfully. “I am, I'd scorn to be anything else—so's Charley, so's Fagin, so's Sikes, so's Nancy, so's Bet. So we all are, down to the dog. And he's the *downiest* one of the lot!”—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

A “*downy* cove,” a cunning fellow, one who “knows what's o'clock.” An allusion to his having the upper hand in his dealings with others.

*Downy*-looking cove, the fair 'un; a mug like that ought to be worth a fortune to him.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

**Downy Bible** (tailors), corruption of Douay Bible; equivalent to "according to Cocker."

**Dowry** (common), a very great deal, an excess. Hotten says this is probably from the gypsy, but there is nothing like it in Romany. It is just possibly from the Yiddish *dowor*, a thing (or word); *dowrin beteilim*, superfluous things. *Dowor* would, like *res*, refer to property.

**Dowser** (popular), a man who tells fortunes; a kind of wizard who pretends to be able to find water or treasures by means of a divining-rod.

**Doxy** (canting), a mistress, a "moll," generally used in a disreputable sense, but "in the West of England women frequently call their little girls 'doxies' in a familiar and endearing sense" (Hotten). This probably is the original meaning.

Lastly I will cleave to my *doxy*, wap stiffly, and will bring her duds.—*Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew*.

**Do you see anything green in my eye?** (popular), Do you think that I am to be taken in or gulled. "Green" is a synonym for unsophisticated, simple-minded, the equivalent in French being *cornichon*, a gherkin, alluding to the colour.

**Drab** (gypsy), poison or medicine; "up to *drab*," knowing all the

mysteries of poison and remedies, suggesting "up to trap" in English slang.

**Drafting on the camp** (Austrian), explained by quotation.

*Drafting on the camp*, or cutting out, as it is generally called, is a very pretty performance to watch, if it is well done. First of all a small mob is cut off from the main body of the cattle, and driven gently away for a little distance, and then allowed to stand. This is the nucleus of the draft mob, for no beast will stand still a moment by itself, and one of the hands is told off to watch them. One or two men then ride in among the cattle, and draft out the ones they want, one at a time, while the rest of the hands ride round the camp and keep the cattle from breaking away.—*Finch-Hatton: Advance Australia*.

**Drag** (low), a woman's dress when assumed by men for a frolic or a fraud. When a "molly," or young man, dresses like a girl, for immoral purposes, he is said to be "on the *drag*." In England and America *drag*-balls are held, at which the young men are dressed like women, and women very often like men. Some *drag*-balls, without any of the female element, and attended by sodomites, take place occasionally in London.

(Thieves), a term of three months' imprisonment, termed also "tray moons."

... But neither Snuffy (Reeves, the identifier) nor Mac (Macintyre) knew me, so I got a *drag*, and was sent to the Steel.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Well, sir, as I was saying, I only got a *drag* for that last job. Oh, I beg pardon, a *drag* means three months. Three

weeks is called a *drag*, too—a cadger's *drag*.—*James Greenwood: Seven Years' Penal Servitude.*

(Popular), to go upon a *drag*, to go about for pleasure.

Also a lure, trick, stratagem.

**Dragged** (tailors), behind time.

**Dragging** (thieves), robbing property from carts or cabs. (Provincial), *dragging* - time, the evening of a country fair day, when the young men begin kissing the girls and pull them about.

**Dragging the pudding** (tailors), getting the sack just before Christmas.

**Draggletail** (common), a dirty, drunken woman; a prostitute of the lowest class.

**Dragsman** (thieves), a thief who robs carriages by climbing up behind.

**Drain** (common), a drink.

"A *drain* for the boy," said Toby, half filling a wine-glass; "down with it, innocence."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

When I was a young man of about two and twenty, I lodged in Little Argyll Street (out of Regent Street), and having made great friends with the night bobby, who "had a *drain*" occasionally—even when on duty—in my rooms, I could slip in or out early in the morning, or at night, in a disguise which was useful and unique.—*Sporting Times.*

**Drains** (American), a tributary of a large river. Washington Irving in "Astarea" thus uses the phrase: "About noon, the

travellers reached the *drains* and brooks that formed the head waters of the river."

(Nautical), the cook on board ship.

**Draper** (old), *ale-draper*, a public-house keeper. The term seems to have a facetious origin, unless it be a corruption of "ale-dropper." Shakspeare has *ale-draper* for a publican.

**Drat it** (popular), a feminine abjuration expressive of contempt or anger, erroneously supposed to be a corruption of the vulgar curse, "God rot it!" It is a form of *dreadeth* or *dre ud* and *drad*, fear or dread (Anglo-Saxon). *Drat* occurs in *Piers Plowman* and *Guy of Warwick*.

**Draw** (sporting and common), a strife which is without result. From "a drawn game."

The time seems to be nigh when all "international" contests will end in a *draw*. It is the usual fate of international cricket matches.—*St. James's Gazette.*

Said of any play, performance, or exhibition when it is a success and attracts people.

Mr. —'s new religious enterprise in the southern suburb commenced very hopefully. It was something new to the people of Wimblewood, and it proved a *draw*. The congregations were large and growing, and very soon the hall was crowded.—*Evening News.*

It has also the general meaning of great attraction.

Oh, the shades are most charmingly blended,

And the fit without flaw,  
And the hat quite a *draw*.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Cricket), a *draw* is a hit made with the surface of the bat inclined.

(American), a Western term applied to the cattle which a cowboy employé could pick up, or plainly steal, for his master.

I could have raised quite a nice bunch of cattle in a twelvemonth. Half the *draw* was worth something those times!  
—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

Small glades, glens, or valleys.

We had left the flats behind, and were now in a rolling country, intersected by grassy *draws*, or miniature valleys, which afforded the finest kind of shelter for cattle.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

(Common), to *draw*, to take in, circumvent.

(Military), to *draw*, an abbreviation of "to *draw* the badger," explained by quotation.

A young officer on first joining was subjected to all sorts of practical joking. . . . Practical joking was indeed a recognised institution. . . . Its usual manifestations were *drawing* a man who had returned from mess early, and "making hay" of his furniture and property. . . . A party of half-a-dozen wild young subalterns, led probably by a festive captain, would, after a heavy guest night, proceed to the victim's room. . . . Perhaps the inmate would be made to stand in the middle of the room in his night-shirt, and sing a comic song. Occasionally, he would be carried downstairs, where he was made to stand on the mantelpiece of the ante-room, and order drinks all round. . . .

We know of one officer, who, in his night-shirt, was made on a cold winter's night to stand outside the window, on the ledge.  
—*Colburn: United Service Gazette*.

(Boxing and popular), to "*draw* or tap the claret," to "*draw* the cork," to make the nose bleed.

This is technically called *drawing* the claret, and is followed up by "practice in the school-room" by a black eye and a bloody nose.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn*.

(University and popular), to vex, to infuriate. It is undoubtedly a metaphor from "drawing a badger," *i.e.*, sending in a badger-terrier to worry him out: which in its turn is probably a metaphor from the badgers being occasionally dragged out by the bull-dog or badger-hound. So in Australia one speaks of "drawing a 'possum."

**Draw a bead, to** (American), the Western hunter or trapper in taking aim does so with deliberate precision. He slowly raises the "front sight," which in appearance is like a bead, to a level with the back sight, and when the two are in a line he immediately fires—hence the expression, and in colloquial use it has come to signify an attack upon one.

**Draw blanks, to** (American), to fail, miss, or be disappointed.

"Have you any invisible ink?"

She sighed

In a whisper

To the clerk.

"We have it, and of the best"—

He replied ;

"Do you know how to make it work ?"

"Oh, it isn't for me, but—

The nice young man

Who writes to me often—

Thanks!

Ma opens my letters, and,

After this,

I propose that she shall—

*Draw blanks.*"

—C. G. Leland.

**Draw boy** (trade), a superior article marked at a low price, placed in his window by a shop-keeper to attract customers; not intended to be sold, but only to act as a decoy to cheat those greedy credulous people who like to make a good bargain. This trick does not always succeed, and may generally be foiled by any obstinate customer who will persist, in spite of refusal, to become possessed of the identical piece of merchandise that has tempted his cupidity.

**Drawing** (studios), artists call a water-colour picture a *drawing*.

**Drawing a wipe** (thieves), stealing a pocket-handkerchief from a person's pocket.

**Drawing his wool** (tailors), vexing, or causing any one to lose his temper.

**Drawing plaster** (tailors), seeking to ascertain a man's intentions.

**Drawing the flats** (popular), imposing on simple-minded people.

The principal artists, however, in the art of *drawing the flats*, or national perspective, are lawyers, doctors, and tradesmen; each of whom has a principle of drawing peculiar to his trade or profession, which ought to be thoroughly comprehended by the amateur.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn.*

**Drawing the Queen's picture** (thieves), the manufacture of base money.

**Draw it mild** (common), calm yourself, don't exaggerate, the reverse of "coming it too strong." It has also the signification explained by the quotation.

*Drawing it mild* is used when the artist wishes to circumvent or bamboozle his customers, and consists in "flummery" or "gammon," which may either be put on the individual with a camel's hair pencil or a trowel, according to his humour.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn.*

**Draw out, to** (common), to elicit information or secrets from one. French, "tirer les vers du nez?"

He was a heavy, simple-looking fellow, and the older tramp was in conversation with him, and evidently "drawing him out."—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Draw teeth, to**, to wrench knockers and door-handles from off street doors, a favourite amusement of medical students of bygone days.

**Draw the planet, to** (gypsies), to tell one's fortune.

Eliza Stanley, a "good-looking young gypsy," tells fortunes; in fact, Mrs. Stanley can "rule your planet." In order, however, to do this successfully she must be entrusted with gold—nothing less being heavy enough to *draw the planet*. Mrs.

Stanley has been *drawing the planet* with considerable success lately; but she has at last *drawn the planet* down upon herself, and the Portsmouth magistrates have given her three months.—*The Globe*.

**Draw worsted, to** (tailors), to ferment a quarrel.

**Dress a hut, to** (shopmen), to exchange articles stolen from respective employers.

**Dressed to kill** (American), to be over-dressed; equivalent to "to be dressed to death," "dressed to the nines."

When we see a gentleman tiptoeing along Broadway, with a lady wigglegagging by his side and both *dressed to kill*, as the vulgar would say, you may be sure that he takes care of Number One.—*Dow's Sermons*.

**Dress in** (Winchester College). The four or five next best players in a football team stand ready dressed so as to take the place of any player who is in any way injured. They are said to "*dress in*."

**Dressing or dressing down** (common), a beating, a defeat. It also means a scolding.

If ever I meet him again I will give him such a *dressing* as he has not had this many a day.—*Miss Austen: Sense and Sensibility*.

**Dress-lodger** (prostitute), explained by quotation.

They belong utterly and entirely to the devil in human shape who owns the den that the wretched harlot learns to call her "home." You would never dream of the deplorable depth of her destitution if you

met her in her gay attire . . . she is absolutely poorer than the meanest beggar that ever whined for a crust. These women are known as *dress-lodgers*.—*J. Greenwood: The Seven Curses of London*.

**Drink** (American), a river. The "big *Drink*" is the common Western term for the Mississippi.

The old boat was a rouser—the biggest on the *Drink*.—*New York Opinions of the Times*.

**Dripping** (common), a contemptuous term applied to a cook, who is not exactly a *cordon bleu*.

**Driver's pint** (military), a gallon of ale. Drivers of the artillery are supposed to have large powers of absorption.

**Drive, to** (racing), *to drive* a horse is to urge him on with whip and spurs.

**Drive turkeys to market, to** (popular), to reel from one side to the other like a tipsy man. Probably from the wobbling of the birds in question.

**Driz** (thieves and gypsies), lace. From the gypsy *doriez*, thread or lace. "*Driz-fencer*," a person who buys or sells stolen lace. A *driz kemesa*, a shirt with a lace frill.

With my fawnied fancy and my onions gay, fake away,

With my thimble of ridge and my *driz kemesa*.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.



**Droddum** (popular), the buttocks, the breech.

**Dromedary** (thieves), a bungler.

**Drop** (American), to get the *drop* on a man, to forestall, get first advantage. This phrase alludes to a trick, practised in large cities upon unsuspecting strangers, called the *drop* game, which consists in pretending to find a pocket-book or purse full of notes, which a confederate has dropped upon the near approach of a likely victim. By specious representations the finder manages to obtain good money from the victim, who is said to be *dropped* on, the notes being, of course, counterfeit.

Also to have the *drop* on one.

When summoned to hold his hands up, he refused and attempted to draw his own revolver, with the result of having two bullets put through him. Finnigan commented on Calamity as a fool for not knowing when a man had the *drop* on him.—*Century Illustrated Magazine*.

**Drop in the eye** (old), to "have a *drop in the eye*," to be partially intoxicated.

O faith, Colonel, you must own you had a *drop in your eye*, for when I left you you were half seas over.—*Swift: Polite Conversation*.

**Drop it** (common), cease, leave off.

**Drop one's leaf, to** (common), to die. Obviously an allusion

to the fall of the leaves in winter.

**Drop the money purse, to** (American), to incur a loss, make a mistake.

Den The Dog he sail inter Brer Coon, en right dar's whar he *drop his money-puss*, kaze Brer Coon wuz cut out fer dat bizness, an' he far'ly wipe up de face er de earf wid 'im.—*Brer Remus*.

**Drop the scabs in, to** (tailors), to work the button-holes.

**Drop, to** (thieves and popular), to leave, turn aside; to "*drop the main Toby*," to turn off the main road. (Popular), to *drop* a man, to knock him down; to *drop* on, to arrest suddenly, to abruptly interfere or prevent, to reprove, lay the responsibility on.

The father died, the son then tried some poison for to take;

But this they stopped, and on him *dropped*, for making this sad mistake.

—*Song: Tiddle-a-Wink the Barber*.

(American), to lose.

St. Paul sporting men left for Illinois on Monday prepared to get even on their previous losses on the Gilmore-Myers mill, fought at Harrison's Landing, near St. Croix Falls, Wis., October 19th last, when Meyer sent Gilmore to grass in five rounds. The Minneapolis and St. Paul men gave big odds on Gilmore, and in round numbers it is estimated that the Minnesota men *dropped* \$8000 on the fight.—*St. Louis Globe Democrat*.

(Common), to *drop* into, to thrash.

**Dropped on** (tailors), disappointed.

**Dropping the anchor** (racing), keeping back a horse in a race.

On the other hand, on remarking upon the wild way of riding, the visitor will probably be met with the retort, that if the jockeys did not flog their animals unmercifully, they would be accused of what is here termed in racing slang *dropping the anchor*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Drum** (popular and thieves), a house or lodging.

Call it what you like . . . *drum*, crib, owse, or whichever way you likes to put a name to it ; it makes no matter to the place I mean.—*J. Greenwood : Dick Temple*.

I went straight back to the old *drum* in Spitalfields, and after a drink with old friends we made up a tossing party, and I lost every penny of that ten shillings in a very little time.—*J. Greenwood : Seven Years' Penal Servitude*.

*Drum* means also a street, a road ; in the West of England a "drong."

It may have come directly from the English gypsy *drum* (old form *drom*), which is, truly, from the Greek *δρῶμῶς*, a road. The origin of the old French cant word, *trime*, which has the same meaning, is probably identical.

(Old), rout or ball. From the noise of the entertainment a ball-room was called the "*drum-room*."

The bonny housemaid begins to repair the disordered *drum-room*.—*Fielding : Tom Jones*.

(Pugilistic), the ear.

(Tailors), a small workshop.

**Drummer** (tailors), trousers' maker.

(Old racing), a horse whose forelegs move in an irregular, unusual manner.

(American), a commercial traveller ; probably from the simile of beating the drum to attract attention, or from *drum*, road.

*First Drummer*—"Had any fun this trip?" *Second Drummer*—"We tried to have some in Louisville, but it did not turn out very well. We painted the nose of one of the boys a brilliant red, and sent him into a revival-meeting." "They must have thought him a fit subject for conversion." "Well, no ; they all rushed up to him, grabbed him by the hand, said they were glad to see him back from Europe, and asked for a puff in the *Courier Journal*.—*Omaha World*."

In this paragraph the editor of the *Omaha World* satirises a colleague in a rival newspaper.

(Thieves), a thief who makes his victims insensible by giving them a narcotic, or causing them to inhale chloroform. Probably a corruption of "drummer" from "drum."

**Drumstick** (popular), the leg ; "*drumstick cases*," trousers.

**Drunk** (American), a state of intoxication.

Observing this, the opium master, who was still squatted on the bed, hastened to roll up a couple of cigarettes of common tobacco, and lit them by taking a whiff at each, after which he handed them to the Chinamen, who rose from the couch yawning, and, like men only half awake, staggered towards the fire, and sat regarding it in silence. They were not going yet ; they had come for a *drunk*, and would probably indulge in half-a-dozen

more pipes before the evening was over.—  
*In Strange Company.*

**Drunken chalks** (soldiers), good conduct badges. Derisively used, and implying that the badges have been gained not by sobriety but by the faculty of carrying liquor well.

**Drury Lane vestals** (old). Drury Lane, like Covent Garden, had at one time a reputation for immorality and debauchery rivalling the Haymarket and Regent Street of to-day. The neighbourhood was notorious as the resort and dwelling-place of women of the town, whether kept mistresses or common harlots. They were called *Drury Lane vestals*, and "the Drury Lane ague" was a loathsome venereal disorder.

**Dry bob.** *Vide* BOB.

**Dry-bobbing** (Eton), cricketing. "Wet-bobbing," the term for river sports. *Vide* BOB.

Eventually he won his case; the Georgie was excused, and "Hossy" recited the prologue with much success. It was in April, when a late and severe flood had put an end to a little attempted early *dry-bobbing*.—*Sketchy Memories of Eton.*

**Dry boots** (common), a sly, humorous fellow.

**Dry hash** (Australian), a man who will not "shout," *i.e.*, pay for drinks. *Vide* DEADHEAD.

**Dry lodging** (lodging-house keepers), sleeping accommodation without board.

**Dry nurse, to** (nautical), is said of a junior officer on board ship who advises an ignorant captain, and instructs him in his duty.

**Dry shave, to** (common), to annoy one by violently rubbing his chin with the fingers.

**Dry up** (popular, originally American), hold your tongue; varied by "curl up," "put a clapper to your mug," "stop your jaw," and other equally elegant invitations. (Theatrical), a *dry up*, a failure, the reverse of a "draw."

Whoever is responsible for the *dry up* at the Opera Comique deserves to be ostracised from theatrical society.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

To *dry up*, to stick, *i.e.*, to forget the words of a part and break down.

(Racing), to slacken pace through exhaustion; literally to be "pumped out."

At the distance he looked like winning in a canter, but *dried up* immediately afterwards.—*Sporting Times.*

(Printers), to leave off work at dinner time or at night. Sometimes to discharge, or to leave a situation.

**Dry, walking** (military), a dry walk or *walking dry*, is the uninteresting and very distasteful promenade a soldier is compelled to take when he leaves barracks after working hours without a penny in his pocket.

**D. T.** (common), delirium tremens, used very generally by Anglo-Indians.

They get a look, after a touch of *D. T.*, which nothing else that I know of can give them.—*Indian Tale*.

*D. T.* also means *Daily Telegraph*.

**Dub, to** (thieves), to open; “*dub* the jigger,” open the door. T. Harman writes this “dup.”

Tower ye yander is the kene, *dup* the gygger.—*Harman: Caveat*.

*Dub*, a key, lock, picklock. *Dub*-lay, robbing houses by picking the locks. “Dubber,” an expert lock-picker.

To *dub* a jigger is a variant of “strike a jigger,” to break open a door, and *dub* in that sense is from the meaning to strike. Anglo-Saxon *dubban*. Hence *dub*.

(Popular), to “*dub* up,” to pay up. Provincial, *dubs*, money. So that “*dub* up” would be the exact rendering of the French *financer*, to pay. (Anglo-Indian), *dub*, a small coin.

**Dub at a knapping jigger** (old cant), a turnpike-man.

**Dubs** (Winchester). In the slang of the boys of that public school this term has the meaning of double.

**Dubsman** (old cant), a jailer.

Oh! give me a chisel, a knife, or a file,  
And the *dubsman* shall find that I'll do  
it in style!

Tol-de-rol.

—*W. H. Ainsworth: Jack Sheppard*.

**Duc** (printers), short for the ink-duct or fountain that regulates the quantity given out to each impression on a machine.

**Ducat, ducats** (theatrical), coin, cash of any description.

(Thieves), a railway ticket. Probably a corruption of ticket.

So I took a *ducat* for Lutton in Surrey, and went a wedge-hunting.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Duck** (popular), a bundle of scraps of meat sold to the poor. (Winchester), the face.

**Duck, or duck's egg** (cricket), no runs; an allusion to the shape of the nought.

I carried out my bat for nineteen, and Thomas his for fifteen, scored with much pluck at the pinch of the game; in fact, he won the match, for the remaining man was good for nothing else but a *duck*.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Stock Exchange). In the slang of the “House” a “lame *duck*” is a defaulter. The expression is old.

I may be “lame,” but I shall never be a *duck*, nor deal in the garbage of the alley.—*Walpole Letters*.

A “lame *duck*” is said to “waddle out of the alley,” that is, leave the Stock Exchange as bankrupt.

The gaming fools are doves, the knaves are rooks, 'Change-alley bankrupts waddle out “lame *ducks*.”—*Garrick: Prologue to Foote's Maid of Bath*.

**Duck, doing a** (thieves), getting under the seat of a railway carriage when the ticket-collector

comes round, so as to avoid paying the fare. From the ordinary meaning of to *duck*, to drop the head or person suddenly.

With a downward glance of intense scorn at me, the first speaker continued—  
 “*Doin’ a duck*, macin’ the rattler, ridin’ on the cheap, on the odno, under the bloomin’ seat, down wi’ the dust, all among the daisies, where you like, and what you like, it makes no matter which, what do you think? Gentlemen in my walk of life can’t always be worried.”—  
*Sporting Times*.

**Ducks** (common), white linen, or drill trousers.

This young person had stipulated that Billy should do the thing proper, and be married in a pair of white *ducks*. These garments he had cheapened at a mart of “reach me down” notoriety, to the satisfaction of the feminine onlooker of his proceedings through the window.—*Savage: London*.

(Stock Exchange), Aylesbury Dairy Company shares.  
 (Anglo-Indian), officials of the Bombay service.

**Dudder, dudsman** (old), a pedlar who sold articles of clothing to country people. *Vide DUDS*.

**Duddering rake** (old), an extremely debauched man about town.

**Dude** (American), a swell or “masher,” an overdressed man. Probably from the very old English cant *dude*, a garment.

Ain’t you one of these *dudes* as the Colonel brings down sometimes from El Paso and Silver, that wants kettles o’ hot water to twelve o’clock?—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

The word is also used in England.

Sometimes, however, a distinction seems to be established between *dude* and dandy, the former being considered to apply more to a brainless “masher.”

I’m a dandy I’ll have you all to know,  
 With the ladies I’m never rude:  
 This style is all my own, with it I carry  
 tone,  
 I’m a dandy, but I’m no *dude*.  
 —*Song*.

The following quotation gives amusing evidence of the antiquity of *dude*.

A correspondent of the *New York Evening Post* shows that *dudes* are of very ancient date. In the “Eunuchus” of Terence, act iv. scene iv., l. 15, it is written:—

“Ita vistus est  
*Dudum* quia varia veste exornatus fuit,”  
 Which, literally translated into English, would read:—“He seemed a *dude*, because he was decked out in parti-coloured clothes,” or still more literally, “in a vest of many colours.”

**Dude hamfatters** (American), a sarcastic allusion to the swell and “masher” pork-raisers. A large number are located not a hundred miles from Chicago.

It seems that the *dude hamfatters*, after trying various games to skip unseen, conceived the idea of making up as a couple of well-dressed women.—*New York National Police Gazette*.

**Dudeman** or **dudman**, a scarecrow (Halliwell).

**Dudette, dudinette** (American), a very young girl, a mere chit, who affects the airs and style of a belle.

**Dudikabin** (gypsy), "to lel *dādi-kabin*," lit., to take lightment. This word was for a long time kept a great secret by the gypsies, and one of them was reprimanded by his friends for telling the writer. It means the making a clean sweep of everything valuable in the house, under pretence of propitiating the planets, or of finding and attracting hidden treasure. This latter is more specially the *huk-ani boro*, or "great humbug." It appears to be connected with the English slang-equivalent "lightment," from to lighten, to relieve of one's property, to rob.

**Dudine** (American), a lady "dude."

Long-handled eye-glasses, and the *dudines* who buy and use them.—*Philadelphia Times*.

**Duds** (thieves), clothes. Scottish *dud*, a rag.

As I was walking down \*Cheapside a man came up to me and said, "Look here, mate, the sooner you sling them *duds* away the longer you will keep out of quod. I have been following behind two private clothes detectives, and they spotted you by your togs, so take my tip to get rid of them.—*Evening News*."

Also *duddies*.

Then he took out a little knife,

Let a' his *duddies* fa',

And he was the brawest gentleman

That stood among them a'.

—*Old Ballad: We'll gang nae Mair a Roving*. [Attributed to King James V. of Scotland.]

T. Harman uses the word with the meaning of linen clothes.

We wyll fylche some *duddes* off the ruffemans, or myll the ken for a lagge of dudes.—*Caveat*.

*I.e.*, "We will steal some linen off the hedges, or rob a parcel of the same from the house."

(Old), to "sweat *duds*," to pawn clothes. A "dudman" is provincial for a scarecrow; literally a ragged fellow.

**Duff** (thieves), spurious. Men at the *duff*, passers of false jewelry. To *duff*, to sell spurious goods, often under the pretence of their having been smuggled, stolen, or found. In London attempts at *duffing* are often made by rascals who offer for sale a worthless meerschaum pipe or ring, pretending they have just found it. *Vide* DUFFER.

**Duffer** (common). This word has two opposite meanings. A rank swindler, a clever cheat—"a word in frequent use in 1701 to express cheats of all kinds." In Yiddish every word which means clever or wise also means roguery; and in Yiddish *doffer* is a shrewd, clever, very crafty man (adjective *doff*, from *tov* or *toff*, good); Dutch thieves' slang *doffer*, a tramp, a seller of forged pictures.

. . . Nor did it mark him out as the prey of ring-droppers, pea and thimble-riggers, *duffers*, louters, or any of those bloodless sharpers, who are perhaps a little better known to the police.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

A worthless person, a stupid man, an awkward, unskilful fellow, a coward.

What an awful *duffer* he is. I do not believe he hit a thing to-day; besides, he is so dangerous.—*Saturday Review*.

In this latter sense the word is connected with *daffe*, Anglo-Saxon, a fool; *daffam*, a silly person (Wright); *daff*, a coward; *daft*, of weak intellect. Anglo-Saxon *deaf*, "surdus, absurdus, stolidus," from *dufan*. *Deaf* is in most of its Indo-European forms synonymous with stupid or stolid. Gothic *daufs*, dull or foolish.

(Popular), spurious money.

I very quietly slipped four *duffers* among six good bobs, and accommodated her with the change she wanted. It came off all right, so I've four bob left for drinks; see! —*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Nautical), a woman who assists smugglers.

**Duffer out, to** (Australian), mining slang. A reef is said to *duffer out* when the gold is nearly or quite exhausted.

He then reported to the shareholders that the lode had *duffered out*, and that it was useless to continue working.—*Advance Australia*.

**Dug-out** (American), a canoe hollowed out of the trunk of a tree. The term seems common throughout the New World, as the Rev. W. Cartwright in his "Autobiography" says, "If by chance we got a *dug-out* to cross in ourselves and swim our horses by, it was quite a treat."

Also a rough kind of structure built over an excavation.

The new house was at best but a modest little structure, but Mayne viewed the

placing of each shingle and the driving of each nail with profound satisfaction. In the sparsely settled neighbourhood, where *dug-outs* and "shacks" predominated, a "frame" house, even though small and unpretending, was a structure of no mean importance. When it became known that Jack Mayne intended to plaster the "front room" it was pretty thoroughly agreed that reckless extravagance characterised Mayne's house building.—*Sporting Times*.

**Duke Humphrey** (common), "to dine with *Duke Humphrey*," to go without dinner. Dr. Brewer, in his "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," says:—"Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, son of Henry IV.; was renowned for his hospitality. At his death it was reported that a monument would be erected to him in St. Paul's, but his body was interred at St. Albans. When the promenaders left for dinner, the poor stay-behinds who had no dinner used to say to the gay sparks who asked if they were going, that they would stay a little longer and look for the monument of the 'good duke.'" "Dining with the cross-legged knights" (the stone effigies of the Round Church) had the same signification. Hotten has the following explanation:—"Some visitors were inspecting the abbey where the remains of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester lie, and one of them was unfortunately shut in, and remained there *solus* while his companions were feasting at a neighbouring hostelry. He was afterwards said to have dined with *Duke Humphrey*, and the saying even-

tually passed into a proverb." *Vide* Halliwell, who gives a better origin, and one supported by all contemporary writers.

**Duke of limbs** (common), a tall, spindle-shanked man; the phrase also implies awkwardness and uncouthness.

**Duke of York** (rhyming slang), walk or talk.

**Dukes or dooks** (popular and thieves), the hands; from the gypsy *dūk*, *dook*, which refers to palmistry; "it is in his dook," meaning "it is in his fate," became "it is in his hand."

Then he began to push me about, so I said I would not go at all if he put his *dukes* (hands) on me. Then he rammed my nut (head) against the wall and shook the very life out of me.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

To grease one's *duke*, to bribe, to pay.

So the next day I went to him, and asked him if he was not going to grease my *duke*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

To put up one's *dukes*, to fight, to box.

No doubt Britain's foes will be thrown into throes

Of utter dismay and despair, too;  
Finding those near the throne are to prize-fighting prone;

And are ready to fight "on the square," too.

Now that royalties spar, all the swells, near and far,

Will do ditto—without any warning;  
And without any flukes, will all put up their *dukes*,

And try punching the bag every morning.  
—*Fun.*

**Dukey.** *Vide* DOOKIE.

**Dūkk, dook** (gypsy), breath.

Mandy nasheded my *dūkk* a prasterin paller the jūva.—*An Old Gypsy.*

*I.e.*, "I lost my breath running after the girl."

A spirit; that which inspires divination or palmistry; the demon of Socrates.

I find that the *dook* is like myself, very much given to lying.—*George Borrow: Lavengro.*

Also pain, vexation, annoyance. (According to the primitive Shamanic faith, all pain was caused by evil spirits.)

**Dūkker, dūk, dook, dooker** (gypsy), to tell fortunes, to pain, grieve, chide; *dūkkerben*, grief, trouble, a fault; *dūkkeripen* or *dūkkerpen*, fortune-telling, augury; *dūkkerō*, sorrowful. Hindu, *dokh*, fault.

When I pens adovo I pens a tácho *dūkkerin*.—*George Borrow: Lavengro.*

Mūkk mengy *dūkker* your kók'ro, rya?

So? Mándy cant pen lis-mándy can.

Mā tūte sáv 'at *dūkkerin*, pála—

Adovo sós sár o tem began.

"Shall I tell your fortune too, sir?

What? I can't! Oh, yes, I can.

Don't you laugh at fortune-telling,  
'Twas with that the world began."

—*Professor E. H. Palmer.*

**Dull in the eye** (popular), intoxicated.

**Dull swift** (old), said of one long gone on errands or messages.

**Dumb-cow** (Anglo-Indian), also *dumb-cowed* (participle), to brow-beat, to cow, set down.

"This is a capital specimen



of Anglo-Indian dialect. *Dam khāna*, 'to eat one's breath,' is a Hindu idiom for 'to be silent.' Mr. Hobson-Jobson converts this into a transitive verb, to *dam-khās*, and both spelling and meaning being affected by English suggestions of sound, this comes in Anglo-Indian use to imply *cowering* and *silencing*" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Dumfogged** (literary), confused.

**Dummock** (low), the fundament; otherwise known as "blind cheek."

**Dummy** (popular), anything fictitious or sham, an individual of vacant mind, and one bereft of speech. (Tailors), a piece of cloth rolled tight and saturated with oil; used for rubbing clothes of a very hard nature in places required to be cut, also the shears, to make cutting more easy. (Thieves), a pocket-book. Originally a book full of *sham* notes.

He is caught—he must "stand and deliver;"

Then out with the *dummy*, and off with the bit,

Oh, the game of High Toby for ever!

—Ainsworth: *Rookwood*.

A "*dummy*-hunter," a pick-pocket, whose speciality is to steal pocket-books.

No *dummy*-hunter had forks so fly,

No knuckler so deftly could fake a cly.

—Ainsworth: *Rookwood*.

**Dummy daddle dodge** (thieves), picking pockets in an omnibus under cover of a sham hand.

Asked by the friendly warder what he thought of the *dummy daddle dodge*, Mr. Mobbs said he rather thought that game was played out. A woman, he proceeded to explain, can work with a *dummy daddle* in an omnibus or a railway carriage much better than a man, because, without appearing conspicuous, she can wear any kind of loose shawl or cloak as concealment for her real hand.—*J. Greenwood: Daily Telegraph*.

**Dump fencer** (street), a man who hawks buttons. *Dump* is an old word for a leaden medal.

**Dumpoke** (Anglo-Indian), a duck, boned, baked, and highly seasoned. From the Persian *dam-pukht*, "air-cooked," or baked. In English gypsy, *pukht* would be *pekkerd*, from the same root.

These eat highly of all flesh *dumpoked*, which is baked with spice in butter.—*Fryer*.

**Dumps** (popular), money. *Vide* DUMP FENCER.

May I venture to say when a gentleman jumps

In the river at midnight for want of the *dumps*,

He rarely puts on his knee-breeches and pumps.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Dung** (workmen), one who is compelled to accept lower wages after being out on strike. The word is the preterite of the old English verb to "ding," to beat down, one who is *dung* or beaten, as in the old proverb, still termed Scottish, "It's a sair *dung* bairn that maunna greet."

(Tailors), "*dunging it*" is said of a traitor to the trade.

**Dungaree** (Anglo-Indian), common, coarse, low, vulgar. The name of a disreputable suburb of Bombay, and also of a coarse blue cloth used for sailors' clothing.

**Dunnage** (popular), clothes or baggage.

**Dunnakin** (American thieves), a chamber-pot. In England, the water-closet.

**Durham man** (old slang), a knock-kneed man was so called, and was said to grind mustard between his knees.

**Durrynacker** (prison), female hawker. From the gypsy *dori* or *doriez*, threads or lace.

**Dust** (common), money. Possibly for gold *dust*.

"Put it down to the bill" is the fountain of ill,

'Tis this has the shopkeepers, undone.

Bazaars never trust, so down with your *dust*,

And help us to diddle all London.

—*Grimaldi's Bazaar*.

The term is old, it occurs in the "Life of Ken," 1690. "Down with the *dust*," pay the money.

If they did intend to trade with Christ they must "down with the *dust*" instantly, for to his knowledge the Papists did offer a vast sum of money for England's Christ. —*Eachard's Observations*, 1671.

He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord. If you like the security "down with the *dust*."—*Sermon attributed to the Rev. Rowland Hill*.

**Duster** (tailors), a sweetheart.

**Dust Hole** (common), the Queen's Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, so called from the fact that half a century ago, when under the management of Mr. Glossop, the débris of the theatre was swept daily under the pit, and suffered to accumulate, to the great inconvenience of the audience, until the *dust hole* was crowded to repletion. The first French plays acted in London were given at this theatre, which, after many vicissitudes of fortune, became fashionable as the Prince of Wales', and is now the property of the Salvation Army.

**Dust out of, to** (American), to leave or depart.

*Mother*—Johnnie, brush the dust off your boots. *Johnnie*—Is that the kind of dust papa was talking to governess about?

*Mother*—What did he say? *Johnnie*—He said: "Dost thou love me, Agnes?"

*Mother*—No, it was not, Johnnie; but Agnes will *dust out* of here to-morrow morning.—*Boston Globe*.

**Dust, to** (West American), to dismount by allowing oneself to roll off to the soft ground.

Frequently, instead of quitting them when they were turned loose, the boys would sit astride of the steers they had been holding, and "stay with them" as they went bucking down the corral towards their fellows, until the proximity of

these latter warned the riders to roll off and *dust*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Dustoor, dustoory** (Anglo-Indian), a commission paid, generally as a kind of bribe. Persian and Hindu, *dastur*, custom.

“That commission or percentage on money passing in any cash transaction which sticks to the fingers of the agent of payment” (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Dusty** (popular), “not so *dusty*,” not so bad.

Three red clocks, two pusses, and a white slang—I ain't done so *dusty*!—*Punch.*

**Dusty, gritty, or stony broke** (popular), without a sou.

“I've been as flash as they make 'em in my time, and you'll 'ardly believe it”—this in a hoarse whisper to me—“I've been that broke—*stony, gritty, dusty broke*—you understand, as I'd 'ave nicked the broads out of a pal's kick, if they was there, and sold 'em for the price of 'alf a pint.”—*Sporting Times.*

**Dutch** (military), to “do a *Dutch*,” to run away, to desert. Probably an allusion to “*Dutch* courage.”

**Dutch** (popular), a wife.

Now he'd not a brown, nor a friend in town,

In fact he was quite undone;  
He made a vow he'd never row  
With his old *Dutch* again:  
So part by hook, and part by crook,  
He tramped it back to London.

—*Mitchell: Jimmy Johnson's Holiday.*

**Dutch auction** (cheap Jacks), a method of selling goods without incurring the penalties for selling without a license.

**Dutch clock**, a bed-pan is so called by nurses.

**Dutch feast** (common), a dinner at which the host gets drunk before his guests.

**Dutchman's breeches** (nautical), two streaks of blue in a cloudy sky.

**Dutch treat** (American), a dinner or drinking where every man pays for himself.

**Dying in a horse's nightcap** (popular), being hung. A horse's nightcap, *i.e.*, a halter.



**EAR** (American), to get up on one's *ear*, to rouse oneself to a great effort.

They called me bully boy, altho' I've seen  
nigh threescore years,  
And said that I was lightning when I got  
up on my *ear*.

—*Words and their Uses*.

**Earl of Cork** (Irish), the ace of diamonds. According to Carleton, "It is the worst ace and the poorest card in the pack, and is called the *Earl of Cork* because he is the poorest nobleman in Ireland."

**Early riser** (popular), the vulgar name for an efficient aperient pill. The application of the term is obvious.

**Ear-mad** (medical), the thickened ear (in its upper portion) found in some cases of insanity; hence the name.

**Earth bath** (old), a grave; to take an *earth bath*, to be dead and buried. Also to take a "ground sweat."

**Earthquake** (American), *bottled earthquake*, spirits, intoxicating liquor of any kind. So called from the disorderly motions attendant on intoxication, or an abbreviation of "earthquake protector."

*Bottled earthquakes* are just as bad as the other kind. Scratch a *bottled earthquake* and you'll find a cocktail.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Earthquake protector** (American), explained by quotation.

It was a delicious beverage, not unconnected with old Jamaica, and sent a delicious glow through every vein. . . .

"But how, pray, does this protect me from an earthquake?"

"Well, sir," replied the barkeeper, "if you'll only drink enough of it, you won't care a continental whether the earthquake comes or not."—*New York Star*.

**Earwig** (thieves), a clergyman.

**Earwiggling** (common), a rebuke in private. Is said of a sneaking, tattling fellow-employé who carries little trifling errors on the part of others to the ears of the governor.

**Ease, to** (popular and thieves), to rob. French slang, *soulager*.

**Eason, to listen** (New York Slang Dictionary). *Easen* is an English provincialism for eaves; hence *eason*, from eavesdropping.

**East and south** (rhyming slang), the mouth.

**Eastery** (cheap Jacks), explained by quotation.

Sometimes, when in a country where there were large villages or small towns, we used to work what was called *eastery* or private business.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

**Easy** (thieves), "make the cull *easy*," kill the fellow.

**Eat a fig** (rhyming slang), to "crack a crib," *i.e.*, to commit a burglary.

- Eat one's terms**, to (legal), to prepare for the bar; to attend the requisite number of dinners in hall each term.
- Eat**, to (American), a Western expression, meaning not to consume but to provide food.
- Captin, do you *ate* us or do we *ate* ourselves? *Eat* yourselves, to be sure.—*American Story*.
- Eats his head off** (common), is said of a horse that remains for a long time in the stable. Sometimes of servants or others who have little to do.
- Eaves** (American thieves), a hen-roost.
- Eavesdropper** (American thieves), a chicken thief, or a low sneak or thief generally.
- Ebenezer** (Winchester College), a ball at racquets that hits the line and rises high into the air.
- Ebony** (popular), a bit of *ebony*, a negro.
- Ebony optics** (pugilistic), black eyes; *ebony optics* albonized, black eyes painted white.
- Edge** (tailors), "stitched off the *edge*" refers to a glass or pint not filled to the top; "side *edge*," whiskers. A "short top *edge*" is a turn-up nose.
- Edgenaro** (back slang), orange.
- Eggshaw** (Anglo-Indian), brandy; probably from the name of a brand.
- Egyptian hall** (rhyming slang), a ball.
- Eighter** (prison), an eight-ounce loaf.
- "Do you eat all your chuck?"  
 "No, I have two *eighters* in my cell now."  
 "I shall be orderly to-morrow. Sling me a toke."—*Evening News*.
- Ekom** (back slang), a "moke" or donkey.
- Elbow crooker** (thieves), a hard drinker; from the phrase to "crook one's elbow," to drink. In French, "lever le coude," said of a hard drinker.
- Elbower** (thieves), a fugitive; one that "elbows," *i.e.*, turns the corner, or gets out of sight.
- Elbow grease** (popular), hard work.
- Elbow-scraper** (nautical), fiddle player.
- Elbow shaker** (old), gambler with dice. From the expression "to shake one's elbow."
- Elbow**, to (thieves), to turn a corner, to get out of sight.
- Electrified** (American), excited with liquor.
- Elephant** (thieves), a victim possessed of much money.  
 (Common), the *elephant*, originally an Americanism. We might compile a volume of the amusing

explanations and illustrations of this expression which have appeared in American newspapers. To have seen *the elephant* is to have had a full experience of life or of a certain subject or object. There is a book by "Doesticks" (Mortimer Thompson), called "Seeing the Elephant," devoted to describing "life" in New York, of which a reviewer remarked that *the elephant*, according to Mr. Thompson, appeared to be bad brandy. When a man had made an unfortunate speculation he would say that he had not only seen *the elephant* but felt him kick. The phrase seems to have originated in an old ballad of a farmer who, while driving his mare along the highway, met with a showman's elephant, which knocked him over, and spilt his milk and destroyed his eggs. The farmer consoled himself for his loss by reflecting that he had at least "seen *the elephant*."

And he said, "Now in future no one can declare

That I've not seen *the elephant*—neither the mare."

In 1849-1850; to have been to California and returned was to have seen *the elephant*.

Those who sold the bonds had vanished, those who hadn't held the town, Little knew they of its glory over seas or great renown, They had nothing of the fruitage—though alas! they held the plant, Nothing saw they of the picture save indeed *the elephant*.

He who had been in the background now came rushing to the fore, Terribly he trampled on them—very awful was his roar.

—*The Rise and Fall of Gloryville.*

Montaigne strangely enough seems to suggest that "to see *the elephant*" was in his time connected with experience of life. He cites the following from "Arrien. Hist. Ind.," c.

17.

"Aux Indes Orientales la chasteté y étant en singulière recommandation, l'usage pourtant souffroit qu'une femme mariée se peust abandonner à qui luy presentoit un *éléphant*, et cela avec quelque gloire d'avoir esté estimée à si hault prix."

This then was the Indian way of "seeing *the elephant*," and of paying, as at the present day, an enormous price for the sight.

(Common), a girl is said to "have seen *the elephant*" when she has lost her chastity. French, "avoir vu le loup."

**Elephant's trunk** (rhyming slang), drunk.

**Elevation**, explained by quotation.

"They as dinnot tak' spirits down thor, tak' their pennord o' *elevation* then—women-folk especial."

"What's *elevation*?"

"Opium, bor' alive, opium."—C. *Kingsley*: *Allon Locke*.

"Elevated" is English for intoxicated in a slight degree.

**Elfen**, to walk on tiptoe lightly (New York Slang Dictionary).

Probably from the old word *alfen*, hence *aleft*, lifted.

**Embroider** (common), to exaggerate, romance. In French, *broder*.

Tom tried to make himself appear to be a hero too, and succeeded to some extent, but then he always had a way of *embroidering*.—*Mississippi Pilot*.

**Emperor** (common), "drunk as an emperor." The quintessence of intoxication. Ten times "as drunk as a lord." The French say "saoul comme trente mille hommes." (Thieves), hence a drunken man.

A pinch for an *emperor's* slang. He was in his altitudes, and we pinched his thimble, slang and onions.—*On the Trail*.

**Empty bottle** (Univ. Cantab), a pensioner. Bristed, in his "Five Years in an English University," says, "They are popularly denominated *empty bottles*, the first word of the appellation being an adjective, though were it taken as a verb there would be no untruth in it."

**End** (American), "to be all on end," to be very angry or irritated. From rising up, or jumping up in a rage. Also applied to a state of excitement, especially of anticipation. "They were all on end to see the President go by."

**Endacott, to** (journalistic), to act like a constable of that name who arrested a woman whom he thought to be a prostitute.

Constable Endacott. . . . Though he might base a claim to a pension on literary grounds, as having enriched the English language with a new word (*to Endacott*, V.A.), it is not probable that an economical Government would value this addition to the dictionary very highly.—*Evening News*.

The expression lived "ce que vivent les roses, l'espace d'un matin," probably on account of certain facts proved in the course of a subsequent investigation, and which showed that the constable's name ought not to go down to posterity as that of an oppressor of womankind.

**Ends, at loose** (familiar). When a business is neglected, or its finances are in a precarious condition, it is said to be *at loose ends*.

**Enemy** (common), used in the quaint but not slangy phrase, "How goes the *enemy*?" *i.e.*, what is the time?

**Ensign bearer** (military), a man with a red and blotchy face arising from tipping.

**Enthuse** (American), to excite enthusiasm, to be enthusiastic. A favourite word with "gushing" clergymen. "An object large enough to *enthuse* an angel's soul." *Enthused*, excited with liquor.

**Entire figure, the** (American), to the fullest extent. A simile naturally derived from expressing sums of money by numerals or "figures." Also the "big figure," the "whole figure."

**E. P.** (clerical), a very common abbreviation, means the "Eastward Position," adopted in portions of the Communion Service.

**Epsom races** (rhyming slang), a pair of braces.

**Equal to the genuine Limburger** (American), a standard simile for anything which is asserted to attain the maximum of bad smells. The German Limburger cheese has, to those who are not accustomed to it, an intensely disagreeable odour.

**Equipped** (thieves), rich, well dressed.

**Eriffs**, young thieves (New York Slang Dictionary).

"It's the gait all them *eriffs* dances," observed the one-eyed man. "I remember once I was in cahoots with a cove like that."—*On the Trail*.

**Esclop** (back slang), police; pronounced "slops."

**Euchred** (common), played out; from a game at cards.

**Europe morning** (Anglo-Indian). When a man gets up late, that is, at nine or ten o'clock, he is said to have a *Europe morning*. The expression explains itself.

**Evaporate, to** (common), to run away, to vanish.

**Everlasting staircase, the** (thieves). The treadwheel, originally invented by Mr.

Cubitt in 1817, and first used in Brixton Prison, fell somewhat into desuetude, but has been revived in some prisons under the Government régime, as an instrument both of utility for grinding corn, raising water, &c., and of real hard labour. The labour varied most unequally, *e.g.*, from 7500 feet ascent in the day in Lewes prison to 14,200 feet in Boston. This inequality and consequent injustice has now been removed.

**Everton coffee** (rhyming slang), coffee.

**Everything is lovely, and the goose hangs high** (American), a phrase which became known during the war, and which formed the burden of a popular song. It signified that all is going well. The goose is a synonym for terror or alarm. Thus, on the stage, "to be goosed" is to be hissed, and when *the goose hangs high* it is equivalent to saying that there is no defeat to fear. The phrase originated in Philadelphia.

**Ewe** (old), a white *ewe*, a handsome woman; an old *ewe*, an old woman.

**Exam.** (schools), short for examination.

**Excruciators** (London), the new-fashioned boot or shoe painfully pointed.



Joyfully the lads bore T'Owd Mon off to Blurton's and got him a real shiny pair of pointed *excruciators* (small thirteens, T'Owd 'Un usually takes calf fourteens). *Sporting Times*.

**Execution day** (common), washing day amongst the lower classes.

**Expecting** (society), a common expression for a woman being in the family way; it is an abbreviation for expecting her confinement.

**Explaterate** (American), to enlarge upon, to hold forth, to explain and illustrate fully.

On this I will *explaterate*,  
And all my views profusely state.  
—*Joel Boodler's Campaign*.

From the obsolete English to *explate*, to unfold.

**Extrumps** (Winchester College), a corruption of extempore. To "go up to books *extrumps*" is to go up without having prepared one's lesson. "Extrumpere," a jocosely perversion of extempore, has been used by old English authors.

**FACE** (popular), credit at a public-house. From one's physiognomy being known there; or from *face*, effrontery, confidence. "To run one's *face*," to obtain credit by effrontery. "He has no *face* but his own" (Grose), he has

**Eye limpet**, another name for an artificial eye.

**Eye-openers** (American), one of the many concoctions drunk at American bars.

In the vestibule of each refreshment-room there is an American bar, where visitors may indulge in juleps, cocktails, cobblers, rattlesnakes, gum ticklers, *eye-openers*, flashes o' lightning, brandy smashes, stone fences, and a variety of similar beverages.—*E. MacDermott: The Popular Guide to the International Exhibition of 1862*.

Also a general term for any kind of intoxicating drink. (Society), is said of anything out of the way.

Of course, there were the usual *eye-openers* in the way of dress.—*Modern Society*.

**Eyes** (low), "no more *eyes* nor arseholes," said of a one-eyed man.

**Eye, to take one's** (tailors), to please one's fancy.

**Eye water** (popular), gin.

no coin (*faces* in French slang) in his pocket.

**Face entry** (theatrical), the *entrée* or freedom of access to a theatre, from the *face* being known.

**Face-making** (popular), begetting children.

**Facer** (pugilistic), a blow on the face.

While showers of *facers* told so deadly well  
That the cracked jaw-bones cracked as they fell.

—T. Moore.

Blogg, starting upright, tipped the fellow a *facer*.—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

(Society), a metaphorical knock down; severe blow.

The news of his having hit his leg yesterday has proved a *facer*.—*Sporting Times*.

(Popular), a tumbler of whisky punch.

(Irish), a dram, a full glass. An old word for a bumper of wine.

(Thieves), a man who places himself directly in the way of persons in pursuit of his accomplices. Formerly *facer* meant an impudent fellow.

**Face the music, to** (popular), a phrase no doubt of theatrical origin, and alluding to the trepidation sometimes felt upon facing the audience. The orchestra is generally placed in front of the audience, and consequently nearest the stage. *To face the music* is therefore to meet an emergency. Sometimes it means "to show one's hand," *i.e.*, to make plain one's purpose.

(American), to boldly meet a severe trial; to nerve oneself up to go through a disagreeable emergency. Originally army slang, applied to men

when drummed out to the tune of the "Rogue's March."

**Facie** (tailors), the man working in front of one. "*Facie* on the bias," the man working in front of one to the right or left. "*Facie* on the two thick," the individual working immediately behind one's face-mate.

**Facings** (tailors), "silk *facings*" are beer-droppings on the breast of a coat.

**Facings, put one through the** (popular), in military parlance the regular drill—"Face!" "Right about face!" &c. In popular slang, to give one a scolding or call him to account.

We were scarcely wed a week  
When she *put me through my facings*,  
And wolloped me—and worse;  
She said I did not want a wife,  
I ought to have had a nurse.

—F. Egerton: *If my wife would let me.*

**Facing the knocker** (tailors), begging.

**Fad** (common), hobby, whim, fancy, favourite pursuit.

It seemed a harmless bit of fun,  
Tho' smoking is a sad  
Bad habit girls might better shun  
Than take up as a *fad*.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Given in Wright's Provincial Dictionary as a provincialism, and by Hotten as a slang term, though it can hardly be considered as such. Obsolete in the sense of cherish, caress, fondle, and now a low expression for to

trifle, play the fiddle. It has been suggested by a writer in the *Cornhill Magazine* that it is derived from "fidfad," a word that has been long in use, with much the same meaning as *fad*.

In the sense of trifling, worthless, it is derived from the Anglo-Norman *fade*, meaning originally sad, faded, tainted, decayed. It seems to have been used at a very early date to signify fanciful, whimsical.

**Fad cattle** (old slang), women of easy virtue.

**Faddist** (common), enthusiast; one addicted to "fads," which see.

**Fadge** (popular), a corruption of farthing.

**Fadger** (glaziers), a glazier's frame.

**Fadmonger**, a monger of "fads," which see.

It has hardly yet found its way into the dictionary, but "fads" are many, and "faddists" and *fadmongers* abound.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Fae-gang**, a gang of gypsies.

Faa was a common name for gypsies—not assumed, but often accepted by them. "Johnnie Faa, the Gipsy Laddie," is the title of an ancient popular ballad, recounting how a handsome vagrant of that name ran off with the Countess of Cassilis, who was enamoured of him for his manly, hearty, and winning

manners. Robert Faa is the present king of the Scottish gypsies at Yetholm.

**Fag, to** (thieves), to beat. Expressive of the trouble in giving a beating.

(School), a young scholar who has to wait upon and do all sorts of little odd jobs for an elder one.

**Fagger** (thieves), a small boy put into a window to rob the house or to open it for others to rob; called also "little snakesman."

**Fagot** (popular), a bundle of bits of the "stickings" (hence probably its name), sold for food to the London poor (Hotten). But more probably from "fag-end." Also a term of contempt applied to a woman or child with reference originally to the slovenly garments, the person being compared to a bundle of sticks loosely put together. The French *fagoté* signifies dressed in ill-fitting, badly matched garments.

**Fagot briefs**, bundles of worthless papers tied up with red tape carried by unemployed barristers in the back rows of the courts to simulate briefs (Hotten).

**Fagot vote** (politicians), votes given by electors expressly qualified for party purposes (Dr. Brewer).

Evidently from the old term *fagots*, "dummy" soldiers or

sailors who were hired to appear at muster and fill up the companies or crews.

**Fagot**, to, an expression proper to robbers; that is, to bind hand and foot (Bayer's Dictionary, 1748). It is curious to note the coincidence with the French cant *fagot*, a convict; from the circumstance that convicts were all bound to one common chain when on their way to the hulks.

**Faints** (schoolboys), in vogue amongst schoolboys to express a wish temporarily to withdraw from participation in the particular sport or game being played. It is generally understood that this can only take place while in bounds or out of danger. It is somewhat similar to the now almost obsolete term "wicket" in cricket.

**Fair and square** (common), honest, honesty.

She beat him *fair and square* in a two miles and a quarter gallop.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also *fair, square, and above ground*.

I will have none of this hole and corner business. . . . I wish all the criticisms in my paper to be *fair, square, and above ground*.—*Anthony Trollope*.

**Fairlick** (Harvard University), a football term used when the ball is fairly caught or kicked beyond bounds.

"*Fairlick!*" he cried, and raised his dreadful foot,  
Armed at all points with the ancestral boot.  
—*Harvardiana*.

**Fair rations** (sport), fair play, fairness.

Their protest was ludicrous in its insignificance, *fair rations* out of the question.  
—*Toby*.

**Fair trade** (thieves), smuggling.

**Faithful, one of the** (common), a tailor giving long credit. As this trade is in London, at all events, almost entirely in the hands of the Jews, they are sarcastically said to have joined the ranks of the *faithful*; or this when they allow long credit to a customer, a practice which, it is to be feared, also often makes the old saying concerning them literally true—"his faith has made him unwhole," *i.e.*, bankrupt.

**Fake**, a very ancient cant word, possibly from *facere*, used in the honest sense of to do, to make, originally, but afterwards in the dishonest one. The word was popularised by a song introduced in Mr. Ainsworth's novel "Rookwood." It is used with various significations, and in this respect exactly corresponds to the verb *faire* of the French slang.

(Thieves), to rob.

All who in Blois entertain honest views,  
Have long been in bed, and enjoying a snooze,  
Nought is waking save mischief and *faking*,  
And a few who are sitting up brewing or baking.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

To do, to make, to cheat, swindle, beg, malinge or counterfeit illness or sores, to escape labour and gain the diet of the infirmary.

Having set his mind upon shirking all work, he announces his intention to *fake* the doctor and "work" the parson.—*Evening News*.

To continue, go on.

In box of the stone peg I was born,  
Of a hempen widow the kid forlorn ;

*Fake away!*

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

"*Fake away, there's no down,*" go on, there is no one looking. To "*fake a screeve,*" to draw up a false document, a begging letter; to "*fake one's slangs,*" to file through one's irons; to "*fake a cly,*" to pick a pocket.

(American thieves), in addition to the usual meaning, cutting out the wards of a key.

"*Faking the sweetener,*" kissing.

(Sporting), to hocus or poison. To insert ginger under a horse's tail.

(American and English), false report, deception, pretence, blind.

. . . And that naming the house in the ridiculous way it was named was merely a *fake* to draw attention to it.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

The report sent out . . . does not bear investigation. It is a *fake*, and nothing else.—*Daily Inter Ocean*.

"I heard your brother had gone to New York."

"Oh, that was a *fake*. He was badly punished at football, and is lying low to fetch up."—*The Youth's Companion*.

Also invention, contrivance.

That was one of the best *fakes* of the time, and there was lots of money in it too.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Card-sharpers), a dodge.

Now to learn some new *fakes* with the broads.—*Sporting Times*.

(Stage), *fake* is another term for "make up" of a character; to *fake*, to paint one's face.

Or ask what their age is, they'll scornfully say—

"I do not *fake* (and smiling), I'm twenty to-day."

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

In conjuring, any mechanical contrivance for the performance of a trick. So also in a show, if, for example, an apparently ordinary dinner plate had a small nick in it to help its being caught on the point of a knife after being tossed into the air, the plate would be *faked*. Again, bustling through a show of any kind under difficulties artfully concealed from the spectators is *faking* it.

"*Faking the duck,*" adulterating, dodgery.

**Fakeman Charley**, the mark of the owner of a stolen object.

**Fakement**, a word of general application among the lower orders for the doing of anything; trade, profession, contrivance, invention.

The *fakement* conn'd by knowing rooks  
Must be well known to you.

—*The Leary Man*.

(Thieves and vagrants), a false begging petition.

Lawyer Bob draws *fakements* up; he's tipped a peg for each.—*Ducange Anglicus: The Vulgar Tongue.*

Any dishonest practice, swindling dodge, forgery.

I cultivated his acquaintance . . . and put him up to the neatest little *fakement* in the world; just showed him to raise two hundred pounds . . . just by signing his father's name.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn.*

Also the depositions of a witness.

**Fakements** (theatrical), small properties or make-up, such as a hare's foot, an old white stocking-top, piece of burnt cork, &c., all you can get in a "make-up" box, a cigar-box. Certain pantomimists are accustomed to call the properties used in the harlequinade *fakements*. A good story of Macready, whose loathing for the very name of slang was notorious, is told in connection with this subject. When starring in *Hamlet* at Newcastle-on-Tyne, the manager was short-handed, and an unfortunate clown was pressed into the service for Francisco, who speaks the first line of the play. The poor pantomimist was waiting in great anxiety for the halberd or partizan he was to carry while mounting guard, and the property-man who ought to have provided it was conspicuous by his absence. The great Mac., grim and growling, and more atrabilarious than usual, opened fire with—

"Er—er—are we to stay here all day? Begin, sir, begin."

"Can't begin, guv'nor," quoth the clown.

"Er—why not, sir? er—why not?"

"'Cos I ain't got my *fakements*."

"Your what, sir? Good heavens! your what?"

"My *fakements*. Here, I say, cully" (catching sight of the property-man, who had just put in an appearance), "hand over the *fakements*."

The great Mac., thoroughly nonplussed, growled to the property-man—

"By all means, Mr. Cully, hand over the gentleman's *fakements*, and let us begin the rehearsal."

**Faker** (popular and thieves). This word is applied to a great variety of men—pedlars, workmen, thieves. From "to fake." In Dutch slang *fokker* is a thief; *ficker* in German cant.

(Circus), a *faker*, a circus rider or performer.

(Popular), a prostitute's lover, bully.

**Fakes and slumboes** (theatrical), one of the numerous synonyms used by pantomimists to describe properties.

**Fall of the leaf** (old cant), hanging. Parker says, "The new mode of hanging. The culprit is brought upon a stage, and placed upon a leaf. When the

rope is fixed about his neck the leaf falls, and the body immediately becomes pendant."

Why, I suppose you know that he was knocked down for the crap the last sessions. He went off at the *fall of the leaf* at Tuck'em Fair.—*G. Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Fall, to** (thieves), to be apprehended.

A little time after this I *fell* again at St. Mary Cray for being found at the back of a house.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**False hereafters** (American), bustles.

The scheme worked to perfection. In the large bustles which they wore, the dudes carried off their wardrobe in large *false hereafters*, and passed the lady of the house on their way out.—*New York National Police Gazette.*

**Fam, fem** (thieves), the hand.

If they do get their *fams* on me I'll be in for a stretch of air and exercise.—*On the Trail.*

The gypsies claim this as a Romany word and derive it from *fem*, five, or the five fingers, although five in Romany is *pange*.

**Fambles, fumbles** (thieves), the hands. *Vide FAM.*

**Fam grasp** (old cant), shaking hands.

**Family disturbance** (cowboys), whisky.

**Family man** (thieves), one of the fraternity of thieves. Also a receiver of stolen goods or "fence."

**Fam lay** (thieves), robbing a store by pretending to examine goods. But more specially to rob a jeweller by means of a sticky substance attached to the palm or fingers, thus abstracting the articles shown.

**Fam squeeze** (thieves), strangling.

**Fam, to** (thieves), to handle; from the gypsy *fan* or *vangri*.

**Fan** (thieves), a waistcoat.

**Fan, to** (thieves), to steal from the person. (Prov. Cumberland), to feel, to find.

On the way down the street Pete was very friendly and entertaining, and *fanned* the countryman's pocket where he had seen him put the roll, but it had been shifted.—*New York World.*

**Fancy bloke** (sporting), a sporting man; also the favoured man of a low class woman, or prostitute.

**Fancy house** (prostitutes), a house of ill-repute.

**Fancy Joseph** (common), a youth who is a general favourite and pet among prostitutes. Also "Cupid," a mere boy, who goes with fast women or girls. An M.D., a "milliner's darling."

**Fancy man** (prostitutes), the lover of a prostitute.

But my nuttiest blowen, one fine day,  
Fake away!  
To the beak did her *fancy man* betray.  
—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

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**Fancy pieces** (common), prostitutes.

**Fancy, the,** the favourite pastimes of sporting men.

That boxing and ratting, and other forms of *the fancy*, still exist as part of the amusements of the lower orders is perfectly true, but they can no longer be classed as among the amusements of those who cannot afford to pay high prices of admission to illegal entertainments.—*Sims: How the Poor Live.*

The word very soon became specialised with reference to the devotees of the prize ring.

They hurried to be present at the expected scene with the alacrity of gentlemen of the *fancy* hastening to a set to.—*Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

Other meaning explained by quotation.

His father took a great deal to *the fancy* . . . it meant dealing in birds, and dogs, and rabbits.—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins.*

**Fancy work, to take in** (common). In general use among milliners, dressmakers, and shop girls, who resort to secret prostitution to eke out their scanty earnings at legitimate work. If a girl known to be receiving small wages dresses well and seems to have plenty of money, it is said of her, "Oh, she takes in fancy work."

**Fanning** (thieves), a beating, also stealing. Cross-*fanning*, stealing from the person with the arms crossed, the right hand operating under the left armpit.

**Fanny** (common), the fem. pud.

**Fanny Adams** (naval), tinned mutton.

**Fanny Blair** (rhyming slang), the hair.

**Fanqui** (Anglo-Chinese), a European; literally foreign devil.

**Fanteeg** (popular), to be "in a regular *fanteeg*," to be perplexed, embarrassed, to be at one's wits' end (provincial English).

**Far back** (tailors), an indifferent workman or an ignorant person.

**Farm** (common), a place where illegitimate children are boarded, or rather starved, for a given sum.

There can be no question that he has a better chance . . . though his treacherous "adopter" deserts him on a door-step, than if he were so kindly cruel as to tolerate his existence at the *farm*.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

(Prison), the prison hospital.

He . . . first entered into a critical description of the dietary system of the *farm* infirmary.—*Evening News.*

To "fetch the *farm*," to obtain infirmary treatment and diet.

. . . The dodges which would take place to "fetch the *farm*."—*Evening News.*

**Farmer** (common), one who keeps a "farm," which see.

These are not the *farmers* who append to their advertisements the notification that children of ill-health are not objected to.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*



(Thieves), an alderman. In Kent a hare.

**Fashno, fashni, fashioni** (gypsy), false, counterfeit; *fashni au-gustrins*, false (gold) rings; also *fashino faunny*. (*Faunny* is canting.)

**Fast** (common), in want of money. Same as "hard up."

**Fat** (thieves), money. French slang, *graisse*. *Fat* cull, a rich man. (Printers), paying work in contradistinction to bad or "lean" work. This paying work consists of blank spaces in a page which are paid for at the same rate as pages fully printed. Short lines of verse set up in type are also considered as being *fat*. (Popular), *vide* CUT IT FAT, CUT UP FAT. (Theatrical), a part with good lines and telling situation that gives the player an opportunity of appearing to advantage is said to be *fat*, or to have *fat*. When an actor has a part of this kind, his colleagues are wont to say "he's got all the *fat*." (Princeton College), remittances of money to students. (English and American), *fat* thing, something which is very profitable or "fat."

"Those concerns will some time be unable to pay their interest," say these wise men, "and then we will step in and get a *fat* thing."—*American Newspaper*.

**Fat flab** (Winchester), part of a breast of mutton.

**Father** (thieves), a receiver of stolen property. (University), *father* of a college, the prælector who presents his men for degrees and represents the parents. (Printers), a person elected to preside as chairman to the "chapel" (which see) when held. He acts as a medium between master and men. (Naval), the dockyard name given to the builder of a ship of the navy.

**Fatness** (common), wealth.

That a man who has enjoyed so many years of *fatness* should die in absolute penury.—*Sporting Times*.

**Fawney** (thieves), a ring; also "fauney."

We believe that the *fauncys* on the hands were not molested, probably being left to be requisitioned on some future occasion.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Hotten gives the derivation, Irish, *faince*, a ring.

**Fawney bouncing** (thieves), selling rings for a pretended wager.

**Fawney dropper** (thieves), one who practises the ring-dropping trick. *Vide* FAWNEY RIG.

Shallow fellows gad the hoof and fence their cant of togs, whilst *fawney droppers* gammon the flats and take the yokels in.—*Ducange Anglicus: The Vulgar Tongue*.

**Fawney rig** (thieves), the ring-dropping trick. A rogue drops a valueless ring or other article of jewellery and when he sees a person picking it up, claims half; or, he pretends to have

- just found the article and offers it for sale to a passer-by at a low price. A few years ago the article offered was generally a meerschaum pipe.
- Fawnied** (thieves), with rings, wearing rings.
- Feathers** (popular), money. Probably from the phrase to "feather one's nest."
- Feed** (common), a meal.
- When he did give a *feed* he always limited the invitation to four.—*Bird o' Freedom*.
- (Football), to *feed*, to support.
- Feeder** (thieves), a silver spoon. (Nautical), a small river falling into a large one, or into a dock or float. *Feeders* in pilots' language are the passing spurts of rain which "fced" a gale (Smyth).
- Feeding gale** (nautical), a storm which is on the increase, sometimes getting worse at each succeeding squall. When a gale freshens after rain it is said to have fed the gale (Smyth).
- Feele** (popular and thieves), a girl; from the French *fille*, or the Italian *figlia*.
- Feet** (old), "to make *feet* for children's stockings," to beget children.
- Feet casements**, a humorous expression for shoes or boots.
- But he managed without it; only the new *feet casements* were not seasoned.—*Toby*.
- Fegaries** (American), old English for "vagaries," fads, caprices, whimsies, odd fancies, whims. A common word in New England.
- Fell and didn't** (tailors) is said of a man who walks lame.
- Felling a bit on** (tailors), Northern *fell*, sharp, crafty, doing something underhand.
- Fellow-commoner** (Cambridge University), an empty bottle (Hotten).
- Fellow-comp.** (printers), a term of familiarity used by compositors amongst themselves, especially for those employed in the same office.
- Fellow-P.** (printers), a designation applied to each other by apprentices that have been bound to the same master or firm, whether in the past or in the present. In some large offices it is customary to have an annual gathering of these *fellow-P.'s*, and such reunions are very sociable, and the traditions of a firm are thus handed down.
- Fen** (thieves), a prostitute. A mispronunciation of *femme*, or from the Anglo-Saxon *fen* or *fenn*, mud, dirt. Compare with the French *gadoue*, meaning both Paris mud and prostitute.

(American and provincial English), a boy's exclamation to express warning or prohibition. "Fen puds," or "fen ball," keep away the ball; from English "fence off," or very old English, *fend*, ward off. English boys use the word "feign," I decline; also "feign it," leave off.

**Fence** (thieves), a receiver of stolen property; also his house or shop. Probably from "fence in."

About two moon after this same *fence* fell for buying two finns.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

G. Parker, in his "Variegated Characters," says: "In Field Lane, where the handkerchiefs are carried, there are a number of shops called 'fence shops,' where you buy any number."

**Fence-riding** (American), said of those who wait to see which side it will pay them to indorse, and then when victory or success seems certain, to throw in their lot with the winning side.

This question is one of clear right and wrong, and there can be no *fence-riding* when the rights of four millions of men are at stake.—*Congressional Globe.*

**Fence, sitting on the.** Although without doubt American in its later usage, the idea conveyed is "as old as the hills." Trench, in his "English Past and Present," page 300, points out how singular it is that not only is the same idea embodied in the phrase as in the Latin *prævari-*

*cato*, viz., "straddling with distorted legs," but that it should also carry with it almost exactly the same figurative meaning as the classical word. "To sit on the fence," in political cant parlance, is to wait and see how things go before committing oneself to definite action or partisanship.

A kind o' hangin' round an' *settin' on the fence,*

Till Providence pinte how to jump an' save the most expense.

—*Biglow Papers.*

Sometimes the phrase is varied with "sitting on both sides of the hedge." The expression is of Western growth, being traceable to the care with which the squatter fences in his lot; it also being a point of vantage at the top of which, at the close of the day's work, he can smoke his pipe and survey his possessions while thinking out his plans for the future.

**Fence, to** (thieves), to sell stolen property, or take it to a receiver's. The term is old.

It's not the first time that I have *fenced* a rum screen with him.—G. Parker: *Variegated Characters.*

Also to spend money.

**Fencing crib** (thieves), a place where stolen property can be disposed of.

**Fencing cully** (old), a receiver of stolen goods.

**Ferg, to** (Vermont University), old English *ferke*, to hasten, pro-

ceed, go. As going out of a rage. German *vergehen*. When a man is cooling down from intense excitement or passion he is said to *ferg*.

**Ferguson** (common), generally heard expressed as, "It's all very well, Mr. *Ferguson*; you're very good-looking, but you can't come in." Said to be addressed to men who are not known attempting to obtain admission to "close" gambling-houses, or other haunts of dissipation, where close watch is kept for fear of the police. There is a song which has this sentence for a refrain. It was very common, and used with many applications from 1845 to 1850.

**Ferret** (thieves), a young thief who gets into a coal barge and throws coal over the side to his confederates. (Old), a tradesman who, having supplied goods at ruinous prices on credit, continually duns his customers for payment.

**Ferricadouzer**, a knock-down blow, a good thrashing (Hotten). Evidently derived from the Italian *fare cadere*, to cause to fall, and *dosso*, back.

**Fess**, to (American university), to fail in reciting the lesson, together with a mute appeal for no further questions to be put. The military cadets at West Point also use the word in a similar way. Old English *fese*, to frighten, make afraid.

And when you and I and Benny and  
General Jackson too,  
Are brought before a final board our course  
of life to view,  
May we never *fess* on any point, but then  
be told to go  
To join the army of the blest, with Benny  
Havens, O!

—*Song: Benny Havens, O!*

**Fetch** (common), a success; to *fetch*, to please, to arouse lively interest, excite admiration.

"You come up to the window and touch your hat, and say, 'Luggage all in, my Lord;' that will *fetch* 'em."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Theatrical), is said of a play or entertainment which finds great favour with the public and attracts large audiences.

The masher's ballet is one of the features of the show and ought to *fetch* north London.—*Evening News*.

(Thieves), to *fetch* the farm.  
*Vide* FARM.

**Fetch a lagging**, to (thieves), to be serving out one's sentence at a convict establishment.

Millbank for thick shins and graft at the pump,

Broadmoor for all lags as go off their chump,

Brixton for good toke and cocoa with fat,

Dartmoor for bad grub but plenty of chat,

Portsmouth a blooming bad place for hard work,

Chatham on Sunday gives four ounces of pork,

Portland is the worst of the lot for to joke in,

For *fetching a lagging* there is no place like Woking.

—*A Thief's Production, quoted by*

*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Fetch up**, to (popular), to startle.  
(American), to come to light,

and said, for example, of the bodies of drowned people.

"Bodies that come over the falls, they mostly *fetch up* here."

"Things always *fetch up* sooner or later, but it's sometimes a week before we get 'em."—*Between Two Oceans*.

Also to recruit one's strength, to recover from some illness.

**Fettle** (popular), "in good *fettle*," in good order, well equipped. Also in a good state of mind, jolly, or very drunk.

**Fever-time** (Winchester College), the time when superannuated college prefects go for a fortnight into a sick-room in order to "mug," that is, to give themselves up to hard study.

**Fez** (Harrow), the tasselled cap worn by members of a football eleven. A member of that society.

**Fibbery** (thieves), lying. From "fib."

And if you come to *fibbery*  
You must mug one or two.  
—*The Leary Man*.

**Fibbing gloak** (old cant), a pugilist.

**Fibbing match** (thieves), a prize fight.

**Fibbings** (boxing), rapid, repeated blows, delivered at a short distance.

I say, could I borrow these gentlemen's muses,  
More skilled than my neck, or in *fibbings*  
and bruises.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Fib, to** (old cant), to strike, beat. (Boxing), to deliver rapid blows at a short distance.

Each cull completely in the dark  
Resolved his *fibbing* not to mind.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

. . . His whole person put in chancery, stung, bruised, *fibbed*, propped, fiddled, slogged, and otherwise ill-treated.—*Cuthbert Bede: Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*.

To tell lies.

**Fickle Johnny Crow** (West Indian), one who does not know his own mind.

**Fiddle** (Stock Exchange) a sixteenth part of £1.

Done at a *fiddle*; "Sugar" getting in!  
—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(Thieves), a whip. (Popular), a sharper; the Scotch *fiddle*, the itch; a sixpence, possibly from the expression "fiddler's money," sixpences. (Tailors), second *fiddle*, an unpleasant task.

**Fiddle-face** (popular), a wizened countenance.

**Fiddler** (pugilistic), a pugilist who depends more on his activity than upon his strength or stay. (Popular), a sharper, a cheat, a careless, dilatory person. Also a sixpence or farthing.

**Fiddler's green** (nautical), a sort of sensual Elysium, where sailors are represented as enjoying for a "full due" those amenities for which Wapping, Castle

Rag, and the back of Portsmouth Point were once noted (Smyth).

**Fiddle, to** (thieves), to gamble and consequently to cheat. (Popular), to get one's living by doing small jobs in the streets. To play upon, to take in.

She's diddled me, she's *fiddled* me, nigh  
Sent me off my chump.

—*Robson: Ballad.*

(Common), to take liberties with a woman. (American), to intrigue, or intrigue craftily.

Bob is the man who *fiddled* h'imself into Congress.—*St. Louis Chronicle.*

(Pugilistic), to strike.

**Fidlam bens** (thieves), thieves who have no speciality, who will steal anything.

**Fidlam coves** (thieves). *Vide*  
FIDLAM BENS.

**Field** (sport), the runners in any race. (Turf), the horses in a race as opposed to the favourite. To "chop the *field*" is said of a horse that outstrips the rest, literally "whips" them. *Vide* TO CHOP.

Bismarck, whose terrific speed enabled him to chop his *field*.—*Sporting Times.*

To "lay against the *field*," is to back one horse against all comers. (Hunting), the riders.

The cry of the "*field* a pony," means that the layer is willing to bet even money on the general mass of runners against any one competitor. The backers

would, of course, select the favourite on these terms.

**Fielder** (turf), one who backs the "field" (which see) against one horse. Also a "layer" or "book-maker."

Yet the confiding *fielder* who took this security stood him in Paris for about £100. —*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Field-lane duck** (popular), a baked sheep's head. *Field-lane* was a low London thoroughfare leading from the foot of Holborn Hill to the purlieus of Clerkenwell (Hotten).

**Field, to** (Winchester College), to jump into the water before another goes in, so as to assist him. (Turf), to back the "field," which see.

It cannot be denied that there has lately been an uncommon eagerness to *field*.—*Sporting Times.*

**Field, to lead the** (city), to set an example which is followed by all others. Evidently an adaptation of the sporting phrase.

**Fiery lot** (popular), a word which does not mean in ordinary slang hot-tempered so much as "fast" and rollicking.

Berty isn't bad-tempered, though he's such a *fiery lot*;  
And he's cool, though when he's spurring, he's a boy that goes it hot.

—*Broadside: My Berty.*

**Fi-fa** (legal), a writ of *fieri-facias*, i.e., a writ lying for him

who has recovered an action of debt or damages, to levy the debt or damages against whom the recovery was had.

**Fifer** (tailors), a waistcoat-maker.

**Fig** (common), "to be in full *fig*," in full dress; *figuretto*, figured silk, the finest and most expensive dress. Old English from the Italian (Halliwell). Dr. Brewer says this term is a corruption of the Italian *in floechi*, in gala costume. Hotten thinks it may be an allusion to the fig-leaf of our first parents. Another but more probable etymology is that it is taken from the word full *fig*. (figure) in fashion books.

(Horsedealers), to *fig* a horse is to apply ginger to a horse to make him appear lively, to make him carry a fine tail.

**Figged out** (popular), dressed in best clothes, in full costume.

**Figger** (thieves), *vide* FAGGER.

**Fighting tight** (American), drunk and quarrelsome. Extremely drunk.

In those unburdened days a quarter of a dollar would buy enough sour mash to make an ordinary man *fighting tight*, but now it would take the larger part of a dollar.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Fight one's weight in wild cats**, to (American), to be full of courage and "go."

John Halkett, as I learned afterwards, could *fight his weight in wild cats*.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Fig leaf** (common), a small ornamented apron worn by ladies. (Fencing), the apron or padding protecting the lower part of the abdomen and the right thigh.

**Figure dancer** (thieves), one who alters the numbers or figures on bank-notes.

**Figure-head** (nautical), the face.

**Figure man** (studios), the principal figure in a picture. In French artists' language, *le bonhomme*.

**Filau** (Anglo-Indian), explained by quotation.

He is ambitious of being Vice-President of the Municipal Committee, or a *Filau* (*Anglicè* Fellow) of the University, and it is requisite that his qualifications should be made more widely known.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Filbert** (popular), cracked in the *filbert*, slightly insane.

**File** (thieves), a pickpocket; *file* is a very old English term of contempt for a worthless, dishonest person. Probably connected with "vile" or "defile."

The greatest character among them was that of a pickpocket, or, in their language, a *file*.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

"The *file* is generally accompanied by the 'Adam tiler'

and the 'bulker' or 'staller.' It is their business to jostle or 'ramp' the victim, while the *file* picks his pocket and then hands the plunder to the Adam, who makes off with it" (New York Slang Dictionary).

(Common), a cunning or artful man. Also silent *file*; *lime sourde*, or dumb *file*, in French slang.

He blewed a monkey, that silent *file*,  
And tipped me the wink with a slippery smile.

—*Earl of Winchelsea: Lay of the Cooperer.*

**Filing-lay** (thieves), picking pockets.

I am committed for the *filing-lay*, man,  
and we shall be both nubbed together.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild.*

**Fillibrush**, to flatter, praise ironically (Hotten).

**Filly** (London), a young girl.

At last I've got a little *filly* of my own.  
—*Sporting Times.*

(Thieves), a daughter. Possibly from the Italian *figlia*, or the French *fillle*. Also used generally for a young woman; in this sense probably derived from the name for a young mare.

**Fimble-famble** (common), a lame excuse; from to fumble, to fumble, and to famble, to stutter; both provincialisms.

**Fin** (common), the hand, originally a sea-term.

You'll find if you put half-a-crown in his  
*fen*,  
It's so much the better for you.  
—*Song.*

French sailors use the corresponding term *nageoire*.

**Find** (Harrow School), explained by quotation.

In a large house there are usually four sixth-form *finds* (a Harrow term signifying a mess of three or four upper boys who take tea and breakfast in one of their own rooms).—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

To *find*, to mess together.

**Finder** (thieves), a thief; one who steals meat at a market. (University), term used at Caius for a waiter in hall.

**Find-fag** (public schools), a kind of *fag* thus described.

*Find-fags* have to procure from the shops in the town anything that may be required besides the regulation bread and butter for tea.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Fine** (shopkeepers), cutting it *fine*, cheating in various ways, adulterating articles of food.

**Fine-drawing** (tailors), accomplishing an object without being seen.

**Fingerpost** (old), a clergyman.

**Fingersmith** (thieves), explained by quotation.

Some traces of humour are to be found in certain euphemisms, such as the delicate expression *fingersmith* as descriptive of a



trade which a blunt world might call that of a pickpocket.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

Also a midwife.

**Finjy** (Winchester College), said when an unpleasant or unacceptable task had to be done by a number of boys. He who said the word last of all had to do it.

**Finn, finnap, finnaf** (thieves), a five-pound note. German-Jewish, *finnaf*. It is a pronunciation of *fünf* peculiar to Yiddish.

When we got into the rattler they showed me the pass; yes, there it was, fifty quids in double *finns* (ten-pound notes).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Finnicky** (common), from “finnickin” (“fine” with a diminutive termination), idly busy.

We don't want to get into international trouble, but we must say that Mexico is getting a trifle *finnicky*.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Finnup ready** (sporting), a five-pound note.

My reason for placing the old 'un there is on account of his having touched a *finnup ready*—this is a good old sporting term—and I expect the extra five pounds will just stop him getting home, or rather getting out.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Fipenny** (thieves), a clasp knife. The term is in common use in Australia, where it was introduced by the convicts.

**Fire** (thieves), danger.

**Fire and light** (nautical), nickname of the master-at-arms (Smyth).

**Fire a slug, to** (old), to drink a dram of spirits.

**Fired** (American), arrested, taken up, turned out.

Tell him he mustn't fall asleep in a public place or he'll get *fired*, and ask him if you can't go to get him a cab.—*Confidence Crooks: Philadelphia Press.*

Also rejected, often applied by artists to rejected pictures.

**Fire-eater** (printers), a term for quick compositors. Savage, in his “Dictionary of the Art of Printing,” 1841, gives this term.

(Tailors), one who does a great amount of work in a very short time.

**Fire-escape** (popular), a clergyman.

**Fire priggers** (thieves), thieves who take advantage of a fire, or in the crowd, to plunder or pick pockets.

**Fire spaniels** (military), soldiers who sit round and close up to the barrack-room fire. They are supposed to be guarding it like faithful dogs or spaniels.

**Fire-works** (tailors), a great disturbance, a state of intense excitement.

**Firky toodle** (popular), to cuddle or fondle; to *firk*, on the con-

trary, means to beat, to chastise. In the same way the French *caresser*, literally to caress, means also to beat.

**Firmed** (theatrical), well *firmed*, perfect in the "business" and words.

**First-chop** (American), excellent, first-rate. In "Sam Slick in England," it is thus explained: "This phrase is used all through the United States as a synonym for first-rate." The word *chop* is Chinese for quality. He looks like a *first-chop* article. *Vide* CHOP.

"Wall," ses Linkin, "I think that is a *first-chop* idea."—*Major Jack Downing*.

**First flight** (sporting), the first persons at the finish in any kind of race, in a fox-hunt.

**First nighters** (journalistic), musical or dramatic critics who naturally attend on first nights.

The production of Anton Rubenstein's "Demon" in the charming Russian dialect at the oddly-named Jodrell Theatre, has, so far, been the only opportunity for *first nighters* to distinguish themselves.—*Sporting Times*.

More generally people who make a point of attending the first performance of plays.

**First night wreckers** (theatrical), men who attempt to hiss down a play on first performance.

**First snap** (American), at the beginning.

Van Cott, you could see at *first snap*, was grit all through, and as full of fight as a game rooster.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Fish** (common), a person; used in such phrases as an odd, a queer, prime, shy, loose *fish*, &c. (Nautical), a scaly *fish*, a rough, blunt-spoken seaman. (Tailors), pieces cut out of garments to make them fit close.

**Fish market** (gaming), the lowest hole at bagatelle. Also known as "Simon."

**Fish, to** (common), to endeavour to obtain favour, to ingratiate oneself, to curry favour. He who does it is a "fisher," a very opprobrious epithet.

**Fishy** (common), doubtful, suspicious, implying dishonesty, as in a *fishy* affair or "concern."

**Fist** (tailors), a "good *fist*," a clever workman. (Printers), an index hand.

**Fist up, put your** (tailors), acknowledge your error.

**Fitter** (thieves), a locksmith who makes burglars' keys.

**Fitting up a show** (studios), arranging an art exhibition.

**Fit up** (theatrical), a concern, small company.

**Five fingers** (cards), the five of trumps at the game of "don."

**Fiver** (common), a five-pound note.

Many a harmless *fiver* has passed from the unprofessional into the professional pocket.—*Standard*.

**Fives** (popular), the fist. Termed also "bunch of *fives*."

Whereby altho' as yet they have not took to use their *fives*,

Or, according as the fashion is, to sticking with their knives,

I'm bound there'll be some milling yet.

—*Hood: Row at the Oxford Arms*.

(Low), a fight.

You are wanted at the corner for a *fives* . . . they struck Cole . . . and he was kicked.—*Evening News*.

**Fixings** (popular), house furniture. (American, English, and Australian), paraphernalia, kit, the adjuncts to any dish. (Bushmen), strong liquor.

**Fixin to eat** (American), a Virginia negro expression. Getting ready for meals.

**Fix the ballot-box, to** (American), to tamper with the returns of an election.

Before they got back I had the box *fixed*, and my economical friend's name was not on a single ballot. He made an awful howl, and swore that he had voted at least seventeen times himself.—*San Francisco Post*.

**Fix, to** (old cant), to put people in the hands of justice, to apprehend.

I daresay if any of us was to come in by ourselves and should happen to take a snooze you'd snitch upon us and soon have the traps *fix* us.—*G. Parker: Variegated Characters*.

(American), applied loosely and slangily to a great number of words indicating different kinds of manual action, such as to repair, arrange, put in order, execute in a satisfactory manner, to cook, write, or do anything whatever.

**Fix up, to** (American and Australian), to settle, arrange.

Later in the evening Cogan told witness that there was no need of his going, as the matter had been *fixed up*.—*Daily Inter Ocean*.

**Fiz** (common), champagne.

Will the call for *fiz* be less now the fiscal duty is greater.—*Sporting Times*.

(Popular), lemonade, ginger beer.

After winning a considerable sum of money at the sports, he could only treat one of his comrades to a *fiz* and a bun.—*Toby*.

**Fizzer** (theatrical), a first-rate part; "a regular *fizzer*" is a part full of life and effervescence.

**Fizzing** (common), first-rate, alluding to the effervescence of champagne.

**Fizzle** (American), failure. From the old English *fizzle*, a flash, a hissing noise, as of anything which has expired in a flash.

Plutarch says that Demosthenes made a gloomy *fizzle* of his first speech.—*American Humourist*.

(Yale University), an imperfectly said lesson. To "flunk"

is to utterly fail, but a man *fizzles* when he manages to get through somehow.

*Fizzle*, to rise with modest reluctance, to hesitate often, to decline finally. Generally to misunderstand the question (Yale Literary Magazine).

*Fizzling* has also been defined as a somewhat free translation of an intricate sentence, or proving a proposition from a wrong figure.

**Flabberdegaz** (theatrical), any words not in the part said by an actor whose memory fails him. Also imperfect delivery or acting.

**Flabbergast, to** (common), to astound, confound. From *gast*, old English, to frighten, and *flab*, to scare.

The magistrate before whom the case was brought seems to have been completely *flabbergasted* and paralysed with astonishment.—*Evening News*.

**Flag** (popular), an apron.

He stood flabbergasted, but I wasn't goin' to put the game away, so I says, "Ginger, 'e can 'ave the jacket and the *flag*, and the cards, and bust hisself shouting, he can, and jolly good luck to him."  
—*Sporting Times*.

Persons who wear their aprons when not at work are termed "*flag*-flashers."

**Flag-about**, a low strumpet (New York Slang Dictionary). (Provincial), "flack" or "flacket," to flap about.

**Flag flying** (tailors) is used in reference to a bill posted up when hands are required.

**Flagge** (old cant), a groat, or fourpence.

"Why, hast thou any lowre in thy bonge to bouse?" "But a *flagge*, a wyn, and a make."—*Harman: Caveat*.

**Flag of defiance is out**, the (nautical), a term in use amongst sailors to imply that a man is drunk, the allusion being to his red, bloated face, and the pugnacity due to being well primed with drink.

**Flags** (popular), clothes drying in the open air and flying in the wind.

**Flag up** (popular). "The *flag's up*" refers to menses, varied to "I've got my grandmother," "my friends."

**Flag-wagging** (military), flag-signalling, or signal drill.

**Flam** (common), obsolete English, but now used in a slangy sense; a lie, humbug, flattering lie.

. . . When with some smooth *flam*  
He gravely on the public strives to  
sham.

—*Earl of Rochester: Works*.

I slowly melt—this isn't *flam*,  
On torrid days like these.

—*Funny Folks*.

(American University), to *flam*, to be partial to the society of ladies.

**Flannels** (Harrow), to get one's *flannels* is to obtain promotion

to the school, cricket, or football eleven. (Rugby), at Rugby when the school played football in white ducks, the probation "caps" were allowed to wear *flannels*. At present, though the whole school wear *flannels*, the name retains its old signification (Our Public Schools). The term has now become general.

**Flap** (thieves), sheet lead for roofs.

**Flapdoodle** (American), nonsense, an English west country expression meaning nourishment for fools, as in quotation.

I shall talk to our regimental doctors about it, and get put through a course of fools' diet. . . . *Flapdoodle* they call it, what fools are fed on.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

Also "flap sauce."

**Flapdoodlers** (journalistic), charlatan namby-pamby political speakers.

**Flapmen** (prison), the first and second class of men in convict prisons, who are allowed for good behaviour a pint of tea at night instead of gruel.

**Flapper** (popular), hand; *flapper-shaking*, hand-shaking.

Wondering whether . . . and if the joining palms in a circus was the customary *flapper-shaking* before "toeing the scratch" for business.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Flap the dimmock, to** (popular), to pay. Termed also "to touch

the cole, stump the pewter, tip the brads, down with the dust, show the needful, sport the rhino, fork, fork out, shell out," &c.

**Flap, to** (thieves), to rob, to swindle; "to *flap* a jay," to swindle a greenhorn. From *flap*, to turn over, *i.e.*, manage adroitly.

**Flare** (nautical), said of a stylish craft.

I've heard her stern-post shows a "rake," and that she's a decided *flare*, Which may be both advantages, but I'm no salt and never were.

—*Judy.*

**Flare up** (common), a jollification, an orgie.

**Flash**, a recognised word for slang, cant, thieves' lingo. Also old for showy but unsubstantial and vulgar, gaudy but tasteless. The term explains itself as applying to anything that glitters, that "flashes." Also spurious, as a *flash* note, a forged bank-note. Thieves have appropriated it and applied it to themselves or their avocations, in a sense of commendation, with various significations, such as good, knowing, dashing, *flash* toggery, elegant dress.

Soon then I mounted in Swell Street High,  
And sported my *flashiest* toggery.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

*Flash* man. *Vide* FLASH-MAN. A *flash* mollisher, a thief's

favourite mistress. "To patter *flash*," to talk in thieves' lingo.

I'm tired of pattering *flash* and lushing Jackey.—*On the Trail*.

(Common), a *flash* girl, a woman about town, a showy prostitute.

In Australia *flash* is used with the sense of conceited, vain-glorious, dandified, foolhardy, swaggering. Australians would call a man *flash* who began slog-ging at good bowling directly he went in to bat, or took up a poisonous snake by the tail to knock its head against the wall, &c.

**Flash cove** (popular and thieves), a thief, sharper.

**Flash drum** (thieves), a thieves' tavern; also a brothel.

**Flashery** (thieves), elegance, boasting talk, great showing off.

**Flash gentry** (thieves), the higher class of thieves.

Oh, if my hands adhere to cash,  
My gloves at least are clean,  
And rarely have the *gentry flash*  
In sprucer clothes been seen.  
—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

**Flash house, ken, panny**, (thieves), a place frequented by thieves; thieves' boarding-house. Also a brothel.

**Flash jig** (costers), a favourite dance at a twopenny hop.

**Flashly** (thieves), elegantly.

Your fogle you must *flashly* tie.—*The Leary Man*.

**Flashman** (thieves), a thief. Also a prostitute's bully, thus described by G. Parker in his "Variegated Characters:"—  
"A *flashman* is a fellow that lives upon the hackneyed prostitution of an unfortunate woman of the town; few of them but what keeps a *flashman*, and some of these despicable fellows, when their woman has picked up a country gentleman, or a drunken person, will bounce into the room and pretend they have surprised you with their wife, and will beat you, or threaten to bring an action against you. Thus intimidated they extort your purse from you, or rob you of your watch."

**Flash of lightning** (thieves), a glass of gin.

"Will you have a *flash of lightning*?"  
"I am just going to have some slim."—  
*Parker: Variegated Characters*.

**Flash, to** (popular and thieves), to show; "*flash* your dibs," show your money.

Cocum gonnofs *flash* by night the cooters in the boozing kens.—*Ducange Anglicus: The Vulgar Tongue*.

"To *flash* one's ivories," to laugh. (Thieves), "to *flash* the hash," to vomit. (Common), "to *flash* the dicky," to show the shirt front.

**Flashy blade** (old cant), a fellow who dresses smart (G. Parker).

**Flat** (general), an inexperienced, easily imposed on person.

What a *flat*,  
To seek such an asylum as that.  
—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

(Sharppers), *flat-catching*, swindling simple-minded people or countrymen, generally by means of the confidence trick, or some such primitive "dodge."

. . . To mark the many kinds of bait that are used in *flat-catching*, as the turf slang has it.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

(Prostitutes), picking up a *flat*, finding a client.

. . . On the chance that she will in the course of the evening pick up a *flat*.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Flat-catcher** (prison), one who swindles foolish or confiding persons by selling painted sparrows, pretending to have picked up a valuable ring, the confidence trick, &c.

**Flatch** (back slang), half, or half-penny. (Coiners), a bad half-crown.

**Flatch-enore** (costermongers' back slang), half-a-crown.

"Why, I've cleared a *flatch-enore* a'ready, but kool esilop (look at the police), nammus (be off)."

**Flat-feet** (popular), a foot-soldier; applied generally to the Foot-guards.

**Flat-fish** (popular), a dull, stupid fellow.

**Flat-footed** (American). There is a very interesting and accurate

description of *flat-footed*, by R. A. Proctor, in his "Americanisms," published in *Knowledge*, June 1, 1887.

"The significance of this word in America is very different from that of the French word *piéd-plat*, identical though the words may be in their primary meaning. A French *piéd-plat* is a contemptible fellow; but an American *flat-foot* is a man who stands firmly for his party. . . . When in America General Grant said he had 'put his foot down,' and meant to advance in that line if it took him all the summer, he conveyed . . . the American meaning of the expression *flat-footed*."

It may be observed that *flat*, in the senses of downright, resolute, firm, plain, direct, straightforward, or simple, is Dutch, and that *platt Deutsch* means "plain Dutch" (Sewell). *Plat afslaan*, or *plat afzeggen*, is to give a flat refusal, or to refuse "right up and down." But the connection between setting the foot down firmly or flat, and a determinate resolution, may probably be found in most languages.

**Flat-head** (American) a green-horn.

**Flat-move** (thieves), the action of a fool, dupe. Any attempt that miscarries, or any act of folly or mismanagement.

**Flats and chits** (thieves), bugs and fleas (Baumann).

**Flats, mahogany** (tailors), bugs; playing cards.

**Flats-yad** (tailors), back slang used by stock cutters, a day's enjoyment or jollification.

- Flat taste** (tailors), very indifferent judgment.
- Flatten out, to** (American), "I flattened him out," *i.e.*, I had the best of him, of the argument.  
(Tailors), *flattened out*, without resources of any kind, beaten.
- Flatter trap** (thieves), the mouth; called by French rogues *la menteuse*.
- Flatty** (popular), a variant of "flat," a greenhorn, a fool.
- Flatty-ken** (thieves), a public-house the landlord of which is ignorant of the practices of the thieves and tramps who frequent it (Hotten).
- Flax, to** (American), to beat, punish, to "give it" to any one severely in any way. "Flax it into him," let him have it hot. "Flacks," blows or strokes (East).
- Flay-bottomist** (common), a schoolmaster, so called from his occasional office of bircher to unruly or disobedient pupils.
- Flea-bag** (prize-fighters), a bed. In French slang, *pucier*, *i.e.*, a receptacle for fleas.
- Flemish account** (nautical), a complicated and unsatisfactory account, one in which there is a deficit.
- Flesh and blood**, brandy and port in equal quantities (Hotten).
- Flesh-bag** (common), a shirt.
- Fleshy** (Winchester), a thick cut out of the middle of a shoulder of mutton.
- Fletches** (prison), spurious coins.
- Flicker** (thieves), a glass; to *flicker*, to drink; from *flacket*, a flask, a very old word.
- Flick, to** (thieves), to beat, to cut; "*flick* the panam," cut the bread. (Popular), old *flick*, old fellow.
- Flies** (trading), perhaps the latest slang word introduced to signify a customer.  
(Popular), trickery, nonsense; no *flies*, without humbug, seriously. "In this sense," says Hotten, "*flies* is a softening of "lies."  
That's poz, dear old pal, and no *flies*.  
—*Punch*.
- (Printers), an ancient name for the printers' devils, from an old cant term for spirits attendant on magicians, more particularly applied to the boys who lifted the newspapers from the press.  
These boys do in a printing-house commonly black and bedaub themselves, whence the workmen do jocosely call them devils, and sometimes spirits, and sometimes *flies*.—*Academy of Armory*, R. Holme, 1638; and *Gentleman's Magazine*, October 1732.
- Flimming, flim-flamming** (American thieves' flash or slang), in England, "ringing the



changes." It is supposed to be partly derived from "flimsy," a bank-bill, and "flam," to cheat. But "flim-flam," for a shiny, deceptive cheat or trifle, is an old expression.

**Flimp, to** (thieves), to hustle and rob. Also refers to highway robbery, "to put on the *flimp*."

*Flimping* is a kind of theft which I have never practised, and consequently of which I know nothing.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe*.

Also to steal by wrenching off.

He told me as Bill had *flimped* a yack, and pinched a swell of a fawney.—*Ducauge Anglicus: The Vulgar Tongue*.

**Flimsy** (journalistic), paragraphs, items of news, comments; from the name of their prepared copying-paper, used by newspaper reporters for producing several copies at once.

I wonder who supplies the *flimsy* about naval matters to the *Times* and other dailies. Occasionally the mistakes are grotesque in the extreme.—*Sunday Times*.

(Thieves), bank notes.

In English Exchequer bills full half a million,

Not kites manufactured to cheat and inveigle,

But the right sort of *flimsy*, all signed by Montague.

—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

The term is now in common use.

"Well, I shall have a fiver on White Wings, and chance it," and the Correspondent put down his *flimsy*, and everybody jeered.—*Sporting Times*.

(Printers), an expression used for telegraph forms, or anything written on thin paper.

**Fling** (common), properly a kind of dance. "To have his *fling*," to lead a merry life.

In London he has settled down;  
He means to have his *fling* in town,  
A little king without a crown.

Who finds the money?

—*Dagonet: The Great Mystery*.

In the above the reference is to General Boulanger.

**Flint** (workmen), an operative who works for a "society" master, *i.e.*, for full wages. In the early part or middle (1836-7, C.W.S.) of the present century, a strike for higher wages took place in London. The men who "held out" were known as "flints," while those who succumbed received the opprobrious name of "dungs." Both these names are used in Foote's play, *The Tailors*.

**Flint into, to** (American), varied to pour in, fire away, tumble on to, pitch into. There may be possibly fifty such words more or less in use, meaning to go at something, to begin to act, to tackle anything.

**Flint it out, to** (tailors). *Vide* FLINT.

**Flip-flap** (popular), a peculiar rollicking dance indulged in by costermongers when merry or excited. Also a kind of somersault in which the performer throws himself on his hands and feet alternately (Hotten). (Nautical), the arm.

**Flipper** (common), hand, originally a sailor's expression; "tip me your *flipper*," shake hands.

The other, a sailor, had one wooden pin, He looked mournful at Ned, then said,  
"Tip us your *flipper*."

—*Song: Pudding-faced Ned.*

**Flippers, flappers**, very young girls trained to vice, generally for the amusement of elderly men; *floppers* is a provincialism for young birds beginning to spread their wings.

**Flirtina cop-all** (popular), a girl generally, or one too fond of men. "Cop" has the signification of catch.

**Flocater** (Whitechapel), a small suet dumpling put into soup (Hotten).

**Floaters.** The *Cornhill Magazine* gives the following explanation:—"An interesting, but one would hope decaying, class of voters are the *floaters*, the electors whose suffrages are to be obtained for a pecuniary consideration. There is a story told of a candidate in an American township who asked one of the local party managers how many voters there were. 'Four hundred,' was the reply. 'And how many *floaters*?' 'Four hundred!' Somewhat akin to the *floaters* are those who sit 'on the fence'—men with impartial minds, who wait to see, as another petty phrase has it, 'how the cat will jump,' and whose convictions at last gene-

rally bring them down on that side of the fence where are to be found the biggest battalions and the longest purses. These *floaters* and men 'on the fence' used in the olden times to be the devoted adherents of the 'man in the moon.' When an election was near at hand it was noised abroad throughout the constituency that the 'man in the moon' had arrived, and from the time of that august visitor's mysterious arrival many of the free and independent electors dated their possession of those political principles which they manfully supported by their votes at the poll. Of course no candidate bribed—such a thing was not to be thought of; but still the money was circulating, and votes were bought, and as it was necessary to fix the responsibility upon some one, the whole business was attributed to the action of the 'man in the moon.'"

**Floating academy** (old cant), the hulks; "Duncan Campbell's *floating academy*," the hulks at Woolwich.

My man is hobbled upon the leg for three years on board *Duncan Campbell's floating academy* for napping a clink.—*G. Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Floating batteries** (soldiers), bits of bread broken up and put in the evening tea. When soldiers are under stoppages or otherwise impecunious and unable to buy herrings, bacon, saus-

ages, and other savoury articles for the tea meal, they are compelled to do with floating batteries. See SLINGERS.

**Floating hell** (old slang). The hulks were so called by those who brought themselves within the clutches of the law.

**Flock of sheep** (domino players), the row of dominoes before a player (Baumann).

**Flogger** (common), a whip.

Compared with the light and elegant *floggers* of the present day, it is a heavy, common "riding companion," with a massive silver handle, with a short twisted lash.—*Sporting Times*.

**Flogging** (popular), a man who is careful and penurious is said to be *flogging*, or saving his coin.

**Flogging cove** (prison), the official who administers the cat.

**Floored** (studios), is said of a picture hung on the lowest row at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy.

**Floorer** (pugilistic), a knock-down blow. (Common), unexpected news of an unpleasant nature; a decisive argument or retort; a question which utterly embarrasses one.

The Putney Pet stared. . . . The inquiry for his college was in the language of his profession a "regular floorer."—*Cuthbert Bede: Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*.

(Schools), a question or paper too hard to be mastered, that

on the contrary masters you. (Skittles), a stroke that brings all the pins down.

**Floor, to.** This word is recognised in the sense of to strike down, hence to put to silence by some decisive argument or retort: given by Wright as college cant, with the sense of "to throw on the floor as done with; hence to finish with." Gathered from the quotation—

I've *floored* my little-go work.—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

In the above the true sense is, "I have mastered," &c. Dr. Brewer says: "Thus we say at the University, 'I *floored* that paper,' *i.e.*, answered every question on it; 'I *floored* that problem,' did it perfectly, or made myself master of it."

**Floor-walker** (American), a man employed in shops to ask those who enter what they want, and direct them to the department where it is sold.

I next went into a shop a few doors farther up Broadway. When I entered I approached the *floor-walker*, and handing him my sample, said: "Have you any calico like this?" "Yes, sir," said he. "Third counter to the right."—*Frank R. Stockton*.

Called in England shop-walkers.

**Flop** (Vermont University), explained by quotation.

Any "cute" performance by which a man is sold is a good *flop*, and by a phrase borrowed from the tall ground is "rightly

played." The discomfited individual declares that they "are all on a side," and gives up, or "rolls over," by giving his opponent "gowdy." A man writes cards during examination to "feeze the profs;" said cards are "gumming cards," and he *flops* the examination if he gets a good mark by the means. One usually *flops* his marks by feigning sickness.—*Hall: College Words and Customs.*

**Floreat** (Westminster), the toast drunk at the election dinners and other great occasions generally from the large silver cup presented by Warren Hastings and other old Westminsters, and commonly known as the "Elephant Cup," from its handles, which are in the shape of elephants' heads.

**Floricus** (Winchester College), an urinal or latrine.

**Flour** (American), one of the innumerable synonyms for money, or value.

**Flounder**, in the slang of water-rats—*i.e.*, men who rifle the pockets of drowned people—is the body of a poor, ragged, drowned man.

**Flourist** (old), sexual intercourse indulged in hastily, or at unseasonable periods.

**Flowery** (tramps), lodging or house entertainment (Hotten).

**Flowing hope** (army), a term for forlorn hope.

**Flue-faker** (popular and thieves), a chimney-sweep.

**Fluff** (railway ticket clerks), short change given by such. To *fluff* is to give short change.

**Fluff, to** (popular), to take away; also to disconcert, put to silence.

And that orator was *fluffed*, and the meeting broke up in confusion.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Fluffer** (common), of unsteady habits.

M. E. — is a bachelor, and, if I may use the expression, a *fluffer*. He has had his romance, as Mdme. — (the actress) could tell it.—*Evening News.*

**Fluffings** (railway ticket clerks), the proceeds from short change given by them.

**Fluff it** (popular), a term of disapprobation, implying "take it away, I don't want it" (Hotten).

**Fluke** (general), a thing obtained by chance when trying to get another. From a term at billiards, playing to score in one way and scoring in another. *Flack*, provincialism for a blow or stroke. A *fluke* at billiards was originally a flying stroke (Skeat). Dutch *vlug*.

These conditions are not often fulfilled, I can tell you: it is a happy *fluke* when they are.—*Black: Princess of Thule.*

**Fluky** (common), obtained through a "fluke," which see.

Don't be cross—I've been learning my lesson—

Can describe who's "bowled clean,"  
Which a *fluky* hit's been,

And almost know Forster from Gresson,  
And haven't a doubt of Nepean.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Flummocks** (tailors), to spoil. Probably a variant of “flum-mux,” to perplex or hinder.

**Flummux, flummox, to** (popular), to perplex, confound, bewilder.

My 'pinion is, Sammy, that if your governor don't prove a alleybi, he'll be what the Italians call reg'larly *flum-moxed*.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers*.

(Theatrical), to distress, to annoy, to upset an actor in his business. Forty years ago, when the late Charles Kean was acting “Macbeth” in Belfast, a stupid, inattentive actor kept the stage waiting for Seyton, in “Macbeth,” for a considerable period. When the act was over he was profuse with servile apologies. Kean was obdurate, and dismissed the fellow with—“Fool! fool! you distressed—you ruined—you tortured—you—*you—flummuxed me!*”

**Flummuxed** (thieves), done up, sure of a month in prison (Hot-ten).

**Flunk, to** (American), to die out, to give out, to fail, to make a feeble effort and then collapse. Possibly a New York or New Jersey (Princeton) word, from the Dutch *flonk, flonker, flonken*, to “twinkle” or sparkle like a star, bright at one instant and then invisible. It is generally used in American colleges for a failure in recitation. In a *flunk* the student at least makes an effort before he breaks down, but in a “dead *flunk*” he makes

none, and simply exclaims, “Not prepared.”

In moody meditation sunk,  
Reflecting on my future *flunk*.  
—*Songs of Yale College*.

**Flunkey** (nautical), the ship's steward. (American), a man who is unacquainted with the secrets of the Stock Exchange, makes rash ventures, and loses his money. The original *flunkey*, a footman, is from the French *flanquer*, to run by the side of (*Skeat*).

**Flush** (popular), full to the brim, that is, intoxicated. Properly affluent, abounding.

We would tempt him from the ale-house bench he occupied when *flush*, or the dead wall he propped up when impecunious.—*Globe*.

When one has plenty of cash he is said to be *flush*.

Lord Strut was not very *flush* in ready.—*Arbutnot*.

**Flush in the fob** (thieves), well supplied with money.

**Flush, to** (popular), to whip.

**Flustered** (common), intoxicated.

**Flutter** (popular), used in this phrase: “I'll have a *flutter* for it,” I shall do my utmost. To *flutter*, to toss with coins.

**Flutter, to** (popular), to toss for anything.

**Flux, to** (thieves), to cheat, over-reach.

**Fly** (popular and thieves), knowing, wide-awake, well acquainted or familiar with, versed in.

“You seem to know all that’s going on?”

“Oh yes: I’m *fly*.”—*The Youth’s Companion*.

Although when they try their games with me, I let them see

That I am *fly* to all their tricks, . . .

—*Song: That’s a Game Best Left Alone*.

To be *fly*, to understand, realise.

“Do what I want, and I will pay you well.” . . . “I am *fly*,” says Joe.

—*Dickens: Bleak House*.

The designer is said to be *fly* at everything, to be up to everything, and down at everything. — *Diprose: Laugh and Learn*.

The term is probably from a simile referring to rapidity of comprehension. To be *fly* in Northamptonshire signifies to be quick at taking offence, at *flying* into a passion. A *fly* was originally a light carriage for rapid motion; and *mouche*, i.e., *fly*, is the name given to penny boats on the Seine. (Popular), “to be on the *fly*,” to be out for a day’s pleasure.

**Fly by night**, to (popular), removing the furniture by night to escape paying rent. “Shooting the moon.”

I remember one night while shooting the moon,

We were all in a terrible fright;

The landlord came in a little too soon,  
And stopped our *fly-by-night*.

—*Sidney Barnes: Shooting the Moon*.

**Fly-cop** (thieves), a sharp policeman.

**Flyer** (sport), a term denoting excellence.

The New Zealanders are not such *flyers* as was at first imagined.—*The Tatler*.

By successful heavy plunging he acquired no little fame,

And he evidently thought himself a *flyer* at the game.

—*Sporting Times*.

(Football), to kick a *flyer*, to kick the ball high up in the air. (Common), to have sexual intercourse without disrobing. (English and American), a chance venture, a risk or hazard taken without much forethought, commonly applied to an off-hand speculation in stock.

He began . . . with a small *flyer* at the race-track.—*American Newspaper*.

**Flyers** (thieves), shoes (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Fly-flat** (turf), one who really knows little or nothing about racing, but fancies himself thoroughly initiated in all its mysteries. There are plenty of schoolmasters always ready to teach him the lesson that “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.”

**Flying a kite** (commercial), drawing accommodation bills.

No doubt but he might without any great flight,

Have obtained it by what we call *flying a kite*;

Or on mortgage—or sure, if he couldn’t so do it, he

Must have succeeded “by way of annuity.”

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

- Flying, blue pigeon** (thieves).  
 "Thieves who *fly the blue pigeon*, that is, who steal lead off houses, or cut pipes away . . . cut a hundredweight of lead, which they wrap round their bodies next to the skin. This they call a 'bible,' and what they steal and put in their pockets they call a 'testament'" (G. Parker).
- Flying coves** (thieves), fellows who obtain money by pretending to persons who have been robbed that they can give them information that will be the means of recovering their lost goods (New York Slang Dictionary).
- Flying jiggers** (thieves), turnpike-gates.
- Flying marc** (popular), a throw in wrestling (Hotten).
- Flying mess, to be in a** (soldiers), to be hungry and have nothing to eat.
- Flying rather high** (common), intoxicated. A more advanced stage is when the subject is "corned," or on his "fourth," or has his "back teeth afloat." "Paralysed" or "boiling drunk" means very much intoxicated.
- Flying stationer** (street), a hawker of ballads.
- Fly low, to** (popular), to evade observation, to keep quiet. Thieves are said to *fly low* when keeping out of the way, because "wanted" by the police.
- Flymy** (low), cunning; *flum*, deceit, a provincialism same as "flam."
- Fly the kite, to** (thieves), to make one's exit by the window. *Vide* FLYING A KITE.
- Fly, to** (thieves), to toss up; "*to fly the mags*," to toss up the halfpence; "*to fly a window*," to lift a window; "*to fly the blue pigeon*," to steal lead off roofs. "*Fly a kite*," *vide* FLYING A KITE.
- Fly to wot's wot** (popular), fully understanding,  
 Percessions I've got a bit tired of, hoof padding, and scrouging's dry rot,  
 But Political Picnics mean sugar to them  
 as is *fly to wot's wot*.  
 —Punch.
- Fly-trap** (popular), the mouth. Among costermongers it may often be heard when another of their fraternity is unusually vociferous in shouting his wares — "Shut up your *fly-trap*."
- Fob, to** (old cant), to pick a pocket.
- Fœtus, tapping the** (medical), procuring a miscarriage.
- Fogey** (nautical), an invalid soldier or sailor. Properly a man becoming stupid with age.
- Fogged** (tailors), puzzled, confused. Is said specially of one

whose memory is at fault, who is "in a fog."

**Fogging** (railway), laying fog signals.

They were identified as Benjamin Golding, a porter, and Henry Barnes, a signalman: both had been engaged *fogging*.—*Standard*.

(Theatrical), getting through one's part anyhow, like a man lost in a fog.

**Foggy** (common), not quite sober.

**Fogle** (thieves), a pocket-handkerchief.

But when beat on his knees, that confounded de Guise  
Came behind with the *fogle* that caused  
all the breeze.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

If you don't take *fogles* and tickers . . .  
pocket-hankerchers and watches . . .

—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

From the German *vogel*, a bird's eye, being slang for pocket-handkerchief, or more probably from Italian *foglia*, a piece of silk or satin.

**Fogle-hunter** (thieves), pick-pocket, stealer of handkerchiefs.

"What's the matter now?" said the man carelessly. "A young *fogle-hunter*," replied the man who had Oliver in charge.  
—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Fogram** (thieves), a fussy old fellow (New York Slang Dictionary).

(Nautical), wine, beer, or spirits of indifferent quality; in fact, any kind of liquor (Smyth).

**Fogue** (thieves), fierce, fiery. Possibly from the French *fougueux*.

**Fogus** (old cant), tobacco. "From *fogo*, old word for stench," says Hotten. Possibly from *fog*, *fouge*, moss, and *foggage*, rank grass. This derivation is borne out by the analogy of "weed," another term for tobacco with "to fog." Also by French cant *trèfle*, *trifoin*, for tobacco.

**Foik**, to (football). "To *foik*" a ball out of the scrimmage is to pick it up with your hands before it is fairly out of the scrimmage, or to kick it out of the scrimmage backwards to one of your own "behinds," to give him a chance of a "run." Doubtless an imitation of "fake," broadly pronounced in some provincial dialect.

**Foist** (old cant), a pickpocket, a cheat.

**Follow me, lads** (common), curls hanging over a lady's shoulder. The French *suivez-moi jeune homme* refers to ribbons waving behind from a lady's dress.

**Fooling around** (American), trifling, not meaning business.

As it stands pugilists are the puppets or partners of acute showmen, and the "Noble Art of Self-Defence" is being rapidly reduced to a money-making form of what Americans call *fooling around*. By all means let us have a real fight and stop this nonsense.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Fool-killer** (American), a mysterious being in the great Yankee



mythology, frequently alluded to by editors as being "in town." The information is generally coupled with a warning to some prominent person that his life is in danger.

St. John of Kansas says he is not "afraid." From this statement we infer, that if St. John of Kansas and the *fool-killer* ever meet, the fur will fly. Look out for locks of a dyed moustache.—*American Newspaper*.

**Fool's wedding** (popular), an assemblage of women at which no man is present. Cf. HEN CONVENTION. The metaphor probably is that of a wedding without a bridegroom.

**Foot** (thieves), explained by quotation.

I got between five or six *foont* (sovereigns).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

German *pfund*, pronounced *foont*.

**Footer** (schools), football. There are a number of slang terms formed by changing the legitimate ending of words into *er*. The custom is said to be derived from Harrow.

(Universities), one who plays football according to the Rugby rules.

**Footing-up** (American), but probably of English origin.

The Arab abhors statistics. He won't be tabulated if he could help it, and were you to go to Algeria, Doctor Colenso, you would find a deeply rooted objection among the people to the reckoning or *footing-up*, as the Americans call it, of

anything animate or inanimate.—*Geo. A. Sala: A Trip to Barbary*.

**Footman's maund** (old), an artificial sore in imitation of a kick from a horse, produced with unslaked lime, soap, and a piece of old iron.

**Foot-riding** (bicycling). When a cyclist cannot ride his iron steed, but is obliged to walk and wheel, it is called *foot-riding*.

Already I realise that there is going to be as much *foot-riding* as anything for the first part of my journey.—*Thomas Stevens: Round the World on a Bicycle*.

**Footsac** (South Africa), be off! An apostrophe to drive away intrusive dogs. Apparently a compound of the French *foutre*, pronounced *foute*, and *saoré*.

**Foot scamp** (old), a low fellow that stops you with bludgeon, cutlass, or knife, and ill-treats you (G. Parker).

**Foot wobbler** (old), an infantry soldier. Now termed a "wobbler," or "mud-crusher."

**Footy** (American and English), a foolish person, a "goose," a "coot." It is an English provincialism signifying trifling, mean, inferior, of little worth.

I think it would be a very pretty bit of practice to the ship's company to take her out from under that *footy* battery.—*Marryat: Peter Simple*.

*Footy* literally means "having foots," *i.e.*, settlings, or dregs, as *footy* oil. Hence its application to anything inferior or

worthless. It has been suggested, however, that *footy* comes from the French *foutu*, which among its various significations has that of inferior, worthless.

**Foozle** (American), a man who is easily humbugged, a fool. "This common slang word, which appears also as *comfoozle*, meaning flattery, cajoling, or humbugging, is probably derived from the Anglo-Indian *foozilow*, meaning quite the same thing. This is in its turn from the imperative *p'hustlāo* of the Hindu verb *p'hustlānā*. It is to be here remarked that many Hindu words came at an early date to the ports of Boston and Salem direct from India, and not through England. The prefix *com* is possibly the Hindu *kōm*, 'love.' To *comfoozle*, in Yankee, in fact means much the same as 'to mash,' but it also applies to bewilder, to lead one off the head, or simply to fool and confuse, which all agrees with the Indian word" ("MS. of Anglo-Indian Terms," by C. G. Leland).

**Fopdoodle** (American), a silly fellow. "Come, don't be such a *fopdoodle*." This is provincial English.

**Forakers** (Winchester School), water-closet. Probably because originally the place used was a field, termed "foreacre," a provincialism for the headland of a field.

**Force the voucher**, a term in use among sporting tricksters, who advertise to send certain winners, and on receipt of letters enclose vouchers similar to those sent out by respectable commission agents, but with double or treble the current odds marked thereon, in reference to the horse named. A plausible letter is sent with the voucher, and the victim is informed that on account of early investments made by the firm, the extra odds can be laid by them, and a remittance to the amount named, or part of it, is requested. Of course, the firm "dries up" when claims become heavy (Hotten).

**Fore coach wheel** (popular), half-a-crown.

**Foreman** (tailors), a "sleeve-cutting *foreman*" is a cutter's trimmer. "Near the *foreman*, near the door," a cutter's term, meaning the farther you work from the foreman the better for you.

**Foreman of the jury** (common), said of a talkative man who will persist in talking to the exclusion of others.

**Foreman on the job** (popular), a leader, master, director, or "boss."

Ah, my wife's *foreman on the job* and no mistake, and what can I do? Nice thing for a free-born Briton, ain't it?—*Song: I'll never go home any more.*

**Fork** (thieves), a pickpocket; from *jorks*, fingers.

**Forkers** (nautical), those who reside in seaports for the sake of stealing dockyard stores, or buying them, knowing them to be stolen.

**Forking** (tailors), hurrying over the work as if doing it with a pitchfork. Anglo-Saxon, *fork-erven*, to cut or slash through.

**Fork on, to** (American University). To *fork on* to anything is to appropriate it to one's personal use and benefit.

**Forks** (popular and thieves), the fingers. In French argot, *fourchettes*. In thieves' language *forks* is more specially applied to the fore and middle fingers used for picking a pocket. Formerly the gallows.

**Fork, to** (common), to pay.

"His fee was a tenner. *Fork.*" Master *forked.*—*Sporting Times.*

Also *fork out*.

"Tip up! . . . *fork out,*" said the boy. —*Greenwood; The Little Ragamuffins.*

(Thieves), to *fork*, to pick a pocket by extracting an article with two fingers only. In French argot, *vol à la fourchette*.

**Forloper** (South Africa), a man who walks in front of a team of oxen, acting as a guide.

**Form** (racing), an expression signifying a horse's present, past,

or presumed capabilities; thus, "really in *form*" means that he is just now at his best; "out of *form*," that he is not as good as usual; "lost his *form*," that he is more or less on the wane; "will show better *form*," that he will improve on his recent performances; "top *form*," that he is ranked amongst the best of his day. (Common), "good *form*," "bad *form*" refer to behaviour up or not up to a generally accepted standard of good manners or morality.

The height of "bad *form*" was reached on Thursday, when a loud cheer followed the failure of — to return a service.—*Pastime.*

**Forts** (American Universities).

At some colleges the boarding-houses for students are called *forts*.

**Forty-five** (cowboys), a revolver.

**Forty-foot** (popular), a short person.

**Forty-guts** (popular), a short person.

**Forty-'leven** (American), of negro origin. This phrase signifies indefiniteness.

Nor don't want *forty-'leven* weeks o' jawin' an' expoundin'

To prove a nigger hez a right to save him, if he's drownin'.

—*Biglow Papers.*

**Forty-rod lightning** (American), one of the innumerable names given to whisky — meaning

whisky which will kill like a rifle at forty yards.

**Fossed** (thieves), thrown down (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Fossick, to** (Australian gold-miners).

*Fossicking* or "pocket mining," the searching for those scattered accumulations of gold which seem to have been washed into eddies in the early history of the earth.—*Standard*.

Also in the old digging days *fossicking* was getting a living by extracting what little gold there was from the refuse wash-dirt which previous miners had abandoned. So called from *fossicking*, taking trouble, it being tiresome work (Halliwell).

**Fossicker** (Australian gold-miners), an alluvial mining explorer. Also a miner who works at holes abandoned by others.

To this region must one come to see the *fossicker* in all his miserable state. Traveling in pairs, but usually working separately, the true gambusino of the North is found. Each boils his separate billy, and provides his frugal fare; each pitches his solitary tent; each works when and how disposed; each roams the ravines adjacent in search of some hidden store; and only when an abundance of water and cradling dirt convenient points out the mutual benefit, do the two combine and share the joint proceeds. Inducement for such a life is hard to find. Every pound of food has to be packed from fifty to a hundred miles. Salt meat is necessarily the sole form in which meat can be provided. Day after day, week after week, the patient *fossicker* tries creek after creek, gully after gully, ravine after ravine, with the same result, the monotonous "colour," or worse still,

the occasional presence of a coarse speck encouraging the delusion of better things.—*The Queenslander*.

**Fossicking about**, ferreting about. *Vide* TO FOSSICK.

**Foul-weather Jack** (nautical), a person whose presence on board ship is supposed to bring ill luck.

**Found on demerit** (American cadet), having more than the limit (100) (O. E. Wood, U.S. Army).

**Found on math** (American cadet), to do badly at mathematics—obviously a corruption of "to founder."

**Four eyes** (popular), a silly term for a person who wears an eye-glass or spectacles.

**Four-holed middlings** (Winchester College), walking shoes of an ordinary kind.

**Four seams and a bit of soap** (tailors), a quaint phrase for trouser-making.

**Fourteen hundred** (Stock Exchange), a password used when a stranger is seen in the "house."

"So help me Got, Mo, who is he?" Instead of replying in a straightforward way, Mo raised his voice as loud as he could, and shouted with might and main, "Fourteen hundred new fives!" A hundred voices repeated the mysterious exclamation.—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

**Fourth** (Cambridge), the W.C.; to "keep a fourth," to go to the

- W.C. Supposed to allude to the fourth court at Trinity, a small quadrangle devoted to lecture-rooms and other conveniences. (Common), a very drunken man is said to be "on his *fourth*."
- Fourth estate**, the complete body of journalists of all descriptions. This term is much used among "liners" (Hotten).
- Four-wheeler** (popular), a steak.
- Fowlo** (pidgin), a fowl.
- Fox** (fencing), a cant term for sword in the older schools, from the "wolf" or *fox* mark borne by Solingen blades. The word "foxing," in the colloquial sense of pretending, is often applied to a sham carelessness in fencing, intended to induce the adversary to "come out" less cautiously.
- Foxed** (old slang), intoxicated. (Printers), stained or spotted books or paper is described thus. Caused by dampness mostly.
- Fox, to** (theatrical), to criticise a fellow actor's performance. (Popular), to watch sliily. (American police), to follow or watch sliily.
- We had several altercations. He was *foxing* me, and I was *foxing* him.—*Daily Telegraph*.
- Fo - yok** (pidgin), gunpowder; literally fire physic, fire medicine.
- F. P.** (War Office), former papers; a regular phrase at the War Office when it is a question of referring to preceding communications, &c., on any matter.
- Fraggle** (Texas), to rob (Bartlett); Dutch thieves' slang, *frikketiren*, to rob.
- Frazzled out** (American), used in the Southern States. Frayed, "frizzled," or worn out.
- "Bimeby," continued the old man, "de switches dey got *frazzle out*."—*Uncle Remus*.
- Freak** (American), men or women who make a living by exhibiting themselves as living skeletons, giants, dwarfs, and other freaks of nature.
- Visitor* (to dime-museum *freak*).—"What is your speciality, my friend?"
- Freak*.—"I'm the man who really knows more than he thinks he does. Want a photograph? Quarter of a dollar, sir."
- Visitor*.—"Yes; give me half-a-dozen. I'd wear one out in a week lookin' at it."—*Chicago Tribune*.
- Free and easy**, a smoking party of any kind, the members of which meet at a public-house to drink, smoke, and sing.
- One of his accomplices, Hunt, had a beautiful baritone voice, and was the delight of *free and easies* patronised by the fancy.—*Daily Telegraph*.
- Free-booker** (journalistic), explained by quotation.
- There are pirates and pirates. An American *free-booker* has sent Mrs. H. a cheque for five hundred dollars, on account of the profits of a filibustered edition of "Robert Elsmere."—*World*.

**Freeholder** (common), a man is called a *freeholder* when his wife will not allow him to visit a public-house by himself.

**Free lances** (society), women who do not run straight, are not virtuous and faithful to their husbands. Originated from the *free lances*, who carried on irregular warfare.

Sooner than be out of the fashion they will tolerate what should be most galling and shaming to them—the thought that by these they are put down among the *free lances*.—*Saturday Review*.

**Freeman's quay** (thieves), to “lush at *freeman's quay*,” to drink at another's expense.

**Freemartin** (veterinary), a calf which is one of twins, the twins being one of each sex; the sexual organs of one or both are imperfectly developed or differentiated, and the *freemartin* is consequently sterile.

**Free of fumbler's hall** (common), a saying applied to one who is impotent.

**Free, to** (thieves), to steal; “*to free a prad*,” to steal a horse.

**Freeze out, to** (English and American), to put out, deprive of, to drive away by distant freezing conduct and cold reserve, which was apparently the origin of the term.

I called on Jane and Mary Bung,  
I thought I was bound to blaze,  
But the very first call they *froze me out*,  
With their new-converted ways.  
—*Song: The Old-Fashioned Beau*.

To exclude.

But the large operators want to get hold of blocks of cheap stock, so a gradual process of *freezing out* of the small speculators is going on, and it appears to be pretty successful.—*Truth*.

**Freezer** (popular), a winter's day. An Eton tailless jacket. The application is obvious.

**Freeze, to** (American), to stick to, to take, to have a longing desire.

I tell you I *froze* for meat before the week was gone to be intimate. There was no more intimacy shown between James and Ann other than might exist between any woman trying to *freeze* on to a boarder.—*Daily Inter Ocean*.

(Common), to *freeze to*, to stick to, take, steal; “some one has *frozen* to my watch.”

**French cream** (popular and thieves), brandy.

**Frenchgout** (popular), gonorrhœa.

**Frenchman** (printers), an Anglo-French printing machine is generally termed thus by the “minders.”

**Fresh** (common), slightly intoxicated.

M. — was summoned, and did not deny the “soft impeachment” that he was a little *fresh* at the time of the assault.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(American), forward, impudent.

“Has Peggy been too *fresh*?” Her sunburnt cheeks flushed.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

Also innocent, unsophisticated.

Wall, there's no denying that fellers as is too *fresh* don't live long our way.—*Omaha World*.

(Thieves), uninitiated, green.

**Freshen one's way**, to (nautical), to hurry, quicken one's movements. From "fresh way," increased speed through the water.

**Fresher** (university), a freshman.

**Freshman's Bible** (university), a humorous name for the University Calendar.

**Freshman's church** (Cambridge University), the Pitt Press, which from its ecclesiastical appearance is liable to be mistaken for a church.

**Freshman's landmark** (Cambridge University). King's College Chapel, so called from its being so situated as to form a beacon to lost and wandering freshmen.

**Freshman's river**, the Cam above Newnham Mill, used for bathing, canoeing, and sculling, but not for boat-races.

**Freshwater mariners** (old cant), a variety of mendicants.

These *freshwater mariners*, their shipes were drowned in the Plaine of Salisbery. These kynd of caterpillers counterfet great losses on the sea.—*Harman: Caveat*.

**Fret one's gizzard**, to (popular), to fret about things, to get harassed and worried, to the absolute discomfort of oneself and those about one.

**Friar** (printers). *Vide* MONK. A light or "scabby" patch in a printed sheet, owing to bad distribution of ink or dampness. Probably derived from Caxton's time when he set up his press in Westminster Abbey, and the reference is to a friar of holy orders, an individual of light clothing.

It is curious to note that French compositors use a similar term, *moine*, a monk or friar, in the same sense.

**Friday-face** (popular), a gloomy-looking man. Alluding to the meagre fare of Roman Catholics on Fridays. French "figure de carême."

**Frigate** (common), a well-dressed woman.

**Frig pig** (old slang), a trifling, finnickin' man.

**Frill** (Australian popular), swagger, conceit. When a slangy Australian sees a person very conceited, or swaggering very much, he says, "He has an awful lot of *frill* on," "He can't walk for *frill*," "He's stiff with *frill*."

**Frillery** (common), linen.

And around her, in confusion, lay each fashion-plate delusion,  
And *frillery*, the creamiest and best.  
But, for details, see Ouida, for in def'rence to the reader,  
Further information is suppressed.

—*Sporting Times*.

2 B

**Frisk** (society), a dance, a hop; not a very common expression, but occasionally used.

The show of dresses and jewels was remarkable, and the *frisk* was a brilliant success, everything being thoroughly well done.—*The World*.

**Frisk, to** (thieves), to search on the person; “to *frisk* a cly,” to empty a pocket.

**Frog** (popular), foot; *frog*-footed, flat-footer, a contemporary term used for those who go on foot.

(Popular and thieves), a policeman.

I must amputate like a go-away, or the *frogs* will nail me.—*On the Trail*.

**Frogging on** (American), getting on. Usually attributed to Germans, and possibly derived from some popular misconception of *fragen*, to ask, or an allusion to the movements of a frog.

Ven ve go for to see our friends apout,  
Hey ho, countrymen—how you *froggin*  
*on*?

All de liddle Deutchers gif a pig shout,  
Hey ho! Schneiders! How you knock  
along?

—*Thomas Browne: The Deutchers on a Spree*.

**Froglanders** (nautical), Dutchmen (Smyth).

**Frog's march** (common), a method of conveying a violent prisoner to the police-station or guard-house. The recalcitrant one is carried face downwards, with a man holding each limb.

**Frolic, on a** (American). “‘Frolic, used for a party *ona frolic*,’ seems

to be a true Americanism” (R. A. Proctor). Dutch, *vrolykheyed*, mirth, jollity, gaiety. The American expression is a literal translation of an old New York Dutch phrase.

**From over yonder** (tailors), from Ireland.

**Front** (Winchester School), angry, vexed, from “affronted.”

**Front, to** (thieves), to cover or conceal the operations of a pick-pocket.

So my pal said, “*Front* me (cover me) and I will do him for it.”—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Frontispiece** (pugilistic), the face.

**Front piece** (theatrical), a short play or “curtain raiser” performed before a more important one.

At the Gaiety, on next Saturday evening, a farce, “*Lot 49*,” by Mr. Fisher, as a *front piece* to “*Frankenstein*.”—*Evening News*.

**Frost** (society), a failure, a *fiasco*.

At every grand ball in the Row or Mayfair, The ball is a *frost* if the Marquis ain't there.

—*Anthony: The Marquis of Hanover Square. A Ballad*.

(Theatrical), a dead failure; “a *frost*, a killing *frost*.” (Popular), a dearth of work.

**Frosty face** (common), said of one whose face has been pitted and marked by small-pox.



**Froust** (Harrow), extra sleep allowed in the morning of Sundays and whole holidays.

**Frow** (old cant), a woman; Dutch *vrouw*.

A flash of lightning next  
Bess tipt each cull and *frow*, sir,  
Ere they to church did pad  
To have it christen'd Joe, sir.  
—Parker: *Variegated Characters*.

**Frummagemmed** (old cant), annihilated, strangled, garrotted, or spoilt.

**Frump** (old cant), as a wrinkled old woman, a witch, &c. *Frump* seems to have some connection with the Dutch *frommeln*, to crumple, and *frous*, to wrinkle up the face, frown, appear angry. As a verb it means to mock or insult, quarrel with or annoy.

**Frushee** (popular), an open jam tart.

**Fry your face, go and** (American and English), low slang expression addressed to a thin-faced, lean man. Probably a form of "dry face."

"Ga, you vas no goot, *go and vry your faces*." "Vat you mean py tolding me dat I vas no goods? I vas so vorse as you if nod vorser. Vry my faces, indeed! I've got no faces to vry, but you vas got enof for dwo, you oldt shin-parrel!"—*Thomas Browne: The Deutchers on a Spree*.

**F sharp** (popular), fleas.

**Fubsey** (thieves), fat; *fubsey* dummy, a well-filled pocket-book.

**Fuddle** (popular), drink; "out on the *fuddle*," out on a day's drinking. From *fuddle*, an accepted term for drinking to excess; from *full*, by an interposition of the letter *d*. The Scotch have *full* for drunk.

**Fug, to** (Shrewsbury), to stay in a close, stuffy room.

**Fuggies** (schoolboys), hot rolls (Hotten).

**Fuggy** (Shrewsbury), stuffy; from *fojo*, an old word for stench.

**Fulhams** or **fullams** (old), loaded dice. "So called," it has been suggested, "from the suburb where the Bishop of London resides, which in the reign of Queen Elizabeth was the most notorious place for blacklegs in all England." Dice made with a cavity were called "gourds" (scooped out like the bottle-gourd used for cups, bottles, &c.). Thus those which were loaded may have been called "full ones," hence *fullums*. Those made to throw the high and low numbers were respectively termed "high *fullams*," and "low *fullams*."

**Full blast** (common), anything is said to be in *full blast* when at its apogee. The allusion is obvious.

**Full drive, full chisel, full split** (American), at full speed, in full career; an equivalent to "hickety split," "ripping and staving

along," "two thirty," and other synonyms for rapidity.

**Full frame** (printers), a compositor that has been a "grass hand" (which see), and secures a regular engagement, is in possession of a *full frame*.

**Fullied** (thieves), committed for trial. From the expression often used by magistrates, "fully committed."

So I got run in, and was tried at Marylebone and remanded for a week, and then *fullied* and got this stretch and a half.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Fulness** (tailors), "not *fulness* enough in the sleeve top," a derisive answer to a threat of personal chastisement.

**Fumbles** (thieves), gloves. From *fambles* or *fams*, the hands; *feemdas*, lit. hand-garment, Old Dutch thieves' slang.

**Function** (society), party, ball, entertainment. From the Spanish *funcion*, which is used to mean any kind of meeting or performance. It came from Mexico through the American press.

The Duchess of —, who was certainly one of the handsomest women present at the *function*.—*Society Paper*.

**Funcior** (Winchester College), the night-light burned in chambers.

**Funeral** (American), "it's not my *funeral*," I don't care, it is not my business, it in no way concerns me.

**Funk** (general), state of nervous trepidation, fear.

. . . A good professional with the magic sixpence on the wicket will give you more trouble than many bowlers in a match, and your *funk* is just the same as a careless barrister who has not read his papers.—*Fred. Gale: The Game of Cricket*.

To *funk*, to be nervous, afraid, shrink back.

But when the time for his examination drew on the little gentleman was seized with such trepidation, and *funked* so greatly, that he came to the resolution not to trouble the examiners again.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

Also to *funk* it.

*Funk* is declared by some authorities to be a recognised word. At any rate it is vulgar and used in a slangy sense in such phrases as "to be in a *funk*," "an awful, mortal *funk*." This term, according to De Quincey, originated among the Eton "men." Probably from *funk*, to emit an offensive smell like certain animals when pursued, or people who lose physical control over themselves when in a state of great terror. This derivation seems to be borne out by the parallel French *foirer*, to be afraid, shrink back, also "faire dans sa culotte."

*Funk*, also a coward.

In New York the word *funk* is connected with humbug, and "Peter Funk" is a kind of mysterious spirit who inspires all kinds of petty business tricks.

**Funkers** (thieves), the very lowest order of thieves.

**Funkster** (Winchester College), one who is afraid.

**Funky.** *Vide* FUNK.

**Furk, to** (Winchester College), to expel. It is said that formerly "men" who were expelled had to go through "non licet gate" when leaving the college for good, and their clothes were sent after them on a pitchfork. If this is true, *to furk* is from the Latin *furca*, pitchfork. Otherwise the origin may be found in old English *ferke*, to hasten on or out. It has also the signification of to send. Thus boys will say that reports are *furked* home by the doctor. Also to send on a message.

**Furmen** (old slang), aldermen. An epithet derived from their robes of office being trimmed with fur.

**Furniture pictures** (studios), pictures painted by the dozen for

the trade of the same class as "pot-boilers."

**Fur out** (Winchester College), angry; *i.e.*, one with *fur out* like an angry animal.


**Furry tail** (printers), see RAT. A workman who accepts work at an unfair house is thus termed, from the fact that a rat is *furry*.

**Fush, to fush out** (American), to waste, come to nothing. Dutch *futsel*, a trifle, a worthless thing; *futseln*, to fiddle, foddle, trifle, idle.

**Fussock** (popular), a person who makes much fuss. Formerly a fat woman, from the provincial English "fussocking," large and fat.

**Fustian** (thieves), wine; white *fustian*, champagne. Compare with "red tape, white velvet," &c.

**Fye-buck** (old), a sixpence.

 **AB** or **gob** (popular), the mouth. This word is given by dictionaries as a recognised term, but it is used in a slangy sense, and may be considered as belonging to slang phraseology. It is derived from the Gaelic and Scotch *gab* or *gob*, mouth, idle prating, loquaciousness.

An' aye he gies the towzie drab  
The tither skelpin' kiss,  
While she held up her greedy *gab*  
Just like an amous dish.  
—Burns: *The Jolly Beggars*.

The term is more often used in slang as the "gift of the *gab*."

In towns that have become accustomed to the franchise, the voters well know that though a man may be a moderate speaker,

he may, and probably will, make a more valuable business-like member of Parliament than the one who has the *gift of the gab*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Gabble manufactory** (American), sometimes called the "*Gabble Mill*"—the Congress of the United States, though in this respect it does not seem to be worse than other national assemblies.

A mill for the manufacture of *gabble*.—*J. Russell Lowell*.

*Gabble* is a diminutive of *gab*; Danish *gabberen*, to trifle, jest; old French *se gabber*, to mock. From the Scandinavian *gabb*, mockery, according to Littré; Dutch *gabbern*, to jabber.

**Gaby** (common), a simpleton, a fool or country bumpkin. (The synonym "gawcum" is used in Somersetshire.) Probably from "to gape;" Danish *gabe*. This derivation seems to be borne out by the analogous *badaud*, booby, idler; from the low Latin *badare*, to yawn, to gape.

**Gad** (gypsy), a shirt; (popular), "upon the *gad*," upon the sudden. It also signifies restless, going about.

I have no very good opinion of Mrs. Charles' nursery-maid. . . . She is always upon the *gad*.—*Miss Austen: Persuasion*.

**Gadding or gadding about.** Hotten says this is only to be heard now among the lower orders, but in America it is still

used by everybody. It does not mean merely "moving about," but going here and there in an irregular way, making short calls or brief pauses on the way.

She was always fond of *gadding*, and was now employed in adding Certain graces to her charms, which some mistake  
For nature's simple beauty, as apart from fashion's duty,  
Although fashion's oft synonymous with "fate."

—*Sporting Times*.

**Gadding the hoof** (popular), walking about without shoes. Same as "padding the hoof."

**Gaff** (American), a steel spur fixed to the "heel" of a gamecock for fighting. From *gaff*, a barbed iron or large fishing-hook.

*Gaffing* is tossing, pitching, or throwing like a juggler performing. The *gaff* is a ring worn on the forefinger of the dealer. It has a sharp point (hence probably the name), on the inner side, and the gambler when dealing from a two-card box can deal out the card he chooses. Some, however, are smart enough to do this trick without the *gaff*. It is out of date.

(Popular), a *gaff* or penny *gaff*, a low place of entertainment. This term is now used for any theatre or music-hall, as the Greenwich *gaff*. This appears to be allied to *gag* (which see), or from *gaffe*, to chatter.

Two or three times a week I used to go to the Brit. in Hoxton, or the *gaff* in Shoreditch.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(Theatrical), to *gaff*, to perform in low theatres. (Prison), a *gaff*, a pretence, imposture. In French slang *gaiffe* has the meaning of joke, deceit. (Popular and thieves), “to blow the *gaff*,” to divulge a secret.

One of them rushes to Smith, and demands, “Have you been ordering some sewing-machines?”

“Yes; is the *gaff* blown?” was the rejoinder.

“We have had a telegram to surround the station.”—*Evening News.*

*Gaff*, in the sense of imposture, and blow the *gaff*, seem to be from *gaffle*, to chatter, or are allied to *gab* or *gag* (which see).

**Gaffer** (athletes), he who trains and “owns” primarily a Sheffield handicap runner—now he who does the same to any “ped” or pedestrian.

**Gag** (theatrical), an actor’s or singer’s interpolation in the text of a play.

The chorister boys in a western cathedral have been getting into trouble for what in theatrical strollers is called *gagging*—singing things that are not in the programme.—*James Payne, in Illustrated London News.*

Many a play has been saved from utter ruin by the self-possession of the actor or actress,

who, finding himself or herself face to face with failure, has emitted some bright line, some apposite *repartee*, which in one moment has converted defeat into victory.

On its first production, the comedy of “The Jealous Wife” hung fire in the last scene, and was nearly going through altogether, until the quick-witted Mrs. Clive improvised a grotesque fainting fit, which evoked roar upon roar of laughter, put the audience into a thoroughly good humour, gave Garrick time to recover himself, and ultimately ensured a triumphant success.

Similarly Frederick Lemaitre, by sheer force of genius, combined with unique and unrivalled effrontery, at a moment’s notice converted a melodramatic ruffian into the incarnation of comedy, and created the character of Robert Macaire.

Paul Bedford’s “I believe you, my boy,” has travelled all over the globe. Chinamen and Japanese have quoted it, to prove their knowledge of the English language. Two of the most memorable *gags* of which we have any record, occurred in moments of inspiration to Macready.

The famous line at the end of the fourth act of “Richelieu”—

“Oh! for one hour of youth!”

only leaped to his lips, amidst the tumult and excitement of the scene on the night of the

first representation of the play at Covent Garden.

Similarly, on the first night of "Werner," at Bristol, in an agony of paternal anguish, he rushed down to Gabor, and in a piercing voice demanded: "Are you a father?" Then he whispered: "Say No!" Gabor, taken off his guard, roared "No!" But Macready rose above him with a wail of grief, which thrilled the heart of every auditor, as he exclaimed: "Then you cannot feel for misery like mine!" At these words, the pit rose at him.

Probably one of the best remembered, and one of the happiest interpolations, took place at Covent Garden on the occasion of T. P. Cooke (the original William) taking his farewell of the stage. Having described the killing of the shark, the veteran proceeded to say—"We hauled him on deck; we cut him open. And what do you think we found in him?" The usual reply is, "Why, his innards, of course." On this occasion, genial Johnny Toole, who played Gnatbrain, replied: "I don't know what you found in him, but I know what you *didn't* find in him. You didn't find another T. P. Cooke." This *gag* brought down the house. Like everything else, *gag* is subject to the general law of "the survival of the fittest," all that is bright and appropriate abides, all that is vulgar and inappropriate is swept

away by the stern stage manager.

To *gag*, to interpolate. *Gag* is old for jaw, palate. Thus to *gag* is synonymous with "to jaw," but it is possibly allied to the old French *gogue* (whence *goguenard*), a joke, from the Celtic *goguea*, to deceive, deride; and this derivation seems to be supported by the signification attributed to *gag* in English thieves' cant, *i.e.*, a *lie*, and to *hoax*.

**Gage** (old cant), a quart pot; from *gauge*, a measure. Written also *gage*.

I bowse no lage, but a whole *gage* of this I bowse to you.—*Brome: Jovial Crew*.

**Gage** or **gager**, a man. Also *cager*. *Gager* is in all probability the gypsy word *gorgio*, meaning any man not a gypsy. Two centuries ago the English gypsies pronounced *gorgio*, "gago" (*gah'dzho*), as their brethren still do all over Europe. (Popular), a *gage*, a small quantity of anything. "*Gage*," says Hotten, "was in the last century a chamber utensil."

**Gagger** (theatrical), one who "gags." *Vide* GAG. Actors were formerly termed *gaggers*.

**Gags** or **gatherings** (Winchester College), a name given to notes which the different parts of school used to write on the work they had done in the week.

Lamb used the word for pieces of mutton fat that make one retch or choke.

**Gait** (American thieves), manner of making a living, profession, calling.

**Galaney** or **galeny** (old cant), a fowl. From the Italian *gallina*, now used in the West of England in the sense of guinea-fowl. A gally-bird in Sussex is a wood-pecker.

**Galee** (Anglo-Indian), slang for bad language. Hindu *gali*. In English gypsy *gooler* or *gäller* is a noise or tumult, and *cäller* a talking or clatter of words.

**Gall** (American), pluck, cheek, impudence, courage.

*Dumley*—"You know that contemptible little Robinson, don't you, Brown?" *Brown*—"Yes, but I don't associate with him." *Dumley*—"Well, what do you think he had the *gall* to do to-day?" *Brown*—"He has the *gall* to do anything." *Dumley*—"He asked me to drink with him; but he'll never repeat the impudence." *Brown*—"What did you do, pull his nose?" *Dumley*—"No. I ordered a champagne cocktail, and it cost him 75 cents."—*New York Sun*.

**Gallanty-show** (common), an exhibition in which black figures are shown on a white sheet to accompany dialogues. Generally given at night by "Punch and Judy" men (Hotten). From the Italian *galanti*, fine, often applied to small shows.

**Gallery stroke** (sporting), a stroke for effect; unlike "playing for

the gallery," which has an almost forgotten theatrical origin. A *gallery stroke* is derived from the fact of so many games being witnessed from galleries. (Cricketers), a high hit up into the air to take the fancy of the spectators.

**Galley slaves** (printers), *vide* COMPS. Compositors are termed thus from the fact that their earnings, especially in newspaper offices, depend on the number of *gallics* done. A man to have a good "poll" must *slave* hard to set up a large number of *gallics*. Moxon, 1683, quotes this term.

**Galley-stoker** (nautical), a lazy skulker.

**Galley west** (American). Though it indicates an opposite direction, *galley west* means the same as "about east," being a strong superlative, as expressive of greatness or magnitude.

I have seen the Escorial and the Vatican, and the Dolme-Bagtche, and Windsor Castle, and lots of those little dug-outs over there, but I'll be darned if this establishment of yours, Hunse, don't knock any one of them *galley west*!—*galley west*, sir, that's what it does.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Gallied** (Australian popular), frightened.

**Gallimaufry** (nautical), a kind of stew made up of scraps of various kinds. Probably meaning the galley scraps (Hotten).

**Gallinipers** (West Indian), a facetious name given by the negroes to a very large and pertinacious kind of mosquito. Without a smile Quashie will tender information to the effect that they are the grandfathers of their species—veterans in practice and cunning. The origin of the word is obscure, except, perhaps, the “nipping” part of it.

**Gallipot** (popular), an apothecary, otherwise a “clyster pipe.”

It's Vidler the apothecary. . . . You said you had *gallipots* enough.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes.*

**Gallivant, to** (common), to dance attendance upon women, to play the gallant. *Gallivant* is a corruption of gallant, the process being the same as in Samivel from Samuel. Also to roam about for pleasure. The Italians have *stare a galla*, to float about, be joyous and buoyant.

A nice thing, indeed—all the company waiting and drumming their heels, while a brat like you was *gallivanting* about.—*R. Sims: The Ring o' Bells.*

**Gallivate** (American), frisking or “figuring” about. A form of “gallivant.”

Oh, Mary had a little lamb, regarding whose cuticular

The fluff exterior was white and kinked in each particular,

On all occasions when the lass was seen perambulating

This little quadruped likewise was there *a-gallivating.*

—*Tit-Bits: The Original Draft of an Ancient Chestnut MS.*

**Gallon of rum among one** (American), a saying attributed to an Indian, who, on being remonstrated with for his great intemperance on a certain occasion, replied: “What's a *gallon of rum among one?*” Also applied to a millionaire of grand ideas, who though single refused to take a very large villa because it was too small. “Fine enough—what's a *gallon of rum among one?*” murmured the would-be seller.

**Galloper** (army), an aide-de-camp. He is continually “on the move,” or “on the rack,” as Canadians say.

**Gallows** or **gallus** (common), a vulgar word for “very,” in use in America and also in England until it was almost superseded by “awful,” and “dreadful.”

I'm hard up for capital—in short, . . . I am *gallows* hard up for capital.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

In England this was originally applied to any person or thing extremely bad, “bad enough,” says Hotten, “to deserve hanging.” In the United States only its extreme or superlative character has been preserved. The French slang has *potence, i. e., gallows* (old English), to signify a rascally person of either sex, an abbreviation of “gibier de potence,” or *gallows-bird.*

**Galluptionous** (popular), delightful.



**Gallus.** *Vide* GALLOWES.

**Gally slopes** (old cant), breeches; abbreviated from "galligaskins," trousers, first worn by the Gallic Gascons, according to Wright.

**Gally yarn** (nautical), a hoaxing story. A sailor expresses disbelief by saying only *g. y.* (Hotten).

**Gal nymphs** (Winchester College), a semi-poetical name for housemaids.

**Galoot**, (nautical), an awkward soldier, a sobriquet for a young marine. In its early English use it seems to be "an infamous person," and derived from the Italian *galeotto*, a galley-slave. Its meaning as a raw marine seems to indicate this. Applied in America very generally as an abusive term, often without any special meaning.

"Yaas!" he cried, striking the bar with his fist, "I've killed twenty-seven men up on the Kansas border, and ther first *galoot* thet looks cross-eyed at me'll be my meat!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

(Also American), a scamp, a rowdy.

**Gamb** (thieves), a leg; from the Italian *gamba*.

**Game** (sporting), "to play the *game*" is to do a thing thoroughly or properly. Also, lame; from Welsh *eam*, Irish *gam*, lame.

The chair . . . broke down with the publisher. Warrington burst out laughing, and said that Bacon had got the *game* chair.—*Thackeray: Pendennis.*

(Nautical), a *game*-leg, a lame limb, but not so bad as to unfit for duty (Admiral Smyth).

**Gameness** (common), spirit, pluck, endurance. An almost recognised word.

Whatever else you might think of Blake, there was no doubt about his *gameness*.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

**Game pullet** (common), a very young prostitute, or a girl who by levity and forwardness is almost certain to become one.

**Gamey** (popular), brave, plucky.

"You'll be shot, I see." "Well," cried Mr. Bailey, "wot if I am; there's something *gamey* in it."—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit.*

And then again we had the ring,  
Of which our poets used to sing;  
In those days 'twas a *gamey* thing,  
Eh? Rather!

—*C. H. Ross: The Husband's Boat.*

**Gammon and patter** (thieves), a meeting.

**Gammon the twelve, to** (Austrian convicts' slang), to deceive the jury.

A man who has been tried by a criminal court and by a plausible defence has induced the jury to acquit him, or to banish the capital part of the charge and so to save his life, is said by his associates to have "*gammoned the twelve* in prime twig," alluding to the number of jurymen.—*Vaux's Memoirs.*

**Gammy** (theatrical), old, ugly, *passé*. From the Gaelic *gam*, lame, crooked, or bad. (Tramps', bad, unfavourable, forged, as in "*gammy* stuff," bad stuff;

“*gammy* monniker,” a forged signature; “*gammy* people,” people who are hostile to the tramps. Hotten says that the hieroglyphic used by beggars or cadgers to intimate to those of the tribe coming after that things are not very favourable, is known by **D** or *gammy*. A *gammy-vial* (*ville*) is a town where the police interfere with tramps or hawkers.

**Gamp** (society), a common term for a monthly nurse. Derived from Sarah Gamp in “Martin Chuzzlewit,” a monthly nurse famous for her gouty umbrella and perpetual reference to Mrs. Harris, a purely imaginary person, whose opinions always confirmed her own. (Common), an umbrella.

But I seriously declare that that wet day when I found myself stranded and desolate in an out-of-the-way village, if five shillings would have bought me the rustiest, most stump-worn and lettuce-shaped *gamp*, I would have paid down the money with delight.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Gamy**, foul, putrid. From a kitchen expression, as *gamy* venison, that is, like high game.

I wish, for the sake of Mr. Stickle's pigeons, that I could give a favourable account of that loft; but truth forbids. It was filthy in the extreme; and I no longer wondered how Club Row became possessed of its *gamy* atmosphere.—*J. Greenwood; Undercurrents of London Life.*

**Gan** (old cant), mouth.

This bowse is better than rom-bowse,  
It sets the *gan* a giggling.

—*Brome: Jovial Crew.*

This is very old slang, but still in use in America. From the Italian *ganascia*, jaw, a jaw-bone.

**Gander**, a married man. A very old English term, but still in use in America, where a *gander* (also a “stag”) partly means a gathering of men only. *Gander-month* in England is the time during a wife's confinement, so called, in Hotten's opinion, from the free range which the husband has at that time among the “geese.” It may be remarked in this connection that *geese* or *gheeze* in Dutch slang means a young girl, any girl; also a lady of pleasure. It is very probable that there is an undercurrent of meaning in reference to these slang words in the nursery rhyme:—

“Goosey, Goosey *Gander*,  
Whither dost thou wander?  
Up stairs, down stairs,  
In my lady's chamber.”

**Gandy month** (common). *Vide* GANDER-MONTH under GANDER.

**Gaoler's coach** (old slang), a hurdle on which at one time it was customary to convey criminals to the place of execution.

**Gape-seed** (common), something to look at, cause for astonishment; a lazy fellow unmindful of his work is said to be looking for *gape-seed* (Hotten).

**Gapes** (popular), fit of yawning.

Another hour of music was to give delight or the *gapes*, as real or affected taste for it prevailed.—*Miss Austen: Persuasion.*

**Gapped** (old slang), getting the worst of it. From old hunting slang.

I will never meet at hard-edge with her; if I did . . . I should be confoundedly *gapped*.—*Richardson: Grandison.*

**Garden** (London), for tradesmen and others, Covent Garden Market; for actors, Covent Garden Theatre. (Thieves), to "put one in the *garden*," to cheat a confederate out of his share.

**Gardener** (popular), an awkward coachman. "Get on, *gardener*," is a most insulting expression from a cabby to a real coachman (Hotten). The allusion is to families who employ the *gardener* as coachman.

**Garden-gout** (old slang), explained by quotation.

When young men by whoring, as it commonly falls out, get the pox, which, by the way of extenuation, they call the common *garden gout*.—*Bailey: Erasmus.*

It must be said that Covent Garden had a bad reputation. A "garden-whore" was a low prostitute.

**Gargle** (common), a drink. The term was first used by medical students.

A hasty introduction and a diplomatic slope  
On the part of the ingenious Mr. B.,

And the gay and gallant Green was,  
single-handed, left to cope  
With the siren who dispensed the  
L.S.D.

But her taste for high-priced *gargles*  
could in no wise be restrained,  
She appeared to look on oof as so much  
dirt,  
And he very soon discovered all the  
assets that remained  
Were a card-case and a ticket for a  
shirt.

—*Sporting Times.*

**Garnish** (old slang), a fee exacted by the keepers of gaols from the prisoners for extra comforts, real or imaginary. In Yorkshire this term means footing money.

**Garret** (common), the head, or upper storey. To have one's *garret* unfurnished is to be a fool.

As Blagg rolled over them, and they  
rolled over Blagg,  
While what's called the "claret" flew  
over the *garret*.

—*Ingoldstby Legends.*

**Garreter** (thieves), a thief who gets on the roofs of houses and effects an entrance by a garret window.

**Garrison hack** (army), a young lady brought up in a garrison town, and who, according to the definition of an officer, "knows all the officers by their Christian names."

**Garrotting** (cardsharppers), cheating by concealing certain cards at the back of the neck (Hotten). The allusion is obvious.

**Garters** (nautical), the irons or bilboes.

**Gas** (common), boastful talk, bounce.

"The Frog he would a-wooing go" is excellently done,

By Mr. Henry Gascoigne, at the merry "Marry-bun;"

In wishing him success of it, we one and all may join,

He has so little *gas*, he ought to take a lot of "coigne."

—*Fun.*

*To gas* is to bounce or brag; to give *gas*, to scold or give a beating. (Popular), "none of your old *gas*," do not brag, none of your nonsense. *Gas* in old French (from Latin *gaudere*), signifies a joke, mockery; but there is apparently no connection.

**Gas bag** (common), a man of words and wind, a gasconader. "To gas" and "gassing," as used in America, are the equivalents of the French *blaguer* and *blague*, German *gasebalg*.

**Gas pipes** (printers), bad rollers.

**Gassy** (common), liable to "flare up" at any offence. (American), talkative, bouncing, full of wind. According to Kluge (*Etymologisches Worterbek der Deutschen Sprache*) the word "gas" was invented by Van Helmont, the alchemist, who died in 1744.

**Gate-bill** (Oxford University), a list of the names and time of coming in of those who return to College after ten at night.

**Gate-race** (sporting), a mock race got up not so much for the best

runner to win, as for the money taken from the spectators (Hot-ten).

**Gater** (Winchester College), a leap head first into a "pot" or canal lock.

**Gate, to** (University), to punish a student by restricting his freedom of going outside the College gate.

The Dean gave him a book of Virgil to write out, and *gated* him for a fortnight after hall.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

**Gathering the taxes** (tailors), calling at workshops when on the road.

**Gating.** *Vide GATE.*

**Gats** (Shrewsbury school), quantity, number.

They are called up in *gats* of three at a time.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Gatter** (popular), porter.

Lots of *gatter*, quo' she, are flowing,  
Lend me a lift in the family way.

—*William Maginn.*

It has been suggested that the term is from a play on "gater," meaning gate-keeper and porter; or from "gutter," the conduit from which the beer flows in public-houses.

**Gaudy** (Oxford University and Inns of Court), grand feast, from *gaudium*. Also the annual dinner of the fellows of a college in memory of founders and benefactors.

**Gawfs** (costermongers), cheap red-skinned apples.

**Gawney** (provincial), common among the lower orders. It means a sawney or half-witted person.

**Gawpus** (nautical), a stupid, idle fellow; a "gawcum" is a provincialism with the same signification.

**Gay** (common), loose, dissipated; a "gay woman" or "gay girl," a prostitute. "All gay," *vide* ALL GAY.

**Gay tyke boy** (popular), a dog-fancier (Hotten).

**G. B.** (American), an abbreviation of "grand bounce," *i.e.*, a rejection, dismissal, or being turned out, or disinherited.

My dad and I

Have had a round-about, and he has dis-  
Sis-sis-inherited me; and I have  
Been given the G. B. on your account,  
My be-be-beautiful!

—*A Californian Romance.*

**G. C. of C.**, the (American), the Glorious Climate of California, and the Intellect of Boston, are such stock phrases in the United States, that academical writers have suggested the expediency of reducing them, like Anno Domini, to initials.

If the "glorious climate of California" is responsible for the exceedingly hopeful prospects of Rocklin's future census reports, and the said lively outlook, materialised, is responsible for my mishap, then plainly

the said G. C. of C. is the responsible element in the case. — *Thomas Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Geebung** (native word adopted by the settlers), an Australian wild-fruit.

**Gee** or **gee-gee** (common), a horse. From *gee* or *gee up*, to turn to the off side.

"I'm sick of seconds," said the Tealeaf, shutting up his book with a bang, after backing five *gee-gees* in succession, who had occupied this unenviable position. — *Bird of Freedom.*

(Popular), it won't *gee*, it will not do. From a provincialism.

*Gee-gee dodge* (commercial), selling horse-flesh as animal food.

The employés I interviewed were encouraged to speak plainly and without reserve; and unknown one to the other, they all agreed in the assurance that to their knowledge the *gee-gee dodge*, as they called it, was seldom or ever practised by their masters—the main safeguard for the public being that it was impossible to bargain with any one for a regular supply. — *J. Greenwood: Veiled Mysteries.*

**Geekie** (Scottish thieves), police-office.

Connor next asked her where it was, to which she replied, "Ben the *geekie*." He did not understand this at the time, but from the light which he afterwards got he knew it to mean the police-office. — *Police News.*

**Geezer** (popular), wife, old woman. Dutch slang, *geeze* or *geese*, a girl, a mistress, *vide* GANDER. Also a man derisively.

He'd flirt and boat, but never wrote  
A note to his old *geezer*.

—*J. F. Mitchell: Jimmy Johnson's Holiday.*

**Geneva print** (nautical), gin.

And if you meet  
An officer preaching of sobriety,  
Unless he read it in *Geneva print*,  
Lay him by the heels.

—*Massinger*.

**Gent** (popular), a contraction of gentleman, generally applied to a dressy fellow. Originated about 1847 from tailors' advertisements. The *gent* was the 'Arry of that time.

Last summer to Brighton invited,  
My friends, on a visit I went,  
And while on the sands promenading  
I met with a handsome young *gent*.  
His figure was that of Adonis,  
His eyes they were really divine,  
And oh! how my heart beat with rapture  
When he turned and his eyes they met  
mine.

—*Harry Hartley: Writing his Name  
on the Sands*.

(Old cant), money; from *argent*.

**Gentleman commoner** (Oxford University), a student who pays higher fees and dines with the fellows of the college. At Cambridge the phrase is a "fellow commoner."

**Gentleman of three outs** (popular), without money, without sense, without manners.

**Gentleman's companion** (thieves), a louse.

**Gentlemen** (nautical), the messmates of the gunroom or cockpit—as mates, midshipmen, clerks, and cadets (Admiral Smyth).

**Gentlemen of observation** (turf), an euphemism for "touts."

An equally strong force of the "touting" fraternity, and the sight of a battalion of these *gentlemen of observation*, as they are more politely called, under the trees of the "Limekilns," is one of the most interesting sights of our morning's walk at a meeting.  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Gentlemen of the green baize road** (gaming), plunderers at the card table, sharpers (Dickens' "Bleak House"); based upon the familiar phrase, "knights of the road," *i.e.*, highwaymen; hence *gentlemen of the green baize road* is equivalent to cheating gamblers, or sharpers—cards, dice, and similar games being generally played upon tables covered with green baize.

**Gentle, to** (American, Western), to tame horses after the halter breaking, or rough breaking in is accomplished.

That's so. I ain't got a colt at all in the corrals to *gentle* now.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Gentry cove** (canting), a gentleman.

The *gentry cove* will be romboyed by his dam. Queer cuffin will be the word yet if we don't tout.—*Beaconsfield: Venetia*.

**Gentry, flash** (thieves), swell thieves.

Oh, if my hands adhere to cash,  
My gloves are at least clean,  
And rarely have the *gentry flash*  
In sprucer clothes been seen.

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

**Gentry mort** (old cant), a lady.

**Genuine, to** (Winchester College), to praise.

**Geordie** (nautical), a north country collier.

**George Horne** (printers), a common exclamation among printers to a person who tells some old story as if it were new.

**Georgetown Yelper**, the (American), name of a mythical or imaginary newspaper invented by an editor when he wishes to publish original matter as borrowed. The name is only given in illustration, any other may be substituted.

*Office boy to editor, respectfully*—"Foreman says we need half a column more of editorial."

*Editor*—"Tell him to take that article we had on Blaine's speech day before yesterday, beginning, 'The following scathing review of Jim Blaine's late abortive effort from the *Jonesburg Terror* is so illustrative of our views that we, &c., and run it in again, with the name of the *Georgetown Yelper* inserted in place of the other paper."

**Georgic** (Eton), to order a boy to do a *georgic* was a favourite punishment with irate Eton masters. It consisted in writing out about 800 lines of Latin, an operation which took at least three hours for the fastest writers.

Then he pulled himself together, dashed into the house and upstairs, where he found Palmer Budd, a fellow of infinite jest and some daring, "staying out," stutteringly demanded if he were the culprit, received an affirmative, inflicted a *georgic*, and then sought for his footman.  
—*Sketchy Memories of Eton.*

**German duck** (popular), sheep's head stewed with onions.

**German ducks** (popular), bugs; otherwise known as B flats, in opposition to F sharps, *i.e.*, fleas.

**German flutes** (rhyming slang), a pair of boots.

**Germans** (common), sausages.

I am glad to be able to state that—having spent several half-hours in the company of as many separate witnesses, all of them employed at different manufactories of *germans*, "collared head," and "spiced beef," chiefly for supplying shops situated in the poorest and most densely populated neighbourhoods—as far as I can make out there is at present no danger that our feline pets will go hungry because of the wholesale conversion of their favourite food into sausages.—*J. Greenwood: Veiled Mysteries.*

**Gerry** (old cant). C. J. R. Turner translates this as excrement, and derives it from the Latin *gerre*, trifles, stuff, nonsense. It also occurs in cant as *jeer*, in which case it is simply the gypsy *jeer*, *jiv*, the rectum, also excrement, though *fül* is the common word for the latter. Where it occurs as *iere*, Mr. Turner derives it from the Gaelic *inneir*, dung, which is hardly so close as *jeer*.

**Gerry gan** (old cant), incidentally, hold your tongue. Literally, s— in your mouth. Modern Parisians will say, "Tais ta gueule ou j'te c— dedans."

*Gerry gan*, the ruffian clye thee.

—*Harman: Cavcat.*

**Gerund-grinder** (common), a schoolmaster.

**Get against the game, to** (American), a term borrowed from poker, but in general use to signify taking risks in anything.

**Get a grind on any one, to** (American), to have a joke on a man, to play a trick, or to have "a good story" to tell against him, it being a popular belief that anything which annoys, pains, or vexes a person is "smart," or witty.

**Get a hat, to** (cricketers), to bowl three wickets in three consecutive balls; originally one was supposed to be presented with a new cocked hat when he had achieved the feat.

**Get a set on, to** (Australian popular), to have a spite against. This is a variation of the English "to make a dead-set against."

**Get at, to** (racing), to put *hors-de-combat*, to corrupt. "Getting at" meant originally getting access to a horse to injure it, but it has also been transferred to those connected with the horse, the owner, the trainer, the jockey, the veterinary surgeon. Applied to them it meant the same as "get round," or "square," *i.e.*, to corrupt into not running the horse fairly. From this it has been applied to any kind of corruption. For instance rabid Tories have accused Mr. Gladstone of having been *got at* by the Irish Americans.

"You see, sir," he explained, "there are no end of loafing vagabonds about that 'ere Yering; who knows but what some of 'em might take it into their heads to *get at* him."—*A. C. Grant.*

**Get away** (American), a locomotive, called in English popular slang a "puffer." Also a railway train.

**Get back into your box!** (American), be quiet, silence!

**Get behind a man, to** (common), to indorse a man's bill.

**Get even with, to** (common), to revenge one's self.

Those who think this country fails to *get even with* France for her unjust discrimination against American pork possibly have never heard a graduate of an American young ladies' boarding-school mangling French. The revenge is terrible.—*American Newspaper.*

**Get off a keen, to** (American cadet), to make a witty remark.

**Get one cold, to** (American), to have a man at advantage, to "best him," to "have him dead to rights." To pin a man down, or to catch him. To get one foul (MS. Americanisms).

**Get-penny** (old slang), a paying speculation. It occurs in Kirkman's "Wits or Sports upon Sports" (1673).

**Get set, to** (cricket), to begin to play well, when the batsman is "getting his eye in."



**Get the length of one's foot, to** (popular), to understand how to manage a person.

**Get the mitten, to** (American Universities), to be expelled from college.

(Popular), to be discarded or jilted.

There is a young lady I have set my heart on; though whether she is a goin' to give me hers, or *give me the mitten*, I ain't quite satisfied.—*Sam Slick: Human Nature.*

**Get the needle, to** (cards), to lose much money at a game. (Common), to get angry.

And fancy *my* slang being stale, Charlie!  
*Gives me the needle*, that do.

In course I've been in it for years, mate,  
and mix up the old and the new;

But if the St. James's young gentleman  
fancies hisself on this lay,

I'll "slang" him for glasses all round, him  
whose patter fust fails 'im to pay.

—*Punch.*

**Get there, to** (American), to succeed. A characteristic American expression very freely used in conversation. "The speculation book's rather smoky—but I'll *get there*," means that though the venture is unpromising at present it will prove profitable in the end.

**Get there with both feet, to** (West American slang), to be very successful.

He said as he'd been gambling, and was two hundred dollars ahead of the town. He *got there with both feet* at starting,

and was eight hundred ahead once, but he played it off at monte.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Get the run, to** (English and Australian), to be discharged.

**Get the sack or bag, to** (common), to be discharged. As the "bag-man" is the traveller of the firm, very possibly *to get the bag* means to be sent on one's travels. *Cf.* "get the sack," "get the run." Compare also German "einen korb behommen," to get a basket, to be dismissed.

"Do you know to whom you are talking?" replied the Governor. "No, and I am — if I care," came the answer; and it took all the illustrious personage's powers of persuasion to get the man to take him across. The ferryman now knows who his passenger was. He has *got the sack*.—*Modern Society.*

**Getting an<sup>e</sup> encore** (tailors), having to rectify something wrong with your job.

**Getting into his wool, wooling him** (American), beating a man, assaulting him violently. A simile borrowed from the negroes, who in fighting attack the head and pull the hair.

Chicago traders are *getting into Philadelphia's wool* in fine style.—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Getting on** (turf), backing a horse for any particular race. The term usually implies a more or less hurried operation.

**Getting out** (racing), laying against a horse previously

backed. This is almost invariably done in haste, though perhaps not more often repented of at leisure than are most speculations.

**Getting the length of his foot** (tailors), knowing what is preferred, and acting accordingly.

**Getting your flannels.** *Vide*  
FLANNELS.

**Getting your hand on him** (tailors), not trusting him, suspicious.

**Get, to** (American), to depart hastily. It is generally in the form "you *get!*" i.e., "begone." There is also an expression, "you bet!" meaning that you may bet on it, or be sure of the matter in question.

One night Bill heard a noise. It was a burglar who had clambered the grape-vine arbour, and was just going to entrance the window. Bill he grabbed his gun and drew a bead on the burg, saying, "You *get!*" The burg looked up, and seeing the iron, replied, "You bet," and retreated.  
—*The Tale of Bill Shuter.*

**Get-up** (common), dress, pure and simple, or dress with marked intention in, or mode of dressing. To *get up* well is to be perfectly dressed.

The Empress of Austria never went out hunting without her fan, the only thing that seemed strange to English eyes in a very perfect costume and *get-up*.—*The World.*

The way in which he received my civil application was complimentary at least to

my *get-up*. In evident agitation and alarm he informed me that he did not want anything to say to me.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Get up and dust** (American), arise and depart; the idea being that a man or a horse raises a dust as he goes on the road.

While dusting the furniture a Bangor serving-maid fell out of a second-storey window. She then placidly arose and *dusted herself*.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Get up one's Injun, to** (American). When a man feels his temper rising with a certain amount of determined ferocity he is said to feel the Indian rising in him.

**G. H.** (printers), see STEREO. These initial letters owe their origin to a certain Mr. George Horne, a typographer, who was in the habit of retailing stale news. If a workman repeats a story already known, an intimation to hold his tongue is conveyed by uttering the ominous letters *G. H.*

**Ghastly** (society), the commonest emphatic word of the day, signifying bad, awful.

**Ghaut** (Anglo-Indian), a landing-place, or path of descent to a river.

The country-people call this place the *ghaut*,  
And from its foot-hills scanty breath  
there be.

—*Burton: Translation of Camoens.*

**Ghee** (Anglo-Indian), boiled butter; used in cooking through all India.

“In most of the prisons of Hyder Ali it was the custom (of European prisoners) to celebrate particular days, when the funds permitted, with the luxury of plantain fritters (fried bananas), a draught of sherbet, and a convivial song. On one occasion the old Scotch ballad “My wife has ta'en the *gee*” was admirably sung and loudly encored. It was reported to the Kelledar (commander of the fort) that the prisoners said and sung through all the night of nothing but *ghee*. The Kelledar, certain that discoveries had been made regarding his malversations in that article of garrison stores, determined to conciliate their secrecy by causing an abundant supply of this unaccustomed luxury to be henceforth placed within the reach of their farthing purchases” (Wilkes' Historical Sketches, Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Ghost-racket** (American), any event or narrative into which the spiritual or ghostly element enters.

The most novel *ghost-racket* on record has just been worked by a Jersey detective in a vain attempt to scare an ignorant German into confessing that he was a murderer.—*Chicago Tribune*.

We have had the tallest *ghost-racket* here in our town that you ever did audit.—*Washington (Pa.) Eagle*.

**Ghost walking** (theatrical), a term originally applied by an impetuous stroller in a sharing company to the operation of “holding the treasury,” or paying the salaries, which has become a stock facetiæ amongst all kinds and descriptions of actors. Instead of inquiring whether the treasury is open, they usually say—“Has the *ghost* walked?” or “What! has this thing appeared again?” (Shakspeare).

A new play called “The Skeleton” has been produced at a Vaudeville *matinée*. It isn't likely to be in much esteem with the actors, owing to a natural deficiency of “fat,” although, on the other hand, it may certainly be expected to offer a favourable opportunity for the *ghost* to walk.—*Funny Folks*.

(Commercial), in large firms, when the clerk whose duty it is goes round the various departments paying wages, it is common to say the *ghost walks*.

**Ghouls** (American), prying and spying reporters for newspapers who chronicle the meanest gossip of private life. The term originated in the “ghoulish glee” of President Cleveland. The word *ghoul* is a great favourite with American newspaper writers, and is used in every grammatical form, as to *ghoul*, *ghouler*, *ghoulest*, and *ghoulette*, a female ghoul, especially a blackmail-levying prostitute.

The *ghouls* also reported that Mrs. Folsom, in the absence of Mrs. Cleveland,

had licked Hector (the President's dog) for being too fresh and promiscuous. . . . The *ghouls* who haunt Mr. Cleveland are not confined to the Republican press. Far from it. A *ghoul* of the *Washington Post* reported that the sex of Hector had been misunderstood, and his (her) real sex just discovered.—*New York World*.

**Ghoulish glee** (American), an expression first used by President Cleveland, which immediately became a popular catch-word. It may be observed that in the following paragraph there is a slang expression in every sentence.

Some newspaper with *ghoulish glee* remarks that the President undertook to pull down his Vest, but that Vest pulled him down. It is certain that he squatted. He bounced Benton for making partizan speeches, and was scared into putting him back into office. It is the completest backdown known to the White House.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**G. I.** (printers), "general indulgence," *i.e.*, a birthday, holiday treat, and is also the festive occasion when an apprentice "comes of his time," an event signalised by much noise, and usually followed by bread and cheese and beer. Sometimes the words "great independence" are attributed to these letters on such an occasion, specially referring to the independence gained by the apprentice.

**Gib** (prison and army), slang for Gibraltar, to which transportation ceased in 1875. (Nautical), a forelock

**Gib face** (popular), a heavy, ugly face. To "hang one's *gib*," to pout the lower lip. *Gib* is properly the lower lip of a horse, or a bump or swelling.

**Gideon's band** (American), a slang term for good-fellowship, association, union for carousing, &c. The term comes from a negro minstrel song, the air and some of the words of which were originally of a camp-meeting or Methodist hymn.

Oh, keep your hat upon your head,  
For you may need it when you're dead;  
Oh, keep your shoes upon your feet,  
That you may walk the golden street.

*Ch.* If you belong to *Gideon's band*,  
Oh, here's my heart and here's my hand,  
We're hunting for a home.

Oh, keep your trousers on your legs,  
That you may hang 'em on the golden  
pegs;  
'Twixt you and me, I really think  
It's pretty near time to take a drink,  
If you belong to *Gideon's band*.

**Gift-house** (printers), a house of call. Compositors have their "gifts" also, or clubs—a limited number of members being admitted only, and their objects being to find employment or to provide for non-employment in the shape of a provident allowance.

**Gig** (popular), a farthing, the nose.

**Gigger** (tailors), sewing-machine; from "to gig," to make a noise.

**Gig-lamps** (common), spectacles.

A person who wears spectacles is sometimes called *gig-lamps*.

He had chosen his friend Verdant to be his prompter; so that the well-known *gig-lamps* of our hero formed, as it were, a very focus of attraction.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Gills** (popular), the jaws, the face; to give a “bang in the *gills*,” to strike one in the face. Also a high or large shirt collar.

**Gilt** (popular), money; from the German *geld*, Dutch *gelt*. *Guelte*, in French shopmen’s assistants’ slang, is the percentage allowed them on the sale. Shakspeare has punned on the word *gilt*.

Have for the *gilt* of France,  
O guilt indeed!

—*Henry V.*

(Thieves), a crowbar.

**Gilt-edged** (American), as the best note-paper was once always *gilt-edged*, the term passed to the Stock Exchange to denote the paper or promissory notes of the first class, on which there could be no risk. Hence the expression became general for anything superlative.

“A man is an infernal fool to play poker anywhere,” said a well-known sport and politician to a *Tribune* reporter the other evening; “but he is a *gilt-edged* idiot to play the game in a card-room or anywhere else where Tom, Dick, and Harry may take a hand.”—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Gilt-tick** (costermonger), money as represented by gold coins.

**Gimcrack** (provincial), a handy man, a universal mechanic or Jack of all trades. In this sense common in Northamptonshire. (Popular), a spruce person.

**Gimlet-eyed** (common), with very small eyes. A corresponding but coarse expression in French slang is “des yeux en trou de pine.”

**Gin** (Australian), the wife of an Australian native.

An Australian settler’s wife bestows on some poor slaving *gin* a cast-off French bonnet.—*C. Kingsley: Two Years Ago.*

**Gin and Gospel Gazette** (journalistic), *The Morning Advertiser*. So called from the fact of its having for a long period, in the early days of its existence, devoted a portion of its space to the announcements of its particular *clientèle*, and another to advertisements of works on theology, and notices of preachers at London churches and chapels.

**Ginger** (theatrical), an idiom derived from the vocabulary of the stables. If an actor plays a part tamely, or ineffectively, it is a common phrase to say “he wants *ginger*.” (Popular), a man with red, yellow, or yellow-brownish-red hair.

The man that I loved was as fair as could be,

The man that I married’s a sort of a *ginger*,

The man that I loved paid attention to me,  
The man that I married my feelings doth injure.

—*T. C. Lewis: The Man I Loved and the Man I Married.*

A *ginger*, a showy, fast horse. From a well-known practice of horse-dealers.

**Gingerbread** (common), a disparaging epithet for too showy adornment of articles of furniture, architecture, &c.

The rooms are too small, and too much decorated with carving and gilding, which is a kind of *gingerbread* work.—*Smollett: France and Italy.*

The French use the term “en pain d'épice” with a like signification. (Nautical), “*gingerbread* work,” profusely carved decorations of a ship. (Thieves), money.

Your old dad had the *gingerbread*.—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

**Ginger-snap** (American), a hot-tempered person, particularly one with yellowish or ginger-coloured hair. A *ginger-snap* is also a very hard ginger biscuit.

Her face was covered with tears and woe, and her little fist aided her apron in dabbing more sorrow from her eyes. “O teacher, teacher,” she sobbed, “Maudie’s calling me names. Maudie [a sob] called me [another sob] a *ginger-snap*, boo-hoo!”—*American Newspaper.*

**Gingham** (common), an umbrella.

He was one of the great unpaid and self-elected flock of hypocrites yclept evangelists, and, with a *gingham* in one hand and a bundle of tracts in the other, he entered a third-class compartment.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Gingle-boys** (old), coin.

We thank our fates, the sign of the *gingle-boys* hangs at the door of our pockets.—*Massinger: Virgin Martyr.*

**Gingumbob** (common), a bauble. From the same root as “jingle.”

**Ginning it up** (American), “working things up,” working hard and energetically at anything.

The Apaches were out to beat hell—at least that was the tune we were all talking to about that time. And they were *ginning her up*, and making things a bit lively, that’s a fact.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

The origin is from working at a cotton gin.

**Gin penny** (costermongers), the extra profit charged to provide the “glass of something short” before going home.

**Gin spinner**, a distiller or rectifier of gin (Hotten).

**Gip** (thieves), a thief, abbreviated from gypsy.

**Gippies** (journalistic), explained by quotation.

Colonel Kitchener will probably stick to his original intention of having only *gippies* (as they call the Egyptian soldiers here) at Suakim.—*The World.*

**Give, to** (common), used in a slangy sense in the phrase “to *give* it one,” to scold, to thrash. “I’ll *give* it you;” in French, “Je vais t’en donner;” Italian, “To vi lo daro.” (American), *to give* is extensively used to form active verbs of extremely varied forms. “*To give* on the make,” to be clever at profiting. “*To give* on praying,” to excel in prayer. With certain persons it is used as frequently as “fix.”

**Give away, to** (American), to inadvertently betray or injure one's self. The man who through forgetfulness or maladroitness "lets out" that he himself has been guilty of something which he had previously condemned gives himself away conspicuously. Also to communicate a thing or to violate confidence. It is said of a Yankee damsel in a university town that she once expressed great horror at the conduct of certain girls with the students. "I was going," she said, "by the College early the other morning, when I saw a great basket being let down with a young lady in it." Here the tale was interrupted, and when it was resumed the fair narrator forgetfully added—"Oh, yes! wasn't it awful? just when about ten feet from the ground the rope broke—and down I came!" "There you *gave yourself away*," remarked a hearer. The expression came into common use about 1868. In its original meaning it was limited to inadvertent betrayal. It is now vaguely used in several senses.

**Give a weight, to** (street), to help a person in lifting a heavy weight.

**Give best, to** (popular), to leave, leave off, to yield.

But after a time I *gave him best* (left him) because he used to want to bite my ear (borrow) too often.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

*To give best* means originally to acknowledge, and thus passes easily to mean the natural corollary of a confession of inferiority, relinquishing or submitting. Also used in Australia.

Accordingly after publication on Friday (it was a bi-weekly paper, the defunct *Pleasant Creek Chronicle*) we "rushed in" our "dis." and *gave* the case-room *best* on Saturday morning.—*Thos. L. Work: Australian Printer's Keepsake.*

**Give 'em Jessie**, a party war-cry widely current in the Presidential Campaign of 1856. Fremont, the Republican candidate, had fifteen years before made a runaway match with Jessie, daughter of Thomas H. Benton, and the popular favour with which runaway matches are apt to be regarded was made much of in this case, the lady's name being freely used in song and story by her husband's political supporters. It was, however, in common use a century before Jessie Fremont was born. It is probably an allusion to the "rod of Jesse" in the Old Testament.

**Give him a chance for his white alley** (American), let him have a last chance for, a forlorn hope, a fluke, give the man one more trial. A figure borrowed from the boys' game of marbles.

**Give it a bone** (common), "stop it," or "that's stale." The metaphor is, of course, that of giving a dog a bone to stop his noise.

- Give it mouth** (popular), speak up. In Italian, "dar la bocca."
- Give it to** (old cant), to rob; "I gave it to him for his reader," I stole his pocket-book.
- Give sky-high, to** (Australian and popular), to blow up, to scold in the most immoderate fashion. The metaphor is from "blowing up"—sometimes simply "to sky-high" is used.
- Give the collar, to** (American), to seize, arrest, to "collar."  
 "The charge is drunkenness."  
 "Yes, I suppose so, but here is the case: I left home at eight o'clock in the evening to buy a pork chop for breakfast. I buy my chop and am going home in a peaceful manner, when a policeman comes up and gives me the collar."—*Detroit Free Press*.
- Give the word, to** (theatrical), to prompt.
- Give us a rub of your thumb** (tailors), show me how you do it.
- Giving out** (theatrical), announcing in front of the curtain the performances for the following evening—generally done by the Juvenile Man, sometimes the Manager, and very often by the Walking Gent, if he is young and a favourite with the fair sex.
- Giving you a hoist** (tailors), doing you a bad turn.
- Gladstone** (common), used to denote cheap claret, from the circumstance that Mr. Gladstone reduced the duty on French wines.
- Glasgow magistrate**, a salt herring. When George IV. visited Scotland a wag placed some salt herrings on the iron guard of the carriage belonging to a well-known Glasgow magistrate, who made one of a deputation to receive his Majesty (Hotten).
- Glass** (thieves), an hour.
- Glass work** (cardsharppers), explained by quotation.  
 "What on earth is *glass work*?"  
 "The use of a convex mirror about the size of a small coin. It is fastened with shellac to the lower corner of the left palm, opposite the thumb, and reflects the cards as dealt. Gamblers generally made them by buying those little silvered glass globes used for children's Christmas trees and breaking out a piece. Sometimes the mirrors were set in half-crowns and laid carelessly on the table, but that is all gone by now, and to-day a man must be able to take a square pack of cards and do all his work without apparatus."—*Star*.
- Glaze** (popular), glass; "to star the glaze," to break a window pane. Glaze for glass is old gypsy.
- Glaziers** (thieves), the eyes. (Anglo-Norman), *glas*, bright or blue, allied to glass.
- Toure out with your *glaziers*, I swear by the ruffin  
 That we are assaulted by a queer cuffin.  
 —*Brome: A Jovial Crew*.  
*I.e.*, "Look out with all your eyes, I swear by the devil a magistrate is coming."
- Glib** (popular), tongue; "slacken your glib."



**Glib gabbet** (nautical), smooth and ready of speech. *Vide* GAB.

**Glim** (popular and thieves), an eye.

Harold escaped with the loss of a *glim*.—*Ingoldsbj Legends*.

A light or candle.

“Don't make such a row,” said Sikes, bolting the door. “Show a *glim*, Toby.”—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

“Douse the *glim*,” blow the candle out. (Nautical), *glims*, spectacles. (Common), the *glim*, gonorrhœa.

**Glimflashy** (popular), angry.

Don't be *glimflashy*; why, you'd cry beef on a blater.—*Lytton: Pelham*.

**Glim lurk** (begging-letter writers), a begging petition giving an account of a fire in which some relative of the impostor is said to have perished or been injured. A common dodge, by which the writer of this was once “taken in.”

**Glimmering morte** (old cant), a woman who solicited alms under the pretence that she had lost all her property by fire.

**Globe rangers** (nautical), a sobriquet for the Royal Marines.

**Globes** (American), a woman's breasts.

**Globe-trotters** (common), travellers who have gone round the world.

These coachmen are such privileged beings that they play practical jokes on even high and distinguished *globe-trotters*. Ben Halliday's upon Horace Greeley, the eccentric editor of the *New York Tribune* and once candidate for the Presidency of the United States, has gone the rounds of the English world's press.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

**Glope, to** (Winchester College), to spit.

**Glorious** (popular), intoxicated.

**Glory-Hole** (popular), the hall for worship used by members of the Salvation Army. So called originally from a cellar or underground place of meeting in Brighton.

These hoary-headed buffers,  
And devil-dodging duffers,  
At the *Glory-Hole* in Teddy Street they  
rave.

Young women and young girls  
They denude—of all their curls,  
When they get them in their den or  
rather cave.

—*Broadside: The Brighton Glory-Hole*.

**Gloves** (racing), “going for the *gloves*,” betting with utter disregard to means of payment. The maxim laid down by Montrose that—

“He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his deserts are small,  
Who fears to put it to the touch,  
To win or lose it all,”

may embody a sound policy in love affairs, but is not to be commended to the turf speculator.

When the piquets were up it was a man's own fault if he was welsbed. Among the established men who bet at the lists there

<sup>w</sup> as seldom a welsher, or any one *going for the gloves*, and this was the great thing to be said in favour of the lists that are now gone for ever.—*Sporting Times*.

**Glove trick** (American thieves), a variety of what is known in Paris as the “*vol à l'Américaine*,” or the taking in a dishonest person in such a way as to make the “victim” think he is cheating the one who is the master-thief.

“The success of this game is dependent on the latent dishonesty of the victims. The properties consist of a handsome kid glove and a cheap ring with a stone in it. The ring is stuck in a finger of the glove so as to be most conspicuous, and the two are dropped at the feet of a woman as she is walking in the street. ‘I beg your pardon,’ the “crook” exclaims, ‘you’ve dropped your glove!’ The woman would look at it, perceive that there was a ring in it, and if she were dishonest would claim it. Then the crook would demur. ‘Maybe the glove did not belong to the lady—and now he noticed it, there was a ring in it!’ The woman, five times out of ten—for the thief reads faces easily—would say, ‘I’m sure it’s mine—but here is something for yourself,’ and would give him five dollars for what she believed was a valuable *solitaire*” (*Philadelphia Press*).

**Glow** (tailors), ashamed; derived doubtless from the warm “tint”

the face assumes under embarrassing circumstances.

**Glue-pot** (old cant), a clergyman, because he joined men and women in the bonds of matrimony, glued or cemented them together.

**Glumpish** (popular), sulky.

**Glutton** (pugilistic), a hard fighter, one who never seems to have had enough fighting.

**Go** (general), impetus, energy, spirit, vigour, strength of purpose, a proceeding. This originally slang word has established itself in the language by dint of general usefulness and expressiveness. Its vulgar offshoot “*go it*” is not likely to be equally successful.

Still, when we get to Victoria, though the air of intense energy and *go* has vanished, there is something that appeals more strongly to the English mind.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

The strange costumes, the bold riding, the actors so picturesque, the *go* and action so vigorous, all combine to make the brilliant show one of the most exciting that Londoners have ever seen.—*Bailey's Monthly Magazine*.

“A rum *go*,” a strange affair; “a great *go*,” a remarkable or important affair; “all the *go*,” much in vogue; “no *go*,” impossible; “a pretty *go*,” a trouble, unfortunate circumstance, scrape.

(Turf), an owner or jockey are equally said to be having or not having a *go*, according to their

supposed intentions with regard to a race. The horse, though implicated in the transaction only as a more or less passive instrument, is also thus spoken of.

(Popular), a *go*, a drink; termed formerly a *go-down*.

So they went on talking politics, puffing cigars, and sipping whisky and water, until the *goes*, most appropriately so called, were both gone.—*Sketches by Boz*.

(Thieves), “to *go* the jump,” to enter a house by the window.

**Go abroad, to** (popular and thieves), formerly signified to be transported.

The Artful Dodger *going abroad* for a common twopenny-halfpenny sneeze-box! —*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Goads** (American), Peter Funks (which see). “Coppers” in gambling houses.

**Go along** (popular and thieves), a fool, also “go alonger.”

**Go and bust yourself** (roughs), equivalent to “you be blowed;” also “go and eat coke.”

“*Go and bust yerself*—go and eat coke!”

A hero has spoken. . . .  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Go and hire a hall** (American), a common expression which is very characteristic of a people as familiar with lectures and public discussions as the Americans. It is addressed to a bore who talks a long time, or always on some special subject. Such people who insist on delivering

impromptu lectures are told to *go and hire a hall*.

If you're always dropping chestnuts,  
Like the forest in the Fall,  
Even though they are the best nuts,

You had better *hire a hall!*

Oh, *go and hire a hall!*

It would please us one and all,

You can splatter at your leisure,

If you *go and hire a hall!*

—*C. Leland Harrison: MS. Collection of Americanisms—Negro Minstrel Ballad*.

**Go-ashores** (nautical), a seaman's best dress.

**Go as you please** (athletes), a race in which the competitors may run, walk, or rest as they like. Usually applied to the barbarous six days' “wobbles.”

**Goatee** (American), the peculiar kind of tuft of hair on the chin worn by Americans and Irish Yankees. So called from its similarity to a goat's beard. In French slang *bouc*, *i. e.*, he-goat.

**Goater** (American), dress.

**Gob** (popular), a provincialism, but chiefly used by slangy persons, the mouth; a “spank on the *gob*,” a blow on the mouth. Saliva or mucus. *Gob* is often used for “gab” in the phrase, “gift of the *gob*.” From the Gaelic *gob*, mouth.

**Go back upon, to** (American), a very curious phrase, equivalent to betray in an unexpected manner, but which has a certain refinement of application which is

difficult to describe. In most cases it intimates that the betrayer has been a trusted friend, and that ingratitude forms a part of the description. In the "Breitmann Ballads" we are told of a candidate who had lost the entire vote of a small town in which he confided,

"'Twas long ere he tid know  
Vot make dis rural fillage  
*Go pack oopon him so.*"

**Gobble** (American), to *gobble* up or devour is a well-known English word. In the United States *gobbling* is often specially applied to the purchase of smaller or rival railroads, insurance companies, &c., by wealthier or shrewder rivals. Thus when the Pennsylvania Railroad Company failed in its effort to purchase the Northern, Central, and other roads, it was announced by the newspapers that "It can't *gobble* its competitor."

(Yale University), to seize, to lay hold of, to collar. At Cambridge, however, "to *gobble* Greek," means to speak or study that language. "You may have seen him traversing the grass-plots '*gobbling* Greek' to himself."

**Gobler** (popular), a turkey-cock. In Scottish slang the bird is called a "bubbly-jock." Harman, in his "Caveat," gives *gobler*, a duck.

**Gob-stick** (nautical), a horn or wooden spoon. *Vide* GOB.

**Go by Walker's bus, to** (common), to go on foot.

**God** (common). The gallery people, who sit enthroned in high Olympus, are called *gods*.

"The Brit.," where specialities we every  
Christmas see,  
Turns out a feast of local fun, entitled,  
*King Tricke*;  
And Mrs. Lane can cater well for pittite,  
box, or *god*,  
A Lane without a turning in the path  
she's always trod.

—*Fun*.

Invariably the most sympathetic and enthusiastic, and not infrequently the most intelligent portion of the audience. Formerly, in many of the important country theatres, the verdict of the gallery on the first night decided the success or failure of the season. "Up amongst the *gods*," the upper gallery, termed by the French *paradis*, or *poulailler*.

(Printers), the nine quadrats used in "jefling" were thus called. Perhaps from the fact that the player would be invoking the *god* of fortune, &c., in his behalf.

(Eton), one of the sixth form.

A *god* at Eton is probably in a more exalted position, and receives more reverence than will ever afterwards fall to his lot.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**God bless the Duke of Argyle** (popular), much used by tailors. This expression is often used by a man when he rubs his back against a post or projection, for the purpose of allaying the

itching sensation in the small of his back, where his fingers cannot reach. It is said that one of the Dukes of Argyle caused posts to be erected in certain parts of his domain, so that all persons troubled with an itching back might relieve their sufferings. This must be taken *eum grano salis*.

**Goddess** (Anglo- or Malay-Indian), an absurd corruption which used to be applied by our countrymen in the old settlements in the Malay countries to the young women of the land. It is the Malay *gōdis*, a virgin.

And then how strange, at night opprest  
By toils, with songs you're lulled to rest,  
Of rural *goddesses* the guest.

Delightful!  
—*W. Marsden: Mem.*

(Common), a female sitting in the gallery of a theatre.

Each one-shilling *god* within reach of a  
nod is,  
And plain are the charms of each gallery  
*goddess*.

—*Rejected Addresses.*

**Godfathers** (American), jurymen. The author of the New York Slang Dictionary explains this by saying that they name the degrees of crime.

**Gods** (tailors), block patterns, or patterns stored and prized by those unable to produce patterns themselves.

**Gods of cloth** (tailors), classical tailors.

**Go-easter** (American), cow-boy slang. A *go*, a valise, so called because the cow-boy seldom owns such an object till he buys one to go to a city, which is generally eastwards (C. Leland Harrison).

**Goff, Mrs.** (American Universities), a cant phrase to denote any woman.

**Go for the gloves.** *Vide* GLOVES.

**Goings-on** (common), proceedings.

The *goings-on* of hundreds of years since are so frequently represented before our latter-day eyes, that in all probability the present generation knows more about its remote ancestors than the worthies did themselves.—*Modern Society.*

**Going to pieces** (sporting), demoralised, tired out.

**Going to pot** (popular), to go to ruin. Old metal-work, &c., when too old for use, is *sent to pot*, *i.e.*, melted down for other uses. This is probably the origin of the phrase.

**Go into the kitchen, to** (popular), to drink one's tea out of the saucer; an allusion to the vulgar method of drinking very common amongst servants.

**Go it** (popular), once perfectly good English, but now a slang mode of expression used as a term of encouragement, as for example in Artemus Ward's "Go it, my gay and festive

cuss ;” or, “*Go it*, you cripples, Newgate’s on fire.”

I met the other day our mutual friend—  
aw—Henry Irving,

Linked arm-in-arm with Tennyson the  
poet ;

And Randy walked behind, his grand mous-  
tache with pleasure curving ;

Kilrain was urging all of them to *go it*.

—*Topical Times*.

To *go it*, to act with energy, spirit, fearlessly. In the quotation it is used in a disparaging sense.

The second offender, who has been *going it* with him, being a much smaller youth, is much more scared.—*The Graphic*.

**Go it blind** (common), a phrase meaning to act without due thought or deliberation. Edwards says : “ It is derived from the game of poker, where a player may, if he chooses, *go it blind*, by doubling the ‘ante’ before looking at his cards, and if the other players refuse to see his ‘blind’ he wins the ‘ante.’ ”

**Go it, boots ! go it, rags ! I’ll hold your bonnet ! glang !** (American), cries of encouragement to a man on foot or on horseback, “ doing time.” In England there is also the well-known “ Go it, ye cripples, wooden legs are cheap ! ”

**Goldbacked ’uns** (popular), body lice.

**Gold bug** (American) a millionaire.

To her enduring honour be it said, the only country where *gold bugs* have not

been permitted to dictate such legislation that their talent in the napkin may be hocused in the sight of all men up to the value of two talents, is the great Republic across the Atlantic.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**Goldfinches** (popular), sovereigns.

Two canaries equal one *goldfinch*—who so possesseth needeth never to pine for lack of notes.—*Punch*.

**Gold-finder** (old), a cleaner of privies or jakes, a night-man.

A *gold-finder* or jakes farmer.—*Urquhart’s Translation of Rabelais*.

**Golgotha** (Cambridge University), literally the place of a skull, “ but,” says the *Westminster Review*, “ a particular part of the University Church is appropriated to the “heads” of the houses, and is called *golgotha* therefrom, a name which the appearance of its occupants renders peculiarly fitting, independent of the pun.” It also signifies a hat.

**Goll** (games), the hand ; derived from the Keltic. Hence *golf*, hand-ball.

**Gollop, to** (common), to swallow greedily ; a corruption of “ gulp.”

**Golly, by golly** (American), a common interjection. It is very doubtful whether it is used euphemistically for God. Nor is it strictly true, as Bartlett says, that it is chiefly to be heard among negroes, since it is quite as common among boys in New England or in the West.

Formerly used in the form "by goly" in England.

Why then, *by goly*, I will tell you! I hate you, and I can't abide you.—*Fielding: An Old Man taught Wisdom.*

**G.O.M.** (general), *i.e.*, grand old man, a nickname of Mr. W. E. Gladstone. It was first used by Mr. Bradlaugh in a speech at Northampton. Since then it has become exceedingly popular, being used derisively by the right honourable gentleman's political opponents, and respectfully, though familiarly, by those who look upon him as a leader. It is now used facetiously in reference to any one.

Each guest has p'raps already guessed the gentleman I mean,  
For all these qualities unite in but one man, I ween:  
I sing that real *G.O.M.*—the chairman of our green—  
Who here this evening may be seen presiding o'er this scene.  
—*St. Helen's Lantern.*

**Gomers** (Winchester College), an abbreviation of "go homers," the clothes college "men" wear when going home instead of gowns. In the old days "*gomers* and hats" was a "peal" similar to "boots and leathers." *Gomer* means also a pewter dish.

**Gone** (American), but also used in England to signify loss, ruin, or total injury. "*Gone up*" and "*gone down*" are in this meaning synonymous. One may also hear that it or he is a "*gone case*," a "*gone goose*," a "*gone coon*," "*gone bird*," or "*a goner*."

"It is all *gone-day* with him" is also a common idiom, meaning that his day or time is lost or over. A "*goner*" also naturally refers to anything or anybody who has escaped or died.

I knew, in the language of the States, that I was a *gone coon*.—*Moonshine.*

**Gone for** (theatrical), criticised, run down. Borrowed from the Americans.

The "*Circassian*," at the Criterion, is drawing better houses than might have been expected, seeing how the piece was *gone for* by the body critical. And in spite of its ultra-extravagance and strained fun, it makes the people laugh.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Gone off one's chump** (popular), crazy.

I'm frantic—still I wander about,  
I am nearly *gone off my chump*,  
My wife, my wife, my cruel wife,  
For me don't care a dump.

—*Song.*

**Gone on** (society), in love. Also "sweet on," "mashed on."

The swells who go there for their lunch every day,  
Are *gone on* the duchess—at least so they say,  
But I fancy they'd be in a very bad way,  
If they knew for my dinner I've nothing to-day.

—*Song.*

**Goner** (popular), a dying person.

They had some conversation, which resulted in their going to the Three Arrows public-house, where he drugged him. "I gave him more than I intended, and when I saw he was a *goner*, I put him in the cab and got away."—*Daily Telegraph.*

Also a bankrupt person, or any one who has "gone wrong."

**Gone to grass**, dead. See GO TO GRASS.

**Gone up** (American), lost, ruined, bankrupt.

**Goney** (American), a stupid, foolish fellow.

"How the *goney* swallowed it all, didn't he," said Mr. Slick with great glee.—*Sam Slick in England*.

**Gonoph** or **gonnof** (popular), a young fool or lout.

I am obliged to take him into custody; he's as obstinate a young *gonoph* as I know, he won't move on.—*Dickens: Bleak House*.

"Produce the infant," he gasped.

"This is it," said Spooner, the proud father.

"And s'posing I die first, d'you think I'm going to get damned for the sins of an ugly red-faced *gonoph* like that."—*Sporting Times*.

(Thieves), a thief. Hotten says an expert thief, a master of his craft. The word is very old.

Understand, if you please, I'm a travelling thief,

The *gonophs* all call me the Gipsy;  
By the rattler I ride when I've taken my brief,

And I sling on my back an old kipsy.  
—*The Referee*.

"To *gonoph*," to wheedle out of, to cheat. From the Hebrew *ganef*.

Vell, it appears that first all he vhent to Cape Colony, vhere de di'mond fields is. He invested all vhat he'd *gonophed* from his poor old father in di'mond shares—every blessed shtever.—*Sporting Times*.

**Gonus** (American University).  
*Vide* GONEY.

**Good** (printers), an abbreviation of good-night.

**Good-bye, John!** (American), equivalent to all is gone, lost, or over.

**Goodfellow** (old), a reveller.

This they said, because it was well known that Sir Roger had been a *good-fellow* in his youth.—*Ascham: School-master*.

It meant also a thief.

**Good job too, and a** (popular), an emphatic expression of approbation. A favourite affirmative. "And good business" is used in the same sense.

The waves began to roar and the winds began to blow,  
The boiler started leaking and the engine wouldn't go,  
The people felt afraid while the captain and the crew  
Refused to bring 'em over *and a good job too*.

—*J. Sparks: A Good Job Too*.

**Good line** (tailors), cheap or saleable articles.

**Goods** (sporting), men or horses. Termed "good goods" or "bad goods" according to quality.

**Good sort** (popular), used in approbation of any one.

And then the Prince of Wales was charged with being a real *good sort*,



And every one yelled out, "Hear! hear!" till the roof went off the court."

—*Francis and Day: Six Months Hard.*

**Good thing** (racing), a presumed certainty in racing. When a horse on his merits publicly shown or privately ascertained is supposed to be sure of winning a race, such event is said to be a *good thing* for him. The imagining of the people more often turns out to be a vain than a *good thing*.

**Good woolled** (American), gifted with unflinching courage. Of late years it has become the fashion with the Western American editors to speak of their part of the country as "the wild and woolly West."

**Go off on the ear, to** (American), to be suddenly irritated, to fly off in a tantrum.

"What made Susie *go off on her ear* yesterday, Mildred?" asked Amy.

"Amy," replied the High school girl, "please do not say 'go off on her ear,' but 'retire on her auricular appendage.'"—*American Newspaper.*

**Go off the hook, to** (familiar), to die.

**Goose** (tailors), a name associated from time immemorial with the large iron used by tailors for pressing.

**Gooseberry** (common), a canard, or a hoax.

**Gooseberry, doing or picking** (popular), to act as chaperone or escort to young couples on occasions when otherwise their being together would not be quite the thing. The chaperone is supposed to pick your berries.

**Gooseberry-pickers** (common), sharp children, who are ostensibly placed in charge of their elder sisters when the latter go out shopping, but who are in reality a check on any chance of flirtation (Hotten).

**Goosegog** (common), a gooseberry. In some dictionaries this is erroneously claimed as a mere provincialism.

**Gooser** (popular), a finishing blow, one that "cooks his goose."

**Goose, the** (theatrical), hissing.

It is said that the hissing of a *goose* once saved the Capitol, but, as the late Mr. Planché wisely and wittily observed, "that was a capital *goose*." This, however, is the only useful sibillation on record, and it is apocryphal. In our time we have authentic evidence of a single instance of hissing leading to a result of a very different character. Macready was acting *Hamlet* at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. Forest, the American tragedian, arose from his place in the boxes and hissed his great rival. Subsequently, during Macready's farewell engagement in America in 1849,

this deplorable incident led to riots in New York, the calling out of the military, bloodshed, loss of life, and Macready's precipitate flight to England in disguise. Hissing is now abolished in the States. If an American audience dislikes a play, the auditors quietly get up and walk out. The odious custom still prevails in this country, and flourishes in full force on first nights, when our audiences devote themselves with ardour to the sprightly pastime of author-baiting.

There is a comic side to every tragedy. Here is an illustration of the comedy of hissing. A famous low comedian, "a fellow of infinite jest," recently deceased, while acting the First Witch in *Macbeth*, found himself in *Bacchi plenus*, and forgetful of his part. In the incantation scene, when he had spoken the two first lines—

"Round about the cauldron go,  
In the poisoned entrails throw,"

his memory failed him. After an agonising pause, he resumed—

"What comes next, I cannot guess,  
So mix the lot up in a mess."

The audience were furious at this ribald tampering with the text, and down came the *goose* most lustily.

"This sound of fear,  
Unpleasing to the actor's ear,"

sobered the comedian instantly. Pulling himself together and

looking up at the gallery with a sly wink, he proceeded—

"Funky actor, lost the word,  
*Goose* from gallery, awful bird,  
Twist his neck off like a shot,  
And boil *him* in the charmed pot."

The audacity of this quick-witted response so tickled the "gods," that they not only condoned the erring comedian's backslidings, but gave him a hearty round of applause into the bargain.

(Printers), *goose*, a curtailment of the word "wayzgoose," which see. (Old cant), a particular symptom in the *lues venerea* (Wright).

He had beake some private dealings with her and then got a *goose*.—*Webster: Cure for a Cuckold.*

**Goose, to** (popular), *to goose* a man in the sense to make a fool of him, humbug or deceive him, may naturally enough be derived from making a *goose* of him. But it is worth noting that in Dutch slang there is a word, *genschccsder*, or geese-shearers (Teirlinck explains that to shear here means to swindle), which refers to a kind of impostors who go about the country pretending to be respectable broken-down tradesmen.

(American), to enlarge or repair boots, by a process generally known as footing, *i.e.*, by putting in or adding pieces of leather. As it is a New York word, it is probably a translation from the Dutch *gans*, a goose,

which is almost identical with *gants*, whole, entire. The provincial *gantsen*, to make whole, would thus become *gansen*, to goose. Bartlett ingeniously suggests that *to goose* is derived for distinction's sake from "to fox."

(Common), *to goose*, to hiss, to "give the big bird."

The defendant, one Dallas, hired several persons *to goose* Mr. Brewster's performance. Unfortunately for Mr. Dallas, his opposition "made a fool of it," and "hissed before the blind was up." Consequently Mr. Dallas has had to pay £30 damages.—*Globe*.

**Goose without gravy** (nautical), a severe starting, so called because no blood follows its infliction.

**Go over, to** (clerical), to join the Church of Rome.

**Goree** (American), gold dust, gold.

**Gorger** (popular), a gentleman, a well-dressed man. A *gorger* or *gorgio*—the two are often confounded—is the common gypsy word for one who is not a gypsy, and very often means with them a *rye*, a gentleman. Actors sometimes call a manager a *cully-gorger* (The English Gypsies and their Language).

(Theatrical), the manager of a theatre.

**Gorgonzola Hall** (Stock Exchange), the nickname for the Stock Exchange, on account of the marble walls.

**Gorm, garm.** Bartlett gives this as *gaum*, to smear over. It is English, but probably more frequently heard at present in the United States.

I remember that once when I was a boy the coloured footman of a friend came to the "missis" with the complaint that the young gentlemen had "gormandised" all over the front door. He meant *gormed*.—*C. G. Leland*.

**Gorm, to** (American university), to eat voraciously.

**Gormy ruddles** (popular), the intestines.

**Gorry! by Gorry!** (American), a common interjection or doubtful oath.

**Goschens** (Stock Exchange), the newly created £2 $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. Government Stock.

A hideous panic seized the Stock Exchange. *Goschens* went down to 60 at a single leap.—*Punch*.

This stock was so named after Mr. Goschen, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who created the Stock in April 1888.

**Gospel grinder** (popular), a city missionary or Scripture reader.

**Gospelshark** (Canadian), a parson.

**Gospel shop** (popular), a Methodist chapel (O. Davis).

As soon as I had procured a lodging and work, my next inquiry was for Mr. Wesley's *gospel shops*.—*Life of J. Lackington*.

**Goss** (popular), a hat. From *gossamer*. (American), to "give one *goss*," to injure or kill.

**Got 'em all on** (popular), dressed to the height of fashion.

**Gotham, Gothamites** (popular). The term *Gotham* is satirically applied to the city of New York, and its inhabitants are called *Gothamites*, just as Londoners are called "Cockneys." First so called by Irving, about 1805.

I intend to present you with some phases of life and manners—such things as would strike or interest a stranger in our beloved *Gotham*, and in the places to which regular *Gothamites*—American Cockneys, so to speak—are wont to repair.—*Fraser's Magazine: Sketches of American Society.*

**Got him down close and fine** (American). This means that everything is known about a man. In pugilistic parlance a settling blow.

**Got his gruel** (popular), dead or dying.

Your yokel friend, Mr. Softhead—I know you all, you see—he's *got his gruel*, I rather fancy.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**Got his leg** (tailors), obtained his confidence.

**Got the ball** (tailors), having the advantage.

**Go the gamble, to** (sporting), to make a bet on some match or race.

**Go the whole hog, to.** *Vide* HOG.

**Go the whole pile** (gamesters), an Americanism naturalised in England, to put all one's money on a solitary chance.

**Go through one, to** (thieves), to plunder a helpless man of all valuables upon him; to strip him of all he possesses.

**Go to Bath and get your head shaved.** This phrase denotes mental disorder, and as the waters of Bath were formerly in good repute for the cure of mental derangements, the saying implied that the person so addressed was silly or idiotic, and should *pro bono publico* do something to get cured.

**Go to college, to** (old slang), to go to prison.

**Go to grass** (American), equivalent to saying "rubbish," "clear out," "shut up;" an expression of incredulity, or a hint to be silent or to depart. Said in New England to have been first addressed to Nebuchadnezzar.

**Go to Halifax** (American, but of English origin). It is a saying among sailors—

"From hell, Hull, and Halifax,  
Good Lord deliver us."

A Tennessee manufacturer told the president of a railroad *to go to Halifax*. The president didn't go, but he refused the manufacturer any more cars, took up the switch leading to his premises, and in six months saw the man lose his business and

every dollar of his money. If you want to sass a railroad man don't go higher than a train hand.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Go-to-meetings** (common), Sunday clothes.

**Go to smash, to** (common), to fail entirely, to be ruined.

Jay Gould and Sullivan have reached our shores,

To rest, they say, a little on their oars.

The first, the champion of the "vast Wabash,"

Makes millions when his railroads *go to smash.*

—*Financial News.*

**Go under, to** (American), a Western euphemism for death. Of Indian origin, and allusive of being put under the grass of the waving prairie, and also, it may be, sometimes of being under the knee of a conquering enemy. The idea and process of reasoning is the same as when the German uses *untergehen* to signify to perish.

Poor Hawkeye felt that his time had come, and knowing that he must *go under* sooner or later, he determined to sell his life dearly.—*Hawkeye, the Iowa Chief.*

**Go upon the dub** (thieves), to go upon a housebreaking expedition; to open or pick the lock or fastenings of a door. *Vide DUB.* *Dup* occurs in Ophelia's song in *Hamlet*—"Dup the chamber door."

**Gourock ham** (Scotch), a salt herring. From Gourock on the

Clyde, formerly a great fishing village. Termed also "Billingsgate pheasant," or "Yarmouth capon."

**Government sign-post** (old), the gallows.

**Governor** (popular), a mode of addressing an unknown person. In French *bourgeois* or *patron*. (Common), my *governor*, my father.

**Gowk** (prison), a countryman. Also a provincialism meaning both cuckoo and fool.

**Gowler** (sporting), a deep-mouthed dog; a howler. To "gowle" is a provincialism for to howl. French, *gueuler*.

**Gowns** (journalistic), University student.

The first at Cambridge had a good game with the 'Varsity, the *gowns* just winning by a goal to love.—*Football News.*

**Grab** (common), grasping. In the United States a *grab* means a robbery or "a steal."

"Papa," said the son of a saloon-keeper, "what does jumping at a conclusion mean?" "*Grabbing* the last piece of lunch on the counter," was the reply.

(Cards), a boisterous game of chance played with cards.

**Grabbers** (popular), the hands. "Land *grabbers*" is a phrase that has lately come into popular use

in Ireland and Scotland to designate the peasants afflicted with "earth hunger," or the anti-rent masters who wish to grab or seize the land that does not belong to them.

**Grabby** (military), a foot-soldier. A term of contempt used by the mounted services.

**Grab, to** (thieves), to arrest.

Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly blowen,  
Or be *grabbed* by the beaks we may.  
—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Song.*

**Grace cards** (Irish), the six of hearts.

**Graduates** (turf), horses that have already run.

The ranks of the *graduates* will be materially recruited before Lincoln comes around, but in the meantime the majority of last year's steeplechasers are on their legs.—*Referee.*

**Graft** (prison and popular), work; to *graft*, to work. To *graf* is a provincialism for "to dig" (*graft* being a trench). Hence the slang signification. This derivation is supported by the French *piocher*, to work hard, literally "to dig." (American), to *graft*, to surround the feet of old boots with new leather, or to add new soles.

**Grampus** (nautical), "blowing the *grampus*," deluging with water.

**Grand hotelism** (journalistic), a word expressive of living in a

public manner, haunting extravagant, flaring hotels; a life of salons and mirrors.

The inferior class of the articles de Paris are Imperialism, Boulevardism, *grand hotelism*, Sebastopolism, Magentaism, Nadesherbism, adapted to the humblest perceptions and the slenderest purses.—*G. A. Sala: A Trip to Barbary.*

**Grandificent** (American), grand and magnificent. Also "grandaceous," "grandiferous," &c., which Bartlett characterises very correctly as factitious words. The number of these manifestly manufactured expressions is very great in the United States, but very few of them survive. It would seem as if slang to live must grow naturally from needs and be developed by use.

**Grandmother, to see one's** (common), to have a nightmare. (Popular), women of the lower class say they see or have their *grandmother* when they have their menses.

**Granger** (American), the member of a political party formed about 1875 in the interests of the Western grain-growing States, or of the agriculturists. The word is now generally used to mean a countryman, a rustic, or "a gentleman from the rural districts."

Now this person was a stranger  
From the West; a rural *granger*  
Sure that nobody could do him,  
And no city chap get through him.

Nothing to him could be dearer  
 Than to meet a bunko steerer.  
 He was with impatience hopping  
 To find a fellow wallet-dropping,  
 And he pined, this pine woods jonty,  
 To encounter three-card monté.

—*How they did the Buck-Eye.*

**Grape-vine telegraph** (American). During the war exciting accounts of battles not fought and of victories not won were said to have been conveyed by *grape-vine* (or clothes-line) *telegraph* (New York Slang Dictionary), but the term was in earlier use, meaning news conveyed in a mysterious manner.

**Grarler** (American thieves), a small dog who by barking alarms the family. "*Grarlers* are more feared by burglars than guns or pistols."

**Grass** (common), "to go to *grass*," to die; "go to *grass*," be off, you be hanged. (Pugilistic), "to go to *grass*," to fall sprawling.

. . . That he had further eased his mind by executing a free-hand drawing of himself as a boxer . . . engaged in having a "set-to" with M. Sterling . . . who was going to *grass* in the most ignominious manner.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

(Royal Military Academy), *grass*, vegetables.

(American), fresh mint or tansy leaves, used in making juleps.

(Australian printers), temporary hands on a newspaper.

The metaphor probably is from the proverb about *grass*—"The *grass* withereth," &c., which would imply temporariness. There is a printers' proverb, "A *grass* on news waits dead men's shoes." The *Australasian Printers' Keepsake* says: "Those familiar with newspaper work in the colonies must often have heard this gruesome axiom. Now this saying, though evidently figurative, does not present the usual pleasing characteristics which we associate with pastoral subjects, especially when they are contemplated from a proper distance, as becomes the eye artistic. Disagreeable as it may be to acknowledge the fact announced in the above saying, however, so much more so must it be to have it verified in one's own person, be you *grass* or prospective dead man. Why are the *grass* or casual news hands not put on a more comfortable footing" (Edward Fitzgerald: *Printers' Proverbs*).

The expression has been imported from England, a *grass* hand in English printers' parlance being a compositor that accepts occasional work in different offices.

**Grass-combers** (nautical), countrymen who enter the service from farming counties.

**Grasser** (sporting), a fall.

Some have terrible *grassers* in climbing into the pigskin.—*Flyers of the Hunt.*

**Grasshopper** (popular), a waiter at a tea-garden (Hotten).

**Grass in his liquor.** See GRASS.

**Grass-ville** (thieves), the country.

**Grass-widow.** In America and in India a *grass-widow* is a married woman temporarily separated from her husband. In the Slang Dictionary of Hotten it is explained as "an unmarried mother, a deserted mistress," which is rather doubtful. Low German, *gras-wedewe*. Also *stroh-wittwer* (German).

**Gravel, to** (popular), to confound, to perplex, to bewilder. From levelling with the earth or *gravel*.

**Gravel-crusher** (military), a soldier compelled to tramp about a square at defaulter's drill. *Vide* ORGAN.

**Gravel-grinder** (popular), one subject to falls through drunken habits.

**Gravel-rash** (popular), a scratched face, generally applied to a drunken person who has had a fall. (Schoolboys), the injury to the knees from a fall.

**Grave-trap, the** (theatrical), a large oblong trap in the centre of the stage, so called because "the fair Ophelia" is supposed

to be buried there. Every fugitive draught in the theatre rises from the cellar through this opening. It is said that Fawcett, when stage-manager at Covent Garden, relinquished the part of the gravedigger (which he had acted a quarter of a century) in favour of a younger actor, against whom he had a spite. "You are very generous, Mr. Fawcett," gushed the youngster. "Not at all, sir—not at all," replied the veteran. Then turning to a crony, with a grin, he growled in a grim aside: "That infernal north-east wind from the *grave* will cook his goose."

**Graveyard** (American), a "private *graveyard*," men who affect great ferocity, or who assume to be desperadoes, sometimes boast in America that they keep *graveyards* of their own in which to bury their victims, or else are sarcastically asked where these cemeteries are. In portions of New England every farmer has his own family *graveyard* on his property, and the writer has known an instance in which a father made a present—which was gladly accepted—to his children of a little *graveyard* with two blank tombstones. They kept it in order and used it as a playground.

**Gravy eye** (popular), a term rather loosely and unmeaningly applied as a derisive epithet—"Oh! you *gravy eye*! How much



gravy does your mother put on your 'taters'?"

**Gray** (sharppers), from the gypsy *gry*, a horse, a halfpenny with either two "heads" or two "tails," used for cheating at pitch and toss. Also called a pony, hence the word.

**Gray-coat parson**, a lay proprietor, or lessee of great tithes (Hotten).

**Grays** (popular), lice; called by the French *grenadiers*.

**Grease** (printers), a synonym for well-paid work.

**Grease one's duke** (thieves), to grease the palm or hand, "duke" meaning hand.

One or two days after this I met the reeler at Hackney, and he said, "What made you guy?" So I said that I did not want my pals to see me with him. So he said it was all right. Some of the mob knew him and had *greased his duke*.—*Horsley; Jottings from Jail*.

**Greaser** (American), a Mexican.

A Chinaman stole swiftly and silently by; a half-breed led a lame horse along; a couple more *greasers*, seated one behind the other, went past on another equine scarecrow.—*P. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

(Winchester College), "to give him *greaser*," to rub the head hard with the knuckles. (Naval), an engineer, or any other man employed in the stoke-room.

**Greasers** (Royal Military Academy), fried potatoes, in contradistinction to "boilers," boiled potatoes.

**Greater or final** (Oxford University), the final public examination in honours. *Greater* is now properly confined to classical honours.

**Great go** (Cambridge University), the final and most important examination an undergraduate has to pass. An earlier examination is called the "little go."

Read through the whole five volumes folio, Latin, previous to his going up for his *great go*.—*The Etonian*.

**Great pot** (racing), a prophet.

I enclose a little circular sent to me in the spring of the present year, sent me by a *great pot* (he would have you believe), addressing from the Strand, London, whose selections, had I followed, would break a bank, much less a private purse.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Great Scott!** (common and American), probably derived from General Winfield Scott, once a candidate for the Presidency, a man of such great dignity and military style that he was popularly known as Fuss and Feathers. To explain the following extract from an American newspaper in which the word occurs, it must be understood that the Republicans in the United States insist that all the roughs, shoulder-hitters, and gamblers in the country are "Demo-

crats." "Where are you going to-day?" asked a man of a Democratic sheriff, "and why is court adjourned?" "Why, *great Scott!*" exclaimed that official, "don't you know there is going to be a prize-fight to-day in the next county?" The phrase has been acclimatised in England by the *Sporting Times*:—

How gaily they glitter, and glisten, and glow,  
As they shine in their sovereign sway,  
And see how they sparkle—*Great Scott!*  
here's a go!

### Great smoke (thieves), London.

The Cockneys, from the *great smoke*, seldom fraternised with the "hardware blokes" from Birmingham. Liverpool criminals were almost entirely of Irish origin.—*Evening News*.

### Great sun! (American), a mild oath, probably only a variation of "great Scott."

But something came up—up like a fountain, up like the bubbling over of the airth's eternal teapot; a black muddy jet of stuff. *Great sun!* I think I see it now. —*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Grecian bend** (society), peculiar bend given to the body by means of a large bustle and high-heeled boots. The term is by no means new. It was used in the "Etonian" more than half a century back. "In person he was of the common size, with something of the *Grecian bend*, contracted doubtless from sedentary habits."

**Greek.** Any language, dialect, or form of speech that the common people did not understand, was either called gibberish or Greek. Thus the slang of the beggars, tramps, vagabonds, gypsies, and thieves was known to the outside multitude as St. Giles's Greek, or pedlar's Greek. In "As You Like It," when Amiens sings—

"Under the greenwood tree,  
Who loves to lie with me,"

he is asked what the mysterious syllables "duc da me" signify, and gives the explanation that it is a *Greek* invocation to call fools into a circle. "Duc da me" is generally explained as Latin intentionally corrupted (or by a misprint) from *duca ad me*.

**Greeks** (old), highwaymen, or knights of the road. The term now is applied to sharpers; *grees* in French (not slang). Also a name given in derision to the low Irish in London who spoke Gaelic. *Vide* GREEK.

**Green** (common), not wide awake, inexperienced. "Do you see any *green* in my eye?" do you take me for a simpleton?

So awfully *green*, dreadfully *green*,  
The greenest of *green* that ever was  
seen,  
He blushes and simpers—you know how  
I mean,  
Frightfully shy, and awfully *green*.

—*Song*.

Major P—'s unco' sly,  
There is *no green about his eye*,  
And oh! it makes the major cry,  
When bang goes a bawbee, O.  
—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Greenbacks** (University), one of Todhunter's mathematical textbooks, because some of them are bound in green cloth. (American), paper money.

**Green bag** (common), a lawyer. "What's in the *green bag*?" *i.e.*, what is the charge to be preferred against me?

**Green goods operators** (American), the counterfeiterers of greenbacks.

The article referred to also contained an *exposé* of the methods, headquarters, and gangs who have so long and with so much impunity carried on the *green goods* or sawdust *operators*. It also gave the names of sawdust operators who had been arrested and indicted in the Federal courts but never brought to trial.—*New York Mercury.*

**Green gown, to give a** (old slang), to tumble on the grass. Used in an obscene sense.

And Johnny gave Jenny a jolly *green gown*,  
Down in the grass by the river.

**Greenhouse** (drivers), a derisive term sometimes applied to an omnibus. "Get out of the way with that old *greenhouse* of yours!"

**Greenland** (common). "He comes from *Greenland*," he is unsophisticated.

A new pal . . . where did he come from?  
*Greenland.*—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Greenman** (builders), a contractor who speculates with other people's money.

**Greens** (common), "to have one's *greens*," to have sexual intercourse.

(Printers), a term in vogue for bad or worn-out printing rollers.

**Green, to** (Eton School), to befool, to cause any one to show simplicity.

I was again catechised on many points personal to myself, and some mild attempts were made to *green* me, as boys call it.—*T. C. Buckland: Eton, 1836-1841.*

**Green turtle, to live up to** (American), to do, and give one's best—a metaphorical phrase which owes its origin to turtle being regarded from the epicure's point of view a *bonne bouche*, and the green fat the most desirable portion.

It were churlish indeed to find fault with any custom, or to dwell critically upon any shortcoming of these hospitable people, who, as hosts, *live up to their green turtle.*—*Paton: Down the Islands.*

**Greenwich barbers** (popular), retailers of sand, so called because the inhabitants of Greenwich "shave the pits" in the neighbourhood to supply London with sand (Dr. Brewer),

**Greenwich goose** (popular), formerly a pensioner of the Greenwich Naval Hospital.

**Greeze** (Westminster School), a crowd. In Italian *grosso*.

Few whose names have ever stood on that paper will forget how they pressed through the surrounding *greeze*.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Gregorines** (common), live stock in the hair. From the Italian.

**Greys, the** (provincial), a state of yawning and listlessness.

**Grid** (theatrical), a contraction of gridiron—the large open wood-work structure built over the flies, extending over the whole stage, so called because it is constructed exactly like a gridiron. To the *grid* all the dead lines which bear the scenery are attached.

**Griddle, to** (street), to be a street singer. Possibly from Italian *gridare*, to cry aloud.

**Griddler** (streets), a street singer. (Tinkers and tramps), a tinker. Probably from "gridiron."

**Gridiron, the** (nautical), the Stars and Stripes of the United States. Also called the "Stars and Bars." (Popular), "the whole *gridiron*," the whole party. (Common), a *gridiron*, a County Court summons. Originally a summons to the Court of Westminster only;

from the Gridiron Arms. The Grafton Club is always known as the Grid or *Gridiron*, that instrument being brought into requisition whenever possible in the cuisine (Hotten).

**Griffin, griff** (Anglo-Indian), a greenhorn, a fresh comer, a Johnny Newcome, one not as yet "in the ways." The origin of this word is uncertain, but something resembling it is applied in different Latin languages to "outsiders," foreigners, and the excluded or mixed members of society. Thus in Louisiana a *griffin* or *griffe* is used, like the French *griffon*, for a mulatto, or one of mixed dark blood (Bartlett). "I am little better than an unfledged *griffin*, according to the fashionable phrase here" (Hugh Boyd, 1794).

(Army), formerly a young subaltern in the Indian service.

Pig-sticking is pretty, very pretty I may say, if you have two or three of the right sort with you; all the *griffins* ought to hunt together though.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn*.

(Anglo-Chinese), a horse fresh from the wilds. Also a person resident in China under three years.

**Griffins**, the residue of a contract feast taken away by a contractor, half the buyer's and half the seller's (Dr. Brewer).

**Grig** (thieves), a farthing. (American), to *grig*, to irritate, goad,

or vex. Probably from *grig*, a small fish-spear used for eels (*grig*, a small eel). Thus to "chivvy," to hunt about, chase, vex, or annoy, is derived from *chiv* (gypsy), a pointed knife, &c.

That word, superiorist, *grigged* me. Thinks I, my boy, I'll just take that expression, roll it up into a ball, and shy it at you.—*Sam Slick: Human Nature.*

**Grind** (university), a long walk. (Cambridge), the Granchester or Gogmagog Hills *Grind*. A tedious piece of academical work. A plodding student who keeps aloof from the usual sports and pastimes. The ferry-boats at Chesterton, wound across by a winch and chain, "to go over in the *grind*." (Schools), to *grind*, to work hard, to cram for an examination. (Common), to have sexual intercourse.

**Grinder** (popular), "to take a *grinder*" is to make an insulting gesture by applying the left thumb to the nose, and turning the right hand round it as if in the act of grinding an organ. Also "to take a sight."

**Grinders** (society), private tutors. (Popular), the teeth.

This round was but short—after humouring a while,  
He proceeded to serve an ejection, in style,  
Upon Georgy's front *grinders*, which damaged his smile  
So completely, that bets ran a hundred to ten

That Adonis would ne'er flash his ivory again.

—*Tom Crib's Memorial to Congress.*

**Grindery** (shoemakers), material for making boots and shoes.

**Grinding mill** (students), preparing for an examination.

**Grind off** (common), a miller.

**Grindstone** (common), to keep one "with his nose to the *grindstone*," to keep him to his work.

**Gringo** (American), a Spanish word, common in the South-West, or at least well known, meaning a flat, new-comer, stranger, an American or a foreigner. It corresponds in some respects to the "griffin" of India and China.

When you play with a *gringo* take off that ar' green coat and silver buttons. I seen every hand you held rite in one of those buttons, like looking inter a looking-glass.—*Cleveland Sun and Voice.*

**Grinning stitches** (milliners), said of sewing slovenly done, where the stitches are so wide apart that they have the appearance of rows of teeth.

**Gripes** (popular), colic.

**Gripes hole** (Winchester College), a hole close to the boat-house, thus called because the water there is very cold.

**Gripper** (popular), a miser, a curmudgeon.

**Grit** (American and common), spirit, courage, pluck, endurance, determination. The word is derived from the hardness of the *grit* of grindstones, millstones, and paving-stones, and other uses to which the most durable sandstone is applied.

If he hadn't had the clear *grit* in him, and showed his teeth and claws, they'd a nullified him so you couldn't have seen a grease spot of him.—*Sam Slick in England*.

**Grit, no** (American), no pluck, sometimes imitated by "no sand."

**Grizzle-pot** (popular), a sulky child, one who is constantly "grizzling," *i.e.*, whimpering, whining.

**Grizzle, to** (common), to cry, whimper.

"What on earth are you *grizzling* about now?" asked the Talepitcher of Mrs. T., when she came in sobbing the other afternoon.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Groaners** (thieves), funeral and church thieves.

**Groats** (nautical), an allowance for each man per mensem, assigned formerly to the chaplain for pay.

**Grog** (popular), to "have *grog* on board," to be tipsy.

**Grog-blossoms** (common), pimples on the face, a consequence of continual hard drinking.

**Grog fight** (army), a drinking party.

**Groggy** (common), unsteady like a drunken man, generally applied to horses when they become weak and unsteady from age and overwork.

And as the Pet, moreover, was so battered and bruised, and was altogether so *groggy* that he was barely able to stand up to be knocked down.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Grogham** (popular), a sorry horse, one who is "groggy" or not firm on his legs.

**Grog-tub** (nautical), a brandy bottle.

**Groom** (gaming), a croupier.

**Groovy** (society), settled in one's habits, old-fogyish, limited to certain views.

After an absence of fifteen years I have just returned to England. . . . I never aspired to being a nabob, or a "chappy," or a "masher" (indeed, I am past the age when attaining to these latter distinctions could be possible); nor did I intend to dissipate my hard-earned and modest fortune as a "plunger." Six weeks ago I was not aware that these terms formed a part of the English tongue; but now . . . I make use of them, lest you should infer from what is coming that I am old-fashioned, prejudiced, or hopelessly *groovy*.—*St. James's Gazette: The Culture of the Mises*.

(American), a "sardine."

**Groper** (popular), a blind man, termed also "hoodman."

**Ground, down to the** (common), anything that is very acceptable and thorough.

**Grounder** (nautical), a ship that is liable to be run aground through bad seamanship.

Unfortunately these rejoicings have been marred through the loss of three "mids" belonging to the notorious *grounder*, *Canada*, who were capsized and drowned.—*Modern Society*.

(Cricket), a ball that is delivered along the ground, a "sneak" or "grub."

**Ground hog day** (American), a term very common in the Middle States, and thus explained by Bartlett:—"Candlemas, February 2, is often so called in the Middle and Western States from a popular belief that the appearance of the *ground hog* on that day predicts a return of cold weather." The *ground hog* (a kind of marmot) has even shown himself at times in poetry.

Though the *ground hog* and crocus creep into their holes,

It's Spring, and the almanac shows it,  
Though a polar wave over the universe rolls,

It's Spring, and we don't care who knows it.

—*Robert J. Burdette: March*.

**Ground-sweat** (thieves), burial.

And as soon as the noose was untied  
Then at darkey we waked him in clover,  
And sent him to take a *ground sweat*.

—*Burrows: The Death of Socrates*.

**Grouser** (popular), a grumbler.

No matter how well the indefatigable cooks acquit themselves in trying to appease the ravenous wants of the hungry crowd, they very often find it altogether impossible to do anything at all entirely to the satisfaction of a certain class of individuals. . . . This select and volatile body of men is commonly designated by their more sensible and forbearing comrades as the *grouzers*.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks*.

**Groute, to** (Marlborough and Cheltenham Colleges), to work hard. Also to go out of an evening. In Yorkshire it is used with the sense of to dig up with the snout like a hog.

**Grouty** (American), ill-tempered, cross, vexed, "grumpy." *Grout-headed*, stupidly noisy (Sussex).

Atter sputin' an' rasslin' roun' considibul, hit wuz fix up dat Bre'r Fox, Bre'r Bar, and Bre'r Buzzard wuz ter run for de offis—an' ter sawter (sort of) pacerfy Bre'r Rabbit, who wuz powerful *grouty* 'bout bein' lef out, dey 'leck him ter hole de ballick-box.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Grove of the Evangelist** (common), a name for St. John's Wood.

**Growing his feathers** (prison), letting one's hair and beard grow, a privilege accorded to convicts for some months before their discharge, that they may not be noticeable when free.

**Growler** (common), a four-wheeled cab; so called because a man is supposed to growl and be discontented in one. Compare with "sulky," a kind of gig.

The cab again drew up at the door, and the pseudo Beau Brummell set his dainty foot upon the step and gaily alighted. A four-wheeled *growler* had accompanied his own carriage.—*Tit-Bits*.

(American), "to work the *growler*," to send out a tin or a kettle to a saloon for beer. Considered rather low.

There's Mистер Hons Sowfer, a fine  
German man,  
He goes out and brings Lager in an ould  
lobsther can,  
'Tis himsilf works the *growler* so nate  
and so well,  
For the good of the ladies in the Bum-  
mers' Hotel.

—*American Broadside Ballad*.

**Grub** (popular), food. See GRUB AND BUB.

"I never see such a jolly dog as that," cried Master Bates. "Smelling the *grub* like a old lady a going to market."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

"To *grub*," to eat. Also to beg, to solicit alms, especially food. (American universities), a *grub* is a student who works hard; to *grub*, to study hard. (Cricket), a *grub*, a ball that is delivered along the ground. Specially underhand bowling.

**Grub and bub**, victuals and drink. The two words are of indigenous English origin. *Grub* is derived from the action of digging up roots for edible purposes; and *bub* or "bib" from Latin *bibere*, French *biber*. "Humming *bub*" formerly signified sparkling ale, and is frequently mentioned in the convivial days of the eighteenth century. The

"grubbing ken," in the language of tramps and mendicants, is the workhouse, and is sometimes used by the lower classes for an eating-house or a cookshop.

**Grubbery** (popular), an eating-house. (Thieves and tramps), the workhouse.

**Grubbing hall** (Winchester), the hall in which college "men" take their meals. It is opposite "organ room." Each house has its *grubbing hall*.

**Grubby** (popular), dirty.

They looked so ugly in their sable hides,  
So dark, so dingy, like a *grubby* lot  
Of sooty sweeps or colliers.

—*Hood: A Black Job*.

(Thieves), food. Diminutive of "grub."

I pattered in flash like a covey knowing,  
Ay, bub or *grubby*, I say.

—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song*.

**Grub-hunting** (beggars), begging for food.

**Grub stakes** (American). When miners become so poor that they are not able to furnish the necessary tools and food with which to "go prospecting," a third party of sufficient means offers to furnish tools and provisions on condition that he is to have a certain interest in anything that may be found (Butterworth's "Zig-zag Journeys").

**Grub-trap** (popular), the mouth. A variant is "potato-trap."



**Gruel** (common), to “get one’s *gruel*” is to be well beaten, or killed.

He refused, and harsh language ensued,  
Which ended at length in a duel,  
When he that was mildest in mood  
Gave the truculent rascal his *gruel*.  
—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

(Sporting), *gruel* or *gruelling*,  
a beating.

**Gruelled** (popular), exhausted.

Wadham ran up by the side of that first  
Trinity yesterday, and he said that they  
were as well *gruelled* as so many porters  
before they got to the stile.—*C. Kingsley*:  
*Alton Locke*.

**Grumble-guts** (popular), a person  
who is always grumbling.

**Grumbles** (popular), to be “all  
on the *grumbles*,” to be discon-  
tented, in a snarling mood.

**Grummet** (low), *puḍenda mulic-  
bris*. Termed also “snatch-box,”  
“turtle,” “maddikin,” “mouse,”  
“monkey,” “pussy.” In French  
slang “chat.”

**Grumpish** (common), ill-tempered,  
“grouty;” probably from “grum”  
or “grim.”

If you blubber or look *grumpish*, I’ll  
have you strapped ten times over.—*Mrs.*  
*Trollope*: *Michael Armstrong*.

**Grundy, Mrs.**, to be afraid of  
(society), to be afraid of the  
world’s opinion. *Mrs. Grundy*  
was a character in the comedy  
of “Speed the Plough.”

They eat and drink, and sleep and nod,  
And go to church on Sunday,

And many are afraid of God,  
And more of *Mrs. Grundy*.

—*Old Ballad*.

They should go up the Dart and Fal  
instead of up the Rhine,  
And dip, spite *Mrs. Grundy’s* frown, in  
truly British brine,  
In short, they should resolve to see their  
native land right through,  
Before they fly abroad to seek fresh scenes  
and fevers new.

—*Truth*.

**Grunter** (tailors), an habitual  
grumbler.

(Old cant), a bumbailiff, a pig.

Here’s *grunter* and bleater, with tib-of-the-  
butt’ry,  
And margery prates, all dress’d without  
slutt’ry.

—*R. Brome*: *A Jovial Crew*.

(Popular), a policeman, termed  
also a “pig.”

**Grunting cheat** (old cant), a pig.

**Gruts** (thieves), tea.

**Guddha** (Anglo-Indian), an ass. “A  
donkey, literal and metaphorical.  
*Hindu gadhā*. The coincidence  
of the Scotch ‘cuddy,’ has been  
attributed to a loan from Hindi  
through the gypsies, who were  
the chief owners of the animal  
in Scotland, where it is not  
common. On the other hand  
this is ascribed to a nickname,  
Cuddy, for Cuthbert” (Anglo-  
Indian Glossary). The only word  
used at present by gypsies in  
England for a donkey, is *maila*  
or *nyla*.

**Guerilla** (American thieves), a  
name applied by professional

gamblers to fellows who "skin suckers" (cheat the ignorant), when and where they can. They do not like the regular gamblers, but try to beat them (*i.e.*, get the better of them), inform on them, and tell the suckers that they have been cheated.

**Guess what** (American), a game.

Also applied humorously to suspicious food, such as sausages.

Baltimore has *guess what* socials, which are well attended and very popular. The refreshments probably consist of sausage hash and mince pie.

**Guiders** (popular), reins. This word seems to have come from the gypsies, who derived it in turn from the Slavonian or Wallachian *voidas*. An English gypsy, on being asked what he supposed *voidas* meant, suggested that it was the same as *vyders* or reins. The French for reins is *guides*.

**Guinea-hen** (old cant), a prostitute.

**Guinea-pigs** (Stock Exchange), directors of a public company. (Common), special jurymen. Also others whose fee is a guinea, such as doctors, veterinary surgeons—

"Oh, oh," cried Pat, "how my hand itches,  
Thou *guinea-pig*, in boots and breeches,  
To trounce thee well."

—*Combe: Dr. Syntax.*

(Anglo-Indian), a nickname given to midshipmen on board Indiamen in the last century, and still occasionally used.

**Guire cove** (old cant), a rogue. Probably a corruption of queer cove.

**Guiver** (theatrical), flattery, artfulness.

**Gulf** (Cambridge), those to whom the degree was allowed, although inferior to junior optimes, but superior to poll men. Such were formerly disqualified for the classical trips.

**Gulf spin** (American cadet), a man who is without principle of any kind, a worthless fellow.

**Gull** (common), one who is easily cheated.

The most notorious geck and *gull*  
That e'er invention played on.

—*Shakspeare: Twelfth Night.*

Hotten derives it from "the easy manner in which the bird of that name is deceived." In French slang a "gullible" man is *pingouin*, a bird more easily deceived than the *gull*. In Dutch, *gull* means soft, good-natured, easy to impose on. "Hy is al te *gull*," he is far too yielding. From *gul*, soft. "De weg is *gul*," the road is soft and yielding. To *gull*, to cheat, deceive.

**Gull-sharper** (nautical), one who preys upon simple or inexperienced people or "gulls."

**Gully hole** (costers), the throat, or gullet; termed also "red lane," "gutter lane." (Gypsy), *gullo*, the throat.

**Gully-raker** (up-country Australian), a cattle-whip. The metaphor is doubtless that of a man walking down the centre of a gully, and commanding both sides of it with his lash, like a man "covering" the whole net at lawn tennis when he stands close up to volley.

As the day wore on they overtook bullock-drays lurching along heavily in the ruts of the road, the little keg of water at the tail-board swinging as if it would wrench out the staple it hung by, and the driver appealing occasionally to some bullock or other by name, following up his admonition by a sweeping cut of his *gully-raker*, and a report like a musket-shot.—*A. C. Grant: Bush-Life in Queensland.*

**Gulph** or **gulf**, to (university), to disqualify. *Vide GULF.*

But I'm not going to let them *gulph* me a second time; though, they ought not to plough a man who's been at Harrow.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Gulsh** (provincial), "hold your *gulsh*," be quiet, hold your tongue.

**Gum** (University and American), a trick, deception. "He was speaking of the 'moon hoax' which *gummed* so many learned philosophers." Also "gum-mation." The author of "A Tour through College" says: "Our reception to college ground was by no means the most hospitable, considering our unacquaintance with the manners of the place, for, as poor 'Fresh,' we soon found ourselves subject to all manner of sly tricks and

'gum-mations' from our predecessors the sophs."

(Common), abusive language, chatter.

There's no occasion to bows out so much unnecessary *gum* . . . you had much better clap a stopper on your tongue.—*Smollett: Peregrine Pickle.*

To *gum*, to humbug or deceive.

**Gum-gum** (Anglo-Indian), a kind of small drum or gong. "We had supposed this word to be an invention of the late Charles Dickens, but it seems to be a real Indian or Anglo-Indian word" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Gummagy** (common), to be *gummagy*, to be of a snarling, scolding disposition. Dickens has the character of Mrs. Gummage in one of his works, the name of whom he evidently coined from this slang expression in the same way that he gave the surname of "Twist," *i.e.*, large appetite, to Oliver.

**Gummer** (popular), explained by quotation.

I was given to understand that the first practice a fighting pup had was with a good old *gummer*—that is to say, with a dog which had been a good one in his day, but now was old and toothless.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps.*

**Gummie** (popular), a simpleton, a dull-headed fellow.

**Gummy** (popular), a person who has lost all his teeth and has nothing but gums to "flash," *i.e.*, to show. (University), to

feel *gummy*, to be in a perspiration. (Thieves), *gummy*, medicine.

**Gump** (American), a stupid person. "You great *gump*."

**Gumption** (common), capacity, comprehension, intelligence; *rumgumption*, great intelligence or capacity. *Gaum* is a Yorkshire word for comprehension or understanding. *Gumption* is a recognised word in Lowland Scotch, and not considered to be slang.

**Gumptious** (common), conceited.

There's *gumption* and *gumptious*! *Gumption* is knowing; but when I say that sum un is *gumptious*, I mean . . . sum un who does not think small beer of hisself.—*Lytton: My Novel*.

**Gum-smasher** (popular), a dentist.

They were *fiancés*, and proposed to celebrate the occurrence by having a few of her less showy molars uprooted at his expense. When the *gum-smasher* had got to work he found it was rather a tougher job than he had anticipated.—*Sporting Times*.

**Gumsucker** (Australian popular), a young Australian "native" (white), so called, it is said, from their habit of eating the gum of the wattle tree, an acacia gum very much resembling, in its astringent qualities and its general appearance, the gum arabic of commerce.

Our colonial lads showed their right to the appellation of *gumsucker* by chewing the transparent lumps that depended from

the silver-wattles, one of the prettiest of our indigenous acacias.—*T. L. Work: "An Expedition to Hall's Gap," in the "Australian Printer's Keepsake."*

**Gumsuck, to** (American), to humbug or deceive.

**Gum-tickler** (common), a dentist.

**Gum-tree** (nautical), "he has seen his last *gum-tree*," it is all up with him.

**Gun** (popular), a thief, an abbreviation of "gonoph," which see.

And this here artful dodger was

A very artful *gun*,  
He sneaked the heart of Rachel and  
Once more poor Roger's done.

—*T. Browne: False Rachel*.

(American), to *gun*, to make a violent effort, to try hard to produce an effect. "Gunning a stock," says Bartlett, "is to use every art to produce a 'break,' when it is known that a certain house is heavily supplied, and would be unable to resist an attack." As it is a New York word, it may possibly be allied to the Dutch *gono*, which means a violent push, or attack. As the word implies secretly obtaining information, or finding out, it may also be derived from the old English *gun*, which has the same meaning.

**Gunned** (American detective), examined.

**Gunner** (army), an artillery officer.

A well-known *gunner*, Lieut.-Col. —, has left England for India to take up a command.—*The World*.

**Gunny, gunny-bag** (Anglo-Indian), a sack, sacking. In English gypsy *gono* or *gunnio* is also a bag of any kind. In Italian *gonna* is a petticoat.

**Gunster** (turf). *Vide TO GUN.*

**Gup** (Anglo-Indian), the common word among Europeans in India for prattle, gossip, or tittle-tattle.

The native ladies sit on their cushions from day to day, with no other amusement than hearing the *gup-gup*, or gossip of the place.—*Mrs. Sherwood's Autobiography*.

**Gurry** (American fishermen), decomposed spoiled crude oil, made from the livers of cod or other fish (Bartlett). Rancid oil. In Dutch, *goor* means spoiled, as *goor melk*, spoiled or turned milk. The oil is used for coarse work, lubricating wheels, and by tanners.

**Gurtsey** (American cadet), a stout, short man, a "fatty." The epithet is generally applied at West Point to the fattest man in a class.

**Gush** (common), exaggerated show of sentiment, or manifestation of approval.

The Endacott perjury has ended, and very properly, in a verdict of acquittal. The charge ought never to have been made, and would not have been but for that absurd quality of *gush* which is in-

herent in the English nation. It is this ever-present *gush* which blinds so many people to common-sense.—*Sporting Times*.

**Gusher** (common), one overflowing with sentiment, with exaggerated manifestations of approval, a rhapsodiser.

She was a gushing school-girl, with the idea of matrimony as the *ne plus ultra* of poetic bliss. . . .

"When your husband comes home from his toil," she asked, "does he not woo you to rest with honeyed words?"

"Well, I don't know about honeyed words; last night all he could say was, 'M'ria, if you can't untie the knots in these laces I shall go to bed in my boots, same as I did last Saturday.'"

That *gusher's* matrimonial enthusiasm is quenched.—*Sporting Times*.

**Gushing** (common). According to feminine interpretation, the word *gushing* answers to the French phrase, "*trop expansif*," and is more often used in a repellent than in a laudatory sense, being habitually applied to overstrained professors of attachment, or exaggerated manifestations of approval.

**Gut, to** (schools), to eat more than is good for one.

**Guts** (old), to "have *guts* in the brain," to have sense.

Quoth Ralpho, truly that is no  
Hard matter for a man to do  
That has but any *guts* in's brain.  
—*Hudibras*.

(Artists), "no *guts* in it." The expression is pretty general, but it is more specially used by artists to announce their opinion that there is nothing in a picture.

**Gutter** (Winchester College), a purl into the water made by the violent contact of a bather's body with the water when he falls on his stomach. French schoolboys call this "piquer un plat-ventre." (Binders), the white space between the pages of a book. (Common), to "lap the gutter," to be in the last stage of intoxication.

**Gutter-chaunter** (common), a street singer.

**Gutter lane** (popular), the urinal.

**Gutter-prowler** (thieves), a street thief.

**Gutter-slush** or **snipe** (popular), a vagabond child who prowls in the streets, sent out by his parents to beg, if he have any, or begging on his own account if he have none.

**Guttle-shop** (Rugby), a pastry-cook's or tuck shop.

We can hardly bring our pen to write this word "pastrycook" as a substitute for the long-established and well-known, though perhaps inelegant, name by which we knew such places—*guttle-shops*.—*Recollections of Rugby*.

**Guy** (thieves), an escape; to "do a guy," or to *guy*, to run away, to escape.

Still it is the constant burden of their thoughts—"How to do a guy!" A *guy* means to escape. The primal difficulty is the want of clothes.—*Evening News*.

From Dutch sailor-slang, in which *gy* seems to indicate speed

as of the wind. "*Gy-wind*," an arid dry wind. Or a corruption of *go*. (Theatrical), to *guy* is to condemn a new play or an actor.

Lo! "brilliant" stalls and solid pit  
In judgment on a new play sit.  
Some *guy* the poor playmaker's facts  
Between the acts—between the acts.

—*Fun*.

(General), a *guy*, an ill-dressed person, a person of queer dress or looks. From the effigy of Guy Fawkes, carried about by street boys on 5th of November. (Common), to *guy*, to distort.

**Gyger** or **jigger** (thieves), a door. Grose has *gigger*, a latch or door; "dub the *gigger*," open the door; "*gigger* dubber," the turnkey of a prison. A door, being for a thief an obstacle to be overcome, must be connected in his mind with the divers noises it creates when forced open, *i.e.*, the creaking of the hinges, clatter of bolts, grinding of keys in the lock. Hence the probable origin of *gigger* or *jigger*, from the provincialism to "gig," to make a noise. French rogues call a door or gate *une lourde*, a prison door being for them a *heavy* obstacle. It has been suggested that *jigger* is a form of the gypsy *stijga*, a gate.

**Gym-khana** (Anglo-Indian), a club or casino, including a skating-rink, lawn-tennis ground, and other amusements. It was, according to the Anglo-Indian

Glossary, unknown twenty-five years ago. The word was invented in the Bombay Presidency, and was probably based upon *gend-khana*, "ball-house," the name usually given in Hindú to an English racket-court. It is also a colonial term signifying a race-meeting got up by the military for gentlemen riders.

**Gyp** (Cambridge), a college servant. Said to be derived from γρῦψ, a vulture, in reference to the said servant's liberal interpretation of perquisites. This

has now become a somewhat unfair description.

At Cambridge *gyp*, at Oxford "scout," Collegians call the idle tout, Who brushes clothes, on errands runs, Absorbs their tips and keeps off duns.


—C. Bede: *Verdant Green*.

A more probable derivation is from *gypsy*, which has given *gip*, a thief.

**Gyro-twistive** (American), full of evasions and tricks.

Now Twine was a *gyro-twistive* cuss as ever you did know,  
And mit some of his circumswindles he fix de matter so.

—*The Breitmann Ballads*.

 **ABBEN**, hobben (gypsy), food, meal. "Párraco mi-dúvel for a kūshto hā-ben!" thank my Lord for a good meal!

**Hackamore** (American, Western), a head-stall for a horse. "She went with only a *hackamore* to bring back a couple of ponies that were straying."

Squito shot off at a tangent on the broncho she was riding, with only a *hackamore* or head-stall, to bring back a couple of ponies that were straying from the bunch.  
—F. Francis: *Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Hackle** (popular), pluck; "to show *hackle*," to be willing to fight. "Hackles" are the long feathers on the back of a cock's neck

which he erects when angry (Hotten).

**Hack, to** (football). "Hacking" is a term used at football to indicate an irregular and savage practice, no proper part of the game, and now falling into desuetude.

**Had, can't be** (London slang), not to be taken in.

While rambling once not far from here, I observed on turning round  
A man stoop and pretend to pick up something from the ground;  
He comes to me and then says he, "Will you buy this gold ring?"  
Said I, "My lad, I *can't be had*—I see it's no such thing."

—*Song: That's a Game best left Alone*.

**Haddock** (popular), a purse. The term probably belonged originally to fish-hawkers.

**Haddocks** (Stock Exchange), Great North of Scotland Ordinary Stock.

**Had it, or him, on toast**, did him thoroughly, completely finished him. (Popular), all served up, all ready, prepared.

I loved her, that was clear,  
And oh, *she had me on toast*, she had,  
For I bought her a diamond ring,  
Then the very next day she bolted away  
With Charley the masher king.

—*Ballad by T. F. Robson.*

**Hag** (Winchester College), an ungracious epithet applied to a matron.

**Haggler** (costermongers). The *haggler* is to the fruit and vegetable markets what the "Bum-maree" is to the fish market—a jobber and speculator.

**Hair** (common), "keep your *hair* on," do not be excited, keep your temper; varied to "keep your shirt on."

With the most perfect good temper the new-comer answered the expostulations of the fat woman with a "Keep yer *hair* on, Lizer."—*Sporting Times.*

"To take a *hair* of the dog that bit you," to take a dram in the morning after a too free indulgence in liquor on the previous evening.

But be sure, over night if the dog do you bite,  
You take it henceforth for a warning,

Soon as out of your bed, to settle your head,

Take a *hair* of his tail in the morning.  
—*Hilton: Catch that Catch Can.*

It is sometimes applied to other homœopathic proceedings (O. Davies).

Holding with most of our poets a vague notion that her woes were to be cured by a "*hair* of the dog who bit her," viz., by homœopathic doses.—*Kingsley: Two Years Ago.*

The saying, which has become a recognised phrase, probably originated in a belief that a dog bite could be cured by an application of the animal's *hair* to the wound, or it may be a version of the saying, "*Similia similibus curantur.*" The French have the common phrase, "*reprendre du poil de la bête.*"

**Hair-pin** (American), a man. This odd expression became popular about 1880. It is derived from a fancied resemblance of the human figure to a double-tined hair-pin, just as in Shakspeare's time a thin man was compared to a forked radish. In America the simile is popularly extended to clothes-pegs and tongs. It is heard most frequently in the form, "That's the kind of *hair-pin* I am."

Aye, that is just the *hair-pin*  
I am, and that's my line;  
And here is twenty dollars  
I've brought to pay my fine.

'Tis glorious when heroes  
Go in to right their wrongs;



But if you're only *hair-pins*,  
Oh, then, beware of tongs!  
—*Carey of Carson: A Ballad.*

**Half an eye** (nautical), "seeing with *half an eye*," discerning easily.

**Half-a-surprise** (London slang), a black eye. From a music-hall song.

**Half-baked, soft-baked** (provincialism), lacking in intelligence. The French equivalent for this is, "Il n'a pas la tête bien cuite."

He treated his cousin as a sort of harmless lunatic, and as they say in Devon, *half-baked*.—*C. Kingsley: Westward Ho.*

**Half-bord** (old cant), a sixpence.

**Half-fly flats** (thieves' slang), roughs ready to be hired to do the dirty work of thieves.

**Half-grown shad** (American), stupid fellow. As the Germans say, "Nicht mehr Verstand als ein Rekrut im Mutterleibe," no more intelligence than an unborn recruit.

No more interlect than a *half-grown shad*.—*Neal: Charcoal Sketches.*

He said it with a simple tone and gave a simple smile,

You never saw a *half-grown shad*  
one-half so void of guile.

—*The Green Old Man.*

**Half-man** (nautical), a landsman or boy in a coaster not deserving the pay of a "full man."

**Half-marrows** (nautical), incompetent seamen.

**Half-moon** (old cant), a periwig.

**Half-mourning** (common), "to have one's eye in *half-mourning*," to have a black eye. Latterly termed "half a surprise," from a music hall song, "Oh! what a surprise."

**Half-past kissing time, it's** (popular), an impudent answer often made by a man or boy to a girl who asks him what o'clock it is.

*It's half-past kissing time*, and time to kiss again,

For time is always on the move, and will still remain;

No matter what the hour is, you may rely on this,

It's always *half-past kissing time*, and time again to kiss!

—*G. Anthony: Ballad.*

Such phrases as the above are generally snatches of popular songs, or are often embodied in them.

**Halfrocked** (popular), half-witted, silly.

**Half seas over** (common), half or indeed wholly drunk. Common at first among sailors, it has now spread to all classes of the community.

The Licensed Victuallers have presented a second life-boat to the R.N.L.I. Of course she will be manned by a cork's-crew, who, though they may be sometimes *half seas over*, we trust may never be whole seas under. The L. V.'s, not believing in water themselves, do their level best—their spirit level best—to save others from it.—*Fun.*

**Half 'un** (common), an abbreviation for half a glass of whisky and water.

North of the Tweed you get a "sma' un," but there is not about this the delicate suggestiveness of a *half 'un*. When Drew, and Romano, and Charlie Moore, not to mention the Gallery and the Rainbow, start good little whiskies at twopence a time, there will be great times in Fleet Street and the Strand.—*Sporting Times*.

**Hall** (University), a general term for the common dinner served in the college halls at a university. Hence the verb "to *hall*."

**Ha-loy** (pidgin Cantonese), come down! "*Ha-loy*, you fella' top-side dat go-down *ha-loy!* hab got one piecee talkee fo' you ear-hear."

**Halves** (Winchester College), half Wellington boots. They are *non licet*.

**Ham** (American), a loafer.

**Ham-cases** (thieves), trousers; called also "hams."

**Hamlet** (American), a captain of police.

**Hammer** (common), an enormous falsehood, synonymous with "clinch," and "crammer." In Scottish parlance, according to Robert Burns, sometimes called a "rousing whid," or in the London vernacular a "whopper," a "rapper," a "good 'un," in contradistinction to a petty falsehood, called by ladies and children a "taradiddle."

**Hammer-headed** (common), stupid, dull, obtuse. Possibly

derived from the common yiddish slang, *hammār*, an ass.

**Hammering** (printers). This is a slang expression used by compositors to indicate overcharging time work—to charge more "hours" than actually engaged on a particular job or work and thus cheating.

**Hammersmith** (popular), "he has been at *Hammersmith*," he has received a terrific thrashing.

**Hammer, to** (Stock Exchange), to declare one a defaulter.

But when the members fail,  
Why, then the dealers quail,  
For it sets the *hammer* working up  
and down.

—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

To beat, ill-treat.

A fellow as ever broke bread,  
As fly as a cop, he could *hammer* a sloop.  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Hampstead Heath sailor** (popular), a term of ridicule—no sailor at all. What the French call "marin d'eau douce," or "amiral suisse."

**Hams shrunk** (tailors), sides of trousers shrunk at thigh.

**Hand-em-down** (provincial), a Northamptonshire term for a second-hand garment. Corresponds to the French "*décochez-moi ça*."

**Handicap, to** (common). This term, as used in racing, is a recognised word. It is also used in

a metaphoric sense to signify to make even, to equalise the chances.

**Handle** (common), a person with a title is said to have a *handle* to his name. This is a very common and now recognised phrase.

**Hand-me-down place** (tailors), a repairing tailor's, now often styled a "never-too-late-to-mend shop."

The cut of his coat makes me weary! Regular *hand-me-downs*, and no mistake—ugh—how can he expect the world to swallow that necktie?—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Hand out** (American), an expression fully explained in the following extract from "The Western Avernus, or Toil and Travel in Further North America," by Morley Roberts—a work which should be read by every one before attempting to "rough it" in the "West":—"Up to this time they had always given us our meals in the tents with knives and forks and plates (separately), but here the cooks brought out a huge can of soup, some potatoes, great lumps of boiled beef, a pile of plates, and a bucket of knives and forks. A chorus of growls rose up from us on all sides. . . . Some of the boys said it was a regular *hand out*, and that we looked like a crowd of old bummers. Bummers is the American for beggars, and a *hand out* is a portion of food handed out to a bumper

or a tramp at the door when he is not asked inside."

**Hand saw** (popular), a street hawker of knives and razors.

**Handseller** (popular), a street or open-air vendor.

**Handsome**, Americanism for grand or beautiful. "The Falls of Niagara are one of the *handsomest* things in the United States." "Yes! indeed, they are very *elegant*." A similar abuse of the adjective is to be found in such vulgar phrases as "The cheese is *magnificent*," "The butter was *splendid*," "The eggs were *first-rate*," "The whole thing was *marvellous*," "The liquor was *glorious*," "The bread was *beautiful*," or "What a *grand old* time we had of it."

**Handsome as a last year's corpse** (American), a sarcastic compliment (C. Leland Harrison: MS. Americanisms).

**Handsomely** (nautical), gently.

**Handsomely over the bricks** (nautical), go cautiously, have a care.

**Handsprings** (popular), to chuck *handsprings*, to throw somersaults.

**Hang** (common), "not to care a *hang*," synonymous with "not to care a fig." *Hang*, or "*hang it!*" denotes that the speaker does not care, is vexed, or disappointed.

And there lay the rider we thought  
 couldn't fail;  
 Ah! Captain Lee Barber! we're broke  
 and want bail:  
 The Frenchmen are beaten 'tis true;  
 but, oh, *hang!*  
 We hadn't a bob on that beast Parasang.  
 —*Sporting Times.*

**Hangers** (popular), gloves, generally well worn, carried in the hand, but never put on.

**Hang-it-out, to** (printers), to “skulk” on a job—not to do justice when on time work.

**Hang it up, to** (American), to charge to one's account, to put down to credit, to chalk it behind the door. Also English, *hang it up*, slate it.

**Hang of a thing, to get or have the** (English and American), to become familiar with, to learn the art, manner, or way of managing or using anything. “I am bad at my lessons just now,” said a new pupil apologetically, “but I expect to do well as soon as *I've got the hang* of the school-house.” Bartlett derives this, very ingeniously, from the adjusting of tools to their handles, which is known as hanging; but hanging in the sense of dependence, relationship, and adjustment, seems to be common in the Indo-European languages, if not in all others.

Though they ain't *got the 'ang* of it,  
 Charlie, the toffs ain't,—no go and  
 no spice!

Why, I'd back Barney Crump at our  
 sing-song to lick 'em two times out  
 o' twice.

—*Punch.*

**Hang-off** (printers), an expression used to convey a rejection or avoidance of anything objectionable. To “keep off” or “fight shy” of anything.

**Hang out** (University), a feasting, an entertainment.

I remember the date from the Fourth of July occurring just afterwards, which I celebrated by a *hang out*.—*Bristed: Five Years.*

Used as a verb, it signifies to treat, to have or possess, also to dwell; “from the ancient custom,” says Hotten, “of hanging out signs.”

“I say, old boy, where do you *hang out?*” Mr. Pickwick replied that he was at present suspended at the George and Vulture.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

“Ce bon Edouard” used to *hang out*—and hang up—in a cold and barn-like *atelier* in the Rue d'Amsterdam.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Hang, to** (popular and sporting), to be in a desperate state. Said when a man cannot turn one way or the other. Dutch, “tuschen *hangen* en wurgen,” to be between hanging and strangling. (American), “it all *hangs* on him,” it all depends on him. In Dutch, “De zaak *hangt* aan hem.”

**Hang up a bill, to** (politicians), explained by quotation.

To *hang up a bill* is to pass through one or more of its stages, and then to lay it

aside, and defer its further consideration for a more or less indefinite period.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Hang up his hat** (common), to make one's self permanently at home, to board and lodge in a house.

I said, "Mrs. Jones, may I *hang up my hat*?"

She replied, "Mr. Sponge, I don't know about that."

—*Comic Song*.

**Hang up one's fiddle, to** (American), to give up business, to resign, to desist, to retire from public into private life.

When a man loses his temper, and ain't cool, he might as well *hang up his fiddle*.—*Sam Slick*.

If a man at forty-two is not in a fair way to get a fair share of the world's spoils, he might as well *hang up his fiddle*.—*Don's Sermons*.

(Common), "to *hang up one's fiddle* anywhere," to adapt one's self to circumstances.

**Hang up, to** (thieves), to rob with violence. American thieves use the expression "hold up." Probably from hoisting a man on one's back, by means of a rope round his neck, while an accomplice robs him. French thieves call this mode of robbery "la faire au père François."

**Hánk** (gypsy), a well.

**Hankin** (trade), trickery. To make common work appear to be the best quality.

**Hanky-panky**, adroit substitution, palming, sleight-of-hand

in legerdemain. The gypsies use *huckeny* and *hunky* to signify deceit. In Hindustani, the parent of gypsy, *hoggu*, pronounced *hocku* or *honku*, with the suffix *bazce* (a box), means legerdemain. In gypsy, *huckeny pokee*, or *ponkee*, means the adroit substitution by sleight-of-hand of a bundle containing lead or stones for another containing money or valuables.

*Hanky-panky* and *hocus-pocus* are each one half almost pure Hindustani.—*The English Gypsies and their Language*.

**Hanky-panky bloke** or **pile o' mags** (theatrical), a conjuror.

**Hanky-spanky** (popular), dashing, in dashing style; refers specially to garments.

**Hansom** (coster), a chop.

**Hant, haunt** (American), a ghost. It is possibly the Malay word *hant*, an evil spirit.

"It must be Beck's *haunt*," suggested one. "Sure as I'm born," said the preacher, "it does look like a ghost."—*Atlanta Constitution: Georgia Ghost Stories*.

But dem unz *hants*. Witches is dere yer kinder fokes wat kim drap dere body and change inter a cat en a wolf.—*Uncle Remus*.

**Han-tun** (pidgin), one hundred.

**Hap harlot**, a jocosé term for a woman's under-garments. *Wrap-rascal* is a similarly facetious term for a man's overcoat. *Hap-harlot* has been modified or corrupted into *hap-parlet*.

**Ha'porth o' coppers** (legal),  
Habeas Corpus.

**Happen on it, to** (American), to meet with anything by chance or accidentally. This phrase, like "to happen in," *i.e.*, "to happen to call in," "to drop in on by accident," is evidently derived from the regular verb "to happen," but it is worth noting that in Dutch *happen* means to snatch, or snap.

Yer oughter hev *happened through* here with that instrumint of yourn about that time, young feller; yer might hev kept as full as a tick, till they war busted.—*Thomas Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Häpper, hápper** (gypsy), to carry away. *Hoppercore*, a policeman (one who carries away).

**Happy-go-lucky** (common), given as a slang term by Hotten and others, but to be found in English dictionaries of the beginning of the eighteenth century as a recognised term under the form "happy-be-lucky," at hazard, go as it will. French slang, "va comme je te pousse."

**Happy returns** (Australian popular), throwing up one's food. If a person feels sick, feels his "dinner in his mouth," as English people say, he will say that "he has the *happy returns*."

**Hard** (roughs and thieves), for *hard* labour.

. . . And then do his month's *hard* on his head.—*Sporting Times.*

(American rhyming slang), *hard* coal, silver and gold, hardware, false coin, hard metal.

**Hard bargain** (nautical), a lazy fellow, a skulker.

**Hard case** (American), a very common old-fashioned expression for a worthless, shameless man, or any one from whom nothing good can be expected. One may sometimes see in "stores" lists of *hard cases* hung up, *i.e.*, of defaulting debtors.

A petrified body has been discovered in Ohio. It is not the first *hard case* that has come to light in that commonwealth.—*Detroit Free Press.*

(Nautical), a bullying, cruel officer.

**Hard cheese** (Royal Military Academy), varied sometimes to "what cheese!" or "fromage." *Vide* CHEESE.

**Hardening market** (commercial). The market is said to harden from the purchaser's point of view when prices advance. Also used when one's chances of success are decreasing.

Take it all together, his life was becoming a mockery and a misery. The matrimonial market was *hardening* against him.—*Moonshine.*

*I.e.*, the possibility of marriage was decreasing.

**Hard horse** (nautical), a tyrannical officer.

**Hard lines** (common), ill luck, hardship.

'*Ard lines*, ain't it, Charlie, old hoyster?  
A Barney's a Barney, dear boy,  
And you know that a squeeze and a sky-lark  
is wot I did always enjoy,  
A street-rush is somethink splendacious to  
fellers of sperrit like me,  
But dints and diakkylum plaster will spile  
the best sport, don'tcher see.

—*Punch*.

**Hard-mouthed un'** (popular), an obstinate person, or one difficult to deal with.

**Hard neck** (tailors), a great amount of cheek and impudence.

**Hard or soft drinks** (American). In the United States any liquor which is decidedly intoxicating is called *hard*, while soda-water, lemonade, root-beer, ginger-beer, and the like, are *soft*. Likewise the French call these respectively *raide*, and *doux*.

**Hard row to hoe** (American), a very common phrase to express a hard task.

Captain Ben sighed. I thought ma'be you was having a *hard row to hoe*, and I thought like enough.—*Frances Lee Pratt: Captain Ben's Choice*.

**Hard-shell** (American), thoroughly orthodox, unyielding, "hide-bound," or conservative in religion or politics. The first persons known by this name were the old-fashioned Baptists in Georgia, who regarded all reforms as new-fangled fancies, so that they even disapproved of temperance. It is said that once

when there was to be a great religious revival, a member rose and said:—"I hev to complain of Brother Smith. He is a rich man, he is worth six or seven thousand dollars, and yet he has only contributed one gallon of whisky towards this revival. Now I'm a pore man, but, to uphold the cause of Christ, I hev given a whole bar'l of sperits, for when it comes to sustaining religion I'll jest do my level best." The name *hard-shell*, or "hards," was given to a division in the Democratic party in 1848. Both in religion and in politics the opponents of these "orthodox" parties were called "soft-shells."

A number of swimming-bath proprietors have been fined in the United States for opening their establishments on Sunday mornings. The prosecutors were certain religious (?) lunatics who resuscitated a quaint old law against bathing on the Sabbath. Genuine *hard-shell* fanatics, who are mad on the subject of religion, are usually dirty in their habits, and strangely ignore the text, "Cleanliness is next to godliness."—*Fun*.

**Hard stuff** (up-country Australian), intoxicating liquors. The bushman has a great contempt for non-alcoholic liquors. Intoxicating liquors he calls *hard stuff*, as the only thing not too "soft" for men.

He knows every one and every one knows him by his Christian name. Each time drinks are called for he is included. He cannot drink *hard stuff*, however, always. His business would suffer. He has a private bottle filled with tea, from which he fills his glass after receiving payment.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Hard tack** (nautical), shipbiscuits.

At that particular moment I should have preferred some coffee and *hard tack* to a lecture.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail.*

(Popular), coarse or insufficient food. *Vide TACK.*

**Hard up** (common), wanting for anything, short of money, poor, varied to "*hard up* for cash."

He ought, or nothing else may be,

Such is sweet woman's whim—

A "J," a knave, or e'en *hard up*,

She's still "soft down" on him.

To make a conquest where he will,

A gallant "gay young spark"

Two attributes need but possess:

He must be "tall and dark!"

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

"Sorry to say, Brown owes money to me! Is he *hard up*?" "Very."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

(Popular), a man who picks up cigar ends in the street.

**Hard-upness** (common), a state of impoverishment.

But in either district there were frequent failures, arising from inexperience of the parties concerned, or collapses from death or *hard-upness*.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

**Hardware blokes** (thieves), men of Birmingham.

**Hare it** (American thieves), return, come back.

**Harlequin** (theatrical), a sovereign.

**Harman beck** (old cant), a constable. It has been suggested that *harman beck* is, literally,

one who beckons, orders you off to the stocks. *Vide BEAK.*

"It is very probable that this word was derived from the name of the celebrated magistrate Harman, who was as well known to all the thieves of England during the reign of Elizabeth, as was George Borrow to the gypsies in that of Victoria" (Charles G. Leland: *MS. Notes of Gypsy Lore*).

**Harmans, hartmans** (old cant), the stocks.

The Bube and Ruffian cly the Harman beck and *harmans*.—*Thomas Dekker: Lanthorne and Candle Light.*

From *harve*, the back upright timber of a gate, synonymous with stock or post; and same suffix used in other cant words, such as "lightmans," day; "darkmans," night; "ruffmans," hedges, bushes, woods; "togman," coat.

**Hāro, haúro, hālonó** (gypsy), copper; *hōrra*, a copper, *i.e.*, a penny.

**Harper**, an Irish shilling which bore the figure of a harp, and was only worth ninepence (Wright). "Harp" is a call at pitch-and-toss, also "music."

**Harrower** (theatrical), a term of derision used to describe a pathetic and powerful artiste, male or female, who is accustomed to *harrow* the feelings of the audience.



**Harry** (common), to play old *Harry* with one, is synonymous with to play the devil, to annoy or ruin one. Old *Harry* is, of course, the "old gentleman," the devil. It has been suggested that *Harry* is the word *hairy*; but it is possible that it comes from to *harry*, to torment, to tear in pieces, so that Old *Harry* would literally mean the old tormentor, the "arch tormentor," "old scratch." Again, it may simply be the diminutive of Henry, old "Nick" or Nicholas being another name for the devil. Sailors often swear "by the Lord *Harry*."

**Harry Bluff** (rhyming slang), snuff.

**Harry! Harry!** (provincial), a derisive expletive addressed by workmen to their mates when the latter are overladen.

**Harry Soph.** This is given as a recognised term by Webster, with the definition of a university student at Cambridge who, having sufficient standing to take the degree of B.A., declares himself a candidate for a degree in law or physic. From *ἐπισοφος*.

**Hash** (common), to make a *hash* of it, to jumble together, to spoil; to settle his *hash*, to kill him.

(American cadets), a term given to the clandestine preparation of supper in the rooms, subsequent to the extinction of lights, and contrary to rule.

Ah! there was a dream of revelry then,  
As over the *hash* these jovial men  
Did stand to inhale the savoury smell,  
And all went smooth as a marriage bell.  
—*The West Point Scrap Book*.

**Haslar hags** (nautical), the nurses of the naval hospital, Haslar, near Gosport.

**Hatches** (nautical), under *hatches*, safely stowed away, dead and buried, in distress, trouble, or debt.

**Hatchet** (tailors), a name vulgarly applied to a plain or ugly woman. (Nautical), "to sling the *hatchet*," to sulk; the reverse of to bury the *hatchet* or tomahawk, a practice of Red Indians in time of peace.

**Hatchet, to throw or sling the** (common), to tell lies, to "draw the long bow."

**Hatch, match, and dispatch column** (American and journalistic), a vulgar epithet to describe the births, marriages, and deaths announcements in the press. An equivalent is the cradle, altar, and tomb column.

**Hatch-thoke** (Winchester College). The term signifies founder's days, which are holidays with Amen Chapel at 11 A.M. There are three in Long Half and two in Short Half. Nobody need be up till 9 A.M. The Warden and Fellows on those days assemble and discuss college affairs.

**Hatchway** (nautical), the mouth.

**Hat fellow commoner** (Cambridge). At Trinity College, a fellow commoner, who was either a baronet, the eldest son of one, or the younger son of a nobleman, formerly wore a tall hat instead of the square cap or "mortar-board."

**Hatfield** (common), a drink consisting of gin and gingerbeer, and other ingredients.

A deep draught of iced *Hatfield*.  
—*Punch*.

**Hating out** (American), sending a man to Coventry.

The punishment for idleness, lying, dishonesty, and ill-fame generally was that of *hating* the offender *out*, as they expressed it. It commonly resulted in the reformation or banishment of the person against whom it was directed. If a man did not do his share of the public service, he was *hated out* as a coward.—*S. Merchaval: History of Virginia*.

**Hat trick** (cricket), a bowler who takes three wickets in succession is said to have done the *hat trick*. From the custom of giving him a hat as a recognition of his skill.

Only three attained to double figures, and the collapse at the end of the innings was remarkable, the wickets of Attewell, Newton, and Beaumont falling to three successive balls from Griffin, who thus accomplished the *hat trick*.—*Standard*.

**Haul my wind** (nautical), an expression when an individual is going upon a new line of action, to avoid a quarrel or difficulty (Admiral Smyth).

**Haul over the coals, to** (society), to scold, give a lecture to. Very often used in reference to any one in an official position who gets reprimanded. Supposed to refer to the ordeal by fire. More probably an allusion to the state of discomfort of a person fuming under the scolding. The French have the familiar phrase, "être sur le gril," to be on tenter-hooks, in a stew, literally on the gridiron.

**Have the drop on, to** (Texan), to have the advantage of, to cover with an aim. From the drop, bead, or sight on a rifle.

**Havey-cavey** (popular), wavering, doubtful.

**Hawk** (common), cardsharper, swindler.

He kept a private hotel at the West End of London, which might be termed a gambling-house frequented by dissipated lords—*hawks* and "pigeons."—*Evening News*.

The Germania or Spanish cant has *gerifalte*, a kind of *hawk*, for a thief; and *aquila* (eagle), for an expert thief.

**Hāwker** (gipsy), to drive away; Hindu, *hawkáná*.

**Hawks her meat** (common), said of a woman who is very *décolletée*. French, "elle montre sa viande."

**Hawk, ware** (thieves), be careful! look out!

**Hawse** (nautical), "to fall athwart one's *hawse*," to come across one, to obstruct one's way.

**Hay, to make** (common), to throw everything into confusion, to turn topsy-turvy. Originally an Oxford phrase.

The fellows were mad with fighting too. I wish they hadn't come here and *made hay* afterwards.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe.*

**Hazard-drum** (thieves), a gambling-house.

**Haze, to.** In England, to confuse, annoy, and intentionally perplex by contradictory orders. In the United States it expresses physical as well as mental cruelty. It is there peculiarly applied to the tormenting of newly-arrived students in universities and military or naval schools. This practice is sometimes carried to a great extent.

West Point has just held a court-martial over the insubordination of certain cadets, and now the Annapolis Naval School is indulging in much the same luxury. The accused were guilty of *hazing* some of the younger academicians.—*American Newspaper.*

**Hazree** (Anglo-Indian), this word is commonly used (Anglo-Indian Glossary) in Anglo-Indian households in the Bengal Presidency, for breakfast. It is not clear how it got this meaning. It is probably *hāziri*, "muster;" from the Arabic *hāzir*, "ready" or "present."

**He can't dance** (American), sometimes heard to indicate a man

without culture. "His daddy hasn't got no peach-orchard, and *he can't dance.*" In Delaware, where almost every farm contains a peach-orchard, this allusion to the orchard would imply a very small landed proprietor. Not many years ago there were not a few people who regarded music in divine service as a profane thing. A rustic who had never even heard of such a thing visited one of the great cities, and found himself on Sunday morning before the door of a church. "Walk in, sir," said the sexton, "and attend service." Just then the organ pealed loudly and the stranger drew back in horror. "No, mister," he replied; "I ain't used to no sitch carryin's-on on a Sunday—besides, *I can't dance!*"

**Head** (American), to get a *head*, or a *head on*, is to have a swelled head after being intoxicated.

Neal Dow has been lecturing on "How to get a *head.*" It pains us that the good old gentleman should evince so much knowledge of the after effects of excessive drinking.—*Detroit Tribune.*

To put a *head* on a man, to assault with intent to annihilate an adversary.

But all his jargon was surpassed, in wild absurdity,  
By threats, profanely emphasised, to *put a head* on me!  
No son of Belial, said I, that miracle can do!  
Whereat he fell upon me with blows and curses too,

But failed to work that miracle—if such was his design—  
Instead of *putting on a head*, he strove  
to smite off mine.

—*Galveston News*.

**Head-beetler** (workmen), the  
bully of a workshop.

**Head boy** (Royal Military  
Academy), the senior under-  
officer.

**Head-cook and bottle-washer**  
(popular), a general servant.

**Header** (tailors), a notability.

**Heading** (American cow-boy  
slang), a pillow or anything put  
under the head at night (C.  
Leland Harrison: MS. Ameri-  
canisms).

**Head-quarters** (turf), Newmarket.

**Head-rails** (popular), the teeth.  
Originally a sea phrase, the *head-  
rails* being the short rails of the  
head extending from the back  
of the figure to the cat-head.

While to another he would cheerfully  
remark, "Your *head-rails* were loosened  
then, wasn't they?"—C. Eede: *Verdant  
Green*.

**Head robber** (popular), a butler.

**Head robbers** (journalistic), pla-  
giarists, those who steal the  
work of other men's brains.

**Head-serag** (Bengaloe and sea),  
a master, overseer, or other im-

portant personage. From *serang*,  
a boatswain, according to Hot-  
ten. Evidently the same as the  
provincial *head Sir Rag*, a prin-  
cipal, the chief agent or actor  
in anything.

**Heads out!** (American Univer-  
sity), a cry of alarm and warn-  
ing to be on guard when a pro-  
fessor or master is near, and  
when any lark or spree is in  
progress.

**Head station** (up-country Austra-  
lian), the homestead on an  
Australian station. *Vide* STA-  
TION. The *head station* is the  
house occupied by the owner or  
manager of a station or run,  
and of course contains the office  
at which its business is trans-  
acted.

Soon they passed a *head station*, as the  
homestead and main buildings of a sta-  
tion are invariably called. . . The houses  
were comfortably built, and of handsome  
design; a large garden adjoined them;  
creepers covered the verandahs and out-  
buildings, of which there were many; and  
several paddocks of great extent, encircled  
by substantial post and rail fences, sur-  
rounded the whole.—A. C. Grant: *Bush-  
Life in Queensland*.

**Healtheries** (common), modern  
slang abbreviation for the  
Health Exhibition.

**Heap, all of a** (common), amazed,  
confused, dismayed.

The *Daily News* is *all of a heap* this  
morning over the Gower election.—*Globe*.

**Heap, struck all of a** (popular),  
amazed.

**Hearing cheats** (old cant), the ears, now termed "leathers" or "lugs."

**Heartburn.** London cads, who find a name for everything, thus call a cigar, evidently a very cheap one.

**Heave a booth, to** (thieves), to plunder a house. Also to "heave a case."

**Heavenly collar and lappel** (tailors), a name given to collars or lappels that turn the wrong way.

**Heaver** (old cant), the breast, now called the "panter;" hence *heavers*, persons in love.

**Heavy dragoons** (Oxford University), bugs (Hotten).

**Heavy swell** (common), a great swell.

And Mr. Crackit is a *heavy swell*, an't he, Fagin?—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Heavy wet** (common), strong malt liquor; principally used to describe porter, stout, or double stout, and sometimes called treble X., because designated by publicans and brewers as XXX.

To the Blue Posts let us go,  
There will clouds of bacca blow,  
And our cares we'll forget  
In a flood of *heavy wet*.

—*Song of 1828.*

**Hedge, to** (turf), to reverse on advantageous terms the previous order of a wager—*e.g.*, if a person takes 100 to 10 about a horse for a future race, and subsequently lays 90 to 10 against the same animal, he has *hedged* his money—he may win £10, but cannot under any circumstances lose.

You must back a winner before you can win in any case, system or no system. Of course, a horse can be laid against, or a bet may be *hedged*, but this does not apply to the backing of horses on a system.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Popular), to get away on the appearance of danger.

**Hedge-bottom attorney or solicitor** (legal). This is applied to a person who, not being himself a solicitor, or who, if he is, has not taken out his certificate (or perhaps has been a solicitor, but has been struck off the rolls for unprofessional conduct), sets up in business as a solicitor under the name of a man who is a solicitor, and thus evades the penalties attaching to those who act as solicitors without being 'duly qualified; because, although all the business is done in the name of another, yet he it is who is the real principal, introducing the clients, doing the legal business, and pocketing the fees; the other is only a dummy to be used as a figure-head for evading the law.

**Hedgehog, to** (Northampton provincial), to reveal, to open, to

bring to light. "A witness giving evidence in an Assize Court said 'the prisoner *hedgehogged!*' On being asked what he meant, he said that 'a *hedgehog* when in water opened; and the man, when they gave him plenty of beer, opened and told all he knewed.'"

**Hedger** (turf). *Vide* HEDGE.

That a tailor's bad to beat when his plans  
are all complete,  
Must be plain to every punter, sharp,  
and *hedger*;  
So if Eiridspond's the pea, as he'll very  
likely be,  
Follow Taylor as a snip for the St.  
Leger.

—*Sporting Times*.

**He'd play his hand for all there was in it** (American), a very significant intimation that a man would make all that he could by fair means or foul.

"I was moighty hard up at the time—right down on the bed-rock—and it may be that I was just monkeying with the cards—a little."

"You bet yer!" cried Jake from the store. "*He'd play his hand for all there was in it*, anyhow."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Heeled** (Western American), armed, weaponed, well defended. An allusion to the practice of arming the birds in cock-fighting with steel spurs. "Were both men *heeled?*" *i.e.*, were they both armed.

If I'd had any show, I'd have drawn on 'em right away—I wanted to ter'ble bad; but I hadn't got no Winchester

along, and only two cartridges in my six-shooter, whilst they was both well-*heeled*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Heeler** (American), an accomplice of the pocket-book dropper. The *heeler* stoops behind the victim and strikes one of his heels as if by mistake. This makes him look down, and so draws his attention to the pocket-book which lies on the ground. The dupe is about to pick it up, when the dropper steps forward and claims half of whatever may be in the pocket-book, but offers to relinquish his share for a certain sum, ten or twenty dollars. The dupe, who has taken a peep and ascertained that the dummy is stuffed with bank-notes, pays the money, and then finds out later that he has bought counterfeit bills. "*Heelers* and strikers," men who beset candidates for office to extort money from them on divers pretences.

(Winchester College), a jump into the water feet first. French schoolboys call this "une chandelle."

**Heels, to turn up** (old), to die, also "to turn up one's toes." A variant was to "topple up the heels."

The backwinter . . . and sicknesse . . . seaven thousand and fifty people *toppled up their heels* then.—*Nash: Lenten Stuffle*.

**Heel-tap**, a small quantity of liquor left in the glass by any

one who drinks or pretends to drink the honour of a proposed toast. This was held in the ultra convivial days of our not very remote ancestors to be a mark of disrespect or of effeminacy, and was often met by the warning of "No *heel-taps*." Also the fag end of a bottle.

Nick took off his *heel-tap*, bowed, smiled with an air  
Most graciously grim, and vacated the chair.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

*Heel-taps* properly are pieces of leather fastened on the bottom of a boot or shoe when repairing the sole. Hence the metaphor.

**He-foo** (pidgin), a sky-rocket, literally "a rise-fire" (Cantonese).

**Hefty** (American). Bartlett defines this as "heavy" in the sense of weight. It is also used to indicate anything great, remarkable, or extraordinary in a "moral" as well as a physical sense.

In course they knows what a perlocefede (velocipede) is, from seein' 'em in pictures, but they never seed a real machine, and it'd be a *hefty* treat for 'em!—*Thomas Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle*.

**He got there with both feet** (American), meaning that he was very successful.

He said as he'd been gambling, and was two hundred dollars ahead of the whole town. *He got there with both feet* at starting, and was eight hundred ahead once. But he played it off at monté.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Heifer paddock**, (Australian), a ladies' school. The derivation from heifer, a young cow—cow being a slang word for a woman—is obvious.

"The fact is, my dear Murray," he added, "the cattle (women) hereabouts are too scattered, you can't inspect them properly. Next year I shall look over a *heifer paddock* in Sydney and take my pick."—*Mrs. Campbell Reed: Sketches of Australian Life*.

**Heigh-ho** (thieves), stolen yarn.

**Hékka! hokki!** (gypsy), haste!  
Possibly the original of "hook it," *i.e.*, hurry.

**Hell** (tailors), the place where a tailor deposited his cabbage (Wright).

**Hell and scissors!** (American), a peculiar interjection, signifying that while one startled at something there is still something ridiculous in the affair. "To kick up *hell*—and break things" is often uttered in quite the same spirit.

**Hell and tommy** (popular). To "play *hell and tommy*" with any one, to ruin him utterly. According to Dr. Charles Mackay, this grotesque expression probably means to reduce a man to extreme destitution, or to bread and water, and if so, an etymon may be found in the Keltic *ol*, drink, and *tomadh* (*toma*), a lump of bread.

**Hell a-popping** (American), a tremendous row or dispute, no

doubt from the propensity of those who use the expression for using their "six-shooters" on the slightest provocation.

There was *hell a-popping*. One fellow said he had roped in a sow with the left ear off. . . . Another fellow said that he had got a young boar with the right ear off. So they went to him, madder than hell they were, too.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Hell-box** (printers), the receptacle for bad, broken, or "battered" letters, which are eventually melted down.

**Hellion** (American), a very abusive word, used in the Southern States, equivalent to "devil or hell's own." Possibly a form of hell-hound.

**Hell's kitchen** (American), a horrible slum. *Hell's Kitchen*, Murderer's Row, and the Burnt Rag are names of localities which form collectively the worst place in New York.

Poor old Bottle Alley, in Baxter Street, has become a mere snoozing-ken for vagrants made sodden and stupid with age, disease, and rum; *Hell's Kitchen*, those big Thirty-ninth Street tenements, offer harm to no one, except when a shower of stones falls from the gutters on an unpopular policeman.—*Philadelphia Press. (From MS. Collection of Americanisms, by C. Leland Harrison.)*

**Hell's mint** (American). "A mint of money" has led to describing a large quantity of anything as one. "Old B. has got a *mint* of houses, as I hear." Hence *hell's mint*, as a superlative of abundance.

Is that an Indian over there, or is it only a soap-weed? There's a *hell's mint* of soap-weed killed these Indian times, grease bush too—and cactus! cactus gets fits. The boys are death on cactus when they get scared. Some of them would just as soon shoot a cactus as not—they don't care what they kill.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**He makes his fun pay** (American), said of a very shrewd man, one for instance who keeps horses to ride and drive, yet manages so well by "trading" that they cost him nothing. A great sharper having said to Lessing that it had cost him ten thousand dollars to see the world, Lessing replied that he feared that the world would gladly give quite as much never to have seen him.

**Hemp, young** (old), young scoundrel deserving the gallows.

**Hempen croak** (common), the hangman's rope.

**Hempen widow** (thieves), one whose husband was hanged.

In a cell of the stone jug I was born,  
Of a *hempen widow* the kid forlorn.  
—*Harrison Ainsworth.*

**Hen** (American), a wife or mistress, girl or woman.

This was more than Jane could endure from Emily. "My young man is as good as yours," she screamed, "and five miles out of town better." And saying this she administered an exhilarating old slap on the face which sounded like the breaking of a tall pine tree by a cyclone. The *hen*-fight lasted exactly five minutes. What was left required exactly two weeks eight hours and ten minutes to reconstruct.—*Philadelphia Newspaper.*



The nights are spent at a poker game,  
 He speaks of the ballet as something  
 tame,  
 And with jibe and joke, these racy men  
 Refer to the season that brings his *hen*,  
 And pleasures flee.  
 —*Hollis W. Field.*

**Hen-convention** (popular), an assemblage of women at which no man is present. Also "hen-party."

**Hen-frigate** (nautical), a ship in which the captain's wife plays a domineering part, "wears the breeches."

**Hen-house** (old), a house for soldiers' wives.

**Hens and chickens** (thieves), explained by quotation.

The *hens* and *chickens* of the low lodging-houses are the publicans' pewter measures; the bigger vessels are *hens*, the smaller *chickens*.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

Called also "cats and kittens."

**Herder** (American). In the West, a white man who has charge of a gang of Chinese.

I found large gangs of Chinamen at work in different places, in charge of a white man who was called the *herder*. This job is not always a happy one, although it is well paid, for the Chinamen who work on railroads are the very scum of China, wharf-rats from Hong-Kong, and are evil and desperate. Consequently it is no uncommon thing for a *herder* to get killed or badly beaten by them.—*M. Roberts: The Western Avcrnus.*

(American cowboys), baby *herder*, a nurse.

**Herdic** (American), a carriage for public conveyance, something like a small omnibus. They were invented and brought into use by a Mr. Herdic of Pennsylvania, whence the name. They are now common in most American cities.

Honest men, like needles in hay-mounds, are hard to find, but we have one in our midst, and his name is Joseph Carroll, driver of private *herdic*.—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Hereford** (American cowboy), white.

A white shirt he calls a *Hereford* shirt because Hereford cattle have white faces. Similarly calls anything *Hereford* that is white; for example, *Hereford* dishes and *Hereford* hats. Carrying this fancy still further, a "white" man is known as a *Hereford* man.—*Philadelphia Press. (C. Leland Harrison: MS. Americanisms.)*

**Here's luck** (tailors), I don't believe it.

**Hermaphrodite** or **morfydite schooner** (nautical) is square rigged, but without a top forward, and schooner rigged abaft; carrying only fore-and-aft sails on the mainmast; in other phrase, she is a vessel with a brig's foremast and a schooner's mainmast (Admiral Smyth).

**Herring** (American), all bad, all alike. Hence the later expression "sardine," applied to a man who is exactly like all his associates, a narrow-minded, average sort of person, who has been packed away as it were among others.

**Herring gutted** (old), lanky.

**Herring pond, the** (common), a facetious name given to the Atlantic Ocean. Said to be of American origin, but now commonly used in both continents.

Everybody nowadays has read as much as he or she cares to about the voyage across *the herring-pond*, a voyage of which many of our American cousins think less than other men of a Channel-crossing.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot.*

**He's gone north about** (nautical) said of a sailor who has died from any cause but drowning. Shakspeare in "Twelfth Night" (Act iii. scene 2) uses a somewhat similar phrase, and which seems to throw some light upon the expression as used by sailors:—"You are now sailed into the *north of my lady's opinion*, where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do reclaim it by some laudable attempt."

**Hewgag, the** (American), name for an undeterminate, unknown mythical creature.

**Hick, country** (old cant), a stupid clodhopper.

**Hickjap** (thieves), a fool. *Hicksam*, a countryman, a foolish fellow.

**Hickey** (thieves), tipsy, not quite drunk, elated. Probably from hiccough.

**Hickety split.** *Vide* FULL DRIVE.

**Hickory shirt** (American), a cheap, durable woollen shirt generally worn by working men, or by those who dispense with linen or muslin.

"Good heavens, girl!" asked Mr. Neece of the domestic, "what are you doing with that *hickory shirt*?"

"Faith an' I'm brushing some of the dust out of it. It's in a shameful condition."—*Peona Transcript.*

**Hid** (American), an abbreviation of hideous, used as a noun. Used chiefly by girls. "She's a perfect *hid*."

**Hiding** (common), a good *hiding*, a severe beating with the "hide," or dried skin of an animal, formerly used as a scourge. To "cow-hide," or beat with a cow or ox-hide, is a common expression, and before the use of the revolver became unhappily prevalent, was once a common practice in the United States. The word has been erroneously derived from the effect of the beating, the skin or hide of the beaten person, and not from the material of the scourge itself.

"What right has a jossler like you to interfere?" the coal-heaver retorted, turning toward the tall stranger. "You may be a D., but I will give you a *hiding* for your cheek."—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**High, the** (Oxford), the High Street at Oxford.

And after calling in at the tailor's to express his approbation, he at once sallied forth to *do the High*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**High and dry** (clerical), old-fashioned members of the

Church of England are often described disrespectfully as being *high and dry*. Those of the Evangelical Church are per contra dubbed "low and slow." (American), a simile borrowed from any article left on the beach by a retreating tide. To be left without resources, to be quite abandoned and helpless.

They ate like brave men, long and well ;  
they gobbled there and then,  
Till the abdomens grew rotund of those  
gallant Fremont men,  
A beef a day to every man was but a small  
supply ;  
Soon conquered they Vallejo's ranch—they  
ate him *high and dry*.

—*Political Song of 1850.*

**High-boy**, a High Tory and Churchman, supposed to favour Jacobitism (O. Davis).

**High faluting** (American), high-flown, extravagant, bombastic language, a gay, impudent sort of fellow, a vulgar coxcomb. "There can be little doubt," says Mr. Bartlett, "of its derivation from high 'fighting.'" As for its coming, as Hotten absolutely asserts, as if it were an established fact, from the Dutch *verlooten* (which word he does not translate), it is enough to say that *verlooten* means "to cast lots." It is very remarkable that there exists in yiddish the word *hifelufelem*, meaning extravagant language or nonsense.

*Hifelufelem* is Narret hei, Possen, Schwank, Ränk.—*Der Herried ene Laub-frosch.*

The remarkable resemblance, as regards both sound and meaning, existing between these words cannot fail to strike the reader. Of late years, terms known more or less to all Jews, especially of the commoner class, have begun to work far more freely into American slang than is generally supposed. By associating *hifelufelem* with "high fighting," *high faluten* would be speedily evolved. It may be observed that in rapid conversation, the Hebrew or yiddish word becomes *hifelufem* or *hifelufen*, which is a materially nearer approach to the well-known American term.

The phrase is now common in England.

A paper in Cincinnati was very much given to *high falutin'* on the subject of "this great country," until a rival paper somewhat modified its continual bounce with the following burlesque: "This is a glorious country! It has longer rivers and more of them, and they are muddier and deeper, and run faster, and rise higher, and make more noise, and fall lower, and do more damage than anybody else's rivers."—*Tit Bits.*

**High fly, on the** (mendicants), begging on the high "toby" or high road, and tramping over the country. Also operating as a begging-letter impostor.

**Highflyer** (common), an incredible or extravagant story.

**High go** (American University), a merry drinking-bout or frolic. "To get high" is to become tipsy and intoxicated.

**High horse** (American). It is commonly said of any one who is putting on airs or assuming a lofty or dignified tone, that "he is on his *high horse*." Something equivalent to it is to be found in many languages. The French say "monter sur ses grands chevaux" (not slang).

**High jinks**, properly an old Scottish pastime played in different ways. At a club or convivial gathering is that part of the evening when the punch-bowl is introduced together with unlimited license.

There he found the eleven at *high jinks* after supper, Jack Raggles shouting comic songs and performing feats of strength; and was greeted by a chorus of mingled remonstrance at his desertion, and joy at his appearance.—*Tom Brown's School-days*.

(Common), a jollification.

All sorts of revelry, all sorts of devilry,  
All play at *high jinks* and keep up the ball,

Days, weeks, and months, it is really  
astonishing,

As to what passed on his own wedding-day.

—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

To play the *high jinks*, to take up an arrogant position.

In days of yore the Lord of Misrule  
Played very *high jinks* at the Tide of Yule,

And sported about like a chartered fool,

And did pretty much as he chose;

There were scarce any bounds to his  
quips and cranks,

His lunatic larks and his motley pranks,  
And victims who suffered e'en offered  
him thanks

For robbing them of repose.

—*Fun*.

(American), *high jinks*, small gamblers.

**High rented** (popular), hot. A seat near a fire is said to be *high rented* when it gets too hot for comfort.

**High roller** (American), one who plays high, or who takes the lead.

He's a *high roller*, by gum! when he's got it (*i.e.*, money).—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

Donaldson in those days was known as a *high roller*, and under his instructions John dealt the game without a limit. Donaldson finally left the business here and went west.—*Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean*.

**High rope, on the** (American), in a passion, very loud, taking on great airs.

**High stepper** (society), a well-dressed girl, who has a good figure and is handsome, a swell of any kind.

**High tariff language** (American), rhapsodical, magniloquent, or extravagant words.

Mingle in de mazes of de dance dou knight ob valour, while de resplendent luminary of de day has wifdrawn his light from de earf, till de bright Aurora gilds de eastern sky wid golden an' den wid car-rowkteristic gallivantry, accompany de fair an' unsumfisticated partners of dy pleasure to deir pyternal mansions—Herey dat am *high tariff language*.—*Brudder Bonus*.

**High ti** (American University), a showy recitation. In use at Williams College. At Harvard the equivalent is a "squirt."

**High tobers.** In American thieves' slang, the very highest order of "gonoffs" or thieves, who go well dressed and frequent watering-places.

**High toby** (old cant), the high road. "On the *high toby*," to take to the road as a *high toby*-man or highwayman.

*High toby*, which, in ancient robber slang, meant the high revelry and luxury and reckless indulgence which characterised the existence of those bold blades who took to the road, was nowhere visible.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

It was one thing to hear play-actors on the stage, in their tame and feeble delineations of the ancient game of *high toby*, and of the redoubtable doings of the Knights of the Road, spout such soul-thrilling effusions as "Nix my Dolly, pals," and "Claude Duval;" but what must it be to listen to the same bold staves out of the mouth of real "roaring boys," some of them, possibly, the descendants of the very heroes who rode "up Holborn Hill in a cart," and who could not well hear the good words the attendant chaplain was uttering, because of the noisy exchange of boisterous "chaff" taking place between the short-pipe smoking driver, whose cart-seat was the doomed man's coffin, and the gleeful mob that had made holiday to see the fun!—*Seven Curses of London.*

**High-tone niggers** (American), negroes who have raised themselves in social position, or in other ways bettered their condition.

I never saw any so-called *high-tone niggers*; and, except in the capacity of barbers, waiters, and shoeblacks, never saw any coloured men in the hotels.—*Phillips-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot.*

**Highwater mark, up to the** (common), up to the mark, an expression of approval.

**High-wood** (common), properly a name given to timber. "He lives in *high-wood*," he conceals himself, he has a secret game.

**Higulcion flips** (Texas), an imaginary malady.

**Hike** (London slang), to carry off, convey, arrest. "*Hike*, to swing, put in motion, toss, throw, strike, to go away, hurry" (Wright's Dictionary).

And *hiked* me off as sure as fate,  
Before the sitting magistrate.

—*Song: If I had a Donkey, &c.*

**Hi! Kelly** (provincial Manx), a mode of address among passers-by in the Isle of Man. Kelly is the name borne by a large number of people in the island—hence probably its derivation.

**Hindboot** (common), the breech.

**Hind coachwheel** (popular), a crown. In French slang a five-franc piece is termed "*roue de derrière*."

**Hing** (Anglo-Indian), assafœtida. It is remarkable that the Germans call this abominably smelling gum *teufel's-dröck*, i.e., *stercus diaboli*, while the common gypsy name for voiding excrement is *hinger*.

**Hip** (thieves), *hip* inside, inside coat pocket; *hip* outside, outside pocket.

**Hipped** (common), ill. To be *hipped*, to suffer from "a fit of the blues," or of hypochondria.

**Hippen**, a Scotch synonym for the green curtain. Hence in Glasgow the gods shout "Up with the *hippen*!"

**His nabs there** (tailors), him, the individual referred to. A variant of "his nibs."

**His nibs** (theatrical), himself, his person. From the old English *neb*, the face, also nose.

When the President's carriage arrives in front of the church, with Albert Hawkins on the box, wearing a big bearskin cape as black as his face, and driving the two big, lumbering "seal browns," there is gathered about the doors of the sanctuary a crowd of two or three hundred, awaiting the arrival of the gentleman whom Tim Campbell, of New York, immortalised himself by speaking of as *his nibs*.—*Chicago Herald*.

**Hiss** (Winchester College), a signal of a master's approach. The "cave" or "chucks" of schoolboys and French *vesse*.

**Hit the flat, to** (cowboys), to go out on the prairies.

**Hitched** (American), married. Literally harnessed.

**Hitch horses, to** (American), to agree, to draw or pull well together.

I never truckle to any man, if he is as big as all out of doors. After he poked his fist in my face, at one election, we never *hitched horses* together.—*Bartlett*.

**Hitch one's team to the fence, to** (American), to remain for any time in a place.

Already people from Lyrsilla and the citron groves of St. Lawrence county are coming into town, bringing their dinners and *hitching their teams to the fence* behind the Coliseum.—*New York Mercury*.

**Hits him where he lives** (American), goes home, hurts his deepest feelings, wounds him in his domestic relations.

"That," says the editor, "*hits him whar he lives*." That will chase him up as bad as it did when I wrote an article ridiculing his sister, who's got a cock-eye."—*Artemus Ward: Things in New York*.

**Hive, to** (American cadet), to steal or "bone"—to take a thing without permission. "To get *hived*" is to be caught in a scrape.

The Amateur Cadets' Band was *hived* by the inspecting officer one night "after taps" while they were serenading in barracks without permission. As a natural result the entire band was reported and punished and had all their musical instruments confiscated.—*The West Point Scrap Book*.

(Popular American), to cover up, to entrap.

**Hived perfectly frigid** (American cadet), said of cadets who, when beyond bounds or otherwise transgressing the academy rules, are caught *in flagrante delicto* without the least possible chance of escape.

**Hivers** (American), women or men who travel with a swarm of *filles de joie*, generally in the Wild West, with a view to making money by them.

**Hivite**, a student of St. Bee's.

**Hoaky, by the** (nautical), synonymous with "hang it!"

**Hobbled** (thieves), committed for trial.

**Hobbler** (nautical), a coast man of Kent, a bit of a smuggler and an unlicensed pilot, ever ready for a job in either of these occupations. Also a man on land employed in towing a vessel by a rope (Admiral Smyth).

**Hobby** (university), a translation. Those who use cribs in translating from the Latin, Greek, and other languages, are said to ride *hobbies*.

**Hob-jobber** (street), a man or boy who loiters about the streets waiting for small jobs, such as holding horses, carrying parcels, &c.

Days came in which there was a *hob-jobber's* famine; no horses to hold, no parcels to carry.—*The Goal Cradle*.

**Hobson-Jobson** (Anglo-Indian), a phrase peculiar to the British soldier, by whom it was invented. It is in fact an Anglo-Saxon version of the wailings of the Mahommedans, as they beat their breasts in the processions of the Moharram: *Ya Hasan, ya Hossain!* (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Hob's hog** (provincial Northampton). When a person conjectures wrongly, he is compared to *Hob's hog*, a local story being

that the mythical porker in question imagined his breakfast was coming, when it was only the butcher preparing to kill him.

**Hock** (American), caught. Caught in *hock* is caught by the heels. The last card in the box. Among thieves a man is in *hock* when he is in prison, but when one gambler is caught by another smarter than himself and is beat, then he is in *hock*. Down South (*i.e.*, in the Southern States), men are only put in *hock* on the race-tracks. In a *hock*-game, if a man hits a card, he is obliged to let his money lie until it either wins or loses. Of course, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine chances against the player, and the oldest man living never yet saw him win, and thus he is caught in *hock* (New York Slang Dictionary).

The author of this work derives *hock* clearly enough from the English slang term for a foot. It may be observed, however, that *hok* in Dutch thieves' slang means credit or debt, which would furnish quite as good a derivation.

**Hock-dockies** (popular), shoes or boots.

**Hocker, hākker** (gypsy), to jump.

**Hocus-pocus** (now recognised), a term applied originally to deception of the eye by means

of legerdemain, now commonly used for any formula of cheating, delusion, or humbug. Crabb ("Gipsies' Advocate," p. 18) says that gypsies pronounce *habeas corpus*, *hawcus pacous*, a manifest error, as in doing this they simply follow the word for a joke. That it is derived from a burlesque rendering of *hoc est corpus* in the Latin Church-service is a mere bit of conjectural philology. In the Roman tongue *hoc* or *hūk* is the root signifying deceit or falsehood in a very extended sense. "Quite a little family of words has come into English from the gypsy *hoc*, *hoeben*, *huckaben*, *hokeny*, and *hooker*, all meaning a lie, deception, and humbug. Mr. Bonar shows us that *hocus*, to bewitch liquor with an opiate, and *hoax* are probably from the same root; and I have no doubt that the expression, 'Yes, with a *hook*,' meaning 'it is false,' comes from the same. 'Hookey' and 'Walker' are of this family" ("The English Gypsies," p. 81). *Hoc* therefore means deceit or delusion, and the English gypsy, like many Hindus, adds *us* in a most arbitrary and irregular manner to any root whatever to make a noun. It is sometimes even affixed to English words, e.g., *side-us*, a side. This gives *hocus*, a pure gypsy word. As *pocus*, it has probably something in common as to its root with "pankey" (*vide* HANKEY-PANKEY), as a certain sleight-of-hand or "substitution" cheat

is called in gypsy *huckeny pou-kee*, or *huckeny pokeny*, the latter being the common word. That this is sometimes called *huckeny pokus* or *pocus* anybody can ascertain by asking the first old gypsy whom he may meet. As a proof of the soundness of this derivation, it may be observed that "hokee-pokee" (which is simply *hocus-pocus*, without the gypsy noun-terminal), is common and very old slang, used firstly as a magic formula in juggling, and sometimes in any aggregate of unintelligible words.

Hokey-pokee, winkee fum,  
Flibbidee, flobbidee, buskey bum.  
—*The King of the Cannibal  
Islands.*

**Hod** (American thieves), a mason or builder.

**Hod of mortar** (rhyming slang), a pot of porter.

**Hoe in, to** (American University), to work with vigour. French *piocher*.

**Hog** (popular), half-a-crown.

Two bobs and a half equal one *hog*.—*Punch*.

Old cant for a shilling, also a sixpence.

"Champollion - Figeac, the brother of the famous Champollion, makes in his work on Egypt the following observations: "Also it appears there were (in Egypt) masses of gold bearing another shape than that



of the ring, for instance the form of a frog, of a calf, of an ox, and that it had thus become a custom to reckon a particular object as worth so many oxen, another as so many calves, or so many frogs, meaning thereby certain known weight of gold" (Leigh Hunt's Journal).

**Hoga** (Anglo-Indian), to work, to do. "That won't *hoga*," that won't do.

**Hog and hominy** (American). *Hog* is pork, and *hominy* is maize or Indian corn scalded, so that it is white as rice, to which it bears when boiled a great resemblance. As pork and *hominy* are the two cheapest articles of food in the United States, the term is very generally used to express plain, common diet.

**Hog, hogged** (binders), said of a book which has the back bulging out, from the binding having given way.

**Hogminny** (old slang), a very young girl very depraved; one who makes a free present of her person. From "Hogmena," Christmas and New Year's presents.

**Hogoo**, strong smell. This word, a corruption of the French *haut goût*, is given as slang by Hotten and others; but it is to be found in a dictionary, 1748, as a recognised word.

**Hogs** (American), a term sometimes applied in jest to the inhabitants of Chicago. (Old), to drive *hogs* to market, to snore.

I'gad he fell asleep, and snored so loud that we thought he was driving his *hogs* to market.—*Swift: Polite Conversation*.

**Hogshead, to couch a** (old cant), to lie down, go to sleep. The phrase explains itself, *hogshead* being a term for body.

**Hog, to** (American), to cheat, humbug, to do for, to break.

"Go," he said, "go, my son, and *hog* the public" (he meant "knock 'em"); but the old man was allers a little given to slang).—*Artemus Ward: Boston*.

This is probably derived from *hogged*, or broken, as applied to steamboats. It agrees with the Anglo-Indian *hoga*, to do, but probably by mere accidental coincidence. (Common), to have sexual intercourse with a woman.

**Hog, to go the whole**. So universally used as to be a recognised phrase. To do a thing, good or evil, thoroughly and completely. This term became very common in America about 1834. It was applied to those who approved entirely of General Jackson's measures. It is said to be derived from a story in a poem which was to be found in most American school reading-books, of the declaration of Mahomet that there is a portion of the swine which no true believer should eat. But as they

could not agree which part this was among them, the Mussulmans ate up the entire animal, or "went *the whole hog*."

**Ho-gya** (Anglo-Indian), used by Anglo-Indians in the sense of "up a tree," or of the failure of any undertaking.

**Hoisting** (thieves). Hotten defines this as only shop-lifting. In America the term is applied to a very peculiar kind of robbery. To rob a house two or three men gather together, one of whom stands close to the wall and the next one climbs up so as to stand on his shoulders, while the third does the same. By long practice this can be done with great ease, so that a thief can enter a window ten or even fifteen feet from the ground. This is called the hoist-lay. A hoister means however a shop-lifter as well, and also a sot.

**Hokey-pokey** (common), good-for-nothing, cheated, done. This word seems as regards both meaning and sound to have a relation to the Yiddish *orche-porchem*, a vagabond, a tramp. It is from "hocus-pocus."

A kind of inferior ice sold in the streets and especially at race meetings amongst the lower classes.

**Ho-lan-kwoh** (pidgin, Dutch), "Holland-nation."

**Hold, do you** (London slang), have you any money to lend or stand treat with?

**Hold-out** (cardsharppers), the vest *hold-out*, sleeve *hold-out*. Explained by quotation.

The old-time poker sharp was not well equipped unless he had a vest *hold-out*. That was a black satin vest with claws inside that came out of the bosom, seized the necessary cards, and slid it in again. It was worked by a chain that ran down the trousers leg and hooked to the heel of the boot, and was such a clumsy and complicated apparatus that I would as soon think of carrying a threshing-machine around with me. Then there was the sleeve *hold-out*, nearly as bad, and the different *hold-outs* to fasten to the edge of the table.—*Star*.

**Hold the stage, to** (theatrical), is said of an experienced actor who is fully at home on the stage, and always commands the attention of the audience. Corresponds to the French phrase, "avoir des planches."

**Hold up, to** (American thieves), to molest, rob with violence.

Two thieves were caught in New York, . . . mistaking two detectives for persons in their own line of business, they invited them to *hold up* a man.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also to arrest, take in custody.

Didn't I give you fifty dollars for leaving my place alone when it was on your beat? You can't *hold me up* now.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Hold your horses** (American), an injunction not to go too far, or say too much.

Oh, *hold your hosses*, will you,  
And do not drive so fast!  
And pray do not imagine,  
Your team can't be surpassed.

—*Song of 1850.*

**Hole** (printers). According to Moxon, 1683, a private printing-office, where unlicensed books were printed, was called a *hole*. The term would apply at the present day to a "cock-robin" shop. (Turf), to be in a *hole* is to lose or be defeated.

**Hole and corner** (popular), plotting conspiracy. The metaphor is obvious—conspirators are compelled to do their plotting in holes and corners.

"I will have none of this *hole and corner* business," said the proprietor of a great Australian journal to the new editor entering office. "No more picking out the weeds of a work to quote them as the flowers: I wish all the criticisms in my paper to be 'fair, square, and above ground.'"—*Anthony Trollope.*

**Hollis** (Winchester School, a smooth round stone.

**Hollow** (common), "to beat *hollow*," to surpass, to be far superior.

**Holus-bolus** (nautical), the neck, the head; in a hurry, helter-skelter.

**Holy Joe** (prison and nautical), the chaplain or any religious person.

**Holy land** (thieves), the thieves' quarter in St. Giles.

**Home** (turf), the *status quo ante* of the better. When a man

recovers his previous losses he "gets *home*" on the day, the week, or the year, as the case may be. Strange to say this barren result is usually regarded by the achiever thereof with greater pride than the apparently more desirable process of winning.

**Home bird** (common), a man leading a very retired life, fond of his fireside; a milksop. French *chauffe-la-couche*.

**Ho-ming** (pidgin), Reuters' Telegram Company is so termed in the Shanghai Directory.

**Homo-opathise** (American), to get bills, *i.e.*, petitions for anything, through the Legislature, or Congress, or a City Council, by means of bills, *i.e.*, bank-bills. This application of *similia similibus* is unfortunately a rule of practice, with few exceptions, especially in the Legislatures, when a bill is brought forward which has "anything in it," *i.e.*, any money.

**Honest Injun** (American), a phrase equivalent to "honour bright." It is often heard among boys as a pledge of faith.

She says, "*Honest Injun*, now hain't you been telling me a lot of lies?" "*Honest Injun*," says I.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

**Honey** (rhyming slang), money.

**Hong-hahng** (pidgin and Anglo-Indian), *hahng* in Chinese means

a row or rank, a house of business. It is particularly applied to trading establishments, foreign or native. The latter were the so-called *hong* merchants who had the monopoly of foreign trade. This monopoly was abolished in 1842.

A society of *hong* or united merchants who are answerable for one another, both to the Government and to foreign nations.—*Sir G. Staunton: Embassy to China.*

**Honour bright** (common), on my honour.

**Hoodlum** (American), a vagabond or rough, a loafer. It was for a long time a Californian word, and is probably of Spanish origin. It may possibly be the pidgin English, *hood lahnt*, good, *i.e.*, very lazy; *lahnt'o*, Mandarin.

Two *hoodlums* knocked down and nearly killed an aged priest in the streets of Versailles, France, the other day.—*Chicago Tribune.*

In San Francisco *hoodlums* are a class of young fools, corresponding in some degree to the English 'Arries. The *hoodlums* walk the streets arm in arm, upsetting everything in their passage "just for the sake of a lark."

**Hoodman** (London slang), blind, drunk.

"Yes," he said, explaining with some amount of regret his curious behaviour of the night before; "but haven't you noticed that whenever I am a little *hoodman* I invariably go on in that way?"

"Well, I can't say that I have," was the straightforward answer of the candid friend.

"Why not?"

"Because I have never seen you a little *hoodman*. I have always seen you so ballyhooly blind that——"

Several bystanders left on the spot without paying for their drinks.—*Sporting Times.*

He had shunted a quantum of whisky immense,

But that *hoodman* he was he denied;  
Though he cast on the lamp-post a look  
so "intense"

That it might have been meant for his  
bride.

They passed over this, but when fivers  
galore

To the Tealeaf he offered to lend,  
That he really was boozed, to a man they  
all swore,

Had appeared sure enough in the end!  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Hoodooed** (American), *voodooed*, *i.e.*, killed, done for, used up; *voudou*, a term applied to the magic or secrecy practised among the blacks.

"Laps," said Mrs. Potter, laying her hand on my shoulder, "I'm *hoodooed* as sure as eggs are eggs. I've been training to do that death all summer, and I had a new play written to lead up to it, and now Lil has gone and gobbled my business."—*New York Morning Journal.*

**Hoof it, to** (thieves), to run away.

**Hoof one's bum, to** (common), to kick one in the lower part of the back.

**Hook** (popular and thieves), a pickpocket.

Take my tip and turn square, from a *hook* who is going to be lagged, would be, in common parlance, take my advice and get your living honestly, says a pickpocket who is expecting penal servitude.—*J. W. Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

Probably derived from hooking an article out by the fingers, which thence are called *hooks*. Or an abbreviation of *hooker*, old cant for a thief who steals things hanging up in shops by removing them with a hook. Stealing by means of a hook is still practised by a class of French thieves, who call it "vol au boulon" (*vide* Barrère's *Argot and Slang*). The French popular slang has *croc* (hook) for a thief, though Littré is inclined to believe this is a contraction of *escroc* (swindler). The ancient "hooker" was also called "angler," which corresponds to the Italian cant *pescator*, a thief, literally, a fisherman. Thus the literal hook has served as a metaphor for the English hook, hooker, angler, the French *croc*, and the Italian *pescator*. The German cant has *höcken*, to lie, deceive, swindle, from the gypsy, though some derive it from *höcken*, to higgler, retail; *höke*, a higgler, huckster, which may be traced to *hake*, a hook, pedlars and porters on the continent using a contrivance for carrying their burdens, termed *crochets* (hooks) in French, hence *crocheteur*, a porter.

(Popular), a *hook*, a catch, an advantage; to take one's *hook*. *Vide* HOOK, TO SLING ONE'S.

**Hooka-buridar** (Anglo-Indian), a servant whose sole duty it was to take care of the master's pipe. As the *hookah* is now a thing of the past, the *buridar*

has also passed away with it into the obsolete, so far as the pipe is concerned.

**Hook and eye** (tailors), walking arm in arm.

**Hooker** (old cant), a thief who used to steal articles from shops by means of a hook.

I will take my prince's part against all that shall oppose him, or any of us, according to the best of my ability; nor will I suffer him, or any one belonging to us, to be abused by any strange abrams, ruffies, *hookers*.—*Bampfylde Moore Carew: English Gypsies' Oath*.

(American), a woman of easy virtue, generally one who plies her trade on the streets.

**Hookey Walker** (popular), go away! be off! Also an ejaculation of incredulity synonymous with "get along with you!" Many origins have been ascribed to this term, which naturally explains itself by its connection with "hook it," *i.e.*, "go away," and "walk away."

**Hooking cow** (West American), a cow that will show fight, and try to toss the cowboys who are seeking to "cut her out" from the herd. From the English "to hook," said of an ox which tosses one.

One of the former was what is termed a *hooking cow*, and to escape her repeated charges tested all our agility.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Hook it, to** (common), to run away. *Vide* HOOK, TO SLING ONE'S.

"You hain't been home since the mornin'—not since you *hooked it* away?" Jerry's voice was tremulous with excitement as he asked the question.

"No, I've been away all day."—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

It has been suggested that it is derived from the gypsy *hokka* or *hekka*, hurry away, hasten.

**Hook, on one's own** (common), on one's own account or responsibility.

The tale runs that a scientific gentleman has been examining his wife's out-door jacket after each excursion, and has carefully collected every loose hair which he has found thereon.—*Society*.

Dependent for a living on one's own resources or exertions. Originally American.

Supplied me with physic whenever I wanted it, and accustomed me to a life of organised laziness—and yet at the end of this time they turn me out to get my living *on my own hook*.—*Evening News*.

What, loose several days in London—*on your own hook* and free to wander, and with no one to partect you?—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

Possibly from the thieves' phrase to *hook*, to steal, thieving and getting a living being with them synonymous; or from *hook*, a catch, so that *on one's own hook* would mean literally, living on what I catch. It may also be derived from an allusion to a meat hook, metaphorically meaning larder, store. French authors have certainly used it with that signification, and the French have the expression

(not slang) "avoir à son croc," to have in store; "vivre aux crochets de quelqu'un," to be dependent on another for one's living, to live at his expense, and the obsolete "diner sur ses crochets," to pay for one's own dinner.

Again, it has been suggested that *on one's own hook* is from a metaphor drawn from the practice of the fish-curers on the Eastern coasts, who hang up the herrings and haddocks to dry in the sun.

**Hookem snivey**, an impostor who feigns sickness, disease, or calamity, and exhibits his miseries in the streets to excite pity and charity. From *to hook*, and *snivelling*, or possibly from the gypsy *hookaben*, a cheat.

**Hooks** (thieves), fingers. Termed also "forks."

With his smeller a trumpet blowing,  
A regular swell cove lushy lay,  
To his clies my *hooks* I throw in,  
Tol, lol, &c.,

And collar his dragons clear away.

—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song*.

(Common), "gone off the *hooks*," dead.

Death wandered by the sea,  
And struck by Walton's looks,  
Broke Isaac's line of life  
And took him "off the *hooks*."

—*Punch*.

An allusion to a gate off its hinges. Compare with the old English phrase, "to be off the

*hooks*," to be out of temper, vexed. French, "sortir de ses gonds," and "to put off the *hooks*," to vex, make angry.

**Hook shop** (American), a brothel, "hooker" being a prostitute. Much used by English residents in China. Possibly a corruption of "hock shop." The English and French slangs have the corresponding "buttocking shop" and "magasin de fesses."

**Hook, to sling one's** (popular), to depart, leave, run away; *sling* is a provincialism for to cast away, so that the phrase means literally "take your hook off," "let go your hold."

**Hook, to take one's** (common), to depart, leave, run away.

A STRANGE TIME-KEEPER.—*Landlord* (to old toper, who has come to the front door, and is gazing intently at an equestrian statue in the square): "I say, what do you keep coming to the door for?" "I want to see if it's time to *take my hook*." "But how can you see that?" "When that horse begins to prance, then it's high time."—*Tit Bits*.

Possibly an abbreviation of "take your *hook* off," that is, let go your hold, or the allusion being to a boat's hook which a man would naturally be told to take off as a signal for departure. This supposition is strengthened by the synonymous expression to "sling one's *hook*," which see.

**Hook, with a** (common), used in this phrase to imply doubt or

some reservation referring to an assertion; "yes, with a *hook* at the end of it." Dr. Brewer has "with a *hook* at the end, you suppose I assent, but my assent is not likely to be given. The subject has a *hook*, or note of interrogation (?), to denote that it is dubious."

"There is a gypsy story that a Romany had permission from a gentleman to fish in his pond, on condition that he should only use a hook. But the gypsy used a net, and emptied the pond of fish. On being asked what kind of a hook he had used, he replied: 'It was what we call in our language a *hookaben*, i.e., a lie or a cheat. *Hook* is here the root, *aben* or *apen* simply indicating a noun" (C. G. Leland).

**Hooky, to do** (popular), the application of the thumb and fingers to the nose in contempt.

**Hoop** (American thieves), a ring.

**Hoosier** (American), a nickname given to natives of Indiana. Bartlett cites from the *Providence Journal* a story which has the appearance of being an after-manufacture to suit the name, deriving *hoosier* from "husher," "from their primary capacity to still their opponents." He also asserts that the Kentuckians maintained that the nickname expresses the exclamation of an Indian when he knocks at a door and

exclaims "who's yere?" However, the word originally was not *hoosier* at all, but *hoosieroon* or *hoosheroon*, *hoosier* being an abbreviation of this. I can remember that in 1834, having read of *hoosiers*, and spoken of them, a boy from the West corrected me, and said that the word was properly *hoosieroon*. This would indicate a Spanish origin (Charles G. Leland).

Oftimes when travelling in the West,  
The stranger finds a *hoosier's* nest;  
In other words a buck-eye cabin,  
Just large enough to put Queen Mab in.

**Hooter** (American), a comparative for anything worthless or trifling. Bartlett conjectures that it is a corruption of *iota*, which is also commonly used in New England in a similar manner.

Ah, Billy, you and your sword-cane  
can't do a *hooter* among the girls, fine as  
you think yourself.—*Philadelphia Comic  
Newspaper*.

**Hooting pudding** (provincial), plum pudding so scantily furnished with raisins that they are sarcastically said to hoot at one another.

**H.O.P.** (popular), hop; on the *hop*, unawares.

Oh, he's tricky, very tricky,  
His conduct's very often rather slicky,  
He never lets folks catch him on the  
*H.O.P.*

Oh, he's clicky, and he's quicky, and  
he's tricky.

—*Broadside Ballad*.

**Hop** (common), a small ball, though often used in reference

to any kind of ball. Formerly "to *hoppe*" signified to dance.

I remember last Christmas, at a little *hop* at the Park, he danced from eight o'clock till four.—*Miss Austen: Sense and Sensibility*.

Said to be of American origin. The *New York Herald* once, if not many times, published accounts of the particular and unfashionable balls given in that city under the heading or caption of "Hop Intelligence." *Hop* for any kind of dance is, however, provincial English.

(Pidgin), half. "My giveecumshaw *hop-dolla*, supposey you make dat Ink-i-lis man wailo to look-see my shop." *Hop*, have, or has. While a Chinese is in the first stage of pidgin-English, as set forth in that primary work, the Chinese "Vocabulary of the Words in Use among the Red-Haired People," he uses *hop*, and in time advances to *hab*. In this work *hop-fasse* is given for have fashion (*hab fasson* at a more advanced stage), *i.e.*, fashionable. *Hop-pi-tsin* (*hab pidgin*) means have business; *hop-tai* (*hab die*), dead; and *hop-time* (*hab time*), leisure.

**Hop and go kick** (tailors), one who walks lame.

**Hop merchant** (common), a dancing-master.

**Hopped over the broom** (popular), married or run away together. From an old belief that



a marriage was legal if the bride and bridegroom stepped or *hopped over a broom*.

“The girl that I had hoped to hear,  
Pronounce my happy doom, sir,  
Had bolted with a carpenter,  
In fact, *hopped o'er the broom*, sir.”  
—*David Dove: A Ballad* by L. M.  
Thornton.

**Hopper** (sporting), to go a *hopper*, to go at a fast pace.

The latter is a filly out of Effie Deans, and with two such smart parents she ought to be able to go a *hopper*.—*The County Gentleman*.

(Anglo-Indian), a colloquial term in Southern India for rice cakes. Tamil, *appam*.

*Appas*, called *hoppers* by the English, supply their morning repast.—*Tennent: Ceylon*.

**Hopping giles** (provincial), a cripple. St. Giles was the patron saint of cripples.

**Hoppo** (pidgin), the Chinese Superintendent of Customs at Canton. Giles says, “The term is said to be a corruption of *hoo poo*, the Board of Revenue” (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Hop the Charlie**, to (common), to decamp.

**Hop the twig**, to (common), to die. Like a bird which drops from its perch.

The English mode of execution divides itself into two branches, on both of which the victims must *hop the twig*.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn*.

**Hora** (gypsy), an hour, a watch.

**Horizontal refreshments** (common), carnal intercourse with a woman. In French slang a prostitute is called *horizontale*, because “elle gagne sa vie sur le dos.” A similar expression in German is used by Heine.

**Horizontalise**, to (common), to have sexual intercourse with a woman.

**Horn** (American). “Yes, in a *horn*.” This is uttered as an expression of disbelief or refusal. “In a hog’s *horn*,” as hogs have no horns. An abbreviation of an old West of England phrase, “In a *horn* when the devil is blind.” “I’ll give it you in a *horn*,” *i.e.*, I shall not give it you, possibly alluding to the impossibility of keeping anything in a horn open at both ends, or to the wind blown out of a horn.

*Horn*, a dram, a glass of spirits. The word dates from the times when *horns* rather than glasses were used for the purpose. It is almost obsolete in England, but common in America.

He poured out a glass of brandy and water. Oh, gummy, what a *horn* it was. It was strong enough to throw an ox over a five-barred gate.—*Sam Slick*.

(Common), “to have the *horn*,” to be in a state of sexual desire.

**Horness** (American thieves), a watchman.

**Hornswoggle**, to (American), to humbug, delude, seduce, &c. (English provincial), *swokel*, deceitful; *swodgel*, *futuere*.

**Horny** (American, also English), lecherous, in a state of sexual desire, in rut.

**Horrors** (society), delirium tremens. Derived from the fits of horror of imaginary things men have in that condition.

And Mostyn—poor Frank

Mostyn—died at last a fearful wreck,

In the horrors at the upper Wandinong.

—*Lyndsey Gordon: Poems.*

**Horse collar** (old), to die in a horse collar or nightcap, to be hanged. (Tailors), an extremely long and wide collar.

**Horse coppers** (American). This term is specially applied to men who cheat people by selling broken-down, but once first-class horses.

**Horse editor** (American). In the United States not only the manager or proprietor and director of a newspaper is called an editor, but also all who write for it, the chief reporter being "the city editor," and the reviewer "the literary editor," while the gentleman who furnishes the sporting news is sometimes facetiously termed the *horse editor*. There is also the real or imaginary "fighting

editor," who is supposed to be a man who "strikes from the shoulder" and sits surrounded by revolvers and hunting knives. According to *Puck*, even the porter of an American newspaper shares the glory of "editorialism." The writer in fact knows an instance in which the janitor of an American journal, when in a rural community, received much attention and honour as being "connected with the press."

**Horse flesh** (printers), an ancient term, according to Moxon, for "dead horse," which see.

**Horse-godmother** (common provincial), a fat vulgar virago, a very masculine woman, quite of the lowest class.

In woman angel sweetness let me see,  
No galloping *horse-godmother* for me.

—*Wolcot (Peter Pindar).*

**Horse protestant** (tailors), a churchman.

**Horse-shoe** (common), the *pudendum f.* In the earliest Oriental mythologies, all that indicated fruitfulness, impregnation, love, &c., was regarded as opposed to the evil principle which sought to cause barrenness. Hence in many countries, not only the images of the pallas and of the female organ were worn as charms, but also everything which in any way resembled them, such as a horn, a perforated stone, a ring, a snail-

shell, &c. Among these symbols the *horse-shoe* occupies a conspicuous place. Hence the belief that it forms an amulet, and that it is lucky to find one. In German the phrase "Sie hat ein Hufeisen verloren" (she has lost a *horse-shoe*) is equivalent to saying that a girl has been seduced.

**Horse-teeth** (American), a man with *horse-teeth* is one that grasps, grabs at, or gains what he aims at.

"Who is that?" I asked of my friend Fisher, as we passed a marked-looking man on the street the other day.

"That?" responded Fisher. "Why, that is So-and-so; great man and full of money. Got *horse-teeth*. That's the kind of man to succeed here."—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Horse, the old** (prison), for Horse-monger Lane Gaol, built at the suggestion of John Howard, closed 1878.

**Horsey** (common) applies to men who are great lovers of the horse or who affect a turf appearance and conversation. Also to articles of dress which in cut and style recall those of turfites or persons whose occupations are connected with the horse.

**Hospital sheep** (up-country Australian), sheep suffering from some contagious disease which necessitates their removal from the rest.

They had passed some miles back a small *gunyah* and yard temporarily oc-

cupied by a flock of *hospital sheep*, ship-headed by an old black gin.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Hoss** (American, Western), a brave, excellent man.

"Well, old fellow, *you're a hoss*" is a Western expression which has grown into a truism as regards Judge Allen, and a finer specimen of a Western judge, to use his constituents' language, "ain't no whar." . . . They consider him one of the people, none of your stuck-up imported chaps from the dandy states, but a real genuine Westerner—in short, a *hoss*.—*Americans at Home*.

**Hoss-fly** (American), "old *hoss-fly*," a familiar form of expression, such as "Well, old boy!" in England. It is of course a variation of "horse," as meaning a man.

Says I, "Billson, yer hav'n't got a well-balanced mind." Says he, "Yes, I have, old *hoss-fly* (he was a low cuss)—yes, I have. I have a mind that balances in any direction that the public rekires."—*Artemus Ward: The Prince of Wales*.

**Hot** (popular), exuberant in spirits, rowdy, full of extravagance and fun, "a warm one." A *hot 'un*, a fast man or woman. One who goes the pace.

She's what Shakspeare might call "a pure, unadulterated, red-hot, clinking scorcher." She's so *hot* that when she takes a walk out in November all the coal merchants shut up shop, fancying it is June.—*Music Hall Song: Why don't you be steady, Maria*.

(Society), a *hot* member of society is a man or woman who does not much care what he or she does, and sets most rules of decorum and morality on one side.

(Thieves), to give *hot* beef,  
*vide* BEEF.

**Hot coppers.** *Vide* COPPERS.

**Hottentot** (popular), a fool, a simpleton.

**Hottentots** (East London), explained by quotation.

All this vast audience was purely local. Our advent, though our attire was a special get-up for the occasion, attracted instant attention, and the cry of *Hottentots* went round. *Hottentots* is the playful way in this district of designating a stranger, that is to say, a stranger come from the West.—*George R. Sims: How the Poor Live.*

**Hot tiger** (Oxford), a mixture of hot-spiced ale and sherry (Hotten).

**Hot, to make it** (common), to make it highly disagreeable.

The smaller youth is sent out of Court with a caution; but retribution, or stern justice, or Nemesis, *makes it hot* for the weeping lad.—*The Graphic.*

**Hounslow Heath** (rhyming slang), the teeth.

**House-farmers, house-knackers** (popular), a variety of the "sweater" tribe. Persons who let bad lodgings at a high rent to the poor.

**Housemaid's knee** (medical), a swelling over the knee-pan, due to the enlargement of a bursal sac which normally occupies that position.

**House, the** (Oxford University), Christ Church, Oxford. (Stock

Exchange), the Stock Exchange. "The probable origin of the word *house*, as applied to the Stock Exchange, is as follows:—Previous to 1801, when the jobbers and brokers (in Government securities) assembled, for a short period, in the Rotunda of the Bank of England, a room was rented in a house facing Bartholomew Lane. When a member was not to be found in the Rotunda it was said 'he is over at the house.' At a later period, when the members moved into their own building, *house* now became a recognised term, which has continued in use until the present day" (Atkin's "House Scraps").

**Hoveller** (nautical), a beach thief.

**How d'ye do** (popular), a regular *how d'ye do*, a regular row all round. A regular mess or difficulty.

**Howler, to go a** (sporting), to lose heavy bets.

**Howling** (common), great; as in a *howling* swell, a *howling* cad.

There was a *howling* crush going on outside the Law Courts.—*Sporting Times.*

*Howling* bags, a swell pair of trousers.

**Hoxter** (thieves), an inside pocket. Old English *oxter*.

No slourd *hoxter* my snipes could stay.—*Ainsworth.*

(Royal Military Academy), extra drill, a corruption of *extra*.

The *hoxter* consists in the painful ordeal of being compelled to turn out of bed at an early hour, and march up and down under the watchful eye of a corporal.—*Albert Barrère: Argot and Slang.*

**Hubble-bubble**, the Indian pipe, termed a "hookah," is thus designated, from the noise it makes when being smoked (Hotten).

**Hubby** (common), husband.

Item, one fair daughter, yclept Lara. Mrs. S. has great faith in her worthy *hubby*, and knows his book by heart.—*Modern Society.*

You may happen on the pier, at Brighton or elsewhere,

To stumble on a tart you think is tame;

And if you should accost her, and her acquaintance foster,

I really fail to see how you're to blame.

Should she ask you out to tea, why a Juggins you would be

The friendly invitation to ignore.

But your danger you'll perceive, should you when you turn to leave

Come across her *hubby* at the door.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Huckleberry** (American), jestingly used to mean a person or subject. "That is a *huckleberry* above me," that beats me.

"Dat's cheatin'," said Johnny. "I'se going to stay wid 'em till I graduate. Dere's more stories dat dey tell den you can find in de dime novels. Say, you fellows would be 'spired to hear about 'Liger going right up t'rough de clouds in a chariot of fire, wid no balloon, no nothin'. 'Liger just got in his chariot, cut 'er loose, and flew. Dat's wot kind of a *huckleberry* 'Liger was. And, remember, dis was thousands of years ago, before dere was any balloons."—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Hue, to** (thieves), to belabour with a cudgel.

**Huey** (old cant), a town, a village.

**Hugger mugger** (nautical), in its Shakspearian bearing may have meant secretly, or in a clandestine manner, but its nautical application is to express anything out of order or done in a slovenly way.

**Hum-box** (popular), a pulpit. *Hum* is to cajole, deceive.

Well, you parish bull prig, are you for lushing Jacky, or pattering in the *hum-box*?—*Lytton: Pelham.*

**Hummer** (popular), a swaggerer.

"Isn't she a swell?"

A dashing young woman in gorgeous raiment went sailing by like a cutter in a thirty-mile-an-hour breeze. The sun shone down upon her and sent out from her magnificent diamond earrings and the mass of beads that covered her head and shoulders a thousand hues.

"Crect, Cholly; she's a *hummer!*" said the first speaker's friend.—*St. Louis Globe Democrat.*

**Humming**, given by Hotten and others as a slang term, is a provincialism meaning strong as applied to drink, and heady, in which latter sense it explains itself.

**Hump** (common), to have the *hump*, to be low-spirited, distressed, mortified, alluding to the attitude of one who is cast down.

Break! break! break!

O ball on thy way to the stump.

So let's alter the law,

Without any more jaw,

Or you'll give an old buffer the *hump*.

—*Fred Gale: The Game of Cricket.*

“To have one’s *hump* up,” to be cross like a cat with its back set up. To *hump* is a provincialism meaning to grumble, and is used in the slangy sense of to spoil. In America to *hump* oneself is to prepare promptly for an attack.

**Hump the swag, to** (Australian), to carry one’s luggage on one’s back.

And you may often have to *hump your own swag*, for the able-bodied fellows who are standing about are probably too well off to care to earn your shilling.—C. T.: *Impressions of Australia* (*Blackwood’s Magazine*).

**Hums** (old cant), the congregation in a church.

**Hunker** (American), one opposed to progress in politics, one opposed to progress in general.



**I am not here** (tailors), I don’t feel inclined to work; or, I wish to be left alone.

**Ictus** (legal), a lawyer. A corruption of *juris consultus*.

**Idea pot** (thieves), the head; also called “knowledge-box.”

**I desire** (rhyming slang), a fire.

**If not, why not?** (American), a peculiar colloquial expression, as “Will you take a drink—*if not, why not?*”

**Hunks.** This word is given by Hotten and others as a slang term, but it is a recognised provincialism, meaning a miser.

**Hunky** (American), good, jolly; “everything went off *hunky*,” went off well.

**Hunt, in the** (popular), regarded as admitted to a circle or society. “He is *in the hunt*,” he is one of us.

Although we isn’t aristocrats, we hold a quid or two, and are considered *in the hunt*.—*Sam Waghorn: The Merry Sand-boy*.

**Hunting** (thieves), card-sharping.

**Hurkaru** (Anglo-Indian), a messenger.

**Husband’s tea** (popular), weak tea.

Personal—Has it ever occurred to you that there is a combination of “the brains,” “the men,” and “the money too” at 159 Washington Street? If so, don’t you think that it would be to your interest to call ’round and have some talk with Bowyer, the expert in circular advertising? *If not, why not?*—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Ignoramus Jury** (old cant), formerly a slang name for a Grand Jury. When a bill was ignored, instead of writing across it “No true bill,” the Latin word *ignoramus*, we do not know, was employed—hence the saying in question. “If you find that anything proceeds from envy

and malice, and not of due prosecution, you may acquit the person that is so wrongfully prosecuted, and so justice is done between party and party, so an *Ignoramus Jury* may not be of no use."

**I guess it's all turkey** (American), a quaint saying indicating that all is equally good. It is said that an old gentleman who was asked at a Thanksgiving dinner if he preferred the white meat or dark of the standard dish, replied, "I don't care which; *I guess it's all turkey.*"

**Ikey** (popular), a Jew; a corruption of Isaac. Also said of any one who thinks himself knowing, smart, and has a great opinion of himself.

**I'll eat my head** (popular), variants. "I'll eat my hat" (some erroneously think hat here is a corruption of heart); "I'll eat my boots," "my head," &c. A boastful promise—an unmeaning way of expressing something impossible of achievement. Mr. Grimwig in "Oliver Twist" backed and confirmed nearly every assertion he made with this handsome offer.

It was the more singular in his case because, even admitting, for the sake of argument, the possibility of scientific improvements being ever brought to that pass which will enable a man to *eat his own head* in the event of his being so disposed, Mr. Grimwig's head was such a particularly large one that the most sanguine man alive could hardly entertain a hope of being able to get through it at

a sitting, to put entirely out of the question a very thick coating of powder.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Illegitimate** (racing), an absurd formula used by the sporting press as a synonym for steeple-chasing, hurdle-racing, and hunters' flat-races. Previous to the establishment of the Grand National Hunt Committee, these sports were unregulated by any code of law, and unrecognised by any racing tribunal, and were then properly regarded as *illegitimate*. They are now, however, as much under rules as flat-racing; nevertheless the term *illegitimate* continues to be applied to them though it has lost its force or significance.

*Illegitimate* season, also called the dead season, viz., the time between the weeks which includes the 22nd November in one year, and that which includes the 25th of March in the year following. No races under Newmarket rules are allowed during this period, which is obviously the most suitable for the other or so-called *illegitimate* branch of racing.

**I'll have your gal!** (street slang), a cry raised by street boys or roughs when they see a fond couple together. In like manner, in small theatres in Paris, the pit will raise a cry of "Il l'embrassera!" when a man and woman are sitting together apart from others.

I proffered and she took my arm,  
Which I thought would be refused;

2 H

*I'll have your gal!* the urchins cried,  
At which I felt amused.  
—*Ballad: The Thames Embankment.*

### I'll have your hat (street cry).

There is a cry that drives me wild  
Which is, *I'll have your hat!*  
*I'll have your hat!* *I'll have your hat!*  
Wi l be the death of me, that's flat,  
It makes me feel so nervous that,  
Whene'er they cry, *I'll have your hat!*  
—*Broadside Ballad.*

### I'll tell you a story of old Mother

**Morey** (American), said sarcastically of a narrative which has nothing in it. From a very old nursery rhyme repeated to children when they are importunate to be told a story.

*I'll tell you a story  
Of old Mother Morey,  
And now my story's begun  
I'll tell you another,  
About her brother,  
And now my story is done.*

**Illumina** (Winchester College), an abbreviation for "illumination." On the last Sunday night in "Short Half" before Grass Court was thrown open, candles were planted in temples or niches cut in Mead's wall. In this consisted the *illumina*. This is now done in "Short Half," and the effect is enhanced by a blazing bonfire.

**I'm afloat** (rhyming slang), a boat.

**Im-koy** (pidgin Cantonese), not ought, *i.e.*, you should not. Used politely in accepting or asking a civility.

**Immediately sooner, if not before** (American), a made-up phrase, heard occasionally among boys.

**Immense** (American), excellent, or extremely good. Such and such a person is said to be an "immense fellow," or liquor is advertised as *immense*, or a tailor notifies that he is "immense on pants," and a dress-maker that she is "immense on skirts," though she does not boast of being "immense in her charges."

**Imp.** The *imp* is the devil of the devil, or attorney-general's devils. There are many of them, and have no position whatever in the law. They only "devil," or get up cases for the junior counsel to the Treasury, though in doing this they often contrive to get work for themselves as well; thus there are many devils in the law.

**Impo. or impos.** (schools), abbreviation for imposition. At Cheltenham College both masters and boys call this an "impot."

**Impost-taker** (American thieves), a man who lends money to thieves and gamblers, or prostitutes, at very high rates of interest.

**Improvers** (trade), young men learning a business, and who enter into employment chiefly with a view to qualify themselves for work. *Vide* BUSTLE.

In this establishment no juniors or *improvers* are kept, and all the medicines are prepared by the proprietor himself, and by a thoroughly competent assistant.  
—*Advertisement of a Chemist in West-gate-on-the-Sea.*



**I'm something of a liar myself** (American). It is said that a certain gentleman who was given to narrating extraordinary experiences, having on one occasion told a very remarkable incident of travel, then turned to a Scotchman who was present and asked him if he was not astonished. "Na, na," replied the Scot, "I'm na that—*I'm something of a leear mysel'.*" This saying has become of late (1887) extremely popular in the United States, and is repeated without mercy among "the ruder sort" whenever any one is suspected of playing Munchausen.

**In** (common), to be *in* with one, to be even with him, or be on intimate terms with him. *In* for it, in trouble or difficulty. (American), to be *in* it, a phrase expressive of taking an interest—pecuniary, personal, or mental—in anything. Like "I'm on it," "I'm *in* it," signifying that I have a part in the subject.

I won't listen to your noncents no longer. Jest say rite strate out what you're drivin at. If you mean gettin hitched, I'm *in*.—*Artemus Ward.*

A horse on publication of a handicap is said, in describing his prospective chance, to be *in* it, "not *in* it," or "right bang *in* it," according to the view and judgment of the speaker. The same terms are used during the progress of a race.

**In a skiffle** (tailors), in a great hurry.

**In a tin-pot way** (popular), in a small, inferior, trifling manner.

I light my long pipe and I sit up in bed and don't we enjoy ourselves *in* our own *tin-pot way*?—*Wm. Barnes: Boozing Bill.*

**In deep water** (American), in pecuniary difficulties or in trouble.

From the statement of Mr. West's attorney it would seem that Elder has been *in deep water* for several months. His real estate was mortgaged for \$5000.—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Indescribables** (society), trousers.

**Indian mess** (American), the mixing and eating all kinds of food.

**Individualise, to** (American), to identify a person, to indicate any one.

No lady of refinement uses perfume to excess. A delicate suggestion of an odour is a pretty way of *individualising* one, provided too many do not use the same perfume.—*Detroit Tribune.*

One may hear in the United States or read in the newspapers that persons are "individual in their orders," or habits, *i.e.*, peculiar.

**Inexpressibles** (society), a sham-modest expression for trousers.

**Infantry** (popular), children. The French have the slang expression, "entrer dans l'infanterie," to become pregnant. Light *infantry*, fleas.

**Infa'r** (American), a wedding festivity, feast, or party.

Bre'r Rabbit got one ev de gals, en dey had a weddin' en a big *infa'r*.—*Uncle Remus*.

**In for patter** (thieves), awaiting trial. *Vide* PATTERN.

**In for pound** (thieves), committed for the assizes.

**In good shape** (American, and well known in England), to be "in good shape" is to be quite correct.

*In Good Shape*.—The total indebtedness of the City of Deadwood falls below \$6000.—*American Newspaper*.

**In his kish** (tailors), quite at home and pleased.

**In his shell** (tailors), not in a talking mood, sulky, or compelled to retire.

**Iniquity-office** (American), inquiry offices or bureaux which advertise to find employment for governesses, servants, &c., and obtain situations for them on condition of receiving from twenty to thirty per cent. of their first year's wages. Such "affairs" are common in London, and many are even worse than the worst in New York.

**Injun here!** (American), a phrase often used jocosely when a man asserts that he has remained true to his principles. It is said that an Indian when lost in the woods and unable to find

his wickee or wigwam, struck an attitude and exclaimed, "*Injun* no lost. Wickee lost—*Injun here!*"

**Ink-e-li** (pidgin), English; Mandarin, *ying-kuo*.

**Inkslinger** (common), a clerk, a journalist or reporter.

Edmund Yates went to see and partially eat at the Newspaper Press Fund Dinner; and thereat the majority of the toasts devolved on Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, who is not overburdened with reason for liking Edmund, who was to respond for the *inkslingers*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Inky** (tailors), a reply given to a question it is not desirable to answer. "Who told you that tale?" "*Inky*." Slopcutter's term. Also used among booksellers, printers, &c., as an evasive answer.

**Innocent** (American thieves), a corpse, an idiot, or a convict.

**Inside** (pidgin-English), within, in, interior, heart, mind, soul, in the country. "You belongey smart *inside*," you are intelligent. A Chinese, many years ago, on being shown a picture of a locomotive, at once remarked, "Hab got too much plenty all-same *inside*," we have many such in the interior of China. On one occasion a Chinese said "Hab got one piecee man, one piecee girly room-*inside*." Room-*inside* means within.

**Inside he mouth** (pidgin-English), secretly in his mind, to himself

reserved. "Inside he heart" has the same meaning.

**Inside squatter** (Australian up-country), a squatter (*q. v.*) in a settled district, used in the wilder parts of Australia, the north of New South Wales, the northern territory, and especially Queensland. *Inside squatters* are those who reside within the margin of settlements, as distinguished from "pioneer" or "outside squatters."

Stations were formed for nearly a hundred and fifty miles outside John's Run, and he began to regard himself as quite an *inside squatter*. His neighbours greatly assisted him in keeping his cattle together, turning them back and sending over notice whenever they were discovered making away; and, in like manner, he performed the same good office for them. Things soon began to wear quite a settled look.—*A. C. Grant.*

**Institution** (American). Bartlett calls this a flash word of recent introduction as applied to any prevalent practice or thing. But it was so common as to attract the notice of Dickens on his first visit to the United States, since he made Martin Chuzzlewit inquire if spitting was an American *institution*.

**Instruct out, to** (American), originally and strictly "to remove from office, as a Member of Congress by instructions from a State Legislature" (Bartlett); popularly, to turn out in almost any way, especially by appeal to a higher authority.

If you don't git out of this place, you young pollution, afore to-morrow mornin', I guess you'll *be instructed* to evaporate from the boss himself—and he'll make it as hot for you as a Fourth Ward Meeting.—*How Silas Greenstick got to Congress.*

**Interviewer** (American), a term which began to come into general use about 1880, or earlier. It was applied to the visiting eminent (or any other) persons, by the reporters of newspapers, for the purpose of extracting information from them. Interviewing in the United States was developed into an art before the term crossed the water to England. But now the French journalists send their men to *interview* politicians.

At the recent Missouri Democratic Convention, each *interviewer* from the St. Louis Globe-Democrat wore a badge of white satin pinned to the coat lapel with a silver star, and bearing this legend:—

GLOBE-DEMOCRAT INTERVIEWING CORPS.

"I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, Father, Royal Dane. Oh, answer  
me,  
Let me not burst in ignorance."

As he finished with his victim, each *interviewer* handed him a check, which he put in his hat-band, and thus evaded any further bother with the reporters. These checks were inscribed as follows:—

PUMPED.

Keep this check in your hat, and you will not be again disturbed by a reporter.  
—*Chicago Tribune.*

This is what in American parlance may be called bringing interviewing "down to a fine point."

I returned to the United States after eleven years' absence, and found that many

new things had sprung up during the time. One of these was "interviewing," which had been developed "to a high note," as I soon experienced. I was hardly at home before a young man came to take my portrait in writing. Oddly enough he was "on" a newspaper of which I had been managing editor for three years. Finding him clever and gentlemanly, but inexperienced, I proposed to *interview* myself for him, which I did, asking myself what I thought of the country, and so on. A few evenings later I delivered a lecture. At midnight another reporter called to work it up. I was in bed, but I remembered how sorry I should have been when I was on a newspaper to have missed anything, so I called him in, and he sat down by my bedside and phonographed away, while I gave him the points. Well, as Dumas says of life in Naples, "It is 'sbirro' one day, and 'lazarone' the next," at one time sending forth interviewers and then being interviewed.—*C. G. Leland: Journal.*

**In the buff** (tailors), stripped.

**In the cart** (common), to be *in the cart*, is to be defrauded, sorely disappointed. *Vide CART.*

In showing a photo, 'tis wise to reflect  
That the girl may have no taste for art,  
So see that the cabinet's fairly correct,  
Or you may find yourself *in the cart.*  
—*Sporting Times.*

**In the crook** or **click** (tailors), in the act of cutting.

**In the hole** (printers). This term is applied to a compositor when he is behind-hand in closing up his copy, and his companions that have taken subsequent copy await the closing-up of his portion, that the making-up into pages may proceed.

**In the know** (common), the expression explains itself.

The clock of St. Paul's had not long struck one ere chance brought me into collision with an old friend who did a little in the dramatic line for one or two newspapers, and who was generally supposed to be *in the know*, as to most things connected with metropolitan play-houses.—*Town Talk.*

**In the rags** (tailors), in trouble, disputing, or in disgrace.

**In the slash** (tailors), fighting.

**In the straw** (common), said of married ladies when accouched. Hotten is wrong in saying this phrase is coarse in origin and metaphor, whatever it may be now. It is in reality very old, and dates back to the days when all beds were stuffed with straw. Even the highest and most exalted in position—Henry VIII., for example—lay upon straw, for Brand tells us that "there were directions for certain persons to examine every night the straw of the king's bed, that no daggers might be concealed therein."

**In the swim.** Hotten limits this to being in a run of luck, or in a good *swim*, because anglers are in luck when they find a *swim* or "school" of fish. But of late the term is applied entirely to being what the French call "dans le mouvement" (slang equivalent, "dans le train"), in with the world, in the current excitements, speculations, ideas, and interests of the age.

**In the wind** (nautical), intoxicated.

**Intimate** (American thieves), a shirt.

**Into** (popular), to be, walk, slip, drop *into*, to attack one, fight him. (American), short of, wanting, as "It was all right *into* a yard missing," "I found the account correct *into* four cents."

I thought I did pretty well deliverin' all the load *into* one box. Considerin' I'd come as nigh into losin' the hull cargo, I guessed it was pretty well. But when Zekiel Hill missed that box he was in an awful takin'. He swore a lot of oaths as long as a kite-string, and sent 'em ascending up to heaven like unto the same.—*How Silas Greenstick got to Congress.*

**Inturn** (American), the inside track in a race, the advantage at a start.

Dis kinder tarrify Brer Rabbit, en he skasely know what he gwine to do; but bimeby he study ter hissef dat de man w'at see Brer Fox fuss wuz boun' ter have de *inturn*.—*Uncle Remus.*

**Invitations to drink** (American).

The following expressions are all stamped, endorsed, and approved in drinking circles:—

*Invitations.*

What'll you have?  
Nominate your pizen!  
Will you irrigate?  
Will you tod?  
Wet your whistle?  
How'll you have it?  
Let us stimulate!  
Let's drive another nail!  
What's your medicine?  
Willst du trinken?  
Try a little anti-abstinence?  
Swy (zwei) Lager!  
Your whisky's waiting.  
Will you try a smile?  
Will you take a nip?  
Let's get there.

Try a little Indian?  
Suck some corn-juice?

*Responses.*

Here's into your face!  
Here's how!  
Here's at you!  
Don't care if I do.  
Well, I will.  
I'm thar!  
Accepted, unconditionally.  
Well, I don't mind.  
Sir, your most.  
Sir, your utmost.  
You do me proud!  
Yes, sir-ree!  
With *you*— yes!  
Anything to oblige.  
On time.  
I'm with you.  
Count me in.  
I subscribe.  
—*C. Leland Harrison: MS.*  
*Americanisms.*

**I. P.** (legal), a corruption of *in personam*, an expression very common among the Old Bailey barristers. It is a defence from the prisoner or his friends given direct to counsel without the intervention of a solicitor.

**Irish cockney** (popular), a child born of Irish parents in any part of the southern counties of England (Hotten). "You're Irish!" is a common phrase when a child or person is saying something not quite intelligible to the listener.

**Irish, Indian, Dutch** (American), all of these words are used to signify anger or arousing temper. But to say that one has his "*Indian* up," implies a great degree of vindictiveness, while *Dutch* wrath is stubborn but yielding to reason.

- Irishman's harvest** (coster-mongers), the orange season.
- Irishman's rise** (tailors and common), wages reduced.
- Irish theatre** (military), a guard-room or lock-up in barracks.
- Iron** (mechanics), bad *iron*, used in reference to any bad affair, failure of any kind.
- Ironclads**, baked pies, so called from the armour-plated consistencies of the outside crust. Of American origin. During the Civil War *ironclad* was applied to everything well defended or hard. An "*ironclad* oath." A severely virtuous girl was an *ironclad*.
- Iron cow**, the pump; so called by the milk dealers of London because it provides them with the water for what is sometimes called the stretching—that is, the dilution and adulteration—of the milk which they supply to their defrauded customers.
- Iron face** (pidgin), stern, obdurate, cruel, severe; Cantonese, *teel meen*; Mandarin, *t'eeaylayeen*. "He makee my one *ilon face*, too-muchee bad heart he hab got."
- Iron making** (popular), occupying a berth or billet in which money is to be put by.
- Ironsides** (nautical), formerly a sobriquet for favourite, veteran men-of-war, but latterly applied to iron and ironclad ships (Admiral Smyth).
- Irrigate**, to (American), to drink, to take liquor or refreshment; a synonymous expression is "to smile." Of Mexican frontier origin.
- Irrigate your canal** (American). This is becoming common in England as an invitation to take a drink.
- Stumbling across a barrel of ale in the house, and feeling a little thirsty, Joseph thought he had found an excellent opportunity for *irrigating his alimentary canal*.—*Sunday Times*.
- Isabella** (rhyming slang), an umbrella.
- I saw, I seen him** (American), a Western phrase implying agreement, harmony, or good fellowship.
- He was drunk, but *I seen him* all the same. "Come and have a drink," says I.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.
- I say** (pidgin). "The Chinese mob used to call the English soldiers *A'says* or *I says*, from their frequent use of the expression. The French gamins used to do the same in Boulogne. At Amoy the Chinese used to call out after foreigners, *Akee, akee!* a tradition from the Portuguese *aqui*, 'Here!' In Java the French are called by the natives *Orang-deelong*, *i.e.*, the *dites-donc* people" (Anglo-Indian Glossary). It is not

unusual for common people in England and America to call Frenchmen “ding-dongs” from the same words, and in the latter country boys cry after Germans *Nix cum arouse!* and *Wie gehts!* and greet Italians as “Johnny Dagos” (*vide* DAGO).

**Is his giblets in?** (American), is he all right? From a coarse story.

**Ishkimmisk** (tinkers), drunk; Gaelic, *misgeach*.

**I should smile** (American). In this phrase a strong accent is laid on “should.” It comes comes from such expressions as “Well, I *should* think!” which are often left incomplete, but which when completed would be “that he ought to be ashamed,” or “that people would know better,” &c. Its general meaning is an intimation of surprise, or mild contempt. It is much used by women, and is believed to have originated in the suburbs of Boston or in Brooklyn, New York.

We asked Joe Capp the other day,  
And asked it without guile,  
“If asked to drink, what would you say?”

He answered: “*I should smile.*”  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Isle of Fling** (east end), coat.

**Isle of France** (rhyming slang), a dance.

**Istubbul** (Anglo-Indian). “This usual Hindu word for stable may naturally be imagined to be a corruption of the English word. But it is really the Arab *istabl*, though that no doubt came in old times from the Latin *stabulum* through some Byzantine Greek form” (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**I suppose** (rhyming slang), the nose.

**Itchland** (popular), Scotland, alluding to the ailment caused by a diet of oatmeal.

**Items** (American thieves), in gamblers' slang, looking at a party's hand and conveying to an opposition player by signs what it contains. A looking-glass is sometimes used, or else signs.

**It goes** (American), it is all right, I agree with you, it is well.

“Come into the ranch and have a drink, Sam,” says I. “A drink *goes*,” says he.

**It takes the gloss off** (tailors), it takes away the profit, or materially detracts from its value.

**Ivories** (popular), the teeth.

These ones object to learning lengthy parts; rehearsals bore them, and stage managers are notoriously anything but angels. One damsel possesses nice arms, another is blessed with a swan-like neck, a third rejoices in a set of lovely *ivories*, and a fourth has a particularly neat ankle.  
—*Modern Society.*

“To flash your *ivories*,” to show your teeth; “to wash your *ivories*,” to drink. Also dice. (Billiards), the balls. “The *ivories* run badly for him,” the game is against him, or, he has

no luck. (Card-players), checks and counters.

Promptly Murat placed by the side of Halsey's chips a column of *ivories* twice as high. It was a raise and up to the limit.—*Bird o' Freedom*.



put after a judge's name, being an abbreviation for Justice, thus Denman J. Also an abbreviation for “jay” or “juggins.”

Up! punters and pencilers, hie ye away  
To the slopes that are crowded on gay  
Derby day.

Stream forth in your thousands from ham-  
lets and towns

To Epsom's bepeopled and booth-dotted  
Downs.

Up! flat-catching magmen and boys of  
that ilk,

On the warpath the *J* of his ooftish to milk.  
“Here's a quid for the man who will turn  
up the knave!”

Here's a snip for those “sports” who the  
bookie would brave.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Jab, to** (English and American), to poke, or stick with any instrument, commonly spelt *job*, is mostly used in this sense.

*Tom*: Yes. You remember that Cæsar held out against the gang until he saw Brutus trying *to jab* him, and then he just said, “Et tu Brute!” and covered up his face with his mantle.—*Republican*.

**Jabber, to**, a word frequently but vulgarly used in England, and still oftener in America, to mean not to speak badly, but to talk any foreign language what-

ever, even though it be done correctly.

At once the bird started *to jabber* Italian, and had quite a conversation with the man.—*Savannah Morning News*.

*To jabber*, in the sense of to talk indistinctly, is a perfectly recognised word.

**Jabble sea** (nautical), a choppy, nasty sea.

**Jack** (American). It is common among schoolboys in Philadelphia to address a stranger as *Jack*, and also to speak of a blunderer or stupid fellow as a *Jack*—an abbreviation of *jack-ass*.

“Where do you come from?” asked a Dallas man of a neighbour. “I'm just from the fair-grounds.” “Have the judges of live stock awarded the prize to the biggest *Jack*?” “They have.” “Did my uncle or my father get it?” “Neither of them. A strange donkey from Eastern Texas got the prize.”—*Texas Siftings*.

(American thieves), a small coin. In England a counter.

**Jackaroo** (up-country Australian), the name by which young men who go to the Australian colonies to pick up colonial experience



are designated (Grant's "Bush Life.") Like *bossaroo*, a slang word coined on the model of kangaroo.

**Jack cove** (American thieves), a mean, low, small fellow. From *Jack*, any very trifling coin or a counter.

**Jacketing** (common), a thrashing. From the phrase, "to dust one's jacket."

**Jacket-reverser** (common), a new word for turncoat.

**Jackey** (popular), gin; called also "old Tom."

I've snuff and tobacco, and excellent  
*Jackey*;

I've scissors, and watches, and knives,  
I've ribbons and lace to set off the face  
Of pretty young sweethearts and wives.  
—*W. S. Gilbert; H.M.S. Pinafore.*

**Jack gagger** (American thieves), a man who lives on the prostitution of his wife. A "ponce."

**Jack-in-a-box** (old cant), a sharper who robbed tradesmen by substituting empty boxes for others full of money.

This *Jack-in-a-box*, or this divell in man's shape . . . comes to a goldsmith's stall . . . where he knows good store of silver faces are to be seene. — *Dekker: English Villanies.*

**Jack-in-the-box** (thieves), a small but powerful kind of screw, used by burglars to break open safes. Also a kind of firework.

**Jack-in-the-cellar** (popular), a child in the womb.

**Jack-in-the-dust** (nautical), the steward's mate.

**Jack-in-the-pulpit** (American), a man who obtrudes himself into a place for which he is unfitted; as, for instance, an ignorant fellow who pretends to preach or teach that of which he knows nothing.

The latest contribution to the history of the Rebellion is from the pen of that eminent truth-teller, Don Piatt. In "Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln," between the covers of which he has been allowed to obtrude, he says of himself: "My one act made Maryland a free State." Of Mr. Lincoln he says: "The President never forgave me." That was because you escaped his memory entirely, Mr. *Jack-in-the-pulpit*.—*Chicago Tribune*, May 29, 1886.

The simile or term is equivalent to the English "Jack-in-office."

**Jack-in-the-water** (popular), an attendant at the watermen's stairs, on the river and seaport towns, who does not mind wetting his feet for a customer's convenience (Hotten).

**Jacks** (thieves), superior counterfeit coin.

'Arry gave me five of the best, and 'ow in the world them quids come to be snide blessed if I know, though probably somebody 'ad chucked 'em away for safety. They wasn't *Jacks*, mind, but reglar wrong 'uns, and—but, unless I'm mistaken, this 'ere station's Fulwell—by leave, sir—  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Jack-shay** (up-country Australian), a tin quart pot used for boiling tea in, and contrived

so as to hold it within a tin pint pot.

The party, therefore, carry with them a light blanket apiece, stowed away in the folds of which is each man's supper and breakfast. Hobbles and *Jack-shays* hang from the saddle-dees. The bust is as full of life as ever.—*A. C. Grant.*

**Jack Sprat** (common), a diminutive boy or man.

**Jack the painter** (up-country Australian), a much adulterated green tea used in the bush.

Another notorious ration tea of the bush is called *Jack the painter*, a very green tea indeed, its viridity evidently produced by a discreet use of the copper drying-pans in its manufacture.—*Lieut.-Colonel Munday: Our Antipodes.*

**Jack up, to** (Australian), to throw up, to abandon; very probably a corruption of "chuck." *Jack it up* is generally an expression of disgust, *e.g.*, when a whist-player finds his partner's hand as bad as his own, and tells him to lay down his cards.

Says I, "Let's *Jack up*, man alive, an' try further down on the Creek." "All right!" says my mate, "but we'll drive right an' left to the end of this week."—*Garnet Walch: A Little Tin Plate.*

**Jade** (American thieves), a long term of imprisonment.

**Jadoo** (Anglo-Indian), conjuring, magic, hocus-pocus. Persian-Hind. *jadū.*

**Jadoogur** (Anglo-Indian), Hind. *jadūghar*, conjuring-house.

"This is the term commonly applied by the natives to a Freemason's Lodge, when there

is one at an English station. On the Bombay side it is called a *Shaitan khana*, a devil's house, a name consonant to the ideas of an Italian priest, who intimated to one of the present writers that he had heard the raising of the devil was practised at Masonic meetings, and asked his friend's opinion as to the fact. In Southern India the lodge is called *Talai-vetta-kovil*, or 'Cut-head-temple,' because part of the rite of initiation is supposed to consist in the candidate's head being cut off and put on again" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

"It is worth remarking, in connection with the imagined mysteries and sorceries of the Freemasons' lodges, that while the theosophists of England believe that untold marvels of magic are practised in India, the Hindoos on the other hand are all firm in the faith that foreigners, and especially Englishmen, excel in the black art, and live in daily secret intercourse with devils of all denominations. 'What cometh from afar aye pleases best.' In popular folklore, the witches and fairies always live far away beyond the blue mountains, and goblins and satyrs must be looked for in the wilderness, in all cases anywhere but at home" (Charles G. Leland).

**Jag** (American), a fancy, a whim; also intoxication, *e.g.*, "jagged," drunk, or "to have a *jag* on."

He's got a *jag* that there's money buried in his place, but I don't believe that he'll ever get back the money he's spent diggin' for it.—*Newspaper Clippings*.

**Jagger** (popular), a gentleman.

**Jah** (freemason), contraction of Jehovah, used in the R.A. degree.

**Jail-khana** (Anglo-Indian), an English-Indian word for "jail," used in the Bombay Presidency.

**Jakes** (old slang), a privy, a water-closet, a place of convenience.

**Jam, real** (turf), one of the almost innumerable synonyms for a turf certainty. *Real jam* has been the cause of many wry faces. The expression is not as much in vogue as formerly. *Real jam* is used by other classes of people to express excellence, so also "true marmalade." Girls of the lower orders sometimes apply the term *jam* to sexual intercourse.

**Jamboree** (American), a word which would appear to be Anglo-Indian or gypsy, referring to something very nice or pleasant, but which is only used in the United States for a jollification or frolic, *e.g.*, to go on a regular *jam-* or sometimes *jim-boree*. *Jam-* or *jan-bori* in gypsy conveys the idea of a great riot or noise, and the origin of *jam* as signifying anything very apt or agreeable is still obscure. There is really very little ground, however, for the Romany origin of the word.

The negroes sang curious songs, like the following:—

Sally, she went down de ribber,  
*Jambree!*

Black man see her gwane dar,  
*Jambree!*

Sally's face it shine like gold,  
*Jambree!*

Black man's face like tar,  
*Jambree!*

The term is now used in England.

They had met, and it was in the Strand last Wednesday morning.

"Ah, laddie, how goes it?"

"Very seedy, dear old boy. There was a bit of a *jamboree* last night, and I'm quite in a chippy way this morning."—*Sporting Times*.

**James** (thieves), a crowbar, a dignified form of the term "jemmy" for the same. French thieves have the corresponding *Jacques*.

We went to Willesden and found a dead 'un, so I came out and asked my pal to lend me the *james* and some twirls, and I went and turned it over.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Also a sovereign.

Make this man leave me alone; he is knocking me 'bout, and I put a half *james* in his hand, and said guy.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Jammy.** *Vide* JAM, REAL.

He was callow, and was diffident of entering the ring;

To his joy a chance acquaintance put him on a *jammy* thing;

He tumbled on perceiving that his quids had taken wing,

That he wasn't on a "smasher."  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Jampot** (Australian), applied to the very high, highly starched

stand-up collars affected by dandies, sometimes as much as four inches high.

When I was staying at Queenscliff, the fashionable watering-place of Melbourne, I was standing at a hotel-bar with a young colonial named C—, who was a dressy man, and was wearing one of these collars. The conversation turned upon the number of Jews who were staying in the hotel. "Oh, blow these Jutes," he said, "they stuff the whole place up; it's as bad as the New Jerusalem."

"Why, ain't you one yourself?" asked the barmaid, who was not so well educated as Australian barmaids generally are.

"Me a Jute! why, what makes you ask that, Mary?"

"The collar. No one but Jews wears them *jampots* now."—*D. B. W. Sladen.*

**Janasmug** (thieves), a go-between; one who was intermediary between a thief and the "fence," or receiver of stolen goods. An old word, from "janus," *i.e.*, double-faced.

**Japanese knife trick**, the (common), to eat, or shovel one's food down with a knife, instead of conveying it to the mouth in an orthodox fashion with a fork. To eat peas with a knife is to do *the Japanese knife trick*. The saying probably arises from the similarity of both the chop-sticks one to another, these articles being equivalent to the knife and fork amongst the Japanese—hence the parallel suggested between the indiscriminate use of the knife and fork, in the same manner as takes place in regard to the chop-sticks.

**Japanned** (University), explained by quotation.

Many . . . step . . . into the Church, without any pretence of other change than in the attire of their outward man—the being *japanned*, as assuming the black dress and white cravat is called in university slang.—*College Words and Customs.*

**Japanning** (popular), explained by quotation.

He applied himself to a process which Mr. Dawkins designated as "*japanning* his trotter-cases." The phrase, rendered into plain English, signifieth, cleaning his boots.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Jārifa, jārika, jallico, &c.** (gypsy), an apron. The variations of this word are numerous.

**Jarrehoe** (Wellington College), a man-servant.

**Jarvey** (common), the driver of a hackney coach.

After listening to two Lonnens singing two Killaloes, he called a cab.

"Where to, sir?" asked the *jarvey*.

"Gaiety buffet."

And he is now willing to bet that he had the cheapest and quickest cab drive on record.—*Sporting Times.*

**Jaw** (popular), talking.

"No more *jaw*, I tell you," said the first boy, who was stronger than Jerry Pape. "Come on home" (this to me, with a lug that made my shoulder-joints crack.) "I shouldn't like to go you halves, my tulip. I 'spect you'll be werry nigh killed wen yer father does get hold on yer."—*Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins.*

Hold your *jaw*, stop your *jaw*, stop talking.

Four-and-twenty of us sat round a table mending soldiers' shirts and convicts

stockings. Notwithstanding the frequent commands of "stop that *jaw*," we discussed many matters of law and prison discipline.—*Evening News*.

**Jawbone** (Canadian), credit; to "call his jaw," to live on credit.

This picture of work and health and happiness has its darker side, and nowhere a sadder one than where the wages of perhaps a whole year pass into the hands of a professed gambler, and the hundreds of dollars, which might have been so profitably invested, are squandered in the poor excitement of an evening at euchre, faro, or draw poker; and his ready money gone he has nothing to live on but *jawbone*, i. e., credit, and to call his jaw, i. e., live on credit, till he has got further employment and more wages.—*A. Staveley Hill: From Home to Home*.

**Jaw-breakers** (common), hard words to pronounce.

**Jawing tackle** (nautical), organs of speech.

**Jaw, jao!** (Anglo-Indian), go, to go. English gypsy *jaw* or *jā*.

**Jaw, to** (popular), to talk much, but especially to scold, complain.

The day that I got married was the ruin of my life,  
She said I wasn't fit to be the husband of a wife,  
She *jawed* and *jarved* all day and night and upset all the place,  
Then knocked me down upon my back and jumped upon my face.  
—*Song*.

**Jaw, to go**, common among tramps or travellers, e. g., to *jaw* on the toby or drum, to go on the road. From the Roman *jāva*, I go. Sometimes

heard as *jāl*, from *jāla*, he goes. Also Anglo-Indian *jao!* go!

**Jaw twister** (common), a hard or many-syllabled word (Hotten).

**Jay** (American), a contemptuous word for a person. A sham "swell," a simpleton. *Vide TO FLAP*.

Spose you was runnin' reglar out of Atchison, or somewhere else in the cowboy country! Why, these *jays* ain't a circumstance to 'em.—*Philadelphia Press*.

"*Jay-hawker*" was a term applied to marauders during the Kansas troubles, and extended to other bandits.

This was a heavier blow to the boy than the corporeal ones, and he vowed to regain his property at any cost; but the bandits were not easily come at by a single foe. In fact, the "*jay-hawkers*," as they pleasantly dubbed themselves, augmented their ranks every day.—*Buffalo Bill*.

"To play one for a *jay*," to make a dupe of. Any word equivalent to ignoramus or dolt may be substituted for *jay*.

"I'm a plain man!" he said, as he strode into the reporters' room, and shook the icicles from his whiskers. "I'm a plain-everyday-man, with no book-larnin' to speak of, but I don't propose to let no one-hoss grocer's clerk *play me for a jay*."  
—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Jeff** (printers). The act of throwing with the quadrats as one would with dice. Nine em quadrats (usually of pica body) are selected, shaken up in the hand, and thrown on an imposing surface. Three "throws"

are allowed to each player, and only the quadrats that fall with their nicks uppermost are counted. This system is generally adopted for determining the share of good or bad work at the end of a volume, and sometimes it is used as a means of gambling.

**Jelly**, or **all jelly** (popular), a buxom, good-looking girl.

**Jem** (old cant), a ring.

**Jemima** (common), a chamber utensil. *Thomas* in French slang.

**Jemini! O Jeminy! By Jimmeny!** (popular), a current interjection, also well known in Holland. Teirlinck, in his Dictionary of Bargoensch, says that "Jemenis is merely a variation of Jesus! We still hear Jemenis! Jee-menis! jumenis! Zeemenis, jee-menis Kristus! Jeemenis Maria! See Jemeny, in Oudermans."

**Jemmy** (popular), a sheep's head; sometimes called by the lower classes a "bloody *jemmy*," on account of the quantity of blood about it.

Nancy quickly laid the cloth; disappearing for a few minutes, she presently returned with a pot of porter and a dish of sheep's head; which gave occasion to several pleasant witticisms on the part of Mr. Sikes, founded upon the singular coincidence of *jemmy* being a cant name common to them, and also to an ingenious implement much used in his profession.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

(Thieves), a crowbar.

They call for crowbars—*jemmies* is the modern name they bear—

They burst through, and bolt and bar—  
but what a sight is there!

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

It has come to the writer's knowledge that the principal tool employed by the burglars is a *jemmy*, which plays the innocent part of axle to a perambulator during the day.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

(Popular), a greatcoat.

**Jemmy duck** (men-o'-war), the ship's poulterer.

**Jemmy Jed** (American). When a boy has not brushed his hair, and it stands on end, he is called a *Jemmy Jed*. In the old American editions of Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes, *Jemmy Jed* is represented in a rude woodcut as rushing from a shed with his hair on end.

*Jemmy Jed*

Went into a shed,

And made a ted

Of straw his bed;

An owl came out

And flew about,

And *Jemmy Jed*

Up stakes and fled.

Wasn't *Jemmy Jed* a staring fool?

Born in the woods, to be scared by  
an owl.

**Jemmy Jessamy** (popular), a dandy (Hotten).

**Jemmy O'Goblin** (theatrical), a sovereign.

**Jenkins** (journalistic), the name given to the person on the staff of the *Morning Post* who reports

the Court news, and gives accounts of grand balls, &c.

**Jenny** (American thieves), a hook on the end of a stick. (Billiards), a losing hazard into the middle pocket off a ball an inch or two from the side cushion. (Popular), a hot-water bottle put into a bed to keep a person's feet warm.

**Jeremy Diddler** (common), an adept at raising the wind, *i.e.*, at borrowing money, especially at borrowing with no intention of repaying. See the farce of "Raising the Wind" (Hotten).

**Jericho** (common), from *Jericho* to June, a very great distance.

His kick was tremendous . . . he would send a man from *Jericho* to June.—*In-goldsb'y Legends*.

A prison, a watercloset, termed also a bog shop, a house of office, a necessary, a House of Commons.

**Jericho! go to** (common), an exclamation of impatience—begone! In the Manor of Blackmore, about seven miles from Chelmsford, King Henry VIII. had a house which had been a priory, to which he frequently retired when he desired to be free from disturbance. To this place the name *Jericho* was given as a disguise, so that when any one inquired for the king when he was indulging himself in animal pleasures in Essex, it was customary to say he was

"gone to Jericho." The Rev. W. Callander, Vicar of Blackmore, wrote in 1880, that the place "habitually goes by the name of the 'Jericho Estate,' or the 'Blackmore Priory.' There is a brooklet running through the village, which I have heard called 'the Jordan.'" There seems evidence that the phrase was used in the time of Henry VIII., but it is not quite clear that it originated in the circumstances stated.

**Jerker**, chamber-pot; (nautical), the steward.

**Jerking** (low), masturbation.

**Jerks** (American), got the *jerks*, has the delirium tremens, is nervous, or under religious excitement at a camp-meeting.

**Jerk the tinkler** (common), otherwise "agitate the communicator."

"*Jerk the tinkler.*" These words, in plain English, conveyed an injunction to ring the bell.—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Jerk, to.** This word is used in the United States in endless forms to express action, especially if rapid.

I can *jerk* a poem with any of them *Atlantic Monthly* fellows.—*Artemus Ward*.

**Jerry.** This word is common among the lower classes of the great cities of England in such phrases as *jerry-go-nimble*, *diarrhœa*; *jerry-shop*, an un-

licensed public-house with a back door entrance; and *jerry-builder*, a cheap and inferior builder who runs up those miserable, showy looking tenements, neither air-proof nor water-proof. *Jerry* seems derivable from the gypsy *jerr* or *jir* (i.e., *jeer*), the rectum, whence its application to diarrhœa, a back door, and all that is contemptible. From the same root we have the Gaelic *jerie*, pronounced *jarey*, behind; the French *derrière*. The Gaelic word also signifies wretched, miserable, in which sense it is strictly applicable to the *jerry-builder*, and to the contemptible characters popularly known as *jerry-sneaks*. A *jerry*, a chamber utensil, abbreviation of Jeroboam. (Thieves), a watch-chain. (Popular), a round felt hat or pot hat. (Printers), on an apprentice coming out of his time it is customary to give him a *jerry*, in the shape of as much noise as possible. Chases and iron plates suspended and beaten with bars of iron, together with whistling and rattling, are considered the correct thing, and truly a printing-office seems a perfect pandemonium under such circumstances. Hansard in his "Typographia," 1825, deprecates such ovations. The same practice is habitual in French printing-shops, and is called *roulance*.

Jerry Lynch (popular), a pig's head pickled (Hotten).

**Jerry nicking, sneaking** (thieves), watch stealing.

**Jerry-sneak** (common), a hen-pecked husband. From a character in a play. (Thieves), a stealer of watches.

**Jersey lightning** (American). This is apple brandy, or spirit distilled from cider, which is so called because the best is made in the State of New Jersey. It is also called apple-jack. But a noggin of *lightning* was the "flash" for a quarter of gin a century ago, and it is defined as such in George Parker's Dictionary of 1789.

The guests now being met,  
The first thing that was done,  
Was handing round the kid,  
That all might smack his mun.  
A flash of *lightning* next  
Bets tipt each cull and frow,  
Ere they to church did pad,  
To have it christened Joe.  
—*Life's Painter*, 1789.

This is interesting as showing that *mun* (Hindu, *mun'h*, a face) at that time still retained in gypsy its earliest form.

**Jerusalem, Jerusalem pony** (popular), ass or donkey.

On Hampstead Heath I ruralise,  
And chaff the girls around,  
I ride the best *Jee-ru-sa-lem*  
That up there can be found.  
"Here's Champagne Charley loose again!  
And what's your game?" they cry,  
And as I'm always so polite,  
"Ax my donkey," I reply.  
—*Champagne Charley's Donkey. A Noddying Ditty* by J. A. Hardwick.



I saw young 'Arry with his billycock on,  
Checked trousers on his thighs, with  
knobbed stick armed,

Climb from the ground like fat pig up a  
pole,

And flop with such sore toil into his saddle  
As though a bran-bag dropped down from  
the clouds,

To turn and wind a slow *Jerusalem*,  
And shock the world with clumsy assman-  
ship. —*Punch*.

Donkey riding masters will give the  
daughters of the aristocracy lessons in  
Rotten Row. A thoroughbred *Jerusalem*  
*pony* at sixpence an hour.—*Funny Folks*.

**Jerusalem the golden**, Brighton;  
so called from the numbers of  
wealthy Hebrews who frequent  
this watering-place.

**Jesse, Jessie** (popular), of Ameri-  
can origin; to give a man *Jesse*, to  
abuse vehemently, or to thrash  
and belabour him severely. The  
expression is supposed to be  
intensified when, instead of  
*Jesse*, the words "particular  
*Jesse*," or "d—d particular  
*Jesse*," are used. The origin is  
unknown. A synonymous ex-  
pression is to "give one fits,"  
"particular fits," or "d—d  
particular fits." The original  
term appears to have been to  
*jess*. A gypsy would under-  
stand by this to make a man  
go, or to clear him out, but this  
is a very doubtful derivation,  
as is Hotten's, that *Jessie* is  
synonymous with *gas*. "It is  
evidently derived from the al-  
lusion in the Bible to Jesse's  
valour and the aid which he  
rendered, a text continually re-  
peated among the Puritans" (C.  
G. Leland, Notes).

**Jesuit** (Cambridge), a member of  
Jesus College.

**Jet** (old cant), a lawyer.

**Jew butter** (American), goose-  
grease.

**Jib** (Dublin University), a first-  
year man. (Gypsy), language,  
speech (Hindu *tschib*). Also used  
in canting. "Dré savo *jib* rakdé  
o mūsh?"—in what language  
did the man talk? (Common),  
cut of one's *jib*. *Vide* CUT OF  
ONE'S JIB.

If she dislikes what sailors call the *cut*  
of their *jib*.—*Scott: St. Ronan's Well*.

**Jibb** (tramps), the tongue.

**Jibber the kibber**, to (old cant),  
decoying vessels on shore for  
plunder, by tying a lantern to a  
horse's neck. From *jibber*, or  
horse that shrinks.

**Jiffess** (tailors), employer's wife.

**Jigery pokery** (tailors), humbug.

**Jigger** (canting and gypsy), a  
gate or door. One of the oldest  
cant words, given in Harman.  
Mr. Turner would derive it from  
the Welsh *guddor*, a gate, but  
it seems to come much nearer  
to the old gypsy *stigga* (also  
*stekka*), a gate, &c.—there are  
many instances of Romany and  
Hebrew words which have un-  
dergone much greater change  
into English than that of *st* to *j*  
—or, as it is often pronounced,

*shtigger*. The Welsh *gwddor* has itself a close affinity to the Romany *wüder*, a door, but *godor* can hardly be said to resemble *gygger* (or *jigger*), so much as the latter resembles *shtigga*. (Billiards), the rest. (Printers). See VISORUM. An article used by compositors to hold the copy by, and also applied to a small box with narrow divisions to hold odd or peculiar sorts in, that do not belong to the cases that he has in use.

**Jigger dubber** (thieves), a turnkey.

**Jiggered** (popular), an oath, equivalent to "blowed," or "damned."

"Got him, Jerry? Halves, don't you know," exclaimed the boy eagerly.

"Halves be *jiggered*," roared Jerry, seizing my other arm. "What's halves for? Ain't I been a-huntin' arter him ever since his father come home? Wasn't I the first to ketch him?"—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

"Well, then," said he, "I'm *jiggered* if I don't see you home!" This penalty of being *jiggered* was a favourite supposititious case of his.—*Dickens: Great Expectations*.

If it hadn't been that my uncle kicked me six times round his garden at Shrewsbury, because I said I'd be *jiggered* if I went, I don't believe I should have had courage to accept the appointment of naturalist to the expedition.—*Punch*.

It is said the expression arose from the suffering caused by the chigoe insect in the West Indies, which burrows in the feet of the bare-footed negroes (T. L. O. Davies). Sailors call these chigoes *jiggers*. But it is pro-

bably from *jig*, allied to *jog*, to split, *i.e.*, destroy (*vide* Skeat); *jigger*, to move rapidly, to use exertion, as in "*jiggered up*."

**Jiggered up** (nautical), tired, exhausted.

**Jih-zee-pah-nee-ah** (pidgin), *Is-pagna*, *i.e.*, Spain.

**Jill-mill** (Anglo-Indian), Venetian shutters.

**Jilt** (thieves), a crow-bar. (American thieves), specially applied to a girl who embraces and kisses a man, and covers his eyes while her accomplice robs him.

**Jimjams, the** (society), delirium tremens. Called also the "uglies" or "horrors."

Should you ask me whence these blear eyes,

Whence the shaking and contrition  
With the horrors of the *jim-jams*.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Jimmy**. This word, which came into use at Cambridge University some twenty years ago, is not found in print except in Mr. Besant's works. It has three uses in ordinary parlance, "that's all *Jimmy*," that's all nonsense. *Jimmy* was in use fifty years ago in America, meaning exactly, fit, suitable. In show parlance a *Jimmy* means according to the context a "fake," or a concealed confederate.

(South Africa), a settler in his first year.

**Jimpsecute** (Texas). In the Texan vernacular, this is the equivalent used, when a young man goes to pay his devoirs to the fair one, to signify the object of his attentions. She on the other hand calls her lover a "juicy-spicy."

I knew a man in Texas once who had no more sense than to have a *jimpsecute*, and this was all her name; Dionysia Boadicea Jeffalinda Jacobina Christiana Buckiana Caledonia Susannah Emily Wyatt Wilkinson Moore Wynne.—*Overland Monthly*.

**Jin** (gypsy), know (Hindu *jāna*, also *chinhua*, to recognise; *jināva*, often *jināwa*, I know; *jinessa* or *jines*, thou knowest; *jindom*, I knew; *jinaben*, knowledge; *jinairt*, to know, a compound between the old form *jinav*, and the English postfix "of it," to *jin*; *jinomescro*, a learned or knowing man. On the Continent the Romany still preserves the Hind. *jan*, "Jan-esa tu Romanes?" (Hungarian gypsy), dost thou know Romany? "Janel o baro Dewel ani Polopen," the great God in Heaven knows (German Romany).

Oh dye, miri dyé!  
Dont tute *jin* a Romany rye.

*I.e.*, "Oh mother, my mother, don't you know a gypsy gentleman."

**Jingling johnnies** (Anglo-Indian). They term thus a small flat, light structure which runs on wheels, and on which two or three individuals will sit with their legs dangling over the sides, the native driver sitting

in front to guide the single horse which drags one of these primitive-looking vehicles.

**Jinked his tin** (popular), rattled or paid his money.

He tried to look just like a duke,  
As he passed through the wicket.  
The train got in, he *jinked his tin*,  
Then went away to dine.

—*J. F. Mitchell: Jimmy Johnson's Holiday.*

**Jinks.** *Vide* HIGH JINKS.

**Jinny** (thieves), a Geneva watch.

**Jin-rick-sha, jenny-rick-shaw** (pidgin, both Chinese and Japanese), a very light vehicle drawn by a man. Japanese *ku-ru-ma*. The French in Tonkin call it "pousse-pousse." The *jin-rick-sha* has of late years extended to China and India. Mr. Giles states that the word is a translation of three characters, signifying man, strength, cart, an exact equivalent, as the Americans in Japan at once discovered, of "Pull-man-car."

The *jinricksha* is a great improvement on the Bath-chair, enabling the man who acts horse to it to go from four to six miles an hour.

**Jiv** (gypsy), to live; *jivava*, I live; *jivvin'*, living; *jivaben*, life.

Adrē o pūro chirus bātīdosta manūshia *jivvede* kūshṭe-bākeno 'drē o chone.—*Gypsy Stories.*

*I.e.*, "In the old time many men lived happily in the moon."

**Job, on the** (turf), a horse is said to be or not to be *on the job*,

according to the supposed intentions, honest or the reverse, of his jockey.

Trainers and jockeys, from various trivial circumstances, very easily gathered whether a particular horse they were asked to ride was "out for an airing" or was *on the job*.—*Standard*.

*Job* also means a commission to back a horse; "he has got the *job*," he has the putting on of the stable money. (Thieves), a thieving affair, a murder.

In some of the worst of these dens robberies are planned, and spoils divided, and every inhabitant knows full particulars as to how and when the *job* was done, or the "crib cracked."—*Town Talk*.

(Popular), any affair; *on the job*, on duty there; the slavey *on the job*, the servant there. To be *on the job*, to enter into a thing heart and soul, with spirit, to be wholly bent on some undertaking.

And 'Arry is fair *on the job*.—*Punch*.

Always *on the job* is the competitor in angling contests.—*Globe*.

**Job captain** (naval), one who gets temporary appointment to a ship.

**Jock** (popular), the male organ of generation. (American thieves), "jocking it with a high-flyer," taking pleasure with a fancy-woman.

**Joe** (popular), a too marvellous tale, a lie, or stale joke. Abbreviated from *Joe Miller*. The

full name is occasionally used, as in the phrase, "I don't see the *Joe Miller* of it," I don't see the wit (Hotten). "Not for *Joe!*" the refrain of a popular song, equivalent to "Not if I know it." (American university), a *cabinet d'aisance*. Vide HOLY JOE.

**Joey** (prison), a humbug.

Convicts generally believe these displays of religion on the part of their fellow-prisoners to be mere shams, calling those who indulge in them by the nickname of *Joeyes*.—*Mayhew: Criminal Prisons of London*.

(Popular), a popular synonym for clown, derivable from *Joey Grimaldi*, the great pantomimist. Also a fourpenny piece. The term is from Sir Joseph Hume.

These pieces are said to have owed their existence to the pressing instance of Mr. Hume, from whence they, for some time, bore the nickname of *Joeyes*.—*Hawkins: History of the Silver Coinage of England*.

COINS OF THE REALM.—'Arry remarks that the Tories are led by a "Bob" (Cecil), the Parnellites can boast the possession of a "Tanner," whilst the Liberal Unionists make the most of their *Joey*.—*Punch*.

(Naval), a marine.

**Joeying** (theatrical), buffoonery, and taking liberties with the text and with the audience—a highly reprehensible practice amongst certain very low comedians.

**Jogerring omeý** (theatrical), a musician. From the Italian *giocar*, to play, and *uomo*, a man.

**John Company** (Anglo-Indian), a term for the Honourable East India Company, which was often taken and used by the natives in days of yore. John was supposed to have a real existence; but according to that charming novel "Pandurang Hasi," some of the *Topee wallahs* were uncertain whether John was a man or a woman. Those who were so wicked as to doubt whether there were such a person, were sure ere long to have something bad happen to them.

**Johnny** (common), a swell; a man belonging to a particular set is one of the *Johnnies*. The young man of the day. A fellow.

When this idea passed through my head,

I was on it;

The earth was made for all, I said,

I was on it.

I twirled my stick, walked on my toes,

I struck a *Johnnie* on the nose.

He spoke not, but his foot arose—

I was on it.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

*Johnny*, with its diminutive Jack, is often used in all modern languages as a term of contempt.

The Italian *Gianni* (pronounced by the Venetians and other provincials *Zanni*) has passed into our language as synonymous with a fool—*Zany*; and in our vernacular we have Jack-of-all trades, Cheap Jack, jack-pudding, and jack-ass—none of these titles being conferred as marks of respect. In German folk-lore it is always a *Hans* who is the model of folly or stupidity. The Spanish, similarly, have the phrase, a *Bobo-Juan*.—*Tit-Bits.*

To this enumeration might be added the French *Jean-Jean*, a

great simpleton; *Jean foutre*, or *Jean fesse*, a despicable fellow.

(Popular), my girl, or my young man.

(Irish), half a glass of whisky.

**Johnny Bates' Farm.** *Vide* BATES' FARM.

A gentleman who had apparently not washed his face, nor let his hair grow since his last visit to *Johnny Bates' Farm*, which is, I understand, the pet name with *ces gens* for H.M. Prison at Wandsworth.—*Sporting Times.*

**Johnny-bono** (East), the sobriquet by which, in the East, the English are commonly designated.

**Johnny darbies** (thieves), policemen. Also handcuffs.

**Johnny raw** (common), a green hand, a recruit.

**John Orderly** (shows and gaffs), the showman's password to cut short the performance. Said to be derived from Richardson, the famous showman, with whom Edmund Kean served his apprenticeship as an acrobat. When Richardson visited "wakes and fairs, and market towns," with his travelling show, upon fair days, the actors were supposed to perform a melodrama and a pantomime in half an hour. When, however, the booth was crowded to repletion while the performance was actually going on inside—the great showman was wont to remain outside on the Parade,

continually inviting the crowd to "walk up, and be in time. Just a goin' to begin!" As soon as he had gathered together enough people to fill the booth again, it was his custom to sing out over the heads of the crowd within "Jack Orderly." Upon hearing that signal the performers put the steam on, the play and the pantomime were finished in ten minutes, and one audience was disgorged at the side doors, while the other streamed in from the front. Mr. Dutton Cook derives the phrase from an earlier authority. In his "Book of the Play" he states: "The life of Edwin the actor, written by" (to quote Macaulay) "'that filthy and malignant baboon, John Williams, who called himself Anthony Pasquin,' and published late in the last century, contains the following passage: 'When theatric performers intend to abridge an act or play, they are accustomed to say, We will "John Audley" it. The saying originated thus: In the year 1749, Shuter was master of a booth at Bartholomew Fair, in West Smithfield, and it was his mode to lengthen the exhibition, until a sufficient number of persons were gathered at the door to fill the house. This event was signified by a fellow popping his head in at the gallery door, and bellowing out "John Audley?" as if in the act of inquiry, though the intention was to let Shuter

know that a fresh audience were in high expectation below. The consequence of this notification was that the entertainments were instantly concluded, and the gates of the booth thrown open for a new auditory.

**John Smith**, a (American and English). The frequent recurrence of this name has caused it to become a byword. Once when an American editor asserted that it was "no name at all," an aggrieved Smith collected and published the names of the *John Smiths* who had distinguished themselves. It may be remarked that in the beginning of Teutonic names there were but three Jarl (Earl), the first nobleman—Smidt (*Smith*), the first workman, and Thral (Thrale), the first labourer or bondsman.

The *Smith* family was largely represented in the army of the Union, and at one time there were upwards of 600 in the Army of the Potomac. On one of the regimental rolls in the Teutonic division, which gave the names and birthplaces, were entered, "Giovanni Smithi, Italy; Juan Smithas, Spain; Jan Smidt, Holland; Ivan Schmithiweski, Poland; Jean Smeets, France; Ion Skimmiton, Greece; Janos Smido, Hungary; Hansli Schmitl, Switzerland; Hános Smeta, Lithuania; Vanni Smitello, Sicily; Gianni Smito, Venice; Evanelo Zsmitka, Croatia; Jehan Ismit, Isle of Jersey; Shaun Ztliemiltche, Brittany; Hanas Smatem, Bulgaria; Ehonas Asmito, Jerusalem;" and twelve *John Smiths* born in this country, besides one whose native land was sweet Erin, of whom it was recorded, "named Patrick but says that he is called *John* for short —*Ben: Perley Poore.*

"Mishter," said a Hollander to the clerk at the railway station. "Ik wants a *uitganger* dicket, an emikrant dicket to ga toe Chicago?"

"Well—what's your name," was the reply.

"Ya—dat is Van Berkenschooverzwerdondertronp."

"Great Moses, Mister!" cried the clerk alarmed. "I can't write all that down. Don't you know what it is in English?"

"Ya—I does. It's *Von Smit*."—*Philadelphia Courier*.

**John Thomas** (common), a flunkey; the penis.

**John Trot** (old), a name for a clown.

**Joined the gang** (popular), a vulgar phrase equivalent to saying that any one has become a thief.

Then from the door he soon did shoot  
With the booty in his duke—oh dear! . . .  
He was sentenced, understand, with the  
rest of the *gang*

For a term of seven long years.

Rolling home in the morning, boys,

As drunk as ever he can stand,

Sure my heart is broke and no mistake,

Since Johnny *joined the gang*.

—*Broadside: Johnny's joined the Gang*.

**Joint** (American), a place of public resort, generally a "saloon," a room of a very low character. From its having been originally an adjacent, adjoining, or *joint* room, an annexe. All the opium-smoking dens kept by Chinese in the United States are called opium *joints*. To explain the following extract it should be understood that the obtaining a license to sell liquor in the American cities often, if not

generally, depends upon the political influence of the applicant.

Carew said that while his saloon was a "tough *joint*," it was not near so bad as Monroe's or the Alcazar. Though a good Democrat, he doubtless lacks the Aldermanic "infloence" back of Monroe and Wilson.

(Common), to put a person's nose out of *joint*, to grievously vex or disappoint him.

**Joint, working the** (thieves), swindling in the streets with a lottery table, the indicator of which can be made to stop at any point by pressure on a concealed rod.

**Jokist** (common), a man fond of playing practical jokes.

On entering the room I had given the bottle into the hand of a young man, a son of the house. This young fellow was a bit of a *jokist*, so when about to take out the glass stopper from the bottle he said to a jolly, fat old Kaffir woman, who stood close by, "Sara, kom ruike heirzo de lekker goed"—(Sara, come and smell this sweet stuff).—*Globe*.

**Jolly** (thieves), a pretence, excuse.

So I began to count my pieces for a *jolly* (pretence).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Other meaning explained by quotation.

One who assists at a sham street row for the purpose of creating a mob, and promoting robbery from the person—a *jolly*.—*Seven Curses of London*.

(Common), *jolly* is used slangily as an expletive, signifying superlatively, as, he got

*jolly* well thrashed, or *jolly* drunk.

**Jolly as a sandboy**, old expression. The "Three Jolly Sandboys" is a tavern sign. Who the original gay and festive *arenarius* was we have not discovered.

I'm as *jolly as a sandboy*, as happy as a king,

No matter what occurs to me, I laugh at everything.

Although I'm like my mother, I'm the image of my pa,

At everything I see, I laugh—ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

—*Catnach Ballad*.

**Jolly, by jolly!** (American), an interjection. Possibly a modification of *gorry!* made by French Canadians in association with *joli*.

I once knew an Indian named Tomah. His friends made Tomah or Thomas into a beaver by adding *quah* to it. Tomaquah, the Beaver, had but one oath, it was *by Jolly!* What deity in the Algonkin or Kanuck mythology *Jolly* represented, I did not inquire. It occurred to me one day that *Jolly* would have made a good tutelary saint for Mark Tapley. While we were ornamenting birch boxes, I explained the idea at full length to my friend. He listened gravely, and as it dawned upon him, interjected approvingly *by Jolly!*  
—*C. G. Leland: Algonkin Notes*.

**Jolly, to** (thieves), to impose upon, to act as an accomplice or abettor. Now common, with the meaning to speak up for.

Of course every "school coach" has one of the most wonderful bowlers or batsmen ever seen. If he did not say so he would not do his duty, and he is bound *to jolly* for his own side.—*Bailey's Monthly Magazine*.

(Popular), *to jolly* a person is to "chaff" or "get at" him, or to hold him in ridicule. (Acrobats, &c.), refers to the act of a friend, a confederate in the crowd, who puts in a good show of money when the hat goes round, which is returned to him afterwards.

**Jolly, to chuck a** (cheap Jack), to praise another's goods, so as to entice the bystanders into buying.

**Jomer** (popular and thieves), a mistress, a sweetheart; literally a kiss, either from the gypsy *chumer*, a kiss, or the Yiddish *joma*.

**Jonnuk** (shows, &c.), to be fair, to share equally.

**Jonger** (gypsy), to awake.

**Josey, to** (American), to go, hasten on. Possibly suggested by the Jewish slang *jozeh*, to go out, go forth, or from the gypsy *jāsa*, *i.e.*, go hurry.

"Hey, get along, Jim along *jozey!*  
Hey, get along, Jim along *joe!*"

**Josh, to** (American), to chaff, to make fun of, to quiz. English provincial, *joskin*, a country clown; *jostle*, to cheat (Sussex). There is an apocryphal origin of the phrase that a miner having been told by a friend that Joshua once commanded the sun to stand still and it obeyed him, replied, "I guess you can't come *josh* over me!"



"Have you boys seen any Indians round?"

"No—they hadn't seen any."

"Nobody's been *joshing* you, I suppose?"

"Oh no! *Joshing* them! Not much."

—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

For some unknown reason a *josh* is supposed, like a David, to be always a sleepy person. On the New York Stock Exchange, says Medbury in "Men and Mysteries of Wall Street" (cited by Bartlett), if a member drops asleep, "*Josh! josh!*" comes roaring from a dozen lungs, and the broker is awakened by the cry. Thackeray seems to have associated *josh* with fatness and dulness in his *Josh Sedley*. Possibly the Chinese *Josh*, or Buddha, who is the incarnation of stoutness and tranquillity, suggested the word.

**Joskin.** Generally used to denote a dull rustic or greenhorn. It would seem, however, to be derived from the Yiddish or German-Hebrew *joschen*, to sleep, sleepy (*i.e.*, stupid), or from *joschen*, old; *ein joschenisch*, an old man.

**Josser** (popular), a synonym for a "prosser" or sponge. A simpleton, a "flat."

There is a *josser's* land,

Far, far away!

Where a drink they never stand,

Far, far away!

Termed Prosser's Avenue,

Where of Pros' you meet a few.

Hundreds could much better do,

Far, far away!

Far away! Far away!

—*Catnach Broadside.*

Probably from "joskin," a lout or countryman. (Australian popular), a priest, the Chinese temples being called "joss-houses" or "josses." Australian slang designated those who ministered in them *jossers*, and then extended this term it had created to mean ministers of any religion.

The reverend *josser* . . . kept his fist in Foley fashion hammering the pulpit.  
—*Newspaper.*

**Joss-house** (pidgin), an idol temple. *Vide* JOSS.

One tim Wang he makee tavel,  
Makee stop one night in *joss-house*,  
He go sleepy, by'mby wake  
In-i-side all-samee *joss-house*.

—*Wang the Snob.*

Long side he *joss-house*  
Stop one old mandalin.

—*The Rebel Pig.*

**Joss, josh** (pidgin), God, a god, an idol. This, say the authors of "Hobson-Jobson," is a corruption of the Portuguese *Deos*, God, first taken up in the pidgin language of the Chinese ports from the Portuguese, and then adopted from that jargon by Europeans as if they had got hold of a Chinese word. "I know but little of their religion," wrote Bockyer in 1711, "more than that every man has a small *joss*, or god, in his own house."

He olo fáta (father) still as mouse,  
He chin-chin *joss* top-sidee house,  
Allo tim he make *joss*-pidgin,  
Wat you fan-kwei cally 'ligion.

—*Mary Coe.*

**Joss - pidgin - man, joss - house - man** (pidgin). "Thus also in pidgin, *joss-house-man*, or *joss-pidgin-man*, is a priest or a missionary" ("Hobson-Jobson," p. 354).

Piggy keepe glowin (growing)

Fatteler an' fatteler,

Neva such a piggy

Since pigs began,

*Joss-man* he smilee

An' talk "you be one flatteler,"

When dey talkey pig look all-samee like  
he *joss-pidgin-man*.

—*The Rebel Pig*.

**Jostick, joss-stick** (pidgin), stick of fragrant powdered woods, combined with a little gum, used by Chinese as incense in their temples. The ingredients for the powder are the *putchok*, a sweet-smelling root from the Himalayas, and sandalwood.

An' Maly answer he lequest,

"My love Chinee joss-pidgin best,

My love Kwan-yin wit' chilo neat

An' *joss-stick* smellum muchee sweet."

—*Mary Coe*.

**Jounce, to** (American), to indent, impress upon, hit severely and suddenly.

Who was followed shortly after by a most unhappy tramp,

Upon whose features poverty had *jounced*  
her iron stamp.

—*The Ballad of Charity*.

*Jounced*, smitten, enamoured.

**Journey** (turf). The sense in which this word is used on the turf seems rather derived from the French *journée* than from the English *journey*. "It is not his *journey*," means "it is not his day."

**Journeyman soul-saver** (popular), a Scripture-reader; one of the subordinate staff of the garrison chaplains or other religious minister who is only a *journeyman* or casual performer.

**Jower** (American), a negro expression for "jaw," talking, and quarrelling.

Wunst erpon a time de creeters spate an' *jower* so much mungst deysefs, and hab so many onpleasan'nesses dat dey 'clude ter 'leck er Jedge ter 'cide all dish yer bickyin' (bickering) an' rucksuin' fer dem.—*De Lektion fer Jedge*.

**Jowl-sucking** (popular), kissing.

**J.P.**, Justice of the Peace. Vulgarly a Joe Poke, or a Harmanbeck in old slang.

**Juba, Cudjo, Quashee, Jumbo, &c.** (American). There are seven of these names in all given to negroes. The reason why they were once so common is that in the countries near the Guinea coast every negro bears the name of the day of the week on which he was born. King Coffee of Dahomey, as he was called, was really Cuffee. He was, in full, Cuffee Calcalli. It was, doubtless, some knowledge of this fact which induced Defoe to christen Robinson Crusoe's man Friday as he did.

"*Juba* is a negro dance consisting in keeping time by striking the feet on the floor, and clapping the hands on the legs to the music of the banjo" (Bartlett).;

Quassia is so called from a negro named *Quashee*, who first made it known to white men. The French have the name "Bamboula" (from a dance) for a negro.

**Jubilee**, a new term for the behind, invented by the staff of the *Sporting Times* or *Bird o' Freedom*.

Young Savile Civility had bought the thing the day before, a beastly toy, made to look like a penny roll, with a mouse on a wire spring inside. The laugh was all on his side till he felt his daddy's old slipper beating on his *jubilee* with the rhythmic precision of the waves upon the wild sea-shore.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Juckel, joakel, jucko** (gypsy), a dog. Evidently from jackal. When the gypsies came to Europe, they gave the names of animals to which they were accustomed to those resembling them. Thus they called a swan a *sakkū* or pelican, and an elephant is in their language a *boro nākengro gry*, a large-nosed horse. It is remarkable that the gypsies did not take a Hindu word in this instance.

"Jackal is not apparently Anglo-Indian, being taken from the Turkish *chakāl*. But the Persian *shagāl* is close, and the Sanskrit *srigāla*, the howler, is probably the first form. The common Hindu word is *gidar*" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Judge and jury** (tailors), sham trials for offences real or imaginary, having but one object in view—beer.

**Judge**, the (American cadets), the man who is the most popular with his fellow cadets.

**Judy** (American), a simpleton, silly, donkey, a fool.

The commonly common council yesterday had a bowl of punch down at the Island, and they all made *Judies* of themselves—as usual. The Doctor was present, and the Chief of Police, with whose aid they raised the devil, so that none of the *dramatis persone* were wanting.—*Philadelphia Sunday Paper*.

It was said of a man who was a convert to Judaism, that Punch and Judyism would be more in his line; but it is doubtful whether these words indicate the origin of the term. As it seems to be New York by birth, it is possible that it owes something to the Dutch *jool*, which means quite the same thing.

**Jug** (old), a term of contempt applied to a woman.

Hark ye, don't you marry that ill-mannered *jug*.—*Centlivre: Platonic Lady*.

(Common), a simpleton, a prison; a contraction of stone *jug*.

Don't you fancy the "Hunemployed" bun-kum has nobbled me; not such a mug! And as for O'Brien and his breeches, I'm glad the fool's fairly in *jug*.

No, no, law and horder's my motter, but wen a spree's on 'Arry's there;

And I thought, like a lot of the swells, I should find one that day in the Square.

—*Punch*.

To *jug* a person, to imprison him. The writer remembers a joke, in connection with

this expression, made by a foreign gentleman in the presence of Stuart Mill, who was then seeking to bring Governor Eyre to justice for his share in the Jamaica massacre. "To *jug* your hare," he said, "you must first catch him."

**Juggins** (sporting), an aspirant, usually young, and always more largely provided with money than with brains. The lawful and longed-for prey of the turf sharper.

I never lured a *juggins* on  
To pigeon or billiard match.

—*Sporting Times*.

The appellation, which is of recent origin, is never regarded as complimentary. In common use, with the meaning of simpleton, fool; a form of *jug*.

"Why don't he get the policeman," asked Peter, "who is standing there, to help him?"

"Because he is standing on the sovereign, you *juggins*."

And a lifelong friendship was again disturbed.—*Sporting Times*.

That's a motion, old man, you may carry,  
When Toffdom and Gladstone jine hands,  
And you may make a fair *juggins* of Harry.

—*Punch*.

This term is also used in America.

I'm not such a *juggins* as I look, my friends,

Though I may be soft and balmy;

They tell me I'm a goose, and all my tiles are loose,

But there's bigger fools than me in the army.

—*Broadside Ballad*.

**Jug loops** (popular), explained by quotation.

Even the hair and whiskers of the cosmougers, like that of more civilised folk, used to be governed by fashion. Sometimes *jug loops* (the hair brought straight on to the temples, and turned under) would be the rage, another season "terrier crop" would be the style.—*Greenwood: The Little Raganuffins*.

**Jūkalo, jūcko** (gypsy), a dog.

**Jumbaree** (theatrical) jewellery.

**Jump** (thieves), a window. *Vide* BACK-JUMP. Used also in America and Australia.

**Jump down** (Canadian), the confines of civilisation. The idea involved is well put in the following quotation.

We started for Brandon in the first train that would carry passengers to that new city, which in the September of 1881 was what is colonially known as the *jump down*, that is, the last place that is in course of erection on the outskirts of what is called civilised life, and upon leaving which you at once *jump down* into the open gulf of unsettledom.—*A. Staveley Hill: From Home to Home*.

**Jumped-up** (popular), conceited, arrogant (Hotten).

**Jumper** (popular), short smock-frock worn by labourers, navvies, &c. Also a short external duck-frock worn by sail-makers, artificers, and riggers to preserve the clothing beneath. (American), a rude sleigh made of saplings, or rough poles, with the ends turned up. They cost very little, but are very useful.

(Military), white canvas frock worn by the men at gun-drill. Also patrol jacket worn by gunners.

**Jumpers** (American thieves), men that rob houses by entering windows.

**Jumping a claim** (American), obtaining anything by fraud or stratagem. Originally a Western expression, signifying an attempt to oust a squatter or settler on new country, such having by law and custom a first claim on the land. It has now come into general use.

**Jumping Moses!** (popular), an exclamation, probably of American origin.

**Jumping off** (turf), one of the earliest and most important accomplishments with which a two-year-old can be indoctrinated. In these days of short distance races, a horse which has not been taught to "jump off," *i.e.*, to begin at a high rate of speed, has but a poor chance with those properly instructed in the art. Therefore, as soon as a colt's education has so far progressed that he has learnt to obey the touch of the rider's hand as to walking, trotting, or cantering, his lessons in *jumping off* begin. He soon learns how to use his muscles for a sudden spring, and becomes as quick on his legs as a cat.

**Jumping off place** (American), the end of the world. From

an old story of a man who travelled till he came to a precipice which bounded the world.

**Jumping over the fat pot** (theatrical), a stipulation made in the days gone by, that all engaged should assist (as the music in Macbeth, Pizarro, Rob Roy, Dance in Honeymoon, God save the Queen, &c.) in the old-fashioned pantomime Man in the Moon (now called the Shadow Pantomime). When gas even was not convenient (Richardson's show), the light was got by a large flame of burning fat, behind the sheet, and all, each and every one, had to contribute his share of the work, and many a time the awkward, spiteful, or half-drunken have knocked it over, not jumping high enough, and so finished the performance.

**Jumping up** (tailors), getting the best of one, or the reverse.

**Jump off** (American). This phrase is thus explained.

Now and again the broad stem of a fallen giant gives you 150 feet of splendid wooden road; but arrived at the end, you find you have been gradually ascending and now stand on what the Americans would call a *jump off*, with a mass of brush below you, hiding in all probability a collection of lop, or a pitfall which, coming at the bottom of such a jump, would end your ramble for that day.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot.*

**Jumps** (popular), to have the *jumps*, the delirium tremens; also used in the sense of a craze, as "He's got the Jubilee

*jumps*," he's gone crazed about the Jubilee.

"Now then, first boy, tell me what beer is made from."

"Hops."

"How do you know that?"

"'Cos it gives you the *jumps*."

He went down to the bottom of the class, but there is a bright future before him, nevertheless.—*Sporting Times*.

**Jump the game, to** (American).

In gambling or poker slang to raid a gambling den by the police (C. Leland Harrison's MS. Collection of Americanisms).

**Jump, to, to cheat, to steal.** This

word is used in England, but is more common in the United States. During the great civil war it obtained great currency in connection with the impudent frauds of the mercenary adventurers—mostly newly-arrived Irish immigrants—who enlisted in the Federal armies for the conquest of the South, and received large sums as bounty-money, varying from two hundred and fifty to a thousand dollars, according to the needs of the State, and deserted within a few days after receiving it, and played the same game in a distant city, sometimes repeating the process as many as half-a-dozen or a dozen times. These evaders were called "bounty jumpers." To *jump* a claim, in the partially-settled districts of the great West, is to fraudulently attempt to dispossess a squatter who has

the right of occupancy from having first settled upon the land.

One morning his rich "claim," of which the fame had spread, was *jumped*—two men had literally jumped into his pit, and he found them there when he came.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

The word was used by Shakespeare in the famous passage wherein Macbeth communes with himself on the expediency of murdering Duncan (*Macbeth*, Act i., sc. 7).

"If the assassination

Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,

With his surcease, success; that but this blow

Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,—

We'd *jump* the life to come."

The word is still used by the lowest classes in London, in America, and Australia, among whom "to *jump* a crib" signifies to rob a house; and "to *jump* a bloke" signifies either to cheat him, violently plunder him, ill-treat, or seize.

Anyhow, Doe Gilpin, the marshal, *jumped* him. I was right there when they met.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

"Sauter" is used in French in the same sense—"faire le saut d'une chose, est voler, ou escamoter une chose." (Popular), to *jump*, to copulate. In French *sauter*.

(Cape settlers), to *jump*, to steal. An English officer camping out was told to take care

they did not *jump* his candlestick. (Australian popular), to supplant in, to take. The difference between *jump* and "shake" is that "shake" implies stealing, and *jump* does not. A thief "shakes" your watch; but if you take a seat in a railway-carriage, or on a coach that is engaged by some one else, you are only *jumping* it. It was a joke against a crustacean bachelor, an editor of a well-known journal in a Murray township, that he had *jumped* a baby, the fact being that in the year of the great flood a baby, alive and kicking, and enshrined in a gin-case, had been deposited by the waters on the verandah-roof just under his bedroom window.

(Medical), to try a dangerous medicine.

**Jump-up-behind, to** (common), to endorse an accommodation bill (Hotten).

**Junk dealer** (American), one who sells marine and old stores.

B. M. Koppler, a *junk dealer*, was arrested by Officer Rice yesterday, charged with stealing lead-pipe.—*St. Louis Republican*.

**Junketting** (nautical), good cheer and jollification; from a provincialism.

**Junkit, to** (Winchester College), to rejoice over. "*Junkit* over

you" is not a very charitable way of saying, I would not be in your place. *Junkit* is from a provincialism meaning a merry-making.

**Juries** (costermongers), assertions, professions. "We deals fair to all that's fair to us—and that's more than many a tradesman does, for all their *juries*."

**Jurk, jark** (old cant), a seal. Still current among thieves in America.

**Just what you're doing** (American), a peculiar expression, often used in conversation, meaning that the subject in hand is of importance. "When you have a horse like that in hand you can't attend to anything else but *just what you're doing*." This was accidentally overheard at the Langham Hotel, London.

Put all your dynamite into *just what you're a doing*, whatever you do, and you'll do!—*Washington Courier*.

**Jūva**, commonly *juvo* (gypsy), a wife, woman. Properly a young woman (Persian *jūva*).

**Juwaub** (Anglo-Indian), a refusal, literally in Hindostanian answer. If a gentleman proposes to a lady, and is refused, he is said to be *juwaubed*.





**KADY.** Vide **CADY.**

If you want to buy a *kady* in Paris, you must go to modes.—*Sporting Times.*

**Kaffir** (popular and Yiddish), a prostitute's bully. Yiddish and Arabic, *kafir*, an infidel, a country boor.

**Kanaka** (colonial), explained by quotation.

The *kanaka* is a chocolate-complexioned importation from the South Sea Islands, sometimes equitably hired, fairly treated and paid, and at the expiration of the contract duly sent back to his or her native country.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Kana-man** (pidgin), cannon-man, *i.e.*, artilleryist.

*Kanamán*, he gun go bangy,  
Some get shootee, some be hangy.  
Many lebel head get choppy,  
Samee garden-man cut poppy.  
Empelor hab got de day,  
Allo Tai-ping lunny way.

—*Ah-Fun.*

**Kanits** (back slang), a stink.

**Kanitseeno** (back slang), a stinking one.

**Karibat** (Anglo-Indian), food, literally rice and curry.

**Karimption** (American), a party, a set of people, a crowd, implying unity, relationship, or nationality. As *ption* occurs as postfix to other words, *e.g.*, "gumption," "conniption," it may have been added in this case to the German-Hebrew word *karim* or *krauwin* (plural), relations, or the related.

A whole *karimption* of Dutch emigrants were landed here yesterday.—*Bartlett: Cairo (Illinois) Times.*

**Kate** (American thieves), a smart, brazen-faced girl or woman.  
*Kat*, Dutch slang, a bad woman.

**Katey** (American thieves), a pick-lock.

**K.D.** (printers), abbreviation of the words *keep dark*, *i.e.*, "don't say anything about it."

**Keel-hauling** (common), a scolding, accompanied by personal chastisement. From the old nautical custom of punishing offenders by throwing them overboard with a rope attached, and hauling them up from under the ship's keel.

Not a blessed mag! Hes Sall Grabham been a *keel-hauling* of yer agen?—*Savage London.*

**Keel over, to** (popular). People are said to *keel over* when by some misfortune or other cause they come to grief in their undertakings or plans, as of a vessel "keel up." "To go up the spout," "to be dead broke," "to be stumped," are some of the innumerable synonymous expressions for the same idea. The expression is common in America.

He goes swarming along like the devil,  
With a cut-water o'er the bay;  
But though now he is perfectly level,  
You'll see him *keel over* some day.  
—*Song of a Swell.*

**Keg** (American), capacity to hold stomach.



I met him going along with his head down, like he was drunk. We'd been having a time, and my *keg* was pretty full too.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Keen** (American cadet), a humorous story, a joke.

**Keen on** (common), intent on, having great liking for, being in love with.

**Keep a hotel, to** (American), a phrase intimating administrative capacity. It is almost universally expressed in the negative, "He can't *keep a hotel*." The origin of it was as follows. About twenty-five years ago a man named Lynch, banjo performer in a negro minstrel troupe, lost his overcoat in a hotel in Vicksburg, Mississippi. As the landlord refused to pay him for it, he revenged himself for a long time after by a humorous dialogue in which the landlord was mentioned, and all his minor good qualities were faithfully enumerated, but which were neutralised by the other interlocutor, who drawled out, "Ya-as—but he ca-ant *keep a ho-tel!*" The expression is still current.

**Keep a pig, to** (Oxford), to have a lodger. A man whose rooms contain two bedchambers has sometimes, when his college is full, to allow the use of one of them to a freshman, who is called under these circumstances a "pig." The original

occupier is then said to *keep a pig* (Hotten).

**Keep cave, to** (Eton), explained by quotation.

Crib-fagging required two lower boys, for whilst one sat and read, another had to mount guard in the passage or on the staircase, to *keep cave*, that is, to give warning by a whistle if he should descry our tutor on the prowl.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

*Cave* is of course the Latin word.

**Keep dark, to** (English and American). *Vide* DARK.

**Keep sloom** (tailors), keep quiet (stockcutter's expression).

**Keep that dry** (American), keep that concealed, secret.

But don't let it enter into your heart. Never let them get a chance at your sentiment; *keep that dry*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Keep your eyes skinned** (West American), keep your eyes open, be watchful.

If you have any business to attend to, you'd best go right along and do it. *Keep your eyes skinned*, of course, but don't stay home.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

The English in the island cast in their lot with sugar, and if sugar is depressed they lose heart. Americans *keep their eyes skinned*, as they call it, to look out for other openings.—*J. A. Froude: The English in the West Indies.*

**Keep your hair on.** *Vide* HAIR.

**Keep your pecker up** (common), do not lose heart. *Pecker* is the

mouth. From *pecker*, a bird's bill.

Each one is carefully guarded to the door by a policeman, and a voice may be heard crying out, *Keep your pecker up*, George, or 'Arry.—*Diprose: London Life*.

**Keep your weather eye lifting** (nautical), keep a sharp look-out.

**Keffel** (American thieves), a horse. From the German *keppel*.

**Kelter** (thieves), money. Probably from *gelt*. *Vide* GILT.

**Kemesa**. *Vide* CAMESA.

**Ken** (thieves), a place, house.

Nancy shall go to the *ken*, and fetch it to make all sure.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Also a bed.

Trim a *ken* for the gentry cove.—*Disraeli: Venetia*.

From *khana*, *khan*, gypsy and Oriental. This word generally has a prefix, as "boozing-*ken*," "speel-*ken*," &c.

**Ken-cracker**, or **ken-miller** (thieves), a housebreaker.

**Kennedy** (St. Giles), a blow on the head inflicted with a poker, supposed to be derived from the name of a man who was killed in that manner, in an encounter among Irish roughs in one of the slums of London. Compare the expressions derived from proper names: to "burke," to "boycott," and the French "watrinisher" (*vide* Barrère's "Argot and Slang").

**Kennurd** (back slang), drunk.

**Kent rag** (popular), a cotton handkerchief.

**Kerb-stone broker** (common), an outsider, unofficial stockbroker.

**Kerflop** (American), another form of "kerslap, kesouse, keslosh, keswosh, kewosh, keswollop," and similar onomatopoeic words expressive of the falling of stones or the jumping of frogs into water.

It was a treat to hear him sling it blindly around, prefixing adjective after adjective to it as he did so, until with the accumulated weight and impulse, he at last brought the whole tautological string down *kerflop*, full and fairly, upon the devoted crown of his auditor.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Kerr'b to**, (tinker), to hit, strike, punch.

My name is Barney MacAfee,  
With my borers and jumpers (tinker's tools)  
down to my thee (thigh),  
An' it's forty miles I've come to *kerr'b* yer  
pee (punch your face).  
—*Tinker's Song*.

**Kerslap** (American), a word expressive of falling flat on the ground, straight onward, ahead.

Other people was sinful as they could be, but Shakers was all right. Shakers was all goin' *kerslap* to the Promist Land, and nobody wan't goin' to stand at the gate to bar 'em out, an if they did they'd git run over.—*Artemus Ward: The Shakers*.

**Kettle** (thieves), a watch; *red kettle*, gold watch.

Two *red kettles* a week will bring in about four pounds. This is better than getting three shillings a-day for slaving.—*Evening News*.

(Nautical), iron or ironclad vessels.

It is not generally known that the three torpedo cruisers . . . have been in the contractors' hands for the past ten months, and that all kinds of expedients have been resorted to. . . . The inexpressibly ludicrous plan of applying "poultices" to their *kettles* is now being tested.—*Society*.

**Kettledrum** (society), an afternoon tea-party.

**Kew** (back slang), a week.

**Khana, khan, connah** (Anglo-Indian), a place of residence, or store-room, entertainment. *Vide* BURRA KHANA.

There never was a *burra khana* given yet in Ind

Where some at the arrangement of the pairs were not chagrined.

—*Aleph Cheem: Lays of Ind.*

**Khubber** (Anglo-Indian), news, especially sporting news (Arabic, Persian, Hind., *khabar*).

There is *pucka* (good, real) *khubber* of a tiger this morning.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

**Kibosh** (English and Yiddish), nonsense, rubbish, or humbug.

Then he sez, "'Arry's always a Londoner." Shows 'Arry aint no bad judge.

"Wot the crokkerdile is to the Nile 'Arry is to the Thames." Well, that's fudge. That's a ink-slinger's try on at patter. Might jest as well call me a moke.

Try another, young man; this is *kibosh* purtending to pass for a joke.

—*Punch*.

"To put on the *kibosh*," to run down, slander, degrade. To put the *kibosh* on anything is latterly to put an effectual stop or end to it. In this sense it is apparently derived from the Yiddish *kabas, v.a., kabbasten*, to restrain, suppress, hold, put a stop to. In the common pronunciation the word is often sounded *kābash*.

**Kick** (popular and thieves), a pocket.

Our old friend . . . says they are ruinous to the *kick*.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

So I put on the hug, and then all in the dark,

I rifled his *kick* of his shiners so fine.

—*Greenwood: A Night in a Work-house*.

*Kick* is probably an abbreviation of *kick-pocket* (*vide* KICKS), like *sky-pocket*, short for sky-rocket. (Common), explained by quotation.

The *kick*, or sixpence, at a hint, From Demos is withdrawn in haste.

—*Funny Folks*.

In a *kick*, in a moment. (West American), a grudge.

I haven't got any *kick* against Don Juan. He has treated us like a gentleman.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Kickeraboo** (West Indies), a corruption of the expression to "kick the bucket." *Vide* BUCKET.

**Kicking at waist** (tailors), an unsightly fault at waist in a coat, "out of balance."

**Kicking for the boot** (tailors), asking for money.

**Kicking for trade** (tailors), applying for work.

**Kicking strap** (tailors), an elastic strap inside a habit skirt.

**Kicks, kicksters, kicksies** (popular and thieves), breeches, trousers. From a metaphor similar to that which gave the synonymous "hams," "trolley-wags."

**Kick the bucket, to.** *Vide* BUCKET.

**Kick the stuffing out of one, to** (American), to ill-treat a person, or to take the wind out of another's sails; to get the better of one.

I am informed that, judged by the standard of success, the "ideal" newspaper is the one that whoops its own side to the top of the pole and *kicks the stuffing out of* the other fellow.—*New York World*.

**Kick, to** (Australian popular), an abbreviation for "kick the bucket," or for "at his last kick."

**Kick, to have the** (sporting), to have luck. From a football phrase.

**Kick up** (common), ceremony, proceedings of a noisy nature.

Were not Her Majesty's subjects from all ends of the earth coming to see the show, and take part in the *kick up*?—*Punch*.

**Kick up a row, to** (common), to make or cause a disturbance.

Charley dined, took his pen and sign'd;  
Then Mob kicked over his throne from behind!

"Huzza! Huzza! we may scamper now!  
For here we've *kicked up* a jolly good row!"

—*Ingoldsbys Legends*.

**Kid** (popular, very common in London), a swell, a masher. A Londoner meeting another very smartly dressed, says, "What a *kid* we are," or the smartly dressed man might say, "Ain't I an awful *kid* to-day?" The "dude" and the "masher" are really well-dressed people, the *kid* is rather a smartly dressed person; also a policeman.

Every one of the urchins knows the School-board officer by instinct, and abhors him even more than their ancient terror, the bobby, copper, *kid*, or policeman.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places*.

*Kid*, cheese; *kid* hard, synonymous with "hard cheese," "hard lines," no luck; a child.

My eyes, what a row! Sally was asleep, the *kids* were asleep, slavery was asleep.—*Evening News*.

"Served his time to the trade," returned the Badger coolly; "been at it ever since he was a *kid*—so high."—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

(Popular and thieves), explained by quotation.

Now, one of these brother boys was well known for his *kid*, that is, gammon and devilry.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

Possibly from Anglo-Saxon *cydhan*, to declare, make known; the primary meaning of *kid* being a puffing speech, termed now "kidment," more probably

from "kidder," a huckster, the patter of a huckster, and "gammon" being considered synonymous; compare the German *höken*, to deceive, "gammon;" from *höken*, a huckster. Also deception, humbug.

I was not a little surprised, therefore, to hear one of them remark, in the unmistakable language of a Cockney of the slums, that, in his opinion, it was all *kid*.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Kidd or kid** (thieves), a swindler.  
*Vide* **KID**.

He at once listened to the jargon of the well-dressed *kidd*, who hastened to explain that not being a smoker himself he did not know what to do with the magnificent lot of cigars that had just been left him.—*Tit Bits*.

**Kiddily** (popular), fashionably.

**Kiddlewink** (popular), a small shop where are retailed the commodities of a village store. Originally a *kiddle-a-wink*, from the offer made, with a wink, to give you something out of the kiddle or kettle. In the West country, an ale-house. Also a woman of unsteady habits (Hotten).

**Kiddy** (popular and thieves), a boy.

So take a caution, my *kiddy*.—*Greenwood: The Little Raganuffins*.

**Kiddy-ken** (thieves), a house frequented by mere children, girls and boys. During the past two years the increase of profligacy among "kids" of both sexes has been very great. A house

recently broken up (1887) in London, was habitually visited by boys and girls; two of the former, who were very well dressed, and who appeared to be gentlemen's sons, were only eight and ten years of age, while the girls were of correspondingly tender years.

**Kidlet**, a boy or girl.

**Kidment** (popular), puffing speech of a Cheap Jack, or others. Humbug, nonsense, deceit, deception. *Vide* **KID**.

**Kidney** (Stock Exchange), a fractional part of one share. A corruption of a man's name Cadney, who is first known to have dealt under  $\frac{1}{32}$ .

**Kidney blow** (pugilistic), a blow planted in the short ribs, in the phraseology of the ring reporter. Often a backhander.

**Kid, no** (popular), no joke, seriously. For derivation *vide* **KID**.

Oh, right you are, chummie! I'm single, you bet, though I'm turned twenty-two,

And I've 'ad lots o' chances, I tell yer; fair 'ot 'uns, old man, and *no kid*.

—*Punch*.

**Kid on, to** (popular), to incite.

**Kid oneself, to** (popular), to fancy oneself, to be conceited of a thing. One talks of a man *kidding himself* on his moustache, or a woman *kidding herself* on her figure or her costume.

**Kid rig, or kid lay** (thieves), swindling, kidnapping, or robbing children.

**Kidsman** (thieves), one who trains boy thieves.

**Kid, to** (popular), to impose in any way, pretend. *Vide* KID.

Relating how he had *kid*ded the work-house authorities.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

They've turned the gas out, and are *kid*ding to play Nap just to make me think I've gone stone blind.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Turf), explained by quotation.

What do you mean by *kid*ding?—It is a difficult word to explain. If you have got a good horse, and allow him to tumble about just as he pleases, and allow the reins to hang loose, the public would say that he was doing his best, but others might not think so. That would be *kid*-ding. . . .

It all depends on the arms, then, as I understand it?—Not necessarily. It may depend upon the legs, and all sorts of other things.—*Standard.*

A *kid*ding horse, a shamming horse, one which pretends to be afraid, &c.

**Kil** (gypsy), to play on an instrument, properly *kel*.

The boshomgro *kils*, he *kils*,

The tani rakli gils, she gils.

Now shoon the Romany gilli!

*I.e.*, "The fiddler fiddles, the little girl sings. Now listen to the gypsy song!" *George Borrow: Lavengro.*

**Kill-cow** (popular), a great boaster.

**Kill-devil** (American), new rum. The rum known as "New Eng-

land," when new, is an appalling beverage.

**Kill, dressed to** (American). *Vide* DRESSED TO KILL.

**Killed** (tailors), hopelessly spoiled.

**Killock** (nautical), given by Webster as a United States term for small anchor, but used in England with the meaning of anchor. Also "mud-hook."

**Kilt** (Irish), well beaten.

**Kilter** (American). "Out of *kilter* or *keelter*," disordered, ill, out of repair. Dutch *keelting*, nausea, "provocation of the stomach;" *kelderziek*, crop-sick, &c. This is, however, a doubtful derivation. Possibly from to *kilt*, to tuck up; so that "out of *kilter*" would literally mean hanging loosely, hence disordered.

**Kinchen** (popular and thieves), a child. From the German *kindchen*.

**Kinchen morts** (thieves), little girls trained to prostitution.

**Kinchin cove** (old cant), a man who kidnaps children. Also a little man.

**Kinchins' lay** (thieves), explained by quotation.

The *kinchins*. . . is the young children that's sent on errands by their mothers, with sixpences and shillings; and the *lay* is just to take their money away—they've always got it ready in their hands.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Kincob** (Anglo-Indian), a term which is becoming well known in England for gold-brocade. Persian-Hindu, *kinkhwob*. Formerly called *khambā*, and known in the Middle Ages to Europe as *camocca*.

**Kinder** (American), as it were, in a manner, or after a fashion. *Kinder-sorter* (*i* pronounced as in *kind*), an old expression very common in New England.

I guess I *kinder* heard o' that before, but I'm like my old man; I never was good at rememberin' names.—*Boston Courier*.

The term is from an English provincialism meaning rather.

**Kindness** (popular), a favour in the way of enjoyment of the person granted by a woman to one of the other sex, or indeed, the other way. There is also a proverb of some standing—"After kissing comes greater *kindness*," and in this sense the word is still in vulgar acceptance. The French have the expression, "*avoir des bontés pour un homme*."

**Kingsman** (costermongers), explained by quotation.

It was the correct thing for the costermonger, whatever branch of industry he might pursue, to wear round his throat—bunchy, loosely tied, and elegantly careless—a very large, highly-coloured silk pocket-handkerchief. This the costermonger calls a *kingsman*.—*J. Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Kink** (American), a fancy, caprice, or crotchet.

The very newest *kink*, I take it, is a revival of the Louis XVI. fashion.—*Chicago Tribune*.

From an English provincialism. In Suffolk a rope is said to *kink* when it does not run out even from its coils.

**Kip** (popular and thieves), a bed. This is probably an abbreviation of *kipsy*, basket. French thieves call a bed *pagne*, a corruption of "panier," basket. *Kip* had formerly the significance of house of ill-fame, and to "tatter a *kip*" signified to wreck one.

**Kip house**, a tramps' or vagrants' lodging-house.

**Kipsy** (thieves), a basket.

"Wasn't there any clobber?" "Yes, there's a cartload." So he said: "Go and get a *kipsy* full of it, and we will guy home."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

This word is given as a recognised term by a dictionary of the first part of the eighteenth century. The form *kipe* is still used as a provincialism for an osier-basket to catch fish. It has been suggested that *kipsy* is from the Old English or Norman English *quipsure*, in which case *kipe* would only be an abbreviation of the primary *kipsy*. But again *kipe* is traceable to the Anglo-Saxon *eapan*, to catch. It must further be noted that *kipsy*, sometimes *kepsi*, is gypsy for basket and a willow. *Kipsi-kosh*, willow wood, of Indian origin.

**Kip**, to (popular and thieves), to sleep or lodge. *Vide* KIPSY.

**Kirkling** (thieves), housebreaking on Sunday evening by finding a house which has been left untenanted while the occupants are all at church (or kirk), or the servant left in charge enticed out.

**Kisky** (popular), drunk.

**Kisser** (popular), the mouth.

**Kisses** (Stock Exchange), Hotchkiss Ordnance Company Shares.

**Kissing-trap** (popular), the mouth.

The off-side of his *kissing-trap*  
Displays an ugly mark!  
—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Kiss-me-quick** (common), a small ladies' bonnet.

**Kiss**, to (billiards), said of balls in close contact.

**Kist o' whistles**, Scotch Presbyterian for organ.

**Kit** (popular), the whole *kit* of them, synonymous with the "whole gridiron," the "whole boiling," *i.e.*, all the party. (Old), a dancing-master. From the *kit* or small fiddle which he uses in his avocations.

**Kit and boodle** (American), the total or whole of anything, as the entire company. Bartlett suggests the German *beutel*, a purse, as the original source of

*boodle*, or "perhaps the old English *bottel*, a bundle." But as it is a New York word its origin is to be sought in the Dutch *boedel*, pronounced *boodle* (which see), meaning property, or anything inherited.

**Kitcheners** (thieves), thieves who congregate in places known as thieves' kitchens. Mr. Greenwood says that such meeting places for the dregs and outcasts of society—whose means of living is a mystery to every one but their intimate friends, and who are seldom seen abroad until the shades of evening have long since fallen—exist within three minutes' walk of the Strand and within two minutes' of Covent Garden—in Drury Lane in fact, or rather in some of the lanes and narrow thoroughfares leading out of that main thoroughfare into Great Queen Street.

**Kitchenite** (printers), a term of contempt for the hands that frequent the *kitchen* of the Compositors' Society house—usually those on the provident fund, that prefer the small relief given to honest labour. This term does not apply to the genuine unemployed, but only to the loafers.

**Kite** (popular), a fool; in French *buse*. (Common), fictitious commercial paper. To *kite* or fly a *kite*, to raise money on a fictitious bill.



Here's bills plenty—long bills and short bills; but even the *kites*, which I can fly as well as any man, won't raise the money for me now.—*Miss Edgeworth: Love and Law.*

Evidently from an allusion to a *kite*, formerly termed a paper *kite*. Flying the *kite* is metaphorically putting a bill in circulation. In America fancy stocks are called *kites*, and to *kite* or *skite* means roaming from place to place, going about restlessly.

We passed eberyting on de road—you ought to seen us *kilin'*,  
Golly! we had a gay old time when we went to Brighton.

—*American Song.*

*Kiting* has also the signification of going about and speculating wildly.

**Kitties** (military), the Scots Guards are so nicknamed.

The Duke of Cambridge has been playing havoc with the *kitties*, not the "kiddies," as *Vanity Fair* has it. "The *kitties*," we explain to those of our readers who do not dine with dukes, is slang for the Scots Guards.—*The Star.*

**K legs** (printers), a term of derision applied to a person with knocked-knees, or otherwise "shaky on the pins," owing to the legs being apart as in the lower portion of a capital K.

**Klep** (popular), a thief; to *klep*, to steal. From *kleptomania*, the meaning of which is now well known to all the lower classes who read the police news.

**Knacker** (common), an old horse, fit for the *knacker*.

**Knackers** (Stock Exchange), Harrison, Barber & Company Shares. (Butchers, &c.), the testicles, also "knuckers."

**Knapped an hot 'un** (prize ring), got a hard knock.

**Knapping-jigger** (old cant), a turnpike gate.

**Knap, to** (thieves), to steal. From to *knap*, to bite off, break short. Derived from the Dutch *knappen*, to bite, take, or catch hold of. (Popular), to catch, used in the phrase "Won't he *knap* it!" (Mountebanks and others), to *knap* the slap, to catch the slap of a lathe or board.

He got a board about the proper size, but too thick, and with it so belaboured the people on his concern that he laid some of them up, they not knowing how to *knap* the slap.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

(American), to *knap*, to arrest, corresponding to the English "nab."

**Knark** (old), a savage person. Now spelt *nark*, meaning an informer.

**Knat** (tailors), a difficult task, a tyrant, one not to be deceived, played with, or hoodwinked.

**Knife** (army), a sword.

**Knife-boards** (London slang), the long, narrow seats for passengers on the tops of omnibuses.

The antiquated *knife-board* has been all but abolished, and garden seats reign in its stead.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Knifish** (tailors), spiteful.

**Knob** or **nob** (popular), the head; one on the *knob*, a blow on the head.

**Knobstick** (popular), a phrase among workmen to designate one who takes work secretly at home, when the men are on strike, and accepts lower pay than the regulation price demanded by his fellows.

We need some measure calculated to completely restore prosperity to our industries, by means of a restrictive duty on the manufactured products of these *knobsticks*.—*Evening News*.

**Knock** (turf), "to take the *knock*," to lose more money to the book-makers than one can pay, and thus to be incapacitated from approaching the ring.

"I've had a bad week," or "I've copped the *knock*," or "it's all gone down on Friar's Balsam."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Knockabout** (theatrical), an actor who does tumbler's work.

Messrs. — are two of the smartest *knockabouts*.—*Fun*.

**Knock about the bub**, to (popular), to pass about the drink.

**Knock about**, to (common), to go, or saunter about.

**Knock down a cheque**, to (up-country Australian). "A system known as *knocking down one's cheque* prevails all over the unsettled parts of Australia. That is to say, a man with a

cheque, or a sum of money in his possession, hands it over to the publican, and calls for drinks for himself and his friends, until the publican tells him he has drunk out his cheque. Of course he never gets a tithe of his money's worth in any shape or way—indeed the kindest thing a publican can possibly do is to refuse him any more liquor at a very early stage of the proceedings, for cheques for enormous amounts are frequently 'knocked down' in this way. A quarter of the worth of them, if honestly drunk out in Bush liquor, would inevitably kill a whole regiment" (Finch Hatton)

When a shearer once determines, at the end of the season, to *knock down his cheque*, as the phrase goes, he does it in the most complete and thorough manner.—*The Graphic*.

**Knocked all of a heap** (popular), astonished, dumbfounded. The metaphor is that one is absolutely floored, knocked down in confusion by surprise.

**Knocked him bandy** (tailors), completely astounded him.

**Knocked into a cocked hat** (American and English). When a round or high hat had been smashed, it was said to have been knocked into the shape of the three-cornered or cocked one. *Vide* COCKED HAT.

There is a Yankee locution descriptive of a process which implies ruthless and

wholesale demolition and devastation, known as *knocking things into a cocked hat*. The French, from an architectural point of view, have *knocked El Djezzair into a cocked hat* as battered and shapeless as that of a parish beadle who has been maltreated by a mob of mutinous paupers.—*G. A. Sala: A Trip to Barbary*.

**Knocked out** (pugilistic), exhausted, beaten, "*knocked out of time*," which see.

Lyons, in the next round, fell down, and when he got up he seemed "pretty well *knocked out*."—*Evening News*.

(Turf), a horse is said to be *knocked out* in the betting when he is so persistently laid against that from short or comparatively short odds he retires to an outside place.

**Knocked out of time** (pugilistic), to be so thoroughly beaten as to be unable to stand up in the ring, or to keep time with his opponent, and receive a succession of new blows and bruises.

**Knocked up** (common), tired.

**Knock-em-down business** (popular), auctioneering.

**Knocker** (common), up to the *knocker*, completely.

I'm jolly, right up to the *knocker*.  
—*Punch*.

Also showily dressed or proficient.

**Knocker face** (common), an ugly face.

**Knocker out** (pugilistic), a redoubtable prize-fighter.

Mitchell laughed at the idea of the "terrible right" both before and after, as

well as during the progress of the fight, and that the celebrated *knocker out* employed it mainly as a means of stopping Mitchell's terrible left.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Knockers** (popular), small flat curls worn on the temples by thieves and costermongers. Called also "sixes."

**Knock in, to** (Oxford), to return to one's college after gate is closed.

**Knocking-out** (Oxford University). All visitors, on leaving a college after time, have to state in whose rooms they have been, that his gate-bill may be scored up for them. When a rackets party takes place, the visitors, or "out of college men," are generally supplied with a list of the names of the quietest men in college, so that the whereabouts of the party may not be betrayed (Hotten).

**Knocking-shop** (English and American), a house of ill-fame.

**Knock-me-down** (popular), strong ale.

**Knock one down, to** (American society), to introduce.

"*Knock me down* to that daisy," *i.e.*, "Introduce me to that fine girl."—*C. Lealand Harrison: MS. Americanisms*.

**Knock-outs**. Fully explained as follows in Diprose's "London Society." "The *knock-outs* are not peculiar to London, they abound everywhere, they are regular traders in one particular branch of merchandise, be it 'old books,' 'articles of vertu,'

china, plate, pictures, horses or houses. . . . They do not interfere with the sale, as is sometimes supposed. They let the general public bid as much as they please, and then is the opportunity for them to display their judgment. Knowing what the article is worth in the trade—which, if the property is valuable, will fetch more than the general public will give—they can outbid the last public bidder, and secure the property to themselves. They may be a band of six, ten, or twenty individuals present, who, after numerous bargains are secured, betake themselves to their favourite ‘public,’ and there settle, in the most business manner possible, who is to become the ultimate possessor by a ‘*knock-out* auction.’ The article, say a picture, is put up at the purchased price by any one party, acting as auctioneer, and the original cost of, say ten pounds, may terminate by bidding up to twenty or thirty. The amount above the cost is placed in a bowl to form a fund to be equally divided amongst all present. . . . Property bought in this manner from an original public bid of a small amount, has often reached to a hundred pounds.”

**Knock the spots off, to** (American). This was current in America as long ago as 1850. It means to surpass, confound, go backwards, beat.

After inviting their friends, they poleaxed the prize victims, cooked them as baked, boiled, and roast in their best style, and held a Jubilee banquet which *knocked spots off* anything of the kind ever held before.—*Modern Society.*

**Knock the stuffing, wadding, lining, filling, insides out, to** (American), to eviscerate, to empty, to knock daylight out of anybody.

**Knock, to** (popular), to make a great impression, to be irresistible.

Didn't he *knock* 'em! didn't he *knock* 'em!  
Awfully comical didn't he seem?

Didn't he *knock* 'em! didn't he *knock* 'em!  
Didn't he make the people scream?

—*Music Hall Song: Didn't he  
Knock 'em.*

“That *knocks* me,” that is too much for me.

**Knofka** (theatrical), a prostitute; also “*nofgur*,” which see.

**Knout** (public schools), a piece of wax on the end of a string, used as an instrument of chastisement by prefects on duty.

**Knowing blokes** (military). The term is applied in the army to individuals, found principally among the older soldiers, who appear to be continually suffering from chronic thirst, and who are constantly seeking to satisfy it at the expense of young soldiers.

The general in command . . . not unfrequently cautions the young soldiers particularly to “beware and not allow themselves to be influenced and led away by old soldiers with badges.” . . . Numbers of these *knowing blokes*, as they are called,

prove very apt teachers, and will not be found slow to try and inveigle some of the inexperienced into their "boosing schools."  
—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks.*

*Vide* BLOKE.

**Knowing cove** (popular), a well-informed person, one in the secret.

Dame Rumour had given the office to some of the *knowing coves*.—*Punch.*

*Vide* COVE.

**Know, in the (turf), to be in the know** is to have a knowledge of the secrets of some particular stable. Sometimes to be generally *au fait* in turf mysteries.

**Knowledge box** (popular), the head.

**Know one's way about, know one's way round, to** (used in Australia more than in England), to be capable, knowing; a metaphor suggested by the helplessness of the man who does not know his way; or perhaps by the facilities offered to one who knows his way round to an unguarded point, such as a private entrance, or a flank.

But grant he *knows his way about*,  
Or grant that he is silly,  
There cannot be the slightest doubt,  
Of Billy's faith in Billy.

—*H. Kendall: Billy Vickers.*

**Knows the ropes** (popular), is said of an old experienced workman, or any one who is well informed. Originally a sailors' phrase.

**Know the time of day, to** (popular and thieves), to be experienced, cunning.

The message must have found her, for a "dossy"-looking bounder,

Who appeared as if he *knew the time of day*,

Was the bearer of this answer, "If you want to see the dancer,

I can introduce you to her right away."

—*Sporting Times.*

**Know your book, to** (popular), to be correctly informed, to be right.

Ain't you glad sometimes to know,

A second thought you took

About a subject, upon which

You thought you *knew your book*.

—*Song: Ain't you glad you didn't.*

**Knuckle down, to** (schools), to kneel down, properly to submit to.

**Knuckled** (tailors), hand sewn.

**Knuckleduster** (common), originally American. A piece of metal with holes for the fingers which close over it, and which covers the knuckles. This instrument, while protecting the knuckles, adds force to a blow struck with it.

Struck by one of the fellows with a *knuckleduster*, M— was stunned for a moment, but he speedily recovered.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Also a heavy or gaudy ring.

**Knuckler** (thieves), a pickpocket.

The commons crowd around the Bar—

A rush—a hustle—merrily then

Begins the *knucklers'* war.

What are you thieves about?

—*Punch.*

**Knuckle, to** (thieves), to pick pockets.

**Knucks** (thieves), pickpockets, a contraction of "knucklers."

The *knucks* in quod did my schoolmen play.—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

**Kokum** (Australian prison), sham kindness.

**Koniacker, cogniac-er** (American thieves), a counterfeiter. Hence *kone*, or *cone*, money.

**Kootee** (Anglo-Indian), a house.

**Kootoo** or **kotow** (American), of Chinese origin, and signifying to bow down before. Misapplied, however, by many writers when used to denote flattery.

Consequently he has *kootood* and *sa-lamed* before every travelling scribbler or story-monger, fearful that he would be dismissed by them to the dunce's stool for some solecism in manner or pronunciation.—*New York Tribune*.

**Kop**, a lost (South African), a solitary hill.

**Kopper, copper** (popular), policeman, detective. *Vide* COP.

Père-la-Chaise vows that the treatment he received at the hands of the police was all owing to a dispute in the past, when the *kopper* had stood in with him, and he had lost.—*Sporting Times*.

**Kori, koro** (gypsy), a thorn. Also penis. Hindu *ker*, the *membrum virile*.

**Kosh** (common), a blow as from a stick or club. From the gypsy *lasht* or *kosh*, a stick. *Vide* COSH.

So the fellow said "Bah!" and Tobias said "Bosh!"

When he felt such a *kosh*

That he went over splosh  
All in his Sunday clothes.

—*The New Comic Songster*.

**Krop** (tailors), back slang for pork.

**Kubber** (Anglo-Indian), news.

**Kudize, to** (university), to praise. *Vide* KUDOS.

**Kudos** (common), a Greek word signifying praise. Originally used by university men, but now in vogue in society with the sense of fame, praise, honour.

Promptly did Gubbins, with hopes of *kudos*, if not of drinks, leap into the arena.—*Sporting Times*.

In theatrical circles it is said of a manager who produces a piece which is not a pecuniary success, that he has made little coin, but much *kudos*: "Un succès d'estime," as the French term this.

There is some *kudos*, as well as considerable profit, to be got by the manager who first stages a *matinée* properly.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Kushto, koshto** (gypsy), good. Hind.-Persian *kūsh*, pleasant; *kūsh-tipen*, goodness.

*Kushto pash kushto kerela ferridiro*.—*Romani Gudli, or Gypsy Stories*.  
*I.e.*, "Good with good makes better."

**Kutch**a (Anglo-Indian), bad. Properly a house built of mud.

**Kye** (costermongers), eighteen-pence.

END OF VOL. I.











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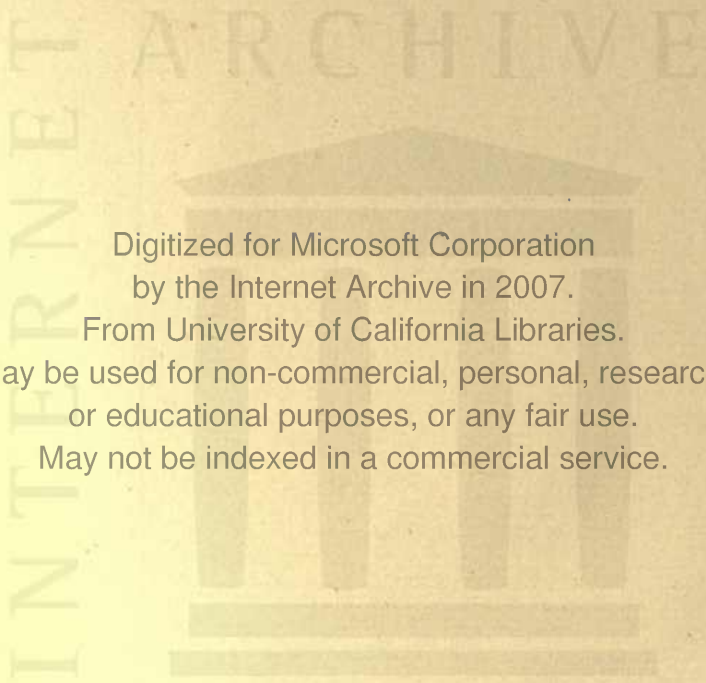


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A DICTIONARY  
OF  
SLANG, JARGON & CANT

THE HISTORY OF

A HISTORY

OF THE

A DICTIONARY  
OF  
SLANG, JARGON & CANT

EMBRACING

ENGLISH, AMERICAN, AND ANGLO-INDIAN SLANG,  
PIDGIN ENGLISH, TINKERS' JARGON  
AND OTHER IRREGULAR  
PHRASEOLOGY

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

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and their Language," &c.*

VOL. II. L—Z.

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MDCCCXC

A DICTIONARY

SLANG, JARGON & COLLOQUIALISM

BY

THEODORE B. SPENCER  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

# A DICTIONARY

OF

## SLANG, JARGON, AND CANT.



**LABELS** (American), postage stamps.

**Lace** (popular), spirits.

He got royally blind, showed a liking for *lace*.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Laced** (old cant), sugared, as *laced* coffee.

**Laced mutton**, used by Shakespeare (Two Gentlemen of Verona). *Vide* MUTTON.

**Lacing** (popular), a beating.

**Ladder** (common), "can't see a hole in a *ladder*," said of one who is intoxicated.

**Ladies' grog** (common), hot, strong, sweet, and plenty of it (Dickens).

**Ladies' Mile** (society), Rotten Row.

**Ladle**, to (theatrical), to speak the text in a pedantic and pretentious manner, *i.e.*, to "*ladle* it out."

**Lad of wax** (thieves), shoemaker.

**Ladroneship** (nautical), literally a pirate, but it is the usual epithet applied by the Chinese to a man-of-war (Admiral Smyth).

**Lady** (old cant), a misshapen woman.

**Lady-bird** (common), a specially nice or dainty kept mistress. (Popular), a wanton or lewd girl.

**Lady-caller** (American), explained by quotation.

A *lady-caller* is a cultivated and presentable woman nicely dressed, who takes a salary for distributing cards for fashionable folk, and, as we presume from the accomplishments demanded of her, even occasionally makes actual calls instead of the lady who employs her, and who, by a social fiction, is supposed to be calling.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Lady-fender** (popular), a lazy woman who gives herself airs. Chiefly used by servants in reference to a mistress who likes to sit by the fireside doing nothing.

A

VOL. II.

**Lady Green** (prison), the prison chaplain.

**Lag** (thieves), a prisoner, convict.  
*Vide TO LAG.*

Asking . . . what improvement there was in the grub at Brixton; was there going to be a war with Russia? If so, was it likely they would want the *lags* for soldiers.—*Evening News.*

An old *lag*, one who has been through penal servitude.

To start, I, a confirmed old *lag* myself, think I may say that there isn't a prison in London that I haven't seen the inside of.—*Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

(Westminster School), a fag.

Every morning the *lag* junior prepares and brings to hall the "list," which is the rota of duties for the day.—*Everyday Life in Our Public Schools.*

**Lage** (old cant), wash water, thin drink. Probably from the Gaelic and Irish *lag*, weak, feeble.

I bowse no *lage*, but a whole gage  
Of this I bowse to you.

—*Brome: A Jovial Crew.*

This term is still used by the low class of actors. It is curious to note that *laigue*, in old French argot, signifies water, from the Spanish *agua*, with the article prefixed. But there is no evidence that the English term is from the French *laigue*.

**Lager** (American). In German *lager* means a resting-place, a camp; from the root *legen*, lay a place. Hence a warehouse where goods lie, a stock or deposit. *Lager bier* in Germany

is stock beer, as one says stock ale in Anglo-Saxondom. It was in America that the word *lager* was most incorrectly applied, for the first time about 1847, in Philadelphia, to German beer, to distinguish it from American and English malt drinks. All German beer is not *lager*, any more than all English beer is Indian pale ale or "bitter."

Und is mein sabre sharp and true?

Und is mein war-horse goot?

To get one quart of *lager* bier,

I'd shpill a sea of bloot!

—*Ballads of Hans Breitmann.*

**Lage**, to (old cant), to wash. *Vide LAGE.*

**Lagger** (thieves), a sailor. Possibly from his way of walking. Also one who gives evidence; an informer. *Vide TO LAG.*

**Lagging** (thieves), a term of imprisonment or hard labour. *Vide TO LAG.*

Now the whole of the difference between passing a comfortable *lagging* and a hard *lagging*, is to give no trouble to the officer. I always make it a rule—don't trouble me and I'll not trouble you.—*Evening News.*

**Lagniappe** (Creole American), a trifling commission or discount.

All New Orleans grocers give to every purchaser a *lagniappe*. If child or servant buys five cents' worth, *lagniappe* is expected and given rigidly, as though so nominated in the bond. It may be sugar, or spice, or candy. If the purchaser demand quartee (two and a half cents' worth) rice and quartee beans, two *lagniappe* are given. There are groceries in the French quarter where the chief business of the supplemental small boy is the rolling of



brown paper sheets into cornucopias, and the filling of these horns of plenty with *lagniappe*.—*American Newspaper*.

This system is getting general now in London for grocers to give presents to all purchasers. The higher the purchase the greater the present. The practice is usual in France, and probably in most countries.

**Lags** (American), layers of leaves of tobacco. Dutch *laag*, a lay, a row layer.

**Lag, to** (thieves), formerly to transport or cause to be transported; now to send to penal servitude or to prison.

They'll ask no questions after him, fear they should be obliged to prosecute, and so get him *lagged*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

A day or two after Bill returns alone. The girl asks him where her sweetheart is. "He's *lagged*," says Bill.—*Sims: How the Poor Live*.

To *lag*, which, it is conjectured, originally came from "lagging," or tying the prisoners together, is curiously allied to *lagan*, the right of the lord to take goods cast up on the shore of his manor. Also goods *tied* to a buoy and then sunk in the sea. In gypsy and Hindu *lagar* or *lugarna* has the same meaning. Compare the French cant word "fagot," for a convict, *i.e.*, tied up like a bundle of sticks. Hotten suggests the derivation from the old Norse *lagda*, laid, laid by the leg. To *lag*, which formerly had also the meaning of to steal, seems to be con-

nected in the sense with the German *lagern*, to lay, to put away.

(Old cant), to *lag*, to void urine. A *lagging gage*, a chamber-pot. The expression is still common among showmen and strolling actors. *Vide* LAGE.

**Laid in lavender.** *Vide* LAVENDER.

**Laid out** (American), also English, but more extensively applied in "the States." Beaten, flattened out.

Mr. M— is horizontally *laid out*. Nevertheless, the war taxes must go.—*Boston Herald*.

**Laker.** Although applied as a term of derision to Wordsworth, Southey, and their famous friends, because they lived in the Lake country, the word had been in use from time immemorial in Yorkshire and Lancashire, in another sense, with reference to players. The dictionaries give "*Lake*, to play, to sport," hence *laker*, or derisively, "lazy *laker*." *Lake*, a north-country word for play, is from Danish *lege*, to play.

One of the delicate pleasures invented at the expense of the players in the last century, runs as follows. When the drum announced their advent in the rural districts of Yorkshire, the farmers' dames were wont to say—"Get the shirts off the hedge, wench, for here comes the *lakers*."

In the year 1750, Gentleman

Holman, a famous actor and author, and the recipient of high honours from his *Alma Mater* at Oxford, was fulfilling an engagement at Leeds. He had dressed at his hotel for Beverley, in "The Gamester," and was attired in his court suit, with powdered hair and bag, chapeau bras, diamond buckles, &c. On his way to the theatre, in a sedan chair, the porters were stopped on Leeds Bridge, and overhauled by a gang of roughs of the period, who demanded to know who was inside. On being informed that the gentleman in court dress was a play-actor, the ringleader said to his friends—"Oh! it's nobbut a *laker*; chuck him in 't' river, lads." Before they could carry out this laudable intention, the *laker* stepped out, confronted them with his rapier, which he slipped into them, right and left, sending the ruffians howling in every direction.

**La-li-loong** (pidgin-English), a thief, thieves.

The barber complained he had been called a *la-li-loong*, the pidgin-English for a thief.—*Celestial Empire*, 1876.

Just 'then he savvy *la-li-loong*,  
Same tief-man muchee bad,  
Hab wantchee kill one foleigna'  
An' catchee állo had.

—*Wang-ti*.

**Lāl-shraub** (Anglo-Indian). English-Hindu, *lāl-shrāb*, red wine. The name for claret in India. In English gypsy, *lāl* or *lulli-moll*.

**Lamb** (old), name given formerly to a dupe, now a "pigeon," "mug," or "juggins." (Popular), an elderly person who dresses and makes up like a young one. *Vide* LAMBS.

**Lamb and salad** (popular), to give one *lamb and salad*, to give a sound thrashing. Also *lamb-pie*, a flogging. From *lam*, *vide* LAMB.

**Lambasting** (popular), beating, thrashing. *Vide* TO LAMB.

**Lamb-down** (Australian up-country), to beat. *Vide* TO LAMB.

He saw the publican . . . narrating with coarse glee to a fellow-poisoner how he had copped the old — on the hop and *lambed him down* to rights.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Lamb, lam, to** (popular). *Vide* TO LAMB.

**Lambs** (common), the roughs at an election employed to create a disturbance and break up the meetings held by and in favour of an opposing candidate. Also roughs of any kind.

The bold Bendy, who until the past year or two was notorious as the foremost "bully boy" amongst the *lambs* of Nottingham.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps*.

**Lame duck**. *Vide* DUCK.

**Lammie Todd** (tailors), a phrase used by tailors, meaning "I would if I could."

**Lamm, to** (popular) to beat, strike. From the Icelandic *hlemma*, to

beat, bruise; Anglo-Saxon *lama*, Irish *lamh*, old Norse *lamr*, Hotten deriving it from the old Norse *lam*, hand. *Lam* is originally to strike with the hand. Compare *smack*, to slap, and Irish *smac*, the palm of the hand. This word is old English, and is now used only by slang-talking people.

Dauber, to beat, swindle, *lamme*.—*Coigrave*.

De vellens ash *lam* de Romans dill dey roon mit noses plue.

—Charles G. Leland: *Breitmann Ballads*.

But forty-nine more were wanted, and I was getting mad,

For I hadn't done what I wanted, which was, I'll now expound,

To *lamm* the ball to a certain and distant part of the ground.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

*Lamm* it on, lay it on, hit hard.

**Lammy** (thieves), a blanket. An allusion to lamb and wool.

**Lamp country** (military), walking out at night without money in one's pockets. The soldier's hours of recreation are generally after dark, when the lights are lit, and if he has no funds to defray entrance to places of amusement, or pay for refreshments at other houses of call, he has to be content with *lamp country*.

**Lamp-post** (common), a nickname for a tall lanky individual, much in vogue among schoolboys. A synonym is "sky-topper."

**Lampresado**, defined in the New Canting Dictionary as one who comes into company with but twopence in his pocket. An impostor, an informer.

**Lamps** (thieves and others), the eyes. The synonyms in French argot and Italian *furbesco* are *quinquets* and *lampante*. *Vide GIG-LAMPS*.

**Landed** (popular). A man is said to be *landed* when he has amassed a fortune large enough to keep him for the rest of his life.

(Thieves), to be *landed*, explained by quotation.

When I fell this time I had between four and five quid found on me, but they gave it me back, so I was *landed* (was all right).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Land-grabber** (common), farmer who rents a farm from which another has been evicted.

Oh, those dreadful Irish! Fiendish affair reported in *Banner*. Goose belonging to Nationalist deliberately allowed to wander about meadow rented by a *land-grabber*, and eat up grass. *Land-grabber's* horse consequently has to go short of green food, poor starved thing! The Coercion Bill must be pressed on at all hazards.—*Funny Folks*.

**Landlubber** (nautical), a useless long-shorer; a vagrant stroller. Applied by sailors to the mass of landsmen, especially those without employment (Admiral Smyth).

**Landsharks** (nautical), crimps, pettifogging attorneys, shop-mongers and the *canaille* in-

festing the slums of seaport towns (Admiral Smyth). Also lawyers.

**Land**, to (common), to hit, to place a blow, to fall.

And he *landed* the P. P. to rights, and he dodged his redoubtable digits,  
And Grimthorpe cried, Go for him, G. G. I  
—*Punch*.

To Mitchellise him till he couldn't hit half an ounce, or *land* within half a mile of a haystack.—*Punch*.

(Common), to *land a kick*, to bring one's foot in violent contact with a person's breech. Also "to hoof, hoof one's bum, to root," &c. (Popular), *landing it hot*, hitting hard; *land*, to strike.

Her fingers so lovely and taper, ah, yes,  
No hand e'er had fingers like those;  
But the way she has got of just clenching the lot,

And *landing me hot* on the nose!

—*Song: Poor Mr. Coppit*.

**Lane**, Harriet (military), preserved or tinned meat. A modern epithet on a ration now much used in campaigns, and obviously derived from the unfortunate girl *Harriet Lane*, who was murdered by Wainwright, and put by in a box with chloride of lime, which preserved instead of destroying the body.

**Lane**, red (popular), the throat.

**Lane**, the (legal). Chancery Lane is always spoken of by lawyers as *The Lane*. (Theatrical), a colloquial abbreviation among the

employés of Drury Lane for the theatre. (Popular and thieves), Petticoat Lane. (Thieves), *the Lane*, represented, in the slang of the criminal classes, Horse-monger Lane Gaol.

**Lanthorn**, dark (old cant), a servant or agent in a court who receives a bribe.

**Lan-tun** (pidgin), London. "Hab muchee man in *Lan-tun* town, but fion dat tim I know."

**Lap** (old cant), tea. (Popular), liquor, drink. *Lap* is a term invariably used in the ballet-girls' dressing-room for gin (Hotten).

**Lap ears** (American University), students of a religious turn of mind are so called; also donkeys.

**Lapland** (popular), the society of women, an expression derived from the female sex being called "cats."

**Lapper** (popular), a rare *lapper*, a hard drinker. (Thieves), drink.

**Laprog** (tinker), a goose or duck; a bird of any kind.

**Lap**, to (common), to drink. (American), this word still retains many old meanings among American thieves and gamblers, or has taken new ones, such as to pick up, to take, steal, wipe out, put out of sight, drink, and

buttermilk, which, like *lap*, is also a term for gin. A "*lap-tea*" is where there are so many guests that girls sit in one another's laps, or in those of the men, or where it is done for pleasure. A "*lap-ride*," where the same thing is done in a vehicle. "*To lap a girl*." "Do you let George *lap* you?" "No, we only sit sideways as yet." *To lap* the gutter, *vide* GUTTER.

**Lardy-da, lah-de-dah** (common), a word borrowed from the refrain of a song which was popular some twenty years ago. Applied to a fop or dandy.

At the bar, forming the central figure of a group otherwise composed of *lah-de-dah* youths (now known as imitation dudes), stood a short, stocky-built man of about thirty-five years of age.—*American Newspaper*.

**Lardy-dardy toffs** (popular), effeminate swells.

**Large blue kind, the** (American). This very eccentric expression, signifying magnitude and intensity, seems to have been suggested by blue bottle flies, which are larger and more disliked than any others. A particularly bad humbug or lie is sometimes described as being one of the *large blue kind*.

**Large order.** *Vide* ORDER.

**Largo, largey, largo** (*g* soft like *j*) (pidgin), much, great, magnanimous, loud. Expresses

magnitude or extent of all kinds.

"My *largo* man, my have catchee peace, my have catchee war."—*Points and Pickings of Information about China* (London, 1844).

**Lárkin** (tinkers), a girl. This is curious as indicating an affinity between the Hindustani *lárki*, a girl, and the gypsy *rakli*. (Anglo-Indian), a very strong spiced punch.

**Lark rig.** *Vide* RIG.

**Larks** (American thieves), boys who steal newspapers from doorsteps.

"Boy, why don't your father take a newspaper," said a man to a small *lark*, whom he had just found *larking* his morning *Tribune*.

"He generally does," was the reply, "but this mornin' he sent me to take one wherever I could snap it."—*Tribune*.

**Larky subaltern's coach, the** (military), a carriage which used to be attached nightly to a goods train, starting from the Nine Elms Station at 2.30 A.M. for Aldershot, put on for the convenience of military officers who had from various causes got benighted in London, and missed the ordinary train. *Larky*, as used here, is probably from the phrase, "up with the lark."

**Larn-pidgin** (pidgin), learn-pigeon; an apprentice, a boy admitted by favour of the upper servants to a house that he may learn English and domestic duties.

**Larrikin** (common), a rough, a wild fellow.

And yonder yelling fools contrive  
To lend some truth to Mammon's text.  
The laziest *larrikin* alive,  
With babbling tongue and brow perplex'd,  
Can help do that. —Punch.

Imported from Australia,  
where it is sometimes abbreviated to *lary*.

In your article on "Our *Larrikins*" of June 2nd, you invite an explanation of the origin of this Colonial synonym for "rough." If the common account be correct, it arose out of a misunderstanding. An Irishman, on being brought up for unruly behaviour before an Australian magistrate, excused himself by saying that he was only "larkin." Any one familiar with the peculiarities of the Irish brogue will easily realise how the two-syllabled participle was mistaken for a three-syllabled noun.—CELT in the *Spectator*.

**Lascar** (Anglo-Indian), originally meaning a soldier, "lashkari."  
It has now become a generally used term for a Malay sailor.

In the French army the term is applied to a bold, devil-may-care fellow.

**Lashins** (Irish), large quantities.

**Lashool** (tinker), nice. Irish, "lachool."

**Lass, to** (American, Western), to catch with the lasso, lariat, or reata.

It don't pay to have fellows blazing off their revolvers, and stampeding the cattle, and spurring their horses on the shoulders, and always going on a lape, and driving cattle at a lape too, and *lassing* steers by the fore feet on the trail, and throwing

'em head over heels, just for the satisfaction of hearing the thud they make when they fall.—F. Francis: *Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Last of the Barons'** (legal), a nickname given to the "Baron of Exchequer" last appointed, since afterwards the Court of Exchequer was done away with, and merged in that of Queen's Bench, and no more barons would therefore be appointed.

**Last run of shad, the** (American). To say that a man looks as if he had come in *the last run of shad*, is equivalent to declaring that he has a very thin, wretched, forlorn, or "played-out" appearance. To be "in the last of pea-time," signifies a hard-up and poverty-stricken condition.

**Latchpan** (popular), the lower lip.

**Late-play** (Westminster School), a half-holiday, or holiday beginning at noon.

**Lather, to** (popular), to beat, thrash.

My father is a barber,  
And is unkind to me,  
So I'd rather *lather* father,  
Than father *lather* me.

—Popular Song.

**Latty** (theatrical), a bed. *Vide* LETTY.

**Launch, to** (Winchester College), to pull a bed over a "man."

**Lavender-cove** (popular), a pawnbroker. So called because property is there laid up "in lavender."

**Lavender, in (turf)**, is said of a man or horse to denote that he is ill, unfit, out of the way.

Most people are tired of waiting for the Beaver, who was put down as certain to win one of the early spring handicaps, but so far has been *in lavender*.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Common), laid *in lavender*, put away, pawned, or left in lodging for debt. From the practice of placing lavender in drawers in which clothes are kept.

(Thieves), hidden from the police.

**Lawful time** (Winchester College), at the end of "log-time," or preparation on a "remedy" or holiday, the prefect on duty calls out *lawful time*, as an announcement that all may leave study.

**Lawn, the** (sporting), Ascot Lawn.

**Lay** (thieves and roughs), particular business, line of work, pursuit, enterprise.

Kept a leaving shop—a sort of unlicensed pawnbroker's, you know . . . that was his *lay* for years.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

A dodge, swindle.

To a constable he told the misadventure of the day,

But the man in blue responded, "It's a very common *lay*,

Did she talk about a child, sir?" Said the innocent, "She did."

"I thought so," said the officer—"but, bless you, that's her kid!"

—*Sporting Times*.

Alas, that writer kept it, too,  
Reminded me of debts long due,

Then lodged me safe in Holloway  
The victim of a heartless *lay*.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

On the *lay*, at work.

Dodger! Charley! It's time you were on the *lay*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

In America (north-east coast), a *lay* is a share in a venture.

(Tailors), a good *lay*, an economical method of cutting, or when a man is doing anything that will be beneficial to himself or others.

**Lay down the knife and fork**, to (common), to die.

**Layer.** *Vide TO LAY*.

**Lay for**, to (American), to lie in wait for, to ambush. Also "to lay by for."

There's a cat in the garden

*A layin for a rat,*

And a boy with a catapult

*A layin for the cat;*

The cat's name is Susan,

The boy's name is Jim;

And his father round the corner

Is a *layin by* for him.

—*American Ballad*.

**Lay it on**, to (common), to exaggerate.

The member who moved an amendment throwing responsibility upon the employé as well as the employer was told he was "*laying it on* too thick," and the amendment was defeated.—*Funny Folks*.

**Lay one out**, to (roughs and thieves), to kill one.

Several of the prisoners were with him. Galletly was saying, "I've *laid one out*" to the other prisoners. . . . Witness also saw the knife, and there was blood on it half way up the steel.—*Evening News*.

**Lay out** (American), a turn.  
 "It's my *lay out*," i.e., it's my turn.

"Boys, yer got me this time. They've called her 'Utella!' as near my name as they could get, and it's my *lay out*. What'll ye hev?"

The glasses clinked merrily, and Mr. Bill beamed with happiness.—*New York Star*.

**Lay over, to** (American), to defeat, excel, surpass. Probably derived from wrestling.

"Can you write?"

"Well, I've seed people could *lay me over*, thar."—*Mark Twain: A Tramp Abroad*.

"In scolding a blue jay can *lay over* anything human or divine."—*Mark Twain: A Tramp Abroad*.

**Lay them down, to** (thieves), to play cards.

**Lay, to** (turf), to bet for or against.

He overheard one noble penciller tell another ominously that "he could *lay* the favourite."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To *lay* the field, *vide* FIELD.  
 (Common), to *lay* one's shirt on a horse, to *lay* all one's money on a horse.

**Lead** (theatrical), the most important part in a play.

Miss —, who returned from abroad yesterday, has, we learn, refused to entertain an offer to play "the *lead*" in the old English comedies at the Strand Theatre. *Daily News*.

(Thieves), *lead*, or friendly *lead*, a collection made for one "in trouble."

I was landed without them getting me a *lead* (collection).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Lead or leader** (Australian mining slang), a vein of gold.

The *leader* is the vein or deposit of gold in an Australian gold mine: said always to run north and south, which if it be true is a phenomenon of magnetism. In size, form, and value, the precious metal within a certain area will present great diversities. Sometimes the *leader* from which the gold is presumably discharged could be identified if it were not that specimens of an entirely opposite character embedded in greenstone, sometimes combined both with greenstone and quartz, sometimes with quartz alone. Often it is as fine as flour, again it will range from "colours" to nuggets of several ounces. It may be worth only £2, 18s. per ounce: it may and does assay £3, 18s. and £4.—*Queenslander*.

**Leading juvenile** (theatrical), the expression explains itself.

Corresponds to the *jeune premier* of the French.

Hamlet is the "lead," Laertes the *leading juvenile*, and Horatio, though an excellent pal, is known as the walking gentleman.—*Globe*.

**Leafless tree** (old cant), the gal-lows.

Oh! there never was life like the robber's

—so

Jolly, and bold, and free;

And its end—why, a cheer from the crowd  
 below,

And a leap from a *leafless tree*!

—*Lord Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

**Lean** (printers), this is a metaphor used to indicate solid or bad paying work in contradistinction to "fat" or good work.

**Leanaway** (slangy Australian), one who is tipsy. The meta-



phor is of course from the drunkard's reeling.

**Leap the book** (common), a false marriage, or one which is illegal.

**Leary** (popular and thieves), wide-awake, knowing, wary. *Leary-bloke*, a knowing or artful man.

But mummery and slummy  
You must keep in your mind,  
For every day, mind what I say,  
Fresh fakements you will find.  
But stick to this while you can crawl,  
To stand till you're obliged to fall;  
And when you're wide-awake to all,  
You'll be a *leary* man.

—*The Leary Man.*

*Leary* is from *lear*, to learn, obsolete or provincial English.

On that sad book his shame and loss he *learned*.  
—*Spenser.*

**Leary cum Fitz** (theatrical), a vulgar, impudent minor theatre actor, is usually described as a regular *Leary cum Fitz*.

**Leather** (American thieves), a pocket-book.

He burst out into a grin, when the magistrate, who was up to his little game, suddenly asked him if he remembered how a certain elderly gentleman had been robbed of his pocket-book while going on board a steam ferry-boat. "Don't I just remember," he cried, "how we 'lifted' the old bloke's '*leather*.'"—*American Newspaper.*

(Football), the *leather*, the football.

**Leather-head** (Canadian), a swindler.

Now the Senator is only a *leather-head*, who made his pile by such and such a swindle, and the parson is a gospel-shark, or devil-dodger.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot.*

**Leather-hunting** (cricket), this term is sometimes used to mean fielding. A *leather-hunting* game is one in which there is much fielding to be done.

**Leather-necks** (naval), a term for soldiers; from their leather stock, which to a sailor, with his neck free of any hindrance, must appear such an uncomfortable appliance.

**Leathers** (popular), the ears, otherwise "lugs."

**Leather, to** (popular), to beat.

**Leaving shop** (thieves and others), an unlicensed pawnbroker's establishment.

**Led captain**, a fashionable sponger or "swell," who by artifice ingratiates himself into the favours of the master of the house, and lives at his table (Hotten).

**Leer** (old cant), a print, a newspaper; old English *lere*, to learn.

**Leet jury** (popular), explained by quotation.

The meddlesome fellows who had caused the disagreeable exposure were called a *leet jury*, whose business it was to pounce on evil-doers whenever they thought fit, once in the course of every month.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Left forepart** (tailors), the wife.

**Left-handed wife** (common), a mistress. *Left*, or sinister, is in all languages applied to that

which is doubtful or bad. In gypsy *bongo* means left-handed, crooked, or evil. Compare the French "mariage de la main gauche."

**Left, over the.** *Vide* OVER THE LEFT.

**Leg** (turf), abbreviation for black-leg, a bookmaker or ring-man.

**Leg-bail, to give** (common), to run away, or decamp from liability.

**Leggings** (popular), a name for stockings.

**Leg it, to** (popular), to run.

**Legs** (American cadet), a nickname given to a tall lanky man, one who is sparely and angularly built.

**Legs and arms** (tailors), beer without any "body" in it.

**Lel** (gypsy), to take, to arrest. Not uncommon among the lower orders in London. The writer has heard "Look out, or you'll get *lelled*," said by one young girl to another within a few steps of Regent Street. It is from the third person indicative present, *lela*; first person, *lava*, I take. This use of the third person for all the others is usual in *posh an' posh* (half and half), or corrupted Romany, and it occurs in Hindustani.

**Length** (theatrical), an arbitrary division of a part into so many

components, after this fashion. Hamlet is thirty-seven lengths, and seventeen lines. Each length is forty-two lines.

Actors do not learn their parts, they "study" them, and they measure each part by *lengths*.—*Globe*.

(Thieves), six months' imprisonment.

**Let her flicker** (American), said of any doubtful issue, the simile being that of a flame flickering in a draught of air, when it is doubtful whether it will be blown out or not. It may be remarked that in American slang there is more metaphor than in that of any other country.

"Well, Uncle, how do you stand on the question of prohibition?" he called to an old darkey on the market yesterday.

"Say, boss," slowly answered the old man, "does dat probishun hev anythin' to do wid watermillyons?"

"Oh, no."

"Doan' take any off or put any on?"

"No."

"Den I'll stay home on 'leckshun day an' *let 'er flicker*."

**Let her up! Let 'er up!** (American), stop there, be quiet for an instant, hear what I have to say. This agrees exactly with the Dutch *Let 'er op! Let 'er op wat ik se zeg!* "Mark what I say to ye."

**Let his marbles go with the monkey, to** (American), an eccentric phrase derived from a story of a boy whose marbles were carried off by a monkey.

But my sanguinary hearers—let 'em try it. Dey'll find dat Yankee Doodle ain't

de boy to luff his marbles go wid de monkey—not by a free (three) pint-jug full—for he's bound to go ahead and let 'er rip.—*Brudder Bones's Complete Entertainment.*

**Let in, to** (society), to cause to lose money by not very upright means; it is a common expression in society. *To let in* a friend is a low trick, and means to deceive, defraud, trick them.

It is their friends and acquaintances who are *let in* by them.—*Saturday Review.*

(American), to attack, beat, abuse.

"I *let in* to the coot about east, I can tell yer," remarked Jake. "I gave him my opinion of himself, and threw in a character, gratis, of all his relations, all the way down to his aunt's sisters."—*Fireplug Moses.*

**Let it slide** (American, of English origin), leave it to chance, leave it alone, do without it. The metaphor is of course that of watching a thing slip without attempting to save it.

**Let on, to** (English and American), to appear to know or to show any acquaintance with a subject with which one may be quite familiar.

Now, if I wanted to be one of those ponderous scientific people, and *let on* to prove what had occurred in the remote past, by what had occurred in a given time in the recent past, or what will occur in the far future by what has occurred in late years, what an opportunity is here! Geology never had such a chance, nor such exact data to argue from.—*Mark Twain.*

Also to admit, as, he never *let on* he knew me.

**Letter perfect** (theatrical), knowing one's part perfectly.

**Let the band play** (American), equivalent to calling out for anything to begin, to start anything up, commence. A common cry to an orator to begin, or an exhortation to a speaker, actor, or any other person to let himself out, or make an effort (C. Leland Harrison's MS. Collection of Americanisms).

In England it is common to say, when anything reaches a climax, "Then the band played."

Tableaux, and *the band played*.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Letting down, or out, tucks** (American), a phrase referring to making preparations, for example, in a building, with a view to future alterations. It is borrowed from the custom of making the trousers of rapidly growing boys or the dresses of girls with *tucks*, so that they may be let out or lengthened.

In England, *let down* easily, means not taking advantage, or being lenient with one in difficulty.

**Letty** (thieves), a bed; from the Italian *letto*. Used in the form "latty" by strolling actors, with whom the term originated.

**Let up** (Stock Exchange), a term to express the sudden disappearance of artificial causes of

depression in the money-market, thus causing money to become "tighter" and loans more difficult to obtain.

**Let up on**, to (American), to cease, to pause, rest, give over for a time.

You can't be mum—you cannot sing,  
You cannot always smile,  
You must *let up on* everything  
From time to time awhile.

—A Poem: Susan of Poughkeepsie.

**Levanter** (common), a card-sharper, or defaulting gambler, who makes himself scarce.  
*Vide TO LEVANT.*

No prelusive murmurs had run before this wild *levanter* of change.—*De Quincey.*

**Levant**, to (common), to go to the *Levant*, that is, to run away from one's creditors, to abscond; to throw or run a *levant*, to play or stake and leave without paying in case of loss.

Never mind that, man (having no money to stake), run a *levant* . . . but be circumspect about the man.—*Fielding: Tom Jones.*

To *levant*, run a *levant*, originated in a pun on the words *leave* (provincial *leve*), and *Levant*. Compare with the French "faire voile en *Levant*," to purloin or steal, and the Italian "andare in *Levante*, venire di *Levante*," to carry away, steal, which are respectively from a play on *lever* and *levare*, to raise, lift. These phrases belong to the numerous class of jocular expressions coined in the same way with allusions to some

locality, as to be off to *Bedfordshire* or Land of *Nod*, to feel sleepy; to go to *Peckham*, feel hungry, formerly *Hungarian*; those in bad circumstances are made to live in *Queer Street*, &c. In French we meet with punning phrases of the same class, "aller à *Niort* (nier)," to deny, the name of this town being suggested to the pedlars (who so much contributed to argot language) by the frequency of their visits to *Niort*, formerly famous for its fairs. "Aller à *Versailles* (verser)," to be upset; "aller à *Cachan* (se cacher)," to conceal oneself; "aller à *Rouen* (ruine)," to be ruined, a bankrupt; "voyager en *Cornouaille* (être cornard)," to be made a cuckold (same metaphor in Italian); "envoyer à *Mortagne* (mort)," to kill; "aller à *Patras* (ad patres)," to die, &c. In Italian, "andar in *Picardia*, a *Longone*, a *Fuligno*," to be hanged, &c.

**Level best** (American), when a man does the best he can, plainly, squarely, and fairly, not extravagantly, but by his average ability.

Let this be put upon his grave,  
He done his *level best*.

—*Newspaper Poems.*

Saying this he drew a wallet from the inner of his vest,  
And gave the tramp a dollar which it was his *level best*.

—*The Ballad of Charity.*

**Level-headed** (American), a man of plain, practical common-

- sense is said to be *level-headed*. The phrase has become universal within a few years.
- Levite** (clerical), a term sometimes used by benefited divines of humble brethren whom they hire. The origin is to be found in the story of Micah and the young man of Bethlehem-Judah in Judges xvii. 7-13.
- Levy** (Liverpool), a shilling. A term taken in all probability from the American *levy*, i.e., an abbreviation of elevenpenny bit, also commonly called a shilling. Hotten suggests that it is derived from *levy*, a term used among labourers for a sum of money advanced to a workman before he has earned it. There is a very great number of American terms current in Liverpool owing to its intimate commercial relations with New York.
- Libb, libbege** (old cant), a bed. "Mill the cull to his long *libb*," kill the man. From the Irish *leaba*.
- Liberties** (Eton), an immunity from all fagging for the first ten days.
- Liberty** (Eton School), the first six Oppidans, and the first six Oppidans in Fifth Form, who work with Sixth Form under the Head Master. (Nautical), *liberty-man*, a man on leave; *liberty-ticket*, a pass.
- Library-cads** (Winchester College), two juniors who have to keep the library in order, that they may set off other fagging.
- Lib, to** (thieves), to sleep.
- Lick and a promise** (popular), a wash of an imperfect nature. "I'll just give my face a *lick and a promise*," i.e., will do it more thoroughly later on. Also in general use to signify a cheap temporary remedy and repair for anything. Miss Baker in her "Glossary of Northamptonshire Words" erroneously claimed this as a provincialism.
- Licker** (popular), "that's a *licker* to me," that "licks" me, is above my reach, beyond my conception.
- Lickety split** (American). This means headlong, or at full speed. It also implies sometimes go fast by exertion. There is an old English expression "to put in big licks," to do one's best, also to lick, to beat, which probably gives the origin of this expression.
- Lickety split* is synonymous with the equally elegant phrase "full chisel." He went *lickety split* down hill. *Lickety cut* and *lickety liner* are also used.—*Bartlett: Dictionary of Americanisms*.
- Lick into fits, to** (common), to give a good thrashing.
- Lickspittle** (common), a parasite, a cringing fellow. The French *lèche-bottes*.

**Lie low**, to (American), to keep to one's bed.

**Lie off**, to (turf), to make a waiting race by keeping some distance in rear of the other horses. A jockey is said to "lie out of his ground" when he pushes the lying off tactics to excess, and gets so far behind that he has little or no chance of making up the lost ground.

**Lifer** (thieves), a man sentenced to penal servitude for life.

They know what a clever lad he is; he'll be a *lifer*. They'll make the Artful nothing less than a *lifer*.—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Miss — would make it up with the comic villain if she could, but his comicality is too much for her, so he probably gets "a *lifer*."—*Referee*.

Till recently there was a distinction between being sentenced to penal servitude for life and for natural life. Good conduct might cause the release after some twenty-four years of a person sentenced for life, e.g., Constance Kent. The writer has had under him in prison a man who had endured a life sentence, got out, and got in again.

**Lift** (football players), a kick at football.

**Lifter** (old cant), a thief. Used by Shakspeare in "Troilus and Cressida." The word survives in shop-lifter, one who steals from a shop, but does not apply to one who steals in a shop by false

weight and measure, and adulterated goods. Also a crutch.

**Lift**, to (thieves), to steal.

At one time I had a very pleasant companion whose speciality was stealing cattle. He was a Newcastle man, and had done three "laggings" for *lifting* cattle.—*Evening News*.

This should be naturally understood in the sense of taking off, removing, just as in French slang *soulever*, to raise, to lift, means to steal; but the Rev. A. Smythe Palmer's "Folk Etymology" says, "It has nothing to do with *lift*, raise, but is (like *graf-t* for *graff*), an incorrect form of *lift*, cognate with Gothic *hliffan*, Latin *clepere*, Greek *kleptein*, to steal. Klepto-mania is a mania for *lifting*."

And so whan a man wold bryng them to thryft,  
They wyll hym rob, and fro his good hym  
*lift*.

—*The Hye Way to the Spyttyl Hous*.

A *lift* or *lifter* is an old word for a thief or shop-lifter; it now means a theft.

Is he so young a man and so old a *lifter*?—*Shakspeare: Troilus and Cressida*.

Women are more subtile . . . than the cunningest foyst, nip, *lift*.—*Greene: Theeues falling out*.

(Sport), to *lift* in a walking race is to *lift* your knees unduly into a run or shamble, to break into an unfair walk or trot.

**Light** (popular), though a popular slang term to a certain ex-

tent, it is specially used by printers, being usually applied to credit at a public-house. While a man can obtain this he is safe from having his *light* put out.

**Light bob** (military), light infantry soldier.

**Light feeder** (thieves), a silver spoon.

**Light frigate** (old cant), a woman of loose morals.

**Lightmans** (old cant), night.

Or else he swears by the *lightmans*  
To put our stamps in the Harmans.

—*T. Dekker: Lanthorne and  
Candle-Light.*

**Light-master** (printers). This term is applied to the man who acts as a "go-between" between the landlord of the house of call and the workmen that avail themselves of it. He is generally one of the workmen of a large establishment, and introduces new clients, and arranges matters, and gives the landlord the "tip" in case the indebted one should be leaving his situation, and thus probably avoiding payment.

**Lightning** (common), a name for gin.

The man holds out a tin mug in his dirt-begrimed hand. According to his views, this is the first step of hospitality. She sniffs cautiously.

"Don't like its smell."

"It's *lightning*."

VOL. II.

The child takes a gulp of the raw spirit, chokes, coughs, and bursts into angry sobs.—*Savage London.*

A flash of *lightning*, a glass of gin.

**Lightning changers, shifters** (American), women thieves who can in a minute, by adroit and ingenious manipulation, change their dress in a most extraordinary manner. The process is fully described in the following extract from the *Chicago Tribune*:—

She was arrayed in the garments of a *lightning change* artist, and could, without the removal of an article, change her dress into four distinct styles. When arrested she wore a black cashmere dress, a tight-fitting bodice of the same colour and material, and a hat with a wide brim. A swift displacement of hooks, eyes, and buttons, a deft adjustment of unseen fastenings here and there, a crushing squeeze of the hat, and the woman stood with a brown woollen dress with corded front bodice, and a neat little turban upon her head. Another set of manipulations and the dress was transformed into a gown, the turban gave place to a coif, a chaplet fell from the girdle, and the woman stood arrayed as a brown nun. Once more a tug of the skirt, a yank at the coif and waist, a flash of the hands, everywhere at once, and the nun was transformed into a young lady of aspiring fashion, in bright-coloured alpaca and the original wide-brimmed hat.

There is also a dress worn by women of this class in Paris, consisting of all the garments in one, so made that in a few seconds the whole may be slipped off, and the wearer be left *in cuerpo*.

**Lights or top-lights** (popular), the eyes.

B

**Like bricks** (popular), quickly, with energy.

Charley Dix, cut his sticks, *like bricks*.  
—*Punch*.

This morning did my laundress bring  
My shirt back in a stew,  
Says she, "If I wash this again,  
I shall wash it into two."  
"Into two!" I cried, "you don't mean that?"  
Go, wash away *like bricks*,  
For you'll be doing me a service  
If you'll wash it into six.

—*Popular Song*.

**Like one o'clock** (popular), rapidly. "She tipped off her twopen'orth *like one o'clock*."

**Lil** (gypsy and common canting), a book, a paper or document or letter, a five-pound note. In American gypsy a *lil* is a dollar, also a bad bank-bill. In canting, a pocket-book. Gypsies call a purse a *kissi* or *gunno*.

**Lily Benjamin** (popular), a long white coat, such as worn by umpires at cricket.

**L i m** (university), from Dr. Limeon of King's; an evangelically-minded student, a "piman." (American), a funny fellow or clown.

**Limb**, an angry epithet applied to an ill-tempered child or woman. An abbreviation of *limb* of the devil.

"Now listen, you young *limb*," whispered Sikes, drawing a dark lantern from his pocket, and throwing the glare full on Oliver's face, "I'm a going to push you through there."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

A young or obscure lawyer is vulgarly called a *limb* of the law, or a *limb* of Satan. The word, according to Halliwell's "Archaic Dictionary," generally seems to imply deterioration; a *limb* was even held to signify a determined sensualist. A man overmuch addicted to a thing was anciently said to be a *limb* for it.

**Limburger**, the real (American), used grotesquely in many ways, especially to anything actually or genuinely German. The Limburg cheese has a strong smell, which is intolerable to those who are not accustomed to it, for which reason it is sometimes called "knock me down at forty rods."

**Lime basket** (popular), as dry as a *lime basket*, very thirsty.

Mr. Chitling wound up his observations by stating that he had not touched a drop of anything for forty-two mortal long hard-working days; and that "he wished he might be busted if he warn't as dry as a *lime basket*."—*Charles Dickens*.

**Lime juicer** (nautical), a nickname given by Americans to English vessels and seamen on account of the compulsory practice of serving out *lime juice* as an anti-scorbutic.

**Line** (tailors), a job *line* is an occasional clearance; a bargain. (Common), on the *line*, a picture is said to be hung on the *line* at the Royal Academy when it is in the best position, that is,



at the height of the spectator's eye.

**Lineage** (journalistic), contribution to a newspaper paid at so much a line.

He was a struggling young writer, already engaged on two weeklies, at a rate of remuneration yecept *lineage*, sufficient to provide him with whisky and cigarettes.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Linens**, the curtain in a theatre. In Ireland they say, "Up with the *linens* and make a beginnin'."

**Linens** (American cadet), the dormitories.

**Liner** (studios), a picture hung up high at the exhibition. (Journalistic), a casual reporter. Diminutive of penny-a-liner (Hotten).

**Lines** (theatrical), an actor's own part which he has to learn. It may happen that an actor will know nothing whatever of the play in which he is taking part beyond his own *lines* and the cues which guide him. (West America), explained by quotation.

Without stopping the coach-horses or his own, Billy scrambled upon the vehicle with his post-bags, and relieved the driver of the *lines*.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

**Lines**, on (printers), an expression used by compositors to intimate that the companionship is in full swing. Mostly used to indicate the resumption of business after "cutting the

*line*." A reference to the fact that their earnings depend on the number of lines composed.

**Line, to get in a** (popular), to hoax.

**Lingo** (popular), language, speech, slang. Latin, *lingua*.

**Lint-scraper** (medical), a young and inexperienced medical man. Applied by Mr. Batchelor to Mr. Drencher, M.R.C.S.I., together with other expletives, as pestle-grinder, &c., in Thackeray's "Lovel the Widower."

**Lintys** (theatrical), a name associated with sprites. Possibly from the French *lutins*.

**Lionesses** (Oxford), ladies visiting an Oxford man.

**Lip** (popular), talk, impudence.

**Lipey** (popular), a common mode of address among the lowest class. "What cher, *lipey*, if you see my Rachel, slap her chops, and send her 'ome." Possibly from the German *liebe*.

**Lip-lap**, a vulgar and disparaging nickname given in the Dutch East Indies to Eurasians, and corresponding to the Anglo-Indian *chee-chee* (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Lip, to give** (nautical), to chatter, to prattle.

**Liquorous**, lustful, inordinately amorous, a corruption of lecherous.

While thus Nastagio sought his own decay

By *liquorous* lust.

—*Turberville*.

**Liquor up** (common), a drink, to *liquor up*. Of American origin.

I had a thirsty neighbour next door, and so I accepted the offer of a *liquor up*. —*Evening News*.

The report of his mission included that he had passed the portals of the "Three Stoats" and "had *liquored up*" with the worthy landlord.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

**Lispers** (old cant), the lips.

**Lissum** (popular), pliant, supple.

**List, on the** (popular), in disfavour. An abbreviation of the well-known "on the black *list*." It was introduced in a popular opera, "The Mikado," and since that time has been very general.

**Listening backwards** (common), or as in Ireland, "walking *backwards*." Those who do these things are regarded as having the "evil eye," and also the misuse of any faculty or talent.

*Listening* and walking *backwards* is considered unlucky in Ireland, and children are cautioned carefully to avoid both, on the ground that God has given them faculties to be rightly used, and not contrary to the manner for which these were designed. I have often seen the children of the peasantry severely reprimanded, and not unfrequently punished, for breaches of the direct natural law of the sense of

hearing and the order of motion.—*Notes and Queries*.

**Little ben** (thieves), a waistcoat.

**Little church round the corner** (American), a slang term for a drinking-place.

**Little end of the horn** (American), an expression first made popular in the Jack Downing Letters. Bartlett defines "coming out at the *little end of the horn*" as being said when a ridiculously small effect has been produced after great effort and much boasting. It would be more correct to define it as failing or coming to loss, grief, or poverty in any way. Probably derived from old drinking customs. He who missed at guessing riddles was obliged to drink from the little end or tip of the horn while the victor drank from the brim. The *horn* seems in popular parlance to be connected with evil, contrary to old folk-lore, which made it a symbol of abundance and a protection against evil. "In a *horn*" is a refusal, or a qualification of falsehood. *Horns* denote a cuckold, and *horn-swoggle* means mere nonsense or humbug.

**Little England** (West Indian), Barbados. The inhabitants of this island rightly or wrongly are credited with egregious self-complacency and esteem. The following is the incident which

led to this sobriquet being given to the miniature island in the Caribbean Sea, which to tell the truth is intensely British in everything compared to the other islands. Charles II. was in exile; he had lost his throne, and there seemed little chance of his ever recovering it. The plucky Brins, who were royalist to the backbone, then sent a humble address to the exiled king, "bidding him be of good cheer and stout of heart, reminding him in his exile that all was not lost, for, although all the world might be against him, Barbados was ever at his back." In consequence of this grandiloquent assurance the island has ever since been satirically called *Little England*.

**Little go** (Cambridge University), a public examination held early in the course, "which," says Lyell, "from it being less strict or less important in its consequences than the final one, has received this appellation."

. . . whether a regular attendance on the lecture of the college would secure me a qualification against my first public examination; which is here called the *little go*.—*The Etonian*.

Also called at Oxford "smalls."

You must be prepared with your list of books, your Testament for responsions (by undergraduates called *little go* or "smalls"), and also your certificate of matriculation.—*Collegians' Guide*.

**Little Hell**, explained by quotation.

There are few worse places in London than certain parts of Cow Cross, especially that part of it anciently known as Jack Ketch's Warren, or *Little Hell*, as the inhabitants more commonly designate it, on account of the number of subjects it produced for the operations of the common hangman.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Little man** (Eton), a footman.

He called the footman (or *little man*, as was the generic term for this class of domestic at my tutor's), and bade him reach down the obnoxious placard. To hear in this case was, unfortunately, not to obey. *Little man* visited the roof, reconnoitred the position, felt his own weakness, and, coming down, confessed to the tutor that he "dursna do it!"—*Sketchy Memoirs of Eton*.

**Little off**, a (American, also English), slightly incorrect or erroneous, insane, poor, reserved. From a term used by dealers in diamonds, "off colour."

Your reply to "three *Tribune* subscribers" in this morning's *Tribune* in regard to private secretaries of United States Senators is a *little off*.—*Chicago Tribune*.

After that he was always a *little off*, as he had no money left, or friends to help him. He was a queer fellow, that old man, and he had a gait in walking I shall never forget.—*Chicago Tribune*.

(Common), *little off* colour, unwell, slightly intoxicated.

**Little side** (Rugby), a term applied to all games at Rugby organised from a "house" standard, e.g., *little side* football.

**Little snakesman** (thieves), a young thief who is passed through an aperture to let in the others.

**Live** (American), not only alive, but also intelligent, vigorous, and progressive. "A *live* Yankee." In the Western newspapers "a *live* man" seems to generally signify one who is vigorous and intelligent but uneducated, in accordance with a popular belief that an individual who has never been to school, or at least who has had only the simplest education, must naturally be far better qualified for positions requiring culture and knowledge than any other. The writer has before him a number of one of the most widely circulated journals in America, in which it is editorially asserted that to fill diplomatic appointments in Europe, what is required is not a man who "knows French," or who has been to college, or moved in society, but a "*live* practical man," plainly indicating that in the mind of the editor in question there is a direct antagonism between education and capacity to fill responsible offices. Of late *live*, extended from America to England, has begun to signify excellence, even in inanimate objects.

So Maria and me goes to a big 'ouse in a fried fish and whelk-stall sort o' neighbourhood. We goes up ever so many stairs till we gets into a enormous attic at the top, when you 'as to pass mysterious like through a big curtling. The attic had all its walls covered with noosepapers in foreign languages, and proclamations was stuck up with big borders, as reminded me of the big posters of "a wholesale grocery store will open on Saturday night.

A real *live* glass milk-jug and a splendid pair of plated tongs given to every lady that buys one pound of our two-shilling Bohea."—*Fun: Murdle Visiting.*

**Livener** (military), an early morning drink.

**Liverpool tailor** (tailors), one who sits with his hat and coat on, ready for the road.

**Live to the door**, to (popular), to live up to one's means. A variant is, to live up to the knocker (which see).

**Living gale** (nautical), a fearful storm.

**Liza** (popular), generally used in the injunction, "Outside, *Liza!*" that is, be off, addressed to any person.

**Loaded for bears** (American). This expression signifies that a man is slightly intoxicated, enough to feel ready to confront danger. Equivalent for it are, a little shot, soothed, a little set up.

**Loaded to the gunwales** (American), intoxicated, full.

Sis said she was afraid you'd come home and make it lively for 'em, but Sis' beau said he guessed you wouldn't come home and make any trouble, as he saw you at a sample-room *loaded to the gunwales*. What did he mean?—*St. Paul Globe.*

**Load on** (American). A man who walks unsteadily, owing to intoxication, is said to have a *load on*, "to be loaded," "to

have a turkey on his back," *i.e.*, to have more than he can carry. Also "He walks like he was carrying a pig, and a darned discontented one at that." Also English.

**Load up**, to (American), a term peculiar to the Stock Exchange, meaning to obtain or accumulate.

The few men who make money in Wall Street speculation sell when the crowd is clamouring to buy, as they have been the last week, and the many who lose always rush in on such occasions to *load up* to the extent of their ability.—*Stock Report*.

**Loafer** (military), a soldier employed on the staff, or in any capacity that takes him from his regular "sentry-go" duty. *Vide* OUTFITTER.

(American), originally a pilfering vagabond; now applied to idlers and hangers-about of every description. The term is now recognised and in common use in England. There have been many suggestions as to the origin of this now familiar word. Bartlett declares, rather boldly, that it came into the United States "probably from Mexico or Texas, and derives it from the Spanish *gallofero*, or *gallofo*, a vagabond." But this would imply the first Mexican war, at least, as the date of its advent. The word *loafer*, however, was common in New England and Philadelphia in 1834, 1835, but it was generally applied by boys to "pilfering."

They would say in jest, "Where did you *loaf* that?" *Loafer*, merely as a drunken, thievish bummer, succeeded this.

At this time all the sketches of the genus *loafer* represented him as a petty pilferer, one who carried a gimlet and tube with him to steal whisky from the barrels, and who was popularly regarded as a lazy sponger of food and garments. In the first year of the *New York Herald*, and in the sketches of J. C. Neal as well as in other "life pictures" of the time, the *loafer* is always a pilfering bummer of the lowest class. It was several years before the word was extended to mean a *flâneur* of any kind whatever. Bartlett says that "the origin of this word is altogether uncertain. Two etymologies have been suggested for it; namely, the German *laufer*, a runner (compare the Dutch *leeglooper* and *landlooper*, a vagrant), and the Spanish *gallofero*, abbreviated *gallofo*, whence the Italian *gaglofo* (?), a wandering mendicant, a vagabond. The Spanish *gallofa* means what was given to the *galloferos*, alms, vegetables, &c." It may here be observed that *laufer* in German thieves' slang is the abbreviate of *landlaufer*, which means exactly and precisely a tramp or *loafer* in its later American sense. As regards the Dutch, there is in its low slang the word *loever*, from *loeven*, to go (*gaan*), to stroll about; but with the sense of going astray or out

of the course. Compare (says Teirlinck) with *loeven*, *op zee van den koers ofwijken*, *op side sturen* (to go aside out of the course—to luff). *Loever* is pronounced almost like *loafer*, and meaning the same, that is, one who idly strolls here and there, allows but little room for doubt as to its New York derivation. In old English cant *loaver* was the same with *loure*, to steal, as well as money. It would seem as if it had kept an unnoticed place in English slang, and then in America been influenced by or combined with the Dutch *loever*, or *loef*, *f* being synonymous with *v*.

**Loaf, to**, an Americanism which has become a recognised word, to idle about.

Shoeblocks are compelled to a great deal of unavoidable *loafing*; but certainly this one *loafed* rather energetically, for he was hot and frantic in his play.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe*.

(American University), to borrow anything, generally without any intention of returning it.

**Loaver** (popular), money. From the gypsy *louver*, specie, or coin.

**Lob** (thieves), a till; properly something heavy. *Lob-sneaking*, stealing the contents of tills. To pinch a *lob* has the same signification. *Lob-crawler*, a thief who crawls into a shop, and behind the counter, to rifle the till.

Poor old Tim, the *lob-crawler*, fell from Racker and got pinched.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Also a box, snuff-box. (Pugilistic), the head. Properly a large lump.

**Lobber** or **looper** (American), run, curdled, coagulated, run together. A New York term, from the Dutch *loopen*, to run; *hy heft de loop*, he has a looseness; *een loopend water*, running water. Bartlett says very correctly that the proper term is *loppered*.

**Loblolly boy**, a derisive term for a surgeon's mate in the navy. *Loblolly* is water-gruel, or spoon meat.

**Lobster** (popular). Sailors dressed in blue were vulgarly called raw lobsters in the first five decades of the present century, and soldiers were called boiled lobsters from the colour of their coats. Soldiers were sometimes and are still called crabs. The name of *lobster* has been in later times transferred to the policeman.

**Lobster-box** (popular), a barrack.

**Lobster, to** (Winchester College), to weep, which makes the eyes and face red.

**Lock** (jailors), "on the *lock*," attending to prisoners. (Old cant), a receiver of stolen goods.

That woman they spoke to is a *lock*, alias receiver and buyer of stolen goods.—*Hitchin: A True Discovery, &c.*

Abbreviated from "*lock* all fast," which had the same meaning. The *lock*, the magazine or warehouse whither the thieves carry stolen goods. *Lock*, also chance, means of livelihood. "He stood a queer *lock*," he stood an indifferent chance. "What *lock* do you cut?" how do you get your livelihood? In this sense it seems to be the same word as *lurk*, which has the same meaning. It must be remembered that in many canting dictionaries distortions of words constantly occur.

**Lockees** (Westminster School),  
lock-house.

**Locker** (old cant), explained by quotation.

I am a *locker*, I leave goods at a house and borrow money on them, pretending that they are made in London.—*Hitchin: A True Discovery, &c.*

Vide **LOCK**.

**Lock, stock, and barrel** (American). Bartlett says of this phrase that it means the whole, a figurative expression borrowed from sportsmen and having reference to a gun. Sometimes we hear horse, foot, and artillery used in the same phrase. It is also very commonly used to say that anything has been so renewed that nothing of the original is left, from the story of a fine gun which had belonged to General Washington or some other great man, and

of which certain portions were new, such as the *lock*, *stock*, *barrel*, and ramrod. Also used in reference to a knife which had a new blade, and then a new handle, and again a new blade, and so on for many restorations, but which "was still the same old knife."

**Lock-ups** (Harrow School), detention in study.

**Loco-foco** (American). Bartlett defines this, as "1. A self-igniting match (or cigar); 2. the name by which the Democratic party was (till within a few years) extensively distinguished throughout the United States." He also gives the history of the match, and how its name came to be applied to the Democrats, all of which the writer can confirm from memory. It is very doubtful, however, whether the matches took their name from "locomotive." The wild flash which the first matches made when "snapped off" was greatly admired. They were sold in combs of about twenty matches in the piece, 144 matches costing 12½ cents (6d.). This was in 1834, 1835. Boys regarded them as a kind of fireworks. The writer was the first to introduce them to his school, and to a large rural neighbourhood, where they excited as much astonishment as they now do among savages. He has always been under the impression since early boyhood that the name is

derived from a barbarous combination of *loco*, the Spanish for "mad," and *foco* (*i.e.* *fuego*), "fire," literally wild-fire. Marck, the inventor or patentee, had in all probability the German word *irrlischt*, as well as the English "wild-fire," to guide him in the name.

**Locomotive** (American), a drink made of half of the yolk of an egg, a tablespoonful of honey, a dash of curaçoa, a flavouring of cloves, all whisked thoroughly together in a quarter of a pint of hot Burgundy. A winter drink.

**Locomotive tailor** (tailors), one who travels by train.

**Loddomy, luddemy ker** (gypsy), a lodging-house; *loddor*, to lodge; *baro loddomy ker*, a hotel, *i.e.*, a great lodging-house; *loddomen-gro*, a lodger; *loddomengro rye*, a landlord.

**Loge** (old cant), a watch; from the French *horloge*.

**Logie** (theatrical), an ornament made from zinc. So called from one David Logie, who invented it. At one period these ornaments were made as large as saucers, and were in great vogue in transformation scenes, and halls of enchantment, in which they dazzled and delighted the eyes of the rising generation.

**Log-rolling** (American), explained as follows by the *Cornhill Maga-*

*zine*: "Log-rolling is a somewhat rare term in England, but is well understood at Washington. When a backwoodsman cuts down trees, his neighbours help him to roll them away, and in return he helps them with their trees; so in Congress, when members support a bill, not because they are interested therein, but simply to gain the help of its promoters for some scheme of their own, their action is called *log-rolling*." A *log-rolling* in America, where neighbours meet to bring logs together to build a house, is generally made the occasion of a frolic.

**Logy** (American), dull, slow, awkward; "he's a regular *logy*." Also *loggy*, *i.e.*, like a log. It would seem also to be derived from the Dutch *log*, heavy, slow, unwieldy. *Een log verstand*, a dull wit (Jewel).

John Clossen was a real *logy*,  
Heavy, bungling, dull old fogy,  
Yet he had his startlin' flashes,  
Now and then like flames from ashes,  
And it made the people stare  
To think that embers still were there.

—*Sunday Courier*.

**Loll** (American), a favourite child, the mother's darling.

**Loller** (American), usually applied to a lively, sportive damsel, or "bit of muslin."

Oh, if she is a *loller*,  
I would like to be her loll!  
And if she is a scholar,  
Let me turn into a schol



Or whate'er she scholarises  
 Or whate'er she tries to do,  
 Or what kind of game arises,  
 So she'd only put me through!  
 —A Song: Poor Jones.

**Lolly** (pugilistic), the head.

**Lone ducks, lone doves, quiet mice.** Women who hire their apartments, where they receive gentlemen visitors, or who go with them to houses of assignation. A woman without a *souteneur*, one who tries as much as possible to evade observation, and to keep up a respectable appearance. This class of women has increased incredibly within a very few years in London, as in all the larger American cities.

**Long** (University), explained by quotation.

"Last Long?" "Hem! last protracted vacation."—Charles Reade: *Hard Cash*.

**Long bow.** Vide DRAW.

**Long ear** (American University), a sober, religiously-minded student. The reverse is called a short ear.

**Long-faced one** (army), a horse.

**Long feathers** (army), straw. In French argot *plume de Beauce*. La Beauce, formerly a province, is renowned for its wheat, and consequently straw.

**Long firm** (common), an association of swindlers who pretend to be a solvent firm of traders. It is called *bande noire* by the French.

The Austrian Consul-General in London having informed the Vienna Chamber of Commerce that Austrian merchants have repeatedly incurred heavy loss by giving credit to *long firms* in England, the Chamber has issued a notice warning traders of the risk of opening accounts with foreign customers, without first obtaining satisfactory information respecting their position.—*Standard*.

The police reports give us occasional glimpses of what are called *long firms*, but glimpses which are for the most part deceptive. They show us small bands of disreputable people taking premises in busy quarters, starting sham businesses, and obtaining goods from manufacturers for which they never intend to pay, and which they dispose of as quickly as possible at any price they will fetch. The reports go on to show us how this kind of thing lasts until one or other of the victimised manufacturers sets the police upon the track of the swindlers, who are invariably hunted up and arrested, when the business collapses.—*Thor Fredur: Shady Places*.

**Long-ghost** (common), a tall, thin person.

**Long-haired chum** (tailors), a young woman, a young lady friend.

**Long-knife** (American), a white man, so called from the swords which the first settlers wore. The term came from the Algonkin Indians. In Chippeway to this day the term for a white man is *chee-mikomon*, i.e., great or *long-knife*. The writer once knew a very refined and beautiful young lady, a Miss Foster, of Philadelphia, and also an old Indian whose name meant "He who changes his position while sitting," but who was termed

**Martin** "for short." Martin usually smoked a very handsome *poaugun*, or pipe mounted with silver, but one day he appeared with a miserable affair, made of freestone, not worth a sixpence. On the writer's asking him what he had done with the fine calumet, he replied, "I sold it yesterday to the *chee-mokomon ikveh*,"—to the *long-knife* woman. The "*long-knife* woman" referred to was Miss Foster.

**Long-oats** (army), fork or handle of a broom used to belabour a horse with.

**Long paper** (Winchester College), paper for writing tasks on.

**Longs** (Fenian), rifles.

*Longs* and "shorts" for rifles and revolvers were familiar enough names to those who followed the Fenian trials a score of years ago.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Longs and shorts** (gambling cheats), cards contrived for cheating.

**Long-shore butcher** (nautical), a coastguardsman.

**Long shots** (turf), to take the *long shots* is to back a horse which is not in popular favour at the moment, and against which the bookmakers therefore give a larger rate of odds. It is in fact a form of speculating for the rise.

Button Park and Bonnie Lassie, at 33 to 1 each, seem fairly well backed; but the outsiders that smack of business amongst the *long-shot* division are Ten Broeck and Althorp.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

How oft at morn we've laughed to scorn  
A *long shot's* chance to win;  
How oft at eve we've had to grieve  
O'er our departed tin.  
We've had the tip, and let it slip,  
What's done we can't retract,  
And we have to pay on the settling day,  
O'er the winner we might have backed.  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Long-tailed one** (thieves), a bank note for a large amount.

**Long tails** (sporting), pheasants, greyhounds.

**Long ton** (miners), twenty-one hundredweight. In the coal trade they usually reckon twenty-one tons as twenty.

**Long trot** (popular), explained by quotation.

We was 'bliged to shoot the load afore we could begin ag'in. Sometimes we had to do the *long trot* (go home) with it, and so sp'iled a whole arfternoon.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Lonsdale's nine-pins** (political), the nine boroughs for which Lord Lonsdale used to send up members to St. Stephen's. A repartee connected with them is attributed to Burke.

**Loo** (common), for the good of the *loo*, for the benefit of the company or the community.

**Loocher** (Anglo-Indian), a low and especially a lascivious black-guard. Hind. *luchcha*, a lecher; the being one, *luchchi pana*. In English gypsy *luchipen* or *lut-chipen*, lustfulness.

**Loo'd, looed** (English and American), beaten or defeated. "A term borrowed from the game called 'loo'" (Bartlett). In a list of imaginary last words attributed to notorious Southern characters, Bella Boyd, a celebrated fast woman and female spy, was represented as saying, "I'm *looed*." In provincial English, *looed* means supplanted.

**Looking-glass**, ancient slang for a chamber utensil, derived from the usual examination made by medical men, for diagnosing the probable ailments of their patients. In Ireland the necessary article is often, if not commonly, called a "Twiss," because the portrait of that once noted politician appeared as an ornament at the bottom, produced for ready sale by a satirical and patriotic earthenware manufacturer in Cole-raine to perpetuate the name and fame of Mr. Twiss, for having slandered the women of Ireland by a baseless accusation of unchastity. The accusation was denied, but the penalty remained, by the operation of the principle sarcastically recommended by Douglas Jerrold in all cases of doubt: if you do not know the rights of a thing, believe the worst.

**Looking on** (turf), one of the many terms which imply that a horse is not intended to do his best in a race.

**Look nine ways for Sundays**, to (nautical), to squint.

**Look-see pidgin** (pidgin), mere sham, hypocrisy. "This is all *look-see pidgin*" (Anglo-Chinese newspaper), religious humbug.

My tink he cat he makee chin-chin Fo,  
My tinkee puss-cat be Joss-pidgin-man  
Who no can *chow-chow* meat—*hai-yak!*  
*ph'hoi!*

Dat cat hab cheatee, cheatee, cheatee  
my;

My tink he 'hood—he all too bad—*mas-kee!*

He Joss-pidgin be all *look-see pidgin*,  
My wish dat cat be dam—wit' evely-ting!  
For allo worl' be bad, an' all be bad,  
An' evely side hab pizen—cats an' tlaps,  
My no can do make tust one man no  
more.

—*The Cat.*

**Loon-flat** (old cant), thirteence halfpenny.

**Loose-box**, a term sometimes applied to a bringham.

**Loose ends** (common). When a business is neglected, or its finances are in a precarious condition, it is said to be at *loose ends*.

**Loose, on the** (common), out carousing.

At the same fair, Jem Moor was about three-quarters and an eighth towards being tight through having been out *on the loose* all the morning with the governor.—*Hindley: Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

Also getting a living by prostitution.

**Looter** (gypsy), to steal from. Anglo-Indian *loot*, plunder.

booty. Hind. *lüt*, from Sanskrit *lotra*, root; *lüp*, rob, plunder. *Lüter* and *lour* are English gypsy terms for the same word, and are also used as verbs.

**Lop, horse (army)**, puddings of suet without plums.

**Loppers, lobbes, loppus** (American). The writer has never seen this word in print, but he has often heard it in Pennsylvania. An awkward, shambling fellow, a hobble-de-hoy. Dutch *lobbes*, a clownish fellow, also a shaggy dog. This is nearly allied to the English *lob*, a lubber or clown.

**Lord (popular)**, a hump-backed man.

That a deformed person is a *lord* . . . after a painful investigation of the rolls and records under the reign of Richard the Third, or "Richard Crouchback," as he is more usually designated in the chronicles . . . we do not find that that monarch conferred any such lordships as here pretended, upon any subject or subjects, on a simple plea of conformity in that respect to the "royal nature."—C. Lamb: *Essays of Elia*.

She invariably wound up at night with a mad fighting fit, during which my *lord*, vulgar slang for hunchback, was always thrashed unmercifully.—*Standard*.

Probably thus called in ridicule from the self-importance and air of complacency supposed to be generally assumed by hunchbacks. Wright suggests the Greek *lordós*, bent forwards, and Smythe A. Palmer the old English *loord*, *lordain*, *lurden*, or *lourden*, heavy, clumsy, sluggard. French *lourdaud*,

old French *lorde*, Low Latin *lurdus*.

**Lord Mayor** (burglars), a large crowbar or jemmy, used for breaking open safes.

Numerous are the names given to crowbars. There is "the *Lord Mayor*," "the Alderman," "the Common Councilman," and so on. These are principally used for breaking into safes.—*Tit Bits*.

**Lords** (Winchester College), the first eleven are thus called.

**Lose the combination**, to (American), to miss the meaning or point of anything. One often hears such an expression in conversation as "Hold on there. I've missed the combination."

"Did you see the butchers' parade?" asked the snake-editor of a casual caller yesterday afternoon.

"Yes."

"See that man throwing sausages at the crowd?"

"Yes."

"Well, I never sausage a thing before."

"Ha! ha! Pretty good. I'll surprise my wife with that when I get home."

When the casual caller arrived at home he said to his wife:

"My dear, in the butchers' parade today there was a man throwing sausages to the spectators."

"Was there?"

"Yes; and I never saw anything like that done before."

"Neither did I."

He waited five minutes for his wife to laugh, and then went out to wonder how he *lost the combination*.—*Pittsburg Chronicle*.

The "snake-editor" mentioned in this anecdote is supposed to be the writer specially employed on a newspaper, to

invent or discover wonderful "yarns" of snakes, mosquitoes, enormous pumpkins, extraordinary instances of instinct in animals, and similar marvels. He is "the big gooseberry man" of the English provincial press.

**Lost and gone poetry** (American). The wailing, feeble-minded rhyming over "lost Edens and buried Lenores," imaginary griefs and sham sorrows, so characteristic of all beginners in poetry, has not escaped the notice of American newspaper wits, who often turn it into ridicule.

**Lotion** (popular), a drink. "What's your *lotion*?" what are you drinking?

**Loud** (common), flashy, "pronounced," extravagant, whether in manners or colours, dress or demeanour. Originally English, it has been very much extended in America.

A much more loquacious, ostentatious, much *louder* style.—*Carlyle: Life of Sterling.*

*Husband*—"Now, Mrs. B.'s dress, I suppose, is what you would call a symphony?"

*Wife*—"Yes, a Wagnerian symphony."

*Husband*—"Why Wagnerian?"

*Wife*—"Because it's so *loud*."—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Lounce** (sailor's), a drink. Generally a pint of beer, probably a corruption of allowance.

**Lounge** (university and public schools), a term of Etonian

origin. It means a treat. In the West of England a *lounge* is a large lump of bread.

**Lour, loure** (old cant), money. From the gypsy.

To strowling ken the mort bings then  
To fetch *loure* for her cheats.

—*The English Rogue.*

**Louver, lovva, lovo, lovvv, lover** (gypsy), money, i.e., specie, or coin. *Vide LOUR.*

**Lovage** (popular), tap droppings. Properly a plant which possesses diuretic properties.

**Love** (common), in scoring of any game equals nought, or nothing.

I have seen those lose the game that have had so many for *love*.—*Bailey's Erasmus.*

I sometimes play a game at piquet for *love*.—*C. Lamb: Essays on Elia.*

*Love* is here the antithesis of money. "To play for *love* (of the game) and not for money." French, "pour l'amour de l'art," "gratis pro Deo."

**Love apples**, explained by quotation.

*Love apples*, the latest name which the dynamiters have given to their bombs, affords another illustration of the love of conspirators for euphemistic terms.—*St. James' Gazette.*

Tomatoes were generally called *love apples* in Australia about sixty years ago. In France *pommes d'amour*. It may be remarked, *en passant*, that the terms *love apples* and *pommes*

- d'amour* are mistranslations of Italian *pomi del mori* or *Moors' apples*, mala Æthiopica.
- Low-down** (common), out of sorts, out of money, and out of luck; also mean, underhand.
- That's just the way; a person does a *low-down* thing, and then he don't want to take no consequences of it.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- Lowie** (Scotch thieves), money; a form of lour, or the common gypsy *lowy*.
- A good deal of talk afterwards took place about the *lowie*, which he believed signified money.—*Scottish Newspaper*.
- Low in the lay** (thieves), in want of money, "hard up."
- Fighting Attie, my hero, I saw you to-day  
A purse full of yellow boys seize;  
And as, just at present, I'm *low in the lay*,  
I'll borrow a "quid," if you please.  
—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.
- Low-pad** (old cant), a footpad.
- Low-water-mark, at** (common), without funds.
- I'm *at low-water-mark*, myself, only one bob and a magpie.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.
- Lucky** (popular), to make or cut one's *lucky*, to escape, run away.
- That was all out of consideration for Fagin, 'cause the traps know that we work together, and he might have got into trouble if we hadn't made our *lucky*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.
- Lug chovey** (popular), a pawnbroker's shop.
- Lug, in** (popular), in pawn. Scotch *lagd*, laid by, put away.
- Lullaby cheat** (old cant), a child.
- Lüller** (gypsy), to vanish, disappear.
- Lully** (thieves), linen, a shirt; *lully* prigger, a thief who steals linen off hedges or lines.
- Lumber** (old cant), a room
- Lumberer** (turf), a swindling tipster, who works his business *vidd voce* instead of by advertisement. His happy hunting-grounds are the bars of fashionable restaurants, though he may be also encountered on race-courses. His method is either to be introduced by a confederate, or to force acquaintance with raw youths (*vide JUGGINS*), and by pretending to intimacy with jockeys and familiarity with owners of horses to persuade his victim that he is willing, from sheer good-fellowship, to part with valuable information; and, provided a commission is entrusted to him, to insure success on some impending race. The name of the horse is given or withheld as may suit the circumstances of the case, but once he has secured the money or credit of the "juggins" the result is the same. Should the horse win (a most unlikely contingency), there are twenty excellent reasons why the stake has not been invested; if beaten, as he usually is, the *lumberer* urges some impossible combi-

nation of rascality on the part of owner or jockey as an excuse for present defeat and in proof of future infallibility. (Common), a man who goes about public-houses sponging on acquaintances. From to *lumber*, to loiter, stroll lazily.

So I pulled out my flask, and my two *lumberers* drained it, and, with a "Lord luv us, Bill, I feels er nu'un," and with the other saying, "Them's my sentiments," began chaffing me—"Are yer agoing to have another game er nap?"—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Lummox** (American), a fat, unwieldy, stupid person. From provincial English *lummock*, a lump.

**Lummy** (popular), first-rate, clever, jolly.

To think of Jack Dawkins—*Lummy* Jack—the Dodger—the Artful Dodger going abroad for a common twopenny halfpenny sneeze-box.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Lump** (popular), a party, association; to go in the *lump*, means to go to the parish workhouse.

**Lump hotel** (popular), the workhouse. Termed also the "pan."

**Lump on the thick un's, to** (turf), to make a heavy bet in sovereigns.

**Lump, to** (popular), used in the phrase "if you don't like it you may *lump* it," *i.e.*, get rid of it by swallowing it. "M. Oliphant regards the word as a corruption of old English *lomp*, Anglo-VOL. II.

Saxon *gelamp*, it happened; and so to *lump* would be 'to take what may chance'" (A. Smythe Palmer). (Thieves), to *lump* the lighter, to be transported. In this case to *lump* signifies to load. (Turf), to put weight on.

Not content with *lumping* him in the handicap.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Lumpy** (booksellers), costly; *lumpy* books, costly books. (Popular), intoxicated, pregnant. (Cricket), applied to rough ground.

The wicket was unsatisfactory, and the batsmen complained that it was *lumpy*.—*Evening News*.

**Lunan**. Hotten declares that this is gypsy for a girl. It is common in canting, but the writer has never been able to determine that it is Romany. Probably from the Swedish or Danish *luns*, a slatternly girl.

**Lung-box** (popular), mouth.

My tar, if you don't close your *lung-box* I shall run you in.—*Brighton Beach Loafer*.

**Lunka** (Anglo-Indian), a strong cheroot from the Bengal Presidency, so called from being made from tobacco grown in the islands, the local term for which is *lanka* of the Godavery Delta (Anglo-Indian Glossary). They are becoming known in London.

**Lunkhead** (American), a horse of inferior breed and appearance.

C

Our new Minister to France is studying the art of politeness and elegance of diction prior to his advent into Parisian society. He calls our worthy Secretary of State (Mr. Fish) a "fossilised *lunkhead*." The term *lunkhead* is usually applied by sporting men to a very sorry style of horse, but never, we believe, to a horse mackerel.—*New York Herald*.

From the Swedish *lunk*, a very slow, heavy horse.

**Lunk-headed** (American), idiotic, senseless.

We shall go armed, and the *lunk-headed*, overgrown calf had better keep out of our sight if he values his miserable, worthless life.—*Estelline (Dakota) Bell*.

**Luny** (popular), a lunatic. "Go along, you *luny*," is a common phrase.

Combining business with pleasure, he chartered a horse and trap, and drove the *luny* to the asylum, intending to wind up with a pleasant drive on his own account. On the road, however, the *luny* saw in the master's pocket the order for admission to the asylum, and he quietly abstracted it. When they arrived he got down from the trap, and told the officials that he had brought them an inmate, a very quiet man, whose only madness was an idea that he was the master of a suburban workhouse.

The master vehemently protested that the other man was the lunatic, and that he himself was really the master of the workhouse. "I told you so," said the lunatic pityingly; "but this will settle the matter; here is the order for his admission." The unlucky master was violently removed, and the lunatic got up in the trap, and drove away.—*Ross: Variety Paper*.

**Lur, loure** (gypsy), to rob; booty, plunder. This word passed into canting at a very early period.

Your'e out ben morts and toure!  
Look out ben morts and toure!

For all the Rome coves are budged a beake,  
And the quire (queer) coves tippe the *loure*.  
—*S. Rowlands, 1610*.

That "Rome coves" means gypsies here, as well as "good men," is apparent enough. Stealing linen from hedges, &c., has always been regarded as a speciality of the Romany.

*Loure* is still commonly used among gypsies. "Do you pen mandy'd *loure* tute?"—"Do you think I'd rob you?"

**Lurk** (tramps and others), a swindle; specially applied to obtaining money by a false begging petition. An occupation.

Then says Pudding-faced Ned, with a grin  
on his phiz,

"It's no one but horses and asses that work;

Now Larry's got his fancy, Jerry's got his,  
And so I've got mine, and it's cadging's  
my *lurk*."

—*J. Greenwood: A Night in a Workhouse*.

Formerly *lurch*.

The tapster having many of these *lurches*  
fell to decay.—*Peel's Jests*.

(Tinker), eye. This word, in the sense of looking about, observing where work may be got, or anything stolen, &c., possibly suggested the old canting word *lurk*, which was used for every kind of "lay," trick, swindle, or "game." To keenly observe forms the first part of the education of a young thief, and to this his eyesight was regularly trained by observing mingled objects thrown up together, &c.—an exercise which might be



with great advantage applied in all schools to develop quickness of perception.

**Lurker** (tramps and others), an impostor who goes about with a false begging petition.

**Lurries** (thieves), money or jewellery. From the gypsy *loure*, plunder.

**Lurry** (old cant), valuables. *Vide LUB.*

The fifth was a glazier, who, when he creeps in,

To pinch all the *lurry* he thinks it no sin.  
—From *A Pedlar's Pack of Ballads and Songs*, collected by W. H. Logan.

**Lush** (Eton), dainty. Shakespeare uses *lush* with the meaning of luxury. It is a provincial term for rich, succulent. (Common), drink; more especially drink to excess. Applied equally to beer, wine, or spirits.

I boast not such *lush*, but whoever his glass

Does not like, I'll be hanged if I press him.

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

Though it once was our game when the chucking time came,

'Tis a fact that I freely allow,  
When in search of a *lush* to the "Spoofs" we would rush,

But the sharps do the "rushing" just now.

—*Sporting Times.*

Suggested to be from *lush*, full of juice, traced by Wright to *luscious*, *lushious*, *luxurious*. Drink seems, in most languages, to be synonymous with "juice." Thus in Scotland whisky is called

the "barley bree," or juice of the barley. The French have "jus de la taille" for wine, and the slang term "jus d'échallas." French sailors call rum of the best quality "jus de botte premier brin." But more probably from the gypsy *lush* or *losher*, to drink; or German *löschen*.

**Lush-crib** (popular and thieves), a public-house or tavern.

**Lushington** (popular), a low, drunken fellow, a sot. Up to recent date, there was, or may be now, a tap-room in a certain hostelry, in the immediate vicinity of Drury Lane Theatre, famous for being a favourite haunt of Edmund Kean. Here that ill-starred genius and his parasites were wont to turn night into day, in making their followers free of "the City of *Lushington*." Other times, other manners.

**Lush, to** (common), to drink, or drink to excess. *Vide LUSH.*

. . . piece of double Glo'ster; and to wind up all, some of the richest sort you ever *lushed*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

**Lushy or lushey** (popular), intoxicated.

It was half-past four when I got to Somerstown, and then I was so uncommon *lushey* that I couldn't find the place where the latch-key went in.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

**Lyesken chirps** (tinker), telling a fortune.

**Lying in** (Royal Military Academy), is said of a cadet who stops at the Royal Military Academy, in his room, on a Sunday when he is supposed to have left on leave.

**Lyo** (Anglo-Chinese), come hither (Hotten).

**Lypken**, a word used by tramps in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and probably at an earlier period, for a house where vagrants and thieves could procure a night's lodging. From the Gaelic *leaba*, a bed; and *cean* (ken), a house.



**AB** (American), a harlot. Possibly from the canting *Mab*, "a hackney coach," which is common to all who will pay for a passage in it. So the French call a *filie de joie* an omnibus. In the north of England a *mab* is a loose, slatternly girl.

**Mabbed up** (old cant), dressed carelessly, as a slattern.

**Macaroni** (thieves), pony (Ducange Anglicus). Formerly a swell, fop. "The Italians are extremely fond of a dish they call *macaroni*, . . . and as they consider this as the *summum bonum* of all good eating, so they figuratively call everything they think elegant and uncommon *macaroni*. Our young travelers, who generally catch the follies of the countries they visit, judged that the title of *macaroni* was very applicable to a clever fellow; and accordingly to distinguish themselves as such, they instituted a club

under this denomination, the members of which were supposed to be the standard of taste. The infection at St. James's was soon caught in the city, and we have now *macaronies* of every denomination" (Pocket-book, 1773).

**Mace** (thieves), to give it on the *mace*, or strike the *mace*, to obtain goods on credit without any intention of paying for them; to sponge an acquaintance, beg or borrow money. Formerly *mace* grieffs were men who wittingly bought and sold stolen fish. Several Yiddish words may have contributed to this term, such as *masser* or *meser*, a betrayer, hence "masse-stapler," which see; *més-chomet*, a blackguard. Also *moser* or *möser*, a cheat; *mös*, money, hence to make money. Man at the *mace*, explained by quotation.

The following people used to go in there: toy-getters (watch-stealers), magmen (confidence-trick men), men at the *mace* (sham loan offices), &c.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

To *mace*, to cheat, swindle in any way.

**Maceman, macer** (thieves), a man who conducts a sham loan office, a welsker, swindler. *Vide* MACE.

**Mâchin** (pidgin), a merchant. "Allo dot go down blongy one numpa-one *mâchin*, he catchee too much dolla'."

**Macing the rattler** (thieves), travelling in a railway train without paying one's fare. *Vide* MACE.

A rough shock head was obtruded from under the seat, and a gruff voice cried:

"J'yer, guv'nor, does your dog bite?"  
"Great heaven!" gasped the little man, "what in the name of all that's holy are you doing under there?"

"Same as your dog. *Macing the rattler*."—*Sporting Times*.

**Mackarel, mackawl** (old cant), a bawd. French *maquereau*, *maquerelle*.

**Madam** (thieves), a pocket-handkerchief.

One day I went to Lewisham and touched for a lot of wedge. I tore up my *madam* (handkerchief), and tied the wedge in small packets and put them into my pockets.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Old cant), *Madam Van*, a prostitute.

**Made** (Winchester). A prefect is said to be *made* when he has received full power from the head-master.

**Made beer** (Winchester), a beverage compounded of college small-beer, raisins, sugar, nutmeg, and rice, so as to give it some sort of a "head."

**Made his Jack** (American), got what he aimed at, attained his point, got into office, or became somebody of consequence. Old English, "Jock with the bush." "This phrase," says Wright, "occurs in Barclay's 'Eclagues,' 1570, and seems to mean a Jack-in-office." Dutch, *een groot Hans*, a great Jack or person, "a swashing blade;" German, *prablhans*, a "swell."

**Madza** (thieves and costermongers), half; from the Italian *mezza*, used as in *madza saltee*, a halfpenny; *madza poona*, half a sovereign, &c. Also *medza*, in low theatrical slang; *medza* beargered, half drunk.

**Mafoo** (pidgin), horse-boy, groom. "Talkee *mafoo* to come chop-chop." (Mandarin), *mah*, a horse; *mah-tung*, a stirrup.

**Mag** (thieves and popular), a halfpenny; in ancient cant a "make."

You has not a heart for the general distress—

You cares not a *mag* if our party should fall,

And if Scarlet Jem were not good at a press,

Ey Goles, it would soon be all up with us all!

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

If he don't keep such a business as the present as close as possible, it can't be worth a *mag* to him.—*Dickens: Bleak House*.

In society "not a *mag*" is equivalent to "not a sou."

And now of Hawkesbury they talked, Indian Ocean and Atlantic, are still broke to a man and a *mag*.—*Sporting Times*.

(Literary and printers), a magazine.

And now of Hawkesbury they talked,  
Who wrote in *mags* for hire.

—*Wolcot (P. Pindar)*.

**Maggots** (popular), whims, fancies. Hence "maggotty," fanciful, fidgety. It was once a popular belief that small *maggots* were generated in the human brain, so that the fretting of these insects produced odd fancies and foolish notions. Hence probably the origin which may perhaps also be traced to the fact that crazy sheep have a worm in the brain.

**Magistrands.** *Vide* BEJANT.

**Magistrate** (Scotch slang), a herring.

**Magpie** (popular and thieves), sixpence.

I'm at low-water-mark myself—only one bob and a *magpie*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Also the black and white circles in a target.

**Magsman** (common slang), the *magsman* is at the very head of the profession of roguery. He

is the great man, the Magnus Apollo among thieves and swindlers, or what the French call *de la haute pègre*. He is a first-class confidence man who selects his victims in the street, in the smoking-rooms of hotels, in stylish bars.

"*Magsmen* are wonderful actors. Their work is done in broad daylight without any stage-accessories, and often a look, a wink, a slip of the tongue, would betray their confederacy. They are very often men of superior education. Those who work the tidal trains and boats are often faultlessly dressed and highly accomplished" (Hotten).

He has not the slightest sympathy with evil-doers, and fifty guineas would not tempt him to permit on his premises the hilarious celebration of bold Toby Crac-kitt's release over a bowl of punch, by a select circle of admiring *magsmen*.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

Probably from the Yiddish *machas* or *magas* (to which *mann* may be arbitrarily added), meaning a great swell, a great man or highly honoured lord; or from *mag*, to talk persuasively. It is curious to note that *meg*, in French cant, which Victor Hugo derives from *mag-nus*, means master, head of a gang (more probably from Italian cant, *maggio*, lord). It may be these words have a common origin, or this is mere coincidence. Compare old cant *dabe*, head of a gang, and French *dab*, same meaning; the latter

probably from *dam*, low Latin for lord.

**Mag**, to (thieves), to talk, to talk persuasively; a provincialism meaning to chatter. In the quotation *mag* signifies talk. Probably from "magpie."

Oh! if you have any *mag* in you we'll draw it out.—*Madame D'Arblay: Diary.*

**Mahmy** (up-country Australian), the white commander of a troop of native police.

The troopers were, of course, delighted at the prospect of a collision with their countrymen, and an unusual degree of activity prevailed in the camp, so much so that next morning before sunrise, while Stone and his guest were getting through their hasty breakfast, the corporal of the troop made his appearance at the door, and stiffening himself into an erect military attitude saluted gravely, reporting at the same time, "Every sing all righ, *mahmy*."—*A. C. Grant.*

**Mahogany** (society), table; to have one's feet under another man's *mahogany*, to sit at his table, be supported on other than one's own resources (Hotten). *Vide AMPUTATE YOUR TIMBER.*

In a casual way he mentioned the days when his father, the J.P., sat for somewhere or other, and of the dainties that nightly graced his hospitable *mahogany*.—*Sporting Times.*

(Popular), *mahogany* flat, a bug.

**Maiden** (turf), a horse which has never won a race open to the public. Therefore the winning of one or more matches does

not disqualify a horse from being entered as a *maiden* for subsequent events.

**Maidstone jailer** (rhyming slang), a tailor.

**Mails** (Stock Exchange), Mexican Railway ordinary stock.

**Mailyas, mailhas** (tinker), fingers. Gaelic, *meirlach*, stealers, as "pickers and stealers," hands. Possibly the real origin of "maulies," influenced by "maul."

**Mai-pan** (pidgin, Cantonese), *compradore*, steward.

**Maistry, mixtry**, sometimes **mystery** (Anglo-Indian), properly a foreman, a master-workman, but used for any artisan, as *rajmistri*, a mason or bricklayer, *lohar-mistri*, a blacksmith. From the Portuguese *mestre*, a skilled or master-workman.

**Make** (old cant), a penny or half-penny. (General), to be "on the *make*," to be always intent on the main chance, seeking to make money. It generally implies unscrupulousness and cleverness.

The English doctors can earn their living in their own country. They haven't gone to Germany on the *make*.—*Referee.*

While the word is unquestionably derived from the English *make*, as "to make money," it is worth pointing out its resemblance to the Yiddish *makir*, one who knows, who is intelligent in anything. No-

thing is more remarkable in slang than the manner in which words mutually form and help one another into currency. It is said also of one who asks too high a price for his goods. "On the *make*" is of American origin; a *make* is a successful swindle.

**Make a bolt of it, to (common),**  
to run away.

And he has been suspected, detected, has *made a bolt of it*, and has been discovered and brought to justice.—*The Graphic*.

**Make a kick, to (common), to**  
raise an objection. French *re-gimber*, said of a horse that backs and kicks, and figuratively of an unwilling person.

**Make a small war, to (American),**  
to amass a small fortune. In reference to a man who had amassed a fortune during the civil war, and of whom it was said that he would like to *make a small war* of his own simply to "finance" it.

Many scores of these philanthropists who have spent their lives in looking for men to enrich whilst anxious only to *make a small war* for themselves, have I encountered.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Makee (pidgin), to make, do,**  
cause, effect. "Supposy you *makee buy-lo!*" It is in pidgin generally prefixed to verbs to make them active, *e.g.*, "I *makee stlike dat too-muchee bad boy.*"

**Make hay** (*vide HAY*), to put in disorder, to mix in utter confusion. The expression explains itself.

Some of the warders, full of the irrepressible spirits of Old Erin (we do not mean whisky) had *made hay* with the drugs in the infirmary, with the result that liniments were taken as medicines, blisters applied in lieu of linseed plasters, and in one instance laudanum administered instead of black draught.—*Funny Folks*.

*Hay-bag* is an old word for a noise, riot, mess.

**Make no bones, to (popular), to**  
*make no bones* about doing anything, is to do it without demur or difficulty. Of very ancient origin, Erasmus in his Paraphrase (1548) using it—"He made no manier bones ne stickyng but went in hande to offre vp his onely sone Isaac in sacrifice" (Luke, f. 15). Its derivation is obscure unless it be an allusion to the habit of some people, in eating fish and small birds, to eat bones and all.

**Make, to (popular and thieves),**  
to appropriate to one's personal use; to *make* clocks, to steal watches.

*Making clocks* was too risky, and guying warn't no catch after I fell in the river at 'Ampton, with a countryman as could swim like a bloomin' duck a throtlin' me.—*Sporting Times*.

(Freemasons), to initiate.

**Make tracks, to (American), to**  
decamp, to run away; in allusion to one who leaves traces

behind him, without intending to do so.

He was one of those unpleasant people who keep firearms on the premises, and handy for use. We *made tracks*, as you may suppose, and quickly too. The other two got clear off. As for myself, a snap-shot caught me in the calf of the leg as I tumbled anyhow over the garden wall, and thus put an end to my "crib-cracking" for one while.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches in Shady Places.*

**Make-up** (theatrical), materials used for making up the face, hands, &c. Soap and water, cold cream, pomatum, or vaseline, pearl powder, Indian ink, rouge, vermilion, blanc de perle, rose water, crêpé hair, spirit gum, wigs, and grease paint of every description. The latter, though a recent discovery in Europe, has been known and used in China for ages. The use of it was first introduced here by the distinguished actor, Hermann Vezin, who, before it became an article of commerce, manufactured it for his own use.

A little girl at the back of the dress circle cried:

"See, ma, he's been kissing the maid, and her *make-up's* come off on his face!"  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

This term also refers to the personal appearance assumed by an actor impersonating a character.

Mr. ——— took the part of the aged diplomatist, Sir Henry Craven. His *make-up* was admirable, and his acting worthy of all praise.—*Sporting Times.*

It has the general sense of appearance produced by dress, habits, &c.

Perhaps he owed this freedom from the sort of professional *make-up* which penetrates skin, tones, and gestures.—*G. Eliot: Daniel Deronda.*

**Making a pitch** (street performers, cheap Jacks, circus, &c.), selecting a locality for a performance of any kind, stopping at any place to perform.

Five times did we *make a pitch* in the wind and the deadly-cold sleet, playing over three times.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Making a song** (thieves), explained by quotation.

Only a purse, with four shillings and a railway ticket in it. What makes me remember the ticket? Why, when I got home—I was still staying at the lodging-house in George Street—a pal told me of a lark he had seen at the market; some poor chap had lost all his money and his return railway ticket, and was *making a song* (telling everybody) about it.—*J. Greenwood: Gaol Birds at Large.*

**Making up the log** (tailors), putting down the wages. In the stock trade it is taking the number of garments cut, and in some cases where they pay "day work," if the quantity does not come up to the specified number of garments, the deficiency is deducted per ratio from the men's wages.

**Malleko** (gypsy), a sneaking spy, an informer, a mischief-maker. This is old gypsy, and it recalls the "miching Mallecho" of Shakspeare.

**Malley** (Anglo-Indian), a gardener.

**Malt** (popular), beer.

When the purchase-money was paid over, the farmer invited the dealer, as is the custom, to have a glass of *malt* before parting, and they entered a neighbouring public-house.—*Tit-Bits*.

**Malt**, to (popular), to drink beer.**Malum** (Anglo-Indian), a sailing-master.

"In a ship with English officers and a native crew, the mate is called *malum sahib*. The word is, in Arabic, *mu'allim*, literally 'the instructor,' and is properly applied to the pilot or sailing-master" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Mammy** (West Indian), an elderly negress; generally an old nurse. Sometimes corrupted into *Mau-mer*.**Manablins** (popular), broken victuals (Hotten).**Man a-hanging** (common), a man in difficulties (Hotten).**Man at the duff.** *Vide* DUFF.**Manchester silk** (tailors), thread.**Manders** (thieves), "remands."

One promising little lad of about twelve, and who really had some claim to being regarded as an "old offender," overdid it by endeavouring, in the enumeration of his numerous convictions, to palm off a couple of *manders* . . . as genuine magisterial sentences to imprisonment.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

**Man-handle**, to (thieves), to use a person roughly, as to take him prisoner, to turn him out of a room, or give him a beating (Hotten). Properly, to *man-handle* is a nautical term, meaning to move by force of men, without levers or tackles.

**Man-man** (pidgin-English), slowly, gradually, little by little. Italian *mano mano*.

*Man-man* one peach-tee flowery become one piecy peach,

*Man-man* one littee chilo get wise an' all men teach,

You cathee one piece can-do; some day it make you gleat,

Ahong hab larn this lesson—to fightee, shave an' wait.

—*The Ballad of Ahong and the Mosquito*.

**Man of the world** (thieves), professional thief.

*Man of the world*. . . He so loves to style himself, not from any resemblance to the similarly designated personage of polite society, but from the fact of his accomplishments being such that he can follow his profession anywhere.—*Michael Davitt: Leaves from a Prison Diary*.

**Man-trap** (common), patches of cow dung in the fields. Also a widow. This old term, still used habitually among American thieves, recalls the bright boy in the New York school who, on being asked the meaning and derivation of the word "virgin," replied, "*vir*, a man; *gin*, a trap; *virgin*, a man-trap."



**Manual subscription** (American), a blow with the fist. In England "a sign manual."

Want me to subscribe to a Life of Grant, do ye? I'll grant ye yer life of ye clar out from hyar 'n less 'n a minit, ye scum! General Grant's soldiers stole all my hens, an' shot my second cousin's brother's arm off, and now ye want me to subscribe for his life! I'll give ye a *manual subscription* in the face with my knuckles, ye helion of a Yankee book-pedar!—*Trials of a Book Agent.*

**Man with no frills** (American), a plain person, a man without culture or refinement. An amiable term to express a vulgar fellow. The *Nevada Transcript* describes a blackguard who, because he was worth a million, insisted on being allowed to sit at a *table d'hote* in his shirt-sleeves, as a *miner millionaire with no frills.*

**Map** (printers), a dirty proof, heavily marked all over by the reader in consequence of blunders and errors in composing—likened to a geographical drawing with many references.

**Marble** (American), also *marvel*. To bound, bounce, or run along. From a boy's marble thrown along a sidewalk, which, if properly propelled, will proceed to an incredible distance. Marbles are also vulgarly called *marvels* in Philadelphia, as in Suffolk-shire.

**Marbles** (common), furniture, movables.

I can't git the 'ang of his lingo; his pater's all picter somehow, And wot he quite means by Calf, mate, I dunno no more than a cow.

But the Scapegoat, that's him, I suppose, and he looks it; it's rough, as he says; No *marbles*, no lodging, no grub, and that sort o' thing for days!

—*Punch.*

**Margery prater** (thieves and gypsies), a hen, from its constant clucking. So called by association with *margery-howlet*, an old word for an owl, and *margery daw*, jack-daw; *margot*, in French, is a nickname for a magpie.

**Maria**, for Black Maria, which see.

Although I had no motive for evading her, 'Twas but lately that I came across her track,

And two stern-faced men were forcibly persuading her

To enter a conveyance, painted black. Aghast at conduct seemingly so cruel, base,

And wicked, I its meaning did inquire— Quoth a gamin, "She's been lifting some cove's jewel case,

And she's going for a ride in the *Maria.*"

—*Sporting Times.*

**Marinated** (old cant), transported.

**Marine** (nautical), an empty bottle.

**Mark** (pugilistic), the pit of the stomach.

Gretting (1724-34) had the nearest way of going to the stomach (which is what they call the *mark*) of any man I knew.—*Captain Godfray: Useful Art of Self-Defence.*

(Swindlers), one marked by thieves or swindlers as easy to dupe or rob.

"Buy a watch-ticket, John?" cry one did—

"Will you bid?—take a quid;"

"In for eight guineas!" "Oh, nay, you don't kid

This young man," said I, "from the North!"

Whispered to me a mock-auction shark—

Thought me a *mark*—"keep it dark."

—*J. A. Hardwick: Up from the Country.*

(Popular), "to come to the, or be up to the *mark*," to be satisfactory. When one is dissatisfied and says that a thing is not up to the *mark*, does not come up to the *mark*, one is still using the metaphor of a measure not filled up to the rim or proper *mark*.

**Marked up** (tailors), to have one *marked up*, is to know all about him.

**Marketeer** (turf), a betting-man who devotes himself, by means of special information, to the study of favourites, and the diseases incident to that condition of equine life (Hotten).

**Market-horse** (turf), a horse simply kept in the betting-lists for the purpose of being betted against (Hotten). The "market" is the Turf Exchange, which is held at Tattersall's, in the betting clubs on the racecourse, or at any great centre where ring-men congregate.

**Marking** (thieves), watching or picking out a victim.

**Marmalade, true** (common), excellent. Also "real jam."

**Marm puss** (tailors), the master's wife, or the wife of any other man.

**Marooning** (nautical), explained by quotation.

In the good old times when punishments were heroic, when floggings were everyday occurrences and keelhaulings frequent, *marooning* was a well-known term. It consisted of putting a refractory seaman ashore on a desert island and leaving him there to wait for the next ship, which very often never arrived.—*Globe*.

Admiral Smyth says *marooning* was a custom among former pirates, of putting an offender on shore on some desolate cape or island, with a gun, a few shot, a flask of powder, and a bottle of water. The French *marron* (English "maroon") was an epithet applied to runaway negroes, or to an animal which has become wild, as "un cochon marron," from the Spanish *cimarron*, wild.

**Married on the carpet and the banns up the chimney** (popular), living as man and wife, though not married.

**Marrow**, local in the North of England for a mate or fellow-workman. The word, though almost obsolete, survives in a variety of applications in the sense of one thing being like

another; as in the Scottish phrase, "thae shoon are nae *marrows*," these shoes are not pairs; "his een are no *marrows*," eyes are not alike—*i.e.*, he squints; "my winsome *marrow*," my dear "mate," my love, my sweetheart, my wife. The word is used by Shakespeare in a phrase hitherto unexplained by his numerous critics and commentators. Mark Antony, speaking of the assassination of Cæsar, says that he was "marr'd" with traitors—*i.e.*, likened with traitors—as if he himself had been a traitor.

**Marrow-bones** (popular), the knees; to go by *marrow-bone* stage, to walk.

**Marrowskying**, *vide* MEDICAL GREEK.

**Mary** (printers), an expression used to indicate "nix" or "nought," in throwing with the nine quadrats, should it happen that not a single one is turned up with the nick uppermost.

**Mary Ann** (popular), an effeminate youth or young man, known in America as a Molly. Latin *cinædus*. Also a designation among the secret societies who govern and make rules for Trades Unions and associations of workmen in Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States, of which the objects are to shorten the hours of labour, maintaining and

increasing the rate of wages, &c. "La Marianne," in 1848, was the name of a secret Republican Society in France. The Republic has been thus nicknamed.

**Marygold** (turf), one million sterling.

**Marylebone stage** (popular), the legs. "To go by the *Marylebone stage*," *i.e.*, to walk.

**Mash** (common), elegance, wooing.

They hint that such a niggard *mash*  
They wouldn't very much like;  
They'd look for 'kerchief, scent, or sash,  
Gloves, jewellery, or such like.

"Tis thus the green-eyed one appears,"  
Says Mary Ann, with laughter;

"You see I have the *mash*, my dears,  
The presents may come after."

—*Fun.*

To be on the *mash*, to be making love to; to go on the *mash*, to go about in search of amourettes; to *mash*, to make love to.

A Johnny . . . *masking* a young lady behind the counter of a large Boulogne Chemisier, received an abrupt check.

"Avvy voo, sivvoo play, un necktie—un scarf—of the colours of petite chère mam'selle's eyes—bleu!"

"Ve have not, m'sieur—vare sorree—but ve have ze scarf of ze same colaire as m'sieu's nose—rouge!"—*Sporting Times.*

To make an irresistible impression on girls, to make a girl in love with one.

My name it is Bertie, the little pet page,  
At court I'm considered the go.  
My carriage and grace, my angelic face,  
Quite *mashes* the ladies, you know.

—*Bertie the Masher.*

About the year 1860 *mash* was a word found only in theatrical parlance in the United States. When an actress or any girl on the stage smiled at or ogled a friend in the audience, she was said to *mash* him, and "mashing" was always punishable by a fine deducted from the wages of the offender. It occurred to the writer that it must have been derived from the gypsy *mash* (*masher-ava*), to allure, to entice. This was suggested to Mr. Palmer, a well-known impresario, who said that the conjecture was not only correct, but that he could confirm it, for the term had originated with the C—— family, who were all comic actors and actresses, of Romany stock, who spoke gypsy familiarly among themselves.

**Mashed** (common), in love.

He was *mashed*, so was she, they were married—though sure  
They were each minus oof of their own.  
—*Sporting Times*.

Also *mashed* on.

He also took charge of the saddle-bags, which contained a cake of tobacco and a love-letter, or, as he styled them, "a chunk of baccor and some durned gush from a gal who's got *mashed* on the owner."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Masheen** (tinker), a cat.

**Masher** (common), an exquisite, a swell, a dandy. Imported from America. For origin *vide* MASH.

"Out of the way, fellow!" cried a *masher* the other evening, "or I will give

you a dressing!" "I shouldn't try it on," answered the fellow, as he exhibited a shoulder-of-mutton fist, "or you'll still be the better dressed of the two."—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*.

Formerly termed "flasher, blood, Jack-pudding, macaroni, buck, top-sawyer," &c. Girls call their lover their *masher* or "mash."

So, friends, take my dear-bought advice,  
On girls don't waste your cash,  
If you instead of dark are fair—  
You'll never be their *mash*.  
The darling creature you adore—  
Don't fancy you're her "mark,"  
Or think you e'er her love will gain,  
Unless you're "tall and dark!"  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Mashery** (common), explained by quotation. *Vide* MASHER.

A mass of conceit from the head to the feet,  
A blending of "cheek" and a bashery,  
A hat awry set, and a mild cigarette,  
Appear as the symptoms of *mashery*?  
—*Moonshine*.

**Mashing**, *vide* MASH. In the quotation this has the meaning of elegant and overwhelming.

The Government's prisoner apparently thought that the time had arrived when a little fresh air would be desirable, and hey presto! a new suit of clothes by some extraordinary means or another was conveyed into the prison, and when the Governor went to see Mr. O'Brien that gentleman was seated by his bedside arrayed in quite the "latest" and most *mashing* suit of tweeds.—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*.

**Maskee** (pidgin-English), the commonest interjection in pidgin, meaning all right. In the Chinese "Vocabulary of Words

in Use among the Red-Haired People" (i.e., Europeans), it is spelt *ma-sze-ki*, and defined to mean "all good." The authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary say it is a term meaning "Never mind," *n'importe*, which is indeed the way in which it is generally used. It is also used for "anyway," or "anyhow," and very often in an indeterminate manner.

They talk all same they savvy you—they all can do, *maskee*,  
Such facey man in allo-tim my nevva hab look-see.

My tinkee muchee culio—he allo be China-man,

But állo hab he head cut off, and holdee in he han'.

—*The Ballad of Captain Brown.*

That mighty-time being chop-chop,  
One young man walkey, no can stop,  
*Maskee* snow, *maskee* ice,  
He cally flag wit' chop so nice,  
Top-side galow!

—"Excelsior" in *Pidgin.*

**Maskin** (old cant), coal.

**Mason's maund** (old cant), sham sore, counterfeiting a broken arm by a fall from scaffolding.

**Masoner** (old cant), explained by quotation.

*Masoners* are a set of people that give paper for goods. There are generally three or four of them that go to a fair or market together, where one appears like a farmer or grazier, and the other two as vouchers.—*The Discoveries of J. Poulter alias Baxter.*

**Masse-stapler** (old cant), a rogue disguised as a woman.

**Ma-ta** (pidgin), mother.

"*Ma-ta* hab got one-pieccc chilo. Joss-pidgin-man hab makee dat chilo Clistun (Christian)."

**Matches** (Stock Exchange), Bryant & May Shares. (American cadet), a stripling of a youth. A tall lanky cadet will often be accosted with "Hulloa, Matches!"

**Matching for keeps** (American), matching coins or marbles, odd or even, &c., with the condition that the money won is to be kept.

Ever since that time he has been working industriously, accumulating wealth and fame, and gliding swiftly for office, office of all kinds, and abstaining scornfully from juggling with such youthful pranks as *matching for keeps*. All his leisure time was spent in the exhilarating sprint for fame.—*Daily Inter-Ocean.*

**Matriarchs** (American), old dowagers. The analogy between this word and patriarchs is obvious.

**Matspeak** (church), sixpence from every one for the seats in the cathedral.

**Mauks** (popular), a term of opprobrium for a woman among the lower classes, a prostitute. Provincial, *mawks*, a slattern.

**Mauld** (popular), very drunk. Old provincial, *mauled* up, tired and dirty.

**Mauley** (pugilists), fist. Also "mawlers," "mawleys."

Professor Sloggins, the eminent artist with the *mauleys*, will deliver a series of instructive experiences.—*Sporting Times*.

Also a signature.

**Mauleys, handy with his** (pugilistic), clever at boxing.

"Now," said the Corinthian, "we shall see whether this supposed 'slogger' is as *handy with his mauleys* as my old friend Mr. Jackson."—*Punch*.

**Maunder** (old cant), a beggar, a tramp.

Nor will any go to law,  
With a *maunder* for a straw,  
All which happiness, he brags,  
Is only owing to his rags.

—*History of Bampfylde-Moore Carew*.

From *maund*, a basket, as beg from bag. Reference to a basket occurs in several cant terms used by the mendicant tribe, as bawdy basket, ballad basket. Webster gives *maunder*, to beg, from the French *mendier*; in German cant *mumsen*.

**Maundering broth** (old cant), a scolding.

**Mavorick** (West American), an unbranded motherless calf.

Nowadays you don't dare to clap a brand on a *mavorick* even; and if they catch you altering a brand—hell! that's a penitentiary job.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Maw** (popular), mouth.

**Mawworm** (common), a hypocrite. From Bickerstaff's play of the "Hypocrite" (Hotten).

**Max** (popular and thieves), gin; said to be an abbreviation of "maxime," meaning properly the best gin.

I bes' the cove—the merry old cove,  
Of whose *max* all the rufflers sing;  
And a lushing cove, I think, by Jove,  
Is as great as a sober king!

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

But ere they could perform this pious duty,  
The dying man cried, "Hold! I've got  
my gruel!

Oh! for a glass of *max*!"

—*Byron: Don Juan*.

**Max it, to** (American cadet), to say one's recitation with readiness and style. From *maximé*. Sometimes "to make a cold *max*."

**Mazarine** (popular), a common councilman, from his wearing a *mazarine* blue cloak.

I had procured a ticket through the interest of Mr. —, who was one of the committee for managing the entertainment, and a *mazarine*.—*Annual Register*.

**M.B. waistcoat**, a name said to have been invented by an Oxford tailor for the cassock-waistcoat which the clergy began to wear in the earlier days of the Tractarian movement. It meant *Mark-of-the-Beast waistcoat*.

**Mealer**, in temperance lingo, is a partial abstainer who pledges himself to drink intoxicating liquor only at his *meals*.

**Mean** (American). The word is most peculiar in its application to bad quality.

The night was dark and stormy, about as *mean* a night as was ever experienced in Washington.—*Philadelphia Post*.

(West American), inferior, savage.

There ain't a drop of *mean* blood in him.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Meant** (turf), short for *meant* to win.

**Mean white**, formerly a term of contempt among negroes for white men without landed property (Hotten).

**Measly** (popular), mean, miserable-looking.

**Measured for a funeral sermon, to be** (American), to be near death's door. The allusion is obvious.

He had been *measured for a funeral sermon* three times, he said, and had never used either one of them. He knew a clergyman named Braley who went up into that region with Bright's justly celebrated disease.—*New York Mercury*.

**Meat and drink** (West Indian), a swizzle or cocktail, in which an egg—both white and yolk—is beaten up.

**Med.** (medical students), an abbreviation of medical student.

Common cads, who, it is well known, describe themselves as *Meds.* when in a scrape.—*Sporting Times*.

**Medes and Persians** (Winchester College), jumping on another "man" when he is in bed.

**Medical Greek**, the slang used by medical students at the hospitals.

VOL. II.

**Medicine-Joss** (pidgin), the god of medicine, Jöh-Uong.

No hab got Jöh-Uong-Chü-Su, he *Medicine-Joss* outside China-side.—*Captain Jones and his Medicine Chest*.

**Medico** (common), physician.

"Give him," said the worthy *medico*, "plenty of champagne and oysters." A week or so passed by and the doctor looked in again, finding his patient considerably better. He said to the wife, "I suppose you've been following my advice?" "Well," she replied, "we're not very well off. Can't afford much in the way of champagne and oysters, but I've done the best I could for him with gin and cockles."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Megs** (Stock Exchange), Mexican Railway 1st Preference Stock. (Old cant), guineas.

**Mei-le-kween-kwok** (pidgin, Canton), American, 'Melican.

**Melt, to** (old cant), to spend money.

**Melthog** (tinker), under or inner shirt.

**Melton** (tailors), dry bread. A reference to Melton cloth.

**Member-mug** (old cant), a chamber-pot.

**Mem-sahib** (Anglo-Indian), the (English) lady head of a family. Ma'am, madam.

"This singular example of a hybrid term is the usual respectful designation of an European married lady in the Bengal Presidency" (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

D

**Menagerie, the** (theatrical), the orchestra. So called from the infernal discord occasioned by the tuning of instruments.

**Menavelings**, odd money remaining after the daily accounts are made up at railway booking-offices. *Menavelings* is properly applied to very small sums, as pence or sixpences. From *menave*, an old provincial word for a minnow, as if the money were small fry, and perhaps because all is fish that comes to certain nets.

**Mend fences, to** (American), to mend or repair fences for a man is to attend to his interests. A story of a political agent for a man who was candidate for the governorship of Rhode Island, and who succeeded in dexterously obtaining the vote of a community by paying for the restoration of their place of worship, is described in a Western newspaper as "A judicious emissary—how he repaired fences both of the church and his candidate."

**Men on the fence.** *Vide* FLOATERS.

**Mephisto** (tailors), the foreman.

**Merkin**, hair on the *pucl. mulieb.*, the *p. m.* itself. In American thieves' slang, also hair dye. Hotten says that *merkin* originally meant false hair for a woman's privities. The word

occurs in the poetical works of the Earl of Rochester.

**Mess** (army and navy), to lose the number of one's *mess*, to die.

**Mess, to** (popular), to play with a woman lewdly, to interfere unduly. Costermongers, says Hotten, refer to police supervision as "messing."

**Mesty, mustee, mestez** (Anglo-Indian), a half-caste.

**Metallician** (turf), a racing bookmaker. Bookmakers use metallic books and pencils (Hotten). Little used now.

**Metal rule** (—) (printers). This is a polite way of expressing a vulgar word or oath. *Metal rule* in speech, and "—" in print would be used. Thus a man in irritation would say, "You be *metal-ruled*."

**Mets** (American). In sporting circles the members of the Metropolitan or New York baseball club are called *Mets*. The term is extending, so that probably ere long a New Yorker will be generally known as a *Met*. (Stock Exchange), Metropolitan Railway Ordinary Stock.

**Met, the**, common abbreviation among East-enders for the Metropolitan Music Hall.

**Mew-mew** (tailors), a derisive ejaculation meaning tell it to some one else, "tell that to the marines."



**Mia-mia** (up-country Australian), a bed, pronounced *my-my*, rest. *Mia-mia* or *gunyah* is the hut the Australian blackfellow constructs for himself by making a sloping screen of leafy branches. It has passed into white men's slang. Australians say, "I'm going to my *mia-mia*," meaning "I'm going to bed" or "going to rest."

Within our leafy *mia-mia* then we crept,  
And ere a man could fifty count we slept.  
—*Keighley Goodchild: On the Tramp.*

**Mickey** (American), a common word for an Irishman, the same as Paddy.

**Micky** (up-country Australian), a term for a wild bull, said to have originated in Gippsland, Victoria. Probably from the association of *bulls* with Micekeys or Irishmen. *Micky*, by the way, has nothing in common with Michael, as generally supposed, but is derived from *mike*, which see.

The rope after passing through two or three pulleys is fastened round the barrel of a windlass outside. It tightens the *micky*, feels the strain, and gives a great leap.—*A. C. Grant.*

**Middies** (Stock Exchange), Midland Railway Ordinary Stock. Middy is a common term for a midshipman.

**Middle**, an old cant term for finger. *Vide* Breton's "Court and Country," 1618. (Popular), the pud. fem., whence the sayings, "virtus non semper in

medio," "in medio feminae et pisces sunt meliores." "Virtus in medio, as the devil said when he coupled with a harlot."

**Middleman** (thieves), explained by quotation.

And what is worse, there doesn't seem to be any *middleman* in these degenerate days, who can get stolen property back for you, as in days of yore.—*Bird, o' Freedom.*

(Tailors), the immediate employer of workmen, who contracts for others.

. . . The hot haste with which they were stitching away, so as to be able to earn at the rate of a shilling a day of the *middleman*, who paid them the magnificent sum of sevenpence for making a pair of gentleman's trousers.—*J. Greenwood: Shadows on the Blind.*

**Middle pie** (popular), the stomach.

**Middling** (tailors), I don't think so, I don't believe what you say.

**Midgic** (tinker), a shilling.

**Miesli, misli** (tinker), to go, to come, to send. The origin of "mizzle," begone. It is not generally, or in fact at all, known how extensively *Shelta* is understood among vagrants even in London. It has probably been the medium by which many Celtic words have passed into English. *Misli* means in *Shelta* not only to go, but to transfer by going or transit, hence to send, and also to send a message or write. *E.g.*, "*Misli* to my bewer," write to my woman, or wife; "My deal is

*mistin* to krady in the kiena,"  
I am going to stay in the  
house. Also to rain.

**Mike** (tailors), to do a *mike*, to pretend to be working or hang about. The term is also used as a verb. A corruption of old English *mich* (still used by printers), to skulk or shirk work.

**Mild** (common), inferior, applied to a feeble attempt. *Vide* DRAW IT MILD.

**Mild bloater** (popular), weak young man who has pretensions to being horsey.

**Miles' boy** (tailors), a very knowing lad in receipt of much information.

**Miles' boy is spotted** (common), a saying addressed to any one in a printing-office who begins to spin a yarn. "Miles' boy" was a young gentleman attached to the last coach which started from Hampstead, and was celebrated for his faculty of diverting the passengers with anecdotes and tales. *Miles' boy is spotted*, we know all about Miles' boy.

**Milestonemonger** (common), one who likes roaming, a tramp.

Of all men I should be the last to utter a harsh word against the most inveterate *milestonemonger* that ever fled from his family to enjoy the sweets of freedom.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag & Co.*

**Mile, to** (society), to ride on the Ladies' Mile in Hyde Park.

At six o'clock within the Park,  
Midst beauty, rank, and style,  
I canter on my bonny bay,  
Adown the Ladies' Mile.

*I mile—I mile—*

When riding down the Mile.

—*Ballad: The Ladies' Mile.*

**Milk hole** (Winchester), the hole formed by the rush of water through lock gates.

**Milk horse** (racing), a horse entered at a race to make money on, and always scratched before the affair comes off. *Vide* TO MILK.

**Milk shake** (American), explained by quotation.

The latest craze in New York is the use of milk in numerous ways, and the dairy trade is enjoying a boom in consequence. The greatest calls for the lacteal fluid are from physicians and their patients, and from saloons and drug stores, where the *milk shake* has become a favourite beverage.—*Sporting Times.*

**Milk, to** (popular), to bleed, to obtain money from by coaxing, &c. (Turf), to lay against a horse fraudulently, *i.e.*, when the bettor has full knowledge that the horse is not meant to win, or has the power and intention of preventing him from so doing.

**Milky ones** (popular), white linen rags.

**Mill** (popular and thieves), the treadmill.

Was you never on the mill?—*Dickens : Oliver Twist.*

(Common), a fight.

Quite cautiously the mill began,  
For neither knew the other's plan.  
—*Ainsworth : Rookwood.*

The Mill was the old Insolvent Debtors' Court.

Mill, to (popular), to fight; to pound with the fists, as beating corn with a stone.

My Lord related all his feats in London . . . how he had milled a policeman.—*Thackeray : Shabby-Genteel Story.*

From *malle*, to hammer, stamp or beat; *malle*, a hammer; Latin *malleus*; Aryan root *mar*. (Thieves and vagabonds), to kill, as "to mill a bleating cheate," to kill a sheep.

Mill a ken, to (thieves), to commit burglary.

To mill each *ken* let Cove bring then,  
Through Ruffmans, Jague, or Laund.  
—*The English Rogue described in the Life of Meriton Latroon.*

Also to steal. Probably the old gypsy mill or miller, to convey away, to take. "Old Ruffler mill the quire-cuffin," *i. e.*, the devil take the Justice of the Peace.

Mill-clapper (old cant), a woman's tongue.

Milled (thieves), a reference to the treadmill.

I shouldn't have been milled, if it hadn't been for her advice . . . and what's six weeks of it?—*Dickens : Oliver Twist.*

Miller (old cant), a murderer, housebreaker. (Common), to

drown the miller, is, according to Bartlett, to put too much water in the flour in making bread, which he says is "doubtless an English expression." At all events, he adds, that "putting the miller's eye out" is a phrase used when too much liquid is put to a dry or powdery substance. As water-mills are far more common in the United States than wind-mills, Mr. Bartlett might easily have found an apter illustration for the saying than that which he has adopted, and left both England and the baker out of the question. The water is said to "drown the miller" when the mill-wheels are rendered useless for work in flood time by superabundance of the fluid. The saying was exemplified by the American miller, whose wife in his opinion was a great poetess—who, seeing that the useful mill-stream had become a raging, useless torrent, looked up to it, her eye in a fine frenzy rolling, and exclaimed—

"This here water  
Comes down much faster than it ought  
ter!"

A gentleman had mixed his toddy, when a teetotaler sitting beside him said, in a deep voice:

"There's death in that glass!"

"What did you say?" replied the other.

"There's death in that glass!" repeated the cold-water man, in a still more sepulchral tone.

The gentleman looked at his toddy inquiringly, ladled some out, sipped it slowly to taste it better, and at length said:

"You're right—you're right. I believe

I have *drowned the miller*," and at once proceeded to strengthen his liquor.—*Scraps*.

To give one the *miller*, to engage a person in conversation till a sufficient number of persons have gathered together to set upon the victim with stones, dirt, garbage, &c. *Vide* TO MILL. Generally to hoot at, to handle roughly, to ill-treat.

The special correspondent of the *Evening News* appears to have been brutally maltreated at Exeter. Future generations of correspondents will do well to reflect upon his "two lovely black eyes," and to pause ere working up ultra-sensational matter about this city, whose inhabitants are of the rough and ready order. Upon one occasion they did not spare their bishop—the present Bishop of London—who fairly "got the *miller*" whilst addressing a meeting at the Victoria Hall.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Miller, to** (old cant), to rob or steal. (Gypsy), to convey away, remove, involving stealing. *Miller* in gypsy means also to mix, mingle, add up, count, colour, adjust. Hindu, *milana*. *Vide* TO MILL A KEN.

**Milling** (popular), fighting.

With Tommy Sayers, too, I've felt  
To box I would be willing;  
I should have won his cups and belt—  
I stand Ax at *milling*.

—*Bill Sykes: The Coiner's Song*.

(West America), explained by quotation.

He plunges into the fray with as much mastery of himself as possible, singling out the finest-conditioned head, wasting no balls, and, instead of keeping the frightened game on the run, executing the cowboy's device to check a stampede of cattle, namely, *milling*.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

**Milling cove** (popular), prize-fighter.

Two *milling coves*, each wide awake,  
Were backed to fight for heavy stake.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Mill, in the** (army), to be a prisoner in the guardroom.

**Mill-ken** (old cant), housebreaker.

Mr. Wild, with much solemnity, rejoined "that the same capacity which qualifies a *mill-ken*, a bridle-cull, or a buttock-and-file to arrive at any degree of eminence in his profession, would likewise raise a man in what the world esteems a more honourable calling."—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

**Mill-lay** (thieves), burglary. *Vide* TO MILL A KEN.

**Mil-mil** (Anstralian bush slang), see. *Mil-mil* is a blackfellow's word that the whites have incorporated into their slang, principally in the pidgin-English in which the whites carry on their conversation with the blacks.

"Here, Mahmy," said one to his chief  
"here that been cut bim head off. You  
*mil-mil* blood."

I shuddered. There, now that it was pointed out to me, on the very stone I had sat down on when stripping to search for the body, the blood-stains were plain. They spattered the dead leaves and stained the grass stalks.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

**Mill the glaze, to** (thieves), break the window. *Vide* TO MILL A KEN.

**Mill the quod, to** (thieves), to break away from jail.

**Milltog** (theatrical), a shirt.  
From the tinker *melthog*.

**Millwash** (tailors), vest canvas.

**Mimicking mugger** (theatrical).  
From obsolete to *mime*, to mimic, play the buffoon. "A buffoon, who attempts to excite laughter or derision, by acting or speaking in the manner of another, a mean and servile imitator" (Ogilvie). Of this class are the ape-like animals who, in burlesquing the strongly marked peculiarities of eminent artists, hold them up to derision and contempt. "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king," and amongst mimics, the monkey is legitimate monarch.

**Mind your eye** (popular), take care.

**Mind your p's and q's** (popular), observe the details of etiquette. Of *mind your p's and q's* Mr. Edward Fitzgerald, in the Australian Printers' Keepsake, writes, "This advice has a most distinct smack of its origin and extraction, and is now in general use in society which is probably unaware of the source of its obligation. Most unmistakably it originated in the pardonable confusion with which a beginner is likely to treat 'characters' so much alike as *p* and *q*, when first making their acquaintance in a reversed form. It is a near relation of 'to speak

by the card,' to which it has a preferential claim on those who endeavour to fulfil the ceremonial law of politeness—etiquette."

**Mingo** (Harvard University), a chamber-pot. An amusing story in this connection is told of Harvard. "Many years ago, some students wishing to make a present to their tutor, Mr. Flynt, called on him, informed him of their intention, and requested him to select a gift which would be acceptable to him. He replied that he was a single man, that he already had a well-filled library, and in reality wanted nothing. The students, not at all satisfied with this answer, determined to present him with a silver chamber-pot. One was accordingly made of the appropriate dimensions and inscribed with these words:—

"Mingere cum bombis  
Res est saluberrima lumbis."

On the morning of Commencement Day this was borne in procession, in a morocco case, and presented to the tutor. Tradition does not say with what feelings he received it, but it remained for many years at a room in Quincy, where he was accustomed to spend his Saturdays and Sundays, and finally disappeared about the beginning of the Revolutionary War. It is supposed to have been carried to England.

**Minor** (Harvard University), a water-closet. This term is peculiar to Harvard and is of classical derivation, from *minor*, smaller, "house" being understood.

**Minor-clergy** (popular), young chimney-sweeps.

**Mint** (old cant), gold. Also a sanctuary in Southwark for those who fled from their creditors. Hence "minters," the inhabitants there.

**Misapplication.** If the essence of slang be the misuse of words, some of the terms in circulation amongst many journalists, chiefly American, are slang of the most brilliant type. The following amusing "Proscription," which appeared in the *Chicago Post*, instances a few of the more glaring examples:—

"Hereafter every reporter in this office shall be personally decapitated, and shall lose his situation who shall be guilty of the use of any of the following barbarisms of language:—Postmortemed, for dissected; suicided, infanticided, accidentated; indignated, for got mad; disremembered, disrecollect, disforgot, &c.; abluted, for washed himself, herself, or itself, as the case may be; sporn, for spared; spondulix, for ducats; catastrophed, scrumpitious, recepted, planted, or funerated, for buried. And any editor, reporter, correspondent, scribe, or dead-beat shall, as an additional penalty, be put on half pay who shall write 'on last evening,' 'on this morning,' 'on yesterday,' or 'on ten o'clock this forenoon.'"

**Miserere seats**, in many churches and chapels seats so constructed

that if the occupier went to sleep when sitting on one of them he tumbled off.

**Misfit** (tailors), said of an awkward man, badly built.

**Mish** (thieves), a shirt. From "commission," which see.

**Mish it them** (tinker), hit it hard!

**Mishtopper** (thieves), a coat. *Vide* MISH.

**Mislain** (tinker), rain, to rain. *Mislain* (or *miesli*, *misl'i*), in the Shelta or tinkers' dialect, also means to go. *Vide* TO MIZZLE.

**Miss** (printers). In printers' parlance a *miss* is an omission to lay on a sheet in feeding a printing machine.

**Miss Baxter** (American), a person occasionally referred to in New England in reference to those who are "too previous," or too prompt in love-making, &c.

There was a nice young lady named *Miss Baxter*,  
Refused a fine young man before he axed her.

**Miss one's figure, to** (common), to miss a chance, to make a mistake.

**Miss the tip, to** (circus), to fall short of an order, suggestion, intention, or object. This is used generally in slang, but in exhibitions it has a special application to the performer not

understanding or catching the tip or word which indicates that he must act.

**Missy baba** (Anglo-Indian), a young lady; a term borrowed from the natives, *baba* being meant for baby. "Is Miss Smith at home?" was asked of a native servant by a visitor. "No, *Missy baba* in tub eating mango," was the answer.

**Mistura God help 'em** (medical), the title of an *omnium gatherum* of medicines, generally the collected dregs of several bottles, said to have been given as a last resource on the off-chance of some one of the many drugs having a beneficial (!) effect. From a story that a certain man who had a valuable mare apparently dying, gave her all the old odds and ends of medicine in his garret, labelled "*Fiat mistura, God help and cure her!*" The mare recovered, but, "singular to relate," every disease for which the medicines were intended came out on her one after the other!

**Mitten** (American), to give the *mitten*, to dismiss as a lover. Hotten confines the word to Canada. In Germany a discarded suitor is said to get a basket.

Had I only got her glove—  
Without a g—I'd have her love.  
But the lilting jilting kitten,  
Has bestowed on me a *mitten*.

—*The Sorrows of Sam.*

Possibly from the old custom of throwing the glove down as a sign of defiance, or derisively bestowing a *mitten* instead of a glove as a keepsake. M. E. Cobham Brewer, in *Notes and Queries*, suggests the Latin *mittere*, to send about your business. There is an obsolete adjective *mittent*, sending forth. Webster gives the phrase as colloquial English.

**Mittens** (pugilistic), boxing-gloves.

**Mivies** (popular), landladies.

A lot of old *mivies* gone queer with the greens.

—*Punch.*

**Mizzler** or **rum mizzler** (popular), one clever at effecting an escape, or getting out of a difficulty. *Vide TO MIZZLE.*

**Mizzle, to** (common), to go away, decamp, vanish.

"Come, come," the Saint answer'd, "you very well know,

The young man's no more his than your own to bestow—

Touch one button of his if you dare, Nick—no! no!

Cut your stick, sir,—come, *mizze!* be off with you! go!"

The Devil grew hot—"If I do I'll be shot!  
An' you come to that, Cuthbert, I'll tell you what's what,

He has asked us to dine here, and go we will not!"

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

From the Shelta or tinkers' dialect (Celtic), *miesli, mislain*, to go. In the same tongue *needy mizzler*, a tramp.

“*To mizzle*—synonymous with drizzle—thick, fine, persistent downfall of moisture from a foggy sky. About George IV., and afterwards William IV., the vulgar punsters of the time indulged themselves in the punning witticisms that pleased the unfastidious public of the time: ‘First they reigned, and then they *mizzled*.’ The point of the joke consisted in the double meaning of the word *mizzle*, which signifies to disappear silently, to vanish. Thomas Hood used the word in the same sense.”

And then one *mizzling* Michael night,  
The lout he *mizzled* too.  
—*Laughter from Year to Year*.

### Mob (thieves), gang.

Being with the nice *mob* (gang) you may be sure what I learned. I went out at the game three or four times a week, and used to touch almost every time.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Up-country Australian), a herd, a flock.

Occasionally they passed through a *mob* standing on the roadside, and John was greatly amused at seeing some of the young calves and steers advancing boldly to them with many airs of assumed anger.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

(Popular), a young woman, a corruption of *mab*.

### Mobs (thieves), companions.

**Mobsman** (thieves), pickpocket. Getting obsolete.

My cousin's a fence, with a crib in the Mint;  
My sister goes out with a *mobsman* so smart.

—*J. Greenwood: A Night in a Workhouse*.

**Mockered** (common), dirtied, defiled. Hotten defines this as “holey, marked unpleasantly.” It is the gypsy *mukkado*, often pronounced *mockerdo*, or *mockered*, meaning smeared, defiled, dirtied, spotted, and sometimes “painted.”

**Mods**, short for Moderations, the intermediate examination at Oxford.

**Mofussil** (Anglo-Indian), the provinces, or the country stations and districts as distinguished from the Presidency, or the rural localities of a district as contradistinguished from the Sudder or chief station. The word (Hind. from Arab.) *mu-fassal*, means properly “separate,” and hence provincial (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Moging** (tailors), telling an untruth.

**Moisten.** *Vide* CHAFFER.

**Moke**, the costermonger's name for a donkey, first given in anger or contempt, or as an objurgation to urge the animal to go on; but now more commonly used in affection for the useful beast. “It originally signified a pig, from the Gaelic *muich*, but has long ceased to have the



objectionable meaning among the class who use it." Another derivation is from Swedish *moka*, quarrelsome, obstinate, sullen. Also *mocka*, dung; both terms of abuse.

What the horse is to the predatory Arab, the donkey is to the costermonger—his all-in-all. The "coster" would sooner sell his wife in Smithfield, if the law would permit, than "swap" his *moke* at the cattle market.—*Diprose: London Life*.

**Moko**, a name given by sportsmen to pheasants killed by mistake during September, before the pheasant-shooting season comes in. They pull out their tails, and roundly assert that they are no pheasants at all; but *mokos* (Hotten). *Moko* is probably from "mock," or a humorous corruption of *macaw*.

**Moles** (up-country Australian), moleskin breeches.

Though our pants are *moles*, and apparently made

With the aid of a tomahawk;

Though we are not in fashion's garb arrayed,

We can revel in tea and talk.

—*Keightley Goodchild: While the Billy Boils*.

**Moll** (thieves), a girl, woman.

At the head of the letter the following was written across the page: "Poison the *moll*."—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

A female companion, wife, or mistress.

The party congratulated him that his *moll* would be in good hands.—*Evening News*.

This word, from its resemblance to the nickname for Mary, is assumed to be the same. Compare with "poll," "polled up." It has been suggested that it owes its form to the gypsy Hindu *māl*, which means a female friend or ally.

**Moll-sack**, a reticule.

**Molled** (popular), in company with a woman.

**Moll-hook** (thieves), a female pickpocket.

**Moll-rowing**. Hotten says that this means "out on the spree in company with so-called 'gay women,' in allusion to the amatory serenadings of the London cats." It may be derived, and probably was, from *Moll*, and *row*, a noise. There appears to have been also, nearly a century ago, a very noted woman named Moll Roe, who is often alluded to in the "fast" literature of the time, and who formed the subject of a song; but whether this was not a pseudonym borrowed from the term, we are not informed.

Or whistle Moll Roe to a pig.

—*Irish Song*.

**Moll-slavey** (old cant), maid-servant.

**Moll, to, molling** (common), to go with women, to act effeminately. To coddle up or cuddle. Dutch, *mallen*, to play the fool, to behave one's self wantonly. *Malloot*, a foolish girl or wench.

**Molly** (printers), "Mary." Practically a blank in jeffing with the nine quadrats, when no nicks appear uppermost in the quadrats thrown; hence no count. (London slang), a young sodomite.

**Molly Cotton-tail** (American), a she-rabbit.

"Which of the girls did the Rabbit marry?" asked the little boy dubiously.

"I did year tell un 'er name," replied the old man, with a great affectation of interest, "but look like I done gone en fergit it off 'n my mine. Ef I don't disremember," he continued, "hit wuz *Miss Molly Cotton-tail*, en I speck we better let it go at dat."  
—*Uncle Remus*.

**Molocher** (popular), a cheap hat.

**Molo-man** (pidgin), *i.e.*, *moro*, a Moor, a negro.

**Molto cattivo** (circus, theatre, Punch and Judy, &c.), very bad, doing badly.

**Molungeon** (American). Mr. Henry A. Wise once said, in the Legislature of Virginia, that a mulatto was the offspring of the young gentleman heir-apparent of an estate with one of the family or house servants, but that the child of a female field-labourer by a Yankee pedlar was a *molungeon*.

**Monarch** (popular and thieves), a man's signature or name. Literally the king, number one. Evidently a term suggested by exalted ideas of one's self-importance. This explanation is

supported by the Italian cant term *monarco*, signifying I, myself, which has given the French *monarque*, same meaning. Also *montagna*, *mia madre*.

**Mondayish** (popular), disinclined for work, Monday being a day for amusement among workmen. (Clerical), used up, tired. A phrase that has its origin in the clergyman's supposed state of fatigue on Monday, after the work of Sunday.

**Moniker**, **monacher** (popular, thieves, and tinker), a man's signature or name. A corruption of "monarch," which see.

When the "box-man" reached out the tools, the new comer seized a pick-axe, which was immediately claimed by another man. The new arrival quietly said, "There's my *moniker* upon it."—*Evening News*.

**Monk** (printers). Mr. Edward Fitzgerald, in "The Australian Printers' Keepsake," writes:—"Sometimes a *monk* is the object of solicitude, an unsightly blackness caused by 'furniture' showing, or undistributed ink. It is a saying manifestly originating with the venerable Caxton himself, and evidently alluding to the unwelcome intrusion of the gentlemen of the Scriptorium, near which portion of Westminster Abbey Caxton commenced his English labours." *Monk* is also applied to a proof which is too black, and "friar" when it is too light or grey.

From the respective colours of their garments. *Vide* FRIAR.

(American), abbreviation of *monkeying*, trifling with. *Vide* To MONKEY.

**Monkey** (tinker), the country. Adopted into common canting, and used especially by Punch and Judy men, itinerants, &c.

**Monkey** (turf), five hundred pounds. The cry not unfrequently heard in the ring of "The field a *monkey*," means that the layer is willing to bet 500 even against any one horse in the race.

Later on 400 to 500 was accepted, and finally seven *monkeys*.—*Sporting Times*.

(Common), to get one's *monkey* up, to rouse his anger. Hotten says "a man is said to have the *monkey* up, or the *monkey* on his back, when he is out of temper." Probably in allusion originally to the evil spirit which was supposed to be always present with a man. A variant in some parts is "to stroke the black dog down." *Monkey-board*, the step behind an omnibus on which the conductor stands. (Legal), *monkey* with a long tail, a mortgage. (Popular), a short jacket, a hod for mortar or bricks.

'Pon me sowl, I was sick, sore, and tired of goin' up and down the latter wid that ould *monkey* on me shoulder.—*T. Browne: Gilligan's on the Spree*.

(Nautical), the vessel in which a mess receives its allowance of

grog. Sucking the *monkey*, explained by quotation.

"Do you know what sucking the *monkey* means?" "No, sir." "Well, then, I'll tell you; it's a term used among seamen for drinking rum out of cocoa-nuts, the milk having been poured out, and the liquor substituted."—*Marryat: Peter Simple*.

Also drinking generally, or abstracting liquor from a cask by sucking with a straw.

Her late lamented was only a low customs' officer, who had been bowled out sucking the *monkey*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Monkey catcher** (West Indian).

Amongst the Jamaican negroes this signifies a cute, shrewd, and level-headed individual—one not too scrupulous in his methods, and who adds a spice of cunning to his cleverness. If a piece of work, or any matter requires special care and attention in its execution, they say, "*Soffly catch monkey*," meaning, take care, exercise tact, don't go blundering, that matter requires finesse and judgment to carry it through. Looked at in any light, the phrase is a curious one. In the first place, it is a good illustration of a certain rough and elementary shrewdness in the negro character; and further, is an example of the hold which the memory of African life still retains upon them, inasmuch as there are no monkeys indigenous to Jamaica, and the phrase is most likely of African origin.

**Monkey on one's back, to get a** (popular), to get out of temper.

**Monkeys** (printers), another expression used by pressmen to denote a compositor by way of retaliation for calling them "pigs."

**Monkey shines** (popular), eccentricities, queer actions.

How can human beings be guilty of such *monkey shines*.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Monkey, to** (American), to play tricks, to trifle, to fool with, to tamper with, obviously from the mischievousness and trickiness of these animals.

It had on it, "Please don't *monkey* with this Indian-rubber trunk. It has loaded guns and pistols, and it won't stand any *monk*."—*New York Mercury*.

Also to make, effect, execute in any way. Used jestingly or sarcastically.

Andrew Jones he wuz er artis'  
On he high an lofty scale,  
Fo' he *monkeyed* wid de ceilin'  
An' de white-wash brush an' pail.  
—S. Keller.

"Wall, old hoss," I says to Meissonier, "how much do you git a squar' yard fer *monkeyin'* such a pictur as thet ar'?"—*The Hoosier in Europe*.

**Monopolises the macaroon** (masher), a new way of saying it takes the cake.

"Devilish fine gal, deah boy."  
"Yaas, quite takes the cake, Cholly."  
"Bah Jove, yass, *monopolises the macaroon*, don't cher know."—*Conversation Overheard in a Theatre*.

**Mon. os.** (Westminster School), abbreviation of *monitor ostii*,

the Queen's scholar of the second election, who announces the hour in Latin at the close of school.

**Mons** (Winchester College). From the Latin *mons*, a mountain, a heap or crowd, a pile of anything.

**Month** (city), "a bad attack of the end of the *month*," in the city, is to have run through one's funds about the 20th, and to have to borrow for the remaining ten days.

**Mooch** (common), the robbers' *mooch* is that peculiar well-known step or striding walk of the brigand or bravo in a melodrama. On the *mooch*, *vide* TO MOOCH.

**Mooch, mouch, to** (general), to sponge, to slink away and allow others to pay for your entertainment, to look out for any articles or circumstances which may be turned to a profitable account; also for scraps of food, old clothes, watching in the streets for odd jobs, horses to hold. Loafing about in quest of anything that may turn up in the shape of amusement, strolling about to look at the girls. Also begging, explained by quotations.

He may while away the tedium of the tramp by *mooching*. *Mooching* is the art of getting what things you want to eat at different houses. A successful moocher must be a man of some imagination who can not only lie, but lie in a logical and

plausible manner; that is not to be caught by the most rigid cross-examination.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Here I assume the proper *mooching* pose—stoop my head, bend my shoulders, . . . to look at, I am the incarnation of all that is forlorn; and I tell you I cannot get to the end of Bishopsgate Street without being stopped by a dozen people, all of whom thrust something into my hand.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

To *mooch* is from old English *mooch*, *mich*, to creep softly about, to skulk, stroll, idle about, pick while strolling.

**Moocher, moucher** (popular), a street thief, a beggar.

My friend, the tramp, admitted with some excusable pride that he was considered in the profession a successful *moocher*.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Also one who "sponges" on acquaintances; one who slinks away and allows others to pay for his drink.

**Moochy** (Anglo-Indian), a man who works in leather in any way. The name of a low caste. Hindu, *mochi*. In English gypsy, leather is called *morchea* or *mortchey*.

**Moolvee** (Anglo-Indian), a judge or doctor of the law. Arabic *maulavi*, from the same root as *mullā* (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

A pundit in Bengal or *molavee*

May daily see a carcass burn;

But you can't furnish, for the soul of ye,

A dirge sans ashes and an urn?

—*N. B. Halhed: Anglo-Indian Glossary.*

**Moon** (thieves), a month or month's imprisonment.

They ask the reeler if I was known, and he said no, so I was sent to Maidstone Street (prison) for two *moon*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Moonack** (West Indian), probably of African origin. A mythical animal known to negroes only. To meet it, is to be doomed to madness or some lingering disease.

**Moon-cursor** (old cant), a link-boy or one that under colour of lighting people robs them. Also termed a "glim-jack."

**Mooney** (nautical), not quite intoxicated, but sufficiently so to be unfit for duty.

**Moonlight** (American University), to make a rush for *moonlight* is to attempt to get the prize for elocution.

**Moonlight fitting** (common), leaving a house by night to avoid paying the rent. *Vide FLY-BY-NIGHT.*

**Moonlighters** (common), men in Ireland who carry out sentences of secret societies against individuals and perform their work of violence by night.

The road on either side is bounded with a low wall composed of ragged little slabs of stone, loosely laid and loop-holed to an extent that would delight the heart of an Irish *moonlighter*.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Moon-rakers** (nautical), sails above the sky-sails.

**Moonshee** (Anglo-Indian), a secretary, a reader, an interpreter, a

writer. It is commonly applied by Europeans specifically to a native teacher of languages, *i.e.*, Arabic, Persian, and Urdu.

Its authenticity was fully proved by a Persian *moonshee*, who translated.—*Mill: History*.

**Moonshine** (common), deception, nonsense, humbug. (Old), gilded *moonshine*, sham bills of exchange.

**Moonshiner** (American), a smuggler, illicit distiller.

As both brothers had now escaped to the mountains, which are filled with *moonshiners*, it was thought that the Burrows had made good their escape.—*Chicago Inter Ocean*.

**Moonshiny** (common), deceptive.

The *National* publishes an extraordinary, and, of course, a very *moonshiny* summary of General Boulanger's programme as confided by the deputy for the Nord to a friend on Sunday night.—*Sporting Times*.

**Moose-face** (American thieves), a rich, ugly-faced man.

**Mop** (common), an habitual drunkard. From an obvious metaphor. On the *mop*, continually drinking. It may be interesting to remark that *mop* in its proper sense is from old French *mappe*, Latin *mappa*, a napkin. "Some suppose *mop* to be of Celtic origin, as we have Welsh *mopa* and *mop*, Irish *moipal*; but it is probable that these are from the English" (Skeat). It may be added that there are a great many Celtic words which have Aryan roots,

and, of course, a resemblance to Saxon or English.

**Moper** (popular), a deserter. From *mope*, a spiritless person.

**Mopped the floor** (American), a common slang phrase, signifying that one man has thrashed another so completely as to have taken him like a broom or a mop, and swept or cleaned the floor with him. In speaking of Charles A. Dana, of the *New York Sun*, who is noted for the severity and savageness of his attacks, an admiring Western editor wrote, "Uncle Dana proceeded to mop the floor with his opponent."

When Smith  
Came on to fight, he took him by the heels,  
And *mopped the stage* with him until 'twas  
clean. —*Brand New Ballads*.

At last the crisis came, when one fine day,  
For some imagined fault, the boarder said  
Unto the waiter, that unless he stirred  
A little quicker, he would bung his eye,  
And take him by the legs, instantlerly,  
And *wipe the floor* with him.  
—*Est Modus in Rebus*.

**Moppy** (common), tipsy. From "to mop" or "mop up," which see. Some of the numerous synonyms are, "slewed, queer, tosticated, so so, been in the sun, muggy, murky, muzzy, fresh, glorious, bright in the eye, dull in the eye, overtaken, overshot, overdone, done over, lushy, tight, foggy, hazy, swipecy, lumpy, obfuscated, groggy, ploughed, bosky, buffy, in liquor, far gone, sewed up, mooney, half seas over, disguised; drunk as an

emperor, as a wheel-barrow, as David's sow, as a fish, as a lord, as a piper, as a fiddler," and the old expression "has a drop in his eye." "Boozy" and "hoodman" are now much in vogue among "mashers." The writer has seen a collection of nearly 300 synonyms for drunkenness, mostly American.

**Mops** (provincial). Statute fairs or "statties" are held, where servants seek to be hired. After the statute fair, a second is held for the benefit of those not engaged. This is called a *mop*, as it *mops* or wipes up the refuse of the statute fair, carrying away the dregs of the servants left.

There is hardly a clergyman or a schoolmaster in the Northern and Midland Counties who is not able to make out the strongest of cases against *mops*, "roasts," and "statties"—fairs or quasi-fairs, which were formerly very useful for the opportunities they afforded to farmers and housewives for annually hiring labourers and domestic servants.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Mop up, to** (nautical), a metaphor, to drink or empty a glass. Also to whisk up, as wiping up with a mop.

The fourth I hooked but lost, and by that time the rest of the capricious tribe simultaneously ceased rising, and refused to be tempted. Had I been there earlier, I might possibly have *mopped up* the entire row.—*Sir Henry Pottinger: Trout Fishing*.

**Mopusses** (popular), cash, coin, money.

He that has the *mopusses*  
May buy diamonds and topazes.

—*Punch*.

VOL. II.

Possibly a corruption of "mops," grimaces, faces. Compare with French slang *faces*, for coin. This is, of course, mere conjecture.

**Mora** (Anglo-Indian), a stool. In common use among the English in India.

**Moral** (popular). "That's a *moral*," equivalent to "that's a certainty." Short for a *moral* certainty.

They must come a cropper soon,  
They muttered—*that's a moral*.  
—*Punch*.

**Morfydite** (American), a maritime pronunciation for hermaphrodite, generally applied to the so-called hermaphrodite brig, a vessel between a brig and a schooner.

**Morris, to** (old cant), to hang dangling in the air, to be hanged. (Theatrical), to make oneself scarce. Alluding in both senses to the quick motions of the legs in the *morris* (or Moorish) dance. Also used by tailors with a like signification.

**Mort** (canting), a woman. The same in old gypsy. Hindu, *mahar*, a wife, woman. It is not improbable that the French word *motte* (*pucl. mul.*), which has long been common in England for a woman, and that which the French word expresses, has caused the gypsies to add the *t*. The gypsies

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very commonly use *minj* for a woman. Tissot, in his work on Hungary, innocently mentions that *gali minj* (English-gypsy *kālo minj*) means a dark girl! This derivation is more probable than that from the Welsh *modryb*, a matron; and *moryun*, a virgin, given by C. J. Ribton Turner in his "History of Vagrants and Vagrancy" (1887).

**Mortar-board** (University), the square cap forming part of the academical dress of all members of the university. Said to be a corruption of the French *mortier* cap worn by Presidents of Courts.

"And as your skill," resumed Mr. Tozer, "has been exercised in defence of my person . . . I will overlook your offence in assuming that portion of the academical attire, to which you gave the offensive epithet of *mortar-board*."—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

It may seem strange that an educated gentleman prefers to wander in the streets of Oxford in the evening, clad in horsey "checks" or bookmaker's stripes, in preference to the tattered gown and battered *mortar-board*, constituting the costume of an undergraduate.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also *mortar*.

Some of them wore a *mortar* on their heads.—*Fuller: Pisgah*.

'**Mos** (printers), an abridgment of the word "animosity," very often used by printers. "To show no 'mos," is to express no grudge against a companion.

**Moses**, a man that for a consideration declares himself to

be the father of another man's child. Grose says, "A man is said to stand *Moses* when he has another man's bastard child fathered upon him, and he is obliged by the parish to maintain it." This may be connected with a phrase given by Cotgrave, "*Holie Moses*, whose ordinarie counterfeit having on either side of the head an eminence or luster, arising somewhat in the forme of a horne, hath imboldened a prophane author to stile cuckolds *parents de Moyse*" (Hall). The *Moses* of Michael Angelo has decided horns, probably based on the head of Jupiter Ammon.

**Mosh, to** (thieves), dining at an eating-house, and leaving without paying. Also doing the *mosh* on the quiet. A corruption of "mooch," which see.

**Moshkeneer, to** (common), to pawn an article for more than it is worth. There are watches and articles of jewellery made for the special purpose of swindling, and which appear to be of solid gold or silver, but which are only covered with thin rolled metal. Probably from the Yiddish or German-Hebrew *mos*, money, and *kenner*, one who knows, one who is "fly," as in the word *kenner-fetzer*, a thieves' butcher. The word *mos*, it may be observed, has in slang taken a wide range, and is quite applicable not only to money or



gold coin, but also to any kind of valuables.

**Mosque** (old cant), a church.

**Moss-backs** (American), old fogies, "fossils," men behind the times. People who are "groovy," and slow to learn or advance.

The Dodo didn't exsight as much curiosity as might have been expected; but when I cum to look into the matter, I found a dozen or more county offishels with *moss* on their *backs* an inch an' a half long, and they had sorter prompted the populace (out of jealousy) to look koldly upon my great livin' kuriosity.—*Detroit Free Press: Letter by Professor Brown Whyte.*

**Mot** (general), a harlot. Turner ("History of Vagrants and Vagrancy") says, "*Mot huys* is a brothel in Dutch, but *mot* is not a word of Dutch origin." It is, however, an old Dutch slang word, whatever its origin may be. In the "Wordenboek van Bargoensch," *mot* is given as *hoer*. "Te *mot* gaen." *Mot-kasse* is the true Dutch slang for a brothel.

**Mot-cart** (popular), a mattress.  
*Vide* MOT.

**Mother Shawney** (theatrical), a rude offshoot of the Mary Anne. An institution to compel a new member of a company to pay his footing. It was the custom for the novice to be served with a formal notice, usually written in a feigned hand, and running after this fashion:

"Whereas it has come to our knowledge that Joseph Greenhorn is an aspirant to Thespian honours, it is our good will and pleasure that the said Greenhorn shall provide on Saturday next, at the hour of nine, for the delectation of his brethren, my children, in their respective dressing-rooms at the Theatre Royal, Slumstone in the Mud, one bottle of brandy, one of whisky, one of gin, two dozens of soda, and a gallon of beer. Whereupon the boys shall drink said Greenhorn's jolly good health, and wish him luck in all his undertakings, present, and to come. The said Greenhorn is warned that disobedience to our commands will be attended with pains and penalties of the most stringent character. Given under our hand and seal at our Palace of Slumstone.

(Signed)

Robin Goodfellow,

Hon. Secretary.

Shawney x Mother,  
Her Mark."

If the neophyte failed to obey this mysterious mandate, the following week he received a more peremptory one, the week after one more imperative still. If he still remained obdurate, he would find his dressing-case rifled and upset, his properties destroyed, his wardrobe ransacked, the sleeves of his dress coat cut and tied in knots, his hat smashed, his

boots filled with filth, &c. Of course, he met with an abundance of affected sympathy; and, of course, no one ever knew who perpetrated these playful practical jokes. Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, was ubiquitous. There was nothing for it but to grin and bear, and pay.

This institution flourished for a considerable period, until a quarter of a century ago, when, one night at Liverpool, a young actor, who afterwards attained considerable celebrity, refused to obey *Mother Shawney's* behests, and catching Robin Goodfellow in *flagrante delicto* (i.e., tampering with his dressing-case and wardrobe), gave the tricky sprite a sound licking, and intimated that the dose would be repeated, if necessary. It never was necessary. From that time this charming institution frizzled away until it died out altogether, and *Mother Shawney* rests in peace in the lumber-closet of antiquity.

**Mouchey** (popular), a Jew.

**Mouch, on the** (common), strolling about in quest of amusement; at Oxford, strolling about to watch the girls. For other meaning *vide* TO MOOCH.

But when once or twice she remained out so late,  
That her people all night her return had to wait;  
And when *on the mouch* in the park she was met

While supposed to be "churching," they thought it, you bet,  
Somewhat strange!  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Moulder** (pugilistic), a lumbering boxer who fights as if he were moulding clay.

**Mouldy** (naval), purser's steward, or assistant.

**Mouldy grubs** (popular), travelling showmen, mountebanks who perform in the open air.

**Mouldy pates** (street), servants in livery with hair powder.

**Mouldy 'un**, a contemptuous term for a penny.

The chief verger informed him that the fee was eighteen *mouldy 'uns* for maimed ladies.—*Sporting Times.*

**Mount** (thieves). Applied not only as in England to men who will swear falsely, but also to those who hire clothes out for disguise; also to those who wear second-hand clothes even honestly. (Old cant), a bridge; "stall on the *mount*," stop on the bridge.

**Mountain-pecker** (popular), a sheep's head.

**Mounter** (thieves), a false swearer. *Vide* MOUNT.

**Mount, to** (theatrical), to "get up" a piece, i.e., to provide scenery, costumes, &c.

**Mourning** (common), a full suit of mourning, two black eyes; half-mourning, one black eye.

One shall lead a horse about, and another shall look for a *mouth* that has a horse to sell or change.—*The Discoveries of John Poulter.*

**Mourning shirts** (common), flannel shirts, that do not require washing so often as others.

We say *mourning shirts*, it being customary for men in sadness to spare the pains of their laundresses.—*Thos. Fuller: Pisgah.*

**Mouse** (pugilistic) a black eye, now a common expression.

Poor Chinnery, our favourite "pug,"

I fear came off but ill;  
He has a blister on his foot,

'Twould take a pint to fill.

His "dexter ogle" has a *mouse*,

His "conk's devoid of bark,"

The off-side of his "kissing-trap"

Displays an ugly mark.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Mouse digger** (Winchester College), a small pick-axe used for digging up fossils, &c., in chalk pits.

**Mousetrap** (turf), a sovereign. From the resemblance of the crown and shield to a set trap.

"No hunter in England can clear that water," replies the earl. "It's even betting—it's five to two on him—it's a monkey to a *mousetrap!*" rejoins the excited girl. "Don't be so slangy, Julia," remonstrates her father. "Papa, the *mousetrap's* mine."—*Daily Paper.*

(Old cant), marriage.

**Mouth** (old cant), an ignorant person, a dupe, one that gapes with mouth wide open ready to swallow anything. In French *gobe-mouches*.

**Mouth-almighty** (popular), a very talkative, noisy person.

**Mouth-bet** (American), when a man in gambling gives only a verbal promise to pay it is called a *mouth-bet*.

"Then, governor, I see you ten dollars and raise you the whole State of Vermont."

The game ceased. *Mouth-betting* was not a success.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Mouthpiece** (thieves), a counsel.

"You come from 'Brum' (Birmingham), don't yer?"

"Yes; I have got seven 'stretch' for a 'burst.'"

"Had you a *mouthpiece!*"

"No, I pleaded guilty. I expected to get off with a 'sixer.'"

"What did you get?"

"Seven stretch and supervision."—*Evening News.*

**Mouth, to have a** (popular), to feel the effects of drinking alcohol; an abbreviation for having a dry mouth. One of the most general effects in the morning of taking too much alcohol overnight; another expression for this is, having "hot coppers" or "the coppers." This produces a burning thirst, for which a "brandy and soda" or a "Hock and soda-water," are the most approved remedies.

**Move** (common), a cunning trick or device; up to a *move* or two, cunning, experienced.

- Mow-beater** (old cant), a drover. making "confusion worse confounded" of his college examination.—*C. Bede: Notes and Queries.*
- Mower** (old cant), an ox, cow.
- Mozzy** (Punch and Judy), Judy. Punch being known as "Swat-chell."
- M's and w's** (printers). A man in a drunken state walking through the streets would be said to be making *m's and w's*, owing to his uncertain and zig-zag gait, likened to the shape of these particular letters.
- M. T.** (railway), an empty carriage.
- Muchee** (pidgin-English), much, very; intensified as *muchee-muchee*.
- My catch one spirit tell my all, but he can no be heard,  
Some notha spilit hab got heah—he no can talkee word,  
They makee *muchee* bobbely—too *muchee* cloud aloun',  
They wantchee *muchee* bad one time to chin-chin Captin Bloun.  
—*The Ballad of Captain Brown.*
- "Massa he *muchee*-goody, Mississee she *too-muchee* goody—yunki Missce (young Miss) she *too-muchee-muchee* goody galaw—she givee my one dolla' cumshaw fo' time."
- Muck** (old cant), money.
- Mucker** (army), a term for commissariat officer, nearly obsolete. (Common), to go a *mucker*, to fail, to come to grief.
- To go a fearful *mucker* . . . bad dash at anything and fails, whether he is thrown from his horse when taking a leap, or
- Muck forks** (common), a low term for the hands or fingers. "Keep your *muck forks* off me."
- Mucking-togs** (popular), clothes worn when mucking about in rain and mud. Possibly a play on macintosh.
- Muck-out, to** (gambling), to clean out. *Mucked-out*, ruined. The more modern synonym is "stony broke." *Vide* MUCKER.
- Mucks, mux, to** (American), to disarrange, discompose, to make a muddle or a failure of anything. "He made a regular *mux* of the whole business." "Don't *mux* my collar!" Provincial English *mucksen*, to dirty.
- Muck-snipe** (gamblers), one who has been cleaned out.
- Muck, to** (popular), to beat, to excel.
- Muck train** (army), an obsolete term for commissariat.
- Mud crusher** (military), name given to infantry men. In French *pousse-caillou*.

**Mudding-face** (popular), equivalent to muffin-face, or stupid. A muff.

She oped the lattice, and I saw that form of queenly grace,  
And heard her very softly say, "Good-night, old mudding-face!"

—*Ballad: She was True to Somebody Else.*

**Muddler** (turf), a clumsy horse, one who gets in a "muddle."

Mr. —, who had the offer of the mount, declined it, thinking the horse was too much of a muddler to have any chance.  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Mud-hook** (nautical), an anchor.

**Mud-lark**, a phrase applied to those who wade or paddle in the slush left on the shores of tidal rivers that run through great towns, in search of articles of little but still of some mercantile value, brought down by the drains and common sewers. The word is metaphorical, derived from the flocks of birds that sometimes come down to the shore on a similar errand in search of nutriment, and the fragments of waste food that sometimes reward them. A conveyer; other meaning explained by quotation.

He . . . became what is called a *mud-lark*; that is, a plunderer of the ships' cargoes that unload in the Thames.—*Mrs. Edgeworth: Lame Jervas.*

**Mud-major** (army), an infantry major, one not mounted, who commands a company on foot, on parade. The term dates from the recent addition made

to the number of majors in an infantry battalion, which was increased from two to four.

**Mud-pickers** (garrison towns), garrison military police.

**Mud pipes** (popular), any kind of boots or shoes, but more specially applied to riding-boots or gaiters.

**Mud player** (cricketers), one who plays best when the ground is soft.

**Mud plunger** (streets), explained by quotations.

That rascal and his wife are street-singers and cadgers of the sort known as *mud-plungers*. Fine weather don't suit them; they can't come out strong enough. Give 'em a soaking wet day, with the mud over their naked toes.—*J. Greenwood: Low Life Deeps.*

Except for professional *mud-plungers*—beggars whose harvest-time is when they can wade in the middle of the road, and in the pouring rain, with an agonising display of saturated rags, and mire-soddened naked feet—wet weather is unfavourable.—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Mud-salad market** (common), Covent Garden Market, so called from its filthy condition when vegetable refuse and slush prevail.

*Mud-salad Market* again. Not content with drawing a princely income from his toll on London's food supply, the Duke of Bedford actually refuses to pay for the sweeping-up of the thoroughfares, rendered necessary by their use as a part of "his" market.—*The Star.*

**Mud-student**, a farming pupil. The name given to the students

at the Agricultural College, Cirencester.

**Muffin** (Canadian), explained by quotation. In reference to *muffins* lying warm and close.

If any young lady, not previously engaged, of course, found favour in your sight, you were at liberty then and there to constitute her your *muffin*, which, being interpreted, signified that by entering into such an arrangement, you might walk, ride, or drive *tête-à-tête* with her; that you had the *entrée* of her parents' house, those parents at the same time keeping obligingly in the background; that at balls, no ill-natured remarks were made by even the most virulent old maids when you danced every dance together, . . . the usual English winding up of such an extensive flirtation was by no means a necessity.—*Once a Week*.

**Muffin-cap** (popular), a flat cap similar to those of charity-boys.

**Muffin face.** *Vide* MUDDING FACE

**Muffin-worry**, an old lady's tea-party (Hotten).

**Muffers** (pugilistic), the old vernacular for boxing-gloves, the "mittens." They are supposed to have been invented by Jack Broughton. The *Daily Advertiser*, in February 1747, announced that "Mr. Broughton proposed, with proper assistance, to open an academy at his house in the Haymarket . . . and, in order that persons of quality and distinction might not be debarred from entering into a course of those lectures, they will be given with the utmost tenderness and regard to

the delicacy of the frame and constitution of the pupil; for which reason *muffers* are provided that will effectually secure them from the inconvenience of black eyes, broken jaws, and bloody noses."

**Muffling cheat** (old cant), a towel.

**Muff, to** (society). To *muff* a thing is to spoil it, make a mess of it, *i.e.*, to do it like a "muff."

You were *muffing* your birds awfully.—*Saturday Review*.

**Mufti**, in (common), in civilian's clothes. Originally Anglo-Indian, from a word signifying a priest. This is now a recognised term.

Blessings flow

From your bold eyes and brown moustache so tufty;

But why, sweet Benedictine, choose to go

So much in *mufti*?

—*Punch*.

**Mug** (general), mouth, face.

His *mug* wore a confident smile, which some might esteem a bit bounceable: These big 'uns are apt to be cocky, but even a Titan is trounceable.

—*Punch*.

It has been suggested that *mug* is from the old form *munkh* or *mugh* of the gypsy *mu* or *mooe* (mouth and face), but it probably originated in an ordinary slang simile. Another suggested derivation is from the Scottish *murg*, French *morgue*, a solemn, sour face; Languedoc *murga*, a snout. Formerly mugs or jugs were made which exhi-

bited distortions of the human face, but there is no evidence to show that the term *mug* arose from this circumstance, or *vice versa*. *Mug*, a simpleton, a person easily imposed upon. Also a "jug," formerly a "mouth." In French, *cruche, bête comme un pot*.

Any man who is *mug* enough to take a 100-guinea watch to the Derby, does so at his own risk.—*The Globe*.

It might have been the jug—I know I was the *mug*,  
That's why I seldom talk about it now.  
—*Sporting Times*.

That man must be a maudlin dunce,  
What wise men term a *mug*.  
—*Punch*.

In turf parlance there is but little difference between the *mug* and the "juggins," except that the former is rather the more hopeless case of the two, the "juggins" being almost invariably a neophyte who may in time develop into a sharp, or, at any rate, into a being reasonably able to take care of himself on the turf; while the true *mug* seldom, if ever, emerges from mughood. Also a stupid financier who finds money for rotten speculations, and is not infrequently swindled by the knave who has led him into a fool's paradise.

**Mugging** (Winchester and other schools), staying and studying indoors. *Vide To MUG*.

**Mugging hall** (Winchester College), the hall where boys

"mug," that is, prepare their lessons and exercises. *Vide To MUG*.

**Muggins** (popular), one easily taken in, a simpleton. Variant of "mug," as "juggins" of "jug."

Must ha' thought me a *muggins*, old man,  
To ask such a question of 'Arry—as though  
grubbing short was his plan.  
—*Punch*.

**Muggy** (popular), half-intoxicated. *Vide To MUG*, to get tipsy.

**Mug-hunter** (thieves), one of a wretched horde (chiefly of women) who infest the streets at night to pick up and rob those who are made foolish (mug) by their drunkenness.

**Mug, mugged** (Winchester College). A thing is said to be *mug* or *mugged* when it has a pleasant appearance to the eye, like a bat which has been well *mugged*, that is, well oiled and polished, entailing much labour. *Vide To MUG*.

**Mugs** (American), roughs and thieves.

"See 'em," said the man at my side;  
"there's *mugs* for you—look at 'em."

"*Mugs?*" said I. "What are *mugs?*"

"Hard characters," said he. "Those are thieves from the First Ward, the fellows that rob immigrants, steal cotton from the bales, go through the trunks that stray down by the riverside, and empty pockets on the ferries and excursion boats."—*Philadelphia Press*.

**Mugster** (Winchester College), one who works hard. *Vide To MUG.*

**Mug, to** (Winchester College), to work hard. From early English *mog*, to sit over in a discontented way, as of a boy sitting over his books. Also to rub oil well into a bat.

In one corner of school some one may be discovered *mugging*, i. e., oiling his own or prefect's bat.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

(Popular and thieves), to strike in the face, to thrash, to swindle, that is, make a fool of one. *Vide MUG.* To *mug* oneself, to get tipsy. In this sense it is derivable from *mug*, a drinking vessel, in the same way as the French *gobeloter*, to indulge in drink, from *gobélet*. An ale-house was formerly termed a *mug*-house. Again, it may be due to a metaphor, as of one in a *mug*, provincial for mist. Compare with its synonyms, "in a haze," and "foggy," "muzzy," for intoxicated.

(Common), to criticise keenly, to examine in a minute and teasing manner. Possibly from slang *mug* for face, in which case to *mug* would nearly correspond in one of its applications with the French *devisager*.

**Mug up, to** (theatrical), to paint one's face, or dress specially to impersonation. From the slang *mug*, for face. (Army), to work hard or "cram"

for an examination. *Vide To MUG.*

**Mugwump** (American), explained by quotation. "*Mugwump* is an Indian word, and means a captain, or leader, or notable person. From this genuine original meaning it was an easy transition to the signifying a man who thought himself of consequence; and during the last contest for the Presidentship the name had a political meaning attached to it, by its application, in derision, to those members of the Republican party who, rejecting Mr. Blaine, declared that they would vote for his Democratic opponent, Mr. Cleveland, the late President. Such is the explanation, doubtless correct, given by Mr. Brander Matthews of New York. The name is now generally applied to those who profess to study the interests of their country before those of their party" (*Cornhill Magazine*).

**Mull** (common), failure. (Obsolete English), rubbish; to make a *mull* of it, to spoil it, to bungle, fail through awkwardness. *Vide MULLOCK.*

In *seats*, p'r'aps, her crew have the pull o'er their rivals;

But what if the pullers make *mulls*?

—*Funny Folks.*

The public, how he bores or gulls,

This buzzing busy B.,

Starts maudlin' "Leagues," that end in *mulls*,

And pure fiddle-de-dee!—*Punch.*



**Mulligrubs** (popular), colic. From provincial English *mull*, to rub, squeeze, rub about; and *grub*.

Peakyish you feel, don't you, now, with a touch of the *mulligrubs* in the colly-bobbles.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

Also low spirits.

**Mullock** (mining slang), rubbish. From obsolete English *mull*, dirt, rubbish. *Mullock* is literally the moraine, the heaps of earth and other rubbish accumulated by glaciers; from this it is applied to the refuse of mines, the heaps of earthy rubbish which remain after crushing, washing, and the other processes have been gone through. It also means type in bad condition, in Australian printers' slang. The metaphor here is from the mining refuse.

The Boss had got a set on him to set The *mullock* of the whole establishment.—*The Australian Printers' Keepsake: The Legend of Lonely Gully.*

(Anglo-Indian), a nickname applied to members of the Madras Presidency service, as Bengal people are called "Quihis," and Bombayans, "Ducks."

It is ane darke Londe, and ther dwellen y<sup>e</sup> Cimmerians whereof speketh Homerus Poeta in his Odesseia, and to this Daye thei clepen Tenebrosi or y<sup>e</sup> Benighted folke. Bot thei clepen themselves *mullys* (*mulls*), from Mulligatawnee wh<sup>ch</sup> is ane of theyr goddys from wh<sup>ch</sup> thei ben ysprung.—*Anglo-Indian Glossary: Lately Discovered MS. of Sir John Maundeveile.*

**Multee kerteever** (costermongers), corruption of *molto cattivo*, which see.

**Mumble mumper** (theatrical), an old, sulky, inarticulate, unintelligible actor.

**Mum-glass** (common). "A cant word for the monument in Fish Street, near London Bridge, in commemoration of the dreadful fire in 1666, which consumed the greatest part of the city" (*Dyche and Pardon's English Dictionary*).

**Mummer** (theatrical). This term, which properly signified a *mime*, buffoon, is now used in the slangy and deprecatory sense of strolling or inferior actor.

Stage slang is a thing of art, just as turf slang is. Every one knows what "the ghost walking" means, and there are a dozen and more phrases peculiar to "the" profession in England. Over here the same thing exists among the "cabotins," which word corresponds exactly with the English *mummers*.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

According to the best authorities, mummery is described as "low buffoonery" (Nuttall), or, "a low contemptible amusement, buffoonery, farcical show; hypocritical disguise, and parade, to delude vulgar minds" (*Ogilvie and Webster*).

The *mummery* of foreign strollers.—*Fenton.*

The same authorities describe a *mummer* as one who masks himself, and makes diversion in disguise, literally a "guiser," one of those village bumpkins who from time immemorial have gone from house to house, at Christmas and other festi-

vals, spouting scraps of the old mysteries handed down by oral tradition. A guiser is described by Mitchell as "a person in disguise, a *mummer*;" and by Ogilvie as "a person in disguise, a *mummer* who goes about at Christmas."

The term *mummer* is also frequently applied derisively to a certain class of players. The application of the word in this relation is directly to be attributed to the feud between the equestrians and the actors.

About half a century ago certain players from the minor theatres were engaged by Ducrow to act at Astley's in the "Battle of Waterloo," "Mazeppa," and pieces of a similar character. These gentlemen gave themselves great airs when the equestrians came "twixt the wind and their nobility," and were regarded by the horse-riders as highly objectionable interlopers. As a natural consequence, when the equestrians were compelled to officiate as supers for the glorification of the vainglorious players, considerable friction occurred, and much ill-blood ensued. The players affected to look down upon the equestrians with contempt, and had the good taste to dub them "mountebanks, horse dung, and sawdust gentry." The equestrians, nothing loth, responded to the compliment by christening the actors "cackling coves and — *mummers*."

Recently, certain journalists, irritated, doubtless, at the social distinction accorded to eminent actors and actresses, have sought to degrade them in public estimation by stigmatising the entire fraternity, from the highest to the lowest, as *mummers*. It is indisputable, that from the time of the master upwards there have been so-called actors, and popular ones too, who are, and have been, neither more nor less than buffoons.

**Mumming** (old cant), explained by quotation.

At Abingdon fair there was a person named Smith who was the proprietor of a *mumming*, i.e., a theatrical booth.—*Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Mummock, mummick** (American), to handle any object. To handle or feel the person. "Don't *mummick* me that-a-way, Billy, or I'll tell my ma!" From the Dutch *mam*, the breast.

**Mumper** (popular), a beggar.  
*Vide TO MUMP.*

**Mumpish, to feel** (common), to feel dull, miserable, like one who has the mumps.

**Mums** (old), lips.

Why, you jade, you look so rosy this morning I must have a smack at your *mums*.—*Foots: The Minor.*

**Mum, to** (theatrical), to act; specially applied to strolling actors. In the quotation the word is used figuratively.

A nice stake for Mr. J. A. Craven, for whom the colt *mummed* successfully again in the Double Trial Plate yesterday.—*Sporting Times*.

**Munches** (tinker), tobacco.

**Munds, muns** (thieves), the mouth. German, *mund*.

The guests now being met  
The first thing that was done, sir,  
Was handing round the kid  
That all might smack his *muns*, sir.

—Parker: *Variegated Characters*.

**Mundungus** (popular), trashy, coarse tobacco. Spanish *mondongo*, black pudding (Hotten), seldom heard.

**Mungarly** (hawkers, strolling actors, &c.), explained by quotation.

Now, a lot of us chaps propose to assist you to-night, as it's the last one, in getting you up a rare full house, to help you and your school to some dinarly and *mungarly*, *i.e.*, money and food.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

*Mungarly casa*, a baker's shop or eating-house. *Mungarly* is derived from the Italian *man-giare*, to eat.

**Mung news** (American), news which has been heard before. Now obsolete. In its time it was equivalent to the more modern term "chestnut." From obsolete English *mung*, past of *ming*, to speak of, mention.

**Munlee** (pidgin), money.

**Muogh** (tinker), pig. Irish, *muck*.

**Murerk** (tinker and tramps), the mistress of a house, a lady.

Perhaps it has a common origin with Spanish cant *marca*, a woman; Italian *furbeschi marca*; French argot *marque*.

**Mush** (common slang), an umbrella. An abbreviation of *mushroom*, which an umbrella is supposed to resemble.

He'll shelter "Floss" beneath his cape if she hasn't got a *mush*,  
When the tart is young.

—Song: *When the Tart is Young*.

(American), stuff, nonsense, indifferent, uninteresting matter. From provincial English *mush*, dusty refuse.

Great Jee-rusalem! a sweet time he'll have. Just fancy her making him slick up to the music of slow church bells Sunday mornings and marching him off, 'stead of having a good time at the gardens, to a straight-backed pew to listen to Gospel *mush*!—*Cleveland Leader*.

**Mush-head** (American), a stupid, witless fellow. Soft like *mush*, *i.e.*, rye, or Indian (maize) meal, boiled to a pap with water.

**Mushroom-faker, mush-faker** (tinker and popular), umbrella-maker or mender.

**Music.** *Vide* FACE THE MUSIC.

**Mutiny** (nautical), explained by quotation.

Some, of course, were planning how they could get a bust-up of *mutiny* (grog) for the occasion.—*Tit-Bits*.

**Mutton** (common), used in the phrase "a bit of *mutton*," a woman. The term is used also in America. Also a woman of

bad character, otherwise laced  
*mutton*. In French *veau*.

**Muttoner** (Winchester College), a  
hard knock on the thumb from  
a cricket-ball.

**Mutton-fist** (common), a large  
hand. The French call it  
*épaule de mouton*. (Printers),  
an index hand (♁) is generally  
called thus, probably from the  
fact of its being somewhat fat  
and shapeless.

**Muttongosht** (Anglo-Indian), the  
common English-Hindu for mut-  
ton, *i.e.*, "mutton-flesh."

**Muttons** (Stock Exchange), Turks  
1873.

**Mutton-walk**, the saloon at Drury  
Lane Theatre (Hotten).

**Muzz**, to (Westminster School),  
to read.

**Muzzler** (pugilistic), a blow on  
the mouth.

**Muzzle**, to (popular), to get, to  
take.

**Muzzy** (popular), drunk, properly  
bewildered.

Lord Frederick Foretop and I were  
carelessly sliding the Ranelagh Round  
picking our teeth, after a damned *muzzy*  
dinner at Boodle's.—*Foots: Lame Lover*.

Excuse me, you've made a mistake, sir!

Not the first one you've made, I sup-  
pose.

I'm a lady, that's straight, and I'm only  
out late

'Cause it's late when the May Meet-  
ings close.

None the less, I'm a bit wideawake, sir—

Taking care of one's self's only right—  
And you can't make too free with a lady  
like me,

Though you are a bit *muzzy* to-night!  
—*Sporting Times*.

**My** (pidgin), I, me, mine. Some-  
times we or ours.

**Myall** (up-country Australian),  
one of the wild blacks in the  
North of Australia. The name  
*Myall* is generally applied to  
those Northern tribes who in  
physique and ferocity are far  
more formidable to the white  
man than the feeble natives of  
the southern colonies. Many of  
them probably have a consider-  
able mixture of the Papuan  
blood, a much more powerful  
and warlike strain.

The blackfellow now put his feet to-  
gether and jumped about, imitating the  
action of a hobbled horse, upon which  
light at once dawned on the Englishman,  
who provided the delighted *Myall* with  
the articles in question.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Mycetal duffer** (theatrical), a  
"howling" or great duffer, so  
called after "a genus of the  
largest-sized monkeys of Amer-  
ica, commonly called the howl-  
ers, from the loud sounds of  
their voices" (Nuttall).

**My-deal**, correctly *mo-dièle*, my-  
self, I, us. In gypsy, *my-kokero*,  
myself, is often used for I, and  
in old canting men said "my  
watch," for me. "That is bene-  
ship to our watch," that is very  
good for us. "The same sys-  
tem," says Turner, "prevails  
in the North Country cant at  
the present day, 'my nabs,'

myself; 'his nabs,' himself." This word, probably derived from nab (old cant), or nob, meaning head, is in theatrical slang "nibs." *Mo-diele* occurs in the following verse (Shelta or tinker):—

"Cosson kailiyah corrum me morro sari,  
Me gul ogaly ach mir,  
Rahet mánent trasha moroch  
Me tu soste *mo-diele*."—

"Coming from Galway tired and weary  
I met a woman,  
I'll go bail that by this time to-morrow  
You'll have had enough of me."

*Me tu soste is gypsy.*

**Mysteries** (popular), sausages; so called because no one is supposed to know what they are made of.

The peelers I scorn and defy,  
While strings of these *mysteries* I wave  
round my head,  
And then to the people I cry,  
"Sassidges, oh, sassidges! Oh, beef and  
pork and German!  
Little gee-gee, little donkey, newly made  
to-day!  
Sassidges, oh, sassidges! oh, beef and pork  
and German!  
Pussy, mi-aow! doggy, bow-wow! and  
beautiful sassidges, oh!"

—*G. Horncastle: Sassidges, oh!*



**NAB** (old cant), the head, in modern slang "nob." Explained by quotation.

There were particularly two parties, viz., those who wore hats fiercely cocked and those who preferred the *nab* or trencher hat, with the brim flapping over the eyes.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild.*

I crown thy *nab* with a gag of benbouse,  
And stall thee by the salmon into clowes.

—*J. Fletcher: The Beggar's Bush.*

Scandinavian *nabb*, beak or bill, once a synonym for face and head.

**Nabcheat** (old cant). *Vide* CHETE.

**Nab-girder** (old cant), a bridle.

**Nab**, to (old English), now used in a slangy sense, properly to take, seize. In thieves' lingo,

to receive or take in stolen goods. It is possible that as the "fences" or receivers were once generally Jews, the word in this sense is derived from the Yiddish *nep*. (French thieves use the word *nep* for a rascally Jew, a receiver, or dealer in sham jewellery.) *Nepp-handel* is cheating by having false or inferior wares, a trade or place in which the goods are all "dickey." *Vide* RUST.

**Nag drag** (thieves), explained by quotation.

Detective-Sergeant Garner, I Division, stated that when the prisoners were removed to the cells, he went into the passage and heard them calling to one another. Hill said, "This will be a *nag drag*." Mr. Chance: "What is that?" Witness explained that it was a slang term for three months' imprisonment.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Nag**, to (popular), to scold or reprove, or "keep at" any one continuously. *Nagging* implies annoying or vexing one all the time, a "following-up" more than anything else. Probably from the Swedish *nagg*, to prick, *i.e.*, to spur or goad, as in the gypsy *chiv*, *chivvy*.

She's always, *nag, nag, nagging*,  
And keeping up the game,  
No matter where we go to,  
She always is the same.

—*Ballad by G. Horncastle: Are You Coming.*

My mother-in-law has come to stay

For ever.

It's ten to one she goes away

For ever.

She's always on the *N.A.G.*

And makes a perfect show of me,  
I'll chuck her out, I will, you see!

For ever!

—*Ballad by C. Williams: For Ever.*

*Naggy* is provincial English for irritable.

**Na-hop** (pidgin), *i.e.*, "no-hab" or "no have." This is given as meaning "without," *i.e.*, "deprived of," or "wanting," in the Chinese-English or Pidgin Vocabulary, according to the idea that not to have is (to be) without. "One piecee man *no-hop* dolla' dat man so bad inisy as *no-hop* lifey"—"He who is without money is as miserable as if he were dead."

**Nail-box** (printers), the place where printers would assemble to "nail" (which see) or "back-bite" any one. Very often refers to a neighbouring "pub." or other rendezvous.

**Nailer, nailing** (common), terms expressing excellence in any way; a *nailer* at football, riding, &c., a *nailing* shot. It is said of a handsome, clever, or fashionable lady that she is a *nailer*. At school a *nailer* is a clever, good student. (Turf), a horse which cannot be shaken off, that keeps pace with his antagonists.

Still, she had some difficulty in getting rid of the attentions of Theodore, who is evidently a *nailer* when the going is a bit soft.—*Sporting Times*.

**Nailing good thing** (popular), a thing which is good and durable.

The Commander-in-chief inspected Ducker's portable hospital hut. . . . It is a *nailing good thing*, with ne'er a nail in it, nor even a loose screw."—*The Sunday Times*.

**Nail, to** (common), to take, seize, detect. (Thieves), to arrest, catch in the act, steal.

"I see," said Mouldy, sagaciously nodding his head. "What was it that you *nailed*?"

"*Nailed*?"

"Ay, prigged, don't you know? Did they ketch it on you, or did you get clean off with it."—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

(Winchester College), to detect, perceive, catch, secure. "To *nail* a man" is to go and tell him to "sweat" or fag for some prefect; also to "watch out" or field at cricket, and to keep in balls at football, that is, to throw the ball back when it goes beyond a certain line. The *nail* is a nail planted in the

middle of the wainscoting under "ant disc" in "school," under which any one *nailed* or detected telling a falsehood was placed for punishment. (Printers), to *nail* or "brass nail" any one is to "backbite." "No *nail*" would be an expression of apology, or "I am sorry, but it is true."

**Namo** (costermongers), girl; back slang for woman.

**Nammus** (thieves and costermongers), look out, beware. "If a stranger should advance, the cry is given, *nammus*," and all signs of gambling are out of sight instanter. Also be off, let us be off. Said to be a corruption of Spanish *vamos*, let us be off, which has given *vamos*, which see.

"Done!" said Aaron, and each held up their hands in fighting attitude, when, after sparring a bit for an opening, and not fancying the fellow, Aaron suddenly exclaimed *nammus*, thereby meaning, cut, run, take care of yourselves.—*Hindley*.

**Nancy** (military), the behind.

**Nancy Dawson** (popular), a name for a molly, an effeminate youth, apathetic, &c. A recent sketch of the characteristics of the mashers of the present day, which appeared in a leading magazine, represents two of the fraternal, who are very intimate, as always calling one another by girls' names.

VOL. II.

I'll tell you of a fellow who's a very heavy swell,  
Who fancies he's the idol of each fashionable belle,  
And they call him *Nancy Dawson*,  
And isn't he a caution!  
Oh, Mr. *Nancy Dawson*, what a tricky man you are!  
Oh, *Nancy Dawson*, can't you do the la-di-dar?

—*Ballad: Nancy Dawson.*

The original *Nancy Dawson* was a noted prostitute, on whom there is a song still current among sailors. Proverbially a finicky, effeminate man is called a Miss Nancy.

**Nanny** (common), a prostitute. Probably from *nun*, meaning the same. *Vide* ABBESS.

**Nanny shop** (common), a brothel.

**Nantee, nanty** (showmen, itinerant actors, &c.), no, not any. Also be quiet, hold your tongue; from Italian *niente*, nothing. *Nanty* dinarly, no money, poor receipts, doing badly.

**Nanty parnarly** (low), used in Clerkenwell, King's Cross, and Leicester Square, and where there are a number of Englishmen and foreigners. If two men are talking confidentially and a third joins them who is not desired to overhear their conversation, one will say to the other *nanty parnarly*, meaning be careful. This is a corruption of the Italian *niente parlare*.

**Napkin** (common), a nap. "To be buried in a *napkin*," to be

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half asleep, not to have one's wits fully about one.

**Nap nix** (theatrical), one who plays for nothing. *Nap*, to take, receive; and *nix*, nothing.

**Nap, nob, or nopper**, the head. "One for his *nob* or *nopper*," pugilistic slang for a blow on the head. *Nappy* was a once favourite epithet for strong ale, equivalent to the French *capiteux*, heady, affecting the head from below. Derived apparently from the old English *knob*, a protuberance; German *knospe*, a button, a swelling, a bud before its expansion into a flower. A picturesque mountain in the vale of Grasmere in Westmoreland is named Nab Scour (*nab*, rising ground), and is more than once mentioned in Wordsworth's poems. Burns uses the word in his admirable poem of "Tam o' Shanter."

"Sit bouzing at the *napty*,  
An' gettin' fu' an' unco happy."

**Nap one's bib**, to (popular), to cry, *i.e.*, to catch up one's *bib*.

**Nap the regulars**, to (thieves), to share the booty. *Vide TO NAP*.

And ye vent and fenced the swag that wery night, and afterwards *napped* the regulars.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

**Nap the slap**. *Vide KNAP THE SLAP*.

**Nap the teaze**, to (prison), to be whipped. From *tees* or *T's*, the iron holdfasts to which

criminals are tied when whipped in prison. From the shape of a *T*. *Vide TO NAP*.

**Nap, to** (popular), to catch, receive. *Napp*, Danish, Swedish, to catch, snap, bite, &c.

While to another he would mention as a fact not to be disputed, "You *napp'd* it heavily on your whisker-bed, didn't you?"  
—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

Also to steal. To go *nap*, to take, sweep the whole. Probably from the game of *nap*.

Men raise bubble companies others to trap,  
And when they're bowled out in it, don't care a rap.

But what is the reason? well, you can go *nap*.

It pays them much better than work!

—*Music Hall Song*.

**Nark, or copper's nark** (thieves), a man or woman who is a police spy upon his comrades or class.

He had a *nark* with him, so I went and looked for my two pals, and told them to look out for S. and his *nark*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

This seems to have some connection with the Dutch *narruken*, to follow about, spy, and *narrecht*, information. German, *nachrichten*.

**Nark, to** (thieves), to watch, observe, look after or into closely. *Vide NARK*.

**Narrow squeak** (common), just escaping or avoiding anything by the merest chance.

"Not exactly in danger," murmured Gommy, "but once, if I had not been



possessed of great presence of mind, I might have had a *narrow squeak* for it."—*Sporting Times*.

**Nash**, to (old cant), to run away, default. Gypsy, *nasher*, to run away, to lose, hang, forget, spoil, injure, in all their variations; *nashed*, *nasherdo*, hanged on the gallows, executed, utterly ruined; *mandy nashed* *lis avri my sherro*, I forgot it (lost it out of my head); *tiro wongurs sar nasherd avri*, your money is all spent. Hence *nass!* away! *Nashermengro*, policeman. Hindu, *nāsāna*, to destroy; *nash*, destruction.

**Nask** (old cant), a prison.

**Nasty** (common), spiteful, ill-tempered.

"But couldn't you get rid of them?"

"Not without being *nasty*."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**Nazie** (old cant), drunken; *nazie cove*, a drunken man; *nazie mort*, a drunken woman. From the German *nass*, wet. The English lower classes use "wet" in the sense of drink, as in the well-known phrase "heavy wet" for porter or beer. "Wet the other eye," take another drink. "Wet the whistle," drink, or moisten the throat. "Wet Quaker," one who drinks on the sly. To make *nase nabes*, literally to make the head drunk.

Now I lowr that ben bouse makes *nase nabes*.—*Harman: Caveat*.

**Ndaba** (South African), explained by quotation.

*Ndaba*, a pure Zulu word, meaning affair or business, is in frequent use even among the whites. With the natives, it has a most elastic signification, and *ndaba* may mean a wedding, a beer-drinking bout, a quarrel, a trial at law, or a hanging.—*G. A. Sala: Illustrated London News*.

**Neap, nip** (Suffolk), a turnip, is commonly used to denote a big watch. In French slang *oignon*.

**Neat**, spirits without water, &c. Liquor or spirit unmixed is "plain, straight, bald-face, reverend, pure, out of the barrel, bare-footed, naked, stark-naked, primitive, raw, in the state of nature, *in puris naturalibus*, unsophisticated, without a shirt, ah, don't mingle, aboriginal, unalloyed, untempered, cold-without, *neat* as imported, or *neat, simplex e munditiis*, uncorrupted, unmarried, virgin, and clean from the still." Stonefence is a drink of whisky plain, a raw recruit is a glass of spirits without water.

**Neckcloth** (common), the halter.

For the *neckcloth* I don't care a button,  
And by this time to-morrow you'll see  
Your Larry will be as dead as mutton.

—*Burrowes: The Death of Socrates*.

**Neck**, to (popular), to swallow; *neck-oil*, drink. Not to be able to *neck* it, not to have the moral courage to do or ask.

**Neck-verse**, chap. li. ver. 7 of the Psalms in the Vulgate, commencing *miserere mei domine*. The test of clerkship in those claiming benefit of clergy. The

record was indorsed in such cases: "Po. se. cul. pet. lib. leg. n. cler. u. i. m. delib. or."—"Posset se (super patriam) culpabilis petit librum legit ut clericus ustus in manu deliberatus ordinario." Puts himself on the country, asks for the book, reads like a clerk, is branded on the hand, and delivered over to the bishop; in later times, *deliberatur secundum statutum*. Such were branded with a hot iron on the brawn of the left hand. Ben Jonson escaped in this way. Sometimes it ran *cog. indict.*, &c., pleads guilty, &c.

The record of Ben Jonson's conviction for killing Gabriel Spencer in a duel in Toggeston Fields, has been found by Mr. Cordy Jeffreason, whence it appears he saved his neck by these means:—

Letter or line I know never a one  
Wer't my neck-verse at Harribee.  
—Scott: *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

The judge will read thy neck-verse for thee here.—*Clobery Div. Glimpses*, 1659.

**Neddy** (thieves and popular), a life-preserver or loaded cane whereby life may be taken. A donkey.

**Needful**, the (common), money.

Was ordered to pay a fine and costs. . . . Not having the *needful*, Pat went into retirement at the expense of the country.—*Scraps*.

**Needle**, the (general), vexation, stinging annoyance.

And it gives a man *the needle* when he hasn't got a bob,  
To see his pals come round and wish him joy.

—*Song: You should never Marry*.

(Turf), "to get *the needle*," or "cope *the needle*," is to be so goaded by "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" that the bettor loses his self-control and "plunges" wildly to recover his money. (Athletics), to get *the needle* is to feel very nervous and funky.

**Needle**, to (common), to annoy.

**Needy-mizzler** (tinker), a tramp.

**Negotiate**, a modern slang expression often employed by sportsmen and the writers who chronicle their achievements to signify any attempt to surmount the difficulties they may meet with in the hunting-field.

They aspire to *negotiate* awkward fences.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Neither buff nor bum** (popular), neither one thing nor the other.

**Nerve** (Eton), impudence.

**Nestor** (Winchester College), a boy small for his age.

**Netgen** (coaster), half a sovereign; from back slang for ten, and *gen*, a shilling.

**Never hit the use** (pidgin English-Chinese). 'M. Chung-yung *not hit the use*, i.e., was idle, useless, or all in vain.

One night Wang-ti go walkee—he feel like  
lonely goose,  
How all he study 'M. Chung-yung—he  
*neva hit the use.*  
How some man pass an' catch deglee while  
he stick fass' behind,  
Like one big piecee lock while waves fly  
pass' him on the wind.

—Wang-ti.

**Never, never country, the** (Australian), the Ultima Thule of civilisation. "*The never, never country* means in Queensland the occupied pastoral country which is furthest removed from the more settled districts" (J. S. O'Halloran, Secretary Royal Colonial Institute).

There is no such thing as an "Australian cow-boy." There is as much difference between the real *never, never* stockman and the Earl's Court article as there is between the real shell-back of the fore-castle or the British tar in "Ruddigore."  
—*Globe.*

**Never too late to mend shop** (tailors). *Vide* HAND ME DOWN PLACE.

**New-bug** (Marlborough College), a contemptuous term to signify a new boy.

**New chum** (Australian), a new comer, a fresh arrival in the country.

More than once on the road, meeting these fellows tramping along, my driver or companion has recognised them as *new chums* by the cut of their pack.—C. T.: *Blackwood's Magazine.*

This expression is simply the English "chum" with a "new" prefixed to it. It is often used rather contemptuously.

**Newgate fringe** (thieves), collar of beard worn under the chin.

**Newgate hornpipe** (common), hanging.

And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing  
A *Newgate hornpipe* some fine day.

—W. Maginn: *Vidocq's Slang Song.*

**Newgate knocker** (costermongers), the mode of wearing the hair curled in the shape of the figure 6 over the ears. In vogue about 1840 to 1850.

**Newgate-ring** (popular), moustache and lower beard worn as one, the side whiskers being shaved off.

**Newy** (Winchester College), a "cad," that is, a fellow who was paid to take care of the canvas tent in "commoner" or school field.

**N. F.** (printers). This term is very largely used by printers in abbreviation of the words "no fly," to indicate an artful companion—one who is only cognisant of what suits him, and feigns ignorance of matters that apply to him.

**Nib** (American thieves), the mouth. *Nib* or *neb* is old English for mouth, snout, beak. Anglo-Saxon *nebb*, head, face. Icelandic *nebbi*, beak of a bird, nose. Swedish *snabel*, beak. Probably the origin of "his *nibs*," self, face, and mouth, being synonymous. In French cant *mon gniasse*, *son gniasse*, &c., mean

- myself, &c., and seem to be abbreviated from *ma tignasse*, my hair, that is, head. (Printers), an expression generally applied to indicate a silly person, otherwise a "mouth," which see.
- Nibbler** (popular), a petty thief.
- Nibble, to** (popular), to take or steal.
- Nibble, to have a** (tailors), to have the best of the bargain, or an easy, well-paid job.
- Nib-like** (thieves and costermongers), gentlemanly. *Vide* NOBBY.
- Nibs.** *Vide* HIS NIBS.
- Nickers**, wild young fellows or mohawks who, in the eighteenth century, when the watch of London was composed of old and feeble men, amused themselves by traversing the streets howling and shouting.
- Nick, to** (thieves), to steal. "He that *nicks* and runs away will live to *nick* another day," inscribed in a prison cell.
- That there cove wot you're a-speaking of . . . what had he been *nicking*?—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*
- Originated from *nick*, to cut, i.e., cutting away pockets. Also to apprehend, arrest.
- "Well, 'Jones,' I see you are Robinson this time. What have you got?"
- "Ten stretch and my ticket."
- "What did you get *nicked* for this time?"
- "Me and my pal were buckled by the — coppers as were going to the — fence with the — swag."—*Evening News.*
- Nigger spit** (popular), the lumps in Demerara sugar.
- Nightshade** (popular), or deadly *nightshade*, a shameless prostitute of the very lowest class.
- Nimmer** (thieves), thief.
- Nimshod** (popular), a cat. The allusion is obvious.
- Nim, to** (thieves), to steal; old English slang *nim*, to take; same root as the German *nehmen*. Anglo-Saxon *niman*.
- Ninepence, right as** (popular), means perfectly correct, apparently a corruption from "right as ninepins," which are carefully set up in proper rhomboidal disposition (A. Smythe Palmer).
- Nine shillings** (colloquialism), cool audacity. Said to be from French *nonchalance*, but it must be noted that *nine*, one of the mystical numbers (three, trinity, represents a perfect unity, twice three is the perfect dual, and thrice three is the perfect plural), occurs in many phrases as indicating an exhaustive plural, perfection or completion, as a *nine* days' wonder, *nine* tailors make a man, dressed up to the *nines*, &c.
- Ning-nang** (horse-coupers), a worthless thoroughbred.

**Nip** (old cant), a pickpocket.

One of them is a *nip*. I took him in the twopenny gallery at the Fortune.—*Roaring Girl*.

**Nip and tuck** (Cornwall), a close contest. An old term in wrestling. *Nip*, to seize, and *tuck*, to chuck or throw.

Speaking of bust-ups, it appears to be *nip and tuck* between Ed. Wolcott, Scott Lee, and the Cincinnati banks. As the score stands now it is a dead tie.—*The Solid Muldoon, Otway, Colorado*.

Also "nip and go tuck."

I've had a terribul fit of the ager since I writ yer last, and one time I thought it was about *nip and go tuck* wether the ager or naturwud whip.—*Major Jack Downing*.

**Nip-cheese** (nautical), purser's steward. Also a miser.

**Nipper** (popular), a baby, a child. Also a small draught. One who goes in for sharp practice. The metaphor is in *nipping*, grasping or squeezing a man more than the bargain purports.

"Like enough," returned Stone. "That accounts why he has the credit of being such a *nipper*."—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

Also a pickpocket; formerly a cut-purse. (Marlborough College), a little cad. (Coster-monger), the youngest of lads employed by costermongers. (Popular and thieves), explained by quotation.

"Dowse the glim! here come the *nippers*."  
That a *nipper* was a policeman, I well knew.—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Nip, to** (old cant), to take, seize, steal, apprehend.

Meanwhile the cut-purse in the throng,  
Hath a fair means to *nyp* a bung.

—*Poor Robin, 1740*.

If we niggle or mill a bousing ken,  
Or *nip* a bung that has but a win,  
Or dup the giger of a gentry cofe's ken,  
To the quier cuffing we bing.

—*T. Dekker: Lanthorne and Candle-light*.

**Nix or nicks** (thieves), nothing. The German *nichts*.

In a bright check suit with staring squares,  
And a "topper" of striking grey,  
The magsman fly to the course repairs

In quest of "mugs" as prey.  
In his "exes" being nil our friend confides,  
His "brief" he snatches and for *nix* he rides.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

It won't do, I say, to stand here for *nicks*.—*Parker: Variegated Characters*.

Used by French thieves.  
Spanish cant *nezo*; Italian  
*niba, niberta*.

**Nix my dolly** (thieves), never mind.

*Nix my dolly, pals, fake away!*

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Niz priz** (legal), a writ of *nisi prius*.

**Nizzie** (old cant), a fool.

**Nob** (common), the head, originally pugilistic. From *knob* or *nub*, the nape of the neck.

The coachman he not likin' the job  
Set off at a full gal-lop,  
But Dick put a couple of balls in his *nob*  
And prevailed on him to stop.

—*Romance from Pickwick Papers*.

I went jest for a lark, nothink else, and  
was quietly slinging my 'ook,  
Wen a bit of a rush came around me, a  
truncheon dropped smack on my *nob*,  
And 'ere I ham, tucked up in bed, with a  
jug of 'ot spruce on the 'ob.

—Punch.

To scuttle your *nob*, to break  
your head.

Soon I'll give you to know, you d——d  
thief,  
That you're cracking your jokes out of  
season,  
And scuttle your *nob* with my fist.

—Burrows: *The Death of Socrates*.

A great swell, a man of  
high position. Abbreviated from  
great *nob* (*nob*, head). In Parisian  
popular slang *grosse tête*.

I came to London—p'rhaps I'd better say  
how I begun,  
For no nabob was half such a *nob*,  
As the Shallaba'lah Ma'rajah.

—Punch.

*Vide ONE FOR HIS NOB.*

No battle (printers), no good;  
not worth while.

Nobba saltee (costermongers),  
ninepence. From *nove soldi*.

Nobber, nobbler (pugilistic), a  
blow on the "nob" or head.

Nobbet, nobbing, to collect, or  
collecting money. "A term  
much used by buskers," says  
Hotten.

*Naubat*, in the language of  
the Hindu Nāts, or musical  
gypsies, signifies, time, tune,  
and instruments of music sound-  
ing at the gate of a great man

at certain intervals. *Nobbet*,  
which is a gypsy word, well  
known to all itinerant negro  
minstrels or tavern singers,  
means to go about with music,  
to get money, or to take it in  
turn. It is manifestly enough  
of Indian origin. "To *nobbet*  
round," means to go about by  
turns to collect.

Nobbing slum (showmen), the bag  
for collecting money. This is  
specially used by Punch and  
Judy men.

Nobbler, thus described by Hind-  
ley:—"In my young days there  
used to travel about in gangs,  
like men of business, a lot of  
people called *nobblers*, who used  
to work the thimble and pea rig,  
and go 'buzzing,' that is, pick-  
ing pockets, assisted by some  
small boys. These men travel-  
led to markets, fairs, and races,  
and dressed for the most part  
like country farmers, in brown  
top-boots, &c. The race of *nob-  
blers* is now nearly extinct, as  
the old ones have died out,  
and the younger hands have  
either turned betting-men or  
burglars." (Australian), a glass  
of spirits, literally that *nobbles*,  
*i.e.*, throttles, kills you.

The other proceeded in the most correct  
bush style. Every now and then uttering  
a wild cry, and dashing his spurs into his  
nag's sides, he would fly along at his top-  
most speed, only to pull up again at the  
nearest public-house, to the verandah of  
which his horse's bridle was hung until he  
had imbibed a *nobbler* or two.—A. C.  
*Grant: Bush Life in Queensland.*

(Rodfishers), the *nobbler*, the *gaff*, *i.e.*, that which gives the finishing blow, that kills.

Then after one alarming flurry on the top of the water, my left hand slips the landing-net under him, and his final struggles are shortly ended with a single tap of the *nobbler*.—*Sir Harry Pottinger; Trout Fishing.*

**Nobble**, to (turf), to incapacitate a horse from starting or from winning a race by previously drugging, laming, or otherwise injuring him.

It is no use blinking the matter. The horse was *nobbled*—by whom it does not concern us to conjecture.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

From old word *nobble*, to beat or rub; also *nubble*, to strike, bruise with fist, or to *nub* (which see), to hang, throttle.

(Popular and thieves), to cheat, outwit, overreach, *i.e.*, to beat.

Don't you fancy the hunemployed bun-kum has *nobbled* me: not such a mug! —*Punch.*

Also to throttle, kill.

There's a fiver in the puss, and nine good quid. Have it. *Nobble* him, lads, and share it betwixt you.—*J. Greenwood; Dick Temple.*

**Nobby**, **nobbish** (popular and thieves), fine, stylish; derivable from *nob*, great *nob*, which see.

Yah, pitch us over yer red slang! Take off that ere *nobby* coat! —*Punch.*

"Look here, mate," said another, "they've reformed all that now. The old Jew in Dudley Street has got the sack. You know it ain't a year since I 'chucked up' and I got my duds at the society in

Charing Cross, and a real *nobby* suit they were until a shower of rain came on and then you should have seen what a scare-crow I looked."—*Evening News.*

**Nob thatch** (popular), the hair.

**Nob thatcher** (popular), a peruke-maker.

**Noddle** (popular), the head. Probably from *nod*. Used by Shakespeare. *Vide* "Taming of the Shrew," act i. scene i.

Doubt not, her care should be  
To combe your *noddle* with a three-legg'd stool.

**Noffgurs** (London), prostitutes.

Wrong 'uns at the "Wateries,"

*Noffgurs* at the Troc,  
Schikskas at the Umperies,  
Pastry in a frock.

*Parties fines* at Purfleet,  
*Petites* in the "Square,"  
*Coryphées* by Kettner,  
Tartlets anywhere.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**No flies.** *Vide* FLIES.

**No kid.** *Vide* KID.

**Nommus** or **namous** (costermongers), be off.

**No moss** (tailors), no ill-feeling or animosity.

**No name, no pull** (tailors), signifies if names are not mentioned there can be no libel, or if I do not mention his name he cannot take offence, unless he likes to apply the remarks to himself.

**Nonsense** (Eton School).

The present Provost of King's, then Lower Master at Eton, on reading over the names of boys who had gained their remove, I remember, quite impressed us with his regal position when he announced that King-Harman was monarch of *Nonsense*. All old Etonians will remember that *Nonsense* was a small division of the third form.—*Standard*.

**Noodle** (common), simpleton.

The chuckling grin of *noodles*.—*Sydney Smith*.

In society a foolish man is called *noodles*. *Noodle* is probably from "nod," like "noddle" and "noddy," because a person who constantly nods to assent is looked upon as being foolish.

**Noras** (Stock Exchange), Great Northern Railway Def. Ord. Stock.

**No repairs** (common), said of a set-to or struggle, where the parties rush heedlessly into the fray; neck or nought.

**Norping** (theatrical), quoting pathetic, thrilling phrases that will "fetch" the gallery; termed also "piling it up."

**North** (common), too far *north* for me, too clever, knows too much. In reference to Yorkshiremen and Scotchmen. The French say of a person who is confused, perplexed, "il a perdu le nord."

**Nose** (thieves), a spy or detective, *i.e.*, one with his nose on the scent like a bloodhound.

How would they know that there wasn't a *nose*—that is, a detective p'leceman—there in disguise.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

**Nose-bag** (waiters), a visitor at a house of refreshment who carries his own victuals.

**Nosender** (popular), a blow on the nose. Originally pugilistic.

"You see, sir," said the Pet, "I ain't used to the feel of it, and I couldn't go to business properly, or give a straight *nosender*, nohow."—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Noser** (popular), a blow on the nose.

It was a *noser*, and no mistake about it, and the ruby spurted in all directions.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

**Nose, to** (thieves), to give information to the police, to turn approver, to watch.

**Nose warmer** (common), a very short black pipe. In French *brûle-gueule*.

**Noter** (Harrow School), a notebook.

**Not for Joe, or Joseph**, used to intimate that one does not intend or care to do, or have anything requested.

**Not half bad**, an expression of approval.

Joking apart, "l'Ainé" is *not half a bad* piece.—*Punch*.

The French say similarly of a man, "il n'est pas la moitié d'un sot," meaning he is no fool.



**Notions** (Winchester College), words, phrases peculiar to the "men" of Winchester College.

**Not much of a shower** (American), a popular phrase, used whenever a political opponent or "any other man" makes light of a great defeat.

*Not much of a shower.*—With all their efforts, and with many political circumstances in their favour, the Republicans have been unable to create a reaction of any consequence whatever. — *Richmond Whig*.

It is said that while Noah was building his ark a certain man used to visit him daily and laugh at his "fad" of constructing such a boat. But when the rain began, and the flood rose till the scoffer's chin was just above water-level, his tone changed, and he humbly entreated to be taken on board. To this Noah would in nowise assent, when the man, turning his back indignantly, walked off exclaiming, "Go to thunder with your old ark. I don't believe there's going to be *much of a shower!*"

**Nowhere** (common), to be *nowhere*, to be in a state of utter (comparatively speaking) inferiority or insignificance for the time being. From a racing phrase; horses not placed in a race, that is, which are neither first, second, nor third, are said to be *nowhere*.

The brave panther when he has once crossed the threshold of that splendid

damsel (who, by the way, is a thief, and addicted to drinking brandy by the "bumper") is, vulgarly speaking, *nowhere*.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Nozzle the bottoms, to** (tailors), to shrink the front of trousers. Also to pawn them.

**Nubbing chit** (old), the gallows.

When he came to the *nubbing chit*,  
He was tucked up so neat and so pretty.  
—*R. Burrows: The Death of Socrates*.

**Nub, to** (thieves), to hang; from *nub*, the nape of the neck.

All the comfort I shall have when you are *nubbed* is that I gave you good advice.  
—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

**Nuff** (soldiers), to have one's *nuff*, means to have had more drink than is good for one, *i.e.*, enough.

**Nursery** (turf), a race for two-year-olds only, and almost always a handicap. (Billiards), when all three balls are close together, and the player, by cannoning, scores several times without materially altering the position of the balls, these scores are termed a "*nursery of cannons*."

In this latter run the balls touched when he had made 42, but he soon got them together after they had been spotted, and made a run of 23 *nursery* cannons.—*Evening News*.

**Nurse, to** (billiards). *Vide* NURSERY. (Omnibus people), to *nurse* an omnibus, to try and

run it off the road. This is done by sending a rival omnibus close behind, or two omnibuses are placed, one before, the other behind an opposition omnibus to prevent it picking up any passengers.

**Nut** (general), head. *Noisette* (nut), for head, occurs in the French slang phrase "avoir un asticot dans la noisette," to be off one's *nut*, *i.e.*, crazy. Chaucer has *not-hed*, a head like a *nut*.

A *not-hed* hadde he, with a broune visage.  
—*Canterbury Tales*.

**Nut-cracker** (popular), sharp blow over the head.

**Nuts on** (popular), partial to, very fond of.

**Nutted** (popular), deceived by a person who professed to be "nuts on you."

I ain't *nuts on* sweaters myself,  
And I do 'ate a blood-sucking screw,  
Who sponges and never stands Sam,  
And whose motto's "all cop, and no blue."  
—*Punch*.

From the phrase "that's *nuts* to one," *i.e.*, a great treat, a thing one is partial to. *Nut* has here the sense of a dainty morsel, from *nut*, a sweetbread, or the lump of fat called the Pope's eye; the *nut* of a leg of mutton (*noix* in French, same meaning, hence *la noix*, the best part, dainty morsel).

**Nutty** (old), nice.

Who on a lark with black-eyed Sal (his blowing),  
So prime, so swell, so *nutty*, and so knowing.  
—*Byron: Don Juan*.



(printers), abbreviation for word "over-seer." Generally used as a note of warning on his approach.

**Oak** (University). An undergraduate's rooms at college are enclosed by double doors. The outer one is called his *oak*, being made of extra strength to meet the rough usage usually in store for it. A man is said to "sport his *oak*" when he locks his outer door. The expression has become common

for to be "not at home" to visitors.

**Oar** (nautical), "to shove in an *oar*," to intermeddle, or give an opinion unasked.

**Oat** (popular), used in the phrase "I never got an *oat* of it," I never got an atom of it. From the small size of an *oat*. Compare with the French "n'y voir goutte;" "point," not at all, from *punctum*; the old *mic*, same meaning, from *mica*, a crumb; and the Latin *ne-hilum*,

which became *nihil*, nothing, from *hilum*, a black dot in a bean.

**Oats** (American), "to feel his *oats*," to be lively and full of spirits. An expression taken from the stables. When a horse is well fed and in good condition, he feels his *oats*.

**Oat stealer** (popular), an ostler.

**Ob** (Winchester College), for *obit*.

**Obfuscated** (common), drunk.

She is scarcely for a moment off the stage, and she appears in half a dozen different disguises; she climbs up a ladder; she gets *obfuscated* by drinking a bottle of *liqueur*.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Observationist** (thieves), one who looks out tempting objects for the skilful thief to steal, &c. Generally pedlars, hawkers, &c.

**Ochives** (old cant), bone-handled knives. *O chiv*, the knife, in gypsy.

**Ochre** (roughs), money. From the colour of gold.

Sport your *ochre* like a man,  
I'm the cove that keeps the tater can.  
—*Old Song*.

**O'clock** (popular and thieves), to "know what's *o'clock*," to be wide awake. Synonymous with "up to the time of day."

Our governor's wide awake, he is. I'll never say nothin' agin him, nor no man; but he knows what's *o'clock*, he does, uncommon.—*Charles Dickens: Sketches*.

**October** (pugilistic), jocular for blood, being short for *October* ale, the body being the beer-barrel.

While to another he would mention as an interesting item of news, "Now we'll tap your best *October*."—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Oddment** (printing), said of a book that ends on an odd leaf. (Linen - drapers), short pieces left from rolls of stuff, linen, cloth, &c.

**Odds** (turf), an imaginary scale of arithmetical chance, arbitrarily fixed by the bookmakers in respect of the prospects of any horse winning any future event on which their customers may wish to bet. (Common), "what's the *odds*," what is the consequence; "it's no *odds*," it's of no consequence.

**Odno** (roughs and thieves), back slang for *no do*. Riding on the *odno*, travelling in a railway train without paying the fare. *Vide DUCK*.

**Off colour** (society), out of health, out of form, not oneself, unable to do things as well as usual. Alluding to a pale face, or a phrase borrowed from the lapidary, who speaks of diamonds as being *off colour*.

When a man has not slept a wink for over a week it is not remarkable that he should look a little *off colour*, but when a constant and not-to-be-escaped brain jangle is added to insomnia, as was the case with the famous Q.C., great ravages are worked at the double.—*The World*.

The arbitrator listened to both sides separately, and soon found that each was a bit *off colour*. Said Billy to the German Sheenie, "You know you cannot show a clean bill of health."—*Sporting Times*.

Mr. — struck me as a bit *off colour* in his acting on that particular evening. It was, however, an anxious time, no doubt.—*Fun*.

(Printers), a term frequently used by pressmen when they feel like "St. Monday," and desire a "miche." Derived probably from the fact that a man thus shirking work would be off from inking, &c., the type for printing. It is now used in the United States to indicate any kind of inferiority or defect in men or objects.

**Off his base** (American), out of his mind, insane, queer.

A Brooklyn professor has been investigating cats and dogs, and he finds just as many cranks and fools among them as among human beings. He says that every fourth cat is *off her base*, while every ninth dog is a sort of fanatic.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Off his cocoa-nut** (popular), crazy, mad.

**Off his dot** (popular), crazy, mad.

**Off his kadoova** (Australian popular), off his head, insane. *Off his kadoova*, "off his head," "off his chump," or simply "off," all convey the same idea—as a train being off the rails, or a man off his play.

And at the very chapel-door began a free fight, because a man had tried to prove a man wrong who said he was *off his kadoova*.—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Off his nut** (common), weak in the head, crazy, mad. (American), illogical, cracked. Also applied to any one who behaves eccentrically or obstinately, or who presses his opinions on others in an asinine manner.

**Off his onion** (costermongers), imbecile, cracked.

I've a chap on the book now for a hundred and twenty who's gone clean *off his onion* betting.—*Sporting Times*.

**Off his own bat** (common), by his own exertions; same as on his own hook.

**Off his saucer** (Australian), tired, not in the humour, out of sorts.

**Office** (general), giving or tipping the *office*, warning; giving a hint dishonestly to a confederate.

And then, in a word or two that none of the outsiders can understand, the conductor gives the *office* to his driver, who sets the picter of good behaviour, you may depend, till the point of danger is passed.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps*.

#### Information.

Good old Baron, I will still stick to thee. Eurasian has gone up, and has gone down, the *office* having been given that John Hammond was going for Quicksand.—*Evening News*.

They gives the public the *office*, and the public believes 'em, bust 'em!—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

*Office* is a provincial corruption of *efese* (Anglo-Saxon), the *eaves* of a house; old English, *ovese*. Hence, perhaps, the phrase, "to give the *office*," as

of a person who gives information, the result of *eaves-dropping*.

**Office sneak** (common), one who sneaks into offices to steal coats and umbrellas.

**Offish** (common), distant, not familiar (Hotten).

**Off its feet** (printers), a reference made by printers when type does not stand square through bad workmanship or "locking up."

**Off one's chump** (common), crazy. *Vide* CHUMP.

"Young man," said the littérateur, as a light dawned in upon him, "you're *off your chump*. I don't want a razor to shave with, I want a raiser that will take me upstairs to bed without having to walk."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Then I got ill, an' know'd nothing for weeks. They said I was *orf my chump*.—*Fergus W. Hume: The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*.

**Off one's feed** (common), unable to eat, having no appetite. Originally stable slang.

**Off one's rocker** (popular), crazy, mad.

**Off the reel** (nautical), at once, without stopping. In allusion to the way in which the log-line flies off the reel when a ship is sailing fast.

**Off the spot** (popular), out of form, silly, imbecile. The metaphor is from billiards *off* or *on*

*the spot—off* or *on the spot* stroke, the most paying stroke at billiards. To be *off the spot*, therefore, is strictly to be "out of form," whence it gets an implied meaning of silly, imbecile. To be "off one's dot," which has this latter meaning, is perhaps only a variation of *off the spot*.

**Ogle** (thieves and pugilistic), eye.

And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing,  
With the mots their *ogles* throwing,  
And old Cotton humming his pray.

—*Burrowes*.

That'll raise a tidy mouse on your *ogle*,  
my lad.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Oh, after you** (tailors), that will do, cease talking.

**Oh, dummy!** (popular), humbug, nonsense.

Yes, last night I had been making a speech outside the old spot, when a little fellow came up to me and said, "*Oh, dummy!*" governor, I've just heard that speech of yours, and I'll lay you had something when you're at home."—*Broadside Ballad: The Second Fiddler of the Band*.

**Oh, Moses!** (popular), a vulgar expletive expression of surprise or incredulity, like "Oh, Heavens!" "Oh, Jupiter!" "Oh, Jehoshaphat!" and the like.

Thy face "the human face divine!"

*Oh, Moses!*

Whatever trait divine thy face discloses,  
Some vile Olympian cross-play pre-supposes.

—*J. B. Stephens: To a Black Gin*.

**Oh my!** (common). Application gathered from quotation.

The upper crust of Nassau has, as a rule, very little sense of humour, therefore

jokes have been voted ill-bred. Venture on, one before a Conch lady and she will make a painstaking and conscientious mental effort to discover whether she ought to laugh or not. If her inner consciousness answers this question in the affirmative, she will venture on a smile; if she is in doubt she will probably compromise the matter by exclaiming, *Oh my!* This is a favourite expression with them on all occasions. If they hear a friend has bought a new dress, or is going to be married, they exclaim, *Oh my!* or if the friend has died, or had his house burnt down, they exclaim, *Oh my!* all the same.  
—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Oh swallow yourself!** (popular), hold your tongue! don't bother!

**Oil of palms** (popular), a money bribe, a tip. To *oil* the palm, to bribe, give a gratuity; "to *oil* the knocker," to fee the porter. The French have "graisser le marteau."

**Ointment** (medical student), butter.

**O.K.** (American telegraph), all correct, used to denote the line is clear, also to express anything very nice. An expression first attributed to President Jackson, who was said to have written *O.K.* for "all correct."

**Old boots!** like (popular), a silly simile, like anything, "as cheeky as *old boots*," "as quick as *old boots*."

**Old clo'!** (popular), anything exhausted, played out, behind the time.

*Ole clo'!* *Ole, clo'!* any old hats I'll buy 'em,  
They say the Tories are no good, well, let the nation try 'em,  
Gladstone was a statesman, some thirty years ago,  
But now his line of business ought to be  
*Ole clo'!*

—*Catnach Press Broadside.*

**Old crow** (American), a drink.

I don't tip very often, but when I'm feeling low,  
Life seems a bit to soften when I try a good *old crow*.

—*Broadside.*

Wherever I go they say hullo,  
Hip, hurrah for a jolly *old crow!*  
—*Francis Bros. : Jolly Old Crow.*

In the United States *Old Crow* is the name of a choice brand of Bourbon or corn whisky.

**Old dog** (prison), meaning gathered from quotation.

One of the greatest delicacies were large white or black slugs which crawled out in numbers after a shower of rain. I must confess to being shocked upon my march out to labour to find that the men were looking eagerly for those slugs, and as soon as one was seen it was pounced upon by a prisoner and swallowed in an instant while the officer was darting about to see if it was an *old dog*, as the bowls of the tobacco pipes were called.—*Evening News.*

**Old doss** (New York thieves), the Tombs, the city prison, a sombre building in the gloomiest style of Egyptian architecture.

**Old ebony** (journalistic), a slang title formerly given to *Blackwood's Magazine*—in allusion to the publisher's name.

**Old gentleman** (cardsharppers), a card longer than the rest in the deck used by sharpers.

**Old gown**, smuggled tea (Hotten).

**Old Harvey** (nautical), the large boat (the launch) of a line-of-battle ship.

**Old horse** (American), a slang term applied by sailors to salt beef, especially when it does not please them. On such occasions they sometimes repeat the following "grace:"

"*Old horse! old horse!* what brought you here?

From Sacarap to Portland Pier  
I carted stone for many a year  
Till slain by blows and sore abuse  
They salted me down for sailors' use.  
The sailors they do me despise,  
Turn me over and damn my eyes,  
Eat my meat and pick my bones,  
And pitch the rest to Davy Jones."

Also "salt horse."

**Old hoss** (American), a term of endearment, equivalent to "old cock." Used also in England.

**Old iron** (nautical), clothes worn when on shore. A sailor will sometimes say, "I am going to work up my *old iron*," *i.e.*, he means to say, "I'm going ashore."

**Old man** (common), the ridge found between two sleepers in a featherbed; also the southern-wood tree. In misses' phraseology a blanket used to wrap a young child in. An old name for a species of bird somewhat

like a cuckoo, and called otherwise a rain-fowl. (Up-country Australian), an old male or buck kangaroo.

In bush parlance the old male kangaroo is called an *old man*; the young female "a flying doe," and the young one till eight or ten months old a "joey." Some of the *old men* reach to an immense size, and I have often killed them over 2 cwts.  
—*Bush Wanderings of a Naturalist.*

Ringed by the fathers of the tribe,  
Surrounded yet alone,  
The Bossaroo superbly posed  
Upon a granite throne—  
A very old *old man* who had  
Four generations known.  
—*J. B. Stephens: Marsupial Bill.*

(English and American sailors), the *old man*, the captain or master.

Now this is pretty bad,  
Yet it's nothing to what's a-coming,  
But I hear the *old man* a-bawling like mad,  
So I guess I will stop my humming.  
—*The Ballad of William Duff.*

**Old pelt** (printers). This is applied to old and worn-out pressmen—referring to the old ink pelts used in olden times by these individuals for distributing the ink.

**Old pie** (American), an expression equivalent to a note of admiration or of approval.

"Sir," sed he, turnin' as red as a biled beet, "don't you know that the rules of our Church is, that I the Profit may hev as many wives as I wants?"

"Jes' so," I said. "You air *old pie*, ain't you?"—*Artemus Ward.*

**Old pod** (American), an old man. Probably associated with limp-

G

ing along or walking slowly. "Pod, to put down awkwardly, to go afoot" (Wright). *Podager*, gout in the feet. Latin *podagra*.

**Old pot and pan** (popular), a familiar form of addressing any one.

To be called an old man, or *old pot and pan*,

Is quite the thing, as you know,  
By your servant-maid, a saucy young jade,  
When your wife's in the kitchen below.

—C. Sheard: *Betsy*.

**Old rats** (American), equivalent to "one of the boys," a thorough-going one, a buck, a hearty old fellow.

She then lade her hed over onto my showlder and sed I was *old rats*. I was astonished to heer this obsarvashun, which I knowd was never used in refined society, and I perlitely but emfaterally shoved her hed away.—*Artemus Ward*.

**Old Scratch** (common), the devil.

A proper degree of this organ furnishes the possessor with a reasonable foresight of consequences, and a tendency to avoid their evils. Witness an example, on the part of ladies, who choose female servants as ugly as *Old Scratch*—bless the matrons' wisdom—I don't blame them for their prudence, as a charming domestic is apt to be mistaken for the mistress, and the error not found out until the fat's in the fire.—*Stump Orations*.

**Old shoe** (cant), good luck. Probably alluding to shoes and slippers thrown at a newly-married couple.

**Old six** (common), old ale at sixpence a quart.

*Spoken*—Look what I've got to do to-night! There's fourteen "pubs" on my beat, and I've got to see that every one on 'em is closed at half-past twelve. That means that I've got fourteen pints of *old six* to get down me. Course you're not obliged to drink it, but you don't like to see good stuff wasted. I often thinks of the 'ardships of our perfession.—*Popular Song: As I Walks by my Beat*.

**Old son** (Australian popular), my fine fellow. An expression of patronage or contempt. One often hears, "I had you there, *old son*," "Steady, *old son*," and such expressions.

Hal they've fired the stable. Don't stir! Have patience. I have you covered, you see, *old son*.—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Old stager** (common), one well initiated in anything.

**Old, the, death**. Sometimes "*the old man*" or master is spoken of as *the old*.

**Old time, high** (American), to have a *high old time* of it is to amuse oneself prodigiously, to be at liberty to act as one pleases, to have it "all to oneself."

"The boys" had a *high old time* of it at the Epsom Drag Hunt Meeting last Wednesday. Enraged at the ooffess state of the visitors, these merry men proceeded to cut through the refreshment tent.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Old timer** (American), a man who has been in California, or in the mining regions of the adjacent States, since they were first settled.



Coming from the barren deserts of Nevada and Western Utah—from the land where the irreverent and irrepressible *old timer* fills the air with a sulphurous odour from his profanity, and where nature is seen in its sternest aspect, and then suddenly finding oneself literally surrounded by flowers, and conversing with beauty about religion, is enough to charm the heart of a marble statue.—*T. Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Old Toast, Old Poger** (American thieves), the devil.

**Old Tom** (common), gin.

*Old Tom*, he is the best of gin;  
Drink him once, and you'll drink him  
again!

—*Lytton: Ernest Maltravers.*

Dr. Brewer says, "Thomas Norris, one of the men employed in Messrs. Hodges' distillery, opened a gin palace in Great Russell Street, and called the gin concocted by Thomas Chamberlain, one of the firm of Hodges, *Old Tom*, in compliment to his former master." But, according to Bee's Slang Dictionary, 1823, the term is properly applicable to the cask containing the liquor.

There are two side-aisles of great casks, . . . bearing such inscriptions as *Old Tom*, 549; *Young Tom*, 360; *Samson*, 1421, the figures agreeing, we presume, with gallons understood.—*Sketches by Box.*

**Old 'uns** (turf), horses that are more than three years old.

Of seven horses that were in front at the finish six were *old 'uns*.—*Sporting Times.*

**Old 'un, the, or fool's father** (theatrical), the pantaloon.

**Old whale** (nautical), a term for a sailor. Also "sea-boy, shell-back, old shell."

**Old women** (prison), for those prisoners who, being unfit for physically hard work, are employed in knitting stockings.

**Ole Virginia never tire** (American), a time-honoured expression applied to the Old Dominion State, or the Mother of Presidents. It is generally heard, however, as a negro expression.

In ole Kentuck in de arnternoon  
We sweep de floor wid a bran-new broom,  
An' arter dat we form a ring,  
And dis de song dat we do sing:  
Klar de kitchen, ole fo'ks, young fo'ks,  
*Ole Virginny nebba' tire.*

**Oliver** (thieves), the moon. From its colour. It may be conjectured, however, that it is possibly from the Danish *ulf* or *ulfa*, a wolf. The moon (or night) was one of Odin's wolves.

Now *Oliver* puts his black nightcap on,  
And every star its glim is hiding;  
And forth to the heath is the Sampsman  
gone,  
His matchless cherry-black prancer  
riding.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

**Omee** (roughs and thieves), a man. From the Italian *uomo*.

Oh, donnys and *omees*, what gives me the  
spur  
Is, I'm told by a mug (he tells whoppers)  
That I ought to have greased to have kept  
out of stir  
The dukes of the narks and the coppers.  
—*The Referee.*

(Theatrical), "omee of the carsa," master of the house. Itinerant actors are accustomed to inquire at a new theatre for the manager, or at their lodgings for the landlord, thus, "Who's the omee of the carsa?"

**On** (popular), tipsy.

Henceforth when door-exploring Jones, Who reaches home a little *on*, Observes, in somewhat husky tones, "Hulloa, I shay, the keyhole's gone!" We must not hasten to cry "Shame!" For it's the climate that's to blame.

—*Funny Folks.*

(Sporting), to get *on* a man or horse, to make bets on him or it. (Common), to try it *on*, to make an attempt generally with a view of deceiving. (Winchester College), a call by any prefect to announce that the "men" may enter chapel.

**On a string** (American). "To send a person to look for something that you are sure is somewhere else is putting him *on a string*. Humbugging, deceiving in any way. When a girl flirts with a sucker she has him *on a string*" (New York Slang Dictionary). Derived from billiards, as when a man gets a "run," or from anything with a view to one's advantage, as, for instance, two ducks in a line.

**On doog** (costermongers' back-slang), no good.

**One** (popular), a fib or lie. "Don't tell me *one*" constantly in the popular mouth. Also a blow.

**One, &c.** (legal), an attorney, being an abbreviation of One of the Attorneys of Her Majesty.

**Onee soldi or win** (low theatrical), one penny. *Vide SOLDI.* *Win*, old cant, is from a different source.

**One-eyed town** (theatrical), a disparaging term for some small town or theatre which somebody has visited to his sorrow.

**One five** (common), hand.

When a "Bobby" apprehends any one, he asks to look at his hands, and judges from the "palm" of *one five* as to the honesty of his prisoner.—*Topical Times.*

**One for his nob** (popular), a blow on the head.

A snatch was made at the tray, whereon the man with the broken nose dealt the snatcher *one for his nob* with his knuckly fist, coolly remarking, as he did so, "That's wot I'm here for!"—*Daily Telegraph.*

(Cards), when the knave of trump is held at the game of cribbage, the holder cries *one for his nob!*

**One-horse** (American), anything small or comparatively unimportant. A *one-horse bank*, a *one-horse town*, a *one-horse insurance company*, a *one-horse candidate*, are depreciatory epithets that are thoroughly understood. When it was said by an opponent that General Grant was a *one-horse candidate* for the Presidency of the United

States, the *New York Herald* declared, on the contrary, "that he was a 'whole team' and a big dog under the waggon."

He returned rather out of breath, just as the captain was giving the signal for departure. "A *one-horse* little place, I guess," said a companion. "Well, no," said the explorer frankly; "I guess not. I stole a pair of socks in the market. I was tried, convicted, and publicly whipped in twenty minutes. I call it an uncommonly smart little place."—*Daily News*.

**One nitch** (printers), a vulgarism applied to infants of the male sex.

**One of the Lord's own** (American society), a dandy; one who is eminent as regards form, style, and *chic*. Also a "daisy, a stunner, or first-classer" (MS. Americanisms by C. Leland Harrison).

**One out of it** (tailors). This phrase signifies, "I don't care to be mixed up in it," "I will have nothing to do with the business."

**Oner** (pronounced wunner), an emphatic rendering of the word "one"—as of a person supereminent, or greatly distinguished for strength, agility, or prowess of any kind. A heavy blow is also called a *oner*; "one for his nob," or a "*oner* for his nob," are pugilistic elegancies of speech that have survived pugilism itself, in popular usage.

I gave him a *oner* on the nose.—*Punch*.  
The watcher is generally hanging about, and he'll "down" you with a *oner* in the

back or side (he won't hit you in the face, for fear of spoiling it).—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

Also a blow, a shilling. Hence perhaps the slang term "blow" for shilling.

**One side to his mouth** (sporting), is said of a horse that only feels the bit on one side of his mouth. The horse has then a right-handed or left-handed mouth.

**One under your arm** (tailors), getting in an extra job.

**One who makes the eagle squeal** (American), said of any grasping, avaricious, or mean man, that when he gets hold of a coin squeezes it so closely that the eagle impressed on it utters a scream or squeal. The expression has been in use for at least forty years. *To make the eagle squeal* is also used in a very different meaning when applied to anything which provokes national indignation (MS. Americanisms by C. Leland Harrison).

**On his lines** (printers), an alternative expression for "on the piece," or work paid for according to scale, and not by weekly wages or "'stab."

**On his uppers** (tailors), in very reduced circumstances.

**Onion** (popular), the head. *Vide* OFF HIS ONION.

**Onions** (thieves), watch seals.

When his ticker I set a-going,  
 With his *onions*, chain, and key.  
 —*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song.*

**On it** (American). This eccentric expression meant originally that a man was decidedly engaged in anything. It implied determination. "I'm *on it*," I understand it. It came into very general use about 1860.

**On the batter** (popular), a bout of low debauchery, riotous living, principally said of a street walker. "It is of Anglo-Irish origin, and signifies on the street, on the road; from the Irish word *bóthar*, a road (originally a road for cattle, from *bo*, a cow), in some parts of Ireland pronounced *batter*, as in the place names Batterstown, Greenbatter, Stonybatter, Boobatterstown" (A. Smythe Palmer).

As for the word *bater*, that in English purporteth a lane bearing to an highwaie, I take it for a mere Irish word that crept unawares into the English.—*Stanikhurst: Description of Ireland.*

**On the booze.** *Vide* BOOZE.

**On the burst, bust.** *Vide* BUST.

**On the cross.** *Vide* CROSS.

**On the dead** (American), gratis, free. Probably derived from "dead head" (which see).

So we followed him into the chamber as  
 soon as these words were said,  
 To get those beautiful presents all gratis  
 and *on the dead*.

—*Song.*

**On the dead quiet** (common), in secret. A variant is "on the strictest Q. T."

"Why did you sacrifice your beard?" asked a young man yesterday of a friend whose honeymoon was barely over.

"*On the dead quiet* I'll tell you," replied the Benedict.—*Sporting Times.*

**On the fly** (popular and thieves), getting one's living by thieving or other dishonest practices. Also out drinking.

**On the forty-ninth ballot** (American). When an election is repeated many times before a candidate can be elected, it may be prolonged until it equals that of a Pennsylvania senator which required forty-nine ballots. Hence the expression as applied to a very long contest of any kind.

Miss Jennie, mindful of her Texas nativity, "went for" a hickory club and the "sarpen" at the same time, tucking her skirts in genuine Amazonian style and attacking by echelon. In spite of his repeated efforts to fasten his fangs in the brave girl she got away with him *on the forty-ninth ballot* and left the field with the slimy varmint dragging behind her triumphant car. His snakeship was the proprietor of sixteen rattles, which makes him nineteen years of age—a regular octogenarian in the reptile kingdom.—*Dallas News.*

**On the ground-floor** (American). Those who are the very first in any scheme to make money, or the original "promoters" of a speculation, are said to be *on the ground-floor*. It is a common trick to take investors in by assuring them that they are

among the first and will have the best chance.

So in Amsterdam Herr Ganef paddled out his Glory bonds;  
And to all he slyly whispered, "I will let you in de first.

*On de ground-floor*—sell out quickly—  
for you know de ding may burst."

—*Rise and Fall of Gloryville.*

**On the half-shell** (American), a very peculiar phrase, derived from an oyster thus served. It is applied to anything prepared and ready for use. When Page's picture of Venus, naked and standing in a shell, was exhibited in New York, the "boys" described it as a girl *on the half-shell*. Also a part of, or by retail, by half-dozens.

I don't intend this essay for laffing in the lump, but for laffing *on the half-shell*.  
—*Josh Billings on Laughing.*

**On the job.** *Vide* JOB, ON THE.

**On the lay** (thieves). *Vide* LAY.  
*On the lay* conveys the same metaphor as lying in ambush, or lying in wait.

**On the ledge** (popular), in a predicament, or in danger or trouble.

And now my mother's made a vow,  
If he don't take the pledge,

The next time that he gets run in,  
She'll leave him *on the ledge*.

—*Geo. Horncastle: The Frying-Pan.*

**On the loose** (popular), free, at liberty, out of prison.

I'd rather have 'arf a bellyfull *on the loose*, than roast meat and baked taters all day long in the steel (prison).—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

Also applied to any one engaged in a course of immoral indulgence, in drink or dissipation of any kind.

**On the make.** *Vide* MAKE.

**On the nod** (common), speaking to everybody, and claiming or making acquaintances by mere impudence.

I've found out a secret to live without work,

Which has proved a good fortune to me,  
I am now *on the nod*, and I find that it pays,

For I tap every one that I see.

—*T. W. Barrett: The Strand-rushing Masher.*

(Theatrical), getting trust—particularly at public-houses. Also applies to passing in at theatres.

(Turf), to bet *on the nod* is to bet on credit, each party to the wager merely registering it in their books, and settling on the following Monday. So called in contradistinction to ready-money betting, where the backer hands over his cash to the book-maker at the time of making the bet, and if a winner, receives payment immediately after the race.

Since the suppression of the piquets there has been a good deal of betting *on the nod*, and there is hardly a penciller who has not a few thousands of dead money on his head.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

Also silent bidding at auctions.

**On the nose** (thieves), watching.  
*Vide* NOSE.

**On the pounce** (common). If, as is thought, a word or phrase becomes legitimatised when it has once been used in Parliament, then *on the pounce*, meaning to be on the look-out for attacking, is no longer slang, as appears by the following extract from the report of the proceedings in the House on September 13-14, 1887.

"I shall not resume my seat," he shouted in tones of passion, waving his arms the while. "You, Mr. Speaker, have been *on the pounce* for me ever since I rose, and I claim my right to speak. I have not transgressed your ruling. You have been *on the pounce* waiting for me all the evening, and I again claim my right to speak."—*Standard*.

**On the prigging lay** (thieves), out on a thieving expedition, picking pockets, &c.

As from ken to ken I was going,  
Doing a bit *on the prigging lay*,  
Who should I meet but a jolly blown.  
—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song*.

**On the road** (theatrical), explained by quotation.

Companies in the provinces are *on the road*, another relic of the past.—*Globe*.

**On the scent** (showmen and circus), on the road, travelling about.

**On the shallow** (beggars), going about half-naked to excite compassion. Apparently from *shale*, a husk, as of anything husked or stripped. Provincial English, *shalligo*, scanty, applied to dress.

**On the sharp** (American thieves). A man who is familiar with all the mysteries of gambling and not to be taken in is said to be *on the sharp*.

**On the shelf** (old), transported.

**On the slate** (printers), waiting for something to turn up.

**On the square** (popular), of masonic origin, and borrowed from the symbolism of operative masonry. To "act on the square," is to act honourably; the square is one of the most important working tools, perfection of detail and accuracy being impossible without it. Hence the metaphor which has now passed into universal acceptance as synonymous with probity, truth, and honour, or more probably used in contradistinction to "on the cross," or "crook," the reverse of straightforward.

**On the stairs** (tailors), the usual answer when a job is called for.

**On the strict Q.T.** (common), on the quiet; a phrase much in favour with the flirting servant girls when they meet their soldiers round the corner, or the cook treats Robert to the traditional cold mutton.

**On the swing** (American), going, acting, or being employed well enough but only temporarily. Thus a "swing-station" is one where a man only rests, or has

a short swing of rest—not “a full swing,” till the horses are changed. Probably through New York, from a Dutch phrase. *Jemand op den schopzetten* means to put any one on the swing, that is, to employ him temporarily, with the understanding that he may be summarily dismissed at any time. *Vide* TO SCOOP. It may here be observed that to *scup* for “to swing” is common in New York (Bartlett).

**On the tiles** (common), out all night carousing. Alluding to cats.

**On the win** (American), winning or making money. This form of expression is now applied to an endless number of verbal nouns, *e.g.*, “on the walk,” “on the borrow,” “on the preach,” “on the steal,” &c.

The coffee ring were *on the win*. They confidently expected to see coffee selling at sixty cents.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**On toast** (American), anything nicely served. Hence a man who is served out, or at one's mercy. Probably the metaphor is from the way small birds, such as snipe, quail, larks, &c., are eaten *on toast*, trussed and spitted. To have an adversary *on toast*, therefore, means to have him, as it were, trussed and spitted at one's mercy.

**Oodles** (American), plenty. “Plenty of money” (Bartlett). Possibly from “out deal;” German *austheilen*, to deal out.

**Oof** (common), the most recent slang term for money. A word brought into vogue by the *Sporting Times*, and now very common.

They quickly sought a neighbouring bar—  
They had not far to search—  
And there she told him that her pa  
Was pastor of a church.

He knew not that the game was spoof,  
Or he had held aloof.

“I love but thee—dost need a proof?”  
And echo answered “Oof!”

—*Sporting Times*.

O Goschen, mighty king of oof.  
—*Funny Folks*.

Said to be of Yiddish or Hebrew origin, but a punning joke on the French *œuf*, with reference to the goose with the golden eggs, may have contributed to the term, the more so as mention of the “oof bird” (which see) is often made. The word *œuf* seems always to have tickled the fancy of Englishmen.

Said one young 'Arry to the other young Arry, “Wot blooming fools these Frenchmen are! Why, they atcheley call eggs money.” “‘Ow's that?” says the other. “Why,” says the first, “they call a hegg ‘day's oof.’”—*Scraps*.

**Oof bird** (common), funds, source from which comes the money.

*Vide* OOF. It is sometimes said of a man who marries a wealthy lady that he has found the *oof bird*, or the *oof bird* has come to him.

“Good evening, mein herr,” said the lady in white,  
To the Johnny who seemingly looked rather tight,

For the *oof bird* was somewhat remote on that night,  
And his fingers with diamonds were gaily bedight.

And the Johnny divined as he looked at that sight,

She was German.

—*Sporting Times*.

The "*oof bird* on the job" means that money is plentiful (Cashiers and clerks), "to make the *oof bird* walk," to make the money circulate.

**Oofless** (common), poor, without money. *Vide* OOF.

He was loyal, did his painting in a hue that shouldn't fade,

At the Jubilee she must of course rejoice;  
Still the peelers couldn't sanction every playful escapade,

And he found himself compelled to make a choice

'Twixt a month's incarceration and pecuniary amends.

Being *oofless* 'twas a case of lock and key.  
He found it most convenient on returning to his friends,

To say he paid a visit to the sea.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Ooftisch** (common), a variation of "oof," money (which see).

If my *ooftisch* disappears before my screw has fallen due,

He's the boy who lets me have a bit;

Of the Johnnies I'm acquainted with he's numbered 'mongst the few

Who'll help me in the matter of a writ.

To whom it is I'm wont to trust my golden watch and chain,

My diamond ring, and wifey's silver plate;

My demands, however frequent, our relations do not strain,

For he charges me, for love, a heavy rate—  
Does my uncle.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Open the occurrence, to** (police), to make an entry in the books

at a police-station of a new case.

**Opening his mouth too wide** (Stock Exchange), is said of one who gets excited, and in consequence bids for large amounts of stock which is adjudged to him.

**Opera buffer** (theatrical), one who performs in "opera bouffe."

**Opposite tacks** (nautical), cross purposes.

**Optic** (pugilistic), eye.

Casting my *optics* on the bruisers an' gluttons of the past.—*Punch*.

You will see to what I refer if you will cast your "*hoptic* over the enclosed cutting."—*Sporting Times*.

**Orchid** (Stock Exchange), explained by quotation.

A young sprig of nobility, who was admitted to the House as the unauthorised clerk of a dealer in the American market, was once heard to tell a friend that when he was in the House he felt like an "*orchid* in a turnip-field." It is almost needless to say that he very shortly had cause to regret his speech, as ever afterwards he and his friends were known as *orchids*. . . . By degrees an *orchid* has become the nickname for any member who has a "handle" to his name.—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

**Order** (common), a large, big *order*, a great, difficult, or arduous undertaking.

For a three-year-old to beat Oberon at even weights at first seems a "large *order*."  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Orders** (theatrical), free admissions. Although the system of



indiscriminately giving *orders* has been at various times the ruin of half the theatres in London and the country, yet many good plays which at first were failures have been nursed into great successes by judiciously "papering the house." Managers, however, frequently throw good money after bad, and bolster up bad pieces night after night by filling the house with "dead heads." It is astonishing with what shameless effrontery people of all classes, from the peerage downwards, levy blackmail upon managers by demanding free admissions.

During the Italian Opera, and the performances of certain Italian tragedians ten years ago, it was the custom on the "off" nights to send out *orders* to impecunious members of the aristocracy, and others, to admit three persons free, with the object of inducing a fourth person to pay for admission. It was rarely, however, that the fourth person did pay. A certain manager who was perpetually pestered by cadgers of this description, upon receiving a letter from a soda-water merchant requesting an *order*, sent an answer to this effect: "Sir,—In reply to your solicitation for an *order*, I beg to order a dozen of soda-water, and one of seltzer, for which my servant will pay you on delivery, less five per cent. for cash." Upon receiving a modest request from the head of an "alarming sacrifice" firm

for fifty or a hundred *orders* for the ladies and gentlemen of his establishment, the same manager replied by enclosing an *order* for two to the gallery, with the addenda that on this occasion evening dress was indispensable, and that the ticket was inadmissible after half-past seven.

Once upon a time one or two disreputable theatres managed to keep their doors open by flooding the house with paper on what is called the overflow and plunder system. *E.g.*, the unsuspecting auditor has an order for the pit; he goes there, and finds the pit crammed to suffocation by people who have not paid. Upon payment of sixpence he goes to the upper boxes, they are also crowded; sixpence more takes him to the dress circle. Before he can obtain a seat he is bled of another sixpence for his great-coat, another for his umbrella, and another for a programme. The performances in these places were as disreputable as the management, and, as a rule, would disgrace a show at a country fair.

(Eton), explained by quotation.

While we were in early school our beds had to be made and our rooms tidied; after that the *orders*, *i.e.*, rolls, butter, and milk had to be served round.—*Brisley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

Order your name to (Winchester College), an unpleasant intima-

tion. When a master wishes a "man" to taste the sweets of a flogging he tells him to *order his name to*. The culprit then goes to the "Bible clerk" (which see), and asks him to take his name down, giving the reason.

**Organ, carrying the** (military), carrying pack or valise at defaulter's or marching order drill. The dead weight is compared to that carried by an Italian organ-grinder. (Printers), a man that lends out money to his fellow-workmen at an exorbitant weekly interest. Any one applying to him for a loan would be said to be "playing on the organ."

**Organ-pipes** (trade), explained by quotation.

. . . to find that the dress-improver is really banished at last. A little artificial fulness is still introduced into the back of dress-skirts by means of folds of starched muslin, "their mission being to gloss over the reactionary moment, and avert a distressing sense of suddenness." We are much mistaken if there is not the making of a great diplomatist of the old school in the author of this happy periphrasis for the arrangement known in the trade as *organ-pipes*.—*Globe*.

**Or out goes the gas** (popular), a threat to put an end to whatever is going on.

More drink and less talk, *or out goes the gas*,  
Be stopping your blethering ways.  
—*Broadside*.

**O. T.** (printers). These initials are used largely by printers and stand for "overtime," *i. e.*, work

beyond the ordinary amount of hours calculated as a day's work.

**Otta, otter** (Anglo-Indian), flour.

**Otter** (costermongers), eightpence. Italian *otto*.

**Out** (popular), a dram-glass.

**Out-and-out** (popular), excellent, beyond measure, true, surpassing, thorough; in the quotation it means quite a man, just like a man.

"Won't he growl at all, when he hears a fiddle playing! And don't he hate other dogs as ain't of his breed!" "Oh, no! He's an *out-and-out* Christian."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Out-and-outer** (society), first-class.

Pretty Polly Pouter  
Is a reg'lar *out-and-outer*.  
—*Punch*.

(Popular), used as a substantive and an adjective, one that excels, surpasses, genuine.

"They were burglars, then?" "*Out-and-outers*, sir."—*Greenwood: Odd People in Odd Places*.

**Out-cry** (Anglo-Indian), an auction.

**Outfit** (American), "the whole outfit," or "the blooming outfit," the whole party. Termed also "all the boiling outfit." Refers also to company, household, caravan, trading expedition.

The waggon master had the presence of mind to gallop his team out into the

prairie, whilst the entire *outfit* made for the best cover it could find.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail.*

**Outfitter** (military), a term used by officers of the Royal Artillery for one who is not fond of change from home to foreign service or from regimental to staff employment, and who is always getting an "outfit" for the purpose.

**Out for an airing** (turf), said of a horse that is backward or of a horse not meant to win.

**Out here** (Australian). An Australian, no matter if he and his parents and grandparents have been born in Australia, and have never left Australia, and own not a sixpence outside of Australia, always speaks of the British Isles as "home," and of Australia as *out here*. Making the voyage to England is "coming or going home," and the voyage to Australia coming or going "out."

That is my Nellie—she's *out here* and Mrs. Cupid Foote:

We came to Melbourne late last year,  
I could not bear the thought  
Of snow, and sleet, and slush, and rain,  
and yellow London fogs,  
An English winter I maintain is only fit  
for frogs.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: The Squire's Brother.*

**Out of collar.** *Vide* COLLAR.

**Out of kilter.** *Vide* KILTER.

**Out of register** (printers). An inebriated person that could

not walk straight, but "wobbly," is thus termed, from the fact that pages *out of register* in printing a sheet would be "out of the square," "out of truth."

**Out of sorts** (printers), a term used when any letter runs "short" or is deficient, and hence the common figurative expression meaning melancholy, annoyed, or slightly indisposed.

**Outs** (printers), an omission of a part of the copy composed is said to be an "out." The meaning is obvious.

**Outside old-river** (pidgin), the Yang-tse-kiang. Cantonese, Ngol-kong-lo.

**Outsider** (turf), a horse which does not stand high in the public estimation, and is therefore noted in the betting "outside" the circle of "favourites." There is also a human species of *outsider*, viz., any person whose liabilities to the bookmakers cause the inside of the ring to be too hot for him, and who if he goes racing at all is obliged to remain "outside" the sanctuaries of the solvent.

**Out, two or three** (popular), when a quartern of gin or spirit is divided into two or three glasses.

**Over at the knees** (stable), said of a horse weak in the knees.

Two of the warrant officers of the court, who have had experience of horses, exa-

mined the animal, and reported that it was in very poor condition, and *over at the knees*.—*Globe*.

**Overdraw the badger.** *Vide*  
BADGER.

**Over goes the show** (popular), a sudden change of resolution, an upset of any kind physical or moral, a catastrophe. Simile from the upsetting a Punch and Judy schwassel-box, or blowing over an exhibition-tent.

It's all very well to say you won't  
Go wrong again—but oh!  
When a pretty little widow winks at you,  
Why—*over goes the show!*  
I formed a resolution once  
I'd never swear in vain,  
If I felt a good swear coming on,  
I bolted it again.  
I was so good I kept it up  
For quite a week or so;  
Then I sat down on a piece of glass,  
And—*over went the show!*

—*Ballad.*

**Overland-man** (colonial), a man driving a flock of sheep, or mob of horses or cattle, overland. The term has another signification, which is the really slang one, a man looking for work in the bush, and who manages to arrive at a station (sheep) about sundown, or after working hours, where he obtains a night's lodgings and rations, and goes on in the morning, doing the same again at sundown. This man is also called a "sun-downer."

**Overland trout** (American cow-boys), bacon.

**Over one** (common), to come over one, to try to intimidate or compel.

**Overplush**, thus explained by the *Globe*:—"Is it right to give the *overplush*, or is it not? Probably most people would answer that question by asking another, and inquiring, in the first place, what is *overplush*? Well, according to the testimony of a Midland Boniface, it is the 'long pull'—not the long pull so largely and honourably associated with after-dinner oratory; not the long pull which is indissolubly connected with the strong pull and the pull all together; but a wholly different pull, namely, the publican's. It is not given to everybody to know everything, or even very much, about the business of the beer-seller; but those who do know something about it will tell you that, in the drawing of beer, there is both a long pull and a short pull, nearly allied to those characteristic pulls on which the precise proportion of froth to liquor so much depends, and which Mr. Arthur Roberts is in the habit of illustrating nightly in his *role* of innkeeper of the time of Napoleon. Now, about the short pull there can be no question. Beer-drinkers, and, indeed, other stern moralists, will tell you that it is quite indefensible. You have no business to give short measure—unless you are a teetotaler in disguise; and even then

it is not strictly equitable. For his twopence or threehalfpence a man should have his twopence-worth or his threehalfpence-worth. But can the long pull be supported? Ought a publican to give the *overplush*? The legal representative of an official receiver says it seems strange that an innkeeper should sell beer at a loss—supplying more of it than he is paid for. But the particular innkeeper under discussion replied that he had adopted this policy by way of attracting custom. He proposed to win the public by giving over-measure, and then, the public gained, to give only full measure. And surely it is permissible to grant *overplush*, if thereby one can generate an *overplush* in the exchequer."

**Overrate it** (theatrical), to overdo one's part.

**Overs** (bank), the odd money remaining after the accounts are made up.

**Overshot** (popular), intoxicated.

**Overtaken** (popular), intoxicated.

He was temperate also in his drinking, . . . but I never spake with the man that saw him *overtaken*.—*Hacket: Life of Williams*.

**Over the left** (common), explained by quotation.

At this inquiry Mr. Martin looked with a countenance of excessive surprise at his two friends, and then each gentleman pointed with his right thumb over his left shoulder. This action, imperfectly described in words by the very feeble term of *over the left*. . . its expression is one of light and playful sarcasm.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers*.

**Overtops box** (Winchester), a box like a cupboard to hold books, &c.

**Owl** (American), "drunk as a biled owl," very favourite simile for intoxication.

Wanted, a man who can go to Mexico on Government business without getting drunker'n a biled owl. Address State Department, Washington, D. C.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

**Oxford clink**. A play upon words is called an *Oxford clink* by Leicester in *Strafford's Let.* i. 224. (Theatrical), free tickets of admission.



's and q's. *Vide* MIND YOUR P'S AND Q'S.

**Pace**, to go the (common), to live extravagantly.

He is the son of a famous racing man who *went the pace*, and cut his throat in Newmarket.—*The Tattler*.

**Pack** (old cant), a gang.

No hooker of another *pack*.—*Oath of the Canting Crew*.

**Padding** (literary), the light articles in the monthly magazines. Also extraneous matter inserted in any literary work for the sake of quantity.

**Padding ken** (tramps), a low lodging-house. One on the *pad* or road.

**Paddle, to** (American), to go or run away.

**Paddy, to come Paddy over one** (American), to bamboozle, humbug.

"Oh, you infernal, lying, blackguardly rascal," said the devil, who had been improving his language of late by reading the New York Sunday papers, "do you think to come Paddy over me in that style?"—*American Story*.

**Paddy's hurricane** (nautical), up and down the mast, *i.e.*, no wind at all.

**Pad the hoof, to** (thieves and tramps), to walk, to tramp. It would be more correct to say, "to hoof the pad," *i.e.*, to tramp on the *pad* or road. French, *fendre l'ergot*. Literally to split the spur (of birds).

In bus or brougham, city merchants roll to villas snug,

While city arabs *pad the hoof*, to where a "shoddy" rug,

In some cold gloomy casual ward, will cover them to-night,

Well! such is life in London now, but say—is it quite right?

—*J. A. Hardwick: London Bridge*.

**Pad, to stand** (street), to beg with a piece of paper on the breast bearing the words "I am starving." Literally to stand on the *pad*, obsolete English for footpath, road.

**Paint a town red, to** (American), explained by quotation.

*To paint a town red* is, I ought to explain, a Western expression, and signifies the height of reckless debauch; and when a cowboy, having drunk his fill of whisky, has let daylight with revolver shots through the hats of those who have ventured to differ from him, and has smashed all the glasses in the drinking saloon with his stock whip, and galloped with a wild whoop down the principal street to the danger and consternation of the inhabitants, he may fairly be said to have done his part towards *painting the town red*.—*Cumberland: The Queen's Highway*.

Also to *paint the town*.

One of these chaps from Texas came in there to *paint the town*, and got his tank full.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Paint, to** (popular), to drink, alluding to a red nose caused by over-indulgence.

The muse is dry,  
And Pegasus does thirst for Hippocrene,  
And fain would *paint*—imbibe the vulgar call—

Or hot, or cold, or long, or short.

—*Kingsley: Two Years Ago*.

**Pair off, to** (American). In order to avoid the trouble of voting a man will agree with some one of the opposite that neither shall vote. Then both will *pair off* with as many others as they can induce to do the same. It is said that in a Western town this was carried to such an extent that at an election not a single vote was "deposited."

The vast majority of strong-minded women wouldn't care so much about voting if they could only get a chance to *pair off*.—*New Haven News*.

**Pair, to** (parliamentary), formerly to *pair off*, to go in couples; my *pair*, my companion.

**Pal** (gypsy), brother, friend. Till within fifty years this word existed among English gypsies as *prala*, which is the common Romany form all over the Continent, derived directly from the Hindu and Sanskrit *brat*. The accent of a word is called *pal of a lav*, i.e., its brother; *pala!* oh, brother!

"Mat, hav akai! ma pūr ajā;

Sār 'shan tu, kūshṭo, puro pūl:"—

"Mat, come here! don't turn away! How are you, good old friend?"—*E. H. Palmer.*

*Paleskro*, brotherly. "The geero kaired mandy sar *paleskro*, as tacho as you'd kam"—"The man treated me brotherly, as well as you'd wish."

The term has become general. In society it means a great friend of either sex. When used with regard to a man as being a great *pal* of a lady, it means more than mere friendship. The lower classes and thieves use it with the sense of companion, friend, comrade, accomplice.

Ned was a wide-awake villain. It was not the first time he had been "in trouble," and he was properly alive to the advantage of having a trustworthy *pal* at liberty.—*The Little Ragamuffins.*

A prisoner inscribed in one of his library books, "Good-bye, Lucy dear, I'm parted from you for seven year—Alf. Jones." Beneath this a sour sceptic who subsequently used the book added—

"If Lucy dear is like most gals

She'll give few sighs or moans,

VOL. II.

But soon will find among your *pals*  
Another Alfred Jones."

—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Palaver**, conversation; from Spanish *palabra*.

His Highness last year met the Crown Prince on the Riviera. They had several conversations together; they dined at Pegli, they breakfasted at Savona, and their *palaver* meant peace and nothing but peace.—*Evening News.*

**Palaver**, to (general), to talk.

*Vide PALAVER.* The expression is common among tramps, itinerant vendors, strolling actors, &c. Nantee *palaver*, cease talking.

**Pall**, to (popular), originally nautical, to stop. From *pall*, a small instrument which is used to stop the windlass or capstan in a ship. I am *palled*, I cannot or dare not say any more; I am nonplussed, confounded.

**Pallyard** (old cant), a beggar with manufactured sores. From the French *paillard*, a dissolute fellow; properly and originally a poor person who sleeps on the straw, such as mendicants, tramps. Du Cange says, "palhardus, homo nihili et infimæ conditionis."

**Palm grease** (common), a bribe.

In French slang *graisse*. Also *palm oil*. French *huile*.

In England a bribe is commonly known as *palm oil*.—*Standard.*

**Palmer** (thieves), a thief who steals articles in a shop, jewel-

II

lery, for instance, by making them adhere to his palm.

**Palmer's twistors** (medical), the name given to strychnine pills, which were the medicine employed by Palmer of Rugeley in getting rid of Cooke.

**Palming** (thieves), exchanging spurious articles, *e.g.*, watches, rings, diamonds, coins, for real ones. From the term in legerdemain.

**Pal on, to** (popular), to associate.

And we *pals on* with Dukes, Lords, and Markisses,

Which our manners is strictly O.K.,  
And they don't make no nasty remarkeses  
Respectu-ing Botany Bay.

—*Blueskin: A Lay of Lag.*

**Panel-crib** (American). The New York Slang Dictionary gives the following explanation:—"Panel-crib, a place especially fitted up for the robbery of gentlemen, who are enticed thereto by women who make it their business to pick up strangers. *Panel-cribs* are sometimes called badger-cribs, shake-downs, touch-cribs, and are variously fitted for the admission of those who are in the secret, but which defy the scrutiny of the uninitiated. Sometimes the casing of the door is made to swing on well-oiled hinges which are not discoverable in the room, while the door itself appears to be hung in the usual manner, and well secured by bolts and lock. At other times the entrance is

effected by means of what appears to be an ordinary wardrobe, the back of which revolves like a turnstile on pivots. When the victim is ready the thief enters, and picking the pocket-book out of the pocket, abstracts the money, and supplying its place with a small roll of paper, returns the book to its place. He then withdraws, and coming to the door raps and demands admission, calling the woman by the name of wife. The frightened victim dresses himself in a hurry, feels his pocket-book in its proper place, and escapes through another door, congratulating himself on his happy deliverance. A *panel-crib* was formerly termed a *panel-house*. Hence the word *panel* for a prostitute, an inmate of such an establishment; abbreviated from *panel-girl*. Compare with *panel-thief*, which see.

**Panel-thief**, one who extorts money by threats of violence in a panel-house or panel-crib, which see.

**Pannum** (costermongers and thieves), bread, food. From the Italian *pane*.

**Panny** (thieves), a house; *flash-panny*, a public-house or lodging-house frequented by thieves. Doing a *panny*, committing a burglary.

Ranting Rob, poor fellow, was lagged for doing a *panny*!—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*



*Panny* is probably a corruption of the old *panel*-house (same as panel-crib, which see), with extended meaning.

**Panny-man** (thieves), a burglar. Also "buster," "cracksman."

**Pan on** (printers). A person with a fit of the "blues," or "down in the dumps," is said to have a *pan on*.

**Pan out**, to (American), to pay well, to prove profitable.

I am afraid that, to use a miner's expression, we did not *pan out* as well as was anticipated.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

From "panning," the process which gold-diggers employ to separate the precious metal from the earth and other substances with which it is usually found associated.

**Pantile** (nautical), biscuit. (Popular), a hat. Properly the mould into which sugar is poured. More common as "tile."

**Pap** (thieves), paper; especially in the form of bank-notes.

Come on, we have had a lucky touch for half a century in *pap* (£50 in paper, *i.e.*, notes).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Paper-maker** (popular), a rag gatherer.

**Paper-mill**, the office in the old Court of Queen's Bench where the Crown Records were deposited.

**Paper**, to (theatrical), to *paper* a house, *i.e.*, a theatre, is to fill it with orders. A *paper*-house is a theatre so filled. "There's a good deal of *paper* in the house," is a common expression.

**Paper-worker** (popular), a vendor of street literature.

**Papoose** (American), a baby, derived from the aboriginal language of the Virginian Indians.

**Paralytic fit** (tailors), a very badly fitting garment.

**Pard** (American), a corruption of partner. Gold-miners, &c., usually work and live in couples, whence the term.

Say, old *pard*, do you want to stake me with fifty dollars?—it's real good investment.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Parentheses** (printers), a pair of *parentheses* applies to bandy legs.

**Parishes** (Rugby), explained by quotation.

The victims stand on one of the old wooden bedsteads, flanked by two small boys, each holding one of those tin sconces called at Rugby *parishes*.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Park railings** (popular), the teeth. A neck of mutton.

**Parliamentary press** (tailors), an old custom of claiming any iron, which happens to be in use, for the purpose of opening the collar seam.

**Parlour-jumping** (thieves), robbing rooms, usually by getting in through the window of rooms seen to be unguarded.

This time I palled in with some older hands at the game, who used to take me a *parlour-jumping*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Parter** (sport), a liberal man.

**Particular**, a special mistress, one belonging particularly to one man. A term much in vogue in the time of George IV., but which is seldom heard now. Also "peculiar." In French *particulière* has the meaning of wife or mistress.

**Part**, to (sport), to pay willingly, i.e., part with one's money.

**Party-rolls** (Winchester College). On the last Friday but one of the Half after dinner when the tutors had gone out, men used to call out "once, twice, thrice, *party-rolls*," three times. The custom arose from the coaching days when the students left the school in different parties.

**Passed mark of mouth** (society), expresses that a lady or gentleman is getting on into middle age, borrowed from horse-dealing. After seven years old you cannot tell for certain the age of a horse by the marks on his teeth, and he is called *past mark of mouth*. The French have the vulgar phrase, applicable to a woman past her prime, "elle ne marque plus."

**Pass in one's chips**, to (West American), to die.

It was not until the following morning that I overtook Lone Wolf, when I found that thirty-two of his band had *passed in their chips*, and over forty-five were wounded.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail.*

*Chips* are counters in games of faro. (American newspaper), items of news.

**Pass the compliment**, to (popular), to give a *douceur* or tip to a servant.

**Paste** (printers), a synonym for brains, referring to the "paste and scissors" class of editorial gentlemen.

**Paste and scissors** (printers). Matter borrowed from other sources is from an editorial point of view termed thus—especially that which is appropriated without acknowledgment.

**Pasteboard** (society), a visiting card. To "shoot a *p. b.*," to leave a card.

**Pasteboard customer** (trading), one who takes long credit.

**Pasteboard**, to (society), to *pasteboard* a person is to drop a card at an absent person's house.

**Paste-horn** (popular), the nose; originally shoemaking expression. From the receptacle used by them for paste.

**Pastry.** In the language of young men about town, *pastry* is the demi-monde, composed of "tarts" and "tartlets."

Oh, beaks so stern and peelers proud,  
You know the whole of the *pastry* crowd.  
Their tricks are trite, their graces old,  
And they never will go home when they're told.

When we get in the Brighton or Margate train

We're all right—but the tarts remain,  
They are left to skulk at their end of town.

—*Sporting Times.*

**Pasty** (popular), a bookbinder.

**Patchey** (theatrical), harlequin; so-called from the triangular-spangled patches on his dress.

**Patch upon, not a** (common), not to be compared to. A *patch* ought to match the stuff upon which it is placed—therefore *not a patch upon* signifies literally "not to be matched with," "not fit to hold a candle to."

She's *not a patch upon* the duchess.—*Punch.*

Whatever at the time had been  
Her satisfaction at fourteen  
When Ted had petted her, she now  
Felt to herself inclined to vow  
That it was *not a patch upon*  
That which she just had undergone.

—D. B. W. Sladen: *A Summer Christmas.*

**Patent Frenchman** (tailors), an Irishman.

**Patrico** or **pater cove** (old cant), a vagabond, a degraded friar, monk, or priest, afterwards in Protestant times called a *hedge-parson*, who associated with

tramps or thieves, and gave his services to them for a fee in mock marriages. It was customary, according to Grose, on these occasions for the man to stand on one side of the carcass of a dead beast and the woman on the other, and on shaking hands they were bidden by the priest to live together till death did them part, meaning apparently that they were parted by death as soon as the ceremony was ended. This was an old gypsy-Hindu custom.

But alas! 'tis my fear that the false  
*patricoe*  
Is reaping those transports are only due  
to me.

—*Retours, my dear Delle.*

*Patrico* is termed *patriarkeo* in the "Fraternity of Vagabondes," 1575.

**Patter** (popular and thieves), talk, conjuror's talk to his audience, puffing speech. French *boniment*.

Mavor's Spellin' and Copybook motters is all they can run to. But slang?

Wy, it's simply smart *patter*, of wick ony me and my sort 'as the 'ang.

Snappy snideness put pithy, my pippin, the pick of the chick and the hodd,

And it fittles up talk, my dear Charlie, like 'ot hoyster sauce with billed cod.

—*Punch.*

You've got the *patter* all right, Billy, but you've on'y got it in the rough. . . . You'll have to put it in perliter language, Billy.—J. Greenwood: *Under the Blue Blanket.*

To *patter* flash, i.e., to talk cant, is old canting.

I *fattered* in flash like a covey knowing.  
—W. Maginn.

It has been derived from *pater-noster*. It is the old gypsy *pat*, or *patterava*; Hindu *bat*, which means slang or secret language. It is possibly allied in Romany to *pat-serava*, corrupt *patter*, to trust or confide in, hence to speak secretly.

The true origin of the word *patter* occurred to the writer in a strange way. "It was in Brighton, when at a corner I saw a tramp with a few ferns in a basket.

"*'Shelkin galopas!*' I casually said in the curious Celtic dialect known as Shelta. *Shelkin galopas* means 'selling ferns.'

"That one word,' replied the tramp gravely, 'indicates that you, sir, are a gentleman who knows the world. Indeed, your knowledge of it is more than unusual—it is unique.'

"I at once saw that the tramp had been educated. I asked him if there were any gypsies in town.

"I have just seen old Lee, the tinker,' he replied. 'And if you will come with me you may see him.'

"We went along to a small public, and entering found old Lee. He had known me of yore. Once, three years before, I had promised to give him a treat. It took the form of rum-hot sweet with a bit o' lemon, if you please. Then contrary to our express compact that the treat was not to exceed drinks, the needy knife-grinder asked for sixpence. And I replied—

'I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damned first.'

"On seeing me again he burst out into Romany—he *treated*; the tramp spoke to me in Shelta. The landlord glanced at me unfavourably. I asked for a private room. Drinks and cigars were provided. Mr. Lee had three hot rums, the tramp three whiskies. The tramp was a pale man and seemed to grow sober as Lee got drunk.

"I don't think,' he remarked, 'that the gypsies are of Hindoo origin. I rather think that they come from the *Jángála*, the hill tribes.'

("Heyday!" I thought. "He doesn't call them jungle men, but uses the vernacular.")

"For I always observed,' he resumed, 'that while the Hindoos only talk Hindustani, the *Jángálas* use that and have the *Bát* among themselves.'

"Great Dictionary!' I cried, 'why, that's Hindoo slang for slang itself. *Bat* or *pat*, and *patter*, are Romany for the *jib*.'

"That's true!' exclaimed Lee. 'But *patter* is cantin' now.'

"Lee,' I answered, 'your great-great-great-grandfather used *patter* for talk. It was old Romany. Then your people dropped it when it got blown. *Patter's the lav*.' And turning to the tramp, I added—'With your permission I will incorporate that observation of yours into the next paper which I propose to read before the Oriental Society. Don't you

think that the gypsies came from the Dom?'

"I used to see a great many of the Domes when I was a soldier in India. I always thought they were real gypsies.'

"People sometimes ask me, 'How did you learn gypsy?' Well, for every word learned, 'bang went a sarpence' for rum or beer."

*Patter* is, however, very old English for to mutter.

Ever he *patred* on their names fast.

—*How the Ploughman Learned his Paternoster.*

The old English to *patter*, to mutter (a paternoster), probably combined with the Romany meaning merely slang.

**Patteran**, a gypsy trail, made by throwing down a handful of grass occasionally (Hotten).

**Patter-crib** (thieves), a public-house or lodging-house frequented by thieves.

**Patterer** (streets), one who cried last dying speeches in the streets, &c.

**Paul's pigeons** (school), the scholars of St. Paul's School have been so called from time immemorial.

**Pav.** (London), the Pavilion Music Hall.

The Dalston Colosseum has an animated Cirque;

The Moore and Burgess Minstrels are, as usual, at work;

And if you're fond of music halls, the Empire and the *Pav.*

Will give you just about the utmost you could wish to have.

—*Fun.*

**Pawnee, Pāni** (Anglo-Indian and gypsy). In the latter also *parny*, water. "The word is used extensively in Anglo-Indian compound names, such as *bilā-gāti-pāni*, soda-water; *brandy-pawnee*, brandy and water; *kush-bo-pāni*, European perfumes (in gypsy *kūsho-pāni*, or *kūsho-sūmeni-pāni*, &c.)" (Anglo-Indian Glossary). In both Hindustani and English gypsy the ocean is known as the *kāla*, or *kālo-pāni*, "the black water," a term of terror in reference to transportation to penal settlements. In German cant water is termed *bani*.

**Pax** (Winchester), cease talking, be quiet. Also a chum.

**Pay-away** (common), go on with your discourse. Originally nautical; from the phrase to *pay-away*, *i.e.*, to allow a rope to run out.

**Pay dirt** (American). When the soil of a place afforded indication of gold in sufficient quantities to render mining profitable, it is called *pay dirt*. The term probably came from the Chinese diggers. The first story in which it occurs is one of a Chinaman who, having been employed to dig a grave, and finding *pay dirt* or gold while so employed,

“pre-empted” the ground, and was shot for so doing. The prefix *pay* is to be found in several pidgin-English words.

As their eyes remarked the symptoms, thus their tongues responsive spoke :

“In this undiscovered section there is *pay dirt*, sure as smoke.”

—*The Rise and Fall of Gloryville.*

**Pay for one's whistle, to** (common), to pay extravagantly for any fancy.

Some, though round them life's expenses bristle,

Are not opposed to *paying for their whistle!*

—*Funny Folks.*

**Pay, to** (popular), to punish, beat.

Her father once said he would kill her mother, and once or twice he *paid* her.—*Standard.*

**Pay with a hook, to** (Australian thieves' patter), to steal. An expression probably imported into New South Wales in the old convict days. *To pay with a hook* signifies to obtain the article, not by payment, but by hooking it, or running away.

You bought them? Ah, I fear me, John, You *paid* them with a hook.

—*J. Brunton Stephens: My Chinese Cook.*

**P. D. (trade), a substance** which is sold to grocers for mixing with, and thus adulterating, pepper. It is known in the trade by this rather enigmatical appellation.

**Peach** (English and American), a very complimentary epithet for a young lady. Also “plum.”

(Drivers), an informer against omnibus conductors and drivers. From *to peach*, to reveal a secret, inform against; corrupted from *impeach*.

**Peacock engine** (railway), a locomotive which carries coals and water in a separate tender, as distinguished from a tank engine, which carries engine, fuel, and water all on one frame.

**Peacock horse**, amongst undertakers, one with a showy tail and mane.

**Pearlies** (costermongers), pearl buttons sewn down the sides of the costermongers' trousers in the East End.

**Pear, to** (thieves), to take money from the police for information, and then from thieves for telling them how to escape. *Pear-making*, the act of drawing supplies from both sides. Evidently from “pair,” and to “pair off.”

**Pebble-beached** (London), *i.e.*, high and dry, or very poor. Explained by quotation.

He had arrived at a crisis of impecuniosity compared to which the small circumstance of being *pebble-beached* and stony-broke might be described as comparative affluence.—*Sporting Times.*

**Pec** (Eton), money; from the Latin *pecunia*.

**Peck** (popular), food. *Peck* and *booze*, food and drink; *peckish*,

hungry; a good *pecker*, a good appetite. *Peck-alley*, the gullet. A holiday at *Peckham*, having nothing to eat. *Peck* is probably derived from the action of a hungry bird *pecking* at seed, and from its beak, which it has to open for the purpose. (Old cant), *pek*, meat (Harman). *Ruff-pek*, bacon. *Pek* or *pekker* means in gypsy to roast or bake, and is commonly applied to roast meat. It is found in all gypsy dialects. Mr. Turner derives *pek* from *pecus*, cattle ("Vagrants and Vagrancy," p. 474).

**Peck-alley** (common), the throat.

**Pecker** (Oxford), appetite. (Common), a rare *pecker*, a hearty eater. From *to peck*, to eat voraciously. Keep your *pecker* up, take heart, do not be discouraged, never say die; literally keep your beak or head up, do not be down in the mouth.

Keep your *pecker* up, old fellow! and put your trust in old beans.—C. *Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Peckish** (common), hungry.

**Peck**, to (common), to eat voraciously. Also "to wolf."

**Ped** (sporting), a pedestrian—usually a professional one.

These well-known Birmingham *peds* have joined in a sweepstakes of £5 each to run 120 yards level.—*Referee.*

**Pedlar's French and St. Giles' Greek.** The English common-

alty, not understanding the secret jargon of tramps and beggars, different from what was called "flash," or ordinary vulgar slang, were accustomed to call it either "French" or "Greek," which two languages were equally unintelligible to them. The "cant" words of tramps, pedlars, and beggars were thus designated as "French," and the Gaelic words spoken to a large extent by the Irish, who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and up to the third decade of the nineteenth, inhabited the rookeries of St. Giles', London, through which New Oxford Street has been driven, was designated as "Greek." Shakspeare speaks of the phrase *duc-da-me*, used in the sport, called Tom Tiddler's ground, as a Greek invocation to catch fools into a circle. There was a district in the slums of Westminster, inhabited chiefly by the disreputable classes, who spoke in a cant unknown to the other and less vulgar inhabitants of the metropolis, known as "Petty France."

**Pedlar's news** (Scotch popular), stale news.

**Pedlar's pony** (American), a walking-stick.

**Peel eggs with**, to (common), to stand on ceremony. "He's not one you would stand to *peel eggs with*," i.e., stand on ceremony with.

**Peeler** (general), a policeman; derived from Sir Robert Peel, who first started the metropolitan police in the place of the Bow Street runners.

Bobby too open to the furtive "tip"?

How can the world malign in such a manner?

Although self-offered to the *Peeler's* grip,  
'Tis plain a "Copper" will not take a  
"Tanner."

—Punch.

Some years ago policemen were still called "Bobby Peelers."  
*Vide* BOBBY.

**Peel, to** (common), to strip, take off, expose, or show.

**Peepers** (common), the eyes.

The next question was how long they should wait to let the inmates close their *peepers*.—*Reade: Never too Late to Mend.*

... Or would amiably recommend another that, as his *peepers* were a-goin' fast, he'd best put up the shutters, because the early-closing movement ought to be folered out.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

*Peepers* in mourning, bruised, black eyes.

His *peepers* are just going out of mourning.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Peeping Tom** (old cant), still in use.

A man who is mighty particular in peering, peaking, and prying about, especially to perceive maids undressing or undrest, when they, poor innocents, deem themselves unseen.—*The Comical Critick.*

The term is derived from *Peeping Tom* of Coventry, who

was struck blind for thus offending.

So *Peeping Thomas* lost his sight.

The world cries out, "It served him right,

For looking at my Lady G."

But oh, if every soul of us,

Who've done the same were punished thus,

How many blind men there would be!

—*Ballad of Peeping Tom.*

**Peepsies** (Punch and Judy), the pan pipes.

**Peg** (general), a drink, generally brandy and soda. Hard drinkers in India, every time they have a drink, are said to add a *peg* to their coffin. The latter is synonymous with "to add a nail to one's coffin." (Thieves), a shilling.

**Peg, on the** (military), to be under arrest, as a non-commissioned officer. The expression is also used when a soldier is put under stoppages. A very common synonym in the army is to be "roosted."

**Peg out a claim, to** (Australian), properly to mark out for one's possession. The miner who wishes to claim a certain piece of ground had to mark it out with *pegs*; so has the free selector (*q.v.*) when taking up land. Therefore to *peg out one's claim* means to mark out for one's possession, and is used figuratively in ordinary conversation, as well as technically.



She is haunted by viscounts and barons,  
 With aristocratical names,  
 Fitzgerald, Fitzjames, and Fitzclarence,  
 All anxious to *peg out their claims*  
 On her heart, and her hand, and her  
 portion  
 Their broken estates to renew,  
 Long emaciate with the extortion  
 Of lawyer, and broker, and Jew.  
 —*Douglas B. W. Sladen: A Bush  
 Flower.*

**Peg out, to** (common), to die.  
 Like a man who strikes his tent  
 to take his departure.

There is every reason to believe that the  
 unfortunate woman *pegged out* because a  
 remarkably enlarged liver interfered with  
 the natural play of other internal appa-  
 ratus.—*Fun.*

**Peg, putting in the** (military),  
 taking a pull at one's self ;  
 being on the sober or quiet  
 tack, voluntarily, or by superior  
 orders.

**Pegs** (popular), legs.

**Peg, to** (common), to drink fre-  
 quently. *Vide* PEG.

**Pelter** (nautical), the small ten-  
 gun ship of old. (Popular),  
 out for a *pelter*, means in a very  
 bad temper.

**Pelt, to** (tailors), to sew thickly.

**Pempe** (Winchester College).  
 When a new "man" comes, he  
 is asked whether he has his  
*pempe* (which in reality is an  
 imaginary object, but is repre-  
 sented as being a book). Of  
 course, the answer is in the  
 negative, whereupon he is as-  
 sured that it is quite indispen-

sable, and is sent from one man  
 to another, each telling him  
 that some one else has it in his  
 possession. The joke ends by  
 his being sent to some master,  
 who gets him out of his diffi-  
 culties. The derivation is *πεμ-  
 πησιον προτερον*, that is, "send  
 the fool further." A kindred  
 joke, perpetrated on a raw re-  
 cruit in the French army, is  
 to send him on a fool's errand  
 after the "clef du champ de  
 manoeuvres," or "le parapluie  
 de l'escouade."

**Pen** (colonial), a threepenny piece.

**Penang lawyer** (Anglo-Indian),  
 the name of a handsome walk-  
 ing-stick from Penang and  
 Salampore. "The name is popu-  
 larly thought to have originated  
 in a jocular supposition that  
 lawsuits in Penang were decided  
 by the *lex bocalinum* (club-law).  
 But *pinang liyar* (wild areca),  
 may almost certainly be assumed  
 to be the real name" (Anglo-  
 Indian Glossary).

**Pencil-fever** (turf), this imaginary  
 disease sets in when, despite the  
 efforts of the "marketeers," a  
 horse can no longer be kept at a  
 short price in the lists (Hotten).

**Penciller** (sporting), a bookmaker's  
 clerk.

**Penny gaff.** *Vide* GAFF.

**Penny starver** (popular), a penny  
 roll.

**Pepper-box.** *Vide* COFFEE-MILL.

**Peppered** (turf), used in reference to a man who has laid large stakes on a horse.

He was *peppered* in one dangerous quarter alone to the extent of three or four thousand pounds, simultaneously with a large outlay on Jerry.—*Sporting Times*.

**Perchera** (Winchester College), a mark put against a "man's" name who has been "late" for chapel.

**Perfectly demmy** (American cadet). A man who is dressed in perfectly good taste—stylishly so—is said to be *perfectly demmy*. Probably from association with Mr. Mantalini of "Nicholas Nickleby."

**Periodicals** (American), men who go at regular intervals on spree, or who get drunk only at certain times, are said to have their *periodicals*, i.e., periodical dissipations.

"Mr. Featherly," inquired Bobby from across the table, "are you in the book business?" "I? No; I'm in the dry-goods business. You know that very well, Bobby." "Yes; but ma and pa were talking last night about your having your little *periodicals*, and I thought perhaps that you had made a change."—*New York Times*.

**Perks** (common), perquisites.

To first-class passengers I speak  
In accents soft and bland,  
To second-class, though quite polite,  
No nonsense will I stand;  
But the third-class I'm down upon,  
I treat them just like Turks,  
The reason is, you understand,  
From them I get no *perks*.  
—*T. Russell: The Railway Guard*.

**Pernicated dude** (Canadian), a dandy who assumes a highly swaggering manner.

**Pernicketty** (American), fastidious, mean, and over-particular.

The Comptroller of St. Louis must be very *pernicketty*. He objects, it seems, to paying out of the City Treasury for carriages to take aldermen home at night.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Perpendicular** (London), a lunch taken standing at a bar.

**Persuaders** (common), pistols.

"The *persuaders*?" "I've got 'em," replied Sikes.—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Also spurs.

I have known a coster get a month for inflicting upon his donkey half the pain which the poor mare suffered from the jockey's *persuaders*.—*Daily Paper*.

**Persuading plate** (thieves), an implement used by burglars. It is an iron disk, revolving on a pivot with a cutting point.

Detective-sergeant now produced a quantity of property found on the prisoners, including a *persuading plate* used for the purpose of forcing safes.—*Daily News*.

**Pesky** (American), an adjective used in detraction, as "the *pesky* horse!" "This is a *pesky* sight too bad." Probably from the Dutch *pestje!* *Pest* on it! was a well-known English oath a century ago, but was still commoner in Dutch and German. *Ein pöüchen* (dialect, *Pestche*).

**Pete Jenkins** (circus), a character introduced in the ring as one

who has friends in the audience. Sometimes it is an imaginary old aunt from the country, who is delighted at recognising her long lost nephew, yet horrified at seeing him risking his life by his daring feats on horseback. Peter assures her that there is no danger, and finally persuades her to take a ride. She, of course, tumbles off, and "makes business," to the delight of all lookers-on. Anon some apparent rustic greets him, inquires if the circus-business pays, and is also persuaded into the ring. The original *Pete Jenkins*, a small man with a large nose, was in Dan Rice's troop, or "Great Show," in America about 1855. *Pete Jenkins* now means a variation on the clown.

**Peter** (thieves), a parcel.

So while I was looking about I piped a little *pete* (parcel).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

A cash-box.

After we left the course, we found a dead 'un, and got a *pete* with very near a century of quids in it.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

Also a very old word for portmanteau. This was the original word. (Australian prison), punishment cell. (Poachers), a partridge.

**Peter-claimer** (thieves), one who steals boxes, portmanteaus, bundles.

**Peter Collins** (theatrical), a gentleman never to be found.

In towns there are generally young aspirants who want to act, who apply at the theatre, and are told to call in the afternoon. If he does he is sent in search of *Peter Collins*, "that's the man to give him a job," by one of the stage men, or any one who knows the game, and "will you take this up to him," a sack with something heavy in it, counterweights, and an old pantomime mask generally. So the youth is sent from the roof to the cellar, and, finally, is generally let down a trap and left to get out as best he can.

The same trick is practised at circuses, but the password is the "green-handled rake," which the youth is requested to ask for. He is generally settled with a pill of horse-dung when they have had enough of him.

**Peter out**, to (American), a California mining expression meaning to give out, be exhausted, or come to an end. (English provincial), "to go through St. Peter's needle," to be beaten, or incur loss. Hence perhaps the expression.

**Peter Funk** (American). In New York city for nearly a century all kinds of petty humbug, deceit, and sham, especially in business, has been characterised by a mythical character named *Peter Funk*. Bartlett ingeniously conjectures that this was a fictitious name given in at the mock-auction shops, where

Peter is employed as a by-bidder to run up prices and swindle the ignorant. But there is much in the term "to funk out," or to disappear mysteriously, and in the associations with funk, a stench, or a smoke, which suggest humbug and foul dealing. *Peter Funk* is very fully described in an amusing old American novel called "The Perils of Pearl Street."

**Peter Rugg** (American). "He'll get home as soon as *Peter Rugg*." "He's like *Peter Rugg*, the missing man." "He brings weather like *Peter Rugg*." The writer has often heard these and similar sayings in his youth, in Massachusetts. They are founded on the following legend. About the end of the seventeenth century one *Peter Rugg* and his daughter left Roxbury in a chaise to get to their home in Boston. A friend remarked that a storm was coming up which would prevent his getting home. To which *Peter Rugg* replied with a dire oath, "I will get home to night or may I never get home." For a hundred years whenever a storm was coming it was always preceded by *Peter Rugg* in his old chaise, asking the way to his house. He was always in great distress, seeming to be bewildered. At last one day when his house had just been sold by auction and passed into the hands of a stranger and was no longer legally his home, *Peter*

*Rugg* drove up, and then disappeared. His penance was at an end.

**Petticoat pensioner** (common), a man who lives on a prostitute's earnings. Also "Sunday-man, ponce, prosser, Kaffir."

**Pew-opener's muscle** (medical), a muscle of the palm of the hand so called by the late Sir Benjamin Brodie because it helps to contract and hollow the palm for the reception of a gratuity.

**Pewter** (common), money.

**Philadelphia Catechism** (nautical), the name by which the following couplet is known.

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thou art able,  
And on the seventh—holystone the decks  
and scrape the cable."

**Philip** (thieves), a policeman. Obsolete. Also a warning cry.

**Philiper** (thieves), a thief's accomplice who keeps watch and calls out *Philip!* as a warning cry.

**Phiz** (common), face, countenance.

Proves as 'Arry is well to the front wen sech  
higperlite pens pop on him.

Does me proud and no horror, dear pal;  
shows we're both in the same bloomin'  
swim.

Still, they don't cop my *phiz* quite ker-rect;  
they know Gladstone right down to the  
ground;

But I ain't quite so easy 'it off, don'tcher  
see, if you take me all round.

—*Punch*.

**Piccadilly crawl**, a languid walk most affected about ten years ago.

**Pickers** (popular), a very old term for hands.

**Picker-up** (Stock Exchange), a man who tries to get members to make a wrong price, and then deals with them.

**Pick flies off it**, to (tailors), to find fault with it.

**Picking out robins' eyes** (tailors), to side stitch a black cloth or fine material.

**Picking-up** (popular), explained by quotation.

There, it seems, the girls of the working class go out *picking-up*, just as the boys go out "mashing." They go by twos or threes, each little party of the same sex; the girls looking in the shop windows and giggling, the boys sauntering along, cigarette in mouth and hands in pocket. Presently the latter jostle up against the former. They apologise. No apology, they are told, is needed. "Going to market?" asks the lad. "Yes," is the reply. "May we come along?" "Very well." Thus is the ice speedily and satisfactorily broken!—*Globe*.

**Pickle jar** (popular), a coachman in yellow livery.

**Pick-me-up** (popular), a stimulating draught before dinner, or after a debauch.

**Pick off**, to (Winchester College), to hit somebody with a stone.

**Picture**, not in the (turf), not placed.

In the Hardwicke Stakes he was fully fifty yards behind Bendigo, who, in turn, was not in the picture.—*Sporting Times*.

**Pie** (printers). Almost technical. Different kinds of type mixed up together, either through accident, as when a forme not tightened enough falls to pieces when being carried away, or through negligence. German and French printers use respectively the expressions, *zwiebel-fisch*, literally fish with onions; and *pâté*, or pie, "faire du pâté," to distribute such mixed up type.

Bacon was a highly educated man, and an expert linguist; yet the foreign in the folio may be summarised as a mass of *pie*. Thus "Dictissima;" "vemchie, vencha, que non te vnde, que non te perreche." These are copied from the quartos. Then we have the French: "il fait for chando, Ie man voi a le Court la grand affaires."—*Standard*.

"We've had an accident, sir," said Old Pleasure, the foreman, "the whole of 'Bits of Turf' has fallen into *pie*."

"Pick it up," said the great man, "and head it 'Musings at the Cheshire Cheese.'"—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Booksellers), the miscellaneous collection of books which have been pulled out of the alphabet during the day, and have to be replaced at night. It is always the last job of the day to put the *pie* away.

**Piece** (common). Hotten says that this is "a contemptuous term for a woman—a strumpet." It occurs in Elizabethan writers in this sense. It is now generally heard in such phrases as "she is a nice *piece*," "a good *piece*."

**Piece brokers** (thieves), explained by quotation.

As he comes along, bringing your new suit home, he would think it no sin to call at that repository for stolen goods, the *piece broker's*, and sell there a strip of your unused cloth for a shilling.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Piece of calico** (American), a girl or woman. "The *calico*," or "the muslin," women in general.

**Piece of pudding** (popular), a piece of luck, or a welcome change.

**Piece of thick** (popular slang), a piece of Cavendish, or pressed cake tobacco.

Never again!  
Will I attempt a pipe to smoke,  
Never again!  
I've tried it once but 'twas no joke,  
I got a clay and *piece of thick*,  
Thought I'd do a clever trick,  
But crikey, didn't I feel sick,  
Never again!  
—*Ballad (Francis & Day).*

**Pieces** (thieves), money.

Rêve d'Or should be the mare to go,  
Unless you boldly strike for Freedom,  
Concerning *pieces* thus to show  
The heartless bookies that you need 'em.  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

The flash terms for *pieces* are: "brown, copper, blow," a penny; "bit," threepence; "lord of the manor, pig, sprat, downer, snid, tanner," sixpence; "bob, breaky-leg, deaner," shilling; "alderman," half-a-crown; "bull, cartwheel," crown; "half a quid," half a sovereign; "sov., quid, couter, yellow-boy, canary, foont," sovereign; "finnup,

fiver," five-pound note; "double finnup, tenner," ten-pound note; "pony," twenty pounds; "monkey," fifty pounds; "century," hundred pounds; "plum," £100,000; "marygold," one million.

**Pieman** (streets), he who is tossing at pitch and toss.

**Pie, to put into the** (auction). At book sales, to put into a large lot, to be sold at the end.

**Pig** (thieves and popular), a policeman or detective. (Trade), sometimes cold *pig*, but more often the former. A term by which goods returned from any cause are known.

**Pigeon** (common), a dupe whose fate it is to be "plucked" by blacklegs and others. The French use *pigeon* in the same sense. In Spanish cant *palomo*, pigeon, is a gullible person.

**Pigeon, blue.** *Vide* BLUE PIGEON.

**Pigeon holes** (Winchester College), small studies. (Printers), matter widely and badly spaced. This is a recognised expression amongst compositors and readers, owing to the amount of white between the words, likened to a nest of *pigeon holes*.

**Pig, pork** (tailors), garments spoiled, cut wrong, not the right material, or any error which precludes the possibility of alteration.

**Pigs** (Cambridge University), members of St. John's College are called *pigs*.

The Johnians are always known by the name of *pigs*; they put up a new organ the other day, which was immediately christened "Baconi Novum Organum."—*Westminster Review*.

(Printers), a term of contempt applied by compositors to pressmen. When pressmen entered the composing-room they would be received with grunts. A compositor would not dare to do this out of his own particular department. So "Savage's Dictionary," 1841, says.

**Pig's ear, pig's lug** (tailors), a name given to a lappel collar or flap too heavy for the size of garment.

**Pig's foot** (American thieves), a jimmy, or thieves' short crowbar, cloven at one end like a *pig's foot*.

**Pig-sticker** (army), sabre.

**Pig-sty** (printers), a press-room is thus somewhat inelegantly described.

**Pig's whistle** (American), according to Bartlett, who gives it as a synonym for an instant, "In less than a *pig's whistle*." As there exists an old English equivalent for this in "less than a pig's whisper," and as there is a well-known old tavern sign called the "Pig and Whistle," it is easy to see how  
VOL. II.

one term might be derived from another. It seems to be a fact and not a mere philological guess, that "pig and whistle" was originally *pigen washal!* Hail to the Virgin! an amusing instance of bathos.

**Pigtails** (Stock Exchange), Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China.

**Pike** (American), a name applied in California to the migratory poor whites, said to have originated, according to Bartlett, from the supposition that they came from *Pike County, Missouri*. "The true *pike*," says Mr. Fraahoff, "is the wandering gypsy-like Southern poor white who lives in a waggon." As the term *pike* and *pikey* have been used for at least a century in England, and probably much longer, for a gypsy or a tramp, the term is evidently enough not derived from "*Pike County, Missouri*." (Thieves), turnpike.

**Pikers** (Australian), wild cattle which cannot be got out of the bush. From English slang to *pike*, to run away.

**Pike it, to** (popular and thieves), to run away. From taking to the *pike* or turnpike road, as applied to a discontented person, "if you don't like it you can *pike it*."

**Pikey** (popular), a tramp or gypsy.

**Pile (American), now used in England.**

In the course of conversation it was very remarkable to notice the variety of occupations which a rich American has filled before he has "made his *pile*." He may have been a bootblack, a messenger boy, the editor of a newspaper, the captain of a ferry-boat, a lawyer, or a murderer, but somehow he has "done the trick."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

To have made his *pile*, is generally supposed to be a term of California origin referring to a *pile* of gold dust, or to have come from the gambling tables, meaning a quantity of heaped-up gold. Bartlett has, however, indicated that the term seems to be the revival of an old one used by Dr. Franklin in his "Poor Richard's Almanac" for April 1741, where he says—

Rash mortal, ere you take a wife,  
Contrive your *pile* to last for life.

*Piler* is obsolete English for one who accumulates money, and this supports the above derivation (also the French *amasser*, to hoard).

"In Dutch *peyl*, a certain mark, as a water-mark; *boven de peyl*, above the set mark; *peyler*, one that sounds the deep, hence *peyllood*, a sounding lead, and *peylloot*, a pilot. Hence a man who had made his *pile* would be one who had attained his determined mark or limit, certainly a much more definite expression than that of a mere heap. It is true that about twenty-five years ago an Indian tribe in the West, when the Government offered them

an indemnity for certain losses, in their ignorance of the art of counting, could only keep repeating, 'Want heap money—heap big.' At least one of the chiefs set an arrow in the ground and stipulated that there should be as much specie given as would quite cover it. It is curious that the word pronounced *pile* in Dutch should—apropos of this story—mean both a set mark and an arrow, and also in English, a heap" (Chas. G. Leland: Notes).

**Pile in, to (American), a common form of invitation to take part in anything, as a meal, or to come into a house, make one of a party in a vehicle or a dance, &c.**

They gave us a friendly hail, and whether they fancied we looked hungry or not, kindly asked us to sit down with them and *pile in*, which being interpreted signifies "Pitch in and eat."—*M. Roberts: The Western Avenger*.

To *pile out* means to come forth.

**Pile of mags (conjuring), a pile of "faked" coins, or of coins so distributed as to move freely one above the other. This is a very old term, which must have been long in the profession, as the *mags* are generally gold, real or apparent; and in the so-called Gypsy Vocabulary of Bampfyld Moore; Carew (but which has hardly a gypsy word in it), *meg* is a guinea. The ancient cant form of the word was *make*. Also *make*, a halfpenny;**



"Brummagen macks," counterfeit halfpence, according to Dekker.

**Pile on the agony, to.** *Vide* AGONY.

**Pile on, to** (American), applied to excess or intensity in any form.

"In acting you should go and see Our friend *pile* on the agony."

*Pile on* the lather, Mr. Jones—do! Tell me that I am a twenty-five horse-power angel, iled with otar of roses. It won't tire me much, and it may relieve you.—*How Jones told his Story.*

**Pill** (common), a doctor; *pill-driver*, an itinerant apothecary.

**Pill-box** (popular), a soldier's cap.

**Pilled** (common), synonymous with "black-balled."

Mr. Jubilee Plunger Benzon was *pilled* for the Southdown Club.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Pill, to** (University), to talk twaddle, or in platitudes.

**Pillow-sham** (American), a cover for a pillow. "Outwardly I was as decorous as a clean *pillow-sham*," a quaint and slightly sarcastic phrase to express an appearance of decorous gravity assumed for the occasion.

**Pimple** (popular), the head.

**Pimp, to** (University), to do little, mean, petty actions, to curry favour.

**Pinchbeck villas** (journalistic), small cheap houses, mostly in

the suburbs of cities, bearing pretentious names, such as "The Oaks," "The Gables," &c.

Our correspondent in Paris informs us that "there is a growing tendency to dub even the *pinchbeck villas* which are springing up all round the metropolis with the pretentious title of *château*."—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Pinch-board** (American thieves or gambling), a swindling roulette-table.

There's the *pinch-board*. That's dead crooked. A sucker sees the wheel and the numbers all straight enough, and the little arrow in the middle. The owner tells him his chances are two to one if he bets on the odd or even numbers, and twelve to one if he puts his money on any one of the twelve. That's all muck. The owner has a brass tube running from the arrow to the edge of the board. There's a rod run through that, and a button on to the end of it. His capper stands next to the button, and by pressing his leg against it he can make the arrow stop (or point to) where he wants it. Sometimes the crowd think that the man that's working the wheel is playing them, and they tell him to stand away from the table. He says, "Certainly, gentlemen; anything to oblige!" and steps back a foot or two; but the capper he's there just the same, and nobody suspects him, 'cause he keeps losin' his money just like the rest of 'em.—*Confidence Crooks: Philadelphia Press.*

It may be remarked that the roulette-tables, spin-boards, dice, teetotums, in short, all the games seen at fairs and races, are swindles. The rifles for firing at a mark for prizes cheat by having false sights or curves in the barrels. The writer at one of these places once succeeded in hitting the mark many times by aiming six inches below it.

**Pinch**, to (thieves), to arrest, to steal.

**Pink** (common), the height of perfection. Used by Shakespeare in this sense. (American cadet), being reported for some infraction of the regulations. "He's got a hefty skin of a *pink* for that jollification," *i.e.*, "He's got a severe report against him."

**Pinked** (tailors), beautifully and carefully made.

**Pinked between the lacings**, a very old term, from *pinked*, stabbed, still current among criminals and detectives in New York. It signifies convicted by reason of perjury. Also when an honest man is convicted of a false charge by treacherous advantage being taken of some weak point. To question a witness (as is very commonly done by unscrupulous counsel) as to all the sins of all his past life, which have no reference to the case whatever, is to *pink him between the lacings*.

**Pinked or skinned, to get** (American cadet), to get reported.

**Pinker** (pugilistic), a blow that draws the claret or blood.

**Pinky** (American), an old New York term for the little finger, from the provincial English *pink*, very small. A common term in New York, especially

among small children, who, when making a bargain with each other, are accustomed to confirm it by interlocking the little finger of each other's right hands, and repeating the following:

*Pinky, pinky*, bow-bell,  
Whoever tells a lie,  
Will sink down to the bad place,  
And never rise up again.

(Bartlett.)

**Pinnel** (thieves), corruption of penal servitude.

**Pinners-up** (tramps), the sellers of wall-songs, that is, songs printed on small sheets and pinned on a canvas stretched on a wall for display.

**Pins** (common), legs.

**Pint** (tailors), "my *pint* for him," I commend him.

**Pinto** (American cowboys), a piebald horse. From the Spanish *pinto*, painted or coloured (MS. Americanisms by C. Leland Harrison).

**Pints round** (tailors), an expression used in places where there are a number of cutters employed and one drops his shears on the floor. Then the cry comes as from one man, *pints round*, and means that the unfortunate individual will have to pay for a pint of ale for every man in the shop. It is said that it was customary to enforce this rule, but it is not so now.

**Pipeclaying it over** (tailors), hiding the faults.

**Pipe-laying** (American), making arrangements to procure fraudulent votes. It is said to have been first used about 1835, in connection with a plot to import voters to New York from Philadelphia. Extensive works in connection with laying croton water-pipes were then in progress, and thence the phrase acquired its accepted significance. The Whig leaders were actually indicted for the alleged attempt at fraud, but were acquitted by the jury by whom they were tried. (Police), taking measures for the detection of a suspected criminal.

**Pipe one's eye**, to (popular), to weep.

Why, what's that to you, if my eyes I'm a  
*pipin*,  
A tear is a comfort, d'ye see, in its way.  
—Charles Dibdin.

**Piper** (London), a spy on omnibus conductors. (American police), a spy. *Vide TO PIPE.*

**Pipers** (pugilistic), the lungs.

**Piper's news** (Scotch popular), stale news.

**Pipe**, to (old cant), to cry. (Thieves), to see. In this sense a corruption of "peep," the eyes being termed "peepers."

If I *pipe* a good chat, why, I touch for the  
wedge,  
But I'm not a "particular" robber;

I smug any snowy I see on the hedge,  
And I ain't above daisies and clobber.  
—*The Referee.*

Also to follow and spy. (Popular), to talk.

"You see," said the barber, "we help one another here, and I have fetched you out this last two nights so as to get you alongside this y'ere chum, who has got fourteen stretch and his ticket. Now then, *pipe* away, red 'un."—*Evening News.*

**Pip**, to (card-players), to take the trick from your opponent.

**Pirates** (London street), omnibuses in which extravagant prices are charged for fare.

Did Mr. Shillibeer, when he started the London omnibus on its prosperous career of useful activity, ever foresee a time when a bold bad 'bus, called a *pirate*, would invade the streets?—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Pit** (thieves), explained by quotation.

I had developed a special aptitude for "buzzing" (pocket-picking) from the *pit* or inside breast coat pocket.—*Tit-Bits.*

**Pitch** (circus, strolling players, itinerants, &c.), a place suitable for a performance of any kind, sale of goods, &c. In certain towns, some sixteen years ago, actors could not work without getting permission from the mayor or justice of the peace, else they were liable to imprisonment as rogues and vagabonds.

Showmen are agreed that there is no better *pitch* in the world than London.—*Daily Telegraph.*

## A performance.

His "fakements" or "properties" were costly and tasteful, and, in short, the entire *pitch* was a complete triumph.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Doing a *pitch*, doing business.

Being at Plymouth fair, and doing a good business, there stood among the crowd a youth who bought a great many lots of me, so that when I had done my *pitch*, and got down from the stage . . . —*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

To "queer the *pitch*," to spoil the *pitch*, or performance, a theatrical and circus phrase, meaning to stop, spoil a performance in any way.

He was never "loose in ponging," nor did he ever "miss his tip." His equestrianism was emphatically "bono," and there was nothing to "queer his *pitch*."—*Daily Telegraph*.

Used also figuratively, to mar, spoil one's plans, business.

When my *pitch* you endeavoured to queer,  
Wasn't friendly at all, so I look for a share  
In her merry ten thousand a year.  
—*Sporting Times*.

(Popular), a short interval for sleep.

Pitched (tailors), acquaintance cut. No intercourse of any kind.

Pitcher (coiners), one who utters base coin.

Pitching it strong (common), exaggerating, overdoing it.

"Well, I am thinking the 'Tiser is *pitching* it rather strong."

"My love, what an expression."—*Reade: Hard Cash*.

**Pitch in**, pull out, to (tailors), to work with a will.

**Pitch into a person, to** (common), to castigate him, to revile him severely.

**Pitch the fork, to** (popular), to tell a pitiful tale.

**Pitch the hunters, to** (fairs), explained by quotation.

When Elias was at a pleasure fair, he would *pitch the hunters*, that is, put up the three sticks a penny business.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

**Pitch the nob.** *Vide* PRICK THE GARTER.

**Pitch, to** (coiners), to utter base coin. (Popular), to have a short sleep.

**Pitch up** (Winchester College), a clique or party, a set of chums. A Winchester boy's *pitch up* are his friends at home.

**Pitch up with, to** (Winchester College), to associate with. *Vide* PITCH UP.

**Pit circlers** (theatrical). The expression explains itself.

It is, however, so magnificently put on and so splendidly acted that it is no wonder the stallites, not to mention the *pit circlers*, crowd nightly to see it.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Pit-pat's the way** (popular), trot along, go on, don't stop!

Wire in and go ahead, like fashionable Fred,

*Pit-pat's the way* and sharp's about the word.

—*Ballad: Fashionable Fred*.

**Pit riser** (theatrical), a burst of powerful acting which evokes an enthusiastic acclamation from the pit. Derived from the well-known anecdote of Edmund Kean.

On returning home, after his first appearance at Drury Lane, while describing his triumph to his wife, Mrs. Kean interrupted him by inquiring what Lord Essex thought of the little man's Shylock?

"Damn Lord Essex! The pit rose at me!" replied Kean.

**Pittsburg grip** (American), explained by quotation.

The *Pittsburg grip*, a throat disorder that troubled singers in the smoky city for years, has disappeared with the introduction of natural gas.—*American Humorist*.

From the French *grippe*, influenza.

**Place** (tailors), "a breast-pocket kind of *place*," or "a one-eyed kind of *place*," is a small shop.

**Placebo** (medical), "I will please," a dose of coloured water, or something equally harmless, given to a patient with an imaginary malady.

**Plain as a yard of pumpwater** (tailors), a quaint phrase, meaning very plain.

**Plain-headed** (society), a term to express that a lady is not good-looking; it is borrowed from house language.

**Plain statement** (tailors), an indifferent meal, or an easy,

simple, and straightforward garment to make.

**Plank, to** (American and old English), to pay down money. "To *plank* the pewter." In old cant, both shillings and Spanish dollars were called boards.

Now then, ye noble sportsmen, if you can find anything to beat him for a shop, *plank* down your spondulicks.—*Sporting Times*.

To *plank* it down, to lay money on a horse.

This is a better bloomin' game, I give you my vord, than *plankin' it down* to Kempton!—*Sporting Times*.

**Plant** (thieves and various), a preconceived swindle, robbery, or burglary, in which sense the term explains itself as being a metaphor taken from planting cuttings or seeds in a garden.

"What have you got to say for yourself, you withered old fence, eh?" "I was away on a *plant*."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

Hence any dishonest trick, dodge, device.

"He should have tried mustachios, and a pair of military trousers." "So he did, and they warn't of no more use than the other *plant*."—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

"Have they got the requisite coin—you know what I mean—the money?" inquired Mr. Laggens. "It isn't a *plant*!"—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

You have really no idea  
What an artful bird it is,  
Fly to trap and up to biz,  
Twigs a *plant* in half a minute.  
—*Punch*.

A *plant*, a decoy, one who keeps watch for burglars to warn them. In this sense it

literally means one *planted* there, like the French *planton*, orderly in waiting. Also hidden money or valuables; to spring a *plant*, to unearth such a hidden hoard.

**Plant, to** (thieves and various), to mark a person out for robbery or a swindle. It is curious to note that the French have *gardiner* for a confederate in a confidence trick swindle, whose duty is to prepare the victim, foster and nurse him as a gardener would a plant. Also to conceal, hide. In this sense common in Australia.

Why, they stuck up Wilson's station there, and murdered the man and woman in the kitchen; they then *planted* inside the house, and waited until Wilson came home at night with his stockman; then they rushed out and knocked old Wilson on the head, and drove a spear through the man's side.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland.*

Not being able to send my gold down to the escort office for security, I was forced to content myself with *planting* it, which I did just inside my tent.—*Australian Story.*

To *plant* the job, to arrange and prepare, generally in reference to a robbery.

It was not found necessary to *plant* the job by squaring the servants beforehand, nor to invent any elaborate ruse, for it was considered that the more natural the mode of attack the better would be the chances of success.—*Daily Telegraph.*

(Coiners), to *plant*, to pass spurious coin, intrusted to them by the "dandy master," or manufacturer of base sovereigns and half sovereigns. A bottle of spirits is the ordinary purchase,

and the smasher receives it and seven and sixpence as a commission.

It is a two-handed job, and two women, generally an old and a young one, manage it. The former carries the base coin, and the latter *plants* it.—*J. Greenwood: Rag, Tag, & Co.*

Also *plant* the sour.

Although the tradesman on whom "her poor old man" had tried to "*plant* the sour" had sent for a constable, Mr. Maloney in the interim had contrived to put down his throat such evidence of his being a "regular hand" as he happened to have about him.—*J. Greenwood: Rag, Tag, & Co.*

(Conjurors), to place an object to be afterwards magically discovered by the conjuror in the hands or pockets of a conscious or unconscious confederate among the spectators.

(Cardsharps), to *plant* the books, to place the cards in the pack unfairly, for the purpose of cheating at play, or deceiving by legerdemain.

(Football), when a football is kicked against a person he is said to be *planted*. Is used more specially with reference to a hit in the face. The blow itself is called a *planter*.

**Plasterer** (sporting), explained in the following extract.

Worse, if it be possible, than this desolater of hares is the "masher" or "chappie" of modern England who prides himself on quick shooting, and cuts down his birds before they are well on the wing. Mr. Bromley-Davenport calls him the *plasterer*—one who thinks nothing of the lives and eyes of the men who sur-

round him on all sides, and blows his pheasant to a pulp before the bird is seven feet in the air.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Plaster, to (popular), to flatter.**

He'd go out and get as drunk as a fiddler, and then he'd come rowlin' home and begin *plasterin'* myself over, calling me his colleen jhas and lovin' me the same as if we'd been married only fifteen minutes.—*T. Browne: My Husband's Toddy*.

**Plate it, to (London), to walk.**

*Vide* PLATES OF MEAT.

An adipose gentleman *plates it* on to the stage, and chirrups the soul-stirring anthem, "You shan't wipe your nose on the flag."—*Sporting Times*.

**Plates of meat (popular), the feet.**

As I walk along my beat,  
You can hear my *plates of meat*.  
—*Music Hall Song*.

They recognise their favourite comedian, and anticipate his lines by numerous gags, and inquiries having reference to "what cheer" he is enjoying, and how his *plates o' meat* are.—*Sporting Times*.

**Platform (common).** "The word *platform*, when used for the programme of a political party, is often classed as an Americanism, but it is really a revival of a use of the word that was very common in English literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though less common, perhaps, as a noun than as a verb, meaning to lay down principles. For instance, Milton, in his 'Reason of Church Government,' says that some 'do not think it for the ease of their inconsequent opinions

to grant that church discipline is platformed in the Bible, but that it is left to the discretion of men'" (*Cornhill Magazine*). It is used as a noun in Cromwell's letters.

A standpoint in an argument, a statement of opinion.

Mrs. Anthony presented the following *platform*, which was unanimously adopted, "That the present claim for manhood suffrage sugar-coated with the words equal, impartial, universal, &c., is a fraud so long as woman is not permitted to share in the said suffrage."—*Report of the Great Woman's Demonstration, New York, 1867*.

Pastor Chignel has set aside Dr. Barham's Liturgy and has taken the most advanced *platform* known to modern Unitarianism."—*Nonconformist*.

**Platter (common), broken crockery.**

**Play board (Punch and Judy), the stage.**

**Play booty, to (theatrical), to play badly, and with malice prepense, for the purpose of flooring a play, or a player.**

**Play dark, to (popular), to conceal one's true character.**

"Look here," said Smithers, wiping the mess from his mouth, "you've been *playing dark*, and I'm out of training, and—."—*Moonshine*.

**Play for, to (American), to deal with generally, with an idea of deceiving.** *Vide* JAY.

**Play Hell and Tommy, to.** This expression is thought to be a corruption of "Hal and Tommy,"

the allusion being to Henry VIII. and his unscrupulous minister, Thomas Cromwell, who seized and rifled the religious houses, and turned out their occupants to starve. This is, however, a very doubtful derivation. In some parts of England it is very common for an angry man to threaten another that he will *play Hell and Tommy* with him.

**Playing it low down** (American), an expression signifying that a man has been too unprincipled, mean, or rapacious in an act.

I ain't over particular, but this I *do* say, that interducin' a feller to your sister, and availin' himself of the opportunity while you're a kissin' her to stock the cards, is a *playin' it mighty low down*.—*Newspaper Story*.

**Playing the sovereign** (American). Office-seekers who, shortly before an election, put on shabby clothes, drink whisky, and shake hands with everybody, and make themselves generally agreeable to all of inferior social position whom it is to their interest to conciliate, are said to be *playing the sovereign*, the object being to secure their good graces and obtain their votes. Probably derived from the common phrase the "sovereign people."

**Play old gooseberry**, to (popular), to do a person a mischief, to "kick up a row," to behave in a violently inimical manner. *Vide* GOOSEBERRY.

**Please the pigs!** (common), if you are willing, if all goes well

—a form of assent providing no obstacle crops up. Edwards says the phrase, ludicrous as it is in its present shape, had its origin in a deep religious feeling. It was formerly "please the pyx." The pyx was the box which contained the consecrated wafer, and was held in the greatest veneration as the symbol of the Almighty. The phrase therefore, "If it please the pyx," was equivalent to "If it shall please God," or, in modern form, "D.V." *i.e.*, *Deo Volente*, or, God being willing. This derivation is, however, much more ingenious than probable.

**Plebe** (American cadet), a new cadet; a military synonym for the freshman of the universities.

**Plebs** (Westminster school), a tradesman's son. From the Latin *plebs*, populace.

**Pledge** (Winchester College), to give away. "*Pledge me*" means after you.

**Ploughed** (common), drunk.

**Plough, to** (university). A man is *ploughed* when he fails in an examination. Probably this word was suggested by the harrowed feelings of the candidate.

Well, the "gooseberry pie" is really too deep for me; but *ploughed* is the new Oxfordish for "plucked."—*C. Reade: Hard Cash*.



**Pluck, to** (common), an Oxford term now in general use, to reject a candidate for examination. "When the degrees are conferred," says Cuthbert Bede, "the name of each person is read out before he is presented to the Vice-Chancellor. The proctor then walks once up and down the room, so that any person who objects to the degree being granted may signify the same by pulling or *plucking* the proctor's robes."

**Plug** (university), explained by quotation.

Getting up his subjects by the aid of those royal roads to knowledge, variously known as cribs, crams, *plugs*, abstracts, analyses, or epitomes.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

(American), a high hat.

**Plug a man, to** (Royal Military Academy), to kick one behind.

**Plugged money** (American). Silver money is often treated by rogues who bore pieces out and fill the holes with lead or amalgam. The term is applied also to men with moral defects, *e.g.*, "He is clever but there is a *plug* in him." "You are not up to his *plugs*."

"Young man!" shouted the retail tobaccoist, "didn't I caution you to keep your eyes peeled for *plugged* silver coins?"—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Plugs** (American), people who assemble on the side-walks and stand there chatting, to the great inconvenience of the passers-by, or who, as any one

may see for himself in Bond Street, London, love to stand with their backs to shop windows to exhibit themselves.

Oh, stand on the side-walk—do!  
That the world may look at you!  
You think you're so complete  
And are dressed so very neat,  
Oh, *plug* on the side-walk, do.

Oh, stand in the doorway, do!  
To hinder passing through,  
'Tis so very *distingue*  
To be standing in the way;  
Oh, *plug* up the doorway—do!

—*Newspaper Ballad.*

**Plug-teaching** (American), teaching trades and arts in casual or evening lessons.

A good deal of boy (and girl) labour in America is brought into existence by what is called *plug-teaching*. "Two young men will be taught engraving in the evenings on easy terms." Telegraphy, type-setting, dress-cutting, and designing are among the businesses thus "taught;" and as a rule the teaching is the merest swindle.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Plug-ugly** (American), the name given in Baltimore to roughs and rowdies, now common.

One that shall devote as much space to literature as to "sport" (of the dog-fighting, rat-baiting kind); one that shall give a dead *plug-ugly* a line (if it is in the way of news), and a dead man who has done something in the world, for the world, many lines.—*New York World.*

**Plum** (common), £100,000.

The next day they disposed of their swag for a *plum*,  
And invested the proceeds in Spaniards and Turks.  
—*Punch.*

*Plums*, money.

Daddy's *plums* in the bank, or daddy's dear, delightful daughter, which?—*Toby.*

It is curious to note that in Spanish *pluma*, and in Italian *pennes*, meaning properly feather, have the slang signification of money.

"It is possible to trace the slang term *plum* for £100,000 to *pluma*, a feather, the idea being that a man who had accumulated this sum had feathered his nest" (*Standard*).

**Plum or plumb** (common), direct, exactly, quite. "The original signification of this word is 'as the plummet hangs, perpendicularly,' hence its secondary meaning of straightforward, directly" (*Bartlett*).

Tom said she was going to get one of us, sure, before we got through. We got her half way; and then we was *plumb* played out, and most drowned with sweat.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

**Plum duff** (sailor), plum pudding.

**Plummy** (popular), satisfactory, profitable. *Vide* PLUM or PLUMB.

They do manage their things so *plummy*.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Plummy and slam** (thieves), all right. *Vide* PLUM or PLUMB.

**Plumper** (racing), all one's money laid on one horse.

The Fitzwilliam Plate was won by Lord Randolph Churchill's colt by Retreat out of White Lily, for which I gave a *plumper*, and he started at 7 to 1.—*Truth*.

(Election), *vide* TO PLUMP. (American), explained by quotations.

A device for puffing out to smoothness the wrinkles of the cheeks, called *plumpers*, has been introduced.—*New York Paper*.

Milo Morgan was yesterday charged with feloniously taking one "palpitating bosom," the property of Emile Horner, who keeps a fancy store, and Milo Morgan stole from it a *plumper*, an article used for artificially rounding out the female bust, palpitating with it.—*Hartford (Connecticut) Times*.

**Plump, to** (election), to give all one's votes to one single candidate.

"Another election term, which will not be so common in the future as it has been in the past, is the expression to *plump*, and its opposite to 'split.' With the increase of single-membered constituencies these phrases must fall into disuse, and a 'floater' will no longer be able to say with Mr. Chubb, in 'Felix Holt'—'I'll *plump* or I'll *split* for them as treat me the handsomest and are the most of what I call gentlemen; that's my idea'" (*Cornhill Magazine*).

(Racing), to lay one's money on one single horse.

But I shall *plump* for Lord R. Ch.'s L'Abbesse de Jouarre, who has been well tried.—*Truth*.

**Plum, to** (popular), to deceive; *plum* him up, *plum* the public, &c. Cheating costers fix three large plums at the bottom of a measure. They are so tightly wedged as to be immovable, and though they are in the measure they are not passed on to the purchaser.

**Plunder** (American), the personal luggage of travellers.

"Help yourself, stranger," said the landlord, "while I take the *plunder* into the other room."—*Hoffman: Winter in the West.*

They'd put in so much *plunder*, two trunks, bandboxes, &c.—*Bartlett: Major Jones's Courtship.*

In Lower Canada packmen call luggage "*butin*," that is, *plunder*, booty. French soldiers also use the word "*butin*" for equipment, belongings.

(Common), profit. (American), luggage.

**Plunge** (society), a heavy and reckless bet.

We did not altogether like Mr. —'s *plunge* on Martley, and are not surprised to hear that the horse is struck out.—*Sporting Times.*

Now my soul the question worries,  
Which to *plunge* on—which to back,  
Friday—though the market flurries,  
Shall the colt a backer lack?  
—*Bell's Life.*

**Plunger** (society), a wealthy man who bets in a reckless manner, who takes large bets at any odds.

The current week has served to introduce us to a new *plunger*, who up to the present has given strong evidence of possession of more money than brains. He is said to have attained his majority only a few days since, and having come into upwards of half a million "ready," has been showing "who's which" in rare style.—*Sporting Times.*

Also a heavy dragoon. A Baptist.

**Plush** (nautical), from *plus*. The overplus of the gravy, arising

from being distributed in a smaller measure than the true one, and assigned to the cook of each mess, becomes a cause of irregularity (Smyth).

**Poach**, to (sporting), to get the best of a start.

**Poacher** (Stock Exchange), a jobber who deals out of his own market. The term is also applied to a broker who is continually changing his market.

**Pocket mining.** *Vide FOSSICK.*

**Pockettes** (conjurers), pockets worn by some conjurers in addition to the *profondes*. From *poke*, or French *pochettes*.

**Pod**, in (popular), in the family way, *i.e.*, run to seed. *Pod* is provincial for belly. (American), *pod*, intimate, old-fashioned ways; an old *pod*, an old-fashioned man. Also old *pod*, a man with a prominent stomach.

**Poet's walk** (Eton), when cricketers get leave of absence from roll-call, and have tea under the trees, they are said to go to *poet's walk*.

**Poge** (thieves), purse; a corruption of "pouch," or "poke."

I went out the next day to Maidenhead, and touched for some wedge and a *poge* (purse), with over five quid in it.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Poggle**, puggly, porgly, &c. (Anglo-Indian), a madman, an

idiot, a dolt. Hindu *pōgal*. Often used colloquially by Anglo-Indians. A friend belonging to that body used to adduce a macaronic adage which we fear the non-Indian will fail to appreciate: "Pogalet pecunia jalde separantur," *i.e.*, a fool and his money are soon parted (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Point** (Stock Exchange). Points are the bases of speculative operations. When a man has a *point*, it generally means that he has secret information concerning a particular stock, which enables him to deal with it to considerable advantage.

**Pointer** (American), a hint; the same as "straight tip" in English.

She fell into a cogitation on the Irish banshees who came to give one *pointers* on approaching death.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Point rise** (American), the rise of one dollar, *e.g.*, as an unit in the value of a stock.

**Poke** (thieves), purse. Properly a pocket.

Kit, from Seven Dials, remanded innocent on two charges of *pokes*, only out two weeks for a drag, expects to get felled or else chucked.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

"The thieves of London," said Dr. Latham, "are the conservators of Saxonisms." So *poke* is from the Saxon *pocca*, a bag, which otherwise survives in its diminutive "pocket," *i.e.*, a little bag, in "buying a pig

in a *poke*," in the noun and verb "pouch," &c.

**Poke bogey**, to (popular), to play nonsense, to humbug. "Now, don't you *poke* none of your *bogey* at me." From *bogey*, a hobgoblin bugbear, and probably connected with *puck* and *puckle*, old provincial English for spirit or ghost. Icelandic *puka*; Welsh *pucca*, a bugbear; Celtic *bucan*, a ghost.

**Poke fun**, to (common), to make jokes, to laugh at one.

Little he deems that Stephen de Hoagues, Who "his *fun*," as the Yankees say, everywhere "*pokes*,"

And is always too fond of his jokes, Has written a circular note to De Nokes, And De Stiles, and De Roe, and the rest of the folks,

One and all, great and small,  
Who were asked to the Hall.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Poke him fly** (tailors), show him how. *Vide* FLY.

**Poker** (university), an esquire bedell who carries a large mace before the Vice-Chancellor when engaged in his official capacity. (Fencing), a disorderly, uncourteous, rough fencer. "Un ferrailleux, tirailleux."

He was no better than a "tirailleux, jeu de soldat"—Anglicised a *poker*.—*Angelo's Reminiscences*, in his account of the bouts with Dr. Keys.

**Pokerish** (American), doubtful, or of dubious safety, an expression implying something dangerous or alarming, but not used

very seriously. From to *poke*, to feel in the dark.

I knew by the *pokerish* hole in the ground  
Which yawned at my feet that a mud-  
hole was near,  
And I said to myself, "If there's dirt to  
be found,  
The man who is humble may roll in it  
here!"

—*Newspaper Parody.*

**Poking drill** (military), aiming drill in the course of musketry instruction, so called because the rifle is being constantly poked or pushed to the front so as to accustom the soldier to the weight, and to get his eye quickly along the sights.

**Pole** (printers). This term is applied to a man's weekly bill, probably from the fact that the more he earns the taller or higher the *pole*.

**Pole, to** (American university), to study hard. Probably alluding to the exertion in climbing a greasy pole; *poler*, one who studies hard; *poling*, close application to study.

**Pole, up the** (military), thought well of by your superiors. Also applied to strict, strait-laced people, who are or like to be considered "goody-goody."

**Poley** (Australian up-country), with the horns off. Though spelt differently, probably connected with "to poll." "Polled" or "pollard" trees, willows, limes, &c., are those which have their tops or polls cut off, and

are trimmed down. "Polled" animals are often mentioned in the Bible.

When he is jogging along, and not in exciting chase, he sits loosely in his saddle, his feet hanging anyhow from sheer laziness; but his keen eye darts this way and that in search of some stray beast—that *poley*-cow that got out of the yard, or Bleny, the strawberry bullock that bolted down by Sandy Creek.—*The Globe.*

**Policeman** (popular), a fly, especially the "blue-bottle" fly, which has given its name to a *policeman*. Also a sneak, a mean fellow. (Tailors), a man deputed to remind a new-comer that it is customary for new hands to contribute a certain sum of money to enable the men to drink his health; in other words, to pay his "footing." The custom is dying out. It also means "spy" or tale-bearer.

**Poll** (university), a contraction of *polloi* (πολλοι), a term applied to the ordinary examination for the B.A. degree, as distinguished from the honour examinations at Cambridge. (Society), a prostitute, one of the *demi-monde*. It is derived from sailors, who always christen women Polly.

**Polled up** (popular), living with a mistress.

**Poll, to** (printers), to vanquish in competition. (Sporting), to distance, beat in a race. (Thieves), is said of a thief (*poll* thief) who robs another of his share of the booty. From to *poll*, to plunder,

pillage, strip. Used by Spenser and Bacon.

**Polty** (cricketers), easy; *polty*, or dolly catch, an easy catch.

**Pompadours**, the 56th Regiment of Foot (Hotten).

**Ponce** (popular and thieves), a brothel bully, or one who lives on prostitutes.

After he and his wife had entered, the constable came in and said to him, "You come here along with me, you — *ponce*." — *Standard*.

**Ponce shicer** (theatrical), an odious epithet, invented by the actors to stigmatise the most infamous of adventurers, creatures who lay themselves out to captivate actresses, and to live upon their earnings. Crapulous scoundrels who live by *chantage*.

**Poncess** (thieves), a woman who supports a man by prostituting herself. The feminine of *ponce*, which see.

**Pond** (common), abbreviated from herring *pond*, the ocean.

We trust Colonel Cody and Mr. Salisbury's plucky venture—for it requires pluck to cross the *pond* with such a show—will meet with a well-deserved reward. — *Bailey's Monthly Magazine*.

**Poney** (racing), £25. An arbitrary denomination like "monkey" and others.

So there was much plunging on Blanch of Lancaster—*ponies*, tenners, fivers, even quids were being dumped down enthusiastically. — *Sporting Times*.

(American), a *petit verre* of brandy. Hence *poney* brandy, the best. Also a very little woman.

**Poney up** (American), pay up; said to be from the German *poniren*, to pay. In Dutch slang *poen* is money.

**Pongelow, pongellorum** (general), beer; also used in the army.

**Pongelow, to** (London), to have some beer.

**Pong, ponge, to** (theatrical), to vamp through a part in a play in ignorance of the text, substituting the actor's own words for those of the author. (Circus), to perform.

**Pongo** (circus and showmen), a monkey.

**Pon my sivey**, a corruption of "asseveration," upon my word.

*Pon my sivey*, if you were to see her picking you'd think she was laying on pounds' weight in a day instead of losing it. — *J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Ponte** (showmen), a sovereign; *mezzo-ponte*, half a sovereign.

**Ponto** (college), explained by quotation.

During a chorister's life in college he had to put up with such a thing as a wooden trencher, or a *ponto* (a much softer missile) thrown at his head [Note.—A *ponto* was the crumb of a new roll kneaded into a ball] and sundry cuffs. — *Sporting Life*.

**Poodle** (popular), facetiously applied to any kind of dog.

**Pool** (American), a combination, clique, gang, association, or syndicate formed by all the dealers in a certain article, to force up the price of it.

A window-glass *pool* follows swiftly after the hard and soft coal *pools*, as these had been preceded or accompanied by monopolies for the control of other essential articles.—*New York World*.

**Pool, to** (common), to form an association, to club together.

So we *pooled* our wealth together, and bought spring traps, and started off to try our luck with the beavers.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Poona** (costermongers), a pound; a corruption of this word.

**Poop downhill** (nautical). Russell gives this as "an imaginary rope"—a seaman's jest, like "clapping the reel athwart ships," and other such sayings.

**Pootly-nautch** (Anglo-Indian), a puppet-show. Hindu, *kath-pullināch*, a wooden-puppet dance.

**Pop** (society), champagne; ginger *pop* is ginger beer. The derivation is obvious. (Eton School), the aristocratic club at Eton, originally a debating society, now a fashionable and exclusive lounge. (American), papa.

It seems that American children know not "dad," and are in the habit of calling their fathers *pop*. On this side of the Atlantic we only associate the word with our "uncles."—*Funny Folks*.

VOL. II.

(London), Monday popular concerts.

Passing over the *Pop*. on Monday, as containing nothing remarkable, I come to the performance of the "Rose of Sharon" on Tuesday.—*Referee*.

**Pop off the hooks, to** (popular), to die.

He stirr'd not,—he spoke not,—he none of them knew,  
And Achille cried "Odzooks! I fear by his looks,  
Our friend, François Xavier, has *pop'd off the hooks!*"

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Pop off, to** (common), to die.

But should I be *popped off*, you, my mates left behind me,  
Regard my last words, see 'em kindly obeyed.

—*Davey: Will Watch*.

**Popped** (tailors), annoyed, in a temper.

**Popped as a hatter** (tailors), very much annoyed.

**Popping** (American University), getting an advantage.

**Poppy-cock** (American), bosh, nonsense, idle talk. It has no such meaning as "sound or fury," as the English edition of Artemus Ward declares, but refers rather to the display which appeals to and humbugs, or dazzles.

I venture to say that if you search all the earth over with a ten-hoss power microscope you won't be able to find such another pack of *poppy-cock* gabblers as the present Congress of the United States of America.—*Artemus Ward*.

K

From "pop-peacock," as in poppin-jay, influenced by peacock.

**Pops** (thieves), pistols.

"Are you armed?" asked Ginger.

"I have a brace of pistols in my pocket," replied Thorneycroft.

"All right, then—we've all got *pops* and cutlashes," said Ginger. — *Ainsworth: Aurio!*

**Pop-shop** (common), pawn-broker's.

As to the other cloak and shawl, don't be afraid; they shan't go to the *pop-shop*. — *Lord Lytton: Ernest Maltravers.*

**Pop, to** (common), to pawn.

And that he meant *to pop*

It round at "Uncle's" shop,

I never had the shadow of a doubt.

— *Song: Many Capers I have Seen.*

(Society), *to pop* the question, to propose marriage. Also *to pop*.

**Pop your corn** (American), "now, then, *pop your corn*," say what you have to say, speak out. Pop-corn is a variety of maize, of a small grain, sometimes of a dark colour. When roasted it pops or expands suddenly. It is often eaten with milk.

"Juliana!" he said to me in a tremorous voice. "I've some *corn* that I want to *pop*—will you acknowledge that *corn*."

And I said I would. That was the way he *popped*. — *Newspaper.*

**P. P.** (racing), play or pay.

**Porridge disturber** (pugilistic), a blow in the pit of the stomach.

**Porterhouse steak** (American), a large steak with a small bone.

**Porter's knot** (common), the large bob of hair at the back of the head worn by women in 1866. Also known as a "waterfall," "cataract," &c.

**Portrait** (common), a sovereign.

**Posers** (Winchester College), two men who come down from New College at election. They examine for the Winchester and New College scholarships and exhibitions. From *poser*, an awkward question.

**Posh** (society), modern term for money, originally used for a halfpenny or small coin. From the gypsy *push* or *posh*, a half. In Romany *poshero*, the affix *ero* being corrupted from *hāro*, copper, *i.e.*, a copper or a penny. *Posh an' posh*, half and half, applied to those who are of mixed blood, or half gypsy. Also a dandy.

**Possum-guts** (Australian bush), a term of contempt.

Two bushmen walked into the bar of an hotel which an enterprising Frenchman had just set up in the principal Riverina township: not finding any one to serve them, they pursued their rambles into the house until they were confronted by a glass door with *Salle-à-manger* painted on it. Sandy was "stuck." "What's that?" he said, with a storm of expletive words to his mate, an Irishman. "You *possum-guts!* Why, it says if you want anything, sound for the manager." — *D. B. W. Sladen.*



"I'll teach you to whistle when a gentleman comes into the hut, you *possum-guts!*"—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn.*

**Possum**, to (American), to feign, to dissemble, to sham dead—a slang phrase almost equivalent to the old English "sham Abraham" (*q. v.*). "The expression," says Bartlett, "alludes to the habit of the opossum, which throws itself on its back, and feigns death on the approach of an enemy."

As one who counterfeits sickness, or dissembles strongly for a particular purpose, is said to be *possuming*.—*Flint: Geography of the Mississippi Valley.*

Also to play *possum*.

You see, the first grizzly I caught in a trap *played possum* with me. After the first or second shot I went up to him, supposing him to be dead. But I will never allow another grizzly to play that racket.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

**Post-and-rails** (Australian), wooden matches as distinguished from wax vestas. The ordinary Australian has a great contempt for wooden matches, very likely because safety-matches, such a necessary precaution in the bush, are generally made of wood.

"Alf," said a great friend of mine to a companion who was engaged with us on a shooting expedition down in Bulu-Bulu, one of the eastern provinces of Victoria, "Have you got a match?"

"Only a *post-and-rails*," was the deprecating reply, responded to with a patronising "Never mind."—*D. B. W. Sladen.*

*Post-and-rails* tea, coarse tea with stalks and leaves floating in it. The metaphor is obvious. The tea supplied to the station-

hands is proverbially bad. It gets its name from the stalks, leaves, &c., floating about when it is decocted.

He brought us some black damper and a dry chip of cheese (for we were famished), together with a hot beverage in a tin pot, which richly deserved the colonial epithet of *post-and-rails tea*, for it might well have been a decoction of "split stuff," or "iron bark shingles" for any resemblance it bore to the Chinese plant.—*D. B. W. Sladen.*

**Posted** (American), informed as to anything, *posted up*. This term was first used in this sense and made popular by Mr. David Stearns Godfrey of Milford, Massachusetts. (Cambridge University), to be *posted* is to be rejected in an examination.

Fifty marks will prevent one from being *posted*, but there are always two or three too stupid as well as idle to save their *post*. These drones are *posted* separately, as "not worthy to be classed," and privately slanged afterwards by the master and seniors. Should a man be *posted* twice in succession, he is generally recommended to try the air of some small college, or devote his energies to some other walk of life.—*Hall: College Words and Customs.*

**Post-horn** (popular), the nose. From the noise when blowing one's nose. In French slang *trompette* means face.

**Postman** (legal), one of the barristers in a common law court is so called from the privileges he enjoys. The expression is well understood.

**Postmasters** (Oxford University), scholars on the foundation at Merton College.

The *postmasters* anciently performed the duties of choristers, and their payment for this duty was six shillings and fourpence per annum.—*Oxford Guide*.

**Post-mortem** (Cambridge University), the second examination after failure.

**Post the coin, to** (sporting), to make a deposit for a match. Generally to pay.

**Post, to** (university), to put up a man's name as not having paid for food supplied by the college, which precludes him from having any more till he does pay. (Common), *post the cole*, *vide COAL*.

**Pot** (common), short for *pot hat*.

Nice lads, very nice; always like Eton boys when they haven't got *pots* on.—*Punch*.

(Sporting and American), the amount of stakes on a horse.

On receiving the list of winning numbers the ticket was at once placed in the hands of the First National bank and yesterday the full amount of the prize, less a small sum for collection, was paid over by the bank to Mr. Poppendick and the *pot* duly divided with his pard.—*Omaha (Neb.) Bee*.

Also an adept, a swell, the favourite in the betting for a race.

The prospects of respective cricket *pots*.—*Punch*.

To put on a *pot*, to lay a large sum of money on a horse.

(Winchester College), the *pot*, the canal; *pot-cad*, a workman at the sawmills; *pot-gates*, lock-gates; *pot-houser*, a jump into

the canal from the roof of a house called *pot-house*.

**Potate** (American), signifying to drink; an abbreviation from *potation*, as the kindred but more permissible vulgarism *orate*, from oration. The last word has already been naturalised in English, but *potate* remains an alien.

**Potato-trap** (common), the mouth.

That'll damage your *potato-trap*!—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Pot-boiler** (studios), an appellation given by artists to a picture painted only for the sake of the pecuniary advantages it brings. French artists term "faire du métier" painting such pictures for the trade. (Journalistic), any production written for money not glory.

It is a strange coincidence that the writer of these lines was actively engaged with Archie M'Neil in collaborating on a *pot-boiler*.—*Topical Times*.

**Pot-fair** (university), the name given to the midsummer fair held at Cambridge.

The fair on Midsummer Green, known by the name of *Pot-fair*, was in all its glory. There were booths at which raffles for pictures, china, and millinery took place every evening, which were not over till a late hour.—*Gunning: Reminiscences*.

**Pot, go to** (common), be off, you be hanged. Explained by quotation.

Isn't saying of a man who's come to grief through beer, that he's "gone to pot," a pewter-ful sort of ale-legory?—*Funny Folks*.

To go to pot, to die. This expression refers to broken metal placed in the melting-pot.

**Pothouse**, *i.e.*, Peterhouse, or St. Peter's College, Cambridge.

**Pot-hunter** (sporting), a man who goes round to small athletic meetings with a view of getting as many prizes as he can. *Vide* POTS. (Fisher), one who fishes only for the sake of the catch, not for the sport.

But ordinary mortals have a natural dislike to returning with empty baskets, and some people not necessarily *pot-hunters* like to eat trout.—*Sir H. Pottinger: Trout-Fishing*.

**Pot-hunting** (sporting), a sport greatly favoured by amateurs since the abolition of the gentleman-amateur qualification—*e.g.*, the crack expert arranges on Whit-Monday with his more formidable rivals not on any account to clash with them, but to farm a meeting a-piece. In the old days gentlemen would go any distance to meet a rival and have it out with him, but nothing is further from the thoughts of the present "crack."

**Potlash** (Canadian), explained by quotation.

Roughly speaking, it seems a *potlash* in an entertainment lasting any time from a week to three months, provided by one tribe for another, and entailing on the

tribe so entertained the duties of receiving their hosts in like manner on some future occasion, generally at the same date in the succeeding year.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Pot on**, to put the (trade), to overcharge. (Common), to exaggerate.

**Pots** (sporting), prizes for athletic sports, generally given in the shape of mugs. (Stock Exchange), North Staffordshire Railway ordinary stock. (Nautical), name for the steward on board passenger-boats. From the pots or basins he provides for sick persons.

**Pot-shot** (common), a shot from a hole or ambush.

But when you turn in your hounds and wait till the deer come like dumb driven cattle to the water, beside which you have sat till you have got cold and cramped, there is none of the credit due to the quiet *pot-shot* which a quick snap-shot at a buck on the jump might earn.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Potted fug** (Rugby), boys thus term potted meat.

**Potted**, to be (common), to be snubbed or suppressed.

**Pot**, to (common), to shoot.

Poisoners of hounds, and enemies of all sport save the *potting* a fellow-creature from behind a fence, can and should be dealt with in no other way.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Racing), to lay a large sum on a horse.

Two of these accomplished gentry, who had severally gone for the crack and the field, that is, had systematically and regularly backed the one and *pot*ted the other. —*Sporting Times*.

(Billiards), to *pot* a ball, send it in the pocket.

**Pot, to put on the big** (sporting), to bully, arrogantly patronise. A *big pot* is a great swell, an adept, a favourite in racing.

**Pot-walloper** (elections), thus explained in the *Cornhill Magazine*:—

“One can well imagine what influence the ‘man in the moon’ had in days gone by with voters of the class known as *pot-wallopers*. The bearers of this melodious name were electors whose sole title to the possession of the franchise was the fact of their having been settled in the parish for six months, the settlement being considered sufficiently proved if the claimant had boiled his own pot within its boundaries for the required period—*wall* meaning to boil. The *pot-wallopers*, with many other electoral anomalies, were abolished by the passing of the great Reform Bill; but a cognate abuse, that of ‘faggot-voting,’ survives in some constituencies.”

(Common), a low parasite. (Theatrical), a tap-room talker.

**Pouch through**, to (American), a post-office term, meaning to convey mail matter in a *pouch*.

Till Special-Agent Death came by one day,  
And *pouched* the old man *through* the  
graveyard town.

He lay quite still, when suddenly he cried,  
“Mail closed!” and drew his salary, and  
died.

—Robert J. Burdette.

**Pouf** (theatrical), an epithet applied by the actors to a silly fellow, who imagines himself to be an actor.

**Poulderlings** (old), students of the second year at St. John's, Oxford.

The whole company, or most parte of the students of the same house mette toogether to beginne their Christmas, of wch some came to see sports, to witte the seniors as well graduates as vnder-graduates. Others to make sports, viz, studentes of the seconde year, whom they call *Poulderlings*. —*Christmas Prince*.

**Poulterer** (thieves), one who gets letters from post-boxes, opens them, steals the money which they contain, seals them, and drops them again into the box. The receiver naturally supposes that the sender omitted to enclose the money.

**Poultice wallah** (military), a man of the staff corps; one whose business it is to attend on the surgeon, carry out treatment, give medicines, apply poultices, and so forth. Hence the expression.

**Pound, to go one's** (military), applied to a man with a good appetite, is evidently derived from the weight of the soldier's

ration; the pound of bread and of meat which the hungry man can easily devour.

**Powerful nerve** (tailors), a great amount of impudence.

**Pow-wow** (American), a conference. Properly the sorcery and ceremony of the Red Indian conjurors. From the Algonkin *bo-win*, a magician.

And everybody was whooping at once, and there was a rattling *pow-wow*.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

**Poz** (popular), certain, positive.

That's *poz*, dear old pal, and no flies.—*Punch*.

**Practitioner** (popular), a thief.

It is only fair to state, however, that his lordship was not personally responsible for his startling statements. He had them from a *practitioner*, from a thief, that is to say.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Prad** (common), a horse.

Just send somebody out to relieve my mate . . . he's in the gig, a-minding the *prad*.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Prairie-schooner** (American), an emigrant waggon.

I am not long out before meeting with that characteristic feature of a scene on the Western plains, a *prairie-schooner*, and meeting *prairie-schooners* will now be a daily incident of my Eastward journey.—*Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle*.

**Prat** (popular), the buttock, behind.

**Prater** (old cant), a hen. Also margery *prater*.

**Prat, to** (thieves), to go, to enter.

I *pratted* into the house.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Press** (American sporting). When a man wins a bet, and instead of taking away his winnings he adds to the original stake and the winnings also, it is called a *press*.

**Pretty horse-breaker**, a fashionable and good-looking young woman of immoral life and bad reputation, sometimes called an "anonyma."

**Prex** (American student), the president of a college, equivalent to the pro-rector of a German university.

I used to think our *prex*  
Was great as any *rex*,  
In my green freshman-nual days.  
—*Student Song*.

**Prick the garter** (thimble riggers), a swindling game. The bet is made that you can't, with a pin, prick the point at which a *garter* is double.

**Prig** (thieves and popular), a thief.

**Prim** (American sporting), a handsome woman. Possibly from *prima*, i.e., *prima donna*.

**Primed** (common), on the verge of intoxication. (Students), crammed for an examination.

**Prime flat** (thieves), an easy dupe. Vaux, in his "Memoirs," says: "Any person who is found an

easy dupe to the designs of the family is said to be a *prime flat*."

**Printer's devil** (printers), a printer's boy. Moxon, 1683, attributes this term to the fact that the boys used to "black and bedaub themselves," whence the workmen jocosely called them "Devils." The real origin, it is believed, was that Aldus Manutius, the Venetian printer, had a negro boy, and in those days printing was ignorantly supposed to be a "black art," hence the term.

Passing for the nonce the itinerant "paper boy," the "errand boy," and the *printer's devil*, which last *genus garçon* machinery is fast driving from his stool, come we to the Arabs of the town.—*J. Diprose: London Life*.

**Private stitch**, to (tailors), to stitch without showing the mark.

**Pro** (popular), one of the profession, an actor. (Theatrical), an actor.

Actors are astonishingly fond of abbreviations, and herein lies most of their slang. They love to call themselves *pros*.—*Globe*.

**Procession** (circus), the parade or public show is always called the *procession*.

**Profondes** (conjurers), the pockets in the tails of a conjuror's dress coat. French slang.

**Prog** (common), food of any kind.

What other fellows call beastly *prog*  
Is the very stuff for me.

—*Punch*.

*Prog*, according to Skeat, is from *prōg*, to go about begging victuals. Middle English *prok-ken*, to beg or demand; Swedish *pracka*.

**Proggins** (university), proctor. The proctors and their subordinates, the pro-proctors, are the magistrates of the university.

**Prog, to** (printers), an abbreviation much used by printers for the word "prognosticate." "To *prog* the winner of the Derby," &c.

**Promossing** (Australian popular), talking rubbish, playing the fool, mooning about.

**Prompter** (school), a member of the second form at Merchant Taylors' School.

**Proms** (London and American), promenade concerts.

They go to the *Proms*, to a tartlet they'll speak,  
Stand one drink, the reason is not far to seek,  
For all this is done on a sovereign a week!  
'Tis the way of the world, of the age.  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

They have for several years tried to abolish the *proms*, because it adds heavily to many students' expenses.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Prop** (thieves), a breast-pin. Probably from *proper* (Cornwall), pretty, ornamental. (Pugilistic), a blow. (Punch and Judy), the *prop*, the gallows.

**Proper crowd** (Australian up-country), particular friends, a

circle, a clique, dependants. An Australian would describe Harcourt, Childers, Labouchere, Conybeare & Co., as Gladstone's own *proper crowd*; Lord Carrington, the Duke of Sutherland, Mr. Christopher Sykes, &c., as being the Prince of Wales's *proper crowd*; and would talk of Lord Wolseley's *proper crowd* as Englishmen talk of his "gang," or apply the term to the Browning Society, &c.

Insolent and overbearing, his own *proper crowd* detested him.—*A. C. Grant.*

**Proper first class** (popular) denotes excellence.

**Prop-nailer** (thieves), a thief who devotes his attention to scarf-pins in a crowd.

**Props** (theatrical), properties. All the inanimate objects or articles used in a play, viz., stage carpet, baize, sea cloth, furniture, anything to eat or drink, books, pictures, vases, statuettes, lamps, fire-irons, fireplace, kettle, pens, ink, paper, swords, foils, guns, pistols, powder, blue fire, thunder, lightning, purse, money, table-cloth, dinner or breakfast service, &c. Certain animate objects, such as horses, pigs, dogs, and babies.

*Props* include everything kept in the theatre for use on the stage.—*Globe.*

**Propster** (theatrical), the property master. The man whose business it is, not only to provide orninary properties for the

stage, but to prepare new ones, to make and ornament banners, to model masks, &c.

**Prop, to** (pugilistic), to strike.

His whole person put in Chancery, slung, bruised, fibbed, *propped*, fiddled, slogged, and otherwise ill-treated.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Pross, to** (theatrical), to sponge. Doubtless derived from the Roman *prass*. The actors, however, affect to derive this detestable word from a line in Otway's play of "Venice Preserved," in which that "dashing, gay, bold-faced villain" Pierre says, "The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte." The wealthy proselyte of dogma is always under the thumb of the proselytiser, who invariably makes his pupil "shell out" for the good of the cause. Similarly, the lowest class of players have, from time immemorial, been accustomed to sponge upon their proselytes, to bleed them in money or malt. The handsome but infamous "Scum" Goodman, the actor, the *amant de cœur* of the notorious Barbara Castlemaine, bled that lubricious lady almost as freely as the illustrious Jack Churchill, or as she herself bled that anointed scoundrel, old Rowley, who in his turn bled the nation. There is a restaurant, not a hundred miles from a certain fashionable theatre in the Strand, known to the initiated as "Prossers' Avenue." At certain times of the day this place

is infested by impecunious loafers, consisting of the outcasts of all professions—actors, journalists, disbanded soldiers, unfrocked parsons, and broken-down adventurers of every description, all of whom make it their business to *pross* for anything, from a fiver down to a glass of gin or beer. The attentions of these enterprising gentry are not restricted to their own immediate circle; they are superior to vulgar prejudice, and will *pross* anything from anybody, more especially from “the stranger at their gates.”

This term is common among workmen and others. Are you one for a *pross*? Will you stand a drink?

But now I've grown to man's estate, for  
work I've never cared,  
I've *prossed* my meals from off my pals,  
oftimes I've badly fared.

—*Music Hall Song.*

**Prosser** (popular and thieves), a degraded creature, one who sponges, a male prostitute. Said to be from *prostitute*.

**Prov.** (printers). “On the *prov.*” signifies that a man is out of work and reaping the benefit of the Provident Fund of his Trade Society—a fund established to compensate the unemployed.

**Provost** (military), garrison or other cells, where the penalty of imprisonment for a week and under is inflicted, without relegation to a military prison.

**Prowl**, to (theatrical), waiting for one's pay.

**Pruff** (Winchester College), explained by quotation.

But deprive a Wykehamist of words in constant use, such as “quill,” meaning to curry favour with; *pruff*, signifying sturdy, or proof against pain; “spree,” upstart, impudent; “cud,” pretty, and many more, and his vocabulary becomes limited.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Psalm-smiler** (popular), one who sings at a conventicle.

**Pub** (common), public-house.

**Public patters** (popular), swell mobsmen, who pretend to be Dissenting preachers, and harangue in the open air to attract a crowd for their confederates to rob (Hotten).

**Puckah** (Anglo-Indian). The word is applied in various ways; *puckah* in Hindostani means properly red brick. So a *pucka* house is a red brick house, and in opposition to a “kutchah” house, one built of earth, it is a good, comfortable house. Hence the meaning of good, best, attached to the word. A *pucka* spin is a young lady who is not engaged, a *pucka* officer is a senior officer; should an officer in command go on leave, his deputy is not *puckah*.

But I believe that marrying  
An “acting” man is a fudge;  
And do not fancy anything  
Below a *pucka* judge.

—*Aleph Cheem: Lays of Ind.*



**Pucker** (military), the best of anything, as the *pucker* colonel, the senior. *Vide* ПУККАН.

**Pucker up**, to (popular), to get in a bad temper.

**Pudding** (thieves), liver prepared with a narcotic drug and used by burglars to silence house-dogs.

When I opened a door there was a great tyke lying in front of the door, so I pulled out a piece of *pudding* and threw it to him, but he did not move. So I threw a piece more, and it did not take any notice; so I got close up to it, and I found it was a dead dog stuffed, so I done the place for some wedge and clobber.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Pudding club** (popular), a woman in the family way is said to be in the *pudding club*.

**Pudding-snammer** (popular), one who robs a cookshop.

**Pud**, to (popular), to greet affectionately, familiarly. *Pud*, the hand.

**Puff** (common), a favourable notice or praise of any kind in a newspaper, usually incorporated in general reading matter. (Tailors), never in your *puff*, never in your life.

**Puffer** (boating), a small river steamboat, a steam launch.

These are the lolling idlers in those comfortable floating hotels, which are called steam-launches by the literate, and *puffers* by the river folk.—*Daily Telegraph.*

(Popular), a steam-engine.

And under we went, one 'on each side, intending to get out again, as usual, as soon as the *puffer* began a-taking us along again.—*Sporting Times.*

(Cheap Jacks, &c.), the special slang meaning is explained by quotation.

We bid or praised up his goods; in fact, often acted as *puffers* or bonnets to give him a leg up.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

**Pug** (common), a prize-fighter. Abbreviated from "pugilist."

He insisted, with a smile serene and smug,  
That he'd gain distinction later as a fistic gladiator,  
Or, in plainer phraseology, a *pug*.  
—*Sporting Times.*

A portion of Highgate Cemetery, where Tom Sayers, Knacker-Atcherly, and other pugilists lay buried, is called "Pugs' Acre."

**Puke**, to (schools), to vomit. A variant of "spew."

**Puker** (Shrewsbury), a good-for-nothing fellow.

**Pull** (society), to take a *pull* means to stop, check, put an end to, and is very commonly in use. It is borrowed from racing parlance, to take a *pull* at a horse.

But it is like the will-o'-the-wisp, which is pretty sure to lead them to their destruction if they have not the moral courage to "take a *pull*" when they are getting out of their depth.—*Saturday Review.*

(Cricketers), to make a *pull* is to hit a straight ball crookedly. This is generally done inten-

tionally. (Popular), the *pull*, the advantage. To have the upper-hand in pulling a rope gives an extra grip, whence the expression.

Sharpers try to pick him up,  
Thinking they've a flat in tow,  
But at pool he cleans them out,  
All the *pull's* with Oxford Joe.

—*Music Hall Ballad: Oxford Joe.*

**Pull a horse's head off** (racing), to check a horse's progress so as to prevent him from winning. Pulling is done by a man leaning back and pulling at the horse's head.

The witness, pressed to explain what the meaning of *pulling a horse's head off* was, said that pulling must be intentional on the part of a jockey.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Pull down your vest** (American). A few years ago, when trousers were not made quite so high as at present, and waistcoats were shorter, it often happened that a portion of the shirt became visible from the latter garment "rising." Hence the frequent admonition of *pull down your vest* from careful mothers to their sons, or of wives to careless husbands. The phrase soon became general, and took the obvious application of "make yourself look decenter," "attend to your personal appearance," and "mind your own affairs!"

**Pulled trade** (tailors), secured work.

**Pulled up, to be** (popular and thieves), to be taken before a magistrate.

**Pulley** (old cant), a girl. A variation of *pullet*, a girl. *Pullet-squeezer*, a man who is always fondling young girls. A "Babylonian."

**Pulling a kite** (popular), making a face.

**Pulling in the pieces** (popular), to make money. A man earning good wages, or getting a high salary, or who is successful in speculation, is said to be *pulling in the pieces*—pieces meaning money, and being so used in other connections.

**Pull off, to** (popular), to achieve, make.

The burglar is flush of money, and each of his comrades knows that a big job has been *pulled off*.—*Evening News.*

**Pull one's self together, to** (common), used as a metaphorical expression for collecting one's thoughts, or cooling one's self down from a previous state of excitement. To "pull up," to cease, to refrain. These phrases are constantly used by lady novelists, though not by any writer of high or deserved repute.

That Lord Hartington's speech outdid the utmost expectations of his friends, in regard to its matter and its fearless outspokenness, is everywhere acknowledged. Here and there it was delivered admirably, and with something of the large manner demanded by his great position. But, truth to say, this was not by any means maintained uniformly, and he frequently seemed only by an effort to *pull himself together*.—*The World.*

**Pull out, to** (sporting), in athletics, is being thoroughly "extended"—usually by a friendly pacemaker. (American), to leave, depart.

For a minute or two they stood looking at one another, and then Doc *pulled out*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Pull the leg, to** (society), to impose upon, to cram one.

**Pull the long bow, to** (common), to tell falsehoods, cram.

"Don't it strike you, Billiam, that chaps about to be hanged generally do *pull the long bow* a bit?"

"It does, Alexandry," replied the Red-Handed One. "If they had kept Percy Lefroy bottled up much longer, he'd have sworn he murdered Maria Martin, Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Lane, and the Mystery at Rainham."—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday.*

**Pull the string, to** (tailors), to make use of all your influence to obtain the desired result. (Popular), to do well.

**Pull, to** (common), to drink. (Turf), to prevent a horse from winning by pulling at the reins.

**Pumped** (common), exhausted.

**Pump ship, to** (common), to make water, to urinate. The Germans have a similar expression.

**Pump sucker** (popular), a tee-totaller.

**Puncher** (American), a cowboy, one who punches and brands cattle.

Perhaps you find it impossible to bring yourself to eat with "aw—cow-servants, you know," as certain young Englishmen, but newly come from college to New Mexico, and unpurged as yet of old world prejudices, found it not long ago. The title "cow-servants" so delighted the gentle *puncher* that it has become a standing quotation in New Mexico.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Pun-paper** (Harrow), specially ruled paper for *puns* or impositions.

**Punting-shop** (common), a gambling house.

**Pupe** (Harrow), pupil-room.

**Pure cussedness.** *VIDE* CUSSEDNES.

**Pure-pickers** (street), pickers up of dogs' dung, which is sold to curriers.

**Purge** (popular), beer, from its peculiar effects.

Comrades, listen while I urge,  
Drink yourselves and pass the *purge*.  
—*Barrack Room Poet.*

**Purko** (military), beer; possibly from Barclay & Perkins, the great brewers.

**Purl, purler** (schools), a jump into the water head foremost. (Sporting), a heavy fall from a horse.

**Purser's grins** (nautical), hypocritical and satirical sneers.

**Purser's name** (nautical), an assumed one. During the war,

when pressed men caught at every opportunity to desert, they adopted aliases to avoid discovery if retaken, which alias was handed to the purser for entry upon the ship's books (Smyth).

**Push** (prison), a gang associated in penal servitude labour.

Most of these pseudo-aristocratic imposers had succeeded in obtaining admission to the stocking-knitting party, which, in consequence, became known among the rest of the prisoners as the "upper ten *push*."—*Michael Davitt: Leaves from a Prison Diary.*

(Thieves), a crowd; an association for a robbery or swindle. "I am in this *push*," I intend to participate. (Shopmen), to get the *push*, to be discharged. (Popular), to get the *push*, to be set aside, rejected, discharged.

The girl that stole my heart has given me the *push*.

—*Ballad: I'll Say no More to Mary Ann.*

**Pusher** (popular), a high-low or blucher boot. Also a female. A square *pusher* is a girl of good reputation. (American), a bit of bread held by children in the left hand to be used as a fork.

**Push your barrow** (popular), go away.

**Puss**, an appellation given by Woolwich cadets to gentlemen cadets of the Royal Military Academy, on account, it is said, of their glossy uniforms. But more probably an allusion to the bushy, which they wore

before it was superseded by the helmet.

**Put a down upon a man**, to (Australian convicts), is to inform against him. Probably introduced into Australia by the transportees.

"To *put a down upon a man* is to give information of any robbery or fraud he is about to perpetrate, so as to cause his failure or detection" (Vaux's Memoirs).

**Put a head on**, to (American), to beat a man on the head. To make one's head swell.

Und he gets madt und says he *put some heads on me* if I doan' gif oop dot twenty. Vhell, I vhas a greenhorn und a fool, you know.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Put-away**, to (prison), has the same sense as the foregoing; it means to split or peach, or so act that a man is discovered through the information given.

**Put in a hole**, to (thieves), to defraud an accomplice of his share of the booty. Also "to put in the garden," possibly an allusion to "plant," meaning swindle. (Common), to defraud any one for whom you are acting confidentially, to victimise.

There was a class of people who if they weré advised to put £10 on a horse which won thought the man a good fellow who told them, but if they lost thought they had been robbed or *put in a hole*.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Put in the well**, to (thieves), to defraud an accomplice of his share of the booty, or to de-

fraud any one for whom one is acting confidentially.

**Put it up, to** (American), to spend money, to gamble.

"Bully for you, Squito!" cried Joe. "When it comes to gambling he's a thoroughbred; he *puts it up* as if it was bad."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Put me in my little bed** (American), one of many current slang expressions signifying that the one addressed is beaten or distanced, or has no more to say. Also the name of a "fancy" drink.

**Putney, oh, go to** (popular), equivalent to go to Jericho, Ballyhock, or any other of the numerous milder modifications of the place of eternal punishment. Sometimes improved by adding "on a pig."

Sarah's gone and left me,  
Her love for me was sham,  
She can go to Putney on a pig,  
Along with her cat's-meat man!  
—*The Cat's-Meat Man.*

**Put one's back into it, to** (common), to act with energy.

It seems to me that if I only hit hard enough I must do something. I *put my back into it*—that's his expression, not mine—and two balls disappear into two pockets.—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday.*

**Put one's back up, to.** *Vide* BACK.

**Put on, to** (common), to initiate.

Once on the course he will undertake  
To *put you on* should you be  
Green at the game, but the quids you stake  
Never again you'll see.

Or perhaps near a bookie like a clerk he'll stand,  
And gonoph any tickets that may reach his hand.  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Putter up** (thieves), a spy in the interest of burglars, whose business it is to collect and impart information to the gang with which he is connected as to the general condition and domestic arrangements of houses that may be most easily robbed, and that offer the greatest chances of plunder. The *putters up* are commonly men of glib tongues and agreeable manners, who endeavour to ingratiate themselves with the female servants. They seldom endanger their own necks by active participation in the burglaries they recommend, but are content to receive a portion of the booty, trusting to the validity of the well-known axiom of "honour among thieves" for the reward which they have earned. They are worse, but not very much worse, than the professional detectives who do similarly dirty work for people who are not burglars or criminals, but who do not scruple to employ such disreputable agents.

**Put the kibosh on, to** (popular), to put a stop to. *Vide* KIBOSH.

**Put the pot on, to** (popular), to punish, to extinguish.

And Damon Tubbs, who loved in vain  
The self-same damsel, lots  
Of times declared with racking brain  
He'd *put the pot* on Potts.

—*Fun.*

(Turf), to lay heavily on a horse.

**Putting a nail in your coffin** (tailors), talking ill of you.

**Put two-handed** (popular), fornication. *Put* is an old term for a person.

**Putty and plaster on the Solomon Knob, the** (masons, &c.), an intimation that the master is coming, be silent!

**Putty walla** (Anglo-Indian), "the one with a belt," a term in Bombay for a messenger or orderly attached to an office. Called in Bengal a *Chuprassy*, and in Madras a *Peon* (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Put up, betrayal.** Hotten limits this simply to inspecting or planning a robbery, or obtaining information in regard to projected theft. But this is very far from the true meaning of the word as used in both England and America. It is thus explained in the "New York Slang Dictionary:"—

"*Put up*. This refers to information given to thieves by persons in the employment of parties to be robbed, such as servants, clerks, porters, &c., whereby the thief is facilitated in his operations. A job is said to be *put up* if the porter of a store should allow a 'fitter' to take an impression of the keys of the door of a safe; or when a clerk sent to the bank

to make a deposit, or to draw money, allows himself to be thrown down and robbed, in order to have his pocket picked."

It may be observed that it is quite in this sense that Dickens uses the word in "Oliver Twist," and not at all in that of obtaining information.

**Put-up jobs** (burglars), explained by quotation.

We often hear that these burglaries are what are called *put-up jobs*; that is to say, they are the result of long and careful study on the part of the criminals, combined with information supplied to them by persons familiar with the inmates and contents of the house marked down for plunder.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Put upon, to** (American and English), to impose upon, to ill-treat.

The Pike's Peak gold fever was raging (1859, &c.). He went to the mines and took a claim, but was much *put upon* by bullies because he was the youngest man in camp.—*H. L. Williams: In the Wild West*.

(Common), to sham.

**Put up your forks, or, bones up** (popular), a challenge to fight.

**Put up your hands, to** (thieves), to submit to being handcuffed. One of the family who has been in prison before, and knows the penalties of resistance, will say when a policeman comes for him, "All right, I'll *put up my hands*," meaning that he will hold out his hands to be handcuffed without a struggle.


**Put your forks down, to** (thieves), to pick a pocket. *Vide* FORKS.

**Put your name into it** (tailors), get it well forward.

**Pyah** (nautical), weak, paltry.

**Pyke** (military), a civilian friend by whom the soldier on the

prowl and impecunious is treated and entertained; some good-natured creature who likes to hear military yarns, and is proud of the privilege of paying for a gallant man's drink. A suggested derivation is the synonymous French word *pékin*, or civilian, as contradistinguished to the military man.

 **C.** (common), a Queen's Counsel.

I am a barrister elect,  
I try my best to please;  
Attorneys pay me great respect—

I wish they'd pay my fees.  
Of business I get my share,  
As much as some *Q.C.'s*;  
But, oh! what drives me to despair—  
I cannot get my fees.

—*Bill Sykes: The Barrister's Song.*

Instead of a call I write you a letter,

Saying as a regular doctor  
No longer she lacks,  
I send her herewith a couple of *quacks*."

A splendid couple of ducks accompanied this cheerful letter.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Quad** (printers) is the abbreviated form of the word "quadrat," a piece of metal used by printers to fill up short lines, &c. From Latin *quadratus*, square.

**Q. H. B.** (naval), Queen's hard bargain, *i.e.*, a lazy sailor, a "lubber."

**Q. T.** (popular), quiet. *Vide* ON THE STRICT Q. T.

The essence of 'Arry, he sez, is high sperrits. *That* ain't so fur out.

I'm "Fiz," not four 'arf, my dear feller.  
Flare-up is my motter, no doubt.

Carn't set in a corner canoodling, and do the *Q. T.* day and night.

My mug, mate, was made for a larf, and you don't ketch it pulling a kite.

—*Punch.*

**Quack** (common), a duck.

"Dear madam, your daughter  
Being very much better,

VOL. II.

**Quadding** (Rugby), the triumphal promenade of the chief football players round the cloisters at calling over time before a match.

**Quail** (thieves), an old maid. Quails are supposed to be very amorous. *Le Roux* gives *quail-ler*, evidently from *caille* (quail), for to have carnal connection.

**Quaker** (popular), a lump of excrement (Hotten).

**Quarron** (old cant), the body; allied to carrion. Old French, *carongne*.

L

**Quarter-deckish** (naval), severe, punctilious.

**Quartereen** (shows, strolling actors), a farthing. The slang expressions for money, used specially by Punch and Judy showmen, and probably by others, are "mezzo," halfpenny; "solde," penny; "dui, tri, quarto or quatri, chickwa, sei, sette, oddo, novo, deger, long deger soldi, beone," a shilling; "ponte," a sovereign. From the Italian.

**Quart-pot tea** (Australian). The following passage is fully explanatory of this Irish phrase for tea.

*Quart-pot tea*, as tea made in the bush is always called, is really the proper way to make it. A tin quart of water is set down by the fire, and when it is boiling hard a handful of tea is thrown in, and the pot instantly removed from the fire. Thus the tea is really made with boiling water, which brings out its full flavour, and it is drunk before it has time to draw too much.—*Finch-Hatton: Advance Australia.*

**Quay** (American thieves), unsafe, not to be trusted. Dutch *kwæd*, bad, &c.

**Queen's bus** (thieves), the prison van. A crazy inmate of Clerkenwell was about to be sent away. To quiet him the warder said the Queen had sent one of her own carriages for him. "One of them with We R. on the side?" "Yes, one of her carriages." "Wot's We R. stand for?" "Why, Victoria Regina, of course." "No, it don't; it stands for Wagabones Re-

moved," said the prisoner. The V.R. on the van is also interpreted by its habitual occupants as standing for Virtue Rewarded.

**Queer bail**, fraudulent bail; insolvent persons who made it a trade to bail out persons when arrested. Also called "Jew bail." Sometimes also "mounsters," as the mounted borrowed clothes for the occasion so as to look respectable.

**Queer bit** (thieves), spurious coin. *Queer*, in old cant, means anything wrong, counterfeit, or illegal. Possibly allied to the German *quer*, across, athwart, contrary to.

**Queer cuffin** (old cant), magistrate.

The gentry cove will be romboyled by his dam, . . . *queer cuffin* will be the word yet, if we don't tout.—*Beaconsfield: Venetia.*

*Cuffin* is synonymous with *cofe*, cove.

**Queer money** (thieves), spurious coin.

That town had been worked with a rush by a gang and \$20,000 in the *queer money* had been left there inside of two days.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Queer rooster** (American thieves), a man that lodges among thieves to pick up information for the police.

**Queer soft** (thieves), bad notes.

**Queer street**, in (common), in a difficulty.



**Queer the stiffer, to** (thieves),  
avoid the gallows.

I think Handie Dandie and I may *queer*  
the stiffer for all that is come and gone.—  
Scott: *Heart of Mid-Lothian*.

**Queer, to** (popular), to ridicule,  
sneer at.

A shoulder-knotted puppy, with a grin,  
*Queering* the thread-bare curate, let  
him in.

—Colman: *Poetical Vagaries*.

To spoil, mar.

But over the doorstep she happened to  
trip,

And *queered* the ingenious crime.

—*Sporting Times*.

To upset arrangements.

The Briton threw a five-franc piece into  
the machine, stopping the ball, and utterly  
*queering* the calculations of the numerous  
systematicians.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To *queer* a flat, fool, impose  
upon a simpleton.

Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,  
Booze in the ken, or at the spelken hustle?  
Who *queer* a flat?

—Lord Byron: *Don Juan*.

To outwit.

He came back in great glee at having  
*queered* the bobbies on this side the Chan-  
nel, and "bothered the gendarmes" on  
the other.—*Punch*.

To *queer* the pitch, *vide* PITCH.

**Quencher.** *Vide* MODEST  
QUENCHER.

**Qui** (printers), an abbreviation of  
the Latin term *quietus*, an old  
expression equivalent to the  
"billet" or "sack," to denote  
a man has notice to leave his  
situation.

**Quiblets** (American), a kind of  
witticism much in vogue in  
negro minstrelsy. A man makes  
a remark which calls forth a  
question, and the reply involves  
a jesting equivoque.

**Quick** (society), explained by  
quotation.

Young Prince Albert Vic., it would seem,  
is most *quick*

(That's the new word for dapper and  
clever). —*Fun*.

**Quick, slick, to cut** (popular), to  
start off hurriedly.

**Quick upon the trigger** (Ameri-  
can), very acute to observe,  
quick to perceive and act, wide-  
awake, prompt, "fly." A sig-  
nificant expression derived from  
seeing game the instant it ap-  
pears, and being quick to shoot  
it. It occurs in the Crockett  
Almanacs, 1838, 1840, but is  
much older.

He's as big and may be bigger,

That's all the same to me;

But I'm *quicker on the trigger*,

And hit twice as hard as he.

For I've lived among the Crows and the

Kaws,

And the Soos and the Kroos and the

Daws,

And can make a bully Injun take a tree!

—*Circus Song*.

**Quid** (general), a sovereign.  
*Quids*, money in general; this  
corresponds to the French *de*  
*quoi* and *quibus*.

Oh, well, I thought I wouldn't star, but  
wait a year or two;

I know your party's solid, so I'll try and  
go with you.

A modest forty *quid* a week, you pay all train fares, eh?  
Your offer is an insult and I'll leave you, sir. Good day.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

'Tis the last *quid* of many  
Left sadly alone,  
All its golden companions  
Are changed, and are gone;  
No coin of its kindred,  
No "fiver" is here,  
To burn in tobacco,  
Or melt into beer.

—*Fun.*

**Quiff** (military), the small curl on a soldier's temple just showing under his glengarry or forage cap. Close cropped hair is one of the indispensable conditions of military smartness, but the curl used to be allowed, or in lieu of it a false curl which was gummed inside the forage cap so as to lie on the forehead. This *postiche* was especially in favour with men just released from military prison.

(Tailors), a word used in expressing an idea that a satisfactory result may be obtained by other than strictly recognised rules or principles.

**Quiffing in the press** (tailors), changing a breast-pocket to the other side.

**Quiffing the bladder** (tailors), drawing the long hair over to hide a bald pate.

**Quill-driver** (common), a writer. (Turf), a bookmaker.

The annual cricket match between the Press and the Jockeys will be played today on the Queen's Club Ground, West

Kensington, and my information is to the effect that the *quill-drivers* are likely to have the best of the willow-wielding and leather-flapping engagement with the knights of the pigskin.—*Sporting Times.*

**Quiller** (common), a parasite; a person who sucks neatly through a quill, says Hotten.

**Quill, to** (Winchester College), to carry favour with, to flatter.

**Quilster** (Winchester College), a flatterer. *Vide TO QUILL.*

**Quilt, to** (popular), to thrash. Much used by tailors. Probably originally a tailor's phrase.

**Quint** (American cowboy), a whip (Spanish).

**Quisby** (popular). Hotten defines this as bankrupt. According to a song "sung with terrific success by Miss Kate Constance" it appears to have a slightly different meaning:—

When tars have been away on a voyage  
o'er the sea,  
They're glad to get home again to have  
a jolly spree,  
But when they kiss and cuddle you and  
won't let you be,  
Don't it make you feel *quisby* in the  
morning?

**Quite too nice** (society), expression much used by the æsthetic female portion of society, meaning much the same as "awfully jolly," æsthetic conversation being largely composed of many adverbs and adjectives strung together. "He is really *quite too nice*," applied to some die-away gentleman with long hair

and black velvet coat, who dabbles in art, and who worships a sunflower, regarding it in the light of the most artistic production of nature.

**Quius kius** (low theatrical), hush! cease! A warning.

**Quiz** (legal), among American law-students a weekly examination in reading is so called. It is equivalent to coaching.

**Quod** (thieves), prison. Probably from the Hindu gypsy *quaid*,

prison. Also said to be from "quadrangle," within four walls.

Here I have been in and out of *quod* for the last five-and-twenty stretch, and I have a right to get a good billet if anybody has one.—*Evening News*.

**Quodded** (thieves), imprisoned.

**Quodger** (legal), a corruption of *quo jure*.

**Quot** (old slang), a man who interferes in household affairs, especially in the kitchen.



**RABBIT** (American), a very rough, raging rowdy. Generally heard as "dead rabbit." From a gang of roughs who paraded New York in 1848, carrying a dead rabbit as a standard, the dead rabbit meaning a conquered enemy. Also "dead duck." "A very athletic rowdy fellow; an extinct political party." *Rabbit-suckers*, young spendthrifts, fast, licentious young men.

**Rabbit-pie** (popular), a low word for a woman in a sensual or carnal sense; a prostitute.

**Rabbit-pie shifter** (roughs), a policeman. Probably an allusion to his impeding prostitutes' trade. *Vide* RABBIT-PIE.

Never to take notice of vulgar nicknames, such as "slop," "copper," *rabbit-pie shifter*, "peeler."—*Music Hall Song*.

**Rabbit-skin** (University), by synecdoche, is the academical hood adorned both at Oxford and Cambridge by the rabbit's white fur. To "get one's *rabbit-skin*," is to take the B.A. degree.

**Rabid beast** (American cadet), a term applied to a new cadet who is impertinent, *i.e.*, according to the views of those who have been longer in residence.

**Rabitter** (Winchester College), a blow on the head with the wide of the hand, so called from the way of killing a rabbit.

**Rack** (Canadian), on the *rack*, constantly moving about, traveling; "always on the *rack*" is synonymous with "always on the move." *Rack* is an abbreviation of "racket," a Canadian snow-shoe.

**Racket.** Originally meaning in England a dodge, manœuvre, or desire, it has within a few years been greatly extended in the United States, so that one can rarely look through certain newspapers without finding it.

You know all the safe-workers arrested here last season were lodging-house bums, and they were up to that *racket*.—*Chicago Tribune*.

The place was pretty full of all the blackguards in creation then on the same *racket*.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Raclan, racklaw (tramps), from the gypsy räkli, a girl.**

**Rads (common), for radicals.**

“The *Rads* have a name of more modern political application, for the term ‘Radical,’ as a party name, was first applied to Major Cartwright, Henry Hunt, and their associates in 1818. The Americans have many more or less strange nicknames, and one of the last invented has reached this country, only to be in various ways misapplied and misunderstood, we mean the euphonious word *mugwump*” (*Cornhill Magazine*).

He turned him round and right-about

All on the Irish shore,

Said he, “We’ll give P-r-n-ll a shake,

And make the *Rads* to roar,

My boy!

And make the *Rads* to roar!”

—*Punch*.

**Rafe, ralph (popular), a pawnbroker's duplicate (Hotten).**

**Raft (American), a great number or quantity of anything or of**

any kind of objects. It is derived from the *rafts* or vast accumulations of floating timber, driftwood, &c., which sometimes form in Western American rivers.

**Rag (popular), the green curtain.** Hence the gods shout “Up with the *rag*.” (Common), a contemptuous term for a newspaper of the inferior sort. The French call this “*feuille de chou*.”

A writer in a penny *rag*, who has himself failed far more lamentably than Mrs. —, and in the same attempt, viz., to entertain the public.—*Sporting Times*.

(Thieves), a bank-note.

**Rag-fair (military), kit inspection,** at which all the necessaries, shirts, socks, underclothing, the “*rags*,” in short, are displayed.

**Ragged brigade, one of the Irish regiments of foot.**

In his youth he did good service abroad with the Carabineers, the *ragged brigade*, and the Springers.—*The World*.

**Rag off (Americanism), explained by quotation.**

Well, if that don't “cap all!” That beats the bugs; it does fairly take the *rag off*.—*Sam Slick: The Clockmaker*.

Abbreviated from “it takes the *rag off* the bush.”

**Rag out, to (American), to dress up well.**

Wall, don't make fun of our clothes in the papers. We are goin' right straight through in these here clothes—we air. We ain't agoin' to *rag out* till we get to Nevady.—*Artemus Ward*.

**Rag proper**, to (cowboys), to dress well.

**Rags** (American), bank-bills. Before the war, when there was no uniform currency, the bills of the innumerable banks of the "wild cat," "blue pup," and "ees' dog" description often circulated at a discount of 50 or 60 per cent., and in a very dirty and tattered condition. These were familiarly called *rags*, a word still used now and then as a synonym for paper-money.

Oh, times are hard ! folks say,  
And very well too we know it ;  
And therefore the best way  
Is while you're young to go it.  
The banks are all clean broke,  
Their *rags* are good for naught,  
The specie's all bespoken,  
So certainly we ought  
To go it while we're young.

—*Song of 1840.*

(Common), to go *rags*, to share.

**Rags and sticks** (travelling showmen), explained by quotation.

When old Sawny Williams, the proprietor, came later in the morning, he was horrified at finding his *rags and sticks*, as a theatrical booth is always termed, just as he had left them the overnight.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

**Rag-shop** (thieves), a bank. *Vide* RAG.

**Rag-splawger** (thieves), a wealthy man. *Vide* RAG.

**Rag stabber** (common), a tailor.

**Rag tacker** (popular), a dress-maker.

**Rag, the** (London), explained by quotation.

There is not a single music-hall, from the vast "Alhambra" in Leicester Square, to the unaristocratic establishment in the neighbourhood of the Leather Lane, originally christened the "*Rag-lan*," but more popularly known as the "*Rag*," that I have not visited. And I am bound to confess that the same damning elements are discoverable in one and all.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Rag, to** (American University). Hall quotes a correspondent of Union College as follows:—

"To *rag* and 'ragging' you will find of very extensive application, they being employed primarily as expressive of what is called by the vulgar thieving and stealing, but in a more extended sense as meaning superiority. Thus if one declaims or composes much better than his classmates, he is said to *rag* all his competitors."

(English provincial), to abuse, slander. At English universities to annoy, hustle. For other signification *vide* BALLYRAG, its synonym.

**Rag trade, the** (tailors), the tailoring business. Also the mantle-making trade.

**Rain napper** (popular), an umbrella. To *nap*, to take, seize, receive.

**Raise a bead**, to (American), to aim at, to make sure of. The

sight of a rifle is called a bead, hence the term. "To raise a bead on him," to take aim at him. Bartlett defines the same phrase as to bring to a head, to succeed, and adds that the figure is taken from brandy, rum, or other liquors which will not raise a bead unless of the proper strength.

**Raised bill** (American), a bank-bill which has had the value raised or increased by pasting over it slips cut from other and worthless bills.

A couple of young men entered M. Levin & Co.'s saloon, Jefferson and Bardell Streets, called for drinks, and tendering what appeared to be a \$20 bill in payment received the change and left. After they had gone the bill was found to be a clumsily-raised \$10. The numbers of a Confederate \$20 bill had been pasted over the figures in the corners, while a strip of paper stuck across the "X" on the back gave the bill the appearance of having been pasted together and partially concealed the fact that there was only a single "X."—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Raise the wind, to** (common), an almost recognised phrase. To procure money by borrowing, pawning, or otherwise.

In lieu of a calf! It was too bad by half!  
At a "nigger" so pitiful who would not  
  laugh  
And turn up their noses at one who could  
  find  
No decenter method of raising the wind?  
—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Raising an organ** (tailors), clubbing clips together to raise a shilling's worth.

**Rake** (popular), a comb.

**Rake an X, to** (American University), to recite perfectly.

**Rake in, to** (American), to acquire, win, conquer, make one's own. From the very obvious simile of using a rake of any kind to draw objects together.

"Yes," said Tim, with a mournful shake of the head, "Pug's converted. I suppose you've been to the revival meetings of Goodman and Worship. No! Well, you've met Mike Ratagan on Groghan Street? Don't know Mike! Well, they've raked him in too."—*Luke Sharp*.

**Raker** (turf), a heavy bet.

It is said the "new plunger" is standing the favourite for a raker.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To go a raker, to make a heavy bet.

**Rake the pot, to** (American), to take the stakes at gambling.

The artist sat and drew:  
No view of frozen Arctic shores,  
Where icy billow sweeps and roars;  
Nor Southern desert, Western plain,  
Nor colours of the Spanish main—  
Nor vision of celestial spot—  
He drew an ace, and raked the pot!  
—*St. Louis Whip*.

**Rally** (common), a row, a fight, a spill. (Theatrical), the rally, the movement by clown, pantaloons, harlequin, and columbine after transformation scene.

**Ralph** (printers), the mischief-monger or "spirit" that is said to haunt men when they will not conform to chapel rules. (See Dr. Franklin's "Waps," 1819, p. 56.) A man is "sent

to Coventry" if he dares to defy the decision of the chapel, and many tricks are played on him by his companions in consequence. *Vide* RAFE.

**Ram** (American University), a practical joke, a hoax.

**Rama Sammy** (Anglo-Indian), used as a generic name for all Hindoos, like Tommy Atkins for a British soldier. A twisted roving of cotton in a tube used to furnish light for a cigar. The name Ramo Samee was popularised in 1820 in England by a Hindoo juggler, who first exhibited swallowing a sword.

**Ramcat** or **rancat cove** (thieves), a man dressed in furs.

**Ramjam** (American), the last morsel eaten after which one is filled to repletion.

**Ramp** (common). This word, when applied to swindling and cheating, *e.g.*, "rampage," thieving and taking in, is evidently of a different origin from *ramp*, to rage, rear up, and act with violence. It is possibly in the former sense allied to the Yiddish *rame*, a deceiver or cheat; Chaldaic *ramons*, deceit. *Ramp*, to rage, occurs in several old English writers, *e.g.*, Jonson.

These, it is only fair to say, were mostly *ramps*, or swindles, got up to obtain the gate-money, and generally interrupted by circumstances arranged beforehand by those who were going to "cut up" the plunder.—*George R. Sims: How the Poor Live.*

(Thieves), the hall mark on plate. From the rampant lion which is one of the marks.

They told me all about the wedge, how I should know it by the *ramp*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

*Vide* ON THE RAMPAGE.

**Ramper** (common), a low fellow, a swindler or ruffian who frequents racecourses generally on welshing expeditions.

Hardly a day passes without some miscreant being charged at police courts, and being recognised by constables as a "welsher," *ramper*, or "ticket snatcher." These are criminal trades, belonging essentially to the racecourse.—*Sporting Times.*

**Ramping** (thieves), explained by quotation.

George Stamper was charged, on remand, with felony, technically known as *ramping*, *i. e.*, calling at the houses where parcels had just been delivered from tradesmen to customers, and obtaining possession of them under various pretences.—*Standard.*

(Sports), a swindle, a conspiracy.

The *ramping* of the Jubilee Plunger at pigeon shooting at Brighton is still the principal topic of conversation. Whether Mr. — will pay up and look pleasant, or repudiate, or prosecute the different parties for conspiracy is more than I can say.—*Sporting Times.*

Also *vide* TO RAMP.

**Ramp, to** (thieves), to steal forcibly from the person. (Sporting), to swindle, but more especially to bet against one's own horse. Also to levy blackmail in a brutal manner. From *to ramp*, to spring with violence.

**Ramping mad** (old), uproariously drunk.

**Rampoman** (thieves), one who plunders by force. In Mayhew's "Criminal Prisons of London," but obsolete now.

**Rams, the** (American), the *delirium tremens*. "To have the rams," to be extremely eccentric.

**Ram, to** (American), to *ram* one's face in, or on; to intrude, to force oneself into any company.

**Rance sniffle** (Texas), mean and dastardly malignity. Peculiar to Georgia.

**Randlesman** (thieves), silk pocket handkerchief, green ground with white spots.

**Randy** (common), salacious. So generally used as to be hardly considered as slang. Properly violent, warm. Of Norse origin.

**Ranker** (military), an officer who has risen from the ranks.

**Rank outsider** (common), a vulgar fellow, a cad. From a racing term applied to a horse outside the rank.

A *rank outsider* might possibly drop from the clouds—just at the bell—but it is hardly possible that Grandison, or Lovegold, or Lourdes, or Florentine, or Stetchworth, or any other "ranker" can be the horse.—*Sporting Times*.

**Ranks** (printers). A compositor that has been promoted to the

position of overseer or reader is said to return to the *ranks* again should he be reduced. Attributed by Savage, 1841, to the fact that compositors' frames are placed in ranks or rows. More probably from a military term.

**Ran-tan** (popular), to be on the *ran-tan* (originally American) is to "be on the big drunk," to be in a fit of drunkenness extending over several days, or it may be weeks, after a period of enforced abstinence. Possibly from provincial *ranter*, a large beer jug. The word appears in the works of Taylor, the Water-poet, in 1630. Also "ran-ran," frolic, drunkenness.

My second son's been made a Buff, and goes on the *ran-ran*.—*Broadside Ballad*.

On the *ran-tan* also means drunk.

**Rapparee** (old slang), a Tory.

**Rap, to** (thieves), to talk, to say. From "rap out."

So I said, "All right;" but he *rapped*, "It is not all right."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

To swear.

D—me! I scorn to *rap* against any lady.—*Fielding: Amelia*.

**Raspberry** (coachmen), explained by quotation.

One gentleman I came across had a way of finding out the cussedness of this or that animal by a method that I found to be not entirely his own. The tongue is inserted in the left cheek and forced



through the lips, producing a peculiarly squashy noise that is extremely irritating. It is termed, I believe, a *raspberry*, and when not employed for the purpose of testing horseflesh, is regarded rather as an expression of contempt than of admiration.—*Sporting Times*.

The allusion is to a grating noise like that produced by rasping.

**Raspberry tart** (American), a nice dainty girl.

*Raspberry tart*, with a little poke bonnet,  
And a great big bunch of thingamies upon  
it,

With a pinafore dress that was just the  
thing,

And a little pug dog at the end of a string.  
—*Broadside Ballad*.

**Rasper** (Stock Exchange), a big "turn," *i.e.*, a large profit on a bargain.

**Raspin** (old cant), the bridewell. So called from the task there of rasping wood.

**Rasping shorter** (cricketers), a ball which swiftly slides along the ground when knocked off by the bat, instead of rebounding.

**Rat** (old cant), a clergyman. "Ratichon" is a very common slang name for a priest in France. (Common), a sneak, informer, turncoat. Also an abbreviation of *water-rat*. (Nautical), an infernal machine for blowing up insured ships for the purpose of defrauding ship insurance companies.

There are two species of *rats*. One species is intended to operate upon iron ships, the other upon wooden ones.—*Times*.

(Printers), a workman that accepts work or wages at unfair rates—not paid according to the existing scale of prices recognised in the locality.

**Rat house, rat shop** (printers), an office where unfair wages are paid—the employes being called "rats," or "furry tails."

**Rats** (popular), to "give a person green rats" is to backbite him. "To be in the rats," to be suffering from drink; to have or see *rats*, the incipient stage of *delirium tremens* (see Zola's *L'Assommoir*). (Common), "to have rats in one's garret," to be soft-brained, silly, or idiotic.

"Say, mimma," Miss Arethusa remarked, "what's gettin' into you lately. You've got *rats* in your garret, haven't you?"

"No, I haven't anny *rats* in me garret, ur in me brain, aither, me foine lady," said the widow indignantly.—*New York Mercury*.

(American), "to have *rats*," to have wild or eccentric fancies; a synonym for "rams," or other animals seen by men with *delirium tremens*.

The word *rat* stands as an opprobrious epithet applied to persons suddenly changing their opinions. Hence the term "rat-ted," which has become so common in late years. Sir Robert Peel seems to have been the first noted person to whom the term *rat* was applied, and he brought the epithet upon himself by changing his opinions on Catholic Emancipation. Some of our Western editors use the word *rats* in a way unknown to M. Barrère. For example, if one editor takes a flippant view of what another regards as a grave question, the latter at once declares that "our contem-

porary has rats;" and sometimes it will be added that "he has got them bad." Dennis Kearney, of Sand Lots fame, wrote, some years ago, of a certain California capitalist whom he described as a "slab-sided, bung-eyed hyena," and he said also that the capitalist had rats.—*C. Leland Harrison: MS. Collection of Americanisms.*

**Ratted** (common), applied to a "rat," i.e., a turncoat.

**Rattled, to get** (American), to become nervous, shaky, to lose presence of mind.

Anarchist August Vincent Theodor Spies was the next witness. Spies was a failure. He got rattled. He was nervous and fidgety while trying to be smart, and both in his manner and in his damaging admissions he was the worst witness the defence has yet called.—*Chicago Tribune.*

She lifted up another shovelful, but the exertion caused her to slip, and she got rattled.—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Rattler** (old cant), a coach. (Thieves), a railway train.

As soon as he got round a double, I guyed away to Malden, and touched for two wedge teapots, and took the rattler to Waterloo.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(American), a neck-tie. It is a very curious coincidence that so far back as 1831 a comic writer spoke of a very great swell as one who

"Is on fashion leading-tattler,  
And his tie's a real rattler,"

and that recently in America cravats are made of rattlesnakes' skins.

**Rattle, to give the** (American thieves), to talk to a man so as

to divert his attention, as, for instance, while robbing him. To confuse by talking.

"Give him the rattle with your mouth all the time you're working him," said Mr. Sutton. "Tell him he mustn't fall asleep in a public place."—*Confidence Crooks: Philadelphia Press.*

**Rattling** (general), jolly, excellent, smart, as rattling bait, first-class food, excellent eating.

That's my plan. Give 'em bumping weight (with the little finger in) and shout, "There you are, all that lot for tuppence, it's rattling bait!" and they swallows it like jam.—*S. May: Hurrah for a Coster's Life!*

**Rattling gloke** (old cant), a coachman.

**Rat-trap** (popular), a woman's bustle.

**Rawg** (tinker), a waggon.

**Raw lobsters** (common), a nickname at one time applied to policemen. It was originated about fifty years ago by the *Weekly Despatch*, and was derived from the blue coats of the then new force. Soldiers had previously been called, and were then known, as *lobsters*, from their red coats, and as when caught and previous to boiling a lobster is of a dark bluish hue, the policemen were called *raw lobsters* to distinguish them from soldiers.

**Rawnie**. This word, according to Hotten, is the gypsy for a young woman. It has, however,

no such meaning in Romany, where it is invariably applied to a lady. From the Hindustani *rānee*, a queen.

"Dui Romany chals were bitchadeypardel,  
Bitchadey parlo boro pānī.

Platos for kaurin,  
Lasho for chorin,

The pūtsī avri a boro *raumee*!"—

"Two gypsies were transported, transported across the great water, Plato for pilfering, Lewis for stealing the pocket from a great lady."

**Rawniel, runniel** (tinker), beer.  
*Tripo-rauniel*, a pot of beer.

**Razor** (American University), a pun.

Many of the members of this time-honoured institution, from whom we ought to expect better things, not only do their own shaving but actually make their own *razors*. But I must explain for the benefit of the uninitiated. A pun in the elegant college dialect is called a *razor*, while an attempt at a pun is styled a sick *razor*. The sick ones are by far the most numerous; however, once in a while you meet with one in quite respectable health.—*Yale Literary Magazine*.

**Reacher** (pugilistic), a blow.

And our pugilistic hero felt his courage go  
to zero

When the stranger started making  
matters snug,

By landing sundry *reachers* on our hero's  
classic features—

Or, in plainer phraseology, his "mug."  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Reach-me-downs, hand-me-downs** (common), clothes bought at second-hand shops. In French "dérochez-moi ça." The phrase has now the more extended meaning of ready-

made articles as opposed to those made to order.

**Read and write** (thieves' rhyming slang), flight. Also to fight.

**Reader** (thieves and tinker), a letter, book, newspaper.

He rubbed his hands so strongly on a man's body that anything in the shape of a piece of thread, a pencil, or a bit of *reader* (newspaper) could be discovered, but he never looked at the handkerchief which was dangled loosely between the thumb and forefinger.—*Evening News*.

Also a pocket-book.

"Agreed," replied the tinker; "but first let's see wot he has got in his pockets."

"Vith all my 'art," replied the sandman, searching the clothes of the victim. "A *reader*!—I hope it's well lined."—*Ainsworth & Auriol*.

(Tinkers), "you're *readered* sooblee," you are put in the *Police Gazette*, my man; there is a description of you published.

**Read, to** (Stock Exchange), to try to ascertain by the expression of a man's features what his intentions are.

**Ready** (common), money. Also *ready* stuff.

While limiting expenses in this true  
Arcadian way,

He borrowed all the *ready* which at her  
disposal lay,

Promising the loan he would infallibly  
repay—

Sm'other time.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Ready-gilt** (thieves and popular), money. *Vide* GILT.

**Readying** (turf), explained by quotation.

Do you mean to say that you don't know what was meant by *readying* Success?—Of course I know what it means. It means pulling.—*Standard*.

**Ready-reckoners**, the Highland regiments of the British army (Hotten).

**Ready thick 'un** (thieves and others), a sovereign.

To his appetite still royal, he soon stormed the Café Royal,  
Where he blewed a *ready thick 'un* on some dinner.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Real jam.** *Vide* JAM.

"She's *real jam*, she is, by Jove!"—so said the Johnny, as he strove  
To make the very most of his position;  
For though he in the front row sat, his  
opera-glass was levelled at  
The tasty choreographic exhibition.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Ream** (theatrical), good. From *ream*, cream, a synonym for anything unusually good.

Sweeter than ani milkes *rem*.—*Leg. Catholic*, 13th century.

"Reaming," getting on well.

**Reckoning up** (common), talking of, usually in a slanderous manner.

It was in the dressing-room, and they were *reckoning up* an absent friend in a manner peculiar to the profession.

"How anybody can consider her an actress," sneered Tottie, "I'm sure I can't imagine. And yet she has the temerity to call herself an artist!"

"And why not, dear?" said Lottie. "I'm sure she paints very nicely!"—*Sporting Times*.

**Red** (thieves), gold; a *red kettle*, *red clock*, *red 'un*, a watch (*red 'un*, also a sovereign). *Red* tackle, gold chain. The word *red*, signifying gold, is also stage slang. Same in Icelandic. (American), a cent.

**Red eel** (West American), an abusive term.

"Stranger," said I, "you're a *red eel*!"—*Crockett's Almanac*.

**Red flannel** (popular), the tongue.

**Red fustian** (popular), port wine.

**Redge, ridge** (thieves), gold. Probably from *red*, which see.

**Red herring** (popular), a soldier. "The terms," says Hotten, "are exchangeable, the fish being often called a soldier."

**Red kettle.** *Vide* KETTLE.

"What did you earn on an average by your trade as a thief?"

"Generally from two to three pounds a week clear. You see, I laid myself out for picking pockets, and I generally got two or three 'red kettles' a week."

"What is a *red kettle*?" I inquired, feeling ashamed of my ignorance.

"A *red kettle* is a gold watch."—*Evening News*.

**Red lane** (common), the throat.

**Red liner** (beggars), an officer of the Mendicity Society.

**Red rag** (popular), the tongue, also "red flannel." In French slang "le chiffon rouge."

Bah, Peter! your *red rag* will never be still.—*Beaconsfield: Venetia*.

**Redraw** (prison), back-slang for warder.

Oh, I know now! It was for shying a lump of wet oakum at the *redraw*.—*J. Greenwood: Low Life Deepfs.*

**Red ribbon** (thieves), brandy.

**Red 'un** (thieves), a sovereign.

She observed, "You'll give me something—won't you, kid?"

So the youth, her wish obeying, placed a coin down—gently saying—  
"There's a *red 'un*—or in other words 'a quid!"

—*Sporting Times.*

Also a watch.

**Red, white, and blue** (popular), a stew made up of various ingredients.

**Reefing** (thieves), drawing with the fingers. "*Reefing* up into work," is drawing up the pocket until the portemonnaie or purse is within reach of the fingers.

**Reeler** (thieves), a policeman. From his rolling gait when sauntering about.

One of my pals said, "There is a *reeler* over there who knows me, we had better split out."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Reesbin** (tinker), prison.

**Refresher**, a fee paid to a barrister daily in addition to his retaining fee, to remind him of the case intrusted to his care (Dr. Brewer).

**Regimental fire** (military), meaning gathered from quotation.

The usual loyal toasts were drunk with much enthusiasm and honoured with *regimental fire*.—*Standard.*

**Regulars** (thieves), a thief's share of the spoil.

They were quarrelling about the *regulars*.—*Times.*

**Reign, to** (Australian prison), to be at liberty. "A wire never *reigns* long," a pickpocket is not long without being apprehended.

**Reliever**, a coat worn in turn by any party of poor devils whose wardrobes are in pawn (Hotten).

**Relieving officer** (University), a father.

**Religious** (Texas), quiet, good. It is amusing to hear a Texan ask when about to purchase a horse, "Is he *religious*?" Generally a mustang is anything but that. It means, Is he free from vice? and as Texan horses are notorious for sulking and kicking, the inquiry seems a trifle superfluous.

**Remedy** (Winchester School), (quasi dies remissionis), on Tuesday or Thursday. If there was any reasonable excuse, prefect of hall used to go up to the doctor after chapel and asked if they might have a *remedy*. If this was granted the doctor gave him a ring (*remedy* ring), and there was a half-holiday, except that all who had not studied had to sit in hall from 9 to 11 A.M. There is still a

*remedy* every Thursday in cloister time. There used formerly to be a *remedy* every Tuesday and Thursday, now there is only a half *rem*.

A holiday at Winchester is termed a *remedy* . . . "remiday," *i.e.*, remission day.—*Pascoe: Our Public Schools*.

**Remi** (Westminster School), remission from tasks.

**Renovator** (tailors), one who does repairs.

**Rent** (old cant), to collect the *rent*, to rob travellers on the highway. A *rent* collector, a robber of money only.

**Reptile** (American cadet), a new cadet.

**Re-raw, to be on the** (popular), to be on a prolonged drunken spree.

**Respun** (tinker), to steal.

**Resurrection** (tailors), the warming up of some previous leaving.

**Resurrection pie** (common), a pie supposed to be made of scraps and leavings.

**Ret** (printers), a pressman or machine-minder terms the second side of a sheet or "reiteration" thus.

**Retree** (printers), a term derived from the French *retrié*, picked again, and used by printers and stationers to denote outside or bad sheets in a ream.

An equivalent perhaps to the old term "Cassie" paper, quoted by Moxon, 1683. The term is indicated by stationers by two crosses (× ×).

**Returned empty** (clerical), uncharitable name for retired colonial bishops of the class that the late Bishop Blomfield described as forming the "Home and Colonial" Episcopate.

**Revelation** (American), to have a *revelation*, to take a drink. A phrase invented by C. F. Browne.

Smith did a more flourishing business in the prophet line than Brigham Young does. Smith used to have his little *revelation* almost every day—sometimes two before dinner. Brigham Young only takes one once in a while.—*Artemus Ward: Brigham Young*.

Will you have a *revelation*, Mr. Jones, an outpouring of the spirit—Monongahela or brandy—I've got 'em both?—*S. Courier: Hard and Fast*.

**Reviver** (common), a drink, a "pick-me-up" or stimulant.

It was but twelve o'clock, and therefore early for *revivers* of any sort.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Reward** (kennel), dogs' or hounds' supper. Also the blood and entrails of the objects of chase.

**R'ghoglin, gogh'leen** (tinker), to laugh.

**Rhino** (common), money,

Why gold and silver  
Should be christened *rhino*,  
As I'm a sinner,  
Blow me tight if I know.

—*Punch*.

If my *rhino* had lasted longer I might have got into worse company still.—*Greenwood: Odd People in Odd Places.*

The word *rhino* can be traced back to the restoration of Charles II. The Seaman's Adieu, an old ballad dated 1670, has the following:—

Some as I know  
Have parted with their ready *rino*.

Dr. Brewer suggests that it came from the German *rin*os, a nose, alluding to the Swedish nose-tax. Other suggested derivations are the Scottish *rino* and the Spanish *riñón*, meaning kidney; "tener cubierto el riñón" signifies to be wealthy. Again it may have been coined from the phrase, "to pay through the nose," i.e., to pay a high price.

"Probably as a Yorkshire and Northern word from the Scandinavian or Danish *ren* or *reno*, fine, brilliant, shining; a common synonym in every language for money, as the 'shiners.' In the Icelandic Skaldespraket, or poets' language (a part of the Edda), the word *Rhine* (Rhenfloden) is, however, given as one of the twenty terms for gold, because the great treasure of the Nibelungen lies in it" (C. G. Leland: Notes).

**Rhinoceral**, rich. *Vide RHINO.*

Thou shalt be *rhinoceral*, my lad, thou shalt.—*Shadwell: Squire of Alsatia.*

**Rhyme-slinger**, a vulgar term for a poet.

VOL. II.

"Poetic license," said Doss Chiderdoss' "is all very well, but you have to pay for it now and again."

"Exactly," observed Miss Park Palings. "I suppose you have to take out a license the same as you do for dogs."

But the highly indignant *rhyme-slinger* had rushed off to Vaughan's to get a stoup of liquor.—*Sporting Times.*

**Rib** (popular), a wife; of Biblical origin.

**Rib bender** (pugilistic), a violent blow in the ribs.

If it had killed the man, he deserved it, the rough fellow. I afterwards heard that it was some time before he recovered the *rib-bender* he got from the fat show-woman.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

**Ribbers** (pugilistic), blows in the ribs.

Yet, sprightly to the scratch both buffers came,  
While *ribbers* rung from each resounding frame.

—*Thomas Moore: Works.*

**Ribbon** (popular), gin or other spirits. *Vide RED RIBBON.*

**Ribbons** (common), the reins; to handle the *ribbons*, to drive.

**Rib-roaster**, colloquially a rap across the body at singlestick. Much resorted to in the old cudgelling or "backswording" play for the purpose of trying to bring the opponent's guard down, and thus obtain an opening at his head. An old term.

And he departs, not meanly boasting  
Of his magnificent *rib-roasting*.

—*Hudibras.*

M

(Pugilistic), a smart blow in the ribs.

There's a regular *rib-roaster* for you!  
—C. Bede: *Verdant Green*.

**Rice-bags** (popular), trousers.

**Richard** (schools), a dictionary. From the abbreviation *dic* (Dick) of dictionary.

**Ricochet** (American cadet), gay, splendid.

**Ridgecully** (old cant), a goldsmith. From *ridge*, gold, and *cully*, man.

**Riding on the cheap.** *Vide* DUCK, DOING A.

**Riding the donkey** (thieves), cheating in weight.

**Rig'** (booksellers). H. J. Byron says a *rig* is a term which signifies in the book trade a sale by auction, where the lots are "missed" by the proprietor or proprietors. And a leading bookseller says that these rigs have now (1868) become a recognised feature in the business. *Rig* is good English for sportive trick, lively frolic, bit of mischief. The *rig* in auction sales is a trick by which the dealers agree not to bid against one another, buy low, and resell by a mock auction called "knock out." A man is said to have the *rig* run upon him when he has to undergo a number of false imputations.

**Right as rain** (popular), quite right, safe, comfortable.

There was six of us took the rattler at King's Cross by the first train in the morning, and we'd got three briefs and a old 'un with the date sucked off—*right as rain* we was! We got a kerridge all to ourselves, nice and comfortable.—*Sporting Times*.

**Right man** (tailors), the workman who makes the right forepart, and finishes the coat.

**Right smart** (American), a "*right smart* of work," a large amount of work; the phrase is further explained by the following quotation.

Mayor Hewitt has laid out what they call in the far West "a *right smart* of work," and it will be interesting to see what the less energetic aldermen are going to do about it.—*New York Times*.

*Right smart* chance, many, much, a good occasion.

**Rights, to** (thieves), to have one *to rights*, to be even with him. "You are *to rights* this time," there is a clear case against you.

**Right up to the handle** (American), thoroughly; "he is a good fellow *up to the handle*."

**Rigs** (popular), clothes. From the expression "to rig out," "to rig up," which see.

I fancy that the style is neat,  
Look at my tile, and twig my feet,  
With *rigs* like mine you seldom meet,  
Eh! Rather!

—H. Ross: *The Husband's Boat*.

**Rig, to** (Stock Exchange), to noduly inflate a security by fair means or foul. (Mercantile), to *rig* the market, to play tricks



so as to defraud purchasers. (Popular), "to rig out," "to rig up," to dress. From a sea phrase. Given as good English by some dictionaries, but chiefly used by slang-talking people.

Tom and I sent out all our own clothes to pawn, so as to rig up a seedy toff (handle to his name and all) and send him in to bet, while we ourselves spent the day in bed without a pair of breeches between us.—*Sporting Times*.

**Rikker, rik** (gypsy), to carry, keep, retain. *Rikker adré o sherro*, to remember.

"*Rikker lis adré tiro kókerós zi te ke-kno'll jin lis*"—"Keep it in your own soul and nobody will know it."

"*Rikker yer noki trushnees*"—"Carry your own baskets."—*Gypsy Proverbs*.

**Rinder** (University), an outsider. Used at Queen's.

**Ring** (American), a combination of financiers, manufacturers, or politicians, formed to advance their own interests, and very often to rob the public. Thus the object of the great whisky ring, a coalition of distillers, was to evade the revenue laws.

Take the case of New York City, with its enormous revenues, by way of illustration. The political rings and gangs year after year despoil that revenue so that there is little or nothing to show for it. The helpless taxpayers are systematically robbed, and the financial administration of the city and county is rotten with corruption.—*American Newspaper*.

This term is now common in England. Formerly to go through the ring, to take ad-

vantage of the Insolvency Act, or to be "whitewashed."

**Ring-dropper.** *Vide* RING-DROPPING.

Tom's evil genius did not . . . mark him out as the prey of ring-droppers, pea and thimble-riggers, duffers, louters, or any of those bloodless sharpers.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

**Ring-dropping** (thieves), offering for sale to a passer-by a brass ring, or other spurious article, alleged to have been found just in front of the intended victim, or scraping acquaintance with a stranger by asking him if he is the owner of a ring which the sharper pretends to have picked up.

**Ringing the horse-shoes** (tailors), a welcome to a man who has been out boozing or drinking.

**Ring in, to** (American), to ring in, to force or insinuate oneself into company where one is not wanted, or to which one does not belong. It is applied to getting the better of in almost every sense. Probably from the English "ringing the changes." Also to ring into. The term was about 1845 generally associated with Beau Hickman, a notorious low adventurer who made it popular. (Cardsharper), to ring in, to add surreptitiously or substitute cards in a pack.

The gang disappeared with "the spoil," and when the cards were counted sixty over the usual number were found to have been rung in.—*Sporting Times*.

To *ring in* a cold deck, to substitute a fresh pack, in which the cards are prearranged.

One day he got half-a-dozen tinhorn gamblers together, and between them they *ring in* a cold deck in a faro-box.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Ringster** (American), a member of a noisy clique, political or otherwise, whose object is to profit its members at public expense.

The Coast Survey Bureau . . . has been a nest for *ringsters* for the last four or five years.—*American Newspaper.*

**Ring-tail** (military), a recruit.

**Ring-tailed roarer** (American). At first a "coon" was a great compliment to a pretentious, or brave, or indomitable man, then ring-tail, from the rings of light grey and grey black which are so prominent on the tail of the racoon.

You're the *ring-tailed squealer*—less  
Than a hundred silver dollars  
Won't be offered you, I guess."

—*Ben Gualtier.*

**Ring, to** (thieves), to steal, by changing such articles as coats, saddles at fairs and markets, &c. "*Ringing* the changes," changing bad money for good, or defrauding by means of a trick. Explained by quotation.

The prisoner went into Simpson's and called for a glass of sherry, in payment for which he gave Miss R— a half-sovereign. She handed him 9s. 6d., whereupon he said that he had some silver, and adding a sixpence to the change asked her to give him a sovereign for that and the ten-shilling piece, which she did. Late

in the evening he came again, and calling for a glass of whisky, tried on the same trick, but the lady gave him into custody.—*Daily Telegraph.*

(Conjurors), to substitute one object for another. From the slang phrase "ringing the changes." (Up-country Australian), to patrol round and round cattle.

You'll have to *ring* them. Pass the word for all hands to follow one another in a circle.—*A. C. Grant.*

(American), to make a noise, to burst out with turbulent conduct.

Next time you *ring* I am coming for you.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Ring up, to** (up-country Australian), to patrol round, to keep riding round and round a herd, which has to be done when they are unsteady, and inclined to make a bolt or stampede. It cows the cattle, who imagine that they are surrounded, and enables the stockmen to see where mischief is brewing.

Gradually they drop into a steadier pace, and at last with panting chests, lolling-out tongues, and glaring eyes, are driven into a mob of quiet cattle, which are found feeding handy. *Ring them up.* Mix them well with the quiet ones, and let them stand a little.—*A. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland.*

**Rinkeno rinkni, ránkini** (gypsy), pretty, beautiful. (Hindu, *ránkini*, gaily coloured),

**Rinse** (society), drink.

I suggested that something ambrosial we'd quaff,

(The *rinse*? Do you cotton to phiz?)

'Twas Arcadia for nearly a day and a half.  
(Goodwood winnings squared the biz.)  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Rip** (old cant), "a poor devil." Dutch slang, gone, lost. J. Teirlinck remarks that "*hij is rip*"—"he is *rip*," or "gone," comes naturally from the R. I. P. of the tombstones. (Common), a rake. Corruption of reprobate, according to Hotten.

**Ripe** (old), drunk.

**Rip, let it** (society), let matters follow their course, go to the deuce. From an American phrase in reference to a steamship, "*Let her rip, I'm insured,*" *i. e.*, let her burst, &c.

**Rip out, to** (American), impatiently giving vent or expression to one's feelings or opinions, to "rap out."

When brought face to face with his opponent, his smarting sense of injustice caused him to *rip out* what he thought of the whole matter.

**Ripper** (common). A *ripper* may be a really good fellow, a very fast horse, a good play or part, in short, it is applied to any one or anything superlatively good. From an Americanism "to rip," to go at a great pace, the metaphor being in an association of ideas between speed and excellence.

**Ripping** (common), a popular superlative of the present day.

An emphasising term to express excellent, pleasant, amusing, charming, elegant, &c. *Vide RIPPER.*

Why, I've been a thinkin' on yer as bein' dead lots and lots of times, old Smiff, since the last time we seed you, and here you are dressed *rippin'*.—*The Little Ragamuffins.*

"Did you enjoy the Easter festivals much?" asked the poetess of the widower.  
"*Ripping,*" responded the bereaved.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Ripping and staving along.** *Vide FULL DRIVE.*

**Rip, to** (American), to tear along headlong. "Ripping and tearing along like all possessed." Commonly heard as "Let her *rip!*" As it implies going recklessly on to destruction, it has been ingeniously derived from the letters R. I. P. (*requiescat in pace*), often seen on gravestones. Also to swear, curse.

While I was cooking supper the old man took a swing or two, and got sort of warmed up, and went to *ripping* again.—*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

**Rise** (common), to take a *rise* out of a person is to outwit, quiz, or make him the subject of a jest. A metaphor from fly-fishing.

Gig-lamps, I vote we take a *rise* out of the youth.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

According to the author of "Sam Slick," to get or take a *rise* out of any one is specially American; but it is very seldom heard in the United States, while it is common in England.

It means simply the vulgar and almost obsolete practice of quizzing, or rendering a man ridiculous, sometimes by directly mortifying him, at others by drawing him out. It is not to be found in Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms; but it is given in Hotten as English, specially as Oxford University slang.

**Rise a barney, to** (patterers, Punch and Judy), to collect a crowd.

**River rats, men who plunder the bodies of drowned persons.**

"It pays better, if a man has got the heart to do it, to rob a body and let it drift."

"Or rob it first, and take it ashore afterwards and claim the reward," I suggested.

"But you'll never find the regular rat doing that, unless it was a body there was a reward offered for. . . . If it's only half-a-crown they find in the pockets, it's best for them to be satisfied with that, and have no more to do with it."—*J. Greenwood: Rag, Tag, & Co.*

**Rivets** (popular), money.

**Road agents** (American), highwaymen.

They went up into Virginia, and formed a band of sixty or seventy road agents, or highwaymen.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail.*

**Roaf** (back-slang), four; as *roaf* gen, four shillings; *roaf yan-neps*, fourpence.

**Roam on the rush, to** (racing), is said of a jockey who does

not ride well, who swerves from the straight line at the finish when the rush takes place.

**Roaring-boys**, an old term still used to signify a boisterous, rowdy gang.

A group of *roaring-boys* comes staggering up to the door.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

**Roaring forties** (nautical), a term applied by sailors to the degrees of latitude between 40° and 50° N.—the zone of storms as far as the Atlantic is concerned. Also sometimes applied to the same latitudes in the Southern Sea.

**Roast brown, to** (thieves), said of a detective who watches a man.

I was taking a ducat to get back to town (I had come by the rattler to Dover), When I see as a reeler was *roasting me brown*,  
And he rapped, "I shall just turn you over."

—*The Referee.*

**Roasting, to give a** (thieves), to watch as one watches meat which is being roasted. This seems to be connected with the phrase "to give hot beef," to pursue.

I see a reeler giving me *a roasting*, so I began to count my pieces for a jolly.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Roast, to** (common), to expose a person to a running fire of jokes for the amusement and with the assistance of a whole company. (Hotten), to severely take to task.

Another letter received from one W. T. Nelson, of Cleveland, severely *roasts* both.  
—*Daily Inter-Ocean*.

(Thieves), said of a detective on the watch. (Pugilistic), to *roast* the ribs is to strike on the sides.

**Robert** (common), a policeman.  
Also *Roberto*.

When coroners sit upon corpses galore  
Of people who killed on the sly are,  
The guilt of one person is well to the fore,  
For our *Roberts* so terribly fly are.  
The verdict is always conclusive enough,  
And the facts in a nutshell all shown are;  
The peelers can prove in ways ready, if  
rough,  
These the deeds of "a person unknown"  
are.

—*George R. Sims: An Awful Character*.

**Robin Red-breasts**, explained by quotation.

Officers attached to the Bow Street police-office, and who were otherwise known as Bow Street "runners," and sometimes, from their scarlet vests, as *Robin Red-breasts*.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Roby Douglas** (nautical), the posterior.

**Rock bottom** (American), properly basis or foundation. Also "hard pan." Metaphorically ruin.

Other freight wars, covering much less territory than the present, have gone to *rock bottom* before any attempt has been made to restore rates.—*American Newspaper*.

*Rock bottom* dollar, last dollar.

**Rocked, half** (popular), half-witted; also, "had a *rock* too much."

**Rocker, off one's** (popular), mad.

**Rocker, to** (gypsy), to understand.

Can you *rock* Romany,  
Can you patter flash?

—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

Correctly *räcker*.

**Rock of eye and rule of thumb** (tailors), refers to doing anything which requires scientific treatment by guesswork.

**Rocks** (American), small stones or pebbles are called *rocks* in the Southern States.

One rash philologist essayed to prove that "nugget" was simply an American corruption of the word "ingot;" but a Californian digger at once sternly negatived this idea by informing Europeans that he had handled a few "lumps" of gold, and had seen some sacks full of *rocks*, but that "nuggets" had never been heard of in the auriferous West until the word was imported from Australia.—*Globe*.

The term is used in some parts of England.

**Rock, the** (army), Gibraltar.

**Rocky** (popular), bad, queer, shaky. Much used by printers.

"Just my usual *rocky* luck," groaned the Conkster.—*Sporting Times*.

(Common), tipsy.

**Roglan** (tinker), a four-wheeled vehicle.

**Rogue and pully** (thieves), a man and woman going out to rob gentlemen.

**Rogue and villain** (thieves' rhyming slang), a shilling.

**Rogue's yarn**, a thread of red or blue worsted, worked into the ropes manufactured in the Government dockyards, to identify them if stolen (Hotten).

**Roker** (schools), a ruler, generally a flat one. Scandinavian *rak*, straight, even. On the east coast a skate is called a *roker*.

**Roller** (Oxford), or roll call, a substitute for compulsory attendance at chapel.

**Rollers** (Stock Exchange), United Rolling Stock.

**Rolleys** (popular), vehicles.

Yet you, with *rolleys* and the like,  
No sympathy can feel, sir,  
But dare a crushing blow to strike  
Against the common-wheel, sir!  
—*Funny Folks*.

**Rolling Joe** (old cant), a smartly dressed fellow. Also "flashy blade."

**Roll of snow** (thieves), a piece of Irish linen (Ducange Anglicus).

**Roll on** (Shrewsbury School), explained by quotation.

Anything approaching swagger is severely rebuked; there is no more objectionable quality than that understood by the expression "He's got such a horrid roll on."—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Roll your hoop** (tailors), go ahead, you are all right.

**Rom** (gypsy), a gypsy, one of the Romany race. The etymology

of the word is uncertain. It would appear to have some affinity to the Hindu *ram-na*, of Sanskrit origin, "to roam." These wanderers are now generally admitted to have come from Northern India, and probably a mixture of the Jāt, Dom, and other wanderers who, being driven out of India, about the tenth century coalesced and went to the West.

The writer believes that the ancestors of the gypsies must be sought, so far as name at least is concerned, among the Dom, a very low caste in India. But in the north of India, in the hill country, there are the Domar or Dom allied to them who are not by any means so degraded. D and R are convertible in Indian tongues, and *doi*, a wooden spoon in Hindu, is *roy* in gypsy. The writer has met with a Hindoo who declared that he once belonged to a tribe of Indian gypsies who called themselves *Rom*. He said that in their peculiar language *māro* or *mānro* was bread. This is the word for bread in all gypsy dialects, but it is not found in any Indian tongue. Mr. Grierson, however, following the indication as to the Dom, discovered in India that among the Bihar Doms, *maro* means wheat.

"As mandy was pirryin' pre the drom,  
I dicked the patteredan of a *Rom*,  
Of a Romany chal as I did know  
And the nav o' the mūsh 'os Petūlen-  
gro"—

"As I was going along the way  
I saw the sign where a gypsy lay,  
Of a gypsy man whom I did know,  
And the name of that man was Petúlen-  
gro."

**Roman fall** (common), another of the absurdities of posture in walking which seem to run periodically like an epidemic through the ranks of the shallow-witted and idle members of the community. It consisted in throwing the head well forward and the small of the back well in while walking.

**Romany** (gypsy and thieves), a gypsy.

And here I am, pals, merry and free,  
A regular rollicking *romany*.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

A *romany* rye, a gentleman who talks Romany, who associates with gypsies, and is familiar with their ways.

**Rome-vile, Rum-ville** (old cant), London.

A gage of ben Rom-bouse  
In a bousing ken of *Rom-vile*.

—*The Roaring Girl.*

From *rum*, great (which see), and French *vile*; or old English *vill*, a village.

**Rook** (common), a cheat, cardsharper. In opposition to "pigeon," a dupe. John Bee, in his dictionary of the turf, ring, &c., gives the following definition of *rooks* of the period—"Fellows about gambling-houses who are employed in plucking well-fledged pigeons, of

every quality, from the thorough-paced gent down to the marker. They may be engaged either in actual play, in acting the confederate, in procuring loans, in forcible robbery, in breaking the pigeon's neck downstairs, or, finally, fighting him with pistols by way of finish."

Daincourt would fain be thought both wit and bully,  
But punk-rid Radcliffe's not a greater cully,  
Nor tawdry Isham, intimately known  
To all pox'd whores, and famous *rooks* in town.

—*Earl of Rochester: Works.*

The papers give an account of the "International pigeon shooting at Monte Carlo." This is very curious. We should have thought that there were no "pigeons" to shoot at, considering the number of *rooks* there.—*Funny Folks.*

Also a clergyman. In French *corbeau*. (Tailors), a very badly-dressed or dirty person.

**Rookery** (common, formerly thieves' cant), thickly-populated courts and alleys inhabited by very poor people, as in the East End.

He owns the *rookery* whence, by roguish sleight,  
From bodily ill and spiritual blight  
Greed sucks a rich subsistence.

—*Punch.*

**Rookey** (army), a recruit; from the black coat some of them wear. (Common), rascally.

**Rook, to** (common), to ease a player of his money; without any particularly offensive meaning. Also to cheat.

**Roorback** (American), a canard, a humbug. Chiefly used in politics. Said to be derived from one Rohrbach, a famous impostor.

"If dey say a candydate am all right dat's a *roorback*; if dey say he am all wrong dat's anoder?"

"Exactly."—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Roost** (common), a dwelling.

**Rooster** (American), a cock.

Go ahead! cock-a-doodle-doo! and he crowed like a real live *rooster*.—*Sam Slick*.

(Old cant), queer *rooster*, a person who shams sleep.

**Roosting ken** (thieves), lodging-house, inn.

**Roost over one, to** (American), to get the better of.

**Roost, to** (common), to cheat. (Military), explained by quotation.

To be *roosted* is to be placed under arrest.—*A. Barrère: Argot and Slang*.

**Rooter** (popular), anything good or of first quality.

**Rooti** (Indian army), soldiers thus term their ration bread. Hindu *roti*, bread.

**Root, to** (schools and London), to give one a kick behind.

**Ropes** (schools), one who plays "half-back" at football. (Nautical), on the high *ropes*, angry. (Common), to know the *ropes*,

to be conversant with the minutiae of metropolitan dodges, as regard both the streets and the sporting world (Hotten).

**Rope, to** (turf), to *rope* one's horse, to hold him in in a race in such a manner as not to be perceptible to lookers-on. This is done when a man is betting against his own horse.

Though we are as deaf as posts, and as dumb as the jockey with orders to *rope* his mount.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Ropper** (popular and thieves), a comforter.

Hulking, heavy-jawed gentlemen, with a great deal of the lower part of the face hidden in the thick folds of a *ropper*, and with close-fitting caps and seafaring-looking jackets, into the side pockets of which the hands are thrust deep as the wrists, as though in guard of the neat and elegantly finished tools of his trade—the "jemmy," the skeleton keys, the life-preserver.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Rorty** (costermongers), a complimentary adjective indicating rarity. It is more likely to have come from the German Jews, who continually speak of anything choice as a *rorität*, than from the English rare.

Still, this 'ere blooming Hanarchy, Charley, won't do at no figger, dear boy, A bit of a *rorty* romp round in the open a chap can enjoy,

But brickbats and hoyster-knives? Walker!

Not on in that scene, mate, not me! And a bash on the nob with a baton is not *my* idea of a spree.

—*Punch*.

A *rorty* toff, an out-and-out swell costermonger; a *rorty*



**dasher**, a fine fellow, great swell.

Yah! marriage is orful queer paper; it's fatal, dear boy, as you say, It damps down the *rottiest* dasher, it spiles yer for every prime lay. No; gals is good fun, wives wet blankets, that's wot my egperience tells, And the swells foller me on that track, though *you* say as I follers the swells.  
—*Punch*.

**Rose** (Punch and Judy), a bitch.

**Rose in judgment** (tailors), turned up.

**Roses** (Stock Exchange), Buenos Ayres and Rosario Railway Ordinary Stock.

**Rosh, roush**, to (Royal Military Academy), to push about, to indulge in horseplay. Probably from *rush*. Stop *roshing* also means hold your noise, hold your jaw.

**Rosin** (popular), beer or other drink given to musicians. This is perhaps derived from "rosin up," or refresh the bow, but it may be observed that in Dutch slang *ros* means beer. To give *rosin*, to give a beating.

**Rosser, rozzer** (thieves), a new term for a detective. From the slang term to "roast," to watch, or more probably from the French *rousse, roussin*, a detective, police.

It was stated that the prisoner, being in Holborn, and seeing a detective watching him, called out to a companion, "There's a *rosser!*" The term is, as the magistrate opined, a new one.—*The Globe*.

"Another wrong un," says the carman. "Hi, Mr. Grabham!"—and up walks a *rozzer* and buckles me tight.—*Sporting Times*.

**Rosy** (common), wine.

In the attempt to be picturesque, the device of poetry is adopted, and an object is represented not by the ordinary word representing it, but by some epithet or periphrasis. Thus wine has been called the *rosy*.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Rotan** (old), a carriage of any kind, originally a cart; Anglo-Saxon *ruotan*. "Hence Rotten Row," says John Bee.

**Rot gut** (army), the cheapest, commonest, and, as shown by the word itself, the most unwholesome kind of drink. Termed also "rotto." In America rough whisky.

These thieves fuddling about in the public-houses, and drinking bad spirits, and punch, and such *rot-gut* stuff.—*Hughes: Tom Brown's School Days*.

**Rotten** (printers). This term is used to denote a weak or uneven impression in the printing of a sheet.

**Rotten Row** (naval). Men in the navy say of an unserviceable ship, "she belongs to *Rotten Row*."

**Rot, to** (common), explained by quotation. From *rot*, rubbish, nonsense.

She kindly introduced me to the expressions "chic," "too-too" (which, however, she said, were now obsolete); the verb *to rot*, which she explained meant to humbug or ballyrag.—*St. James's Gazette*.

*Rot* was originally circus and acrobats' expression for anything bad.

**Rough luck** (Royal Military Academy), an ejaculation of disappointment, meaning "no luck."

**Roughrider's wash tub** (army), the barrack water-cart, so called because it is used to lay the dust in riding-schools.

**Roucher, roncher** (American), a word expressing something extreme, powerful, superlative, as, for instance, a violent wrench or blow. Also anything large, fine, or remarkable. Probably a modification of the old English *rounceval*, strong, large, to which is allied the Northumberland *roundge*, a violent push or blow, also a great noise.

**Roundabout** (thieves), a female thief's pocket, which encircles her body and reaches down to the knees, with two apertures. It will stand an ordinary search—spoons, a watch, or money sliding round from side to side; and if the wearer be bulky, much larger articles pass undiscovered. Also the treadmill, invented about 1823.

**Roundabout, round robin** (American thieves), an instrument used by burglars to cut a large round hole into an iron chest or door. It is said to have been invented by a noted American burglar, known as "the Doctor."

Whenever he cut a disk of iron from a "safe," he always kept it, and when he was finally arrested, forty or fifty of these trophies were found in his house.

**Round betting** (turf), those who bet upon or against several horses in a race are said to *bet round*.

**Rounder** (American thieves), a man who hangs around faro-banks, but who does not play. A loafer who travels on his "shape" (*i.e.*, trusts to dress and personal appearance), and is supported by a woman, but who does not get enough money to enable him to play faro. Gamblers call such men *rounders*, outsiders, loafers.

**Round on, to** (thieves and popular), to inform on, give evidence against a comrade or accomplice, although it is used also of prison officials.

Mary Anne *rounded* on her royal lover, and made the most damaging statements against him.—*Ros's Variety Paper*.

Yesterday the news was announced that one of the men arrested had *rounded* on his accomplices.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Perhaps from an idea of turning round upon one treacherously, or from the old English *to round*, to whisper, a corrupt form of *roun* or *roune*. Anglo-Saxon *rūnian* (German *raunen*), akin to Icelandic *rún*, a secret, a whispering (Rev. A. Smythe Palmer: *Folk Etymology*).

**Round 'un** (popular), an unblushingly given and well-proportioned lie (Hotten).

**Round up, to** (West American), gathering sheep, cattle, or pigs into a compact flock or herd. The metaphor of rounding in the sense of massing is very ancient. The Romans used "globus" in the sense of a mass.

As soon as the *round up* was completed, the herd was taken down to the hacienda, where the branding was to take place.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

Used also in Australia.

Now they are well away from the scrub, *round them up*, if possible, and let them stand a few minutes to breathe.—*A. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland!*

**Roupy** (American), hoarse.

She plays upon the pian-o,  
And twirls the light fantastic toe,  
And sings just like a *roupy* crow.  
—*Negro Minstrel Song.*

**Rouseabout** (Australian up-country), a drudge. A *rouseabout* on a station, like a "super" at a theatre, is a man who has to make himself generally useful—to do any job that may turn up, such as chopping wood, cleaning out, &c.

It may be that the *rouseabout* swiper who rode for the doctor that night,  
Is in Heaven with the hosts of the Blest,  
robed and sceptred, and splendid with light.  
—*New South Wales Paper.*

**Rouster, roustabout** (American), originally any very powerful fellow, now applied to a rough who hangs about anywhere for work,

and specially to a deck hand, stoker, rough fellow. Swedish *rustar*, a powerful rowdy, a roisterer.

A fight occurred on the steamer between a negro *rouster* and the second mate.—*American Newspaper.*

**Rovers, fish-hawks** (American), women, often young and good-looking, who go about every and anywhere, into brokers' shops, law-offices, stores, universities, or wherever men may be met, soliciting subscriptions or contributions for charitable purposes. Many of them are really employed by churches, hospitals, &c., others are cheats, who have many ingenious devices to obtain money. One of these is to inquire if Mrs. — is at home (having previously ascertained the name of the occupant of the house), and send up a card. While in the drawing-room, as soon as the servant is gone, the *rover* steals a few cards from the receiver. Having interviewed the hostess, she goes to the ladies whose names and perhaps addresses are on the cards, and states that she was sent to them by the one from whom they were taken, and that she takes a special interest in the charity for which money is solicited. There are many men engaged also in this infamous business. Women also largely employ the "collection dodge" for purposes of intrigue, and to make the acquaintance of men. Even

- when undertaken in good faith, "roving" has a demoralising effect on young ladies, as the soliciting money from "all sorts and conditions of men" always must. "When I first went about collecting for our charity," said a young lady, "I was ready to faint whenever anybody looked at me, but now I shouldn't be afraid to ask the Old Boy himself for a dollar, and not let him go till he paid it."
- Rowdy** (popular), cash, money. Probably a corruption of *ruddy*, a gold piece. *Vide* RUDDY.
- What gives fools wit?  
What beautifies the dowdy?  
Hear it and blush,  
Ye servile! 'tis the *rowdy*.  
—*Punch*.
- Rowdy-dow** (common), low, vulgar.
- Rowing man** (University), (pronounce *row* as in bough), one who lives a fast life, a spreer.
- Rowl**, to (American University), to recite lessons well. Provincial English *rowl*, to rush.
- Royal scamp** (old cant), a gentleman highwayman, in opposition to "foot scamp."
- Rubbed about** (tailors), being *rubbed about* is being made a convenience of.
- Rubbed out** (common), dead.
- Rubbs** (old cant), hard shifts.
- Rub down**, to (prison), explained by quotation.
- Such searching causes trouble, and it soon degenerates into a mere form even by the strictest officers. The *modus operandi* is as follows: the prisoner stands at attention with his vest unbuttoned—he raises his arms, holding his pocket-handkerchief in one hand. The officer passes his hand over his body, and then proceeds to the next man. This is called *rubbing down*.  
—*Evening News*.
- (Popular), to rate a person soundly, or take him to task.
- Rub in**, to (American), persevere in teasing or annoying, aggravation without cessation, or what in French is called *monter une sue*.
- Rub of the paper**, a (army), when any soldier wants to borrow the newspaper in the reading-room he asks for a *rub* of it.
- Rub out a pattern**, to (tailors), to cut a pattern.
- Ruby**, the (pngilistic), blood.
- They had heard of the "tapping of the claret" and the flow of the *ruby*.—*Punch*.
- Ruck** (common), common, undistinguished crowd. German *rücken*, to crowd together; Icelandic *hraukir*, probably the true origin.
- But I'm quite another guess sort; penny plain, tuppence coloured, yer see, May do all very well for the *ruck*; but they'll find it won't arnsfer for me!  
—*Punch*.
- (Turf), to come in with the *ruck*, to arrive at the winning-post among the unplaced horses.

I once knew a chappie not famed for his  
luck

Who to punting was muchly addicted;  
But the horses he backed to a place "in  
the ruck"

Were with scarce an exception restricted.  
—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Ruck along**, to (Oxford), to go  
or make one go along at a great  
pace.

**Ruck on**, to (popular), to tell of,  
to inform. "She's such a sneak,  
she is, always rucking on me."

**Ruction** (popular), commotion,  
disturbance. Swedish *ryck*, at-  
tack, row, convulsive excite-  
ment.

Sure never obstruction  
Raised half such a ruction.

—*Punch.*

Hotten gives the definition  
"an Irish row, faction fight."

**Ruddy** (thieves), a gold piece.  
Icelandic *roda*, red and gold.

**Ruffian, ruffin** (old cant), the devil,  
alluding to the rough hair  
covering his body (as its syno-  
nym "old Harry"). *Vide* HARRY.

The bube and *ruffian* cly the Harman  
beck and harmans.—*T. Dekker: Lan-  
thorne and Candle Light.*

*Ruffian* once denoted, not so  
much roughness of behaviour,  
as roughness of appearance,  
especially in the matter of hair.  
The English ruffian, in its usual  
sense, is from the Italian *ruffiano*,  
a pimp; but *ruffian* and *ruffin* are  
confused in old cant.

**Ruffier** (old cant), a mendicant  
who shammed the wounded sol-  
dier or maimed sailor, but who  
robbed on the highway when  
opportunity offered. Harman  
has the definition "outcast of  
serving-men who robs inferior  
beggars."

Now in the crib, where a *ruffier* may lie,  
Without fear that the traps should distress  
him.

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

This seems to be derived, like  
the old French cant term *rouffier*,  
soldier, from the Italian *ruffare*,  
to seize, lay hands upon.

**Ruffles** (old cant), handcuffs.

**Ruffle**, the, the production of  
the crackling sound of a pack  
of cards, used as a flourish to a  
trick ("Modern Magic").

**Ruffmans** (old cant), woods or  
bushes.

Now bynge we a waste to the hygh pad,  
the *ruffmans* is by.—*Harman: Caveat.*

From *rough*, and the frequent  
affix *mans*, as in "darkmans"  
night, "lightmans" day, &c.

**Ruffpeck** (old cant), bacon.

Red-shanks then I could lack,  
*Ruffpeck* still hung on my back,  
Crennam ever filled my sack.

—*The Scoundrel's Dictionary.*

**Rugger** (schools), the Rugby game  
at football.

**Ruggins** (old cant), to go to  
*Ruggins*, to go to sleep. From  
*rug*.

**Ruggy** (popular), fusty, frowzy (Hotten).

**Rug, it's all** (old cant), it is all right.

**Ruin** (popular and thieves), gin; called also "blue ruin."

**Rum, rom** (old cant). This word, which signified great, excellent, superior, clever, best, &c., came from *rum, rom*, a gypsy. As in *rum-booze*, good drink.

Piot, a common cant word used by French clowns and other tippling companions; it signifies *rum-booze*, as our gypsies call good guzzle.—*Urquhart: Kabelaïs*.

*Rum* clan, a silver or gold mug; *rum* cod, a well-filled purse, a purse full of gold; *rum* cole, a new coin; *rum* cull, rich man, lover, best man.

I, Frisky Moll, with my *rum* cull,  
Would suck in a boozing ken.

—*Frisky Moll's Song, from Harlequin's Sheppard, a Play.*

*Rum* doxy, best girl, mistress, wife; *rome-mort*, lady, queen; *rum* pad, the highroad; *rum* quick, large booty; *Rom-vile*, the great town, London.

A gage of ben *Rom-bose*  
In a bousing ken of *Rom-vile*.

—*The Roaring Girl.*

This signification survives in *rum* beak, justice of the peace; *rumbo*, good, and *rum* cull, manager of a theatre, used by actors and showmen, whose slang phraseology is mainly from the gypsy and Italian;

also in *rum-mizzler*, one clever at effecting his escape.

The modern *rum* is a word of many meanings, generally implying something strange, queer, difficult, or out of the way.

"What a *rum* chap you are, Tom!" said Master Bales, highly amused.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

He came not to luncheon, all said "it was *rum* of him!"

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

A rider unequalled—a sportsman complete,  
A *rum* one to follow, a bad one to beat.

—*Whyte-Melville: Songs and Verses.*

It has been said that this word, with its present signification, was first applied to Roman Catholic priests, and subsequently to other clergymen. Thus Swift spoke of a "rabble of tenants and rusty old *rums*" (country parsons). Swift simply uses the old gypsy cant term here, which meant "queer," hence odd.

*Rum* or *rom*, as a gypsy word, was applied not only to whatever concerned sport, the ring, and turf, but to what is "queer," and is still used commonly as such, *e.g.*, a "regular Roman" (Borrow), or *rum 'nn*, *i.e.*, a Romany. There are other old instances proving that the word, as applied to *rum*, a liquor, was regarded as a gypsy word.

**Rum beak** (old cant), a synonym of "queer cuffin," a justice of the peace.

**Rum bing** (thieves), a full purse. From the old canting *rum*, which see, and *bong*, a purse.

- Rum bit** (old cant), a rogue.
- Rumbler** (thieves), coach; now more generally a four-wheeled cab.  
I first held horses in the street,  
But being found defaulter,  
Turned *rumbler's* flunky for my meat,  
So was brought up to the halter.  
—*Charles Hindley: The Life and Times of James Cainach.*
- Also a cart.  
The *rumbler* jugged off from his feet  
And he died with his face to the city.  
—*Burrowes: Death of Socrates.*
- A running *rumbler* was a confederate of thieves, who rolled a grinding stone, to give an opportunity to his accomplices.
- Rumbo** (theatrical), good. *Vide RUM.*
- Rumbo ken** (theatrical), a pawnbroker's shop.
- Rum boozing wells** (old cant), bunches of grapes.
- Rum bowling** (nautical), anything inferior or adulterated.
- Rumboyl** (old cant), the watch.
- Rumbumptious, rumbustious** (popular), haughty, pompous, boisterous, making great fuss and careless of the comfort of others.
- Rum cull** (theatrical), the manager of a theatre. *Vide RUM.* The *rum cull* of the casa, proprietor, landlord of lodgings.  
VOL. II.
- Rum-dropper** (old cant), a vintner.
- Rum duke** (old), a half-witted, awkward boor.
- Rum-gagger** (nautical), a cheat who tells wonderful stories of his sufferings at sea to obtain money.
- Rum glimmer** (old cant), king of the link-boys, rogues who, under colour of lighting people, robbed them.
- Rum-gutlets** (old cant), a canary
- Rum homee of the case** (itinerants), the master of the show, the mistress being the "rum dona of the case."
- Rum-hooper** (old cant), a drawer.
- Rum-Johnny** (Anglo-Indian), a low class of natives who obtained employment on the wharves of Calcutta. Among soldiers and sailors, a prostitute. From the Hindu *rāmjāni*, a dancing-girl (Anglo-Indian Glossary).
- Rumley** (old cant), well. *Vide RUM.* Whid *rumley*, speak well.
- Rúmmar, romer, rúmade, or romado** (gypsy), to marry, married. From *rom*, a husband, or a gypsy-man. In Coptic *romi* has the same meaning.  
" Te vel tu sí rummado mishto,  
Te vel tu rumessa sígan,  
N

Latchesa ke mandy shom kushto  
Te sar mōri Romany shan"—

"So if you will marry me early,  
So if I'm soon wedded to thee,  
You'll find that I really am good  
As any real gypsy can be."

—Janet Tuckey.

**Rum mill** (American), a grog-  
gery.

**Rummy** (popular), queer. *Vide*  
**RUM.**

True, out in foreign parts parties practise  
*rummy* starts.

—Punch.

**Rum ned** (old cant), a fool, mad-  
man.

**Rump**, to (popular), to turn the  
back upon one.

**Rumpty** or **tooth** (Stock Ex-  
change), a thirty-second part of  
£1.

**Rumpus** (popular), a noise, dis-  
turbance. From *romp*.

It is very fortunate too, sir, . . . since  
when the finale comes, there will probably  
be a bit of a *rumpus* that we are not very  
full of company just now.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**Rum**, to come it (popular), to do  
foolish things.

**Rum Tom Pat** (old cant), a real  
clergyman.

"What, are Moll and you adamed?"  
"Yes, we are, and by a *rum Tom Pat*  
too."—*Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Rum 'un** (pugilistic), a blow that  
fairly settles a man.

**Rumy** (gypsy), a wife; feminine  
of *rom*.

**Run** (common), the success of a  
play, according to the number  
of performances.

The penny "gaff" is usually a small  
place, and when a specially atrocious  
piece produces a corresponding *run*, the  
"house" is incapable of containing the  
vast number of boys and girls who nightly  
flock to see it. Scores would be turned  
away from the doors, and their halfpence  
wasted, were it not for the worthy pro-  
prietor's ingenuity.—*Greenwood: Seven  
Curses of London.*

To get the *run* upon one, to  
have the upper hand, the advan-  
tage over him.

**Run a bluff**, to (West American),  
to outwit; in English slang, to  
"bounce."

"You got the stock, though?" "Oh,  
yes; I *run a bluff* on 'em. They said they  
wasn't driving 'em anyhow, but they got  
started in the trail ahead of 'em, and it  
wasn't their business to turn 'em."—*F.  
Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Run against a pill**, to (American),  
to encounter a bullet, to be  
shot.

He had always told him he'd *run plumb*  
*ag'in' a pill* some day if he wan't blanked  
careful like.—*Drake's Magazine: He  
Died Game.*

**Run big**, to (turf), a horse that  
runs when too fat, not in train-  
ing.

It is agreed that the colt *ran big*, but  
the short lapse of time will hardly be  
sufficient to get the lumber off him.—  
*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Run-down** (French *praticable* and  
*pont*). The sloping carpeted



bridge running from a conjuror's stage into the auditorium (Robert Houdin and Hoffmann).

**Rung** (up-country Australian). The process of being *rung* or "ring-barked" consists in the bark being cut right through all round the tree a few feet above the ground, which is done to kill the large gum-trees which encumber and draw so much moisture from the pasturage. It is much practised in Australia.

Their road at first lay between paddocks interspersed with a few trees *rung* and mostly dead.—*D. B. W. Sladen: A Summer Christmas.*

**Run in**, to (popular), to apprehend and take to the police station.

Occasionally some unfortunate is pounced upon, rudely handled, and *run in*.—*Saturday Review.*

It's bad enough to get *run in* even of one's own free will;

But to get *run in* for some one else it makes me sick and ill.

And my boss'll get to know it, since the oof I cannot raise,

And I shall get the blooming *chuck* as well as fourteen days.

—*Sporting Times.*

This phrase is not recent, but it was seldom heard out of policemen's circles until the chorus of gendarmes in Offenbach's "Geneviève de Brabant" made it familiar to the public. It may have been derived from the old Bow Street runners, the predecessors of modern constables. The process varies

according to the offender. Some need the "policeman's grip," whereby the left hand of the prisoner, palm upwards, is grasped by the left of the constable, whose right passes under the upper part of the prisoner's arm, grasps his waistcoat, and being straightened, forms a lever which makes him helpless, and would even dislocate his shoulder or break his arm if he resisted. Then there is the "frogs' march" (which see). French policemen sometimes use a process by which even the strongest man is rendered quite helpless. The officer's left hand is fixed at arm's length from behind on the prisoner's coat-collar, while his right lifts him slightly by the seat of his trousers. The man, being thus placed out of the perpendicular, and almost on tip-toe, can then be forced on at a swift pace.

**Run it**, to (American cadet), to go beyond bounds without having previously obtained permission to do so.

**Runner** (popular), a waver.

All of a sudden I get on a *runner* mountains high, and bang on the beach goes her bow.—*Brighton Beach Loafer.*

(Stock Exchange), a man in the employ of a broker, who having a private connection, spends his time running from client in quest of orders.

**Running glazier** (old cant), a thief who pretended to be a glazier.

**Running rumble**, the (old cant), going about with a grinding-stone as a pretence to give accomplices an opportunity for picking pockets.

I shall go upon the *running rumble* if you will go with me, Cock-a-brass.—*Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Running snavel** (old cant), a thief who watched children going to school to rob them. Swedish *snäif* (snave), close, mean.

**Run of your teeth** (Canadian), board; as in the phrase, "I pay so much for the *run of my teeth*," i.e., my boarding expenses are so much. The *run* generally refers to keeping, managing, carrying on.

**Run one's face**, to (common), to get credit. *Vide* FACE.

Since all my money now is gone,  
And I have naught to live upon;  
Grant me, O Lord, the special grace  
For meat and bread to *run my face*.  
—*Harper's Magazine.*

**Run one's week**, to (American university), to trust to chance for success.

**Run rigs**, to (old cant), to play pranks.

**Run straight**, to (society). This is one of the commonest expressions in society as applied to ladies, and it means that a lady is virtuous and faithful to her

husband. It is borrowed from racing parlance, where a horse is talked of as running straight.

These foolish ones are content to do what is considered the smart thing, knowing as they do that many in our gossiping and scandal-mongering society will attribute to them the worst of motives, and class them with those who do not *run straight*.—*Saturday Review.*

**Run the rule over** (prison), to search a person for stolen property or contraband articles.

I was going through Shoreditch, when a reeler from Hackney, who knew me well, came up and said, "I am going to *run the rule over* you."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Run through**, to (American thieves), when gamblers play with a "sucker" (i.e., a novice), and do not give him a chance to win a single bet, and clean him out without loss of time.

**Run**, to. This verb is applied in England to several meanings besides the legitimate one, but in the United States it has taken a much wider range. Thus a man *runs* a grocery, a shop, a bank, or a church; and if he be a mayor, or a very influential person in a community, he is said to *run* the town. "I am *running* Latin just now," said a schoolboy, meaning that he was studying it.

Last week a horse in Duluth found a keg of lager with the head knocked in, and being thirsty, he drank it almost dry. In ten minutes he was waltzing about on his hind-legs, and remarking to every one whom he met, that if he didn't *run* that turn, he would like to know who the d——I did.—*Minnesota Newspaper.*

Some people *runs* de beautiful,  
Some works philosophic;  
Der Breitmann solve de infinide  
Ash von eternal spree!

—*Breitmann in Kansas.*

The term is being used in  
England.

To have a big boom was the general rage,  
And every man's dream was to *run* or to  
"boss" all.

—*Punch.*

(American), the term is often  
applied to keeping of a house-  
hold. "How much does *running*  
your house cost you?"

(Common), to *run* the show,  
to be the manager of any place  
of entertainment, theatre, circus,  
&c.

These two boys that *run* the shows in  
Argyle Street and elsewhere.—*Bird o'  
Freedom.*

Run up, to, explained by quota-  
tion.

Anyhow there they were, and it re-  
quired no uncommon degree of penetra-  
tion to discover that their chief aim was  
to take note of every bid that was made  
by an unfortunate whose goods had been  
seized and *run him up* most villainously.  
I feel quite convinced that many persons  
who had come to repurchase their furniture  
might have got it, taking it at its market  
value, at half the sum they had to pay.—  
*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

Rūp (gypsy), silver; rūpeno, of  
silver. From the Hindu *rup*,  
silver. Hence the French slang  
term *rupin*, rich, handsome,  
splendid. In Danish slang *rup*  
signifies gold.

Rush (Australian), the opening of  
a new gold-field, from the rush

which is made to new diggings.  
(Up-country Australian), a stamp-  
ede of cattle.

A confused whirl of dark forms swept  
before him, and the camp so full of life a  
minute ago is desolate. It was a *rush*, a  
stampede.—*A. C. Grant.*

(Common), on the *rush*, *i.e.*,  
in a hurry.

The lumberer's lurch, as he roams on  
the *rush*.

—*Sporting Times.*

Rushed (up-country Australian),  
charged by an animal. (Ameri-  
can), very busy, hurried.

Some day when Uncle Sam isn't *rushed*,  
we hope he will melt over his old mail  
boxes and cast some new ones big enough  
to stick a paper into.—*Detroit Tribune.*

Rushers (football), the members  
of a football team who run with  
the ball.

American football teams are made up as  
follows—one full-back, two half-backs, one  
quarter-back, and seven *rushers*.—*Sport-  
ing Life.*

Rush, to (common), to *rush* a  
person, to hurry him.

Do, but try and make it Japanese if  
you can; it's just possible he might twig  
if we *rushed* him, don't you know, and  
then I should suffer.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(American), to *rush* a bill, to  
hurry through a bill.

To *rush* a bill is an expression well  
known in the American Senate, and occa-  
sionally also used here.—*Cornhill Maga-  
zine.*

Russer, russer (American), a heavy  
player, a "plunger," a dashing,  
sensation-causing man; applied  
to politicians, clergymen, &c.

**Rust** (popular), to nab the *rust*, to take offence, get angry, turbulent. For derivation *vide* RUSTY.

**Rustler** (American), explained by quotation.

I just tell you, he's a *rustler*. Now a *rustler* is a great Western word, and expresses much. It means a worker, an energetic man, and no slouch can be a *rustler*.—*Morley Roberts: The Western Avernus*.

A rowdy, rough.

The habit of removing the hat at restaurant tables, which came some years ago, has been followed by other reforms no less notable, and what may be called the atmosphere of the street has clearly less of the *rustler* about it.—*Letter from Chicago*.

A desperado, cattle lifter.

Then, the *rustlers* had congregated there in force, the locality affording exceptional advantages for their chief occupation, namely, running off cattle and horses from either side of the frontier. Many a spot is pointed out as the scene of a sanguinary skirmish between these modern moss-troopers and the owners and their followers.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

These men, however, must not be confounded with another class of desperadoes, *i. e.*, those who would not work, and were what is termed *rustlers* or house thieves.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Rustle**, to (American), to go about seeking work. "I set to work, *rustling* for a job." *To rustle up* or along, is to hurry, hasten, as in this phrase, "*rustle* the dinner along."

**Rust ringing** (American university). "At Hamilton College, the Freshmen," writes a

correspondent, "are supposed to lose some of their verdancy at the end of the last term of that year, and the *ringing off their rust* consists in ringing the chapel bell—commencing at midnight—until the rope wears out. During the ringing, the upper classes are diverted by the display of numerous fireworks, and enlivened by most beautifully discordant sounds, called 'music,' made to issue from tin kettle-drums, horse-fiddles, trumpets, horns, &c."

**Rusty** (thieves), to turn a *rusty*, to betray.

Blow me tight, but that cove is a queer one; and if he does not come to be scragged, it will only be because he'll turn a *rusty*, and scrag one of his pals.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

From the colloquial phrase, "to turn *rusty*," used of a person who becomes stubborn, surly, disobliging. *Rusty* is an old Saxon and Icelandic word, meaning stubborn or rebellious, restive. To cut up *rusty*, *vide* CUT UP RUSTY.

**Ry** (Stock Exchange), any sharp or dishonest practice. "It originated," says Dr. Brewer, "in an old stock-jobber, who had practised upon a young man, and being compelled to refund, wrote on the cheque, 'Please to pay to R. Y., &c., in order to avoid direct evidence of the transaction.'"

**Ryder**, a cloak; gypsy *ruder*, to clothe.

**Rye** (gypsy), a gentleman; (Hindu), *rae* or *rai* (*rye*), a petty nobleman. *Ryékro*, gentlemanly. *Romany rye*, a gypsy gentleman, but generally meaning a gentleman who has learned or who speaks Romany. *Güdlo rye*, a nice (sweet) gentleman.

Hotten says this is gypsy for a young man. It is nothing of the kind, *rye* meaning invariably a gentleman or superior person, and nothing else. *E.g.*, "the

*Romany rye*," the gypsy gentleman.

"And the *rye* and the rawnie  
A-pirryin ap o drom"—

"The gentleman and lady  
A-walking up the road."

*Young man* in gypsy is *tano mûsh* (i.e. manûsh), or *juvo*, or *raklo*.

**Ryebuck** (American), all right, it will do, I am satisfied.



**SACK** (common), to give the *sack*, to dismiss, discharge from one's employment. To get the *sack*, to be dismissed, discharged.

I wonder what old Fogg 'ud say, if he knew it; I should get the *sack*, I s'pose.  
—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

He is no longer an officer of this gaol; he has got the *sack*.—*Reade: Never too Late to Mend.*

Said to be from the practice of putting into a *sack* and throwing into the Bosphorus certain members of the Sultan's harem; also generally supposed to be from the Spanish *sacar*, meaning to dismiss, and also to "bag," just as in English; but it originated in the old practice of giving a man a *sack* when sending him forth. Hence (St. Luke x. 4) Christ specifies that His disciples, by *not* taking a *sack* or scrip, should not consider themselves as dismissed,

i.e., not make provision for themselves. The French have the corresponding expressions, "donner son *sac* à quelqu'un," "avoir son *sac*;" formerly, "donner son *sac* et ses quilles." French workmen will say, "il a en son *sac* avec une forte paire debretelles." The Germans have the phrase, "to give the basket." The synonyms are, "to get the bag," the "empty," or the "bullet." "To give the *sack*" is so widely used as to be almost a recognised phrase.

**Sack, to.** *Vide* SACK.

We had fixed one day to *sack* him, and agreed to moot the point,  
When my lad should bring our usual regale of condered joint.

—*T. B. Stephens: My other Chinese Cook.*

**Saddle** (theatrical), an additional charge made by the manager to a performer on his benefit night.

**Saddlebacks** (popular), lice. Also Yorkshire greys.

**Safe 'un** (turf), a horse which will not run, or will not try in a race. Synonyms, "dead 'un," "stiff 'un," "stumer."

**Sagaciate** (American), a slang word which seems to be mysteriously employed more for sound than sense, as in "How does your corporosity *sagaciate*?"—"How are you?" In the following extract from one of the "Bre'r Rabbit" stories, it seems as "*segashiashun*" to mean suggestion.

"Dem ez wuz tuk by Bre'r Buzzard's *segashiashun*, wuz ter drop en er chickypin" (chinkapin).

**Sailors' waites** (nautical), the second mates of small vessels.

**Salamon, salomon** (old cant), the mass. "I swear by the *salomon*."

And as I keep to the fore-gone,  
So may help me *Salamon*.  
—*Oath of English Gypsies.*

**Salmon**, a corpse, in the slang of water-rats, that is, low rascals who ply the river for drowned bodies to rifle. They have different names for them, one with poor ragged clothes being a "flounder" if a man, and a "dab" if a woman. French undertakers call the body of a well-to-do deceased person "un *saumon*."

I knowed a rat . . . who was bit over a job of the kind in a way he isn't likely to

forget in a hurry. Just as them two chaps in the sailing boat we saw a while ago might be doing, him and his mate were tacking about on the chance, when they hauled a *salmon*, as they say.—*J. Greenwood: Rag, Tag, & Co.*

**Salt** (Eton), money.

**Salt-box** (thieves), the condemned cell in Newgate. (Naval), a case for keeping a temporary supply of cartridges for the immediate use of the great guns.

**Salt cat** (bird fanciers), explained by quotation.

Busily concocting a horrid mess, which he called a *salt cat*, and of which old mortar, cumin seed, and urine were the chief ingredients. When he had mixed it all up like cement, he proceeded to fill sundry old pots and kettles, and to place them in various parts of the loft, for the birds to peck at at their pleasure.—*J. Greenwood: Undercurrents of London Life.*

**Saltee, solde** (costermongers, itinerants, &c.), a penny. A corruption of the Italian *soldo*, plural *soldi*.

It has rained kicks all day in lieu of *saltees*, and that is pennies.—*Reade: Cloister and Hearth.*

This term was originally used by strolling actors, showmen, and became common among other classes of people.

**Salting the Freshman** (American university). In reference to this custom, which belongs to Dartmouth College, a correspondent writes—"There is an annual trick of *salting the Freshmen*, which is putting salt and

water on their seats, so that their clothes are injured when they sit down. The idea of preservation, cleanliness, and health is no doubt intended to be conveyed by the use of the wholesome articles salt and water."

**Salt, to** (commercial), making fictitious entries in the books to simulate that the receipts are greater than they really are, when about to sell a business connection, is called *salting* the books. (Mining), sprinkling some gold-dust in an unproductive mine or hole, or a few diamonds, to deceive intending purchasers or investors.

Stymer, long experienced in the mines, set them down for a pair of sharps, and understood their game. He divined that Mose had *salted* the claim.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

In French, *saler* is to overcharge, to make one pay roundly. A similar expression is used in Swedish.

(Stock Exchange), to *salt* down stock, to buy stock and keep it for a considerable period.

**Same old crowd** (society), same set of people, as applied to society gatherings.

**Same there** (tailors). The phrase means, "What you say applies equally to yourself."

**Sammy - house, swamy - house** (Anglo-Indian), an idol temple or pagoda.

**Sampsman** (old cant), a highwayman.

Now Oliver puts his black nightcap on,  
And every star its glim is hiding,  
And forth to the heath is the *sampsman*  
gone,  
His matchless cherry-black prancer riding.

—Ainsworth: *Rookwood*.

Literally a collector, from a very old English word *sam*, to collect things together (Halliwell). German *sammeln*; Swedish *samlä*, implying money in one sense, also union or being together. Hence to stand *sam*, to treat all the party. *Sam*, the lot. "*Sammed*, assembled together" (Halliwell).

**Sam, stand** (popular), to be surety for a person, to treat to drink, pay the reckoning. *Vide* **SAMPSMAN**.

But not to be balked of the night's entertainment, he had perforce to stand *Sam* for the lot.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

But the scapegoats must not kick up shindies, and stop up our streets and our squares,

That's a moral. Perhaps there is grabbers as wants to swag more than their shares.

I ain't nuts on sweaters myself, and I do 'ate a blood-sucking screw,

Who sponges and never stands *Sam*, and whose motto's "all cop, and no blue."  
—*Punch*.

**Sand** (West American), courage. An equivalent for "grit."

"Doc would get away with him," said Joe.

"Would he!" ejaculated Squito hotly.  
"Yes, he's got all Sam's *sand*, and is cooler."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Sand-rat** (engineers), a moulder in a foundry.

**Sand, to have** (American), to be brave.

SHE HAD THE SAND.—Mrs. Lizzie Cook, of No. 18 Clark Street, demonstrated her personal courage and thorough muscular development in rather an odd manner last evening. Without weapon of any kind, she seized and held a strong man, whom she asserts is a horse-thief, until a servant had been despatched to the Central Police Station.—*Daily Inter-Ocean*.

**Sandwich boat** (university). In bumping races, rowed in two divisions, it is the boat head of one division and last in the other. It has to row two races each day.

**Sandwich-men** (general), called also board-men. Poor fellows who for a scanty reward walk the pavement in single file, with advertisement boards on chest and back.

He stopped the unstamped advertisement—an animated *sandwich*, composed of a boy between two boards.—*Sketches by Boz*.

"Declined with thanks; with thanks declined,"

This is the burden of my song:  
These words are ever in my mind,  
I see and hear them all day long.

I envy every man I see—

Sweeps, *sandwich-men*, and clerks in banks;  
Their services, whate'er they be,  
Are not always "Declined with thanks!"  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Sank-house** (tailors), an army clothier's establishment. From *sank*, a great quantity, wholesale.

**Sap** (Eton), one who works hard. *Vide To SAP*.

He remembered in English schools and colleges the many epithets applied to those who, not content with doing their work, committed the heinous offence of being absorbed in it. For this purpose schools and colleges had invented phrases, semi-classical or wholly vernacular, such as *sap*, "smug," "swot," "bloke," and "mugster."—*Daily News*.

If a boy did anything more than the regular school-work for his own improvement, he was called a *sap*.—C. T. Buckland: *Eton Fifty Years Ago*.

**Sap the tias** (common), backslang for pass the salt, used when the drink does not go round freely.

**Sap, to** (public schools), to work hard. It is in common use at Eton. Said to be of circumlocutory derivation from the Latin *sapere*, but more probably to *sap*, taken figuratively, i.e., to dig. The French *piocher* is used in both senses.

These incentives to industry prevent the early years of a boy in college being entirely wasted; but those who, toward the end of their school time, at length begin to value and to practise studious habits, often think regretfully upon the advantages secured by those who *sapped* from the beginning.—*Pascoe: Every-day Life in our Public Schools*.

**Sarabs** (Stock Exchange), Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Def. Stock.

**Sarab's boots** (Stock Exchange), Sierra Buttes Gold-Mine Shares.

**Saratoga walk** (American), a fashionable "fad," fully ex-



plained in the following elegant extract from an American newspaper:—

“The *Saratoga walk* is said to be the latest fashionable gait for women. One who describes it says that ‘the first requisite is to throw your shoulders back, the chest forward, chin up, and stomach in, and then walk, wriggling head, limbs, body, and especially bustle. The aim is to secure a series of revolutions which shall be simultaneous but opposite. In simple brevity, if your head moves right your body must move to the left, and before your foot reaches ground you must describe a circle with the entire limb. The gait is practised in a night dress before the mirror. The part of the business most difficult to master is the proper position of the stomach.’”

**Sardine** (American), a man who has nothing distinctive or characteristic in him; a mere average person; a provincial who has always been shut up in some small place among men like himself. Obviously derived from the *sardine*, which being all of the same size, and packed in tin boxes, suggested to some poetic orator the simile.

**Sardines** (Stock Exchange), Royal Sardinian Railway Stock.

**Sa soldi** (strolling actors, &c.), sixpence.

**Sass** (African coast). When a chief or other person becomes too bold, or powerful, or wicked, he is said in English negro slang to “get too much *sass*.” The remedy for this is to make him drink “*sass water*.”

According to news from the West Coast of Africa, there have been some human sacrifices in consequence of the death of a son of the King of Grand Jack. Selected victims were obliged to drink “*sass water*,” a poisonous liquor, and were then pitched into the surf on the seashore. When the rollers dashed them ashore, men, women, and children cut at them with knives until they were dead. The chief of the tribe flies the British flag, and the captain of a trading vessel remonstrated with him in vain.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Sat.** (printers). This is an abbreviation of the word “satisfaction,” and is very often used to express a revengeful feeling, *i.e.*, to have *sat.* or to be “even” with any one.

**Satin** (popular), gin; a yard of *satin*, a glass of gin.

Some of them love *satin*, as a softening for the throat,  
While others with dry Heidseck you must woo.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Sauney, sawney** (popular and thieves), bacon, pork. The gypsies, who never confound or mix their own language with canting, say that *sani* for pork is old Romany. *Sawney* hunter, one who steals bacon. *A sawney* (provincial), a fool.

**Sausage game** (billiards), a German game.

**Sawbones** (common), a surgeon.

**Sawder**, soft (popular), properly *solder*, cajolery, plausible words; flattery easily laid on, and received with pleasure, like "butter" and "soft soap."

You've got *soft sawder* enough, as Frank calls it in his new-fashioned slang.—*Lytton: My Novel*.

And I also maintain, without any *soft sawder*,

That Orde is an oar of the very first order; And whichever crew wins, we may safely foretell

That the crew of Light Blues will this year "bear the Bell."

—*Globe*.

**Sawdust** (American), counterfeit gold-dust or money.

A man, charged with a violation of the postal laws, committed in the pursuit of the *sawdust* or counterfeit money swindle.—*New York Mercury*.

(Popular), not genuine, cajoling.

The palaver was *sawdust* and treacle.

—*Punch*.

**Sawdust bloke** (circus), a circus rider.

At the recent performance at Passy, M. Molier was the most conspicuous among the amateurs. To adopt the technology of the ring, M. Molier, by all accounts, approved himself a most accomplished *sawdust bloke*.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Sawdusty** (popular), cajoling, using flattering and soft words; probably same as "sawder."

Me doing the *sawdusty* reg'lar, and following swells on the stump.—*Punch*.

**Saw your timber** (common), be off; equivalent to "cut your stick."

**Say it again** (tailors), I heartily endorse your sentiments.

**Scab** (American), an opprobrious epithet applied to a mechanic or workman who does not belong to the trades' union of his calling. Shakspeare uses the term with the meaning of paltry, mean fellow.

It was a very novel and effective warfare that the wives of the coal strikers used against the imported *scab* labour on Tuesday. If the bread was as hard as some that is baked in the Pennsylvania bakeries, the loaves must have hurt as well as humiliated the unwelcome intruders.—*New York Sun*.

**Scabby** (printers). In printing, uneven colour, through bad distribution of ink, is thus called *scabby*.

**Scab raiser** (army), obsolete. A drummer, as formerly one of the duties of his office was to apply the cat.

**Scabs** (tailors), button-holes.

**Scad** (American), abundance, large quantities, plenty. Hence *scad* used for money or means. Possibly from Icelandic and Swedish *skat*, tribute money, tax. Hence "to pay one's scot;" the word *scot* is, however, generally derived from French *écot*.

His mother wishes to impress him with life's sober realities.

"Johnny, yesterday is gone, never to return."

"Oh, that don't matter, mamma; there are *scads* of to-morrows just like it."—*American Newspaper*.

**Scadger** (public school), a mean fellow, a corruption of "cadger."

**Scaldings** (popular), a cry meaning "look out," "get out of the way," "by your leave." A warning that some one is coming along with a bucket of hot fluid, soup, tea, or water, which may scald all who impede progress. (Winchester College), used with same meaning.

**Scaldrum dodge**, a dodge among begging impostors of burning the body with a mixture of acids and gunpowder, so as to suit the hues and complexions of any accident to be deplored by a confiding public (Hotten).

**Scalla-wag** (American), a scamp, a scapegrace.

I hev travelled o'er this cont'nent from  
Quebec to Bogotaw,  
Bnt setch a set of *scallawags* as these I  
never saw.

—*The Ballads of Charity.*

*Skall* occurs in all the northern tongues as an opprobrious term, and *scallu-wag*, in the sense of wight, a person, is good old English, from *scall* (Anglo-Saxon), a scale or scab.

**Scalp, to** (American), to sell under price.

**Scaly** (popular), shabby, mean, disreputable, of dubious character; a variation of "fishy."

Sister of L. E. L., of Mrs. Stowe, too;  
Of E. B. Browning, Harriet Martineau,  
too;

Do theologians know where fibbers go  
to?

Of dear George Eliot, whom I worship  
daily;

Of Charlotte Brontë, and Joanna Baillie.  
Methinks that theory is rather *scaly*.

—*J. B. Stephens: To a Black Gin.*

**Scammered** (popular), intoxicated. From *scammered*, disgraced. Anglo-Saxon *scamn*, shame; Swedish *skämna*, to put to shame.

**Scamp.** *Vide* ROYAL SCAMP.

**Scamp, to** (popular), to give short measure or quantity. Also to hurry through a task and do it badly. (Old cant), *to scamp* on the panny, to be a highway-man.

**Scan.** (printers), an abbreviation used to describe a Scandinavian printing machine invented by a native of Stockholm.

**Scandal water**, slang word for tea, dating from the hard-drinking days of a bygone generation, when it was fashionable to get drunk, when "drunk as a lord" was a proverbial expression, when a man was accounted the best in a convivial company who first fell senseless from his chair by excess of liquor, and "a three-bottle man" was considered a king of good fellows.

Who first shall rise to gang awa,

A coward cuckold loon is he;

Who first beside his chair shall fa',

He shall be king among us three.

—*Robert Burns.*

Tea was considered so effeminate a drink that the vulgar

bacchanals exerted all the ingenuity they possessed to invent feebly contemptuous names for it—among others “cat-lap,” “scandal broth,” “water bewitched,” “tattle water,” “kettle-brandy.”

**Scapali** (theatrical), to go away. Also “scaper,” “bunk.” From the Italian *scappare*, to escape, run away..

**Scarecrow** (thieves), explained by quotation.

“Never take up with a fresh hand till you’ve shopped your *scarecrow*.” The *scarecrow* is the boy who has served him until he is well known to the police, and is so closely watched that he may as well stay at home as go out. Now, perhaps, you understand. — *The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Scare up** (American), to obtain, get. “See if you can’t *scare up* five dollars.”

**Scarlet fever** (common), the passion for military society. In allusion to the colour of English regimentals. Ladies who run after military society are said to have *scarlet fever*. So in Australia people who flock to every new-rush (gold-field), in the hopes of finding an El Dorado, are said to suffer from “yellow fever.”

**Scarper**, to (thieves and Seven Dials), to run away. From the Spanish *escapar*, or Italian *scappare*.

**Scat** (tailors), signifies “go away and tell it some one else.”

Sometimes it is used to express utmost disgust or contempt. *Scat* is in imitation of trying to frighten away a cat.

**Scene rats** (theatrical), extras engaged in ballets or pantomimes.

**Schism-shop**, cant Anglican for dissenting chapel.

**School** (popular), a set of regular passengers by a particular train, travelling as a rule in the same carriage, to and from town. From *school* of fishes (for shoal). Any small gathering of people generally bent on pleasure, as a *school* of drinkers in a public-house or canteen. Much used by soldiers. (Thieves and streets), a gang of thieves, a body of idlers or street gamblers, also a number of “patterers” working together.

**Schooling** (thieves), a term of detention in an industrial school or reformatory.

She is young—just come home from a *schooling*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Schoolman** (thieves), a companion, one of a gang termed “school,” which see.

The knucks in quod my *schoolmen* did play.

Fake away!

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Schools** (Oxford), any university examination at Oxford.

**Schooner** (American), a large glass of lager-beer, supposed to hold

double the quantity of a five-cent glass, but generally a delusion in this respect. A three-masted schooner, a beer schooner of extra size. Originally *skew* (provincial English), a cup, changed to *skew-ner*, which is a common Yankee pronunciation of *schooner*.

Every time he wiped out an Indian or strung up a greaser a dude would order a round of beer, and this fellow invariably called for a *three-masted schooner*.—*American Newspaper*.

**Schoony-orgy** (naval), a schooner; termed also hermaphrodite brig, bastard brig, &c.

**Schroff** (Anglo-Indian), a banker, treasurer, or confidential clerk.

**Scob** (Winchester College), box spelt backwards (phonetically). A large box for college men to sit at and keep their books in.

When all is ready, the prefect of hall enters school, and takes his seat facing the stove, followed by the members of the three "sixes," and then by all the scholars, who sit on their *scobs*.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Scoff** (South African), food. The term is used by natives in the service of Europeans in South Africa. *Skofoor* (*skoffer*), Swedish, is applied to common food, *i.e.*, scrapings.

**Scoff away, scuff away** (American), to blow away, to drive away, impel. Probably from Swedish *skuffa*.

**Scoff, scorf, to** (South African), to devour, eat voraciously.

A prospector, with ten donkeys and a waggon, had "outspanned" for the night, during the course of which a hungry lion *scoffed* (*Anglice*, (ate) one of the Jerusalems, and, being filled to repletion, was disinclined to wander from the scene. In the early morning, it being rather dark and the prospector and his niggers half asleep, Mr. Leo was "inspanned" as wheeler in'mistake for the missing moke. The eight in front beat their record in the travelling line, and were glad to have the error rectified at dawn.—*Sporting Times*.

**Sconce** (public schools), a tin candlestick.

**Sconce, to** (Oxford University), to fine for any breach of etiquette at hall dinner, such as wearing a coloured coat, swearing, or making Latin or Greek quotations. The *sconce*, or fine, is generally levied in beer. The customs vary at different colleges. Hotten says that if the offender could, however, floor the tankard of beer which he was *sconced*, he could retort on his *sconcer* to the extent of twice the amount he was *sconced* in.

. . . was *sconced* in a quart of ale for quoting Latin, a passage from Juvenal; murmured, and the fine was doubled.—*The Etonian*.

The term is used by Milton with the meaning of to mulct, fine.

**Scoop, on the** (popular), on the drink. A metaphor derived from *scoop*, a ladle for liquors.

"You seem to forget, George, that when I married you I could have had young Plutus!"

"A nice sort of husband he'd have made. The blackguard goes home drunk in a cab every night."

"Well, if he does, that's better than returning on the top of a penny bus, as you do."

He went on the scoop that night.—*Topical Times*.

**Scoop, to** (American). It has become common of late to speak of any one who has been turned out of office, or been rejected, as *scooped*. This agrees exactly with the Dutch phrase, "Jemand den schop geven," to give a man the *scoop*, or a kick, "to cashier one," as Sewell says. Also "Jemand op den schop zetten" (*schop* here means "swing," as well as *scoop*), to take to one's self the liberty to cashier a servant or workman at any time, without being bound to employ him any longer. And also "Een schop in 't gat geven," to give one a kick, or *scoop*, in the breech. All of which agree marvellously well with the cases of countless "cashiered" Republicans recorded by the *Chicago Tribune*.

**Scout, to** (American), to move fast, to run. A corruption of *scud*; from the Dutch *schut* and *shot*, a shot. "Dat schip makt schot," that ship goes a great pace, or sails fast.

The fellow sat down on a hornet's nest, and if he didn't run and holler and *scoot* through the briar-bushes, and tore his trousers.—*Bartlett: Hill's Yankee Stories*.

Used also in English sporting circles.

I saw that he wanted to serve me out toko, But I swiftly and carefully thwarted his plans,

For I *scooted*. His blow fell on somebody's boko. —*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Scorcher** (society), a fast or very lively person. Derived from to scorch, burn up, consume. (Cyclists), one who always goes at racing speed. (Tailors), properly an iron at burning heat; figuratively, an individual of peculiar, eccentric, or hasty temperament.

**Score off, to** (common), to get the best of one, especially in wordy warfare. From scoring up the points at billiards.

I say, old man, that was a stuck-up set of prigs at old Brown's the other night! By Jove, though, I did manage to *score off* them a bit, eh?—*Punch*.

**Scot** (popular), a lot, share. Anglo-Saxon *sceat*, or French *écot*. Also temper or passion; from the irascible temperament of the Scotch, says Hotten. To be in a *scot*, to be in a passion.

**Scotch chocolate** (common), milk with brimstone.

**Scotchman** (South African), a florin.

**Scotch peg** (roughs' rhyming slang), a leg.

**Scout** (old cant), a watchman. (Oxford), a college servant. (Thieves), a watch. From the old provincial *scout*, a spy, a play on watching and spying.

Connor then asked what the article was, to which the answer returned was, "A *scout*." This he understood to mean a watch.—*Scottish Newspaper*.

**Scout**, to (sporting), to *scout* for pigeons, to shoot pigeons outside the inclosure of a gun-club. Compare scouting for tennis-balls and cricket-balls that have been hit away.

**Scrag** (popular and thieves), the neck. Derived from *scrag*, a raw-boned piece, especially a neck-piece of meat. The *scrag*, the gallows. He is down for his *scrag*, he is going to be hanged. (Shrewsbury School), explained by quotation.

The highest mark is twenty with a cross . . . and so down to a huge duck's egg and a rent across the paper entitled a *scrag*.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Scrag-end**, explained by quotation.

There is a long and sinuous thoroughfare situate in the heart of London-in-the-East, the real name of which will not be here given, but which, probably because of the chronic impecuniosity of those who patronise it as a market-place, is popularly known as *Scrag-end*. It flourishes all the week through, but the time to see it at its busiest is Saturday night, when the glaring jets of gas have just been lit to illuminate the butchers' shops, and the countless costermongers have set their naphtha lamps blazing.—*J. Greenwood*.

**Scragging** (popular), an execution. *Vide* SCRAG.

**Scraggy**, from the old Norse *skrukka*, to shrink, shrivel; hence applied to a lean neck.

**Scrag**, to (popular and thieves), to choke, throttle. *Vide* SCRAG.  
VOL. II.

"Pooh!" says his pal, "you great dunce!  
You've pouched the good gentleman's  
money,  
So out with your whinger at once,  
And *scrag* Jane, while I spifficate  
Johnny!"

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

To be *scragged*, to be hanged.

"Do you want to have us *scragged*, fool?" cried the Sandman, springing into the vault.—*Ainsworth: Auriol*.

For synonyms in English, French, Italian, &c., slang, *vide* Barrère's "Argot and Slang."

**Scran** (popular), food; much used in the army. A *scran*-bag is a food wallet; a *scran*, a meal.

But ere for the *scran* he had left the  
Cole,  
The Harman he came in.

—*Harlequin Sheppard*.

His club, Charlie, 'ad a reception,  
Which means a big crowd and cold *scran*.  
—*Punch*.

(Beggars), food or pieces of meat, broken victuals. *Scranning*, or out on the *scran*, begging for broken victuals. The term *scran* was originally used in a deprecatory sense, from *scrans*, provincial English for refuse, or more probably from to *scran*ch, to grind crackling food between the teeth. *Vide* SCRUNCHER.

**Scranning** (beggars and tramps), begging for food.

**Scrape** (common), a shave.

**Scraper** (common), a razor.

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**Scrapper** (popular), a pugilist; given in John Bee's dictionary of the turf, 1823. Also used in America. Probably from the movements of a pugilist who appears to *scrape* with his feet.

People who have of late been playing at pugilism have their own organs, which are not only organs, but partisans also. Thus they, the players, don't want me to break a lance in their behalf; and yet I note that those who have taken upon themselves the rôle of advisers and directors of the toy pugilism which has so aroused Mr. Howell's wrath, have said never a word in defence of the queer thing about which they have for months been making so much vapour. Has the spirit of Bombastes affected the directors and controllers as well as the Lowther Arcade *scrapppers*.—*The Referee*.

**Scrap, scrapping** (popular), a fight, boxing, a rough and tumble row. Also used in America. Suggested to be from Swedish *skrap*, a difficulty, which has given the English "scrape." *Vide* SCRAPPER.

Tom O'Connell and Bob Banner had a *scrap* on last Tuesday afternoon at Chipeta Park. Six rounds were fought, and from the appearance of the gloves, which were covered with blood, some hard-hitting was done.—*The Solid Muldoon, Otway, Colorado*.

**Scrap, to** (popular), to fight or box. Also used in America.

**Scrap up** (popular), having a *scrap up* is having a quarrel, a row.

**Scratch** (common), a *scratch crew*, team, or eleven, consists of men who have not practised together and are collected on the spur of the moment. To come up to

the *scratch* is a colloquialism, meaning to meet the point of issue, to enter the contest.

Sir Bingo . . . eyed his friend with a dogged look of obstinacy, expressive, to use his own phrase, of a determined resolution to come up to the *scratch*.—*Scott: St. Ronan's Well*.

In debate, to be brought up to the *scratch*, to be compelled to come to the point. Technically the *scratch* is a line at the starting-point of a race, or the mark which is *scratched* or chalked on the ground in the middle of the "ring," hence the expression coming up to the *scratch*. Also toeing the *scratch*, being ready at the post in time. The rules of the prize-ring require each man to have his toe on the *scratch* within eight seconds of "time" called on pain of losing the battle. He must walk to the *scratch* unaided. This rule was adopted after the fatal fight between Owen Swift and Phelps in 1838, when the latter died of exhaustion, having been brought up to the *scratch* by his second under the older rule.

**Scratching rake** (popular), a comb.

**Scratch, no great** (popular), of little worth. The allusion is to a fowl scratching for food.

**Scratch-race** (turf), a technical expression, meaning a race without any restrictions. To *scratch* is a technical turf term, meaning to strike a horse's



name out of the list of runners in a particular race. Generally to eliminate the name of any candidate from a list in any kind of competition.

A series of *scratchings*, most unpopular, will leave unpleasant memories clinging round each of the big handicaps named above.—*Sporting Times*.

**Scratch your wool** (tailors), try to recollect.

**Screamer** (American), an extraordinary person, a great swell; from a metaphor similar to that from which arose the expression *screaming*, which see.

**Screaming** (common), first-rate, splendid. A *screaming* farce, one that makes the audience scream with laughter.

**Scream, to** (thieves). When a thief is robbed by another and he applies to the police, he is said to *scream*. More commonly in America to *squeal*.

**Screen** (thieves), a note. *Screen* is apparently an old term for money. Provincial *screen*, a small vein of ore. Scandinavian and Teutonic *skrin*, a little box for money. Swedish *skrin-lägga*, to lay up money.

Readily the queer *screens* I then could smash,

Fake away!

—Ainsworth: *Rookwood*.

**Screeve** (thieves and beggars), a begging petition. *Vide To SCREEVE*.

**Screever** (street), a street artist and beggar who ornaments the pavements with drawings in coloured chalks. *Vide To SCREEVE*.

**Screeve, to** (thieves and beggars), to write; to *screeve* a fakement, to write a begging-letter. From provincial *scribe*, obsolete English, to *scribe*, to write. To *screeve* also means to draw on the pavement with coloured chalks.

**Screw** (general), salary, wages. The metaphor implies efforts on the part of the employer to diminish the rate, or the efforts of the employé to enforce unwilling payment of, the salary, which has to be *screwed* out.

If I got any practice he would have an excuse for knocking £100 or so off my *screw*.—*Truth*.

'Twas Monday morn,  
And he had wasted all his weekly *screw*,  
And was in debt some sixpences besides.  
—*Australian Printers' Keepsake*.

Drat those clerks, they always want holidays. I'll stop it out of their *screw* though.—*Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*.

(Popular), a *screw* of tobacco, the smallest quantity of tobacco done up for sale in a packet. (Thieves), a key, skeleton key.

It was a good job I did, or else I should have got lagged, and my pal too, because I had the James and *screws*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

A jailer, turnkey, prison warden.

My next neighbour, who had been a bank manager, asked, "What implement

in a carpenter's shop does the chief warden look like?" The response was, "A screw-driver." The officers were always designated *screws*, so the description was not improper.—*Evening News*.

(American University), a searching or strict examination of a student by an examiner or instructor.

**Screwed** (general), intoxicated, a synonym of "tight," the metaphor being the same.

By Jove, you must have been *screwed*. Then, I dare say, you don't remember wanting to have a polka with him.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

An unsexed woman shouting a song at the top of a brazen voice, with an imitation "how her old man got *screwed*."—*Evening News*.

**Screwing up** (Oxford University), explained by quotation.

At present friction occurs between unpopular "Dons" and rowdy students. The Don finds himself *screwed up*, or, in other words, imprisoned to his room by a gimlet thrust into the door in such a way that it requires the aid of a carpenter to unfasten it.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Screw loose** (common), used in the phrases "a *screw loose* somewhere," something wrong. "He has a *screw loose*," he is slightly deranged.

**Screw on**, put the (thieves), to extort money by threats. In allusion to the old torture of the finger-screw.

Is it true you was pinched for *putting the screw on* an omnibus, conductor?—*Sporting Times*.

In common parlance, to apply pressure by threats or other-

wise so as to enforce acquiescence.

**Screwsman** (thieves), a burglar; a *screw* being a skeleton key. Burglars who work with "screws," especially if they are clever enough to make them themselves, look down upon their less artistic brethren who rudely break into a house by crowbars or other implements.

One day after this I asked a *screwsman* if he would lend me some screws, because I had a place cut and dried.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Screw, to** (common), to extort, to have carnal connection. (Thieves), to enter a house by means of skeleton keys.

So we went and *screwed* his place, and got thirty-two quid, and a toy and tackle which he had bought on the crook.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(American University), *vide* SCREW.

**Scrimshandy** (nautical), an Americanism, signifying the objects in ivory and bone carved by whalemens during their long voyages. Synonymous with "scrimshaw," which see.

**Scrimshanker** (army), one, whether officer or soldier, who is not over keen for danger, whether on active service or at home. One who has avoided his turn of foreign service, who malingers or feigns illness to escape duty. *Scrimshanker*, or idle shuffler, is also used at some

public schools to signify a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow. Probably from *scrimp*, to shorten, to stint or contract, and *swanker*, labour; Danish *skrumpe*, German *schrumpfen*, Dutch *krimpfen*.

'A could na bear to see thee wi' thy cloak *scrimpit* . . . an' should be a'most as much hurt i' my mind to see thee i' a pinched cloak as if old Moll's tail here were docked too short.—*Mrs. Gaskell: Sylvia's Lovers*.

**Scrimshank**, to (military), to shirk one's duty. *Vide* SCRIMSHANKER.

**Scrimshaw-work** (nautical), anything made by sailors for themselves in their leisure hours.

**Scroby or claws for breakfast** (prison), whipping while in prison.

**Scroof**, to (thieves), to sponge, to live with a friend at his expense. Thieves are in the habit of *scroofing* with an old pal when they first come out of prison, till they can steal something for themselves. This seems to be a form of scoff, *scorf*, which see.

**Scroofer** (thieves), a sponge, a parasite.

**Scrouge** (American University), an exaction, a specially hard task.

**Scrouge**, to (American University), a term applied to an exacting tailor or master who

extorts a maximum quantity of work from his pupils. (Popular), to crush, crowd, or squeeze. "This term was made familiar in the language of literature by Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge. It is the old English *scruze*, to squeeze or crush, and seems to have no native origin. It is perhaps from Spanish *estrujar*, to press, strain or thrust, which is derived from Latin *extorculare*, to press out (as wine from grapes); *torculum*, a press, from *torqueo*, to twist" (Smythe A. Palmer).

Then atweene her lilly handes twaine  
Into his wound the juice thereof did *scruze*.  
—*Spenser: Faerie Queene*.

**Scrub** (American), synonymous with the English "screw" for a horse of little value.

When the regiment was ordered to charge, they raised the rebel yell and rushed forward; but the colonel's horse—an old *scrub* he had borrowed—"bucked" and refused to move.—*Harper's Magazine*.

The English *scrub* is expressive of meanness. Also a worn-out brush. (American University), a servant. (Australian), explained by quotation.

I have used and shall use this word so often that some explanation is due to the English reader. I can give no better definition of it than by saying that it means shrubbery.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn*.

**Scrubbers** (Australian), explained by quotation.

The captain was getting in the *scrubbers*, cattle which had been left to run wild through the mountains.—*H. Kingsley: Geoffrey Hamlyn*.

**Scrubbing** (Winchester College), a flogging in which four cuts were administered.

**Scuff, to** (Australian), to seize as if seizing by the *scuff* or back part of the neck.

In crossing the Fitzroy River I once had a narrow escape of being *scuffed* by an alligator.—*Finch-Hatton: Advance Australia.*

**Scurling** (Westminster College), the inquiry made on the first day of election week by the warden and posers of the F. seniors and F. juniors in college as to whether they have any complaint to make as to the state of things in college.

**Scrumptious** (popular), nice, select.

'Ow are yer, my ribstone? Seems *scrumptious* to write the old name,  
I 'ave quite lost the run of you lately. Bin playing some dark little game?  
—*Punch.*

*Scrumptious* or *skrumshus* is a Suffolk word for stingy, close, or very particular, from the same root as *scrimp*, and it does not mean so much pleasant or agreeable as select or choice, something which is scrimped.

**Scruncher** (American and English), one who eats greedily. *Scrunch*, to crunch (Wright). Dutch *schransen*, agreeedy feeder; *schransen*, to eat greedily. These Dutch words indicate that there is a Teutonic as well as a Celtic original for *scran*, food, if the act of eating may be assumed

as of the same origin with that which is eaten.

**Scuds** (American), money; English *skids*, sovereigns. Possibly in the sense of shiners; from the Dutch *schit*, i.e., *skit*, *schitter*, to shine, glitter, or sparkle; or from the Italian *scudi*, crowns.

**Scuff** (thieves), a crowd. A pick-pocket may have a companion whose sole function it is to "get up a *scuff*," to provide opportunity and to conceal the operations of his friend. This is done by feigning a fit, by a sham quarrel, &c. Also "push." The derivation is evidently from *scuffle*, a tumultuous broil; Saxon *scufian*, to push.

While we was there we saw a *scuff*: it was a flat that had been welshed.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Scug** (Eton and Harrow), a boy who is not distinguished in person, in games, or social qualities. One of untidy, dirty, or ill-mannered habits; one whose sense of propriety is not fully developed. Provincial *scug*, one who hides or sneaks away.

Bathing was always in great favour with the Eton boys. A boy who did not bathe was called a *scug*.—*C. T. Buckland: Eton Fifty Years Ago.*

**Scumble, to** (studios), to glaze pictures with an opaque colour.

**Scurf** (costermongers), a term applied to mean, close-fisted costermongers by their fellows.

**Scuttle, to** (roughs and thieves), to stab, rip a man open. From the ordinary meaning of the word, or gypsy *scuttle*, to kill.

Three persons were charged with being accessory to the murder of John Brady in a *scuttling* affray.—*Scotsman*.

**Sea cunny** (Anglo-Indian), a steersman or quartermaster. Persian *sukkāni*, from the Arabic *sukkān*, a helm.

**Sea-grocer** (nautical), the purser.

**Seal**, a religious slang term for a convert (Hotten). In the phraseology of Mormons, a wife.

**Sealed** (American), originally used by the Mormons to intimate that wives are appointed or united by eternal destiny to a man. A source of many slang phrases, and not a few unseemly puns and jokes.

A young Mormon wife, in a fit of absent-mindedness at the post-office, dropped herself into the box, and let the letter walk home, nor did she find out her mistake till the clerk asked her if she were double or single? "Young man," she replied, "don't you know that I'm sealed!"—*Newspaper jokes*.

"My wives, Mr. Ward," sed Yung.

"Your sarvant, Marms," sed I, as I sot down in a cheer which a gal brawt me.

"Besides these wives you see here, Mister Ward," sed Yung, "I hev eighty more in varis parts of this consecrated land which air sealed to me."

"Which?" sez I, gittin' up and starin' at him.

"Sealed, sir! sealed!"

"Whareabouts?" sez I.

"I sed, sir, that they was sealed." He spoke in a traggerdy voice.—*Artemus Ward*.

**Seas over, half.** *Vide HALF-SEAS OVER*, to which may be added the following explanation:—

Dr. S. G. Green, in his life of William Wilberforce, the philanthropist, states that he (Wilberforce) would say, "I have often heard that sailors on a voyage will drink 'friends astern' till they are half-way over, then 'friends ahead.' Could this custom be the origin of the phrase? . . . Though the phrase is never used, I believe, to denote a person completely drunk, it originally implied semi-intoxication."—*Notes and Queries*.

**Sea, to be at** (common), to be lost, to know nothing about a matter; to be uninformed, uncertain.

**Second-hand daylight** (popular), the light of another world. Apparently a vulgar version of the light that never shines on sea or land. "I'll let daylight into you."

The other night she came with a candle in one hand and a sixpenny dagger in the other, and started on me in this style—"Where is the old kangaroo? Let me get at him, and I'll treat him to two-pennyworth of *second-hand daylight*!"—*Music Hall Song: Why don't you be steady, Maria?*

**Second timer** (prison), a man convicted and sentenced for the second time.

I have known hundreds of men who were *second timers*, who in a ten years' sentence had got twenty-seven months' remission, who were compelled to do the whole of this time in addition to what they got in the second sentence.—*Evening News*.

**See, a** (American), a sight. "She determined that the world

should have an opportunity of seeing her three babes, or trins, or triplets, at twenty-five cents *a see*," says an Illinois newspaper.

See a man, to (American), to go and have a drink at the bar.

Seedy (common), unwell. The metaphor refers to a plant run to seed, and consequently withering.

Would it not be better for you to receive part (perhaps all) of your money by a wise concealment? for however *seedy* Mr. Bagshot may be now, if he hath really played the frolic with you, you may believe he will play it with others.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild.*

Little Flanigan here is a little *seedy*, as we say among us that practise the law.—*Goldsmith.*

Sei. *Vide* SOLDI.

Selection (Australian), a kind of farm. The principle of free-selection is established in all the self-governing Australian colonies. The Government throws open such and such an area of the crown lands for free-selection and then any one is allowed to *select* or *take up* so much land, usually 320 or 640 acres, paying at the rate of a pound an acre, the payment being spread over a number of years, residence on the area selected for so many years, and certain improvements within a prescribed time being conditions attached. As these *selections* are generally taken up for farms, a *selection* has come to

mean pretty much the same as a farm, though it has this technical meaning.

Here they can breed a sturdy family To help them farm more highly, as more mouths

Demand subsistence from the same *selection*, And when they grow too many for its means

And have acquired a rife experience, Send sons forth one by one to found fresh hives.

—*Douglas B. W. Sladen: Home in Australia.*

Selector, free (Australian), a farmer.

I venture to differ from my correspondent when, in telling me that "cocky" is Australian argot for a small farmer, he adds, "By-the-bye, you never hear the word 'farmer' over there; it is always *selector* or 'squatter.'" But I beg to state that many scores of times at the Antipodes I have heard agriculturists whose holdings were small, spoken of, not as "cockies" but as "cockatoo farmers;" while to the term *selector* was generally prefixed the adjective "free."—*Illustrated London News.*

Sell (common), disappointment, deception, practical joke.

Mr. Verdant Green having swallowed this, his friend was thereby enabled not only to use up old *sells*, but also to draw largely on his invention for new ones.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

Sell a pup, to (common), to make a fool of one.

Sell, to (common), to deceive, swindle, play a practical joke upon a person. Said to be from a cheap Jack's phrase, "sold again," after selling his goods.

**Send a man up Green River**, to (American), *i.e.*, to kill him. The phrase, on De Vere's authority, had its origin in a once famous factory on Green River, where a superior kind of large knife was made, very popular among hunters and trappers. On the blade the words "Green River Works" were engraved, and hence the mountaineers, using the knife to despatch an adversary, literally sent his blood up Green River.

**Send-off notice** (common), an obituary notice.

After the funeral Huggins behaved handsome; he put the Scalper into deep mourning, and wrote a beautiful *send-off notice* saying what a loss the community had suffered in Scrimmy's untimely end.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Sensation** (popular), a quartern of gin.

**Sent down** (University), rusticated, sent away for a certain lapse of time.

When "Billy" Wykeham gave to his colleges at Winchester and Oxford the motto "Manners makyth man," we wonder if he considered the publication of skits upon "dons" to be a breach of scholarly manners. The trustees of University traditions at Oxford have, however, no doubts upon the subject, and yesterday an undergraduate of New was *sent down* for irreverent jibes, published in an undergraduate paper for which he was held responsible.—*Globe*.

**Sentry go** (army), properly the cry made by the sentry nearest the guard-house when it is time for him to be relieved, and

which reminds the sergeant or corporal to turn out the next relief. *Sentry go* has come to be accepted as the term for any kind of active military duty. A *sentry go* soldier is one who is always at duty, and in the lesser sense always at the most ordinary form of duty.

**Sep** (American cadet), a cadet who joins the academy in September.

**Separates** (prison), the first nine months of a sentence of penal servitude, which are passed in separate and solitary confinement in Pentonville or Millbank prisons before going to a convict prison.

**Serang** (Anglo-Indian), a native boatswain or chief of a Lascar crew, the skipper of a small native vessel. Persian *sarhang*, a commander or overseer.

**Serene, all** (popular), all right.

So fur *all serene*; but this joker, I tell yer, runs slap of the track  
Wen he says that my togs and my talk are  
"the fashion of sev'ral years back."  
—*Punch*.

She saw he needed friendly aid,  
To grant it she was not afraid,  
Thought she "It's all serene!"  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Sergeant-major** (butchers), an expression used by butchers in garrison towns to denote a large piece of mutton in the rib part. So called obviously from the white stripes like sergeants' stripes.

**Sergeant-major's brandy and soda** (army), a stable jacket gold laced.

**Sergeant-major's wash cat** (army), a new kit. The troop store man; a term in the cavalry where the troop sergeant-major has an orderly man or assistant who looks after the stores.

**Servante**, the concealed shelf at the back of a conjuror's table.

**Serve, to** (thieves), to undergo penal servitude.

He laid claim to have *served* both in Maidstone gaol and the prison of Wandsworth. — *Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Serving out slops** (nautical), punishment on the gangway.

**Se, sey** (theatrical), yes. From the Italian *si*.

**Sessions** (popular), an exclamation of surprise.

**Set about, to** (popular), to chastise, beat, thrash.

This got to my father's ears. When I went home he *set about* me with a strap. — *Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Set 'em up, to** (American), to treat with drinks.

They threaten to make him *set 'em up* every time he tumbles in hereafter. — *T. Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Set her up again!** also, **set 'em up again!** (American), try again, begin once more. An encourag-

ing exhortation to any one. Taken from the game of ten-pins, where it is a cry to the boy when all the "men" are down.

Rip Sam! *set her up again!*  
*Set her up again, set her up again!*  
 Rip Sam! *set her up again!*  
 We're all of the Choctaw tribe!

—*Old Song.*

**Setter** (old cant), a spy. (Thieves), a policeman in disguise or a man in the employ of the police (the French "indicateur") who points out the thief for others to arrest. (Costermongers and others), sevenpence; from Italian *sette*.

**Set up** (American), conceited. "You needn't be so *set up* about it," is a very common expression.

**Seven pennyworth** (thieves), seven years' penal servitude.

**Sewed up** (popular), *vide* SEWN UP.

**Sewer** (London), the Underground Railway.

The *sewer*, as it was called by the old school, would be sure to monopolise all traffic. — *Graphic.*

**Sewn up** (common), exhausted, or simply *sewn*. *Sewn up* is probably only one of slang's ingenious variations of "finished," "done," &c., also intoxicated.

He . . . has twice had Sir Rumble Tumble . . . up to his place, and took care to tell you that some of the party were pretty considerably *sewn up* too. — *Thackeray: Shabby-Genteel Story.*



(Popular), having no work to do, drunk.

**Shabash!** (Anglo-Indian), well done! bravo! From the Persian *shāh-bāsh*, *rex fas*, thou shalt become a king! The authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary very happily and ingeniously illustrate this interjection with the following quotation.

"At pueri ludentes, *rex eris*, aiunt,  
Si recte facies."

—*Horace*, Epist. I., i.

So boys in play cry out, "Thou shalt be king,  
If thou dost rightly!"

Used also in America.

**Shack** (West American), a hut.

It happened one Sunday afternoon that I, Scott, Davidson, Hank, and Mitchell were in one of the *shacks* or huts, and they were idly listening to me.—*R. Morley: The Western Avernus*.

In Canadian society the word is used for a house dwelling. In America a vagabond, provincial English. In Norfolk a mendicant is termed a *shack-bag*; to *shack*, or go at *shack*, to wander about.

**Shad-belly** (American), a Philadelphia term for a Quaker, in special reference to the dress worn by the Friends. The Quaker coat in its outline from the neck to the end of the skirt is cut in a curve exactly corresponding to that of the ventral line of a *shad*, whence the term.

**Shadder**, for shadow, a woman who watches prostitutes termed dress-women.

She's a dress-woman, that's what she is . . . one of them that they tog out that they may show off at their best and make the most of their faces . . . they can't trust 'em . . . you might tell that by the *shadder*.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Shade**, to (thieves), to conceal, keep secret.

I felt 'alf inclined to dance, till I remembered as I must *shade* it from Jem, and the boys, or they'd be wanting their corner, and I didn't bloomin' well feel inclined to cut up my luck.—*Sporting Times*.

**Shadkin** (American), a marriage broker. From the Yiddish *shadchen*, also called a "chasserem-schlupfer." "A chasserem-schlupfer is ahner der a Hochzich zamine brengt un Chusen und Kalle mocht" (D. H. L.).

The *shadkin* business has received a bad set-back in Brooklyn. A *shadkin* is a marriage broker. He is a very useful man. He finds out spinsters who have money and then he makes a bargain with some fellow who wants a wife with money and gets the couple introduced. Ten per cent. of the dowry goes to the *shadkin* when the others become kin.—*American Paper*.

**Shadow** (thieves), a first-class detective, one who possesses to a high degree the power of remembering the peculiar features and characteristics of persons, added to indomitable perseverance in following those whom he has spotted.

**Shadow, to** (popular), to dog a person.

The immediate cause of the present case was that for some months past the male defendant had *shadowed* him wherever he went.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Shady** (common), dishonest, questionable, of doubtful propriety.

Although it may be *shady* when you wish to mash a lady,

To wink at her and simply whisper,  
"Tottie!"

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

A *shady* trick is a mean one or a contemptible one, from the want of ability displayed.

**Shag, to** (common), futnere. From provincial *shake*, same meaning. "*Lascivus*, Anglice a schakere," nominale MS.

**Shag back, to**, to hesitate and hang back in the field before the enemy, or in a lesser degree, when hunting or riding a steeplechase, to crane at and refuse a fence. From a provincial term (Gloucestershire), to *shag*, to slink away.

**Shah** (popular), a great swell.

"Guessed it in once, old Ogsland!" went on Posh. "Perish me pink if it wasn't a bloomin' copper, all as blue as mould! And wasn't he a *shah*, neither!" —*Sporting Times*.

**Shake** (popular), a prostitute. Abbreviation of *shakester* (which see), or more probably from the provincial *shake*, futnere. In the north *shakes* means a

bad character. (Printers), an expression used to describe a "slur" or "maekle" in a printed sheet, caused by uneven impression or "drag."

**Shake a stick at, to** (American), a very common expression, meaning "more than can be counted." Thus, "there are more people there than you can *shake a stick at*." Another meaning is "worthless," as for instance, "there was nothing there to eat, worth *shaking a stick at*." As regards the former, it has always seemed to the writer that it must have been of New York Dutch origin, and perhaps in its first form was "more than you can shake" or "hit with a stick." In Dutch *schok* (like *stoot*) is, according to Sewel, not only to shake but to hit. And it would be a very likely thing for a Dutchman endeavouring to say that there was more fruit or nuts on a tree than you could strike with a stick, to say, "more than you could strike at with a stick" and translate the word with "shake." Such an expression is too natural not to have occurred, and too quaint not to catch the American fancy for odd sayings. Thus "tie the dog loose," from some German's version of *losbinden*, "tar him mit fedders," for "tar and feather him," and "throw him mit ecks," pelt him with eggs, have all become "household words in the street."

**Shake-lurk** (old cant), a letter prepared for a vagabond stating that he has incurred a great loss, such as sickness or shipwreck. As it is a lying letter, it is probable that the term owes its origin to the Yiddish *shakar*, a falsehood. Also *scheiker*. But it is quite as possible that *shake* is the provincial "shack," a vagabond.

**Shaker** (popular), an omnibus, a shirt.

**Shake, shakes** (American), a fair *shake*, a good opportunity, offer, bargain or chance. Provincial English *shakes*, a bargain.

**Shakes** (common), no great *shakes*, not much, of a poor description, not up to much.

Will Douglas, *no great shakes* at metre, did write these lines.—*T. Carlyle: Cromwell's Letters*.

And though the acting was *no great shakes*, yet the singing was, and her last note took us and everybody else by surprise.—*Punch*.

"Well, he's *no great shakes*," returned the coal-whipper's wife, in relenting tones; "he's had a homin', as he calls it, and that always upsets him."—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

"It is probable that *shakes* here is identical with the provincial word *shake*, to brag, which must be of ancient usage, as we find '*schakar*, or cracker, or booste maker, lactator, philocompus,' in the Promptorium Parvulorum, about 1440. These words are near akin to Danish *skogger*, noisy, roaring (in *skog-*

*ger-latter*, roar of laughter, &c.), Icelandic *skak*, *skakr*, a noise. For the change of meaning from 'making a noise,' to 'boasting,' compare *crack*, old English *crake*, any loud noise, a boast, a brag (cf. 'a *crack* regiment,' one to boast of); *brag*, to make a loud noise (akin to *bray*, Latin *fragor*), to boast. Thus *no great shakes* would mean nothing to make a noise or brag about. Otherwise we may look for it in the provincial *shakes*, a bargain, comparing Danish *skakke*, to peddle, or huxter; Icelandic *skakka*, to balance. These latter words seem to be cognate with Anglo-Saxon *scacan*; Icelandic *skaka*, to shake or wave (of the balance), just as weigh and wag are related" (A. Smythe Palmer). It has also been suggested that no great *shakes* may possibly be attributed to the expression to *shake* the elbow, *i.e.*, to play at dice, thus, no great *shakes*, a bad throw.

**Shakes, in a brace of** (popular), in an instant. Also "in a couple of shakes." Supposed to be from a *shake* in music, but really from provincial English *shake*, a quick motion. Compare with the French "en deux temps," in an instant; literally in two motions, from a fencing term.

Now Dragon could kill a wolf in a *brace of shakes*.—*Reade: Cloister and Hearth*.  
I'll be back in a *couple of shakes*,  
So don't, dears, be quivering and trembling.

—*Ingoldsby Legends: Babes in the Wood*.

**Shakester, shickster** (popular), a female. "Amongst costermongers this term is invariably applied to ladies or the wives of tradesmen, and females generally, of the classes immediately above them" (Hotten). In America a *shakester* is a lady, and *shickster* a woman. Derived from the German-Hebrew *shigsel*, *shixen*, *shichsle*, a girl. In Yiddish vocabulary it is defined as a Christian girl.

**Shakes, the** (theatrical), a synonym for stage fright. No actor or actress, worthy of the name, ever goes on the stage for a new part, without suffering from this most terrible of all complaints. Most actors feel it more or less every night for a few moments previous to making their appearance before the public. The emotional temperament, and the tendency to hysteria, which are the distinguishing characteristics of all great artists render them peculiarly susceptible to *the shakes*.

**Shake the ghost into one,** (popular), to frighten one.

**Shake the red rag, to** (tailors), to threaten or discharge. The *red rag* here probably means the tongue.

**Shake, to** (Australian popular), to steal. Originally imported by convicts into New South Wales, this word has passed

into universal use among school-boys, bushmen, shepherds, &c. When "taking" is stealing, it is called *shaking*. When "taking" is only a breach of etiquette, it is called "jumping;" you would *shake* a person's watch, but you would only "jump" the seat which he had engaged in a railway carriage.

**Shake up** (American), to obtain, get, procure. As if one had got game by shaking up or beating the bushes or coverts.

I never saw such magnificent weather for drying clothes. They don't *shake up* any such climate as this in Italy.—*Max Adeler*.

**Shaking a cloth in the wind** (nautical), slightly intoxicated, a drunken man being unsteady, like a sail that trembles in the wind.

**Shallow** (popular), a barrow used by costermongers.

And here they are after it—in vehicles for the greater part; in carts and "half-carts," and *shallows* and barrows.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps*.

(Beggars), the *shallow* dodge, explained by quotation.

It may be here mentioned that the "shaller," or more properly *shallow* dodge, is for a beggar to make capital of his rags, and a disgusting condition of semi-nudity; to expose his shoulders, and his knees, and shirtless chest, pinched and blue with cold. A pouncing of the exposed parts with common powder blue is found to heighten the frost-bitten effect, and to excite the compassion of the charitable.—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Shallow cove, shivering Jemmy** (popular), a beggar of the male kind, very scantily clothed; "shallow mot" is the female. Also *shallow bloke*.

"What do you call a *shallow bloke*?" "He is a cove that acts the turnpike sailor; pretends he has been shipwrecked and so on."—*Temple Bar*.

A beggar of this description is said to go on the *shallows*. This word is possibly connected with to *shale*, to shell, take the shell or coat off.

**Shandy-gaff** (common), a drink composed half of beer, half of ginger beer. Sometimes stout or other liquors are used instead of beer.

This functionary has a staff of natives under him for the purpose of serving out the beer, rum, soda water, and lemonade, the latter cooling drinks, which are always kept in ice, being very much used by some of the thirsty souls for the purpose of making *shandy-gaff*.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks*.

**Shaney, shanny** (popular), a fool. Probably from the expression *shanny-pated, giddy-pated, i.e.*, with no more brains than a *shanny*, a small fish that lurks under stones and weeds.

And out ran every soul beside,  
A *shanny-pated* crew.  
—*Bloomfield: The Horkey*.

Or perhaps from the Yiddish *scheina*, meaning the same. *Vide SHEENY*.

**Shanghai-ing** (nautical), explained by quotation.

I fail to find the term *Shanghai-ing* in either slang or other dictionary, although,

amongst sailors, it is a common word, denoting a common occurrence. Anglicised, it means, "Catching an unsuspecting landsman near a ship wanting hands; drugging and robbing him; shipping him as an A.B., and securing his first month's wages in advance." The authors of this villainy rely for security principally on the chance of death at sea, and then, should the improvised sailor succeed in reaching land safely, on his silence regarding the affair, owing to its apparent improbability and a desire to escape exposure.—*Evening News*.

(Australian), a *shanghai* is a boy's catapult. Small birds are not favourite quarry of the small Australian catapulter; like his rival, the larrikin, his special prey is the Chinaman. In the writer's memory, even the sons of high police officials found themselves in the dock charged with *shanghai-ing* Chinamen. Perhaps the instrument is so called in delicate allusion to those whom it is used to execute. (American), a dandy.

**Shanks' mare, Shanks' pony**, a popular saying meaning on foot.

This David Dunn was son of so poor a settler that there was no horse at home at his disposal; out West there is almost the same scorn for a person who goes even a little distance on foot as in Spain or Mexico or the Southern States before the great Civil War reduced the descendants of the cavaliers to the universal and proverbial *Shanks' mare*.—*H. L. Williams: Buffalo Bill*.

**Shank, the** (American), the balance, what remains; as, for example, one friend might say to another, "Suppose you come in and spend the *shank* of the evening with me?" *i.e.*, the lesser or later part.

The old Kentuckian who in the *shanks* of the evening was wont to maintain there was no such thing as bad Kentucky whisky, admitted with extreme reluctance, even in the early sermons and soda-water period of the day after, that it might be possible some Kentucky whisky was better than others.—*W. A. Paton: Down the Islands.*

**Shan't play, I** (Australian popular), I am annoyed, I don't like it. A metaphor taken from children peevish over a game saying, *I shan't play*. If a person is being chaffed, or if he finds a thing difficult, such as climbing up the soft ashes near the top of Vesuvius, he would say, *I shan't play*.

**Shanty** (circus and showman), a public-house is always called by this name. Properly *shanty* is a mean dwelling-hut, temporary building or erection, said to be from Irish *sean*, old; and *tig*, a house (Webster). The word is, however, claimed to be of American origin, from Canadian French *chantier*, meaning the same. (Nautical), a song.

It was a tough pull, as the shark was over fifteen feet in length, until the mate suggested a *shanty*, or sea-song, a corruption of the French word *chanter*, which a fo'c's'le Mario commenced, and the rest joined in vigorous chorus. So *Carcharias vulgaris*, as naturalists call the white shark, left his native element to the rousing strains of—

"Were you ever in Quebec,  
Ho, la! ho, la!  
Hoisting timber on the deck!  
Ho, la! ho, la!  
With a will now—Heave, oh!"  
—*Detroit Free Press.*

A contributor to a London journal declares that this is not a true sailor's word, but of literary origin, and only of late years.

**Shape** (American), "to travel on one's *shape*" is to get on, or pay debts, or live or succeed by the virtue of prepossessing looks.

He has no more sense than a shad, you know,  
Nor half the wit of an ape;  
But he'll get on while here below,  
By travelling on his *shape*.

—*Ballad: Beautiful Billy.*

**Shaps** (American), leather leggings. Probably from *shap* (provincial English) tight-laced, shapely, fit, comely. *Shapes*, a tight-laced, jaunty girl.

A pair of *shaps* or leather overalls, with tags and fringes down the seams.—*Alex. Stavelly Hill: From Home to Home.*

**Shark** (army), a recruit. (Yale University), reckless absence from college, or shirking of its duties. Applied both to the thing itself and to the person. (Common), a sharper, rogue, or cheat. "Commonly supposed to be a figurative use of the word *shark*. It is really a slightly disguised form of German *schurke*, a cheat or knave; Dutch *schurk*, a shark, rascal" (Sewel). The French "requin de terre," for an attorney, seems, however, to support the figurative use of *shark*, the fish.

**Shark, to** (nautical), to purloin.

In the mess I was in, we took up our full whack of provisions, comprising three

tins of preserved Fanny Adams, a certain amount of flour, fat, and figs, which we had saved, and of course, salt horse, and salt pork; well that, and what we *sharked*. We were determined to have a grand flare-up, as regards our bread-baskets.—*Tit-Bits*.

**Sharp.** "A similar expression to 'two pun' ten,' used by assistants in shops to signify that a customer of suspected honesty is amongst them. The shopman in this case would ask one of the assistants, in a voice loud enough to be generally heard, 'Has Mr. *Sharp* come in yet'" (Hotten).

**Shave** (common), a narrow escape. Hotten has "a false alarm, a hoax, a sell. This term was much in vogue in the Crimea during the Russian campaign—that is, though much used by the military before then, the term did not, until that period, become known to the general public." Almost invariably heard as a close *shave*.

**Shaver** (popular), a very short jacket. A cunning fellow, one keen in making bargains, close-*shaving* being sharp dealing. A little, insignificant man.

And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,  
He was an unco' *shaver*,  
For monie a day.

—*Burns: A Dream*.

Among all the characters which he bears in the world, no one has ever given him credit for being a cunning *shaver* (be it here observed in a parenthesis that I suppose the word *shaver* in this so common expression to have been corrupted from *shaveling*, the old contemptuous word for a priest).—*Scutney: The Doctor*.

VOL. II.

Much did Aunt Fan disapprove of the plan;

She turned up her dear little snub at "the man."

She "could not believe it"—"could scarcely conceive it

Was possible." What! such a place! and then leave it!—

And all for a "shrimp" not as high as my hat!—

A little contemptible *shaver* like that!

With a broad pancake face, and eyes buried in fat!

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

In the latter meaning the word is possibly from the gypsy *shavie*, *chavy*, or *chavo*, a child or son. In old provincial English, however, a *shaving* is anything small, and *shaver* a small child.

**Shave, to** (drapery trade), to charge a customer for an article more than the marked price.

When the master sees an opportunity of doing this he strokes his chin as a signal to his assistant (Hotten). Ladies are the chief customers at drapers', and this process is facetiously described as "*shaving* the ladies."

**Shaving through** (common), just escaping failure at an examination, or in anything.

**Shebang** (American), a shanty, or small house of boards. No one has ever explained the origin of this term, but it may be noted that there are exactly seven board-surfaces in a shanty, the four upright sides, the two sides of the roof, and the floor,

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and that the word *shebang*, in Hebrew, means seven.

For last night we had a tempest—while the mighty thunder rang,  
Up there came a real guster, which blew down the whole *shebang*.

*Shebang* is a word from Hebrew, meaning seven sayeth Krupp,  
And applied to any shanty where they play at seven-up.

—*The Story of Mr. Scrooper, Architect.*

**Shed a tear, to** (common), taking a glass of spirits. In the early part of the eighteenth century, in the days of Allan Ramsay, the Scottish poet, the phrase for a dram was a “bender,” from the action of bending the elbow to raise the glass to the lips. The modern phrase applied to a drunkard, “he crooks his elbow,” is synonymous. French “lever le coude.” The Americans call a dram of alcohol a *smile*; and the question, “Will you smile?” signifies “Will you drink?”

**Shee** (Charterhouse), a plum-pudding or cake.

**Sheen** (Scotch), bad money. Probably alluding to the “glitter,” or possibly from German *schein*, a bank-bill.

**Sheeny** (Yiddish and popular), a common and not very respectful word for a Jew, used principally in the slang of the Goyim or Gentiles, but also to be heard in jest among Jews. It is probably taken from *scheina*—“*scheina jaudca lischkol*”—a stupid fellow who does not

know enough to ask or inquire. *Schien*, a policeman, and *schiener*, a house-thief, may have contributed to form this rather obscure word.

Benny is a smart boy. The lesson was bein' read to him about Joseph bein' sold by his brothers into bondage. When it was concluded the master asks, “Vat moral do ve draw from this?” Benny didn't need to think for a minute. “Steer clear of *sheenies*,” says he, “if you don't want to get sold.” By my blessed gezundt, the boy's right.—*Sporting Times.*

Also used by thieves.

Took the daisies to a *sheney*, and done them for thirty blow.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

In America a pawnbroker is sometimes called a *sheeney*.

**Sheepskin fiddle** (theatrical), the big drum. Also used by soldiers.

**Sheepskin fiddlers** (army), drummers.

**Sheep wash, to** (Winchester College), to throw a man into the water.

**Sheffield handicaps**, well-known sprint races in which there is no scratch man, the real scratch man receiving an enormous start from an imaginary flyer. It is possible that originally the idea was that when each man was told his start, he would not know the exact distance he had to run, but the whole affair is shrouded in mystery.

**Shekels** (London), money, coin. Properly an ancient Jewish coin, in value about 2s. 6d.



When you've been racing, and raked in the *shekels*, and you come back to Romano's and order a "Noisette de Brabant," you get a mutton-chop with the bone taken out.—*Sporting Times*.

**Shelf, on the** (popular), in pawn. (Army), under arrest. French thieves use the expression, "sur la planche au pain," arrested and committed for trial.

**Shell-back** (nautical), a sailor; also "old shell."

**Shell out, to** (common), to pay, disburse; a metaphor, or out with one's *shells* or money, possibly alluding to the cowries or shells used in Southern Asia, on the coast of Guinea, and in the Philippine Islands.

Will you be kind enough, sir, to *shell out* for the price of a daacent horse?—*Miss Edgeworth: Love and Law*.

Come, fork out, old Flint! . . . *shell out*, old fellow!—*Waters: Recollections of a Detective*.

Also used in America.

It may be imagined I had to *shell out* pretty freely. In all I reckon it cost me more than 25 dollars.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Shells, brown** (popular), onions.

In these ways may the enormous demand for *brown shells* and "big 'uns" be to some extent accounted for; but as one contemplates men, women, and children busy among the heaps as ants on an ant-hill, and bearing off, with satisfaction heaping in their faces, onions enough to garnish steak or tripe through all the days in the year.—*J. Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Shelving** (printers), a man in writing his weekly bill is said to

have *shelved* it if he does not fully charge up the work done by him—in contradistinction to "horsing," or charging in advance of work done.

**Shenanigan** (American), humbug, deceit.

Jim took his bill, two days' board, \$2.62, and eyeing the puzzled landlord as though he suspected some *shenanigan*, he broke out: "I want to see them ar books!"—*New York Mercury*.

Bartlett says, "Foolery or nonsense when advanced to cover some scheme." This indicates, accurately, the beginning or commencing of something disgraceful. In Dutch this would be expressed by *schên-aangaan*, to begin anything disreputable. *Schên* is the root of both. *Schenden* and *schende*, violence and shame. This is only offered as a merely possible derivation of the word.

**Shepherd, to** (English and Australian popular), to watch, to play the spy on, to guard, to pay court to. The metaphor is obviously taken from shepherding sheep. Adversaries opposite each other at football are said to *shepherd* or watch each other. A man may *shepherd* a rich uncle or rich heiress, a detective *shepherds* a criminal whom he suspects of planning a felony. A man *shepherds* one of his own side at football by keeping off adversaries while he is running or kicking.

- Sherbet** (popular), a glass of any warm alcoholic liquor, as grog, &c. A misapplication.
- Sherry-fug, to** (Universities), to spend the afternoon indoors drinking sherry.
- Shice, shicey, shicer** (popular and theatrical), nothing, no good. *Vide* SHICER. (Thieves), counterfeit, specially counterfeit coin.
- Shicer, shyster**, the lowest and vilest kind of a man. The term is supposed to have been first used in England among the lowest order of Jews. It is said to be derived from the German *schicser* (Lat. *cacator*), but may be influenced by the Yiddish *sheiker*, a lie, falsehood, or liar (Heb. *shakar*). "*Sheiker we kisun*," lies and falsehood. In New York the word *shyster* is specially applied to the lowest type of criminal lawyer—"a Tombs lawyer." (Diggings), a hole that yields nothing.
- Shicksas** (London), a certain class of the demi-monde. From the Jewish slang *shicksel*, a girl.
- Shickster.** *Vide* SHAKESTER. *Shickster* crabs, ladies' shoes or boots.
- Shig** (Winchester), a shilling.
- Shiggers** (Winchester), white football trousers costing 10s.
- Shikar** (Anglo-Indian), shooting and hunting game. Sport and game. *Shikaree*, a native or European sportsman, or professional killer of game.
- Shikerry** (popular), shabby, bad, shaky, doubtful. Used in Australia. From provincial English *shickle*, fickle, doubtful.
- Shillagalee** (American), a low, tricky, sinister fellow. New York Dutch, *scheeloog*, one that is squint-eyed, associated with *scheelen*, to want, ail. Possibly Irish.
- Shilling shocker** (common), explained by quotation.  
The *shilling shocker* is too much given to a beggarly setting forth of its title in plain, fat, black letters, on simple white paper. Even when it aspires to a picture cover, the illustration is generally done in black and white, which unwisely ignores the noble and still unslaked thirst for blood which consumes the consumers of those Belshazzar's feasts of the imagination.—*Globe*.
- Shimmary Hall, St. Mary's Hall, Oxford.**
- Shindy.** Most probably from the gypsy *chindi*, literally a cut, or cutting up, which is again confused with *chinger*, which has the same meaning and also signifies a quarrel. *Shines*, as applied to noisy deeds, mischief, rioting, &c., may be from the same root, a conjecture which is supported by the fact that it is always associated with *cut*, e.g., "He is cutting up shines."

**Shine-nag** (costers), a token of bankruptcy, or being "cracked up." "You'll ruin the *shine-nag* if you go on like that."

**Shiner** (popular), a sovereign; *shiners*, gold coins, money.

'Twas Isobar—this goodly tip—  
And Epsomwards I hurried,  
Expecting to recoup my trip  
When safely home he'd scurried,  
But when, at length, 'twas plain to see  
That I had lost each *shiner*,  
My jubilation struck a key  
Comparatively *minor*.

—*Sporting Times*.

To let a lord of land want *shiners*, 'tis a shame.—*Footie: The Minor*.

(Tailors), a *shiner*, a boastful fellow.

**Shines.** *Vide* CUT UP SHINES.

**Shine, to** (tailors), to boast. (Popular), to take a *shine*, to be partial to a person or thing, to take a fancy.

**Shiney** (popular), gold.

We'll soon fill both pockets with the *shiney* in California.—*Reade: Never too Late to Mend*.

**Shingle** (American), hanging out a *shingle*, *i.e.*, to put up one's sign or name over a shop or office. Of Western origin, *shingles* having been used there for the purpose named.

**Shingle short, having a** (Australian), equivalent to "having a tile loose," *i.e.*, being slightly crazy or idiotic.

**Shingle tramper** (nautical), a coastguard.

**Shinning around** (American), explained by quotation.

"Fossicking about" is now used as a general term for what the Americans call *shinning around*, or what we should qualify as "ferreting about."—*Illustrated London News*.

To *shin* means also to walk.

**Shinny on your own side!** (provincial and American). *Shinney* is the game termed hockey in England, and the exclamation is a suggestion to a person to attend to his own personal interest in anything. *Shinney* is provincial English for hockey.

**Shin out, to** (popular), to pay up money. Probably from the phrase, "to break one's shins," to borrow money from him.

**Shin-plaster** (American), a term applied ever since the revolutionary war (1776) to depreciated currency.

The House Committee on Banking and Currency will to-morrow make a favourable report to the House upon the bill providing for the issue of \$25,000,000 in fractional currency. The demand for these small notes for transmission through the mails has increased within the past year, and numerous petitions asking for a return to the convenient *shin-plaster* have been received during the present Congress.—*New York World*.

Also used in England for a cheque or bank-note.

Mr. — gave — a cheque for a monkey . . . he was flourishing the *shin-plaster* in question at Sandown.—*Sporting Times*.

Bartlett tells the familiar tale as to the origin of the word, that after the old continental currency had become almost worthless, an old soldier used a quantity of it to make plasters for a wooden leg. It is, however, worth noting that the German and Dutch words *schein* or *schyn*, approach very nearly to *scheen*, *shin*, in the latter, and that they mean paper currency. A German proverb speaks of money as a *plaster* for every ill, and the peasants call a great price "a hot *plaster*." There is reason to believe that the phrase a *shin-plaster* will be found to be a translation from the German. The term is sometimes applied to "fractional currency," or notes of small value. Again it may be derived from the slang phrase "to break shins," to borrow money. The term *shin-plaster* is used in England. *Sheen* (which see), Scotch for bad money, is much older than the American Revolutionary War.

**Shins** (common), to break one's *shins*, to borrow money from one. A corresponding French phrase is, "Donner un coup de pied dans les jambes."

**Shin-scraper** (prison), explained by quotation.

The treadmill *shin-scraper* (arising, it may be assumed, on account of the operator's liability, if he is not careful, to get his shins scraped by the ever-revolving wheel).—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Shin up a tree**, to (common), to climb up a tree.

**'Ship** (printers), abbreviation for "companionship"—a body of compositors that work together and share alike all round, as regards the rate of pay per hour, a clicker being appointed to take charge and write the general bill.

**Shipped** (American University), expelled.

**Ship**, to (Shrewsbury school), to be unsuccessful in repeating lessons.

**Shirking** (Eton), explained by quotation.

*Shirking* was a marvellous invention. Fellows were allowed to boat on the river, but all the approaches to it were out of bounds; we might walk on the terrace of Windsor Castle, but it was unlawful to be caught in the streets of Windsor which led to the terrace. . . . If, happening to be out of bounds, you saw a master approaching, you had to *shirk*, which was done by merely stepping into a shop. The master might see you, but he was supposed not to see you; the *shirking* was accepted as tantamount to a recognition that you knew you were breaking rules, and this was enough to disarm magisterial resentment. The absurdity of this system was, that to buy anything in the shops in High Street, where all the school tradesmen dwelt, we were obliged to go out of bounds.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

Skeat derives the English word *shirk* from shark; but *shirk*, a slinking rascal, has a direct affinity with the German *schürke* both in sound and meaning.

**Shirt (turf)**, "to put one's *shirt* on a horse," to lose all one's money on a horse. The French say of a man in extremes, "il a vendu jusqu'à sa chemise."

"Now the word *shirt*," said the pedagogue, "is a common noun, and means an undergarment for men."

"And for horses, sir," put in a sharp youngster.

"For horses? What do you mean?"

"Father says he is going to put his on Friar's Balsam for the Derby, sir!"

There was trouble in that class.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Common), to lose one's *shirt*, to lose one's temper. Also "to lose one's hair."

**Shirt out, to have one's** (used in England, but more in Australia), to be angry. Probably this expression has arisen from the shirt working out between the breeches and waistcoat during a struggle. *To have one's shirt out*, therefore, denotes excitement and thus anger. Another possible derivation is from the provincial *shurty*, to bustle about.

**Shirty** (common), angry. Used more in Australia and America.

**Shivareen, a** (Canadian), explained by quotation; a word imitated from the French *charivari*.

The second night of my stay in Chehallis we had a wedding celebrated according to local custom by a *shivareen*, which is a performance of the following description: When the fond bridegroom and his blushing bride have supped and gone to roost, their friends and well-wishers, mostly males, arrive from the neighbouring

ranches, bringing with them guns, rifles, drums, horse-fiddles, and other musical instruments. With these they commence a lively serenade, firing volleys, and working the horse-fiddle, a big wooden box, with a very active stick inside, until the unhappy pair turn out and drink the healths of their untimely visitors. Should the husband turn rusty, his callers may possibly pull his roof off, pour water down his chimneys, or forcibly extract him *in statu quo* from his nuptial couch.—*Phillips-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Shoe-goose** (Anglo-Indian), a term which shows how many Anglo-Indian words are manufactured. It is applied to the lynx, and is a corruption of the Persian *siyah-gosh*, literally "flock ear."

**Shoe-leather** (thieves), a thief's warning cry when he hears any one coming. French thieves, in a like circumstance, will say, "chou! chou!" or "acresto."

**Shoe-string** (American). When a man bets a small sum and runs it up to a large amount, it is called a *shoe-string*.

**Shoes, another pair of** (popular), quite different.

We'll show 'em *another pair of shoes* than that, Pip, won't us?—*Dickens: Great Expectations*.

Said to be a corruption of the French *chose*; but that is improbable, as the French have a corresponding and kindred phrase, "c'est une autre paire de manches."

**Shoe, to** (popular), a variation of making one "pay his footing."

**Shoful** (costermongers and thieves), counterfeit, base coin, sham jewellery. A *shoful*, an impostor. "This cant term originated among the Jews, and is the Hebrew *sháfál* (or *sháphál*), low, base, vile, the word which David applied to himself when he danced before the ark (2 Sam. vi. 22). Mayhew quotes *showfuls*, bad money, as a piece of costermongers' slang. It is curious to find the word once used by the King of Israel still living in the vocabulary of a London costermonger. Compare showful, showy" (Smythe-Palmer). (Popular), a hansom cab, *i.e.*, in the shape of a *shovel*, the original appellation. It is said, however, that they were at first despitely called *shofuls*, *i.e.*, bad ones. *Schoful* appears in Dutch slang as *sjofel*, bad. The word is common all over Germany, Belgium, and Holland.

**Shoful-pitcher** (thieves), a passer of base coin. *Vide* SHOFUL.

**Shoful-pitching.** *Vide* SHOFUL-PITCHER.

**Shoful-pullet** (popular), a gay girl. *Vide* SHOFUL.

**Shoke** (Anglo-Indian), a hobby, a whim, a favourite pursuit. Arabic *shank*.

**Shoon** (thieves), a fool, a lout. Probably from the Hebrew. *Vide* SHEENEY.

**Shoot** (American), a slang phrase equivalent to "bother that!" "stop it!" "keep that out!"

Once in a while a man may take  
A little holiday;  
Don't talk to me about the shop!  
Oh *shoot* the shop, I say!

—*Song.*

Miss Mabel Brown has jilted me, and that  
is nothing new of her;  
Oh *shoot* Miss Mabel Brown, I say! Miss  
Wilkins is worth two of her.

—*Western News.*

*Shoot* is a Lancashire term, to get rid of, reject, eliminate.

I'll gie ya fifteen shillin apiece for those  
hundred cows, and ya'll let me *shoot* ten  
on 'em.—*Peacock: Lonsdale Glossary.*

The parallel phrase, to get *shut* of, is still used in Ireland and provincial English. In the Cleveland dialect, to get *shot* of. (Popular), a lot collected for sale.

Mr. — had a big show of useful harness and hack horses, and as they were all sound and good-looking in appearance, it is needless to state that the Midland dealer got rid of nearly the whole *shoot*, at prices ranging from a "score" to fifty guineas.—*Sporting Life.*

**Shooter** (old), the guard of a mail coach, from his being armed with a blunderbuss.

He had a word for the hostler about that grey mare, a nod for the *shooter* or guard.—*Thackeray: Shabby-Genteel Story.*

(Printers), short for shooting-stick, an implement used for tightening up the quoins of a forme.

**Shooting-irons** (American), fire-arms.

The jurors—good, grandfatherly men—took a different view of the matter, and did not seem to think that it was any harm for an injured female to go about the streets with *shooting-irons*, ready to deal, probably, promiscuous destruction around her.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Shooting on the post** (sport), to catch your opponents and win just before the tape.

**Shoot off your mouth** (American), to talk much, or talk in a boasting manner.

If he could kill Indians *shooting of his mouth* at them he'd soon clean them out all there is.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

**Shoot one's linen**, to (common), to jerk one's sleeves in order to show the shirt wristbands.

And as for the garment I wear next my skin,  
To be "shirty" with that after years  
would be sin,  
I could once *shoot my linen* so spotlessly  
white,  
But now I am thinking 'twere best out of  
sight.

—*Song: Gone to Smash*.

**Shoot one's star**, to (popular), to die.

**Shoot, the** (London Railway). Walworth Road Station, on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, is called, *par excellence*, *the Shoot*, because of the large number of passengers who alight there, thus relieving the enormously congested traffic from the city stations. This is especially noticeable at certain times of the evening when those engaged in the city are returning from business.

**Shoot the cat**, to (common), to vomit. (Army), the bugle-call (in infantry) for defaulters' drill, so called from the onomatopœic sound of the call which it is fancied follows the words "shoot the cat—shoot the cat." Nearly all bugle-calls have their synonymous words, as the dinner call, which runs "officers' wives have puddings and pies. Soldiers' wives have skill—ee!" and the second watch setting, or tattoo roll-call, which begins "Wiggins, Wiggins, Private Wiggins, come home to barracks," and so on to the end of a long tune.

**Shoot the crow** (American), explained by quotation.

An ancient sinner was recently charged with *shooting the crow*, i.e., obtaining alcoholic stimulant at public-houses, and making an artful retreat without paying for the cool, refreshing moisture. His method was charmingly simple. After strolling into a coffee-room, he would order a six of whisky. On the liquor being brought, he usually remarked, "The water in the bottles looks rather cloudy, waiter. Just fetch some fresh, if you please." Then, while the gentle garçon retired, the A. S. invariably drank the spirit with rapidity, and made tracks as speedily as possible. Fifteen days' "hard."—*Fun*.

From an allusion to *crow-whisky*, or the best kind.

**Shoot the moon**, to (common), to leave a house or lodgings by night, and generally removing the furniture without paying the landlord.

My uncle's got the broker's man,  
My cousin's got a month;  
My brother's joined a regiment,  
The hard-up ninety-oneth.

My aunt she's gone to Colney Hatch,  
To spend the afternoon,  
And all our blessed family  
To-night will shoot the moon.  
—*We are a Merry Family (Francis and Day)*.

Synonyms "move in the blind,"  
"go between the moon and the  
milkman," &c. In French,  
"déménager à la cloche de bois."  
*Vide* MOON.

**Shoot, to** (Stock Exchange).  
"To make a man a close price  
in a stock without knowing if  
there would be a profit or loss  
on the bargain" (Atkin, "House  
Scraps").

**Shop** (general), a house, place,  
establishment, and club. The  
French use the word *boutique* as  
a disparaging term for any ill-  
managed house or establishment.  
"All over the *shop*" implies a  
general disturbance, confusion,  
or commotion of any kind; to  
talk *shop*, explained by quotation.

There was another symptom of a parallel  
feeling in the widespread censure involved  
in the common reproach that a man talks  
*shop*. What was talking *shop*? It meant  
talking of the interests of the work which  
they did, or the profession to which they  
belonged. But injustice lay in the word,  
and a snare in the thought. Too often it  
meant the exclusion from lively conversa-  
tion and pleasant discussion of that which  
formed the dearest intellectual interest of a  
man's life.—*Daily News*.

A lay guest at a clerical dinner,  
hoping to ingratiate himself with  
his neighbour, a well-known  
London parson, and beginning  
some rather unctuous talk, was  
met with the rebuke, "Sir, when  
I dine with Jack Ketch, I don't

talk about hanging." (Army),  
the guard-room. The Royal  
Military Academy is termed the  
*shop*. (Turf), to get a *shop*, to  
secure first, second, or third  
place in a race.

"My boy," said an eminent bishop to  
his eldest son, "truth will always triumph  
in the long run; for this reason let your  
guiding principle in life be Veracity." "I  
don't think your tip will quite win, pa,"  
said the boy; "but I shall certainly back  
it for a *shop*."—*Referee*.

(Theatrical), explained by  
quotation.

Sometimes one may meet in the Strand  
an actor who has been out of a *shop*—all  
engagements being called *shops*, as well as  
the play-houses—a long time, who having  
run through, or run in to Attenborough, his  
ordinary wardrobe, will be wearing his  
"props" to keep up an appearance.—  
*Globe*.

**Shop-bouncer** (popular), generally  
a well-attired thief, who appro-  
priates articles while being  
served with other articles of  
less value.

**Shopkeeper** (trading), an article  
which remains long in hand in  
a shop is always known as an  
old *shopkeeper*.

**Shop-lift** (old), a thief who robs at  
shops.

The tenth is a *shop-lift*, that carries a bob  
When he ranges the city, the shops for to  
rob.

—*Pedlar's Pack of Ballads and Songs*,  
collected by W. H. Logan.

**Shopper** (trade), one much ad-  
dicted to "shopping."

The plan is to distinguish between the  
two classes of *shoppers*.—*Daily Telegraph*.



**Shabby** (common), to be *shabby*, to talk of nothing but about one's calling or profession, or on sporting subjects.

When golfers get together their talk is more unutterably *shabby* than even that of hunters, cricketers, or racing men.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Shop**, to (army), to put under arrest in the guard-room.

If we enter the army, joining the light infantry, we will become a "light bob," and our first contravention of military law will ensure our being *shopped*.—*Morning Advertiser*.

(Royal Military Academy), to put under arrest. (Pugilistic), to punish a man severely, knock him "all over the *shop*." (Trade), to discharge a shopman. (Thieves), to send to prison.

She looks up in his face. "Jim," says she timidly, and cowering close to him the while, "if you was took and *shopped*, like him in the long boots, I'd go to quod with you, if they'd give me leave—I'd go to death with you."—*Whyte-Melville: M or N*.

**Shop-walker** (trade), a kind of foreman who walks about the shop.

**Short** (common), without money.

*Barber*—"Pretty *short*, sir?" *Customer*—"Well, yes, I am. Just put it down on the slate, will you? Much obliged to you for speaking of it."—*Lovell Citizen*.

(Costermongers), neat gin. Originally unsweetened or shortened gin, then *short* gin, then any neat spirit. "Let's have something *short*."

Old men will swathe their gouty limbs, And talk of sound old port;

Converted thieves will sing loud hymns,  
Then take their drops of *short*.

—*Fun Almanac*.

(Banks), upon presenting a cheque, the clerk asks, "How will you take it?" *i.e.*, in gold or notes. If in notes, "long or *short*?" Should it be desired to receive it in notes for the largest possible amount the answer is, *short* (Hotten).

(Tailors), he bit him off *short*, he abruptly closed the interview or instantly dismissed his appeal.

**Shortage** (American), a deficit in accounts.

"Let's see," he mused. "You are in some bank down town, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"And don't all these robberies, embezzlements, and *shortages*, make the directors a little nervous?"

"Well, perhaps."

"Any talk of giving the cashier a vacation so as to slyly examine his books?"

"Not that I have heard of."

"Then you must have confidence in him?"

"I—I think so. That is, I presume so. That is—I'm the cashier myself."—*Wall Street News*.

**Short ear** (American University), a rowdy.

**Shorter** (thieves), a rogue who clips and files coin. From a crown-piece a *shorter* could gain 5d. Chemical means are also resorted to.

**Short-hairs**, silk stockings (American), the names of two branches of the Democratic party in the Western States. They appear to have been first

used, or at least to have first come before the public, at the Democratic State Convention, held in Springfield, Illinois, August 26, 1886.

They did not resign, as had been hoped by the *short-hairs*, but desired to retain control of the fall campaign, and until December, when their terms expire. This was a disappointment, but their opponents got satisfaction by preventing the reelection of any of them. The *silk stockings*, as they are freely called, made an attempt in the committee meeting when the election of members at large took place to crowd out the Cook County *short-hairs* altogether by a motion that only four members at large be elected.—*Chicago Tribune*.

The *short-hairs* appear to be discontented with the administration, while the *silk stockings* approve of it.

**Short of a sheet, to be** (Australian), the Australian equivalent of a tile loose.

**Shorts, the** (Stock Exchange), said of brokers who are minus stocks which they have contracted to deliver.

**Shot** (popular), reckoning. From Danish *skat*, Anglo-Saxon *sceat*. Hence scot-free. Old French (*escot*), *écot*.

There's three more of 'em, waiter—three more jolly blue boys, give it a name, my Britons; I'll pay the *shot*.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

(Old cant), explained by quotation.

The "Charley" winked at the robberies committed by nocturnal footpads on drunken wayfarers, he black-mailed the unfortunate female night-prowlers, and especially did he lend aid and countenance

to the resurrection-men or body-snatchers, who often found the watchman's box convenient as a temporary receptacle for the *shot*, or corpse, which they had just disinterred.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Turf), to be *shot* is to make a disadvantageous bet which is instantly accepted.

Then a plucky fielder, who does not perform in London every day, offered "nine monkeys," and was instantly *shot* by the very dealer who had backed.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Popular), to be *shot*, to be photographed.

**Shot in the locker** (nautical), a metaphor signifying money in the pocket.

**Shot, shot in the neck** (American), drunk. German, "Er ist geschossen," he is *shot*, i. e., drunk.

**Shot, to** (horse-dealers), to *shot* a horse, is to give him a quantity of small shot, the result being that for a short time he appears sound in wind.

**Shoulder shams** (old cant), confederates of a pickpocket who press round the victim.

**Shoulder, to** (popular), when a servant steals his employer's money he is said to *shoulder* him.

**Shouting.** *Vide* TO SHOUT.

It is the custom in the colonies, or, at all events, in the parts I have visited, to "stand" drinks most profusely at the village or township bars. They call it *shouting*.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

**Shout, to** (Australian), to treat, to frank; *shouter*, one who treats.

Give me the wealth I have squandered in  
*shouting*,  
Scattered in sixpences, paid by the  
pound,  
Ladled out glibly, no grudging or doubt-  
ing,  
Never a thought of the use to be found.  
—D. B. W. Sladen: *The Sigh of the  
Shouter*.

He had felt bound, according to custom,  
to *shout* for them all. I said, "But why  
do you give in to the practice?" He re-  
plied, "It is not for the drink that we  
care, but for the expression of friendly feel-  
ing."—C. T.: *Impressions of Australia*  
(*Blackwood's Magazine*).

To *shout*, perhaps, gets this  
meaning as being equivalent  
to giving the order. I *shout*,  
therefore, I call out the order.  
The custom of *shouting* is uni-  
versal in Australia. No one  
ever voluntarily drinks alone.  
He *shouts* his friend and his  
friend *shouts* him back, or each  
one of a company in turn *shouts*.  
If there is no one else to *shout*  
to, the customer generally in-  
vites the barman to take a drink.  
This custom is one of the curses  
of Australia. A publican knows  
that, however many there are in  
a party which enters his house,  
there will be the same number  
of "*shouts* all round."

**Shove** (thieves), to pass bad  
money; "*shoving* the queer,"  
passing counterfeit coin. In  
all probability a combination of  
the gypsy *chiv*, with the Eng-  
lish *shove*, as *chiv* comes much  
nearer to putting, or placing, or  
disposing of, than *shove*, i.e., to  
merely push. "Chivving wafro  
lovvo" (Lavengro), passing bad  
money.

**Shovel** (nautical), an opprobrious  
term applied to a marine en-  
gineer who knows little or  
nothing about his work.

**Show** (theatrical and common),  
any performance or entertain-  
ment. In the quotation refer-  
ence is made to a cricket match.

And have I "been bored or been weary" ?  
Oh, gracious me, no !  
There is plenty of go  
About these broad-chested and cheery  
Young fellows come up for the *show*.  
—*Bird & Freedom*.

"Many words of stage slang  
can be traced to Shakspeare's  
days and Shakspeare's plays.  
The word *show*, to begin with,  
meaning the performance and  
the play indifferently, is to be  
found in the tragedy of young  
Pyramus and his love Thisbe  
in the comedy of the 'Mid-  
summer Night's Dream':—

'The actors are at hand, and by their  
*show*  
You shall know all that you are like  
to know.'"  
—*Globe*.

Used in such phrases as boss  
the *show*, run the *show*, to direct,  
manage.

We determined to run the *show* our-  
selves, or, in theatrical parlance, by "com-  
monwealth."—*Tit-Bits*.

Over goes the *show*, explained  
by quotation.

It's all very well to say you won't  
Take another of 'em on, but oh !  
When a pretty little widow winks at you,  
Why, over goes the *show*.  
—*Music Hall Song*.

(American), a chance, an opportunity, a turn.

Flanigan hesitated for a second; then he saw he had no *show*, and with an oath he let his rifle drop.—*Century Illustrated Magazine*.

It is often heard in the form, "give a fellow a *show*." "My friends," said a Baptist preacher, "if ever the devil has anything to say for himself, you ought to give him a *show*." It has become one of the commonest of slang words in Australia. The expression probably comes from giving a person a chance of showing his cards, which, for example, he cannot do at *écarté* if his opponent shows the king, and only requires one point. Australians talk of giving a man a *show*, not having a blessed *show*, a mortal *show*. He hadn't a *show*, he was altogether out-matched.

**Show-box** (theatrical), the theatre.

**Showing a front** (army), a term used when short notice of a parade is given, and a soldier has to turn out without proper time to prepare himself by cleaning up his accoutrements and kit.

**Show Sunday**, the Sunday in Commemoration week at Oxford. On this day most of the University and their friends used to be seen in the Broad Walk of Christ Church, but of late years, owing to the influx

of town's people, very few of the University are seen there. (Studios), the Sunday before pictures are sent in for the Academy Exhibition, when studios are visited by the artists' friends.

**Shrieking sisterhood**, the (journalistic), an opprobrious term applied to women who take the lead in matters of reform connected with their sex. This phrase is of American origin.

**Shroff** (Anglo-Oriental), a money-changer, a money-broker or agent, a banker. Arabic *sar-rāf*. *Shroffage*, a money-broker's commission. To *shroff* is to assort money, pick out uncurrent coins and determine the agio or discount on them. Hence it has come in Oriental-English to mean sifting, choosing, or valuing men, horses, or anything whatever.

"*Shroffing* schools are common in Canton, where teachers of the art keep bad dollars for the purpose of exercising their pupils, and several works on the subject have been published there with numerous illustrations of dollars and other foreign coins, the methods of scooping out silver and filling up with copper or lead, comparisons between genuine and counterfeit money, &c." (Giles' Glossary of References, Anglo-Indian Glossary.)

**Shroffing dollars** (Anglo-Indian), sorting dollars, selecting them.

Among settlers in China, *shroffing* means seducing.

**Shucks** (American), "don't amount to *shucks*," it is less than nothing. *Shucks!* an exclamation signifying nonsense! or expressive of refusal. In America *shucks* are the husks or shells of nuts and Indian corn. It is an old provincial word for shell or husk. The pods of peas are still called pea-*shucks*, and being worthless have given rise to the slang phrase. The Confederate "blue-backs" or bank notes were also called *shucks*, probably for a twofold reason, because they soon became worthless through the failure of the Southern cause and from the circumstance of money being sometimes designated as dust, pelf, filthy lucre, &c.

**Shulwauers** (Anglo-Indian), trousers or drawers, the same as pyjamas, long drawers or Mogul-breeches. From the Arabic *sirwāl*, which has spread widely, though greatly changed, through many languages.

**Shunter** (Stock Exchange), explained by quotation.

One who buys or sells stocks on the chance of undoing his business, on one of the provincial Stock Exchanges, at a profit.—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Shunt**, to (popular) to move, turn aside. From the railway term. To *shunt* any one, to get rid of him.

He started in life as a welsher. Not a respectable welsher, one who snatches your brief when you present it for payment, or punches you in the jaw and tells you to *shunt*.—*Sporting Times.*

**Shut up!** a vulgar but very common phrase used as a forcible request to another to keep silent or quiet. French slang has the expression "ferme ta boîte." The Greeks said, "Keep an ox on your tongue." *Shut up*, also exhausted, done for; "that *shut* him up," that entirely stopped his speech or action.

**Shut up your face** (American), be silent. Also, "cork up your whisky-bottle."

**Shy of the blues** (thieves), explained by quotation.

I happened to know that in criminal circles to describe a person as being *shy of the blues*, is equivalent to saying that he has particular reasons for keeping out of the way of the police.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Shyster** (American), a louting, swindling attorney, or a low fellow who pretends to be an attorney—though possibly he had here no connection with the law except to sweep out an attorney's office, or run an errand, or who hangs about police offices, or courts of justice, to cheat prisoners or suitors on pretence of sending them legal assistance. Derivation uncertain, but probably from the German *scheisser* (cacator), allied

to *scheuen*, to avoid, to be in fear of, and *scheusslich*, abominable.

When a man is thrown into prison a *shyster* leech gets access to him, and extorts from him his last cent under the pretence of obtaining his liberation.—*New York Tribune*.

*Shysters* are a set of turkey-buzzards whose touch is pollution and whose breath is pestilence.—*New York in Slices*.

There is more deep-hued and earnest ingenuity in three hairs of the Counsellor's Londonderry beard than in the Pompadour mop-heads of all the dude *shysters* of the day. The Counsellor knows a dollar when he sees it, and no dollar ever coined had intelligence enough to get out of the way of that astute practitioner.—*San Francisco News-Letter*.

**Sick** (Australian popular), without trumps. In playing a nap, if the player's trumps are exhausted, he will say *sick*, and if he have a hand full of trumps, and challenges the board, to see if any one has any left, he will ask "All *sick*?"

**Sick market** (Stock Exchange), a *sick market* is one in which sales of stock are difficult to place. As a rule this is usually the result of hazardous and reckless speculation.

**Side** (common), a man is said to put *side* on when he gives himself airs, swaggers, or assumes unusual dignity. This expression is now much in vogue in England and America. It seems at first sight to be a metaphor either taken from the habit of dogs when they are given things to carry, when they invariably put their side out in a curve,

like a horse when buckjumping, or from a billiard term meaning making a ball revolve on a perpendicular axis by striking it on the side, or again from a ship that shows its side when sailing fast with a side wind; but in reality *side* is old provincial English. Bailey gives it as a north-country term, meaning long, steep, proud.

The young men of the present day, who think it is the right thing to put on a lot of *side*.—*Saturday Review*.

(Cambridge University). At the larger colleges there are several college-tutors amongst whom the students are appointed. Those attached to each are called his *side*.

A longer discourse he will perhaps have to listen to with the rest of his *side*.—*Westminster Review*.

*Side* degrees are test degrees by lecturers. (Thieves), used in the cant language of the Northern towns as an affirmative. Probably abbreviated from the phrase, "I *side* with you."

**Side-board, stick-up** (common), a collar.

**Side-pocket** (American thieves), a drinking saloon in an out-of-the-way place. A quiet resort for out-of-the-way people, fancy-women, private gamblers.

**Side-show** (American). Where there is a large exhibition, as, for instance, a "mammoth circus," or Barnum's "Great

Menagerie," there are generally established about and near it a number of trumpery little cheap exhibitions of fat men, tattooed young women, the human fish or dancing dogs, generally charging a dime or fivepence admission. These are called *side-shows*, but the term is extended in popular slang to signify anything not in the expected order of things.

The supper at the party was good, but on temperance principles, and I was beginning to feel doleful after my fried oysters, and terrapin, and chicken-salad, and soft-shell crabs, when Enos came up and whispered softly, "Now you've seen the Great Moral Circus, suppose you step into the *side-show*." The *side-show* was in the back dining-room, where he had a bottle of fine old brandy.—*Philadelphia Newspaper*.

**Side-wheeler** (American), a paddle steamer.

**Sight, to take a** (American), to take aim.

Another Indian had turned and was getting a bee line on us when Frank *took a sight* at him in return.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Sil** (thieves), a spurious bank-note, especially one drawn on the Bank of Elegance or Bank of Engraving, to avoid the consequences of a more accurate imitation of the genuine note. Much used by welters and confidence-trick men. In all probability *sil* was originally a forged document used by a "silver beggar" (which see), and abbreviated from silver.

VOL. II.

**Silk, to take** (law), to be made a Queen's Counsel.

**Sillikin** (popular), a silly person.

I don't know where I came from,  
And I don't know where I'm going,  
They think I am a *sillikin*  
But I am rather knowing.

—*H. Wilson: The Blessed Orphan*.

This term is used by Australian thieves.

**Silly-billy** (popular), a foolish fellow, a dupe.

I tell every girl I meet that "my heart is thine alone." And they all believe it! What a lot of little sillies? But I'm no *silly-billy*.—*Broadside: I Say, Cabby*.

**Silly season** (journalistic), the period when there are no parliamentary debates to 'report, or any interesting events. Newspapers to fill up their columns are then compelled to insert "silly" matter.

**Silver beggar** (beggars), a beggar who travels through the country with letters containing false statements of losses by fire, shipwrecks, accidents. Forged documents are exhibited with signatures of magistrates and clergymen. Accompanying these are sham subscription-books. The former in beggar parlance is termed a "sham," whilst the latter is denominated a "delicate" (Hotten). Formerly a pickpocket was termed a *silly* cheat, corrupted from silver (siller) cheat.

Q

**Silvers** (Stock Exchange), India-rubber, Gutta-Percha, and Telegraph Works Company Shares.

**Sim**, in clerical talk, a follower of the late Rev. Charles Simeon, a well-known Cambridge evangelical clergyman, died 1836.

**Simkin** (Anglo-Indian). Formerly, when Anglo-Indian slang was more prevalent than now-a-days, champagne was called *simkin*, probably in imitation of the native way of pronouncing the word.

The dinner was good, and the iced *simkin*, sir, delicious.—*Oakfield*.

(Theatrical), the fool in comic ballets.

**Simon** (circus), a trick horse, or one trained to perform tricks. (Popular), a sixpenny piece.

**Simon-Pure cussedness**, an American combination of Simon Pure, the character in Mrs. Centlivre's comedy of "A Bold Stroke for a Wife," now a proverbial expression, and "pure cussedness."

They (the mules) very quickly developed a capacity for *Simon-Pure cussedness* that caused the officers of the ship no little anxiety from day to day.—*T. Stevens in the "Boston Herald."*

**Simply throwing up buckets** (Australian popular), very vexed or disappointed. When a person means to say that he is as disappointed as ever he can be, he sometimes says, "Oh! I am

*simply throwing up buckets,"* this being of course a play upon the Australian use of sick (*q. v.*). This expression is of course considered very vulgar—used by schoolboys, and the like.

**Simpson**, water, as applied to its mixture with milk for adulteration.

These authorities know best the average quantity of *Simpson*—the technical term in dairymen for water—used by unscrupulous cow-keepers to debase their milk.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Hence the parish pump has been called Mrs. *Simpson*.

**Sinbad** (nautical), an old "salt" or sailor; the allusion is obvious.

**Sinch** (American), a saddle-girth. Spanish *sincha*.

You can show him the way they corral a train

In an Indian raid on a pinch;

You can show him the bravest son of the plain,

That knotted a broncho's *sinch*.

—*William Devere: The Great Wild West.*

**Sines** (Winchester College), bread, which commoners generally went without (*sine*, without).

**Sing it, don't** (popular), don't exaggerate. Another variation of this is, "Don't chant the poker."

**Sinkers** (popular), bad money.



**Sink**, to (tailors), to fall down the *sink*, to take to drinking and forsake work.

**Sipper** (popular), gravy.

**Sir-ree!** (American), generally heard as "Yes—*sir-ree!*" A low expression which is said to have originated in this anecdote. A grim, taciturn individual came to a tavern, and was asked if he wanted something to eat? He replied, "No, sir!" "Will you have anything to drink?" "No—*sir-ree!*" "Perhaps," suggested the complaisant landlord, "the gentleman would like a lady companion?" To which the reply, with a glad smile, was, "Yes—*sir-ree—bob!*"

**Sit.** (printers), an abbreviation of the word "situation." For instance, "out of *sit.*" or "collar."

**Sit under.** In Evangelical and Nonconformist circles, to *sit under* a preacher is to attend his ministry.

**Sit-upons** (common), trousers.

But I should advise you, old fellow, to get your *sit-upons* seated with wash-leather.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Sit up**, to (familiar), to make any one *sit up* is to punish him severely at a game. At billiards, for instance, when one is making a break, he is said to make his antagonist *sit up*.

**Sivey, sivvy, 'pon my** (popular), upon my honour. Corruption of "asseveration."

'*Pon my sivey*, if you was to see her pecking you'd think she was laying on pounds' weight in a day instead of losing.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Sixer** (thieves), explained by quotation.

"Neddie, from City Road, smuggled for attempt up the Grove, expected a *sixer*," means that a misguided Edward has been apprehended while promenading outside Whiteley's, and investigating the contents of ladies' pockets, and is reconciling himself to an absence from his oriental home for half a year.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

Also a six-ounce loaf of bread given to prisoners.

**Six quarter or swop, to get** (city), to be dismissed from one's employment.

**Six-shooter horse** (West American), a swift horse. A six-shooter is a revolver or repeating rifle.

I'd get on one of the *six-shooter horses*—a *six-shooter horse* is a heap better than a six-shooting gun in these cases.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Six-water grog** (nautical), very weak grog.

**Size**, to (American), to *size* a man up means to understand him, to perceive or understand what he is, or to mentally take his *size*, which is a common American equivalent for his whole bodily and mental condition.

I'm a clerk at the Palmer House and *sized* you up the minute you spoke to me. If you show your face again in the house

I'll see that you are kicked out of the door in the highest style of the art. Ta-ta!—  
*A Bunko-Steerer Taken In.*

Also a West Indian expression.

We landed at a quay of well-formed masonry, in the presence of a crowd of blacks who evidently took stock of us, *sizing* us, no doubt, with the design of engaging us in pecuniary transactions more or less connected with fruit.—*W. A. Paton: Down the Islands.*

(Cambridge University), to send for extra victuals in Hall; *e.g.*, an undergraduate will *size* for a tankard of Buttery ale, instead of the small beer or "swipes" that is placed on the table.

**Skedaddle** (common), of American origin, to run away, to be scattered in rout.

He raises such a rumpus,

"He's a rum puss out and out,"

That the other cats *skedaddle*,

Quite dismayed they're put to rout.

—*Detroit Free Press.*

"The Scotch apply the word to milk spilt over the pail in carrying it. During the late American war the New York papers said the Southern forces were *skedaddled* by the Federals. Saxon *scedan*, to pour out" (Dr. Brewer). In addition to this it may be suggested that *sketdaddle* in English provincial dialects means to go quickly but unsteadily. *Sket*, quickly, and *daddle*, to walk irregularly or unsteadily (Wright). Though this may not be the true origin of the word it corresponds to the definition of retreating

rapidly yet in a confused irregular manner. *Sket* corresponds with *skeet* (which see), to go quickly or run. Dutch *schieten*; Anglo-Saxon *scabtan*. Schoolboys generally derive the word from Greek *σκαδαννυμι*, to put to flight, or the substantive *σκαδασμος*.

**Skeet** (American, New York and Philadelphia), to dart, run along rapidly. "Now then, *skeet!*" From the Dutch *schiet*, *schieten*, to dart, cast, shoot, throw. Hence probably a *skit*, a flippant sarcasm, *i.e.*, a shot. The word is sometimes confused in Philadelphia with *skeet*, the local vulgar pronunciation of skate.

**Skeezicks, skeesicks** (American). Bartlett defines this as a mean, contemptible fellow. The writer has always understood it to rather mean a fidgety, fussy little fellow. Both may be right. In Cornwall, *skeese* means to frisk about. *Skieer* is "a lamb which kills itself by excess of activity" (Wright).

**Sket** (thieves), a skeleton key or pick-lock. From provincial *sket*, a latch, bolt, &c.

**Skew** (Harrow), a dunce or ignoramus. Probably from provincial *skew*, one-sided (for *askew*), awry, irregular, as *skew-brained*, odd, fanciful, idiotic; to *skew* is to fail in construing a lesson. (Old cant), a cup, porringer. Probably old French *escuelle*.

**Skid, skiv** (popular), a sovereign.

**Skids** (American), volunteers, militiamen. Swedish *skyda*, a guard, protector.

Oh brighten up your uniforms !  
Put sweet ile on your har !  
Go tell yore culled neighbours,  
Go tell it everywhar ;  
Dis great organisation  
De cream la cream, dey say,  
March on for decoration,  
De *skids* are out to-day !  
When ! when ! dandies !  
Now ain't we hat-que-hay  
Sweet goodness' sake !  
We take de cake !  
De *skids* are out to-day !

—*Negro Minstrel Song.*

**Skied** (artists), said of a picture which is hung on the upper line at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy.

Had a similar course of conduct been pursued with respect to the disposition of pictures in the actual Salon, many loathsome daubs that disgrace the "line" there would have been sternly *skied*, or, still better, peremptorily rejected. — *Daily Telegraph.*

"The Three Graces," now well placed, had been previously *skied*. But didn't this show that Sir Joshua's work ranked uncommonly high in the opinion of the former hangers. — *Punch.*

**Skill** (football), when the ball is kicked between posts and thus procures a goal, it is termed a *skill*.

**Skilly** (common), water-gruel, in the workhouse and prisons.

So much the better for you, I say,  
So much the better for you.  
If you never act silly, you'll keep off the *skilly*.

That's so much the better for you.  
—*Music Hall Song.*

A Lincolnshire term, *skilly*, oatmeal-gruel, from obsolete English *skelly*, thin and light, applied to thin, poor food ; also sailor's soup of many ingredients.

**Skilly and toke** (popular), applied to anything mild, insipid.

The mugs and the jugs never joke, never gag, never work in a wheeze ; no, their talk is all *skilly and toke*. — *Punch.*

**Skilts** (American). "A sort of brown tan trousers, formerly worn in New England, very large and reaching below the knee" (Bartlett). Probably from *kilt*, *kelt*, undyed cloth made from black and white wool.

**Skimmer** (public schools), a dive into the water in a slanting direction without going down deep.

**Skimmery** (Oxford), St. Mary's Hall.

So I swapped the beggar to a *skimmery*-man for a regular slap up set of pets of the ballet. — *C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Skin** (American cadet), a report ; hefty *skin*, a rigorous report. (Popular and thieves), a purse. The term is much used by strolling actors, showmen, &c.

**Skin a razor, to** (common), to drive a hard and close bargain.

You be blowed, you young Jew sharper ! You'd *skin a razor*, that you would. I'll back you for drivin' bargains agen Joe hisself. Now, Mo, boy, fair dealin' with an old customer. — *Savage London.*

**Skin disease** (popular), four ale, *i.e.*, ale at 4d. a quart.

**Skin game** (American), a swindle.

**Skinned** (American and Australian), to keep one's eye *skinned*, to be on the look-out, to have an eye to the main chance. *Skinned*, open. *Cf.* also, "to have one's weather eye open."

Kept his eye *skinned*, an eye that never missed a chance of gain. — *New South Wales Paper*.

**Skinner** (turf). *Vide* SKIN THE LAMB.

**Skinner**s, a variety of a class of persons in confederacy who make a living by attending at sales. *Vide* KNOCK-OUT.

So they themselves modestly describe their avocation, should a stranger venture to make inquiry; but amongst themselves they are *skinner*s, "knock-outs," and "odd-trick men," and they work together in what the elegant language of their profession calls a "swim." — *Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Skin of the teeth**, by the (common), just or barely escaped. Of Biblical origin.

Just by the *skin of its teeth* the Manchester New Year's Meeting was brought to a satisfactory finish, but it was a desperately near thing. — *Sporting Times*.

**Skin the lamb** (turf), when a non-favourite wins a race, book-makers are said to *skin the lamb*, under the supposition that they win all their debts, no person having backed the winner. This has been corrupted into "skinner" (Hotten).

"*Skinned the lamb* through you, old chap," yelled the Coke, grasping the lucky jockey's hand. — *Sporting Times*.

It was at the "colonel" that Mr. B. —, in sporting parlance, *skinned the lamb* to the extent of some £1200. — *Saturday Review*.

Also a game at cards; a corruption of *lansquenet*.

**Skin**, to (Yale University), to obtain a knowledge of a lesson by hearing it read by another. Also to borrow another's ideas and present them as one's own, to plagiarise, to become possessed of information in an examination or recitation by unfair or secret means. "In our examinations," says a correspondent, "many of the fellows cover the palms of their hands with dates, and when called upon for a given date, they read it off directly from their hands." Such persons *skin*. To *skin* a head, to read a lesson over just before going into class. (Common), to pull off a jersey, to pull off one's bed-clothes. More used at colleges and universities.

**Skin your own skunks** (American). This highly expressive phrase is applied to any man when he is exhorted to do his own dirty or difficult work without involving another in it.

As a last proof of the absence of characteristic individuality in Mr. L.'s style, we take a sentence from a story of two Indians who were by the ears. "To which Marten replied that Moose might *skin his own skunks*, and fish for his own minnows,

and also paddle his own canoe to the devil if it so pleased him"—all of these being approved Indian sayings of high and racy antiquity.—*Review of the Algonquin Legends of New England*, 1884.

**Skip a cog** (American), to make a mistake in planning machinery, metaphorically to commit any error by want of foresight.

A Virginia preacher who believes in prayer met a bear in the woods the other day, and instead of putting his remedy into effect he jumped from a bluff into Cheat River and swam half a mile. He had never tried prayers for bear, and was a little afraid they'd skip a cog somewhere.—*American Newspaper*.

**Skip out, to** (American). This means, like "light out," to escape. It is probably only a variation of that word. To *jump*, to evade, to dodge. Both *skip* and *jump* occur in the following extract.

A woman who keeps a boarding-house on Larned Street called at police headquarters yesterday to complain that a gentleman boarder had *skipped* her house, leaving a bill unpaid. . . . A man who'll *jump* a board bill and a marriage engagement, too, is an outlaw who should be locked up.—*Detroit Free Press*.

It is sometimes said when a man dies that he has *skipped out*.

**Skipper** (old cant), a barn.

Now let each tripper  
Make a retreat into the *skipper*.  
—*Broome: Jovial Crew*.

Hotten derives this from Welsh *ysgubor*, pronounced *scybor* or *scibor*, a barn. (Strolling performers, &c.), to *skipper* it, to sleep in the open air, or in a

rough way. *Skipper*, properly master of a small vessel, is often used to designate a chief or manager, or captain of a ship.

**Skipper-birds, keyhole-whistlers** (beggars), beggars who have their night's lodging in a barn or outhouse. *Vide* SKIPPER.

**Skip the gutter**, common phrase. In old cant, a *skip-kennel* was a lackey or servant. *Skip the gutter* seems to be only an expression equivalent to "Houp la!" or "Over she goes!"

*Skip the gutter*, tra la la! Tottie, do you love me?

Ting-ting, *au revoir*, girls there's none above me.

If you like me, tell me so—do not let me linger;

Tottie, if you love me, oh! squeeze my little finger!

—*Music Hall Song*.

**Skip, to** (University), to shirk; not to attend a lecture, for instance.

**Skirk out, to** (Winchester College), to go up town without leave.

**Skirk, to** (Winchester College), to go into the water without jumping in.

**Skitting dealers** (old cant), in George II.'s time beggars who professed to be tongueless.

**Skittles!** (popular), nonsense!

"Stop, sir!" shouted the jeweller; "it's four shillings altogether."

"*Skittles!*" observed the customer.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Skulduggery** (American), rascality, treachery. A Western word. From Low Dutch slang (thieves), *schooldugerey*, *school*, a villain.

**Skull** (American), the head man anywhere. The allusion to *skull* as the brain-case. The President of the United States, or a governor.

**Skungle** (American), a word which "had a run" at the end of the civil war. It meant many things, but chiefly to disappear, or to make disappear. Thus a deserter *skungled*, and sometimes he *skungled* a coat or watch.

Dey shtripped off his coat, and *skungled* his boots.

—*The Breitmann Ballads.*

**Skunk**, used by all English-speaking people but originally American. Properly an animal nearly allied to the weasel on the one hand and to the otter on the other, which secretes an extremely fetid liquor as a means of defence. Figuratively a paltry, mean wretch, a contemptible creature.

Mr. — (jumping to his feet and speaking very excitedly), "I'd knock your two eyes into one. You're a big fellow, and just come over here." Mr. —, "Go along." Mr. — (loudly), "Come over here, you common blackguard; you low *skunk*." Mr. —, "Go along out of that." Mr. — (very excitedly), "You dirty low mean skut. I'd ram my fist through you." (Laughter). Mr. —, "Go to the coal pits, where you were in England."—*Evening News.*

He was one of those down-lookin' *skunks* I was a-speaking of, and a more endless villain, p'raps, there ain't between the blessed poles than he was.—*Sam Slick.*

**Sky** (thieves and popular), a pocket. Abbreviation of "sky-rocket," which see.

How little of fun do they have in the main  
At the same old haunts again and again;  
When the Oof Bird's scarce and the land-lady's fly,  
And there isn't a mash with a mag in his *sky*.

—*Sporting Times.*

(Westminster School), a black-guard. Said to be from the old gown and town rows in which the Westminsters styled themselves Romans, and their antagonists *volsci*—hence *sky*.

**Sky-blue**, formerly gin, or London milk.

Oh! for that small, small beer anew,  
And (heaven's own type) that mild *sky-blue*

That wash'd my sweet meals down.

—*Hood: Retrospective Review.*

**Sky farmers** (old cant), rogues who go about the country with a false pass extorting money.

**Sky-larker** (old cant), a journeyman bricklayer that belongs to a gang of housebreakers.

**Sky-rocket** (thieves), rhyming slang for pocket.

A slavey piped the spoons sticking out of my *sky-rocket*, so I got smuggled.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Sky-scraper** (common), a tall man. In nautical language, a triangular sail set above the sky-sail.

**Skyser, skycer** (thieves), a low, mean, sponging fellow. *Vide* SHICER and SHYSTER.

**Skyte** (Shrewsbury School), explained by quotation.

At one time there used to be a strong feeling against the day boys, who live or lodge in the town; and the designation of *skytes* was formerly applied to them.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

Also used by Scottish school-boys with the meaning of fool.

They vituperated the dominies as "auld shoan," "coofs," "blasties," "blethering bellums," "blunties," "chuffies," "gowks," "grunzies," "maggot's meat," *skytes*, and "staumris."—*Daily Telegraph.*

Possibly from Σκυθῆς, a Scythian, but more probably from provincial English *skite* (literally *cacator*), *skite*, and *skitter*, merdis aspergere (Halliwell). (Popular), a fool. Also "kite."

**Sky, to** (popular), or *sky* a brown, to toss up with pence. (Cricket, lawn-tennis, &c.), to *sky* a ball, to hit a ball up in the air.

Sugg, with his score at twelve, *skied* a delivery from the Oxonian.—*Sportsman.*

*Vide* SKIED.

**Slab-sided** (American), straight, without contour or curve. Generally applied to persons of a prim, stiff, "up and down" figure.

Jack Downing says that Maine is the middle and kernel of real Yankeeism, Rhode Island and Connecticut point to each other as the focus of the article; while the Massachusetts man will tell you that the real *slab-sided* whittler is indi-

genous to Vermont and New Hampshire.—*New Sloper Sketches*, by C. G. Leland (*Knickerbocker Magazine*, March 1856).

**Slack** (nautical), to hold on the *slack*, to skulk, as if holding a slack rope.

**Slacks** (popular), fatigue trousers drawn over others to keep them clean.

Sailors of all nationalities, and almost every shade of colour between white and black, some smart and attired in their best clothes, others as though but just released from ship duty, unwashed and in their working *slacks* and guernseys.—*James Greenwood: Odd People in Odd Places.*

**Slack 'un** (pugilistic), a smashing hit, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, *i.e.*, a blow *à la* Slack. Jack Slack (champion from 1750 to 1760) was renowned for the force of his hits.

**Slam, to** (popular), to talk fluently—"he is the bloke to *slam*." From a term in use among low singers at the East End, by which they denote a certain style of note in chaffinches (Hotten). (Army), to simulate drunkenness. The swaggering soldier whose funds are at a low ebb, and who cannot buy drink, often returns with the symptoms of intoxication, assumed, and a maudlin story of the friends he found who liberally stood treat till he was made thus glorious.

**Slaney** (thieves), a theatre. Probably a variation from "slang," which see.

**Slang** (showmen, circus, &c.), a performance, a travelling show of any kind. The *slangs*, however, is the more usual expression, meaning any collection of such shows, or generally the showman's profession. Also a gymnast's performance; a performance at penny "gaffs," *i.e.*, low theatres or music halls. A first *slang*, second *slang*, are respectively first and second performances given the same evening. (Thieves), this or that particular kind of thieving. The word is old.

"How do you work now?" "Oh, upon the old *slang*, and sometimes a little bully-prigging."—Parker: *Variiegated Characters*.

A watch chain.

Fulled for a clock and *slang*.—Horsley: *Jottings from Jail*.

(Prison), the *slang*. Leg-irons worn by convicts as a special punishment inflicted by the superior authority of one of the Board of Directors, and for one of two offences, an assault upon a prison officer or an attempt to escape. The irons consist of a chain weighing from 7 to 8 lbs., attached to ankle basils, which are rivetted on to the leg; the chain is some three feet in length, and is carried between the legs, being suspended from a leather waist-belt. The noise the chain makes in walking is evidently the origin of the expression *slangs*. These irons may be carried, according to sentence, from

three to six months. They are worn with a parti-coloured dress, alternate stripes of yellow and drab for an escape, of yellow and black for an assault, and the dress is continued for a longer period after the chain is removed. These chains are never taken off day or night, when once rivetted. (Costermongers), counterfeit weights and measures. A *slang* quart is a pint and a half.

There are not half so many *slangs* as there was eighteen months ago.—Mayhew: *London Labour and London Poor*.

Out on the *slang*, going about with a hawker's license. Of gypsy origin.

Matty's got his *slangs* . . . now a *slang* means, among divers things, a hawker's license.—Charles G. Leland: *The English Gypsies*.

The term *slang*, as connected with any kind of theatrical performance or show, is of gypsy origin. The gypsies modified the Hindu *swangia* (*w* easily passes to *l*, *e.g.*, very, London swells, *vevy*; children, *velly*) into the English *slang*. One thing is certain, it has always been regarded as a gypsy word and used as one of them. It may be remarked that while many of the words such as "multee kerteever," "fake," &c., are to be found in common slang, they are used "on the *slangs*," or among showmen, with special application, and a large proportion of them actually originated in shows whence they passed to



common slang. The word, in the sense of language or lingo, has been hitherto used to mean "argot," "vulgar language," "abuse." It is clear that in the sense of argot it is gypsy, the *slang* language originally meaning the language of the *slangs*, or shows, just as "langage de l'argot" meant the language of the brotherhood termed "argot," being afterwards shortened into argot and generalised. But *slang*, as "abuse" or "vulgar language," is of an Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian source, and while there appears to be every reason to believe that the word *slang*, as tradition asserts, is of gypsy origin, there is also ground to believe that it has drawn something from another source. "*Slang* or vulgar language," according to Skeat (Etymological Dictionary), "is from the Norwegian *sleng*, a slinging, a device, a burden of a song. *Slengja*, to sling; *slengja kjeften*, to *slang*, abuse (literally to sling the jaw); *sleng-jenanm*, a *slang* (i.e., an abusive name); *sleng-jeord*, an insulting word; all from *slengja*, to sling." This is all, however, based on the assumption that *slang* means nothing but abuse, or "the slings and arrows" of vituperation, while it has never at any time meant that, or even "vulgar language," so much as what in Hindu is called *bhāt*, a tongue used for purposes of concealment. A man may be

abused to the utmost, and in vulgar language at that, without a word of *slang* being employed; while on the other hand, one might translate the New Testament into Romany, which is the very *slang* of slangs, or Shelta, or even canting itself, with the utmost propriety. Yet it is very probable that while *slang*, in the sense of *bhāt*, or jargon, is of gypsy origin, it owes something in the meaning of "abuse" to a northern source. It may, however, be fairly admitted, that the Anglo-Saxon *slanga* (*circum-actio*), and *toislanga* (*dubietas*) (not noticed by Skeat), somewhat favours the association of *slang* with "double meaning" (Glos. Alf.). To conclude, it should be noticed that the common English word sling is allied to *slang* as abuse, or depreciatory language. *Slinging off* is much used among the lower orders with the signification of casting insinuations, making innuendoes.

In *Notes and Queries* we find the following:—"Henry T. Riley supposes this term to descend from the time when the vituperative Dutch General Slongenbergh ruled over part of the English forces. In corroboration of the conjecture I may add that the sailors of our Royal Navy still use to designate a soldier under the name *slang*, 'het is een *slang*,' meaning it is a red-coat, whilst the substantive itself may very well have been

employed as a *nom de guerre* for the Dutch general I have just mentioned, and afterwards applied to all soldiers indiscriminately" (J. H. Van Lennep). This, needless to say, is very far fetched.

**Slangander** (American), to slander in a silly manner. *Slangooing*, women's tittle-tattle, backbiting, or gossip.

There are points on which we disagree,  
And I will state the facts,  
I don't go round *slangandering*  
My friends behind their backs.

—*The Breitmann Ballads.*

**Slang and pitcher shop**, a (popular), a shop where they sell the commonest and cheapest toys, &c., for Cheap Jacks—knock-'em-downs, prizes to give away, &c. From *slang*, a show, performance, and *pitch*, street performance, or place selected by itinerants of all kinds, Cheap Jacks, &c.

**Slang boys** (old cant). "Boys of the slang, fellows who speak the slang language, which is the same as flash and cant" (Parker, "Variegated Characters").

**Slang cull** (cant), master of a show.

**Slanging** (cant), explained by quotation.

To exhibit anything in a fair or market, such as a tall man, or a cow with two heads, that's called *slanging*, and the exhibitor is called the "slang cull."—*Parker: Variegated Characters.*

The term has now a more extended meaning. *Vide SLANG.*

**Slang-tree**, the, the stage, the trapeze. *Vide SLANG.* To 'climb up the *slang-tree*, metaphorically, to make an exhibition of oneself in public.

When I was a girl, and a nice girl I was,  
At least so the young men asserted,  
Society then was far better than now,  
If now it's correctly reported.  
The ladies of fashion felt no sudden passion  
To flash their good looks on the stage,  
No Lily or Langtry would climb up the  
*slang-tree*,  
In hope to become all the rage.

—*Catnach Broadside.*

**Slang us your mauley** (thieves and roughs), shake hands. A variation of "sling your daddle."

**Slang-whanger** (common), a scurrilous or abusive person.

The personal disputes of the miserable *slang-whangers*.—*Irving: Salmagundi.*

Americanism for one who makes too constant a use of slang expressions, more especially applied to members of Congress, and of other legislative assemblies, who are addicted to vulgarity of speech, or are incapable of expressing themselves in refined or decorous language.

Parson Brownlow is a local preacher and editor in Tennessee, and one of the *slang-whangers* of the south-west.—*Harper's Magazine.*

**Slant** (Australian popular), a chance. An Australian M.P., who had the very unenviable

nickname of Rogue, was addressing the electors of Ballarat East, a constituency which included the rough mining population of Bungaree. The miners were there in great force, and would not allow him to get a hearing, until one of their number persuaded the rest "to give the old brute a *slant*," when the speaker had the courage to address them as "Gentlemen of Ballarat East, and savages of Bungaree."

**Slant, to** (thieves), to run away.

We have collared the swag—let us *slant*!  
—*Sporting Times*.

(Nautical), to *slant* across, to sail. "We had a good *slant* across the bay," *i.e.*, a good passage.

**Slap**, paint for the face, rouge or vermilion to colour the face. In allusion to "slapping," a rough, cheap way of colouring walls in a house. Hence to apply rouge in a hurry.

As a suitable commencement to the vengeful machinations

Directed against Maudie and her "chap,"

She nullified the virtues of her toilet preparations;

Or, in other words, she doctored Maudie's *slap*.

—*Sporting Times*.

It is said that when Bath Montague, a famous light comedian, who had had the misfortune to lose his hair when a youth, presented himself to the elder Macready, manager of the Bristol

Theatre, the latter was very much disappointed at the appearance of his new recruit. Montague, although a gentleman, had been a brother "faker" with Edmund Kean in Richardson's show, and amongst other bad habits had accustomed himself to the showman's slang. "When I get my *slap* on," said he, "you'll see that I shall be all there!"

"Good heavens! what does the man mean by *slap*?" inquired Macready, who was as great an autocrat as his famous son.

"Wait till night, Guv'nor, and you'll see!"

When at night an elegant, rosy-cheeked youth, with the limbs of Antinous and the head and front of Apollo, bounded on the stage for Mercutio, the manager was amazed.

"Good God!" he exclaimed, "can this be Montague?"

"No, Guv'nor," replied the airy youth, "I'm Mercutio. It's the fakements—the wig and the *slap*, that does it."

**Slap-bang** (popular), a low eating-house where you have to pay down money with a *slap-bang*.

They lived in the same street, walked into town every morning at the same hour, dined at the same *slap-bang* every day.—*Sketches by Boz*.

**Slap up** (common), first-rate, excellent, fine, spruce, fashionable.

Might not he quarter a countess's coat on his brougham along with the Jones

arms; or, more *slap up* still, have the two shields painted on the panels with the coronets over. — *Thackeray: The New-comer.*

“Do you think he’s one of our perfection?” inquired the Sandman.

“Bless you! no—that he ain’t,” returned the Tinker. “He’s a reg’lar *slap-up* svelt.” — *Ainsworth: Auricol.*

A poodie they will play with, just to aggravate their mash;  
Their fan is more a weapon than a toy.  
They’ll sport a *slap-up* carriage if he’s not  
hard up for cash,  
And they glory in a much-bebuttoned  
“boy.”

—*Bird o’ Freedom.*

**Slash** (thieves), an outside pocket.  
Properly a cut in cloth.

**Slate** (common), abuse, quarrel.

Really these things are ordered much better in England. After a mutual *slate*, a meeting generally takes place in Prossers’ Avenue, or some equally lively location, and the results are somewhat deadly; but not until the next day after the encounter.—*Fun.*

(American political), the list of people recommended to office by a political party. (Old canting), a sheet. In Dutch slang *slaatje*, *klein linnengood*, small linen.

**Slate off** (common), to have a *slate off*, to be slightly deranged. A synonym for “to have a tile loose.”

**Slater** (common), a criticiser. Frequently an airy and uneducated youth, who endeavours to be facetious at the expense of the play and the players.

**Slate-smasher** (American political), a President or leading statesman who will not attend to the nominations or recommendations of a party.

If there be anything I like, it is to see a *slate* smashed, or a caucus broken up.—*Cincinnati Weekly Inquirer.*

**Slate**, to (common), to pelt with abuse, to criticise, to “cut up” in a review. From provincial *slate*, to ridicule, to be angry.

Wy, it’s worth a fair six *d.* a week jest to see ‘em a *slating* Old Chips.

—*Punch.*

“Don’t think much of that,” says the pit; “I expect it’ll be *slated* all round.” The pit was right. The piece was *slated*, *i.e.*, written down by the Press.—*G. Sims: Social Kaleidoscope.*

Also to knock a man’s hat over his eyes, or to knock him. (Sporting), to lay heavily against a man or horse in a race.

**Slathers** (American), abundance, superfluity, “no end of.”

Come along, old fellow, you’re looking seedy; I’ll tog you out—I’ll stand a new rig for you, from a red feather in a new hat all the way down to high-heeled boots. I’ve got *slathers* of money, and I’m goin’ to git more. It’s high old times with me now—*slätherin’* old times, I tell you.—*Newspaper.*

In the Midland counties *slatter* means to waste or spill, but the principal meaning of the word is rather slovenliness or carelessness.

**Slaughterer** (booksellers), a man connected with the book trade, who buys up large cheap lots at

sales and reduces the material back to pulp.

**Slaughter-house** (popular), generally a place of business or firm which pays starvation wages, the head of which is termed a "sweater." In particular, a place where journeymen cabinetmakers, working on their own account, are sure to sell the articles (as a last resource) which they have been offering from place to place without success.

**Slavey** (general), maid-servant.

Or even if I was a *slavey*,  
I'd rather be that than a man,  
I'd get the first dip in the gravy,  
I'd get the first sop in the pan.

—*Song*.

Applied sometimes to a male.

Then the boy Thomas, otherwise called *slavey*, may say, there he goes again. . . . The *slavey* has Mr. Frederick's hot water.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes*.

**Slaving gloke** (old cant), a servant.

**Sleeper** (American), money which lies unclaimed on a gambling table.

**Sleeve-board** (tailors), a hard word to pronounce, a jaw-breaker.

**Slewed** (common), intoxicated. A maritime phrase employed by sailors to denote the uneven course of a ship in the act of changing her tack or angle of progress, and thence supposed

to describe the attempts made by a drunken man to walk straight. The word was very generally used in America when it was much less known in England. It is, however, of old Yorkshire origin.

I feel my head begin to swim,  
I see a knock-kneed Seraphim,  
I hear old Nick—I know it's him—  
I'm drunk!

I cannot feel my feet at all,  
I cannot see the nearest wall,  
I cannot hear the missus call—  
I'm boozed!

I feel that I have lost my purse,  
I see my wife—that's much worse—  
I hear the echo of my curse—  
I'm *slewed*!

I cannot feel my way upstairs,  
I cannot see to say my prayers,  
I cannot hear my own choice swears—  
I'm screwed!

I feel a thump upon my head,  
I see a bedroom full of bed,  
I hear the naughty word *she* said—  
She's drunk!

—*Sporting Times*.

Also *slued*.

He came into our place one night to take her home; rather *slued*, but not too much.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

**Slewer** (American), a servant-girl; a vulgar word, only heard among fast young men. *Sloor*, *slure*, Dutch slang, a poor, common woman.

**Slick** (studios) is synonymous of rapid, bold, dashing. A picture which is dashed off is sometimes said to be too *slick*. (Popular), fast, an Americanism.

Never trust me if I ever seed a dinner go so *slick*! Yer don't need to carry a

nosebag when yer goes out of a night, for yer can stow away enough for a week at wunst.—*Savage London.*

**Slick-a-die** (thieves), a pocket-book. *Vide DEE.*

**Slicker** (American cowboys), a coat, greatcoat. From *slick*, old form of *sleek*. *Slick* is in universal use in New England with the meaning of smooth, shining, hence applied to anything nice, neat, apt, or appropriate.

Now, I'll wear this *slicker* and have a red handkerchief around my neck, and also wear this white hat, and for God's sake don't you shoot me.—*St. Louis Globe Democrat.*

**Slick, to** (American), to swallow; *slick it down*, swallow it. Dutch *slikken*, to swallow down. Also, "*slick it up.*" Dutch *slik-op*, "one that will lick up, or swallow down, almost everything that's edible" (Sewel, 1757). Swedish *slika*, to lick.

**Slide** (American), "oh, let it *slide*," or "let it rip," never mind. Though claimed as an Americanism it is a very old English phrase. Shakspeare in the "Taming of the Shrew" has, "Let the world *slide*;" Chaucer in the "Clerke's Tale" uses, "Well-nigh let all other cures *slide*." To "let her rip" is of Western river origin. Steamboats when racing were liable to come to grief on sunken trees and quays, but in the mad excitement of a race no account was taken of these dangers—

it was all happy-go-lucky—"let her rip," if it so chances, so long as we out-run the rival boat.

**Slim** (old cant), punch. "A bobstick of rum *slim*, a shilling's worth of rum" (Parker, "Variegated Characters").

**Sling a nasty pen, to** (American), is said of a scurrilous writer. *Slings* a nasty foot, is a good dancer.

"I have rather a notion of Jenny. She *slings a nasty foot*," meaning that she danced very well.—*Sketches Attributed to Davy Crockett, 1834.*

**Slingers** (popular), bits of bread floating in tea.

**Slinging off** (popular), casting insinuations, making innuendoes.

**Sling one's Daniels, to** (popular), to move on, to run away.

He flung up his window with a furious bang . . . swore in horrible terms that if we did not that instant *sling our Daniels*—which the Trombone informed me was an equivalent for moving off—he would shy at us every heavenly article of crockery his apartment contained.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Sling one's hook** (common), to begone.

I used to go horse-racing once,  
At last I made a book.  
Though lots of men took people's coin,  
And then would *sling their hook*;  
I paid my losses like a man,  
Till I'd lost about a "thou,"  
But I haven't (sym :) haven't (sym :)  
I haven't for a long time now!  
—*Broadside Ballad.*

Probably originally a sailor's expression, as "sling your bunk," and the phrase would explain itself as the intimation to let go one's hold of a boat by means of a boat-hook.

**Sling, to** (thieves), to throw away so as to get rid of and escape detection. Thus a stolen handkerchief or any ill-gotten gains are "slung" or thrown away when pursuit is close. Also to pass to a confederate.

Watching the "screw," getting his dyspeptical neighbours to *sling* him surplus "eighters" with "puddings" on a Thursday.—*Evening News*.

(Popular), *sling* your daddle, give me your hand, shake hands. To *sling*, to blow the nose with the naked fingers; generally to talk, to fling, as to *sling* patter, *sling* abuse.

But Jack could always *sling* touching patter, you never heard such a crying tongue.—*New South Wales Paper*.

(Theatrical), to jerk or *sling* a part is to fill a part; to *sling* a nasty part is to play it so well that another performer has a difficulty in rivalling it. (American), to *sling* oneself round on the loose, to go about in a hurried, reckless manner. "*Sling* yourself," "let her *sling*," used in the same slangy way by the Dutch *slingeren*, to hurry about.

**Sling your bunk** (American), go away. Literally "sling up your hammock." Hence to *bunk*, to go.

VOL. II.

**Slippery** (thieves), soap. Termed by French thieves *glissant*, that is, *slippery*.

**Slip, to** (popular), to *slip* any one, to give him the *slip*.

He told the other policeman that I had been with another girl, who *slipped* him.—*Standard*.

To *slip* into any one, to attack him.

**Slither, to** (Australian popular), to hurry away. Old provincial. Also "sliter." *Slither* is probably only another form of "slide," and so may be taken to mean slide off, slip off.

*Slither*, you and your brother, or they'll nab you both.—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Slobber** (printers), badly distributed ink is expressed thus. The effect is to show a "rotten" or "scabby" appearance.

**Slog** (popular), a blow, a fight with the fists. (Public schools), a large slice of anything.

**Slogger** (cricketers), one in the habit of slogging; that is, playing in an unscientific manner, striking the ball recklessly; for instance, hitting to leg or long off a ball which ought to be cut at point. (Popular), a quick worker. (Common), a prize-fighter.

The great *slogger* had offered, per advertisement, 1000 dollars to any enterprising boxer who would stand up "fore-nist" him for four rounds.—*Evening News*.

R

Also slugger.

Muse, sing of the merriest mill, between  
two pugilistic rivals,  
That yet has been seen in the ring, in this  
season of fistic revivals,  
Don't warble of Smith and Kilrain, or of  
Sullivan, known as the *Slugger*.

—*Punch*.

**Sloggers** (Cambridge University),  
*i.e.*, "slow-goers," the second  
division of race-boats at Cam-  
bridge. Called "torpids" at  
Oxford.

**Slogging** (popular), a beating,  
thrashing, and fight. *Vide* TO  
SLOG.

**Slog on** (printers). A compositor  
is said to have a *slog on* when  
he is making a spurt either for  
the purposes of making a good  
bill, or because the work he is  
engaged on is urgent.

**Slog, to** (popular), to strike hard,  
thrash. From the German  
*schlagen*, or Gaelic *slogan*. *Vide*  
SLOGGER.

This would produce the immediate entry  
of the night-officer, while the gentleman  
who occupied the apartment overhead  
would shower down sanguinary adverbs,  
and threaten to *slog* the jealous watch-  
maker the following day.—*Evening News*.

**Slop** (popular and thieves), a  
policeman, from back-slang,  
*esclop*, police.

I wish I'd been there to have a shy at  
the *esclops*.—*Mayhew: London Labour  
and the London Poor*.

They found out as you're the parson as  
'tices the gals away,  
They say it's through you they peaches,  
and goes on the "Christian lay."

I dragged you in here and saved you, and  
sent out a gal for the *slops*,

Ha, they're a-comin', sir!

—*George R. Sims: Ballads of Babylon*.

Then the magistrate rose in a roaring  
rage,

And said he, "You may think it fun

The feelings of *slops* to thus outrage;

Just see what you've been and done."

—*Topical Times*.

**Slope** (alleged American). Of this  
word Hotten says, "It means  
to decamp, to run, or rather to  
slip away. Some persons think  
it came originally from *lope*, to  
make off, and that the *s* prob-  
ably became affixed as a por-  
tion of the preceding word, as  
*let 'slope*, let us run. It is purely  
an Americanism, and is possibly  
but an emendation of our own  
word *elope*. Lope, leap, and  
elope are kindred." It is a  
pity to spoil so much ingenious  
guess-work, but *slope* is only  
American in being old New  
York, or Hollands Dutch. "Hy  
*sloop weg*," he sneaked away, is  
given by Sewell (1754) as the  
perfect tense of *sluypen*, to  
sneak or slink away, and *weg-  
sluyping*, an evasion or sneak-  
ing off. Lope, leap, and elope  
may be near kindred, but they  
are only fourth cousins to *slope*.

The defendant came up to him and told  
him to pack up and *slope*. He obeyed the  
constable's order.—*Standard*.

**Sloper's Island** (London), the  
artisan's village near Loug-  
borough Junction was and is  
still so called from the frequency  
with which tenants "sloped"  
without paying their rent. This



was more especially the case at first, when the houses were let out as weekly tenements. The "village" was at one time surrounded by fields, hence its being called an "island;" now it is in the midst of a densely-populated neighbourhood.

**Slop over, to** (common). "To *slop over* one's talk" is to exhibit exaggerated effusiveness of manner and words—to draw the long-bow with caddish servility or effrontery. A very subtle expression, and used in a variety of meanings, all of them, however, with something or all of the foregoing in them.

Yes, to judge from the opening chapters, "When we were Boys" is an admirable essay in the art of *slopping over*. . . . The sentimental parent and the schoolboys who allude to their fathers as "pa" are bad enough, but the picture of the "unspoiled London *ingénue*," with her warbling voice, "luminous figure," and insufferable arch conversation, is calculated to make the angels weep.—*Globe*.

The expression is attributed to Artemus Ward.

**Slops** (thieves), chests or packages of tea. "He shook a slum of *slops*," stole a chest of tea. (Popular), garments. Anglo-Saxon *slop*, a covering; Dutch *sloove*. Shakspeare uses this word with the meaning of breeches. Old English *slop*, gown or cassock.

**Slosher** (Cheltenham College) is synonymous with "driver," an assistant in one of the board-

ing-houses whose functions consist in superintending evening work, dormitories, &c.

**Slosh, to** (American), to frequent grog-shops in a half-tipsy state.

Tim isn't good for much now; all the good he ever had in him is fast oozing out; since he's taken to *sloshing* about he hasn't done a lick, and isn't worth a red cent.—*Flush Times of Alabama*.

**Slouch** (American), no *slouch* on the shoot, an excellent marksman. From English *slouch*, Danish *sloff*, stupid, clumsy man.

**Slour, to** (thieves), to lock up, fasten up. A *sloured* hoxter, a buttoned-up inside pocket.

No *sloured* hoxter my snipes could stay,  
Fake away!

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

From provincial *store*, to grasp, or hold fast.

**Slug** (American), ingot of gold or silver; twenty-dollar piece. (Common), glass of spirits.

He ordered the waiter to . . . bring alongside a short allowance of brandy or grog, that he might cant a *slug* into his bread-room.—*Smollett: Sir L. Greaves*.

**Sluice-house** (pugilistic), mouth.

Sam's *sluice-house* was again severely damaged.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Sluicery** (popular), a public-house.

**Sluicing one's bolt** (popular), drinking.

**Slum** (New England), explained by quotation.

That noted dish to which our predecessors of I know not what date gave the name of *slum*, which was our ordinary breakfast, consisting of the remains of yesterday's boiled salt beef and potatoes, hashed up and indurated in a frying-pan.—*Scenes and Characters at College.*

Also known as apple *slum*, a broken-up dish of meat, from its resemblance to *slum* or *slump*, broken, boggy earth, mud, dirt, which used metaphorically in a deprecatory sense seems to have given birth to some of the cant significations of *slum*, as *slum* fake, which see; *slum*, formerly a cant word for a muddy, dark alley; *slummy*, a servant-girl, &c.; to *slum*, to hide; *slum*, bad money, *i.e.*, dirt, &c. (Thieves), a chest or package, a package of bank-bills, a trick; to fake the *slum*, to do the trick; up to *slum*, knowing. Also nonsense.

And this without more *slum* began.  
—*Jack Randall's Diary.*

(Prison), a room, a letter.  
(Punch and Judy), the call.

**Slum fake** (Punch and Judy), a coffin.

**Slumgullion** (American), a servant, one who represents another.

Should in the Legislature as your *slumgullion* stand,  
I'd have a law forbidding Dutch through  
all this 'varsal land.

—*The Breitmann Ballads.*

**Slumguzzling** (American), deceiving, humbugging.

But when Breitmann heard de story  
How de fillage hot peen dricked,  
He schwore by Leib und Leben  
He hot rader hafe been licked  
Dan pe helpt mit soosh *slumgoolzin* ;  
Und 'twas petter to be a schwein  
Dan a schwindlin honeyfooglin snake,  
Like dat lyin' Yankee Twine.

—*The Breitmann Ballads.*

**Slummy** (popular), a servant-girl.

**Slump**, to (American), to recite badly, fail, bungle. Properly to sink in mire, hobble, and go about in an awkward manner.

**Slum the gorger**, to (thieves), to cheat on the sly.

**Slum**, to (common), to go about low places, in *slums*.

It is stated that for some reason or another this person was in the habit of *slumming*; he would visit the lowest parts of London, and scour the *slums* of the East End.—*Globe.*

People who have *slummed* Paris are acquainted with the dirty little wine-shop in the Rue des Anglais.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Common and gypsy), to follow. Also to fill, crowd, overdo. A gypsy's remark to C. G. Leland, "This here gav is *slummed up*"—*i.e.*, this town is over full (of gypsies). (University), to keep to back streets to avoid observation. (Theatrical), to act in *slums*, or low pieces, or very small towns. (Thieves), to hide as if in a *slum* or dark alley, pass counterfeit coin, pass to a confederate.

**Slung** (tailors), *slung* out on his hands and knees, instantly dismissed.

**Slush** (American), editorial slang for any kind of indifferent matter, poetry, &c., to fill up with.

**Slushy** (nautical), the cook; termed also "drainings," and "doctor." From *slush*, grease obtained from boiling salt pork—generally the cook's perquisite. *Slush* or *sludge* is also a term used in Australia.

*Sludge*-lamps are largely used in back-block stations.—*Keighley Goodchild*.

**Smack** (tailors), to have a great *smack* for one, to have a great liking for him.

**Smack calf's skin, to**, to kiss the Book, on taking an oath in a court of justice. "It is held by St. Giles's converts," says Bampfylde Moore Carew, "that to kiss the thumb instead of the calf-skin, or book, is to escape the guilt of perjury."

**Small cap O** (printers). This is an epithet used to define an under or sub-overseer—from the fact that SMALL CAPS are subordinate to the CAP, but superior to the smaller or lower case letters, *i.e.*, the rank and file.

**Small cheque** (popular), to take a *small cheque* is to take a dram of liquor. Very common among sailors.

**Small potatoes** (American), an expression of contempt, small potatoes being of little value,

as Bartlett remarks, except for feeding hogs and cattle. The full phrase is, "Very *small potatoes*—few in a hill, rotten in the middle, pithy at both ends—mighty stringy at that—the hills a great way apart—a great way to go and dig them—and nobody to do it!" The man who fulfills all these conditions may be set down as of the minimum quality of *small potatoes*.

**Smalls** (Oxford University), the first examination at Oxford, one of little difficulty.

Mr. Bouncer pointed to Mr. Four-in-hand Fosbrooke . . . on his way from the schools, where he was making a very laudable (but, as it proved, futile) endeavour to get through his *smalls*, or, in other words, to pass his little-go examination.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

Cramming for *smalls*. . . . Julia reminded her that *smalls* was the new word for little go.—*Reade: Hard Cash*.

(Theatrical), explained by quotation.

Minor companies with "fit ups," that is, companies carrying their own theatre, comprising scenes, props, curtains, wings, &c., who visit small towns and villages for one night performances, are said to be "doing the *smalls*."—*Globe*.

**Smash** (prison), tobacco. Probably so called from being passed surreptitiously. *Vide TO SMASH*. To sling the *smash* to bring in and give tobacco. *Smash*, also loose coin or change. (General), a *smash* means a break-up, and is generally applied to monetary affairs; sometimes it means to come to grief gene-

rally. (American), *vide* quotation of SMILE.

**Smashed** (army), cashiered, reduced to the ranks. In general parlance bankrupt, ruined.

**Smasher** (thieves), one who passes counterfeit money or forged notes. *Vide* TO SMASH.

And then he proceeded to inform me that the individual mentioned on the paper was a *smasher*, or in other words, a dealer in counterfeit coin or "sours."—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

A *cadee smasher*, formerly a rogue who professed to be a tout to innkeepers, but who occasionally acted as a *smasher*. There is a well-known proverb, "Once a *smasher* always a *smasher*," showing how difficult is the reclaiming of this class of criminal.

**Smash feeder** (thieves), a Britannia metal spoon, from which the best imitation shillings are made.

**Smash**, to (thieves), explained by quotation.

Take the base coin, for example—he is always in want of recruits. Old hands, however skilled in *smashing*—*i. e.*, passing bad money—will not do for him, they are known to the police.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

To *smash*, literally to break coin by changing it. (Hence *smash*, change.) In French slang "casser une pièce," to change a coin. (Lawn-tennis), striking the ball hard.

Lobbing, too, has been greatly improved, and altogether the back-court player, if he possesses the power to *smash* a short return, can more than hold his own against the volleyer.—*Pastime.*

**Smear gelt** (old cant), bribe money, synonymous with "palm oil."

**Smeller** (popular and. thieves), the nose.

Come on, half-a-dozen of ye, and let me have a rap at your *smellers*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

To her ken at once I go in,  
Where in a corner out of the way,  
With his *smeller* a trumpet blowing  
Tol lol, &c.,

A regular swell cove lushy lay.  
—*Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song.*

Also a blow on the nose. German cant has *schmecker* (lit. "smeller"), for nose. Italian cant, *odoroso*, lit. "full of smell," or *soffiante* (blowing).

**Smelling cheat** (old cant), nose, garden, nosegay.

**Smelling committee** (American).

"Persons appointed to conduct an unpopular investigation. The phrase originated in the examination of a convent in Massachusetts by legislative order" (Bartlett). To which may be added, that those who went "smelling about" the convent did not find the slightest trace of the alleged immoralities which they sought, while it came immediately to light that one of them was accompanied on this excursion by a kept mistress.

**Smelt** (thieves), half-a-guinea. (American), half-eagle, five dollars. In Dutch slang *smelt* is tin.

**Smiggins** (thieves), formerly the soup given on board the hulks.

**Smile** (American), a drink of any alcoholic liquor.

Your confirmed cock-tail drinker is not to be confounded with the common sot. He is an artist. . . . With what exquisite feeling will he graduate his cap, from the gentle *smile* of early morning to the potent "smash" of night.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Smile, to** (American), to take a drink of wine, beer, or spirits. Because men generally smile while so doing.

"Say, stranger! won't you *smile*?" (I had been smiling unremittingly, I could not help it. But in America *smiling*, "seeing a man," and "liquoring up," are all one.)—*Richard A. Proctor: Notes on Americanisms.*

**Smish** (old cant), a shirt or chemise.

**Smiter** (old cant), the arm.

**Smock-face** (popular), a white face, a face without any hair.

**Smoke** (popular), an appellation given to London for obvious reasons.

I say, chum, do you know red-headed Jim, in your party? He is from the *smoke*.—*Evening News.*

**Smoker or smoke-shell** (Royal Military Academy), a chamber-pot.

**Smouch** (popular), one who obtains anything by unfair means, a cheat, a Jew.

While I, like de resht of ma tribe, shrug and crouch,  
You find fault mit ma pargains and say  
I'm a *smouch*.

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

From Dutch *smous*, *smousje*, a German Jew. "So called because many of them being named Moses, they pronounce this name *Mousyee*, or according to Dutch spelling *Mousje*" (Sewell). *Smouch* seems to be allied to the Boer's term *smous* or *smouse* for a trader.

**Smouch, to** (old cant), still used in America. *Vide* SMOUCH. To obtain by cunning, to steal; also to take unfair advantage of one.

"Why, Aunty, I don't think there's ten." "You numbskull, didn't you see me count 'em?" "I know, but"—"Well, I'll count 'em again." So I *smouched* one, and they come out nine, same as the other time. Well, she was in a tearing way—just a trembling all over, she was so mad.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

**Smouge, to** (Hamilton University), to absent oneself without leave.

**Smous** (thieves), a Jew. The Boers thus call a trader.

**Smouting** (printing), casual work away from office—now called "grassing." "Workmen, when they are out of constant work, sometimes accept of a day or two's work or a week's work at

- another printing-house; this by-work they call *smouting*" (R. Holme, 1688). The fine for *smouting* was half a benvenue.
- Smouze, to** (American), "to demolish as with a blow" (Bartlett). To smash, German *schmeissen*.
- Smug** (schools), an untidy (properly *smug* means tidy) fellow who does nothing but work. At the university an ill-mannered, ill-dressed, probably poor and generally unpopular student.
- Smuggings**, snatchings, or purloinings; shouted out by boys when snatching the tops, or small play property, of other lads, and then running off at full speed (Hotten).
- Smuggled** (schools), pencil sharpened at both ends.
- Smug, to** (schools), to keep indoors, hard at work. (Thieves), to steal, to apprehend. From the meaning of *smugged*, comfortably hidden.
- Then two or three more coppers came up and we got *smugged* and got a sixer each.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.
- Smut** (popular), a copper boiler.
- Snabble, to** (old cant), to steal, plunder, sometimes to kill. *Snabble*, as if snapping up with the bill of a bird. *Snabel*, Swedish and Norse; hence Yorkshire, a bird's bill.
- From prigs that *snabble* the prancers strong  
To you of the peter lay,  
I pray now listen awhile to my song  
How my bowman he kick'd away.  
—*Harlequin Sheppard, acted at Drury Lane, 1724*
- Also to apprehend, imprison.  
But filing of a rumbo-ken,  
My bowman is *snabbled* again.  
—*Frisky Moll's Song, from "Harlequin Sheppard," acted at Drury Lane, 1724*.
- Snack** (Winchester College), a racket ball.
- Snaffled** (popular and thieves) arrested, as if by the application of the snaffle-bit.
- Snaffler** (old cant), a highwayman.  
From old provincial *snaffle*, to steal, rob.
- Snaffling-lay** (old cant), highway robbery.  
I thought by your look you had been a clever fellow, and upon the *snaffling-lay* at least, but I find you are some sneaking-budge rascal.—*Fielding: Amelia*.
- Snag-catcher** (common), a dentist.
- Snagging** (thieves), angling for poultry.
- Snag on, to** (American), to attach oneself to anybody.  
Two ladies had just *snagged on* to me.  
—*Howells: April Hopes*.
- Snake** (tailors), a skein of silk. (Popular), to give one a *snake*, to vex him.

**Snake in his boot, a** (American).

One of the horrible symptoms of *delirium tremens* is the fancy that the sufferer is surrounded by snakes and reptiles, among other horrors.

For instance, alcohol, which produces the phenomena humorously designated by our American friends as *snakes in one's boots*, on the other hand, if used medicinally, is death on snakes, or rather on snake poison.—*Globe*.

**Snakes** (society), "a caution to *snakes*," something very singular.

**Snakes in Virginny, as sure as there's** (American), equivalent to declaring the absolute certainty of anything. "As sure as death or taxes," "As sure as I'm a sinner," "As sure as green corn in July," are synonymous.

**Snakesman, little** (thieves). "A boy thief, lithe and thin, and daring, such a one as house-breakers hire for the purpose of entering a small window at the rear of a dwelling-house" (Greenwood). Most probably a corruption of *sneaksmán*, which see.

**Snake, to** (London slang), to steal in a wary manner. A metaphor on supposed wariness of snakes. More probably a corruption of *sneak*, which see. (Billiards), to *snake* the show, to win the pool at billiards.

**Snam, to** (thieves), to snatch, rob from the person. Also stealing

anything that may be lying about and making off rapidly.

**Snap** (American), in England *snaps* is a share or a chance in a job; in the United States the word is applied to a scheme, plan, project, or device.

Free rides to brides is the latest "advertising *snap*" of Canada railways. Brides encumbered with "children over four years of age," however, have to weigh out the full fare.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To give the *snap* away means to betray a plot, so as to lose the profits.

When Dowling heard of Joe's stubbornness he knew there would be a raid. He removed his furniture, and when the "cops" came around they found nothing. Harrison blamed Dumphy for giving the *snap* away to Dowling, and determined to get even with the latter.—*Chicago Tribune*.

A soft *snap*, a profitable affair, an easy position, a good thing, anything worth having.

Frank, old pard! I just want fifty dollars for an hour or two—give it to you again to-night. I've got a soft *snap* on, can't miss it.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

From provincial English *snap*, catch, piece, share. (Popular), on the *snap*, or looking out for *snaps*, watching for windfalls or odd jobs. In the quotation it refers to eating and drinking.

I sorntered about on the *snap*.—*Punch*.

(American), *snap company*, a small, indifferent theatrical troupe. One gathered for an occasion, as if at a *snap*. An itinerant troupe.

One night, during the engagement of a *snap* company at the Chestnut Street Theatre, a little boy came down the stairs from the gallery during the first act, and inquired for the manager. The manager was not in at the time, and the doorkeeper inquired why he wished to see him. "Because," returned the lad, "I want my money back." "Aren't you satisfied with the play?" was asked. "Oh, yes," he replied. "The play's good enough, but the fact is I'm afraid to stay up there all by myself."—*Chicago Tribune*.

(Parliamentary), *snap* division, a division taken by surprise in a thin or unprepared House.

**Snapped** (American), drunk; probably from *schnapps*, often pronounced *snaps*.

**Snapper** (American), an impudent tattler. *Snaps voceren*, to be full of impertinent talk; *snappen*, to chatter impudently. Snippish, snappish, and snobbish have much in common, and the Dutch *snappery*, idle, foolish gossip, is very suggestive of snobbery in a colloquial sense. Feeble as this etymology may be, it is worth as much as that which would derive snob from *sine obolo* and *sine nobilitate*, which as feats of philology may be ranked with Horne Tooke's extraction of Fo-hi from Noah. Also "the snapping turtle."

*Snapper* soup, pepperpot, tripe and oysters, chicken salad. Be pleased to have you call.—*Philadelphia Press*.

**Snapperhead** (American), an impertinent fellow, one who snaps or answers too quickly or impudently.

"Don't you 'woman' me, you young *snapperhead*," said Mrs. Wayback, eyeing him with disfavour. "I'm a lady, an' don't you forget it," and she flounced out.

**Snapps** (East End), spirits; German *schnapps*.

**Snarler** (popular), a dog.

**Snatcher** (thieves), a thief of the younger and less experienced type.

**Snatcher, body** (journalistic), a reporter or special correspondent of a newspaper who fastens on any eminent man whose actions are prominent, &c.

The *Body Snatcher* of the *D. T.* (*Daily Telegraph*) has, we hear, been closeted with his "Peerage" and "Lemprière" ever since.—*The London Figaro*.

**Snavel.** *Vide* RUNNING SNAVEL.

**Sneak** (cricket), a *sneak*, "daisy trimmer," "grub," "daisy cutter" or "undergrounder," is a ball bowled all along the ground instead of with a fair pitch. Though perfectly allowable, they are considered bad form. *Vide* AREA-SNEAK.

**Sneaking-budge** (thieves), thieving, pilfering.

Wild . . . looked upon borrowing to be as good a way of taking as any, and, as he called it, the genteelst kind of *sneaking-budge*.—*Fielding: Jonathan Wild*.

**Sneaks** (thieves), explained by quotation.

That way, and in less time than it takes a healthy pulse to beat thirty, we are in



the regions of gloom, and our footsteps (or rather mine are—my guide wore a pair of what, in criminal phraseology, are known as *sneaks*, and are shoes with canvas tops and indiarubber soles) are trespassing on a stillness instantly suggestive of death in the midst of life.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Sneaksman** or **sneak-thief** (thieves), a petty thief, a shop-lifter.

Until at last there was none so knowing,  
No such *sneaksman* or buzgloak going,  
Fake away!

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

**Sneak**, to (general), to steal; usually applied to pilfering, stealing in areas, linen from lines, in shops, &c.

He was always hungry, and every time he acted as orderly managed to *sneak* from the tray the particles of food returned by prisoners whose appetites were not of the usual ravenous nature of the ordinary convict on "public works."—*Evening News.*

"You're the bloke as *sneaked* the kick-sies," says he.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Sneeze-lurker** (thieves), a thief who throws snuff in a person's eyes in order to rob him. Hence probably the expression "to give snuff," beat, ill-treat.

**Sneezer** (thieves), snuff-box, but become obsolete with the common use of the article. A pocket-handkerchief.

Fogles and fawnies soon went their way  
To the spout with the *sneezers* in grand array.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

(Pugilistic), the nose, a blow on the nose. (Tailors), anything that puzzles. (Army), a very

strict officer or martinet. (American), a dashing, thorough-going fellow. Alluding to a horse's snorting. Compare with **SNORTER**.

**Snell-fencer** (streets), a street-salesman of needles. *Vide* **SNELLS**.

**Snells** (popular), needles; from the English *snell*, brisk, piercing.

**Snick-fadge** (thieves), petty thief. From to *snick*, to cut, hence to steal, and *fadge*, a farthing.

**Snicktog** (thieves), to go shares. To *snick*, to cut, and *tog*, clothes, coat.

**Snid** (thieves), a sixpence.

**Sniddy**, **snidey** (popular and thieves), bad, unfavourable. A form of "snide."

Since Bill George was nabbed for liftin' them sax things is been very *sniddy*, so you'll be glad to learn as I have got on a new hook.—*Evening News.*

(Army), dirty.

**Snide** (common), bad, base, spurious, false, mean; as *snide* coin, *snide* fellow. Also, "he's a *snide*."

Sometimes the police will help the thieves by getting *snide* witnesses . . . who will swear anything according to instructions.—*Rev. A. Mursell: Shady Pastorals.*

But no matter how often they sold him,  
He failed to perceive that their motives were *snide*,  
For he always believed what they told him.

—*Sporting Times.*

"Say! you, look here, now!" he would explain to a native, "these 'ere men don't want none of your *snide* outfits, but just good bronchos, and a waggon, and strong harness."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

In Dutch, *snyden* means to swindle, "as some inn-keepers do," meaning that they cut, or, as Americans would say, "chisel" or "gouge" strangers. "Men *snydt* de luyden lustig in die herberg," that tavern is a swindling shop. *Snood*, in Dutch, means base, sordid, villainous; German *schnöde*.

**Snide-pitcher** (thieves), one who gets a living by passing base coin. Such are looked down upon by thieves as of the lowest rank of the criminal fraternity.

**Snide-pitching** (thieves), passing base coin. *Vide* SNIDE.

Up comes old Andy, too, and says, "This 'ere young man's bin a *snide-pitching* with me, too," and he fishes out the duffer as I'd give 'im unbeknown.—*Sporting Times.*

**Snifter** (American), to take a *snifter*, to take a drink; from *sniff*, to smell something, to take a sniff at some perfume. We find in English *snift*, to snuff.

I would sooner *snift* thy farthing candle mad.—*D'Arblay: Camilla.*

**Snip** (general), a tailor. From to *snip*, to cut with scissors.

"Alton, you fool, why did you let out that you were a *snip*?" "I am not ashamed of my trade."—*C. Kingsley: Alton Locke.*

(Turf), information as to the certainty of a horse winning a race.

D. is in glorious form with his wires, and is certain to keep it up next week at the above meetings, for which he knows of several *snips*.—*Sporting Life.*

(American), a small boy or girl, a small person. Generally in a contemptuous sense, as if the *snip* were conceited and ignorant. The writer supposed at first that this was derived from *snip*, a tailor's cutting; but he finds that in Bargoensch, or Dutch thieves' slang, the word means not only a young person, but also a heedless or foolish one. Shakspeare uses the word *snipe* with the meaning of fool, blockhead. In French *bécasse* (*snipe*) is a stupid girl.

**Snipe** (common), a long bill, or account. Evidently a play on a snipe's long bill. Also an attorney, possibly because of their "comptes d'apothicaire," or very long bills.

(London), gutter-*snipe*, a street arab.

**Snipes** (thieves), scissors for cutting off pockets. From to *snip*, to cut off with scissors.

**Snipe, to** (American), to pilfer.

Yes, it is bad indeed in some respects. I have to buy my own tobacco now; Or beg it when I can from other boys, In place of *sniping* it from the old man's box.

—*Rome: New York Sentinel.*

**Snippeny, snippy, sniptious, snippish** (American), used in several ways; vain, conceited.

*Snippeny* folks are not popular, and E. P. Roe says that almost anything will be forgiven sooner than thinking one's self better than other people.—*Detroit Free Press*.

Also given to petty criticism, mincing and pert observation.

**Snip, to go** (common), to go shares. Literally to divide, as with scissors.

**Snitch** (old cant), nose.

**Snitched** (horsedealers), explained by quotation.

A horsedealer . . . was showing a farmer a horse that was *snitched*, that is, glandered. It was a fine-looking animal and made up for sale. It was jugged, digged, and figged.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack*.

Allied to provincial English to *snite*, to blow the nose, or the cant term *snitch* for nose, the allusion being to the running from the nose. (Thieves), caught, arrested, *i.e.*, tied up. To *snitch* is provincial English.

**Snitcher, snitch** (thieves), an informer, one who turns Queen's evidence, one who causes one to be "snitched," *i.e.*, arrested, more probably from cant *snitch*, nose, a "nose" being a spy, informer.

Then your blowing will wax gallows haughty,

When she hears of your scaly mistake,  
She'll surely turn *snitch* for the forty

That her Jack may be regular weight.

—*Lord Byron: Don Juan*.

"In Scotland," says Hotten, "*snitchers* signifies handcuffs."

**Snitch, to** (thieves), to give information to the police, to turn approver. Hence to arrest.

**Snivel, done a** (tailors), wept, or told a pitiful tale.

**Snob** (University), a townsman as opposed to a gownsmen. (Common), a shoemaker.

A shoemaker charged with removing a front tooth belonging to a brother *snob*, against his will and consent, was ordered by a bench of magistrates to pay the complainant 10s. as compensation for the loss of the ivory.—*Jack and Jill*.

(Marlborough College), game of *snob*, a kind of rough game of cricket, such as playing two together or at tip and run.

**Snobbery, hiding the** (tailors), covering up the bad trade. Snob is a journeyman shoemaker, also one who works for lower wages in a strike; hence bad work expressed by the term *snobbery*.

**Snob's-boot** (tailors), sixpence.

**Snob's-duck** (popular), stuffed leg of mutton.

**Snob-stick** (popular), a workman who refuses to join in strike; variation of "knob-stick." Also termed a "snob."

**Snob, to** (tailors), to do work badly, or in a slovenly manner. *Snob* is a shoemaker or cobbler,

the phrase therefore exactly corresponds to the French *saveter*, which means to do work badly.

**Snock him on the gob, to** (American), to hit him on the mouth. *Gob* is common English slang for mouth. *Snock*, provincial English for a blow.

**Snoddy** (popular), a soldier.

**Snooker** (Royal Military Academy), a newly joined cadet, student of the fourth class. Possibly from to *snook*, to lean the head forward in walking, in allusion to awkwardness in drill.

**Snooks** (common), the name of an imaginary person given as a derisive reply to an idle question, or when the name of the perpetrator of some action is refused.

**Snooping, to snoop** (American), to pry into, to go about picking up bits of food. "I think it may be granted by everybody that of all petty presumers there are none like those who are habitually given to what New York Americans call *snooping*, a word derived from the Dutch *snoepen*, and meaning the going about and sticking one's nose into all kinds of places where it has no business to be."

**Snooze** (thieves), a bed.

**Snoozing-ken** (old cant), a brothel.

**Snopsy, snops** (American), *schnapps*, i.e., gin.

Fo' I can play de banjo, yes, indeed I can,

I can play a tune too upon de frying-pan,  
I can holler like a steamboat befo' she's  
gwine to stop,

I can sweep a chimney an' sing upon de  
top;

Oh, I can jump, an' I can hop, an' take a  
little *snopsy*,

Oh, I can sleep just like a top, becase my  
name am Topsy.

—*Topsy's Song*.

**Snork** (Shrewsbury School), to do the whole of a paper in an examination. To beat another in argument or repartee.

**Snorter** (society), a man who excels in anything. From the snorting of a high-mettled horse. (Cricket), a *snorter*, "corker," "stringer," or "clinker," a very hard ball to play; one that puzzles the batsman. (Popular), the nose, a blow on the nose; a regular *snorter*, great hurry.

**Snort, to** (Australian), to be enraged at a thing, to refuse to do a thing. This is a metaphor taken from observing the horse. If a horse is afraid to do a thing—such as to swim a river, to go too near the edge of a precipice, to carry "game," or the like, he starts back and *snorts*, hence the expression. The French *renâcler* (to snort) is used metaphorically in like manner, and supports the explanation.

**Snot** (thieves), a gentleman. (Popular), a term of opprobrium. Much used by schoolboys.

**Snot-rag** (popular), pocket-handkerchief.

**Snotted** (popular), being reprimanded, hauled over the coals. This corresponds to the French *mouché*, used in the same metaphorical sense.

**Snotter** (thieves), a pickpocket whose specialty is stealing silk handkerchiefs. *Snotter*-hauling, stealing pocket-handkerchiefs.

You could make a fair thing by *snotter*-hauling even if you cannot get on at fly-buzzing.—*Temple Bar: Six Years in the Prisons of England.*

**Snottie** (naval), a midshipman.

**Snottinger** (popular), a pocket-handkerchief.

**Snout** (prison), tobacco; a playful allusion to "pig-tail," roll of twisted tobacco. Prisoners will brave all risks to get it. The most elaborate and Machiavellian plots are always in progress in a convict prison to suborn officers, and to tempt them to become the intermediary between the caged bird and his friends outside. The officer who yields becomes "Mr. Wright" (which see), and the bearer of a clandestine letter or "stiff" (which see), his credentials; and armed with this he calls when off duty on the pri-

soner's friends, who, if they are well-to-do, pay cash down as a bribe. The traitor warder buys tobacco at the market rate, charging the prisoner about £5 per pound, over and above the personal *douceur* he receives. The tobacco is smuggled into the prison in small quantities, and passed by means of "trafficking" (which see) from the wholesale possessor to purchasers in exchange for food. Tobacco has also a price current in prison in food, generally bread, but meat, cheese, potatoes are also passed. It is always used in chewing. The term is also used by itinerants with the meaning cigar.

**Snow** (thieves and tramps), linen hung out to dry on hedges or lines. The allusion is obvious.

**Snowball** (popular), a negro. In French, "boule de neige."

**Snow-dropper** or **gatherer** (thieves and tramps), a thief who steals linen hung out to dry.

**Snow-dropping** (thieves), explained by quotation.

"What do you mean by *snow-dropping*?" "Oh," said he, "that's a poor game. It means lifting clothes off the bleaching line or hedges. Needy-mizzlers, numpers, shallow blokes and flats may carry it on, but it's too low and paltry for you."—*Temple Bar: Six Years in the Prisons of England.*

Also "going *snowing*."

**Snowy** (thieves), linen.

My pals used to send stiffs to the school-master, saying that I was wanted at home; but instead of that we used to go and smug *snowy* that was hung out to dry.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Snuff-box** (popular), the nose.

There's a crack on your *snuff-box*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Snuff it, to** (popular), to die, like a candle snuffed out. In French slang "moucher sa chandelle" means the same.

And I mean to live a good bit longer yet. Josh Heckett isn't going to *snuff it* just for a crack on the head.—*G. R. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds.*

**Snuffler** (common), a religious canter.

You know I never was a *snuffler*; but this sort of life makes one serious, if one has at all any reverence at all in one.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

**Snuff, to give** (popular), to beat, thrash. Alluding to the pain caused by snuff thrown into the eyes of a person. French slang has the corresponding phrase, "foutre (donner) or coller du tabac," and the police expression, "passer au tabac," that is, ill-treat a prisoner so as to make him confess. Shakspeare uses the expression to take in *snuff*, to be angry, vexed, like a man snorting with anger.

**Snuff, up to** (general), knowing, expert, experienced in the ins and outs of life. Literally "up to scent," like a dog who can

distinguish between the sexes of his own species by scent.

He knew well enough  
The game we're after: zooks, he's *up to snuff*!  
—*John Poole: Hamlet Travestie.*

Queer start that 'ere, but he was one too many for you, warn't he? Up to *snuff* and a pinch or two over.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers.*

I am pretty well up to newspaper *snuff*, as it is, sir.—*Sporting Times.*

To put *up to snuff* is to initiate into mysteries of any kind, and generally to instruct in, make expert.

He was some ten or eleven years my senior . . . but having travelled all my lifetime, was better *up to snuff* than an ordinary man would be at fifty.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

The thieves knew where to draw the line, and chucked the lot away in the garden, among the other weeds. They were *up to snuff*, but not to tobacco in this form.—*Punch.*

**Snuffy** (popular), tipsy.**Snuggeries** (London), explained by quotation.

Generally at one end of the hall is a long strip of metal counter, behind which superbly-attired barmaids vend strong liquors. Besides these there are *snuggeries*, or small private apartments, to which bashful gentlemen desirous of sharing a bottle of wine with a recent acquaintance may retire.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Soaker** (popular), a pelting down-pour of rain.

That countryman was right when he prognosticated a *soaker*. The only individual I met on the road going my way was a timid-looking old gentleman in a phaeton, who was well protected from the

rain with a mackintosh, knee-wrap, and a gig umbrella.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

Also a confirmed tippler.

An old *soaker* who was a pretty frequent attendant at the Bell, at Bromley.—*Sporting Times.*

**Soak, to** (American), turn, change gradually. This is old English.

Said Turpin, "It is time to go,  
I've a very fine plant, boys, I know;  
While Oliver *soaks* pale,  
We will rob the royal mail;  
Before the cock begins for to crow."  
—*Broadside: Dick Turpin.*

Hence to exchange, barter, pawn.

The two youths made a call and the watch was *soaked* with a pawnbroker, and \$20 obtained on it.—*Daily Inter-Ocean.*

**Soap** (common), explained by quotation.

Flattery is the confectionery of the world. In polite society it goes by the name of *soap*, and in general is designated "soft sawder."—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn.*

(American), money. (Royal Military Academy), cheese.

**Soap-and-bullion** (nautical). A sailor's food is oftentimes of the poorest, and to say revolting description, and Jack has not been slow to signify his disgust thereat. The following are some of his choicest terms for such dainties:—"Lobscouse, dandy funk, dogsbody, sea-pie, choke-dog, twice laid, hishee-hashee, *soap-and-bullion*, dough Jehovahs, tommy, soft tack."

VOL. II.

A thin watery soup served out on some vessels.

I have known many a strong stomach, made food-proof by years of pork eaten with molasses, and biscuit alive with worms, to be utterly capized by the mere smell of soup-and-bouilli. Jack calls it *soap-and-bullion*, one onion to a gallon of water, and this fairly expresses the character of the nauseous compound.—*Clark Russell: Sailor's Language.*

**Soap-crawler** (popular), a sycophant.

Stale, too, orful stale, my young josser.

It's wot all *soap-crawlers* say,  
If a party 'as "go" and "high sperrits"—  
percise wot you praise me for, hay?—  
If he "can laugh aloud," as you say I can,  
better than much finer folk,  
Will you ticket 'im "vulgar," for doin' it?  
Oh, you go 'ome and eat coke!  
—*Punch.*

**Soapers** (American thieves), men who practise the soap trick. "It is a simple conjuror's trick, and it is not difficult to understand. A number of cakes of soap are wrapped each in a piece of paper, and mixed up together in a travelling-bag, suspended by a strap round the neck of the operator. A five-dollar bill is wrapped around one of the cakes, and enveloped in the paper, like the others. It is then thrown into the bag, after having been marked by the thumb-nail, and the crowd are invited to pick it out of the lot at the cost of one dollar. Of course, the cake containing the money is not thrown into the bag at all, but is palmed (substituted by sleight of hand) by the head of the firm, who

S

gives another cake, similarly marked. When the capper (confederate) buys a cake, he draws a prize" (Confidence Crooks, *Philadelphia Press*).

**Soap, to (common), to flatter.**

And the tailor and robemaker, between washings with the invisible soap, so visibly *soaped* our hero in what is understood to be the shop sense of the word.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

(American), to bribe.

If a knock down were needed in a case, Griffin would perform it promptly and expertly. The bloods paid the fine, and *soaped* Griffin besides.—*New York Herald*.

**Sober-water (common), a jocular appellation for soda-water.**

**Soc (printers),** this is an abbreviation of the word "Society." To be a member of the *Soc.* (compositors'), hence not a "rat."

**Society man (tailors),** a member of the trade union.

**Sock (Eton),** edibles of various kinds privately imported.

The consumption of *sock*, too, in school was considerable, and on occasion very conspicuous.—*Fascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

Hotten says the word is still used by the boys of Heriot's Hospital School at Edinburgh, and signifies a sweetmeat, being derived from the same source as "sugar," "suck." Swedish *sock*, sugar. (Popular), credit. (Common), to give one *sock* or *socks*,

to thrash him. From provincial English to *sock*, to strike.

**Sockdolager (American),** a word inadequately explained by its imperfect resemblance to doxology. A *sockdolager*, says Bartlett, is a conclusive argument, a "settler," and as that ends everything, and as the doxology is sung at the end of the religious service, ergo, they are the same. As it is very commonly applied to a settling blow—two out of three of Bartlett's illustrations of it refer to such—it probably owes its beginning to *sock*, to strike. In Dutch a *zaakdadelyk* (or *daddyke-zaak*) means "a plain case," admitting no further argument; but it is very doubtful whether this has anything to do with it. A *zakduwertje*, a bag of dollars, would come much nearer than "doxology"—and as it is an effective settler to most disputes, a great deal might be said in its favour, but similarity of sound and even of meaning is not always conclusive. The most probable derivation is *sock*, a hard blow, and *dole*, to give. It is, however, possible that the origin of the much discussed word is the Iceland *saukdolgr*, which Jonæo in the glossary appended to the Latin version of Nialls Saga, defines as meaning among other things *dwellum*, a sudden attack, also a bad affair, evil, and another authority gives it as impetus. *Saukdolgr* is pronounced almost



exactly like *sockdolager*. It probably came from the Swedes of Philadelphia, as it is an old word in America.

Sam caught him a tremendous blow, clean bang in the left eye, one that nearly knocked him off his pins. Every man in the room heard that *sockdolager* as plainly as he saw it.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Socker** (public schools), football played according to the Association Rules.

**Socketer** (popular), one who obtains money, "socket-money," by threats of exposure. In French *chanteur*.

**Socket-money** (old), prostitute's fee. Query any reference to putting the money in the *socket* of a candlestick? In France the fee is placed under the candlestick. Also money extorted by threats of exposure. Probably from *soke*, a payment made to the lord by his tenant for the privilege of being a sockman or freeholder. Anglo-Saxon *soke*, a toll.

**Sock, sock down, to** (American), to pay money down, to *slap* down money. A common expression in Philadelphia. To *sock* it into a man, to press hard on him, to beat or strike, thrash or "larrup." Also applied metaphorically on the Stock Exchange.

If any feller dares to sport with my Eliza Jane, I'll let him have it hot and short till death shall end his pain; and if I find in any way that she is in the swim, I'll take a fence rail ten feet long, and *sock* it into him.—*American Jokes.*

To *sock* into, for to beat, thrash, is a common expression in England.

**Sock, to** (Eton), to eat. *Vide* SOCK.

We Eton fellows, great and small, "socked" prodigiously. By the way, I do not know whence that term *sock*, as applied to what boys at some schools call "grub," and others "tick," is derived? for I question the theory which makes it spring from "suck." I am rather disposed to accept the story that at the beginning of this century, one of the men, who sold fruit and tarts at the wall, got nicknamed "Socks," in consequence of his having discarded knee-breeches and stockings in favour of pants and short hose. The man's nickname might then have spread to his business and to his wares by a process familiar to etymologists, till "socking" came to mean the purchase of good things not from "Socks" only, but from any other vendor.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

To *sock* a fellow, was to give him something to eat or drink, outside his regular meals. Sometimes a boy might say, 'My governor has *socked* me a book.' . . . A boy has also been heard to ask another to *sock* him a construe of his lesson" (C. T. Buckland, "Eton, Fifty Years Ago"). (Winchester), to hit hard, especially at cricket. It also means to beat, or defeat in a game. *Sock* is a provincialism meaning to hit hard, but much used by slang-talking people.

And then he proceeded, in manner most sry,  
In his muscular arms to enfold him,  
And said, "Dub up, or else you'll get  
*socked* in the eye!"

—*Sporting Times.*

- Sodom** (Oxford), Wadham College. From a similarity of sound.
- Soft** (thieves), paper money. (General), foolish; a *soft*, a fool.
- It'll do you no good to sit in a spring-cart, if you've got a *soft* to drive you.—*G. Eliot: Adam Bede.*
- Soft ball** (Royal Military Academy), tennis.
- Soft down** (common), in love with.
- Soft horse** (turf), a horse with little stamina.
- Soft-sawder** (common), flattery.
- Soft-sawder* by itself requires a knowledge of paintin' of light and shade, and drawin' too. You must know character.—*Sam Slick.*
- Soft soap** (common), flattery.
- He and I are great chums, and a little *soft soap* will go a long way with him.—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*
- Soft soap over, to** (popular), to flatter, to wheedle.
- Soft tack** (nautical), bread. *Vide TACK.*
- Spotless calico bags containing quarts and pints, and which were as eagerly purchased almost as the *soft tack* and the green vegetables the bumboat folk bring alongside ships that have been long absent on sea service.—*J. Greenwood: Odd People in Odd Places.*
- Soft tommy** (common), bread. Originally a sea-phrase. *Tommy*, food, provisions (various dialects), Halliwell.
- I've treacle and toffee, and excellent coffee, *Soft tommy* and succulent chops; I've chickens and conies, and pretty polonies, And excellent peppermint drops.  
—*W. S. Gilbert: H.M.S. Pinafore.*
- "Gringue," known to the polite as bread, has its duplicates in *soft tommy* or prog.—*Morning Advertiser.*
- Softy** (popular), silly person, half-witted.
- She were but a *softy* after all.—*Mrs. Gaskell: Sylvia's Lovers.*
- Sog** (American), dulness, a swoon, lethargy. East Anglian *sog*, to decline in health; *sog*, to hang down as oppressed with weight. To *sogg* on, to walk heavily; *soggy*, wet, swampy; hence the association of drop-sical, heavy, stupid.
- So help me tater** (popular), oath or adjuration in common use, and of no definite signification. Synonyms, "So help me bob," "S' help me, Bill Arline," "So help me greens."
- Soiled doves**, prostitutes.
- Soiled doves* from the shades of the Evangelist, *alias* strumpets from St. John's Wood.—*Saturday Review.*
- Solace** (printers), a penalty or fine inflicted by the "chapel," according to Moxon, 1683—a term rarely met with now. If the offender would not pay he was *solaced* by his companions, *i.e.*, whacked on that part (accord-

ing to Shakspeare) "on which we sit down."

**Soldier** (popular), a red herring. *Vide* COMING THE OLD SOLDIER.

**Soldiering** (army), cleaning accoutrements, doing the routine and irksome part of a soldier's duty.

**Soldier's wind** (nautical), one that blows both ways—east and west.

**Sold up** (common), poor or distressed.

**Sole-slogger** (popular), a shoe-maker.

**Solid dig** (printers). A compositor is said to have a *solid dig* when the copy in hand is very close, *i.e.*, few short lines or whites and usually without leads.

**Sollamon** (old cant), the Mass.

Oh, I would lib all the darkmans,  
By the *sollamon*, under the Ruffemans.  
—*The Roaring Girl*.

Also *salamon*, *salomon*. Probably gypsy *sal* or *sol*, oath, influenced by *solemn* (oath).

**Some pumpkins or some punkins** (American), description of an important person; the contrary to small potatoes, applied to persons of little or no account.

Franklin was a poor printer boy, and Washington only a land-surveyor, yet they grew to be *some pumpkins*.—*Sam Slick: Nature and Human Nature*.

I took to attendin' Baptist meetin's because the Presbyterian minister was such

*small potatoes* that it wasn't edifyin' to sit under his preachin'.—*Widow Bedott's Papers*.

**Something short** (popular), spirits neat, short of water.

When he thought of his friends who'd grown portly on port,  
Who never on ale appeared ailing;

If only he might dare to take *something short*,

Would the teetotal ghosts all start wailing?

A pub! Yes, he will! He's hopped in like a bird—

But the curtain shall fall on our brother;  
We'll only record that the last words we heard,

Were, "Now, dear, let'sh 'ave jus' another!"

—*Judy*.

Generally "summat short."

And as to the benjamin . . . he would keep it long enough, unless the owner stood a drop of *summat short*.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

**Sonk, sonkey** (popular), a stupid fellow. From *sunket*, a foolish fellow. Norfolk dialect.

**Son of a gun** (popular). "An epithet conveying contempt in a slight degree, and originally applied to boys born afloat, when women were permitted to accompany their husbands to sea; one admiral declared he literally was thus cradled, under the breast of a gun-carriage" (Admiral Smyth).

You may fancy his rage, and his deep despair,

When he saw himself thus befooled by one

Whom, in anger wild, he profanely styled,  
"A stupid, old, snuff-coloured *son of a gun!*"

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Son of wax** (American) a cobbler or shoemaker. Professor S. S. Haldeman is said once to have addressed a party of these men with, "How are you, my *sons of waxes*?" The term is not regarded as uncomplimentary.

**Soogun** (Irish tinkers), a hay rope.

**Soor** (Anglo-Indian), an abusive term. Hindostanee, a pig.

**Soot-bag** (thieves), an obsolete term for a reticule.

**Sop** (popular), a foolish, soft man. Provincial *sope*, a simpleton.

**Soph**, abbreviation of *sophistes*; second year men are termed "junior *sophs*," third year men "senior *sophs*."

**Sore leg** (army), German sausage; an unsavoury allusion to its appearance. (Popular), explained by quotation.

"These puddings, I believe, have nick-names?"

"Yessir. The spotted is called *sore leg*, and the plain 'sudden death.'"—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Sort** (popular), that's my *sort*, that is my nature, character, that is my way of proceeding; that's your *sort*, this is the course for you to adopt. A good *sort*, or a good old *sort*, a good-natured person.

**Sorts.** *Vide* OUT OF SORTS.

**Soundings** (printers). Pressmen are said to be in *soundings* when they get near the bottom of their heap. In taking the last few sheets off the "horse" their knuckles would touch or rap against the wood, hence the term.

**Soup** (legal), the prosecutions which are given out to the junior bar in court by the clerk of the peace or arraign as the case may be. The custom is to give them out whether the prisoner pleads guilty or not, but in some places only pleas of "not guilty" are given out. They frequently form the first "brief" which a young barrister gets. (Printers), bad and sloppy ink is thus termed. (Burglars), melted plate; it is sometimes called *white soup*.

**Souper** (popular), one who pretends conversion to obtain soup-tickets. (Thieves), *souper* or *super*, a watch.

**Soup-shop** (burglars), a place where melting-pots are always kept ready, the price not being paid to burglars and thieves who have come to dispose of plate till the recognition of the plunder is no longer possible.

**Sour on, to** (American), to treat unkindly, to act unamiably.

"How's your girl, Charley?" "Oh, it's all up with us!" "How's that?" "The hot weather was too much." "What had that to do with you?" "Well, she *soured* on me."—*New York Sun*.

*Arthur*—"My best girl soured on me yesterday." *George*—"I don't wonder. I always said she was a little pickle."—*Almanac.*

**Sour planters** (coiners), rogues who pass off counterfeit coin.

Publicans, we were given to understand, are usually the unfortunate tradesmen fixed on as a mark, barmaids being easily thrown off their guard by the customer's innocent appearance and manner. But a safer plan, and one more admired by the *sour planter* herself, is to perambulate streets of tradesmen's shops with her companion, with a sharp look-out for spoony shopmen and hobble-de-hoys entrusted with the till.—*J. Greenwood: Rag, Tag, & Co.*

**Sours** (coiners), counterfeit coin.

Roman coins and such old money are called onion-pennies, or *onions* (provincial), onions are also *sours*, and the connection between bad money and *sours* appears evident. The phrase "to plant the *sours*," *i.e.*, to pass bad coin, strongly supports this explanation, further strengthened by the Italian cant term *argume*, literally *onions*, and French slang *oignon*, both meaning money, coin. Again, the term may owe its origin to the acids used in electro-plating. But that is mere conjecture. "Sometimes when coiners are hard pressed, if there is no other way of getting rid of the *sours*, they secretly swallow them. The shilling *sour*, in the opinion of 'smashers,' is the handiest, and pays better than the florin or half-crown, because when it comes to that value people examine it more

closely. Shilling *sours* of a superior kind generally cost four shillings a dozen first hand."

And then he proceeded to inform me that the individual mentioned on the paper was a "smasher," or, in other words, a dealer in counterfeit coin or *sours*.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

To plant the *sours*, to pass base coin.

**Southerly buster** (Australian), a piercingly cold southerly wind.

The climate of Sydney, always a detestable one, is never the same for more than a few hours. I have often seen a day there open with a hot scorching wind, which lasts perhaps until one o'clock. Suddenly a fierce, cold wind, a *southerly buster* as it is called, sweeps up from the ice-fields of the Southern Sea, and blows perhaps for two days, perhaps only for a few hours.—*Finch Hatton: Advance Australia.*

**Souths** (Stock Exchange), London and South-Western Railway Ordinary Stock.

**Sov** (general), a sovereign.

**Sow-belly** (American rancheros), bacon.

**Sow's baby** (popular), a sixpence, *hog* being a shilling.

**Spange** (Royal Military Academy), new, as a *spange* war hat, war helmet. Elegant swell, "you look *spange*." From *spangle*, provincial *spanged*, variegated, shiny.

**Spangle-shaker** (theatrical), harlequin. Also "spangle-guts."

**Spanish, or Spanish blunt.** Hot-ten defines this as money, and suggests that it is a relic of buccaneering days. In America it is correctly limited to silver coin. It is a relic of the old word Spanish-boards, or dollars.

Indeed there's not one in the language  
that I know  
Save its synonyms, *Spanish blunt*, stumpy,  
and rhino.

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

**Spare a rub** (tailors), oblige me with some, or after you with it; possibly alluding to ironing.

**Spark** (American), a lover, a "beau." Flame is an old English word for a sweetheart; in America it is more peculiarly applied to a lady-love. "Where there is flame, there will be sparks," originated the application of the latter word to men. From this is derived "to spark it," and "to go a sparking."

When the dew is just a sprinkling,  
And the stars begin their twinkling,  
And the day dies into darking,  
That is just the time for *sparking*.

—*Broadside Ballad.*

I was about eighteen years of age, when, for the first time, I took it into my head to go a *sparking*. One of my neighbours a few miles off had a pretty daughter that, I thought, would just suit me.—*Youth's Companion.*

A *spark* in England was formerly applied, like *beau*, rather to a gay and stylish fellow than a lover.

Our attention has been called to them and their doings by an indignant "Stall-holder," whose plaint we publish in another column. "Stall-holder" is exercised in

spirit, and with reason, by the behaviour of certain *sparks*, or "bucks," or "bloods," or "Corinthians," or "Macaronis" (their name changes with the centuries, but their nature is eternally the same), who make too much noise in stage-boxes and stalls, together with their "female companions."  
—*Globe.*

The Rev. A. Smythe Palmer, in his "Folk Etymology," remarks: "*Spark*, as a name for a self-sufficient fop or conceited coxcomb, has probably no direct connection with the glittering particle of fire which we call a *spark*, any more than flunkey has to do with German *funke*, a spark. Mr. Wedgwood connects the word with provincial English *sprag*, *sprack*, quick, brisk, as of a lively young man (compare *spraic*, vigour, sprightliness), and clearly further points out a connection with Icelandic *sparkr*, *sprakki*, lively, sprightly, also a dandy. See also Professor Skeat's notes to 'Piers Plowman,' p. 398."

Oft has it been my lot to mark  
A proud, conceited, talking *spark*.

—*J. Merrick: The Chameleon.*

No "double entendres," which you *sparks*  
allow,  
To make the ladies look—they know not  
how.

—*Dryden: Love Triumphant.*

According to Skeat, from same root with *spark*, a small particle of fire. Originally noisy. Icelandic *spraka*, to crackle.

**Sparkle** (thieves), a diamond. In French (not slang), *brillant*.

I got her purse and found the ring. I saw it was a big *sparkle*. I noticed the size, and

at once went in front of a jeweller's window to compare those in the window with my prize.—*Evening News*.

#### Also *spark*.

Jack's conversation is essentially diamondy, and he speaks casually of having seen, whilst over yonder, a trifle of a quarter of a million's worth of *sparks* in a bucket.—*Sporting Times*.

#### *Spark* prop, diamond breast-pin.

My pal said, "Pipe his *spark* prop." So my pal said, "Front me, and I will do him for it."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Sparkle up**, to (popular), to hasten, be quick.

**Sparring bloke** (popular and thieves), a pugilist.

It was while using one of those places I first met a *sparring bloke*, who showed me how to spar.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Sparrow catching** (popular), going out *sparrow catching* is for a girl to go out for the purpose of finding a lover.

**Spec** (common), a venture.

Off I posted to the fam'ly lawyer fit to break my neck,  
And he philanthropically took the matter up on *spec*.

—*Funny Folks*.

(Popular), an occupation generally with an idea of uncertain profits.

They were "little doll" men; poor deluded wretches, three of thrice as many hundred who, quite new to the Epsom game, had heard that little dolls were the best *spec* out.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

Other meaning explained by quotation.

Throughout lower London, and the shady portions of its suburbs, the window of almost every public-house and beer-shop was spotted with some notice of these *specs*. There were dozens of them. There were the "Deptford *Spec*," and the "Lambeth *Spec*," and the "Great Northern *Spec*," and the "Derby *Spec*," but they all meant one and the same thing—a lottery, conducted on principles more or less honest, the prize to be awarded according to the performances of certain race-horses.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Specklebellies** (provincial), Dis-senters.

**Specks** (costermongers), damaged oranges.

**Specs** (common), spectacles.

No matter for that. He had called for his hat,  
With the brim that I've said was so broad  
and so flat,  
And his *specs* with the tortoiseshell rim  
and his cane.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Speech** (turf), private information on a horse. In French turf slang *tuyau*, 'i.e., private information whispered, "dans le tuyau de l'oreille." *Speech* is used in such phrases as "get the *speech*," "give the *speech*."

**Speeler** (American), a gambler. German *spieler*.

**Speel**, to (thieves), to run away, to decamp. Probably an abbreviation of "*speel* the drum," to make off to the highway, take to the highway. *Speel* is from German *spielden*, to play, and "drum" is cant for highroad,

so that the phrase is a play on these two words, and corresponds to the French cant "jouer des trimoires," *trime*, road, being from the same root as "drum," which see. It has been suggested that this term is from provincial English *speel*, to climb.

**Spell for** (popular), to long for.

**Spellken, spielken, or spell** (cant), a theatre. Probably from the German *spielen*, to play, and *ken*, a place.

Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,  
Booze in the ken, or at the *spellken* hustle.  
—Byron: *Don Juan*.

**Spell oats, to** (American). "He can't *spell oats*," said of an ignorant fellow. This originated in a practical joke about 1848. One man would leave a grain of oats with another, who was in the joke, and then meeting another friend, would say, "Have you seen Jones? He has an *oat* for you." The victim, not understanding the sell, would go to Jones and ask for a note, the result being, of course, a treat.

When men couldn't *spell oats*, they were  
not given votes,

Their place was to work, not to worry,  
And Brummagem Rads didn't pauder to  
cads,

For office there wasn't such hurry.  
The friends of rebellion were one in a  
million,

They injured no woman or child,  
E'en traitors were Trojans, dreamt not of  
explosions,  
And Parliament was not defiled.

—*Song: In the Good Old Times Long Ago* (published by Francis Bros. & Day).

**Sphere** (football), the ball.

**Spice, to** (old cant), to steal, rob, from an obvious metaphor like "salt," referring to overcharge; "pepper," to ill-treat, &c. "To *spice* the swell," to rob a gentleman; the *spice*, highway robbery; *spicer*, a footpad; *spicer-high*, i.e., *high-spicer*, a highwayman.

On the high-toby *spice* flash the muzzle,  
In spite of each gallows' old scout.

—Byron: *Don Juan*.

**Spiff, spiffy** (common), tip-top, first-class, fashionable, spruce. From provincial English *spiff*, dandified.

But, my gracious! if I ain't got the  
*spliffest* lot o' items for you about the  
French church outfit, 'n as usual I haven't  
left myself enough room to do 'em full  
justice, so must put it off till next week,  
when look out for a screamer.—*San Francisco News Letter*.

A *spiff*, a swell. (Trade), a small commission on sales in retail shops.

**Spiffed** (Scotch slang), slightly intoxicated.

**Spiffer.** *Vide SPIFF.*

**Spike team.** *Vide UNICORN.*

**Spin** (Anglo-Indian), abbreviation for spinster. *Vide PUCKA.*

**Spindigo** (American), said of one who has come out badly, as from an examination at college or a speculation on the Stock Exchange. Probably from the



English army slang *spin*, to reject from an examination; *spindle*, the third swarm of bees from a hive; *spinny*, thin, slender. To this some facetious person has probably added *indigo*, to give it a sufficiently blue tone.

**Spink** (Royal Military Academy), milk, specially condensed milk.

**Spinning-house** (University), the ordinary prison of the Vice-Chancellor's court at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

**Spin**, to. *Vide* SPUN.

**Spit** (popular), a facsimile. "He's the very *spit* of his father or mother." "Er ist seiner Mutter wie aus dem gesichte geschnitten" (*Londonismen*). French "c'est son père tout craché."

Emma has a baby boy,  
To own it I decline;  
But people cry and wish me joy  
Because they think it's mine.

Oh, James, whoa James!  
Whoa James, for shame on you!  
Oh, James! whoa James!  
James, it's the *spit* of you!

—*Song*.

**Spit curls** (American). *Vide* BOW-CATCHER.

**Spithead nightingales** (naval), boatswains, and boatswains' mates, on account of their calls.

**Spit sixpences**, to (common), to have one's mouth parched up, be thirsty. French "cracher des pièces de dix sous."

He had thought it rather a dry discourse; and beginning to *spit sixpences*, he gave hints to Mr. Wildgoose to stop at the first public-house they should come to.—*Graves: Spiritual Quizote*.

**Splash** (common), complexion powder, as rice powder, &c. To *splash*, to paint the face. Provincial English *splatch*. *Splatchy*, painted; said of a woman's face.

**Splashing** (popular), talking without sense or talking too much.

**Splash up**, to do it (popular), to do it in fine style.

**Splathers**, hold your (tailors), hold your tongue.

**Splathever** (tailors), one who talks much of himself or anything.

**Splice the main brace**, to (nautical), to serve out an extra allowance of grog in bad weather, or after severe exertion; drinking.

**Splice**, to (Winchester College), to throw or fling. (Common), to marry.

The moral obligation of matrimony was fulfilled, and they were indissolubly *spliced*.—*Savage London*.

Imagine his feelings, if you are human (and *spliced*), pity him.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Split** (thieves), a detective; from to *split*, to inform.

Two *splits* (detectives) got into the train, and I got ready to have a go for it if they put their hands upon me, but I got out all right.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Common), abbreviated from two brandies or whiskies, and a soda *split*, i.e., shared.

So he sought him a bar where the thoroughbred tart  
Regaleth itself on the longest of *splits*.  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Split fair** (popular), tell the truth; a variation of to *split*, to divulge, inform.

**Split-fig** (popular), a grocer.

**Split out**, to (thieves), to separate.

There is a reeler over there who knows me, we had better *split out*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Split**, to (common), to let out a secret, to inform against one's accomplices.

If I tell you all about it, will you promise that you won't *split*?—*Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins*.

On the hold business. Just to have a chat. When are you going to *split* on your old pal?—*G. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds*.

"You needn't think I'm going to *split*," she said indignantly.—*Fergus W. Hume: The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*.

To go at full *split*, or to go as hard as one can *split*, means to go as hard as ever one can at full pace. Used by slangy Australians as well as in England. Old English *split*, force; "to make all *split*," an old phrase implying great violence of action.

We had run him for seven miles and more, as hard as our nags could *split*.  
—*A. L. Gordon: Wolf and Hound*.

**Spodger** (popular), a lout, awkward countryman.

**Spodgy** (common), coarse, referring to complexion, with pimples.

**Splurge** (American), a dashing, brilliant display. At Princeton University a student who recited a lesson badly was said to "fizzle," when he did it creditably he "rowled," but to show a perfect mastery of the subject was to *splurge*.

A new wrinkle at seaside resorts is the *splurging* of fair women on borrowed dresses. They only differ in degree from many other fair women who own their dresses, but whose fathers and husbands sometimes have to borrow the money to pay for them.—*St. Paul Globe*.

To cut a *splurge* is synonymous with "cut a dash."

**Spoffskins** (society), a lady of an accommodating disposition, who makes morganatic arrangements of a temporary character.

**Spoffy** (common), applied to a bustling busybody, a fussy "finick." From provincial English *spoffle*, to busy oneself overmuch about a matter of little consequence.

**Spondulicks** (American), a term for specie or money. It would appear to have some connection with Dutch *spaunde*, "chips," also slang for money, and there is also a word *oolik*, bad, wretched. The term probably originated in New York, in some confusion or perversion of these words. This word has become common among turfites.

**Sponge**, throwing up the (common), to give up, submit, acknowledge one's defeat; from the custom in the prize-ring. The principal second keeps a sponge during the fight, wherewith to cleanse and refresh his principal's face between the rounds; thus his *throwing up the sponge*, as it were, because it has become useless, is taken to be indicative of his side giving up the struggle. This is an almost recognised phrase.

The party . . . told him that he must either return to France or *throw up the sponge*. General Boulanger refused to do either.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Spoof** (turf), deception, swindle, sell. Properly a childish kind of game like "tiddlywinks."

Next day I put all my oof

On to Gold (sixteen to one),

And now I hear the cry of *spoof*,

The race is o'er, and he's not won.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

*Spoof* has been defined by Sir P. Colquhoun as "an unintelligible shibboleth, invented to indicate an idiotic game—a sell. Exactly as 'the loud laugh proclaims the empty mind,' so, to be an adept in the *spoof* cult, indicates, as the first qualification for that dubious distinction, softening of the brain." This term owes its origin to the game of *spoof*, played on a draught-board with counters, which have to be whisked on the top of the adversary's own counters by means of a small stick. It has been suggested,

however, that "*spoof* is from provincial English *spoffle*, to busy oneself overmuch about a matter of small consequence, to rage over a trifle, as a 'great cry and little wool,' i.e., a cheat or sell. Hence disappointment, deceit."

Love he used to think, I've said before, a riddle;

To-day he says the *mot d'énigme* is oof,  
And that lovers play a very second fiddle  
To markers at the noble game of *spoof*.

—*Sporting Times*.

'Tis oh! to be the people's "pug,"

Who is paid at halls to spar,

Who's a lovely, unscratched, scarless mug,  
Who lives like a La-di-da!

Big battles he fights which are always  
drawn,

But draw much golden oof,

He boasts of his biceps and "Boston"  
brown—

'Tis oh! for the game of *spoof*.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also the confidence-trick  
swindle.

Also to play *spoof*.

The alligator and crocodile are just in the prime of life at 100. There are parrots in the gardens who are seventy-five years old, and still cheerful, and the swan begins to think about putting away youthful follies at 200. I hope the keeper who told me all this knows that it is wicked to *play spoof* on Sunday. I believed all he told me, and kept saying "Really" in such a sweetly innocent way, that he may have been tempted to put the pot on.—*Referer*.

**Spoof, to** (turf). *Vide SPOOF*.

"T," said the Wicked Nobleman, having previously arranged to *spoof* the crowd with the word "taint."—*Sporting Times*.

His railway carriage he will choose and  
pick,

Till he spots a likely lot,

To royally *spoof* at the three-card trick,  
And to lift of a cosy "pot."

And he patters the while of mysterious tips  
And dollars he cops for "stable" snips.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Spoon** (common), courtship;  
*spoons* together, much in love  
with one another. *Vide* SPOONEY.

She and I, dontcher know, are great *spoons*.  
—*Punch.*

(American), "to do business with a big *spoon*" is the same as "to cut a big swath" (Bartlett); that is to say, on a large scale. Also to help oneself fully, which is the origin of the German phrase, "Er isst mit grossen Löffel"—"He eats with a large spoon."

**Spooney.** There appear to be two separate or distinct words of this spelling, probably with different roots. A case of spoons, or of two persons who spoon on one another, is a term existing out of English, in Welsh, Arabic, and German (*Löffeln*, to play the gallant, also cat with a spoon; *Löffel*, galantry, and spoon), without any reference to weak-mindedness or folly. It is usual in Wales, Norway, and Sweden, as in Algeria, to make a newly-married couple a present of two spoons both carved out of one piece of wood joined, or a kind of double, and the writer has in his possession specimens of several kinds. The idea in this seems to be that as spoons in a set match and fit together exactly, so should man and wife. A *spooney*, meaning a

silly person, had originally no connection with love, though it became natural enough to associate silly fondness with affection. *Vide* TO SPOON.

You don't mean to say you have been doing the *spooney*—what you call making love—have you?—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

The original meaning of *spooney*, foolish, possibly owes its origin to the phrase "not past the spoon," *i.e.*, childish, that is, spoon-fed.

"Can't you see it ain't open yet, *spooney!*" demanded the irascible landlady.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**Spoons** (American), equivalent to money, means, or a fortune. "She has the *spoons*," indicates an heiress.

**Spoon, to** (common), to court, make love, to woo. Sometimes with an idea of foolish fondness, which was the original meaning.

"You're not a bad-looking fellow. *Spoon* some woman, you'll soon be all right." Some short time passed on, when the two met again, the broker in fine feather. "Took your advice, old man. *Spooned* a deuced ugly woman. Doing well. Look at my coat."—*Bird o' Freedom.*

"To *spoon*, borrowed probably from some of the provincial dialects, seems to be akin to Anglo-Saxon *sponere* (*spanere*), an allurer or persuader; *sponung* (*spanung*), persuasion, seduction; *spanan* (past participle *sponen*), to entice, or solicit; the primitive form of which was probably *spanan*, implied

by Teutonic *un-spunahh*, inexorable. Thus the original meaning of *spoon* would be 'to be seductive or alluring' in one's looks and manner, to woo" (A. Smythe Palmer).

(Cricket), to strike the ball in such a way with a slack and almost horizontal bat that it rises up in the air.

They "pulled," they *spooned*, they, in short, committed every fault of which the cricketer can be guilty.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Spoons, or spoopsy** (American), a soft-brained fellow, or one whose manners are objectionable.

Seniors always try to be dignified. The term *spoopsey*, in its widest signification, applies admirably to them.—*Yale Tomahawk*.

*Spoopsy* is from English provincial *poop*, a puppy. The ending *sy* is very often irregularly applied in America, as Jimsy for Jim.

**Sport** (popular), a man who gives himself up to sport, a betting man, turfite. Originally American.

Leastways I don't mean that exackly; I like you too well; you're my sort; But you ain't took my measure korrect, I'm a Tory, a patriot, a *sport*.

So wy should you round on me thusly? I call it a little mite mean.

If I took and turned Radical now; but oh! no, 'Arry isn't so green.

—*Punch*.

**Sporting door** (University), outer door of chamber. Also "oak." *Vide TO SPORT*.

**Sport**, to (common), to exhibit, wear, as "*sport* a new tile."

"To *sport* one's oak," to shut the door against visitors. *Vide OAK*.

Mr. Verdant Green had for the first time *sported* his oak. Under any circumstances it would have been a mere form, since his bashful politeness would have induced him to open it to any comer.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Spot** (common), to have a vacant *spot*, to be crazy; to be *on the spot*, or to be "all there," to be thoroughly *au fait* of some business, occupation, or game. To be in form, or lucky, to be smart. An officer is said to be *on the spot* when he is thoroughly acquainted with his duties. "Off the spot" is the reverse. The metaphor is from a billiards phrase, on or off the spot stroke, the most paying stroke at billiards. To be *on the spot*, therefore, is to be doing the spot stroke skilfully or luckily.

**Spotted** (army), *spotted* mysteries.

Potted preserved beef, which may contain unknown ingredients, or be made of bad meat.

But what do I care? Not a pennorth of *spotted*; and when customers come in and ask for a fourpenny plate with plenty of gravy, I take the money—always look after the coin, you know.—*Broadside Ballad*.

(Army), *spotted* dog, sometimes applied to a currant pudding, but by soldiers used for a sausage or saveloy.

(Popular), *spotted* donkey, coarse plum-pudding, sold at cook-shops.

**Spotter** (American), spy in the employment of the police. French *indicateur*.

It is shrewdly suspected that there are regularly paid *spotters* who watch in the Paso del Norte establishments and note the customers who go with their purchases into the street cars, and point them out to the United States inspectors when they reach American territory.—*Globe Democrat*.

**Spot, to** (common), to see, notice, make a note of anything, pick out, identify.

But I preferred pecking and prowling, and *spotting* the mugs making love.—*Punch*.

The next tipster avows he will forfeit a large sum of money unless he *spots* the identical winners, "first and second." Of course, nothing can be more transparent than bombast of this sort; but here it is in black and white.—*Greenwood; Seven Curses of London*.

There are certain movements of individuals, as the extension of a hand, the methods of carrying a cane or a parasol, that mark the persons, so that, disguise themselves as they may, a trained detective would *spot* them anywhere, or under any circumstances. They are involuntary, and all the training in the world would not change them an iota.—*Illustrated Bits*.

Also to lay money down for gambling, setting it on the spots.

**Spouter** (popular), orator or preacher. Also a whaling term for a South Sea whale.

**Spout, to** (common), to pawn. *Vide Por*.

He went out one Monday morning and *spouted* his watch to raise funds.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

The dons are going to *spout* the college plate.—*T. Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

I hold it truth with him who says  
That sometimes 'tis as well to *spout*  
One's watch, and not to get it out  
Till after lapse of many days.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To shout as a street vendor.

I was out with the missis and the moke  
a *spoutin'* my wares.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To *spout* also refers to noisy talking or oratory.

At its case, of an "uncle" of his, who'd a *spout*,

That horrid word *spout* no sooner came out

Than Winifred Pryce would turn her about,  
And with scorn on her lip, and a hand on each hip,

*Spout* herself till her nose grew red at the tip.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

In the following quotation a play is made on the word.

A very interesting article on sponges has been written by one of our Consuls on the Syrian coast. It appears that these interesting, but lowly organised creatures, exist only by *spouting*, in fact they are the Grand Old Man of the sea.—*Moonshine*.

**Spout, up the** (common), in pawn.

And his pockets, no doubt, being turned inside out,

That his *mouchoir* and gloves may be put up the *spout*.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

In America there is a poetical paraphrase of this term in very common use. It is "where the woodbine twineth," because in country houses there is generally a woodbine growing on the water-spout. It was invented by the notorious Fiske in reference to bonds hypothecated.

*Up the spout* is in allusion to the spout up which pawnbrokers send the articles ticketed. When redeemed, they return down the spout, *i.e.*, from the store-room to the shop.

As for spoons, forks, and jewellery, they are not taken so readily to the smelting-pot, but to well-known places where there is a pipe (*spout*) which your lordships may have seen in a pawnbroker's shop.—*Shaftesbury, The Times*.

There were three of these floors, and the *spout* from the shop penetrated to the topmost. On every floorway a sharp and active youth, whose business it was to discover and send "down the *spout*" the ransomed bundles.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Sprat** (popular), my *sprat*, *i.e.*, my young man, my sweetheart. Swedish *spratt*, beau, coxcomb, dandy. (Popular and thieves), a sixpence.

I got more pieces for the wedge. I got three and a *sprat* (3s. 6d.) an ounce.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Sprats** (popular), effects, furniture, *i.e.*, "sticks," from provincial English *sprats*, small wood.

**Spread** (popular), butter. (General), a meal, banquet.

At the conclusion of the exercises on class days all adjourned to the *spreads* (as the cold collations are called) in the various rooms and halls.—*Life at Harvard (U.S.) College*.

Next day I was present at a *spread* at the Mission Hall of a much more gratifying description. Next day was Wednesday, and for a very long time past, on this day, the good missionary among the savage tribes of St. Luke's has somehow contrived to raise from the charitable money enough to give the children—

VOL. II.

poor, neglected, literally half-starved little fledglings of the surrounding rookeries—a hot dinner, a smoking-hot dinner, and as much as they can eat of it.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

(American), a bed covering.

**Spread eagle** (nautical), a person seized in the rigging; generally a passenger thus made to pay his entrance forfeit. (Cambridge), pulled and grilled fowl, a fowl opened down the back, and served up with mushrooms, &c. (American), as an adjective it applies to oratory.

The king was satisfied; so the duke got out his book and read the parts over in the most splendid *spread-eagle* way, prancing around and acting at the same time, to show how it had got to be done; then he gave the book to the king, and told him to get his part by heart.—*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

*Spread eagle*, the operations of one who buys an amount of stock on time, and then bargains to sell the same stock within the same time at a higher rate, expecting to receive a profit from the difference, without expenditure of capital, but who, as by his bargain the option neither of reception nor delivery is in his hands, is at the risk of being obliged both to buy and sell at a disadvantage in order to fulfil his bargain.

**Spread-eagle-ism**, an American phrase, first applied to exaggerated, extravagant, and vulgar patriotic speeches in laudation of the American Union, its present greatness and its future

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probabilities; first suggested by the eagle as the personification of the country, in the same manner as the lion is the heraldic emblem of England, the unicorn of Scotland, the cock of France, the double-headed eagle of Austria, and the black eagle of Prussia. According to the definition in the *North American Review*, as quoted by Bartlett, "A compound of exaggeration, effrontery, bombast, mixed metaphors, platitudes, defiant threats thrown at the world, and irreverent appeals to the Supreme Being."

**Spread oneself, to** (West American), to boast.

Now he was another man, and for the benefit of the "tenderfoot" he *spread himself*.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Spread, straddle** (Stock Exchange), Americanisms for "options."

**Spree** (Winchester), said of one giving himself airs. "He's *spree*" means he is a conceited person. Applied to dress or other articles it means smart, stylish, in good form. (General), on the *spree*, on a frolic, bent on amusement generally involving feasting. This word, both as a substantive and adjective, is provincial English, used slangily.

She shouted out "Hansom"—I thought she meant me,

For I'd never rode in one before—  
She said to the cabman—"We're out on the *spree*."

—*J. Anthony: The Girl at the Park.*

In Dutch, *spreifest* is a betrothal or marriage feast, which was of old in Holland the great spree of all others in a man's life. *Spreifeest, trouwfeest, spreien, trouwen, huwen; ook vrijen* (Wordenboek van Bargoensch and J. Teirlinck). *Spreiing*, the act of betrothing or wedding (*trouwing, daad van trouwen; vrijage*), is both in sound and in fact very nearly an equivalent to "spreeing."

**Spreeman** (Winchester College), a junior who is permitted to work hard, generally one who has been there some time.

**Spreeners** (Winchester College), onceit.

**Springers, the.** In America the 62nd got this name from their rapid pursuit of the enemy after the battle of Trois Rivières.

**Springer up** (tailors), a tailor who sells cheap ready-made clothing. The clothes are said to be "sprung up" or "blown together."

**Sprint** (sporting), a short distance race. Provincial English, *sprint*, lively, such a race being run at full speed. Also *sprint* race. A *sprint* is a professional walker.

**Sprinter** (American), one who is making great exertion in running.

The young desperado ran like a *sprinter*, but the young lady kept well up with him.



Finally, after a chase of about eight blocks, a gentleman jumped from his buggy and stopped the thief.—*Kansas City Times*.

**Sprint**, to (sporting), to walk in matches, and to run in short distance races. *Vide* SPRINT.

"Now that your son has returned from college, do you feel repaid for your outlay for his education. Did he take any prizes?" "Oh, yes, mum, yes, indeed. He got a medal for what he calls *sprinting*, and he must be high up in mathematics, for he says he's learned four new curves."—*Scranton Truth*.

**Sprout** (Yale University), any department of knowledge is so called, e.g., botany, mathematics, classics, are each and all of them *sprouts*. (American), a bunch of *sprouts*, the five fingers of the closed fist. Also the chambers of a revolver.

**Sprug** (Scottish), a sparrow.

**Sprung** (naval), a man in liquor is "*sprung*, slewed, or half-seas over" or "dead-oh!" according to the stage of intoxication. *Sprung*, like a boat full of water, which springs a leak.

As she went along, the boys bid her be of good cheer, for she was only a little *sprung*.—*Dickens*.

**Spry** (American), active, nimble. From provincial English *spry*, nimble; Swedish *sprygg*, very active (Skeat).

He rejoiced, for he said, "My blackguards will be *spry* and busy, and full of work."—*Sporting Times*.

**Spud** (American thieves), base coin, bad money. From *spud*, a bad or raw potato.

**Spud** (popular), a dwarfish, round, potato-shaped person. Also a baby's hand, so called because round and plump.

**Spudding** (costers), a street seller of potatoes.

**Spudgel** (American), to move or run away speedily. Same as West of England *spuddle*. *Spudgy*, quick, speedy. Dutch *spoedig*, speedy; *spoediglyk*, rapidly.

**Spuds** (popular), potatoes. Query from the implement, the *spud*, with which they are dug up. *Spud* is used by Swift with the meaning of "short knife."

**Spun** (medical students), having failed at examination.

**Spunk-fencer** (popular), a lucifer-match seller. *Vide* SPUNKS.

**Spunks** (popular), lucifer matches. *Spunk* is an excrescence on the bark of trees, used sometimes for tinder.

**Spur**, to (thieves), to annoy.

The only thing that *spurred* me was being such a flat to bring them home.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Squabash**, to (popular), to kill. From *squab* and *bash*, both meaning to beat, ill-treat.

Harry the Sixth, who, instead of being *squabash'd*, as in Shakspeare we've read, Caught a bad influenza, and died in his bed.

—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

**Squabble** (printers). This is a term for the more technical one "broken." Type when disarranged and mixed, as if quarrelling, is said to be *squabbled*, i. e., in "pie," or "squashed."

**Squad**, defined in quotation.

*Squad*, applied generally to little parties, of little sense—as an awkward *squad*, a blackguard *squad*, a squandering *squad*, &c.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street.*

(Public schools, &c.), the *pi-squad*, i. e., pious *squad*, a set who profess to be very pious and good.

**Squaddle** (American), to depart rapidly, begone, cut and run, or skedaddle.

And at once released the prisoner,  
Sternly bidding him to *squaddle*,  
Just as fast as he could make it,  
Ere the stary night came on.

—*In Nevada.*

**Squantum** (American), a common expression in New England is, "She looks as if she came from *squantum*," i. e., from some rustic, out-of-the-way place. Bartlett suggests that the term is probably derived from some Indian place-name, and states that *squantum* was a Massachusetts Indian name for the devil. Also a picnic.

**Square** (thieves and popular), honest, straightforward.

They considered themselves much better than many *square* (honest) people who practise commercial frauds.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

"Take my tip and turn *square*, from a hook who's going to be lagged," would

be in common parlance, "Take my advice and get your living honestly, says a pick-pocket who is expecting penal servitude."  
—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

This word has recently acquired extensive currency among the criminal classes, and the functionaries whose business it is to cope with them; to *square* is to adjust, to settle, to make straight, to discharge a liability. "On the *square*," fairly and satisfactorily, honestly. The derivation has long been known as coming from the freemasons,

When I was an apprentice, I lived upon  
the *square*,

My boss gave me no money, which I  
thought was hardly fair

(*The Cross Boy's Song*);

and the phrase, in its metaphorical sense, would not be justly liable to the reproach of being slang, were it not for its use by the dangerous and disreputable classes to describe the kind of honour that is supposed to exist among thieves and law-breakers in their intercourse with each other. (Society), *square*, to run on the, to be straight, honest, reliable.

**Square backdown** (sporting), a shuffle of more than usual palpableness.

The fight to a finish between Killen and Conley, which was to have taken place on March 1, is off. Killen made the plea that, owing to the bad condition of his hands, he could not fight until a later day. An agreement was reached January 4 to withdraw the forfeits and declare the fight off. Killen's action is regarded by all sporting men as a *square backdown*.—*New York Police Gazette.*

**Square, to** (general), to bribe, conciliate. "Squaring his nibs," silencing anybody by a bribe.

There was in the Manchester detective service one man who could not be *squared*, and had an inconvenient habit of keeping information to himself, and Smith was frequently employed by other detectives to get up bogus cases in order to throw discredit upon this official.—*Evening News*.

**Squarehead** (thieves), explained by quotation.

"Honesty among thieves" is undoubtedly the production of a *squarehead* or sham thief; a good thief will rob anybody.—*Confessions of Joe Bragg*.

Also Australian prison slang.

**Square meal** (common), solid, complete meal. Originally American.

I hear that when the members of the the Metropolitan Asylums Board visited Leavesden a few days ago, they were regaled with a *square meal* of the most sumptuous description.—*Truth*.

**Square rigged** (nautical), well dressed.

**Square round, to** (Winchester College), to make room at the fire for some one.

**Square up, to** (general), to put oneself in a fighting attitude, to pay a debt.

**Square with, to be** (common), to be even with him, or to be re-ven-ge-d.

**Squarson** (clerical), a combination of "squire" and "parson"—a squire in holy orders who

works his parish, or rural parson of means and position not overshadowed by resident squires.

**Squattle away, to** (American), to depart. Probably suggested by ducks *squatting* or "splashing" as they hurry off.

**Squatty, squaddy** (American), short, stout, small, and fat. *Squat*, a short, stout person in several English dialects.

Tombólin's wife being a very small *squat*, Out of the water soon she got.

—*Old Ballad of Tombólin*.

**Squawk** (American, but of English origin), to squeak or squall in a loud, harsh tone. Generally associated with the sounds uttered by poultry in rage, pain, or fear. A wretched failure, an object "fizzle."

Jokes may be divided into the first-rate good, the first-rate bad, and *squawks*. A *squawk* awakens in you a sense of horror, or of shame for the man making it, and causes you to be thankful that you are not in his moccasins.—*Henry P. Leland*.

**Squeak, a narrow** (common), a narrow escape. Metaphor from a pig escaping through a small opening.

It was a *narrow squeak* for me, as the bullet cut off a lock of my hair, and passed clean through my hat.—*O'Reilly: Fifty Years on the Trail*.

**Squeaker** (bird fanciers), a young pigeon.

*Squeakers*—young pigeons—and you take 'em to the public-house, and you enters 'em to the race.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

(Popular), a pig.

**Squeak**, to (thieves), to confess, inform.

I never will whiddle, I never will *squeak*,  
Nor to save my colquarron endanger thy  
neck.

—*Retoure, my dear Delle.*

This verb is obsolete, for to break silence, for fear or pain, to speak.

If he be obstinate put a civil question to him upon the rack, and he *squeaks*, I warrant him.—*Dryden.*

**Squealer** (Wellington College), a small boy. (Thieves), an informer, one who gives information that may lead to detection.

"Somebody saw him?"

"Yes."

"And that somebody has been arrested and confessed?"

"No; oh, no!"

"No *squealer* yet?"

"No; that's straight. I see you doubt it, but it's true."—*Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean.*

**Squeal**, to (thieves), to lodge information with the police. A "State's evidence" man is a "squealer." The term is, however, becoming quite common as expressing the imparting of knowledge of any kind. Variants are—to blow on, to give away, to let out on, to go back on.

A pal *squeals* on his chum, and detectives will capture him in short order.—*Sub-head in Abilene (Kansas) Gazette.*

**Squee-gee** (American; English, *wee-jee*), aristocratic, refined, extremely elegant and fashionable.

No minister in the city, not even the one who officiated at the church where the

family attended, was *squee-gee* (*squee-jee* is a Gothic word meaning high-toned) enough to conduct the services.—*American Newspaper.*

**Squeeze** (thieves), the neck, a crowd, silk.

After the place got well where I was chived, me and another screwed a place at Stoke Newington, and we got some *squeeze* (silk) dresses, and two sealskin jackets, and some other things.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

The latter asked Fife if he had been to see the *squeeze* (silk) that morning. Fife answered "Yes."—*Daily Telegraph.*

*Squeeze-clout*, neck-cloth.

**Squeezer** (thieves), gallows.

For Larry was always the lad,  
When a friend was condemned to the  
*squeezer*;

But he'd pawn all the togs that he had,  
Just to help the poor boy to a sneezer.

—*The Death of Socrates.*

**Squelcher** (pugilistic), a settling blow. Old provincial. We find *squelch* for a heavy fall in Hudibras.

There's a *squelcher* in the bread-basket that'll stop your dancing, my kivey!—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

Figuratively a settler in argument or vituperation.

This last retort would have been a *squelcher*.—*Evening News.*

He was keeled back, I remember, in a strong chair, with his feet on the front of the table, and a clip full of paper on his knee, and in that position he used to write his leading articles. *Squelchers*, some of them.—*The Golden Butierfly.*

**Squib** (costermongers), a head of asparagus. (Painters), a paint-brush.

**Squibob** (American), a term applied usually in contempt, but sometimes in indifference to anybody. From provincial English *squybobble*, a fuss, a needless ceremony. Hence a man who is finicky and fussy.

**Squiffed** (common), slightly intoxicated.

He never tells his wifelet what the nature of the "biz" is;  
And when he rolls home rather *squiffed*,  
just as the day is dawning,  
Do you think he ever tells her what has kept him out till morning!

—*Sporting Times*.

Also *squiffy*.

It was melted so soon, I am rather afraid  
That our hero was *squiffy*, or worse:  
And some might have fancied that most of it laid.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Squinny** (American), to cause a laugh, to laugh, wink, and smile. *Squinny*, provincial English, to squint; *quin*, a wink.

**Squinny-eyed** (common), a modern street phrase of general application in an offensive sense, but rather out of vogue.

**Squinting** (tailors), being without food or anything requisite. The French say of anything longed for, "cela le fait loucher."

**Squirm** or **squirt** (public schools), small obnoxious boy. (American), to get a *squirm* on, to begin moving, to bestir oneself. Properly to wriggle.

Turn out your bundle quick, get a *squirm* on you!—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Squirt** (Harvard University), a showy recitation. Hall says: "From the ease and quickness with which the words flow from the mouth, being analogous to the ease and quickness which attend the sudden ejection of a stream of water from a pipe. Such a recitation being generally perfect, the word *squirt* is very often used to convey that idea. Perhaps there is not, in the whole vocabulary of college cant terms, one more expressive than this, or that so easily conveys its meaning merely by its sound. It is mostly used colloquially." Also a fop.

If they won't keep company with *squirts* and dandies, who's going to make a monkey of himself?—*Magazine: Jones's Courtship*.

(Stock Exchange), a man who hangs about the market with a paltry order, and who will not deal fairly. (Common), a doctor or apothecary (nearly obsolete).

**Squirt your dye** (American). This means, "Now, do your best, your turn for action has come!" A phrase borrowed from the dyer's workshop. It is generally heard as "Now then, *squirt your dye!*"

**Squish** (University and public schools), marmalade. The term is used at the Royal Military Academy.

**Stab** (billiards), to make a *stab* shot is to cause your own ball to stop dead on the spot occu-

plied by the object ball, or only to run through it a very little way.

'**Stab, on the** (printers). A man employed on regular work, and at a fixed weekly wage, is said to be on the "establishment," and this word is very commonly shortened to 'stab.

**Stab rag** (popular), a tailor.

**Stab, to** (theatrical). "*Stab yourself, and pass the dagger.*" A jovial synonym for "Help yourself, and pass the bottle."

**Stag** (Stock Exchange), a man who applies for shares or stock in a new company with the intention of selling as soon as possible at a premium.

A *stag* there was—as I've heard tell,  
Who in an attic used to dwell,  
Or rather—to use a fitter phrase—  
Who in an attic used to gaze;  
And being blest, like many I know,  
With little conscience, and less rhino,  
Took to that frailest of all frail ways.

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

(Thieves), one who has turned State's evidence, an informer. To turn *stag*, to peach, betray, turn informer, from the meaning of to *stag*, to watch, hence to spy and inform. Also, a shilling.

**Stag dance** (American), a peculiar buffoon dance performed by men alone. *Vide* STAG PARTY.

After supper a universal *stag dance* of not less than fifty couples came off. This is a peculiar kind of affair, in which the dancers arrange themselves in two long

lines, facing each other, inside of a lane of candles, half buried in the ground, and above these three muskets forming a tripod, and each bayonet having a candle spluttering on its point. Drums, fifes, and violins formed the orchestra. The cadets started with a simultaneous bound, involving themselves inextricably, and at last it became a mere competition who should work his legs and feet most excruciatingly. —*The West Point Scrap-Book.*

**Stage-dooring** (theatrical), hanging about the scenes or doors reserved for actors.

Mr. — refused to put the chorus ladies into tights, and the public was gently but firmly made to understand that *stage-dooring* was not allowed, that supper parties were forbidden. —*Evening News.*

**Stage wait** (theatrical), keeping the stage waiting so as to suspend the progress of the play.

One night, some years ago, there was what we call a *stage wait*—the next performer had not arrived. —*Sporting Times.*

**Stagger** (popular and thieves), one who looks, watches.

**Staggerer** (common), applied to anything wonderful, astounding, that *staggers* one.

Jobson showed me what he rightly called a *staggerer*. Highland scene, cattle life-size . . . "Had to get a Pickford's van to take it to the Academy." —*Moonshine.*

Considering the slowness of the wicket yesterday, this in itself was a notable feature of the innings, but the greatest *staggerer* was that one man made more than half of the total. —*Star.*

**Staggers, hungry**, explained by quotation.

Shall I let the chances of stealing a turnip off a stall, or a loaf out of a baker's barrow, go past me, while I keep straight

on, looking out for an honest way?—straight on, and straight on, till I get the *hungry staggers* (you never had the *hungry staggers*, Mr. Magistrate), and tumble down on the road? I'm not such a fool, thank'e. I don't see the pull of it.—*Seven Curses of London.*

**Stag mag** (theatrical), stage manager.

**Stag party** (common), a party of men. A simile obviously borrowed from the groups of younger stags who are driven away to associate by themselves, when the stronger and older males monopolise the females.

"I have observed," remarked Cyn, "that among animals it is the strongest, bravest, and best who monopolise the favours of the females. A *stag party* of deer consists of the feeble bachelors, the fools, so to speak, of the herd. But in humanity the rule is reversed. Nineteen out of twenty of the ladies' darlings, the regular mashers, the dear Berties, are the very refuse of our sex, so far as brains are concerned. You may find *stag parties* of the most manly and intelligent men, in which there are some who never had a *bonne fortune*, and those who have enjoyed them had to work hard enough for their happiness; while a drivelling fool of an opera-singer, or a small actor half idiotic with vanity and ignorance, will be overwhelmed with love-letters from all sorts and conditions of belles."—*The Stag Club.*

I lose myself in a little party of old bricks, who, under pretence of looking at the pictures, are keeping up a small *stag party* at the end of the room.—*Mace Sloper* (C. G. L.) in the *Knickerbocker Magazine.*

**Stag, to** (popular and thieves), to look, watch. Alluding to the fixed, intent staring of a stag. Suggested to be from Swedish

*staga*, to stop, as staying to listen.

Lest the transaction may have been *staged* by some impertinent bystander or a trap, he mounts his box and drives away.—*Jon Bee: A Living Picture of London for 1828.*

So you've been *staggering* this gentleman and me, and listening, have you?—*H. Kingsley: Geoffry Hamlyn.*

**Stairs without a landing** (thieves), the treadmill.

Well, I'll tell you. Our last lodger—about two years older than you he was, and as clever a little fellow as ever turned his hand to diving—he lasted as a lodger of mine only nine weeks. He's lodging now at Coldbaths Fields—getting up the *stairs without a landing*. Three months of it, and twice privately whipped. Bad for him, isn't it?—*The Little Ragamuffins.*

**Stakes** (thieves), stolen handkerchiefs.

**Stake, to** (American), to provide for. A phrase derived from the picketing or staking out of horses and mules in frontier life.

There is no doubt that he had plenty of money and plenty of clothing when he left, for his family *staked* him. It is known that he had \$55 on the night preceding the murder.—*Chicago Herald.*

**Stale bear** (Stock Exchange), a man who has sold stock which he does not possess, and has not bought it back. A bear who has been short of stock for a considerable period (Atkin, "House Scraps").

**Stale bull** (Stock Exchange), a man who has held stock for a long period without profit.

**Stale drunk** (common), is said of a man who has been drunk at night, and has taken too much stimulants in the form of spirits the following morning.

**Stale whimer** (old cant), a bastard.

**Stalk, the** (Punch and Judy men), the gallows.

**Stall** (popular), trick, excuse, defence, humbug, pretence. Early English, a snare, or decoy. Also *stale*.

For two pins, wretches, I'd smash you all.  
It's nice, on my word, such things I ne'er heard,

You've been hiding my bird for a *stall*.

—*Broadside Ballad: The Masher and the Parrot.*

(Thieves), explained by quotation.

"Little Burks (as he was called), the police detective, who was discharged for acquainting the thieves with all that was transacted in the detective department, wouldn't mind acting as a *stall* in a robbery."

"What's that?"

"Why, cover a robbery. If he saw a mob of thieves at work he would get his brother policeman away on some pretence till the job was over, and then claim his share in the swag."—*Evidence given by an old Police Officer.*

**Stalling ken** (old cant), a broker's or receiver's place.

**Stallion** (circus), a piebald horse (doubtful or varied in its application). (Common), a lascivious man.

**Stallsman** (thieves), an accomplice who takes charge of the

plunder; from to "stall off," take away.

**Stall, to** (theatrical), to act a part. (Popular), to lodge or put up at a public-house. (Thieves), to screen a robbery while it is being perpetrated, to surround an intended victim in a crowd while a confederate operates. (Old cant), to make, arrange; "*stalling* to the rogue," admitting a new member. Also to conceal, to carry off, put by as booty.

I met a dell, I viewed her well,  
She was banship to my watch;  
So she and I did *stall* and cloy  
Whatever we could catch.

—*The English Rogue.*

**Stall your mug** (popular), go away, make yourself scarce. Thieves use this expression generally with the meaning of go home, take shelter.

**Stamp** (printers), separate types are commonly called—especially by outsiders—*stamps*. (American), a peculiar way of throwing dice out of a box. "I have seen three sixes thrown thrice in succession by *stamping*."

**Stamp-backs** (gambling cheats), explained by quotation.

It is absolutely and utterly impossible to distinguish the microscopic dots and lines of the ordinary marked card while it is being dealt off the pack, and no man ever lived who could use them to advantage. The first of the kind produced were the old-fashioned *stamp-backs*, but players soon found out that no system of marks were eligible while the cards were in motion, and they dropped them.—*Star.*



**Stampers** (thieves), feet, shoes.

Strike up, piper, a merry merry dance,  
That we on our *stampers* may foot it and  
prance.

—*Broome: Jovial Crew.*

**Stamps** (old cant), legs. "*Stamps*  
in the Harmans," legs in the  
stocks.

**Stander-up** (American thieves), a  
man who robs intoxicated per-  
sons under pretence of aiding  
them to go home.

They gave Chandler the name of being  
a *stander-up* of drunken men. The proper  
mode of *standing-up* a tipsy man, accord-  
ing to the rules, is to place your right arm  
under the left arm of the sleeper close to  
the shoulder, placing the hand on his waist-  
coat, just above his left vest pocket. As  
you raise him with the right hand, press  
your hand hard against his body so that  
he will not feel the watch slipping from  
his pocket into your left hand.—*Phila-  
delphia Press.*

**Standing dish** (society), a com-  
mon expression for any one who  
is constantly lunching, dining,  
or calling at a house. "Mr. —  
is always lunching here, he is  
quite a *standing dish*." Gener-  
ally speaking applied to any  
one or anything which often  
makes its appearance before the  
public.

Lottery started with the call of Cigar  
and Peter Simple (the grey), whose oppo-  
nents also included those *standing dishes*,  
Charity and Seventy-four.—*Sporting  
Times.*

**Stand in**, to (general), to have a  
share in a bet or any specula-  
tion.

Here, hand me the flimsies, and *stand  
in* with me,  
I'll do a good turn to a friend of old  
Flo's.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

Mr. —, I believe, was asked to *stand  
in* with him, but the Jove of the Lyceum  
declared that the prices were ruinous. The  
result, however, was an enormous success.  
—*Star.*

Take a side in a dispute.  
(Thieves), have a share of the  
proceeds of a robbery.

If I lend you these I shall want to *stand  
in*; but I said I can't *stand* you at that;  
I will grease your dukes if you like.—  
*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Stand-offish** (society), a *noli me  
tangere* manner.

A hundred years since Versailles was  
almost divided into two camps. The  
quarter of Notre Dame almost proudly  
assumed the title of the patriotic quarter.  
Its denizens gave the first deputies of  
France a cordial welcome, while those of  
St. Louis stood aloof. It is solemn and  
respectable, one might almost say *stand-  
offish*. Its doors keep people at a distance,  
and its windows seem to look with a kind  
of contempt on the passers-by.—*Evening  
News.*

**Stand off**, to (American), to put  
off by means of a trick.

Loop-holed! Well, the man who built  
this place expected occasionally to have to  
*stand off* irate Mexicans who had followed  
stolen stock into the valley.—*F. Francis:  
Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Stand on one's hind legs**, to  
(popular), to show anger, to take  
a thing in bad part, or to lose  
one's temper. French *se cabrer*.

**Stand on velvet**, to (racing), to  
have all your bets secured, and  
on the winning side.

**Stands on his ears** (American), an expression which, like standing on his head, or throwing somersaults, denotes exhilaration of spirits.

Man springeth up as the toad-stool, and standeth upon his ears when he is young, but as he groweth older he wrinkleth up with worry, and his beauty fadeth away.—*Thomas P. Montfort.*

**Stand to** (common), to treat to.

If you like to stand a can of beer, you may enter the smithy and have a chat with them; but idle only on your part.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

Stand me a drink before I go; it is an arduous task I have to perform.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Star** (auction), an article not properly belonging to the sale introduced into an auction of goods.

**Starcher** (common), stiff white necktie.

**Star-gazer** (popular), a horse that keeps its head high when trotting or galloping. Also a hedge prostitute.

**Star-gazers** (American), "ladies of the pavement, who walk by night, not so much, however, to study the heavenly bodies, as to dispose of their own." "Bats, night-hawks, owls, astronomers, nocturnes, moonlighters, moths, nightlies, nymphs of darkness."

**Stark-naked** (old slang), raw gin. Also "strip-me-naked."

His "bingo" was unexceptionable; and as for his *stark-naked*, it was voted the most brilliant thing in nature.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

**Starling** (police), a person marked for the police. From a play on *spotted*, marked out.

**Star-queller** (theatrical), is a term applied to an actor whose imperfect acting mars that of better actors.

**Starring** (prison). "Some crack a pane in a shop-front and by passing the wet thumb along, they can direct the crack as they please; then removing the glass they can remove the goods" (Chesterton's "Revelations of Prison Life"). A lump of putty is sometimes placed on the window and then struck with a life-preserver. The glass is thus broken without noise, even that of falling glass.

**Star the glaze, to** (popular and thieves), to break a window pane; to star in that sense is provincial English.

So, in fractional arithmetic, it is considered highly improper to *star the glaze*, in falling through the sashes of a grapery, when on the look-out for grapes.—*Diprose: Laugh and Learn.*

**Start, the** (beggars and tramps), London. Grose gives it as being Newgate. (Popular), a rum *start*, an odd circumstance.

**Starting** (popular), a reprimand or beating.

**Star**, to (theatrical), to perform as a *star* with inferior actors. Also to *star* it.

To use a bit of theatrical slang, Mr. — is *starring* it with success in Wales, and is not likely to forget the extraordinary moonlight demonstration at Singleton Abbey.—*Fall Mall Gazette*.

(Billiards), to *star* is to receive one or more additional lives in the course of the pool game, on payment of an additional entrance fee.

**Staruben** (gypsy), imprisoned.

Where is Anselo W.? He that was *staruben* for a gry?—C. G. Leland: *The Gypsies*.

Vide STURIBEN.

**Starve 'em, Rob 'em, and Cheat 'em**, slang names for the contiguous or united towns of Stroud, Rochester, and Chatham. "So called," says Grose, "by soldiers and sailors, and not without good reason."

**Stash**, to (common), to cease, stop, stay, leave off. As this word agrees in every particular as to meaning with the gypsy *hatch*, it is possibly an anagram of it, or a corruption of to *stanch*, which formerly had the limited meaning of to stop.

What to the heel do you *stask* at? I'll chive you.—*Jon Bee: A Living Picture of London*.

**Stationery** (theatrical), paper, or orders in a theatre.

**Staving**, *rip-staving*, *rip-staver*ing (American), to *stave*, i. e., to

break into, as to *stave* a cask, is correct. From this comes to *stave*, to burst through, or press onward. "The world will *stave* right on," "Where are you *staving* to?" Hence *staving*, dashing on, proceeding brilliantly, doing well, as a *staving* business. "*Ripping* and *staving* along" may be heard sometimes. "*Rip-smorter*, *rip-staver*, a tearer, driver, dasher" (Bartlett). Vide RIP.

**Stay** (American). "To be *stayed* with is to be courted by a man" (Bartlett). To *stay* with a woman is to carry courtship to the extreme. (Common), to *stay* is said of a horse or man with powers of endurance.

M. Carnot . . . has been unquestionably the most hard-worked citizen in this country; yet he has amazed his entourage by his *staying* powers.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Stayer** (sporting), one not to be discouraged. An athlete or horse who has powers of endurance.

The distance was half-a-mile, and considerable interest was taken in the race, in which a fine contest was expected to ensue between the holder, H. C. S., and J. N., who has previously been known as a short-distance swimmer rather than a *stayer*.—*Pastime*.

Gonfalon is stopped by his penalty, and is nearly certain to give way to Theophrastus, who is a rare old *stayer*.—*Referee*.

**Stay out** (Eton), meaning the reverse.

Sometimes Blazes had a lazy fit, and put himself on the sick list for a day. This was called *stay out*, for the reason that

one had to stay in.—*Brinsley Richards: Seven Years at Eton.*

Many things at Eton were called by misnomers, in the construction of which the *lucus a non lucendo* principle came out very strong. Thus, when we stayed in, we said we were *staying out*; when "absence" was called, we had to be *present*; a *third* of a year was called a *half*, &c. &c.—*Sketchy Memories of Eton.*

**Stay-tape** (trade), a dry goods clerk or salesman.

**Steak, a two-eyed** (popular), a bloater, or "soger," or red herring.

**Steamer** (American), a tobacco-pipe.

**Steaming** (popular), a pudding steamed. In Manchester a potato-pie is called a steam-engine. The term is much used in the army.

**Steel**, prison slang for Coldbath Fields, from the Bastille. A name it earned rightly from its abominable management in the early part of the nineteenth century, and wrongly from the ignorant outcry which greeted the introduction of the separate (or silent and solitary) system of imprisonment.

"And the *Steel*—the place to which Mr. Eggshells alludes in connection with his retirement?"

"Coldbath Fields," responded Mr. Badger, promptly, "quod—gaol—prison—that's the *Steel*."—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

The term has been extended to any prison, lock-up.

He pitched into the policeman, was lugged off to the *steel*, had up before the magistrate, and got a month.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

**Steel-bar drivers** (popular), journeymen tailors. Termed also "fingers."

**Steel-pen** (common). A *steel-pen* coat is a dress coat.

As regards the coat, the Emperor has sternly set his face against the "swallow-tail," "claw-hammer," or *steel-pen* garment which, for the last sixty years, has been mercilessly inflicted on civilised society all over the world.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Steep** (American), extreme. "A *steep* price." *Steep* grade, a rather difficult undertaking. De Vere remarks that *steep* is not only used in its literal sense, but by a kind of bold hyperbole applied to things generally. Men speak of "a *steep* price for a farm," and complain of "a *steep* tax to be paid." The French have *raide* (*steep*), for anything difficult to perform, to believe, or to stomach.

At the election in Minnesota one hundred and ten Winnebago Indians, wearing their blankets, voted the Democratic ticket; but the agent thought this was rather *steep*, so he afterwards crossed that number from the list.—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Steeple-house**, Puritan for church.

**Stems** (popular), the legs.

**Stem-winder** (American), applied to anything quite perfect and finished, "with the latest improvements."

"Denver."

"Yes, sir, you're right, Denver. Now, there's a booming city—regular *stem-winder*. Ever been to Denver?"

"Yes, siree. Denver is a pretty slick sort of a place. Didn't stay there long, eh?"—*American Newspaper*.

**Step down and step out!** (American), an intimation to cease, or a hint that a man has the worst of it.

**Step it, to** (common), to run away.

Mr. Curtis slipped into his pockets nine silver knives, and some dessert spoons and forks, and then we regret to say he *stepped it*, but he did so like a gentleman.—*Daily Telegraph*.

The last dull rays of the rushlight were gleaming,

Poor Snip and his wife, just as usual,  
were tight;

That the landlord would seize they had long been a-dreaming,

So they made up their minds to just *step it* that night.

—*Fred. Perry: Ballad*.

**Stepper** (prison), the treadmill.

**Stepping it** (army), desertion.

When a soldier absents himself with no intention of returning, he is said to have *stepped it* by his comrades.

**Stepping ken**, a dance-house.

English, but now more used in America, where the dance-house is much commoner than in England. It is a dancing-hall frequented by sailors, and the lowest classes of men and women of all kinds. The shameless debauchery practised in these places is of the most *outré* description.

**Stereo** (printers), any one relating stale news to his companions, would be told it was *stereo*, i.e., already "cast." Vide GEORGE HORNE.

**Steven** (thieves), money. Vide STEVER.

I rather fancies that it's news,  
How in a mill, both men should lose;  
For verè the odds are thus made even,  
It plays the dickens with the *stever*.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Stever** (popular), a penny; Dutch, *stuiver*. English stiver.

But now I've grown to man's estate, for work I've never cared,

I've "prossed" my meals from off my pals,  
oftimes I've badly fared;

Last night I had a single brown, a faggot  
thought I'd buy,

I dropped the *stever* down the sink, and then  
said with a sigh,

"I can't get at it."

—*Catnach Press Broadside*.

**Stew** (old), not wholly obsolete, for a brothel; a *stew*-holder, the keeper of a house of ill-fame. The name of *stew* originated from such establishments being generally held in conjunction with places where hot baths were kept, and where the men who frequented them, if afraid of infection, might resort to the hot bath and induce copious perspiration, by way of possible purification. A prostitute was often called a *stew*, in the seventeenth century.

**Steward** (American cadet), the doctor at West Point, United States Military Academy.

**Stick** (general and American), an inefficient person.

If you've got any *sticks* working in this office I want them discharged at once. I can't allow any but first-class men in this department.—*Chicago Tribune*.

An awkward and uninteresting actor is often called a *stick*. (Thieves), a crowbar. Burglars that "work with the *stick*" are looked down upon by those that "work with the 'screws.'"

"What tools will you want?" "We shall want some twirls and the *stick*."—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Silver trade, &c.), *stick*, for candlestick, also a candle.

**Sticker** (popular), a butcher or slaughterer.

Sporting with feelings, 'tis too bad,  
Although a butcher's boy,  
For *stickers* may be made to smart  
With love's cruel alloy.

—*W. B.: Sporting with Young Kill Bull's Heart*.

**Stick-hopper** (sport), hurdle-racer.

First Fiddler is being taught hurdle-jumping at Richmond, where they are reported to have two or three very promising *stick-hoppers*.—*Evening News*.

**Sticking** (theatrical), or "dead stick," when all concerned get muddled.

**Stick in**, to (cricket), or to keep up one's wicket, is to avoid getting out by careful play without attempting to make runs.

**Stick it up**, to (popular), to put a charge down to any account, to score.

The old man has died and left in his will That all is for me so I'll pay every bill,  
Though some *stick it up*, now I'll pay money down,

And ride in my carriage all over the town.

—*Charles Sheard: I'm a Millionaire*.

**Sticks** (common), furniture.

To the individual whose average earnings are perhaps half-a-crown a day, furnished lodgings are of course out of the question, and so none will permit him to occupy a room in a private house, unless he has at least a few *sticks* by way of security for the payment of a week's rent.

—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co*.

To tide over till then is a work of some difficulty, but the *sticks* and the "ward-robe" of the family have paid the rent up to now.—*George R. Sims: How the Poor Live*.

A poor woman owed 11s. 3d. for rent. A broker distrained on her goods. They were sold at auction for £2, 1s. 9d., the expenses amounting to £2, 4s. Among other items 10s. had been charged for advertising her miserable *sticks*.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Printers), another slang term for bad or hard printing rollers. (Racing), hurdles.

Some little time back Trap was smart over *sticks*, but now, I fear, he is no flyer; and of the others, Lowestoft, if he can jump, might have to be reckoned with, while both Never and Windsor did better at Croydon than is imagined.—*Evening News*.

(Cricket), the stumps.

Every ball on the *sticks*,  
And the wicket playing vilely up to all kinds of tricks.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Old cant), pistols.

**Sticks and stones** (popular), one's *sticks and stones* are one's household goods and possessions, equivalent to Lares and Penates.

**Stick, to cut one's.** *Vide* CUT ONE'S STICK.

"That lad," said he to the sergeant, when the lad had gone out, "that lad's apprentice to a customer of mine. I suppose he's *cut his stick*."—*The Gaol Cradle*.

**Stick, to stick, to be stuck.** This word, in the sense of to cheat, to be taken in, or as signifying loss, is English, but like many slang terms it has been very much extended and developed in the United States. Thus any and every kind of miscalculation, or error, or mistake, involves or results in being *stuck*, or in a *stick*. A man left with a certain number of unsaleable articles is *stuck* to that amount, and so on. There is a story of a country fellow, who, having gone into an auction, was told after it was over that he must pay for an immense quantity of goods which he had purchased. "Why, I didn't buy no goods," he replied. "Yes, you did," replied the auctioneer. "Every time I winked to you, you nodded again, and that was a bid." "'Twan't no bid," cried the countryman. "You kep a winkin' at me, as much as to say, 'Yes, you see how I'm goin' to *stick* somebody this time,' and I nodded back, meanin' 'I'm darned if you don't, mister.'" (Popular and thieves), to *stick* up, to deceive, cheat, disappoint.

VOL. II.

Now don't *stick me up* (disappoint); meet me at six to-night.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Australian), to rob, to entrap, to take violent possession of. To *stick up* literally signifies to stop. "Stop," in the days of highwaymen in England, had a similarly disagreeable connotation. Australians talk of a bank being *stuck up*, *i. e.*, robbed, of being *stuck up* by bush-rangers, &c.

Why, they *stuck up* Wilson's Station there, and murdered the man and woman in the kitchen; they then planted inside the house, and waited until Wilson came home at night with his stockman. Then they rushed out, and knocked old Wilson on the head, and drove a spear through the man's side.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland*.

A man talks of being *stuck up* when he does not see how to score at billiards, when he is puzzled for an answer, in fact, when he cannot get on in any matter.

**Sticky-fingered** (popular), thievish or covetous. The metaphor is obvious. In French cant *poisser* (to make sticky, clam), signifies to steal; *poisseur* or *poisse*, a thief.

"You're as *sticky-fingered* as a Scotchman."

"Why a Scotchman in particular?"

"Because he keeps the Sabbath, and everything else he can lay hands on."

A dialogue heard after the joke came out in *Punch*.

**Stiff** (general), paper of any kind, so called from its stiffness; a promissory note, used in con-

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trast with "hard," which signifies cash, or hard money. To do a "bit of stiff" is to accept or endorse a bill.

Could not otherwise obtain his share of the plunder than by taking paper from P., *i.e.*, stiff, in the form "I promise to pay."—*Jon Bee: A Living Picture of London.*

(American turf), explained by quotation.

"What do they mean by a stiff in the race?"

"That means generally a horse that on public form should win the race, and that either the jockey, trainer, or horse has been 'fixed' so that he will not win. I have heard the term 'bookmaker's stiff' used, and it means about the same thing, and is played at the expense of the public and in the interest of the bookmakers."—*St. Louis Republican.*

(Popular and thieves), a letter, a secret or clandestine communication between a prisoner and his friends outside, or between one and another. It is written on a sheet torn out of a library book, or on whitey-brown, with a scrap of pencil picked up and cautiously secreted, or a piece provided by an officer in connivance.

"You've got a 'new chum' in your party?"

"Yes; he's got a fiver. He is a draper, from Leicester. He says you used to be his lawyer."

"Ask him to write me particulars of his case."

"Oh, yes; I'll swag it in. I have a piece of 'cedar' which I'll lend him to write the stiff."—*Evening News.*

(Popular), a stiff, a corpse.

I've been terribly scared myself. I recollect one night, something like this, I

had gone out about eleven o'clock to get the stiff of a man who had died of consumption.—*Globe Democrat.*

**Stiff-fencer** (streets), a street seller of notepaper. *Vide* STIFF.

**Stiff for** (sporting Australian), certain for. The metaphor here is something that cannot be diverted (or averted). After the Melbourne Derby and Cup of 1880, Grand Flaneur was considered stiff for every race for which he was entered.

**Stiff on** (tailors). *Vide* DEAD-HORSE.

**Stiff 'un** (popular), a corpse. (Turf), a horse certain not to run.

The shilling you sent me, dearest mother,  
Has caused your boy some weeks of  
mental pain,  
I backed a stiff 'un with it, dearest mother,  
You shall have it when the Gee-gees run  
again.

—*When the Gee-gees run Again.*

The latter, seeing how sensitive the market is nowadays, and how inclined racing men are to follow what is done by layers who have the reputation of living out of stiff 'uns, kept his place in a way that can only be regarded as miraculous.  
—*Referee.*

There are two bookmakers in Melbourne nicknamed "the Undertakers," because of their fondness for laying against stiff 'uns, which, in this case, means horses that are certain not to run.

**Stilting** (thieves), synonymous with "high flying," explained by quotation.



"Don't say another word," said he: "am I anything in the police, indeed! You are a nice sort of chap to try your hand at *stiltin'!*" (first-class pocket-picking). "Why, what d'yer mean by it? How long have you been about?"—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Stilton** (common), that's the *Stilton*, a rendering of "that's the cheese."

**Stinger** (common), a hard blow.

**Stingo** (popular), strong ale.

. . . to prove his trust in native *stingo*, quaffed off a flagon of it.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Stink cupboard**, a cupboard in a chemical laboratory through which a strong upward draught passes, and into which any evil-smelling and noxious preparation is placed during the process of its manufacture.

**Stinkious**, gin; a word in use in the early part of the eighteenth century.

**Stinks** (schools, &c.), chemistry, a lecturer on physical science, especially chemistry. When a man took his degree in natural science, he used to be said at Cambridge to "go out in *stinks*."

**Stinky** (army), a farrier or shoeing smith. Query so called from the unpleasant smell of burning hoof, &c., so often accompanying the fitting of new shoes to a horse.

**Stir** (thieves), prison. Abbreviation of "sturiben" (which see).

**Stiver** (American), to run away, be off rapidly. Dutch *stuiven*, to fly, rush away.

**Stock actor** (theatrical), an artiste who is a regular member of a stock company.

**Stock cards, to** (cardsharper), to arrange cards for cheating purposes.

**Stock, long of**, explained by quotation.

*Long of stock* is an American term for a holder of securities who anticipates ability to sell at a higher price than that at which he purchased.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Stodge** (Charterhouse), the inside of a roll or the crumb of new bread. (Popular and thieves), food. *Stodge* is provincial for soft food, pottage, &c., of any kind. From *stodge*, thick, slimy mud.

**Stodger** (common), a great eater, gormandiser. (Charterhouse), a penny bun.

**Stodge, to** (common), to gorge oneself with food.

**Stolen ken** (old cant), a broker's shop.

**Stomp drawers** (old cant), stockings.

**Stone broke or stoney** (general), term in very common use among men in the fashionable world to express that they are in extreme financial difficulties and on the verge of bankruptcy, if not already bankrupts. The

term is perhaps derived from "stone-breaking," in that the solid mass of rock, broken up into small fragments, and only useful for mending roads with, is a decided come-down for a granite rock. Or it is an allusion to "rock" or "bed rock" dollar, last dollar. Originally American. The term is now in general use. The writer heard it from the lips of itinerants, &c.

At your mute call the people flock,  
The banker for his pounds pawns stock;  
The widow for the mite pawns frock;  
The milkmaid sweet, she pawns a crock;  
All *stoney broke*—with not a "rock,"

Ye three brass balls.

—*Detroit Free Press.*

We shall see scores of punters who went *stoney* over Manchester working away at Croydon this afternoon.—*Evening News.*

**Stone-jug, the,** originally Newgate Prison. Now any prison.

In a box of the *stone-jug* I was born.  
—*Ainsworth: Jerry Juniper's Chant.*

"The elders of the Kirk in Glasgow used of old to go out of church and make a sweep round for absentees and idlers, who on Monday were placed in the stocks or pillory, which being called (from the Latin *jugum*, a yoke), the *jougs*, the treatment was styled 'clapping them in the *jougs*,' hence stone *jougs* or *jug*. Parish *jugs* in Scotland consisted of an iron collar fastened by a chain and padlock to one of the entrance piers of the churchyard gate. This was the iron *jug*, and a prison in which the offender is confined bodily becomes, by

an easy association of ideas, the *stone-jug*." "It is remarkable that the use of the phrase *stone-jug* for prison, finds a parallel in Greek. The Scholiast on the Iliad, on the word *Keramos*, gives the meaning, a prison, as a Cyprian usage" (*Notes and Queries*). Grose calls it a "stone doublet."

**Stone-fence** (common), brandy and ale. A variation of "breaky leg."

**Stook** (thieves), pocket-handkerchief. Probably Yiddish, from the German *stuck*, a piece. *Stook-hauler*, a pickpocket who steals pocket-handkerchiefs.

**Stoop, the** (old cant), the pillory.

**Stop, on the** (thieves), explained by quotation.

You have heard of working *on the stop*, most likely, which means picking pockets when the party is standing still.—*Temple Bar.*

**Stop-lay.** Two or more well-dressed pickpockets promenade singly, until they select a person that will answer their purpose. One then inquires of him the direction to a place somewhat distant. On being told, he pretends not to understand his informant, who, becoming interested in his desire to be explicit, draws closer to the inquirer. At this instant one or both the others walk up, and in an instant the obliging man is relieved of a part of his property. This is called the *stop-lay*.

**Stormen** (society), a hot member of society, a man who is extremely proficient at anything, a lady who is fast and peculiar in ways and language; the origin of the word is a storm which bears down everything before it.

**Stotor** (old cant), a heavy blow; Dutch *stoat*, a blow, thrust, or push. "Het schip stiet op en onder schip"—"The ship fell foul upon another ship."

**Stouts** (Stock Exchange), Arthur Guinness, Son & Co. Shares.

**Stove-pipe** (popular), a silk hat. French "tuyan de poêle."

**Stow, to** (thieves), to live.

You may have a crib to *stow* in, Welcome, my pal, as the flowers in May. —*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Slang Song.*

(Popular), stop, cease.

'*Stow* that gammon,' interposed the robber.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

*Stow* it, Emma . . . It's only a lark . . . Lark or linnet, you *stow* it, or I shall have to show you downstairs.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps.*

*Stow* that kid, stop that nonsense, humbug.

I am a Devonshire clergyman's daughter, and just left my home with an officer—oh, *stow* that kid. Here's half a dollar, which is precious near the last.—*Sporting Times.*

To *stow*, not to talk about.

You maunders all *stow* what you stall, To rum coves what so quire.  
—*Song: Clear Out, Look Sharp.*

*Stow* magging, *stow* your

whids, *stow* your gab, hold your tongue.

"Oh! *stow* your gab, now, old 'un, do;  
Oh! *stow* your gab," said she;  
"And, though it's nowt to do wi' you,  
I'll tell what's ailin' me."  
—*Scraps.*

(Nautical), to *stow* one's jawing tackle, to hold one's tongue.

But 'tain't for a British seaman to brag, so I'll just *stow* my jawin' tackle and belay.—*Gilbert: Kuddigore.*

"To *stow* comes from old English *stewen*, to restrain; akin to stay, stop, stand. Compare Shetland *stow!* hush! silence!" (A. Smythe Palmer).

**Straddle, spread** (American), a Stock Exchange term for "options." This term is also used in England.

The well-understood operation of put and call is in danger of being henceforth known as *straddle* or *spread*.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Straddle, to** (American). When a candidate for office, "or any other man," in America does not take sides distinctly with one party or the other, he is said to be "on the fence," or to *straddle* it.

Their view of the message is that the President has convictions on the subject, but lacks the courage to give expression to them in a fighting way; so he *straddled*. —*Chicago Tribune.*

**Straight** (American). In the United States a *straight* drink means one of unmixed spirits, e.g., whisky *straight*, is the same as neat. But Mr. Hotten is quite wrong in saying that it is

peculiar to dram-drinkers. It is used in many strange ways. Thus, if cigars are labelled, "Ten cents apiece, *straight*," it means that no deduction will be made for buying a number of them. To vote the *straight* ticket at an election is to do so without scratching, that is to say, without taking off the name of any candidate and substituting another.

In molasses, mixtures are relatively cheaper than *straight* goods.—*New York Price Current*.

But refusing to take e'en a moment of rest,  
He exceedingly rapidly fell,  
By dint of disposing of glass after glass,  
Into that Bacchanalian state,  
Into which you will almost be certain to  
pass  
If you go in for taking Scotch *straight*.  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Straighten the screw, to** (thieves),  
to bribe the jailer.

I've knowed what it was to go starvin'  
on skilly and toke for a month, and then  
'ave a cold mutton chop, as was sent in by  
a pal as 'ad *straightened the screw*, shoved  
in through my trap.—*Sporting Times*.

**Straight griffin, the** (popular),  
"the *straight tip*," or hint.

The Old Temple Bar was to London a cuss,  
But I think the new griffin's a jolly sight  
worse,  
Our sage city-fathers grandmothers appear  
To raise such a griffin, at which people jeer,  
Now here's the *straight griffin*—it won't  
long be here.  
—*Ballad: Oh lor, oh lor, oh dear*.

In explanation of this verse it may be said that Old Temple Bar was removed because it was considered ugly by all who

regard everything ugly which is not brand-new, but chiefly because it was in the way. A monument, representing a *griffin*, was raised on its site, to commemorate it—which monument is quite as much in the way as "the Bar" ever was, and, in the opinion of everybody, except perhaps its manufacturer, twice as ugly.

**Straight racket, on the** (thieves),  
leading an honest life.

Plenty of cases might be cited where wrong 'uns who were wanted went to a chief of police, demanded truce on promise of amendment, and most scrupulously observed the conditions of the treaty. "Will you leave me alone if I take on the *straight racket*?" is a question often answered in the affirmative.—*Referee*.

**Straight tip** (racing), *straight* is probably only a slang form of "right." Latin and Greek have each a word meaning both *straight* and *correct*. *Straight tip* originally meant correct information as to what horse would win a race, but is used slangily for "good advice" or "correct information about anything."

He was a real good fellow, and would give them the *straight tip*.—*A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Australia*.

**Strain your taters, to** (common),  
to urinate. The play is on *kidney potatoes*. Also "to scatter."

**Strap** (popular), credit at a public-house or other place where drink is retailed. The word is

common among small dealers, but has not yet extended to the classes immediately above them.

I was once told by a brassfounder that out of thirty-six men in the factory where he was employed no fewer than thirty-two were on the books of a public-house to which the men regularly resorted, as there they could get *strap*, i.e., credit.—*Daily Telegraph*.

I've tried to get fried fish on *strap*,

But found it was no use,

For when I said she was a duck,

She said I was a goose.

—T. W. Barrett: *Blow Me up  
an Apple-Tree*.

*Strap* is a Yorkshire term. The idea is probably that of a man in debt, metaphorically bound by a *strap* or tightening his belt as if hungry. The French use the term *serré* for needy. (American), hard *strapped*, in great trouble, much distressed for money. *Vide* BLACK-STRAP.

**Strawer** (public schools), straw hat.

**Strawing** (streets), "selling" straws in the streets for a penny and 'giving' the purchaser a paper (indecent or political), or a gold ring; neither of which, the patterer states, he is allowed by Act of Parliament to sell" (Hotten).

**Straw**, in the, to describe a woman in childbed. "Halliwell and Wright give the expression as an archaism, but without instances of its use. It is not found in the older phraseological dictionary. Hot-

ten derives it from the uses of the farmyard, Webster from the supposed practice of making beds of straw. The more probable derivation is that given from the practice of laying down straw before a house in which a lady is confined. I believed that the expression was only applied to persons of condition. I am reminded of a characteristic witticism uttered by a celebrated judge, many years ago, in connection with this practice. He was on circuit, and going in state with the high sheriff to the courthouse, the street in front and round the court was found covered with straw. Some curiosity was expressed by the sheriff to know why this was done. The learned judge said he supposed it was on account of the *gaol* delivery" (G. B. B., *Notes and Queries*).

**Streaked, streaky**. Bartlett gives this as American: "To feel *streaked*, is to feel confused, alarmed;" Hotten as English slang for irritated or ill-tempered, and derives it from its being "said of a short-tempered man who has his good or bad times in *streaks*." The Dutch say, "Daar loopt met hem een *streek* door," i.e., a *streak* runs through him, which Sewell translates as, "He has a weak place in his head."

**Streaks, to make** (American), to decamp; also "make tracks."

**Street ganger** (thieves), a beggar.

**Street pitchers** (popular), any of the class of people who make a "pitch" or stand in the streets to sell articles or give an entertainment or performance of some kind.

**Stretch** (thieves), a year. Compare with "length" (six months' imprisonment).

I did not fall again for a *stretch*. This time I got two moon for assaulting the reelers when canon. — *Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

"All right, Sam." "How much, Toby?" "Three *stretch*," by which the sympathetic Sam knows his friend means "three years." — *Greenwood: Under-currents of London Life*.

One of them called out, "We may get a *stretch* (twelve months) for it," and another replied, "No, we can't, for loitering." One then called out, "We may get 'a drag' (three months), after the remand." — *Daily Telegraph*.

(University) a walk.

**Stretched** (thieves), hanged.

The night before Larry was *stretched*,  
The boys they all paid him a visit.  
— *Death of Socrates*.

**Stretcher** (common), a falsehood.

**Stretcher fencer** (streets), a street seller of braces.

**Stretch-hemp** (common), a candidate for the gallows.

**Stretching match** (thieves), an execution by hanging.

A long, an audible breath of relief passes like a wave over the crowd. They look at

one another. After all, Billy would be saved his *stretching match*, and the girl would die game. — *Savage London*.

**Strides** (theatrical), trousers.

**Strike, to** (old cant), to steal money.

The cutting a pocket, or picking a purse, is called *striking*. — *Greene: Art of Coney-catching*.

(American), to borrow or extort money. From provincial *to strike*, to tap a barrel. Compare with French slang *taper*.

I may *strike* you for \$10 next week. — *The Judge*.

**Strike a bright, to** (popular), to have a piece of good fortune.

**Strike a jigger** (thieves), to break open a door, or pick a lock.

**Strike a light** (popular), to open an account of the minor sort, generally applied to ale-house scores. This is said to have originated with printers.

**Strike it rich, to** (American), to find a rich vein.

To increase the unfounded enmity against the boy-miner, and give it such basis as envy would rate enough, he found a vein, *struck it rich*, as the saying goes. — *H. L. Williams: Buffalo Bill*.

**Strike me blind** (nautical), rice.

**Strike me lucky!** (popular), an exclamation used when concluding a bargain; from the old custom of striking hands and leaving a luck or earnest coin in that of the seller, formerly

termed God's penny. In France, when letting apartments or a house, it is customary to give the concierge a silver or gold coin as *denier à Dieu*.

**Strike oil, to,** to come upon, discover oil. Hence to be very lucky, to hit upon a fortune. A metaphor borrowed from an American phrase.

Dr. Stanford has undoubtedly *struck oil* with this novel adaptation of our national melodies.—*London Figaro*.

**Strikers** (American), persons who in politics and elections simply aim at personal profit.

My dear boy, you do not understand these matters yet. The mugwumps do not form a party or nominate a ticket. They sit in judgment on the other fellows. They are not political *strikers*. They are political kickers. They want no offices for themselves, but they demand the best services for the State.—*Boston Herald*.

**Stringer** (cricket), a very hard ball to play, one that puzzles the batsman. Possibly alluding to a ball that comes in direct on the *stringed* handle of the bat, consequently one hard to play.

**String, to** (printers), to mislead, or put one on the wrong scent; to hoax a person would be to *string* him, *i.e.*, to lead him. (Provincial), to get in a *string*, to deceive. (Billiards), players *string* at the commencement of the game for choice of balls and option of breaking, by playing both together from the two corner spots in the D. They play to hit the top cushion,

and rebound back into bank. The winner is he who gets his ball nearest to the bottom cushion when the balls have come to a rest. To *string* is therefore to play up and down the table, literally to put on a line (as to *string* beads). A common expression in America is "to get in a *string*," applied to any kind of fortunate series. The French have the slang term "se faire enfler" (literally to get strung or stringed), meaning to have an unlucky series at cards, hence to lose much money.

**Strippers** (gambling cheats), explained by quotation.

*Strippers* were also great favourites—that is to say, packs in which the high cards were a little wider than the rest, and cut slightly wedge shape, so that they could be drawn out at will.—*Star*.

**Struck all of a heap** (popular), astounded.

For a second he stood *struck all of a heap*, as he explained to his wife afterwards. Then he burst into a roar of laughter.—*George R. Sims: The Doll's Secret*.

**Strummel** (cant), straw. Gypsy *strummel*.

The bantling's born; the doxy's in the *strummel*, laid by an autumn (autem) mort of their own crew that served for midwife.—*Broome: Jovial Crew*.

Hair, called also "thatch."

With my *strummel* faked in the newest twig.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Strummel or strummel faker** (cant), a hairdresser, barber.

**Stubble your whids** (thieves),  
hold your tongue.

*Stubble your whids,*  
You wants to trick I.  
Lend you my quids?  
Not one, by Dickey.

—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

**Stuck, to be** (popular), to be  
moneyless. *Vide* STICK, TO  
STICK. (American), to be at a  
disadvantage, to lose in trade,  
to lose by miscalculation.

"We're the only Eastern folks in the  
Yonkville Stock, unless Mr. Sloper will  
take a few shares—and, of course, any  
body else may be *stuck*, and be darned."—  
*Mace Sloper*, by C. G. Leland: *Knicker-  
bocker Magazine*, March 1856 (cited by J.  
R. Bartlett).

**Stuckling** (Winchester College),  
explained by quotation.

*Stuckling* was a kind of flat pastry made  
of chopped apples and currants. And the  
speciality of it was that the apples must be  
that year's apples. They used to be sent  
up from Devonshire or Cornwall, and some-  
times were with difficulty obtained.—*T. A.  
Trollope: What I Remember.*

**Stuck on it** (American), fond of,  
addicted to. To get *stuck on* a  
girl, to fall in love with her.

Spring's the best time to buy stock.  
Turn 'em on to your range when the grass  
is green, and there's plenty of it; they get  
*stuck on it* then, and stop there—you  
don't have no trouble locating them.—*F.  
Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Stuff** (American), a *stuff*, a weak,  
worthless person, one without  
energy. In low slang used for  
an honest, respectable citizen.  
(Common), money.

Has she got the *stuff*? Is she rich?—  
*Sheridan: The Rivals.*

(Prison), tobacco.

When was I at the steel? Had I got  
any *stuff*? That screw was all right. He  
would sling some *stuff* for a quid.—*Even-  
ing News.*

**Stuff-gownsmen** (legal), a junior  
or barrister under the degree of  
Queen's Counsel is so called.

**Stuggy** (public schools), thick-  
set.

**Stumer** (London slang), a ficti-  
tious or dishonoured cheque.  
From German *stumm*, *stumme*,  
dumb, in imitation of the Eng-  
lish "dummy," meaning both  
"dumb" and "sham."

My collection of writs, pawn-tickets,  
unreceipted bills, *stumers*, letters from  
tarts, unpublished operas, and correspond-  
ence.—*Sporting Times.*

**Stump** (old cant), strength.

Now my kinching-cove is gone,  
By the rum-pad maundette none;  
Quarrons both for *stump* and bone,  
Like any clapperdogeon.

—*The Rum-Morts' Song.*

**Stumped** (common), defeated in  
argument, nonplussed, puzzled,  
confused. Literally bowled out.

To be all "abroad," to be *stumped*, not to  
know where

To go, so disgraced as not to be "placed,"  
Or, as Crocky would say to Jem Bland,  
"to be nowhere."

—*Ingoldby Legends.*

Also bankrupt, in poverty.

**Stumper** (cricket), wicket-keeper.

Since then he has enjoyed the reputa-  
tion of being one of the finest *stumbers*  
that England has ever produced.—*Sports-  
man.*



**Stump, on the** (common), or to *stump*, to go about speech-making on politics or other subject. Originally American, alluding to an orator who harangues the populace from the *stump* of a tree or other elevation.

The temptation, in short, would be far too severe, and would, too, so often prevail,

That members, as 'tis far too much on the *stump*, would be always henceforth on "the rail."

—*London Figaro*.

**Stumps** (common), the legs, synonymous with "pins."

See—see—the fine fellow grows weak on the *stumps*.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

"Shove on more coke!" yelled the engine-driver. "Shovel it up, shovel it up, you butter-fingered bungler! Move your *stumps*, I say, or I'll help you!" and he did, with a heavy boot.—*C. H. Ross: The Husband's Boat*.

**Stump-spouter** (Canadian), an itinerant "orator."

They were downright Tories—thought most things would grow better and stronger in the long run for being let alone a bit. If a constitution was to grow up strong, it didn't want forcing with a lot of *stump-spouter's* rubbish, and so on, and so on.—*Phillipps-Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Stump, to** (common) to defeat, literally bowl out.

He was determined, he said, to *stump* the examiners.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

(Popular), to pay, or *stump up*.

Why don't you ask your old governor to *stump up*?—*Sketches by Bos*.

Only a pound! it's only the price  
Of hearing a concert once or twice,  
But common prudence would bid you  
*stump* it.

—*Hood: Tale of a Trumpet*.

Why didn't he *stump* up the ochre?  
—*Punch*.

Also to *stump* the pewter. For derivation *vide* STUMPY.

**Stumpy** (popular), cash, coin, money.

Reduced to despair, they ransomed themselves . . . till they was reg'larly done over and forked the *stumpy*.—*Sketches by Bos*.

Down with the *stumpy*; a tizzy for a pot of half-and-half.—*C. Kingsley: Alton Locke*.

*Stumpy* is that which is paid on a *stump*, synonymous with "paid on the nail." "In the centre of Limerick Exchange," says O'Keefe, "is a pillar with a circular plate of copper about three feet in diameter, called the *nail*. On this metal desk the earnest of all Stock Exchange bargains has to be paid." A similar custom prevailed at Bristol, where were four pillars called *nails* in front of the Exchange for a similar purpose.

**Stunner** (common), splendid, excellent, quite out of the way; applied to a person or thing.

Who's the buyer of coat? Here's a *stunner* for three-and-six, half-a-crown, two bob, anything.—*J. Greenwood: Low-Life Deeps*.

(Popular), a surpriser.

A six-and-thirty tonner

Not inaptly called a *stunner*,

And known as the Woolwich Infant.

—*Punch*.

**Stunning** (common), astonishing, excellent.

You were justly reprov'd. The word *stunning* is decidedly slang.—*Household Words*.

She certainly was a *stunning* girl.—*Punch*.

**Stun out of the regulars** (thieves), to *stun* a man out of his regulars, is to cheat him out of his rights, deprive him of his share in the plunder.

**Sturiben** (thieves). In America *sturbin*. In England any prison, in America the State-prison. The common canting *stir* or *stur* is an abbreviation of this. It is a pure gypsy word, from the root *star-ava*. Correctly *staripen* in gypsy. *Stardo* in gypsy means "imprisoned."

My mush is lelled to *sturiben*,  
To *sturiben*, to *sturibon*,  
My mush is lelled to *sturibon*,  
To the tan where mandy jins.

—*Gypsy Song*.

**Sub** (popular), to do a *sub* is to borrow money, probably an abbreviation of subtraction. Also a small advance of pay in this sense from subsidy or subsistence. (Anglo-Indian), all.

**Suck** (common), a swindle. (University), a parasite. (Old cant), beer, a breast-pocket.

**Suck-casa** (costermongers and itinerants), a public-house.

**Suck egg** (popular), a silly person. "Go along, you *suck egg*."

**Sucker** (American), a greenhorn, a gullible person, a dupe. A term much used by thieves and gambling cheats.

Such men always take it for granted that an Englishman is a *sucker*. It is as well to foster the belief, for the amusement of hearing them ingeniously unfold their magnificent schemes.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin*.

Perhaps I'd better buy land, waiting for a rise and a *sucker*, buy horses with defects, sellin' 'em for sound, buy shares of railroad stock, or mines, anything to beat some one else and get the better of them.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

From *sucker*, a fish which is a synonym for stupidity, or from *sucking*, young, new to.

My enemy are but *sucking* criticks, who would fain be nibbling ere their teeth had come.—*Dryden: All for Love*.

I suppose you're a young barrister, a *sucking* lawyer.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes*.

Also a sponger, a sycophant, same as English suck. A person who ingratiates himself into the favour of the landlord of a large hotel, praises or puffs the establishment in the newspapers and makes himself agreeable to the guests, does odd jobs for his patron, and lives rent-free and board-free at his expense. The same sort of person was once called a sponger in England, and a *sonner* in Scotland, though both were confined to private practitioners, and unknown to hotel-keepers.

Sam . . . you're a nigger, but thar's more real white man under your black skin than could be found in an acre of such varmin'ts as that *sucker*.—*Americans at Home*.

**Suck in**, to (common), to cheat, swindle.

I up wid a rock and I hit him on de shin,  
And dat's de way I *sucked* him in.

—*Negro Song.*

**Sucking the monkey** (common).

The phrase is used by all who have to do with wines, beer, &c., as *sucking* the liquor (sur-reptitiously) out of a cask, or barrel, through a straw, or other thin tube. From spirits conveyed in cocoa-nuts, commonly called *monkeys* (Marryat, "Peter Simple").

**Suck**, to (American University), to make use of cribs and helps to translation. (Common), to sponge, draw information from a person. (Society), to *suck* up to, to toady, flatter, make up to. This word has been borrowed by society from school-boy slang.

**Sudden death** (Anglo-Indian), a fowl served as a spatch-cock (*i.e.*, a split and grilled chicken). It was so called because it was often killed and cooked within half-an-hour. *Sudden death*, as food, recalls the German proverb, "Tod ist des Lebens Bothenbrod." (Popular), in tossing, to be decided by the first call, is to go *sudden death*. (University), a crumpet. *Vide* SORE LEG.

**Suds**, in the (thieves), embarrassed, nonplussed, at a loss to know what course to take.

**Suety Isaac** (popular), a pudding of only duff, and without plums.

**Sugar** (common), money. (American), flattery, praise, gammon.

**Sugar-bag** (Australian blackfellows), a nest of honey; also "chewgah bag." This is the name the blackfellows give to the honey-stores of the wild bee, of which they are inordinately fond.

The regular sharp chop-chop of the tomahawk could be heard here and there where some of them had discovered a *sugar-bag*, or a 'possum on a tree.—A. C. Grant: *Bush Life in Queensland.*

**Sugar off**, to (American), used when speaking of a large fortune.

Josh Billings comes of a wealthy family, Shaws of Lanesborough in Massachusetts, and it is estimated that his estate would *sugar off*, as they say in Vermont, about \$200,000.—*Harper's Bazaar.*

**Sugar**, to (rowing), pretending to row hard but in effect shirking.

**Suit** (thieves), a watch and seals.

Near to these hopeful youths sat a fence, or receiver, bargaining with a clouter, or pickpocket, for a *suit*, or, to speak in more intelligible language, a watch and seals.—*W. H. Ainsworth: Jack Sheppard.*

(Popular), *suit* of mourning, a pair of black eyes. (American). Whiskers or moustachios, as being a pair or a match, are often in the United States called a *suit*. Hence a head of hair has received the same name. "A full-blown *suit* of whiskers and moustachios, with head to match." Very naturally derived

from *suite* as a series, a *suit* at cards, a *suite* of rooms, a *suit* of cards, *suite* being frequently pronounced *suit*.

**Sukey** (servant-girls), a kettle. A servant-girl is frequently addressed as *Sukey* by the lower classes.

**Sulky** (common), a one-horse chaise, with only room for one person. Used now only in trotting matches.

**Summer game** (American gamblers), playing merely for amusement or benefit of another person, but with his money.

**Sumpsy** (legal), an action of *assumpsit*.

*Sumpsy* is a pet word among lawyers for an action of *assumpsit*.—*Morning Advertiser*.

**Sun** (common), in the *sun*, having too much drink. (Naval), "getting the *sun* over the foreyard," taking a forenoon cup of grog at six bells, or eleven o'clock.

**Sunday-face** (popular), the behind.

**Sunday-man** (low), the lover of a street girl, her bully. Formerly a man in debt, who went out on Sundays only, for fear of the bailiffs.

**Sun dog** (nautical), the name given to the phantasmic mirage of a mock sun shining near

the real sun—a phenomenon observed in some latitudes.

**Sundowner** (Australian), a tramp.

The Australian shepherd, like the *sundowner*, is almost a thing of the past.—*The Graphic*.

*Vide* OVERLAND MAN.

**Sunshades** (Stock Exchange), *Sunehales* Extension of the Buenos Ayres and Rosario Railway Company Shares.

**Super** (theatrical), *supers*, or *supernumeraries*. In the dictionaries a *supernumerary* is described as "a person or thing beyond the number stated, or beyond what is necessary." If this description be accurate, then the word *supernumerary* is utterly inappropriate to describe the humble but valuable auxiliary popularly known by the name of *super*. The *super* is as essential to the business of the historical, the melodramatic, or the operatic theatre as the actor or the vocalist. The *super* is the valiant soldier, the faithful follower, the grotesque retainer of the pantomime. He it is who seizes the hero, and loads him with chains, and drags him to the deepest dungeon beneath the castle moat; or presently leads him to storm the castle, to cut off the giant's head, or the dragon's tail, and anon quaffs his health from a gorgeous empty goblet of *papier mâché* what time he comes crowned with triumphant laurels to rescue the lady of his

love, to marry her, and to live happy ever after. He it is who carries the "wood of Birnam" on his shoulders to "high Dunsinian Hill," who patiently bears "the blows and buffets of outrageous fortune" at the hands of that rascal Joseph Rumbuster, the clown. The *super's* work begins with the rehearsal, and ends with the performance, and he keeps the wolf from the door (though God knows how he does it!) at eighteenpence or half-a-crown a night. Amongst the *supers* you will find the idle, the dissolute, and the drunken; but amongst them you shall also find the modest, the gentle, the industrious—the broken gentleman, the disbanded soldier, the disappointed author, the ruined tradesman, bearing their fallen fortunes with equanimity. Most of these poor fellows are unpretentious, uncomplaining; and very few are unwilling, or unintelligent. Upon all important occasions, by special permission, detachments from Household troops, the Grenadiers, the Coldstreams, and the Guards officiate as *supers*. During the run of Henry V., at the Queen's Theatre, the actor who played the king had the honour of having amongst his body-guard four stalwart six-footers for his squires, gallant gentlemen who, although reduced to the ranks from adverse circumstances, had all held commissions in Her Majesty's service, and fought in famous battles.

He is only an amateur *supe*, who goes on in the "angry populace" scenes.—*Greenroom Jokes*.

At the Philadelphia Academy of Music, at the close of the performance, the *supers* and ballet-girls demanded their wages, but they were not forthcoming.—*Boston Journal*.

(Thieves), watch.

You must know where to dispose of a *super*.—*Temple Bar*.

(Thieves and popular), *super* and *slang*, watch and chain. Also used by itinerants, strollers, &c. &c. (Australian up-country), the superintendent of a station or run. Colonial slang is addicted to abbreviations—e.g., prof. for professor, comp. for compositor; and so uses *super*, not in its ordinary sense of supernumerary at a theatre, but in the sense of superintendent of a sheep or cattle station.

Curly Johnson, the *super*, despised him, and never neglected a chance, To annoy and degrade the poor wretch who replied with not even a glance.

—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Super master** (theatrical), the superintendent of the *supers* at a theatre.

**Supers** (medical), explained by quotation.

Dr. Oliver Birnie's consulting-room was generally pretty full in the morning, and always with paying patients. He had long since passed the *super* stage of the profession. Lest any intelligent reader should be unacquainted with this phase of medical practice, let me explain that it is the custom when young doctors are anxious to work up a reputation for being

fashionable for them to engage a few *supers*, that is, to give advice gratis to a few selected persons, on condition that they come once or twice a week and help to make a crowd in the waiting-room.—*G. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds.*

**Super-screwing** (thieves), stealing watches.

**Supouch** (old cant), a landlady.

**Supplejacks** (up-country Australian), creepers, lianas. The derivation is obviously from the toughness and pliancy of these lianas, which in Victoria are rare, but are commoner in the warmer parts of Australia and New Zealand.

*Supplejacks*, cyclopean,

Binding huge tree to tree, with strength  
of mesh

No apic elephant could tear apart ;

While up the bank, in their spring glory  
fresh,

The blue lobelia with yellow heart,

And waratah with flame-hued royal crown  
Proclaim the beauties round Australia's  
own.

—*D. B. W. Sladen: A Poet  
of Exiles.*

**Sura** (Anglo-Indian), this is commonly called toddy, the fermented sap of several kinds of palm, such as the cocoa, palmyra, and wild date. Sanskrit *surā*, vinous liquor (Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Surat** (popular), an adulterated article of inferior quality. From the mixing of cotton with *surat*, an inferior article.

**Surf** (theatrical), a fourth or fifth-rate actor or musician who

blends some other daily occupation with his nightly employment at the theatre. (Popular), *surf*, or *serf*, a sycophant.

**Sut** (tailors), satisfactory ; said of anything gratifying, fortunate.

**Swab** (naval), an epaulet.

**Swack-up** (common), a falsehood.

**Swad** (American), a crowd, a number, a mass, or bunch. Dutch *zwad*, a swath, a row of mown grass ; *swod* (Sussex), a bushel basket for measuring fish ; a *swod* of fish.

**Swadder, swaddler** (old cant), a pedlar.

**Swaddler.** In America this term is specially applied to men who are paid by pickpockets to preach in public places and collect a crowd in which they may ply their craft. In England any street-preacher. In America men who pick a quarrel with a man and at the same time beat and rob him. Originally a contemptuous term for Methodists used by Roman Catholics. "It happened that Cennick, preaching on Christmas Day, took for his text these words from St. Luke's Gospel, 'And this shall be a sign unto you ; ye shall find the babe wrapped in *swaddling*-clothes, lying in a manger.'" A Catholic who was present, and to whom the language of Scripture was a novelty, thought this so ridiculous

that he called the preacher a *swaddler* in derision (Southey, "Life of Wesley"). In old cant a *swaddler* was a pedlar. Hotten gives the definition "a Roman Catholic who pretends conversion."

**Swaddy** (popular), an opprobrious name for a soldier; in old cant *swad*, *swadkin*. *Swad* is a Lancashire term, thought to be from pea-*swad*, used by old writers for a silly fellow, a country bumpkin.

Did swear that he would kill and slay,  
I, mary, would he doe,  
If any *swad* besides himselfe faire madam  
owle did wowe.

—Warner: *Albion's England*, 1592.

Again, it is possible that it owes its origin to the cant term *swadder*, a pedlar, alluding to the soldiers tramping about with a knapsack like a pedlar's pack, or to the provincial *swad*, a sword.

**Swag** (old cant), a shop. (Costers), a large collection of miscellaneous goods. Hence *swag-shop* (also termed a *swag*), *swag-barrow*. (Thieves), booty, plunder. *Swag-shop*, a receiver's place, also *swag-chovey*.

"It's all arranged about bringing off the *swag*, is it?" asked the Jew.—C. Dickens: *Oliver Twist*.

Twas awful to hear, as she went along,  
The dark allusion, or bolder brag  
Of the dexterous dodge, and the lots of  
*swag*.

—Hood: *Tale of a Trumpet*.

"We must do it to-night, Boss," said the elder, soon after dusk. "The *swag's*  
VOL. II.

all in jewels, and a grab'll collar the lot."—  
G. R. Sims: *Rogues and Vagabonds*.

A mess of sausages may apprise a ramed dog-stealer, "it is all right; the animal is dead, and his body effectually disposed of;" "toad in the hole" may convey to a suspected burglar the glad tidings that the hidden *swag* has not at present been discovered.—J. Greenwood: *Undercurrents of London Life*.

Speak to the tattler, bag the *swag*,  
And finely hunt the dummy.

—C. Hindley: *Life and Times of James Catnach*.

*Swag* is provincial for a quantity or lot, a portion of property. Scottish *swag* or *swack*, from old German *sweig*, a flock. The Australian *swagman*, i.e., travelling artisan or journeyman, "humps his *swag*," i.e., carries his tools and luggage in a bundle on his back.

I feel in the race of life of late,  
I've been handicapped badly by careless  
fate,

Who has put on my back a *swag*.

—Keighley Goodchild: *Through the Fence*.

Also a small valise.

I would advise anybody to take as little as possible in the way of articles of toilet, I mean brushes, combs, &c., as if, later on, he wishes to travel on horseback, he will find how little can be squeezed into a *swag*.—*Cornhill Magazine: With a Cockatoo*.

**Swagman** (Australian), a tramp, a travelling artisan. *Swag*, bundle. The *bona-fide* travelling artisan is properly the *swagman*, but the word is often used as equivalent to a *sun-downer*, i.e., a tramp. In old cant *swigman*, a tramp, a mendicant bearing a wallet, a pedlar.

X

**Swag-chovey bloke** (thieves), a marine-store dealer who buys stolen goods.

**Swaggering Bob** (theatrical), an impudent buffoon.

'Tis the miserable art  
Of the vile buffoon, who to please the pit,  
Provokes its laughter, but lets down his  
part,  
Winks at his audience while he slaps his  
fob,  
And turns Charles Surface into *Swaggering Bob!*

—*Lord Lytton (the present):  
Glenaveril.*

**Swagsman** (thieves), an accomplice who takes charge of the plunder.

**Swag, to** (thieves), originally to carry off as plunder, but extended to carrying off anything.

The next witness is a policeman, who deposes that he was in a public-house, where he overheard the prisoner say that he had had a good haul, and got over a hundred ounces of plate, which he *swagged* away.—*Evening News.*

By arrangement they each undertook to *swag* out their literary treasures, so that each man would only have the statutory number of books in his cell which were allowed by the authorities.—*Evening News.*

**Swallow the cackle, to** (theatrical), to learn a part.

**Swanker** (public and military schools), one who works hard.  
*Vide TO SWANK.*

**Swankey** (West-Indian), a beverage compounded of molasses, vinegar, and water—a favourite drink with fishermen. This

term has now become common throughout the States and the Dominion.

"Roll along here," shouted the cook. "Tumble up, and get your *swankey*, boys. It's as good as ever you cocked a lip at." And at the word each man, his face glowing with excitement and exercise, took his turn at the *swankey* pail.—*Newfoundland Fisheries.*

**Swank, to** (public and military schools), to work hard; old English *swinke*, to labour; *swinked* or *swenkt*, tired with work.

The *swenkt* grinders in this treadmill of an earth have ground out another day.—*Carlyle.*

**Swan-slinger** (theatrical), a *slinger* of "the sweet Swan of Avon," otherwise a Shakspearian actor.

**Swapped off** (American), cheated, taken in, done, "sold."

Den Brer Fox know dat he been *swapped off* mighty bad.—*Uncle Remus.*

That was the time that you got *swapt*,  
And looked so awfully wambler-cropt.  
—*A Poem: Simon Barky.*

**Swartwout** (American), a verb of local (New York) origin or usage, signifying "to abscond," "to vamoose," "to skip." A Mr. Swartwout once decamped from that city, carrying with him a large amount of public money—hence its origin.

**Swat** (Royal Military Academy), *i.e.*, *sweat*, work in general, but especially mathematics.

**Swatchel** (Punch show), Punch. Also the show. *Swatchel* box



the show itself; *swatchel* cove, the showman. *Swatchel* is provincial for "to beat with a switch." Hence probably the nickname given to Mr. Punch, whose principal occupation is plying his stick.

The various slang names used by the Punch and Judy showmen are—"Mozzy" for Judy; "darkey," the negro; "vampo," a clown; "vampire," a ghost; "buffer figure," dog owner; "scrappers," fighting men; "crocodile," a demon; "filio," a baby; "buffer," a dog.

The "frame" is the entire machine; "peepsies," the pan pipes; the "nobbing slum," the bag for collecting money; the "letter cloth," the advertisement; "tambour," the drum; "stalk or prop," the gallows; "slum fake," a coffin; "slum," the call.

**Swat**, to (University), to *sweat*, to work hard.

**Sweat** (public schools), fagging. (American), in a *sweat*, in a hurry, impatient.

Besides, he was in a *sweat* to get to the Indian Ocean right off.—*Huckleberry Finn*.

**Sweat-box**, the cell where prisoners are confined on arrest previous to being brought up for examination before the magistrate.

**Sweater** (common), explained by quotation.

At the outset Mr. — is careful to distinguish between a contractor and a *sweater*. Both are contractors, but the *sweater* is a contractor and something more. Both exact from the workmen under them a certain amount of work for a definite wage, but there the likeness ends; for whilst the contractor pays an ordinary wage for an ordinary day's work, the *sweater* "exact[s] from men employed by him and working under his immediate superintendence the performance of an excessive amount of work in return for an unreasonably low remuneration."—*Evening News*.

The great *sweater* is the public; and as long as the public continues to encourage, or rather to compel, the "unscrupulous employer" to use the over-stocked labour market as he is using it now, so long will the existing evils endure.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Boating), a thick woollen jersey originally used in boating. (Stock Exchange), a broker who cuts down commissions. A broker who works for such small commissions as to prevent other brokers getting the business, whilst hardly being profitable to himself (Atkin, "House Scraps").

**Sweat gallery** (Winchester College), the juniors who had to do some "sweat" or fagging. Each prefect had a water-carrier, who brought him cold water on Sunday; a clothes-brusher, who had to brush his clothes; a valet to bring him his books, and warm water in winter.

**Sweating** (thieves), a primitive way of scraping gold off coins by shaking them in a bag. Another mode explained by quotation.

By far the most scientific form of smashing is that which is called *sweating*—the modern equivalent for the ruder art of “clipping,” so fully described in Macaulay’s History. Here the galvanic battery is brought into requisition, the metal being dissolved equally from all the surfaces of the coin operated upon, and that, too, without impairing the sharpness of “image or superscription.” Sufficient metal for the *sweater’s* purpose being removed, the coin is polished afresh.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

(Schools), working. (Common), extracting money from a person, employing workpeople at starvation wages.

In Bavaria, it appears from the reports of the German factory inspectors, nearly sixty per cent. of the working classes work from ten to eleven hours a day, and over forty-nine per cent. work from eleven and a quarter to sixteen hours daily. It is the immigrants from countries like this who have made *sweating* possible.—*Evening News.*

*Sweating* shops, establishments where this is practised.

It is the women and children from the factories at the East End and the *sweating* shops in the neighbourhood who are pouring in now.—*Sims: Social Kaleidoscope.*

Sweat one’s duds, to (thieves), to pawn one’s clothes, that is, extract money from them.

They *sweated* their duds till they riz it.  
—*Death of Socrates.*

Sweat one’s guts out, a vulgar expression, meaning to work very hard.

Sweep the board, to (common), to take all. (American), to scoop the pool.

Games have introduced others as bandy and *sweep the board.*—*Standard.*

Sweet (thieves), in thieves’ slang, an intended victim is *sweet* if he does not suspect the trick which is about to be practised on him. If he suspects, they try “to sweeten him” and “to keep him *sweet*” until their object is accomplished.

Sweetener (auction), a man who runs up prices at an auction.

Sweetmeat (common), a very young kept mistress, a precocious votary of Venus.

Sweet on (common), in love with.

Swell (general), a showily dressed pretender to extreme fashion.

This isn’t the moment, when all *swell-dom* is at her feet, for me to come forward.—*Thackeray: Neucomes.*

There were the *swell* and the snob.  
—*Punch.*

*Swell* . . . seems to have the greatest amount of vitality; but it is unquestionably moribund.—*Globe.*

This word threatens to be superseded by its more modern synonym of *masher* and *dude*. Both *swell* and *masher* have had many predecessors, some of which still linger in popular parlance, such as beau, dandy, brick, macaroni, Bond Street lounge, Mohawk, Corinthian, and bloke. *Swell* survives as an adjective in the sense of showy, brilliant, pretentious, as a *swell* carriage, a *swell* house, a *swell* waistcoat, a *swell* dress, a *swell* turn-out, a *swell* watch-chain, and many others.

Bullington Club is the most aristocratic and the *swellest* in Oxford.—*Truth*.

*Swell* is evidently from the act of being puffed up with pride. French slang *se gonfler*, to feel proud of some achievement, congratulate oneself. It is the exact equivalent in meaning of the Italian *gonfiore*, synonymous with *zerbinotto* and *damerino*. It is also used of any one who is proficient in anything, who is high up or excels in his profession. Our distinguished admiral who bombarded Alexandria has the nickname of "*swell* of the ocean."

There was a very large attendance of *swells*, including such magnates of the world of sports as the Dukes of Beaufort and Portland, &c.—*Sporting Times*.

A *swell* at Eton is thus defined by T. R. Oliphant, author of "Eton College":—"It is very hard to define exactly what is meant by a *swell* at Eton; but it usually implies a boy who, brought into notice either by athletic prowess or scholarship, or high standing in the school, by this means becomes acquainted with the leading members of the school, and is found on acquaintance to develop considerable social qualities, which make him hand and glove with all the Eton magnates."

**Swell block** (American University), a coxcomb and dandy; also those who assume and pretend overmuch.

**Swell head** (American), a vain, arrogant man, one who gives himself airs. Also a man who is drunk, spirits in excess giving the feeling as if the head were heavy and swollen.

**Swell-mob** (common), well-dressed, genteel sharpers and swindlers taken collectively.

He is renowned for his acquaintance with the *swell-mob*.—*Charles Dickens*.

**Swell mobsman** (common), one of the *swell-mob* (which see).

**Swells** (Winchester College), services on Sunday, saints' days, &c., when college men used to wear surplices.

**Swell, to** (Winchester College), to make a *swell* or mess; to bathe, wash, &c.

**Swelter, to do a** (popular), to perspire.

Athletics ain't 'ardly my form, and a cut-away coat and tight bags  
Are the species of togs for yours truly, and  
lick your loose flannels to rags,  
So I let them as liked *do a swelter*.

—*Punch*.

To *swelter* is an old English word used by Shakspeare.

**Swift** (printers), a fast and expeditious setter of type; quoted by Savage's Dictionary, 1841.

**Swill, to** (Shrewsbury), to take a shower-bath.

**Swim** (common), to be in the *swim*, to be in the popular current

either in opinion, speculation, or fashion, on the move with the rest. To be one of an association, an affair.

"Look here," said the indignant gentleman in the brown pot hat, "why wasn't I in this *swim*?"

"What *swim*?" asked his Criterion friends.

"Why, this 'ere fight?"

—*Sporting Times*.

One's particular pursuits.

But hus, Charlie, hus? I likes horder, and likeways I'm partial to law, Wen it means keeping my *swim* all clear, and a muzzling my henemy's jaw.

Wy, nothink could easy be nicerer, then, don'tcher see, dear old pal;

But supposing that game interferes with my larks, or my lush, or my gal?

—*Punch*.

(Angling), the section of water one selects to fish in. (Thieves), a good *swim*, a good run of luck, a long time without police interference.

**Swimmer** (old cant), a guardship on the river. A thief who, to avoid conviction, consented to be sent on board ship to serve the king, was said to have been *swimmered*.

**Swimming market** (Stock Exchange), in other words, when the *market* is firm and buyers feel no hesitancy in operating; the reverse of a "sick market."

**Swim**, to (thieves), to make a man *swim* for it, is to cheat him out of his share.

**Swindle**. This word is used in sporting circles to describe a speculation, or any dealing in

which there is an element of chance. When a proposition is made to toss for a drink by spinning a coin, the phrase is generally "let's have a *swindle*."

Judge Pigott summed up in a case. "As to the second plea that *swindle* had not a libellous meaning, this was in a great measure carried out by the plaintiff himself, who had advertised that he was getting up a *swindle*. In sporting circles they certainly did deal with an extraordinary vocabulary, and apparently did not use this word *swindle* in Dr. Johnson's sense."

In another case, *Davey v. Walmsley*, the following bit of evidence was tendered.

Mr. Hawkins—"Is the word *swindle* commonly applied to things like 'specs.?"

Witness (Mr. Paul Walmsley, Editor, *Racing Investigator*)—"Certainly! I never heard them called by any other name. It is a regular byword with us as a racing phrase. Lotteries are announced and commonly known as *swindles*."

**Swinger** (Charterhouse), a box on the ears.

**Swing-tail** (old cant), a pig.

**Swing, to** (common), to be hanged.

Whether it be direct infrynging

An oath if I shed waive his *swinging*.

—*Butler: Hudibras*.

If I'm caught, I shall *swing*; that's certain.—*Sketches by Box*.

**Swipe** (popular), at cricket a hard hit with full swing of the bat. Also a blow. Provincial English *swipe*, a blow.

"You might drag me to — if you liked, if you'd on'y let me get one fair *swipe* at him," growled Mr. Perks, savagely.—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

**Swipes** (common), the cheapest kind of beer-tap droppings.

We smoked our pipes,  
With no such *swipes*,  
When we were blithe and bold.  
—*Punch*.

At schools, beer good or bad is invariably termed *swipes*. Also tea or weak tea.

Tea! *swipes*! After all, miss, it's your way, and no doubt you don't know no better.—*Golden Butterfly*.

A *swipe*, properly an implement for drawing water for a brewery, hence probably *swipes*, for weak beer.

**Swipe, to** (American), to appropriate. Frequently said of actors or exhibitors who take the "gags" or "games" of others, and pass them off for their own.

You can't copyright a gag, you know, and as soon as we get off anything good the other fellows *swipe* it and it's all over everywhere before we have time to get clear round.—*Philadelphia Press*.

**Swikey** (popular), intoxicated. From "swipes."

**Swishing** (Eton), explained by quotation.

Flogging, or, as it is called at Eton, *swishing*, is to be abolished at that aristocratic seminary.—*Illustrated London News*.

*Swished*, flogged.

**Swiss admiral** (naval), a person who personates a naval dignity at a watering-place. The French have the derisive term *amiral suisse* for a naval officer who has never navigated, who is employed on *terra firma*, or for some suspicious individual who pretends to have held a high rank in army or navy.

**Switch in, to** (American), to bring in expeditiously, to introduce with promptness, and execute with despatch. "Now's your time, boys; *switch* in and let them have it!"

. . . Men were sent to cut out the Chicago, but being denied admittance to the cellar under the pavement went to work and broke through one of the manholes from the street, and were busily engaged *switching in* their own service when the Chicago Company's men appeared on the scene.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Swivel eye** (common), squinting eye.

Young Arthur Orkintrooler, him with the *swivel eye* and the pink wart on his blushing brow.—*Sporting Times*.

**Swizzle** (common), drink.

Humph! you've turned a teetotaller now, I suppose,  
And should I sing "hey! ho! and a bottle of rum,"  
You'd not join in the song—or the *swizzle*?  
—*Punch*.

Also *swiz*.

No, percessions, dear boy, ain't my fad,  
But political picnics with fireworks, and  
plenty of *swiz*, ain't 'arf bad.

—Punch.

To *swizzle* is provincial for to drink, and *swizzle* is ale and beer mixed. (West Indian and Australia.) Mr. Finch-Hatton thus graphically describes a drink which is said to make a man wish he had a throat a mile long and a palate at every inch of it:—

“Never having heard of a *swizzle*, which is a drink peculiar to Mackay, I believe, I watched his proceeding with interest. First of all he put two inches of Jamaica rum into the bottom of a tumbler, into which he shook a few drops of Angostura bitters from a bottle with a small hole in the cork. Next he added a small teaspoonful of brown sugar, and a squeeze of a lemon, and filled the tumbler two-thirds full of water. He then took a small stick with three prongs growing the reverse way up at the end, and whirled it round in the tumbler between his hands, with a dexterity only to be acquired by constant practice, till the decoction was foaming to the top of the glass. Handing it to me quickly with directions to ‘drink it while fizzing,’ he watched it going down, with one eye shut, and an expression of sympathetic interest on his face. ‘How’s that for high?’ he asked, as I set down the

glass with a sigh of satisfaction.” In America *swizzle* is a mixture of rum, molasses, and water, and the Australian drink described above is nothing but the old American rum cock-tail.

**Swizzy, swizzle** (nautical), grog.

The drink to be discovered in Dibdin’s songs would make a sea large enough for several combined fleets of that age to have floated on. The sailor had nothing to do but to sing in all weathers, beat the French, and drink the *swizzy*.—*W. Clark Russell*.

**Swop** (popular), to get the *swop*, to be dismissed from one’s employment. Especially used among linendrapers’ assistants.

**Swot** (University and public schools), explained by quotation.

So much for work or *swot*, as the Harrovian, in common with other boys, somewhat inelegantly terms the more important part of instruction he receives at school.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

A *swot*, one who works hard. At the Royal Military Academy *swat* or *swot* applies specially to mathematics. (Shrewsbury), in a *swot*, in a rage.

**Sycher** (popular), a contemptible person.

**Sydney-sider** (Australian), a convict. There never were any convicts sent to Victoria after its separation from New South Wales, while Sydney was originally a convict settlement. It was therefore natural to talk of a convict as being on the *Sydney*.



**TAB**, the (popular), the Tabernacle of Mr. Surgeon.

**Tabby party** (common), a party consisting entirely of women. *Tabby* is a colloquialism for an old maid or gossip.

**Tabs** (tailors), the ears.

**Tack or sheet** (nautical), a man's saying that he will not start *tack or sheet*, implies resolution.

**Tack or tackle** (public schools), food; sometimes applied to drink. *Vide* **HARD TACK**. *Hard tack* is properly a large kind of hard crackers much used for food on board ship.

**Tackle** (old cant), a kept mistress. (Thieves), a watch chain. *Red tackle*, a gold chain.

One day I went to Croydon and touched for a red toy and red *tackle*, with a large locket.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Nautical), clothes.

**Tacky** (printers), according to printers' vocabulary, a roller is in good condition when it is *tacky*, that is, a little sticky to the touch of the finger.

**Tad** (American), originally provincial English. In English, *tad* is an excrement (Wright). Hence in the United States, and perhaps in England, it was commonly applied contemptu-

ously to the frequenters of brothels. It is now more widely extended. Bartlett gives "little *tads*, small boys; provincial *tadde*, a toad, hence applied to any small person. The French have *crapaud* for a little boy; *les crapauds*, the children; old *tads*, grey-bearded men."

**Taffy** (American), flattery, "soft-sawder;" "soap," "gammon," persuasive and unctuous humbug.

**Tag** (theatrical), explained by quotation.

And the *tag* is the end of the play—the last lines spoken, in rhyme or otherwise—just as this sentence is the end of this article.—*Globe*.

Also the end or catch word of an actor's cue. *Tags*, a species of improvised jokes (called by French actors "cascades"), allied to "tack." Danish *tak*, a supplement, appendix.

**Tail** (common), to have one's *tail* down, to be discouraged; to have one's *tail* out, to be angry; to get one's *tail* up, to pluck up spirits.

**Tail-block** (nautical), a watch. Properly a rope-stropped block, having an end of rope attached to it as a *tail* by which it may be fastened to any object.

**Tail-buzzer** (thieves), a pickpocket who devotes his attention to the pockets in the tails of a coat.

**Tailed**, *vide* LONG-TAILED ONE.

A curious coincidence occurs in French cant. *Tailbin* is an accommodation bill, from old word *talle*, tail; and *tailbin d'altèque*, a bank note, *d'altèque* in this instance signifying superior, genuine.

**Tailing** (up-country Australian), herding.

Mustering now proceeded with steady vigour, and Desmond was allowed to gain experience in *tailing* those already brought in, along with two old and experienced hands, who were much amused with their companion's eccentricities, and who never tired of relating his peculiar sayings.—*A. C. Grant*.

**Tail-piece in the steel** (thieves), explained by quotation.

Their conversation, though not the most elegant, was least of all concerning the wretched trade they followed; indeed, the subject was never mentioned at all, except in melancholy allusion to Peter or Jerry, who had been recently "copped," and was expected to pass a *tail-piece in the steel* (three months in prison).—*J. Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Tail-pulling** (publishers), a method of publication explained by quotation.

It came out in evidence yesterday, in the case of Mackay *v.* M'Lean, that the publication of the literary productions of private individuals, who like to contemplate their own handiwork in print, is technically known among those who do it as *tail-pulling*. That seems an odd name to give it, because no animal we are acquainted with likes having its tail pulled; unless it is on the principle of the little girl who "wagged the dog's tail to give it pleasure."—*Globe*.

**Tai-pai** (pidgin), a large ticket, a great chop, first, slangily "boss."

Dey lock um up in littee house thlee day till allo done,  
An' den Wang-ti come out *tai-pai*, first chop, an' Numpa One.

**Tai-pan, typan** (pidgin), literally "great series," *i.e.*, the first of a series, a leader, a head-man, or "boss."

My *typan* must make fun of me,  
When all his crowd can see—  
Ah! well, perhaps they do not care  
For a little clerk like me.

—*China Punch*.

**Tai-pay** (pidgin), great-beer, *i.e.*, porter (Canton).**Take** (printers), a synonym used by compositors to signify the portion of copy that falls to their share. A "fat" *take* is considered a good one.

**Take a figure** (printers). This is an appeal to the ballot instead of "jeffing," or "throwing" with the nine quadrats. To settle shares of good or bad work, or other matter, a man would select a number of figures, according to the number of men concerned, shake them up in his apron, and each individual would *take a figure*, the highest, or *vice versa*, as agreed on, having the choice.

**Take a rise.** *Vide* RISE.

**Take beef, to** (thieves and popular), to run away. *Vide* BEEF.

**Take down, to** (thieves and popular), to get the best of one, to deceive, humbug.



Well, Governor, I think there is some credit due to me for *taking you down*. Any fool can do an ordinary swindle, but it is not any one who would attempt to *take down* the Governor of a convict prison.—*Evening News*.

**Take it in snuff.** This old slang phrase, which dates from a time long anterior to the supposed introduction of the tobacco plant into Europe by Sir Walter Raleigh, occurs in plays of the Elizabethan and Shakspearian era. It does not appear to have originated in the habit of snuff-taking, nor would the appositeness or appropriateness of the phrase have been palpably apparent if it had done so. *Sniff*, in its primary acceptation, means a movement of the nostrils, expressive either of annoyance or displeasure at a disagreeable smell, and by metaphorical extension a sign of scorn or anger at any person or thing that is offensive to either the moral or physical sense. It is curious to note how often the consonants *sn* are found as the initial sound of words that express anything disagreeable, and that are manifested by the action of the nose. Among others, sneeze, snore, sneer, snort, snarl, snigger, &c., all more or less suggestive of an unpleasant meaning.

**Take it out of him** (popular), thrash him well.

**Take it out, to** (popular), to obtain value for expenditure, labour, &c.

**Take my hat** (American). In the United States, when any man narrates a story which is so incredible or extravagant that the auditor must confess that he cannot outdo it, the latter often exclaims, "*Take my hat!*" In a pamphlet entitled "Three Thousand Miles in a Railway Car," the author tells us that in a jovial party of men they had a small hat which was made from a champagne cork, and that when one of them told the last best story the hat was given to him, to be retained until another told a better, when it was handed over to the latter. "Saw my leg off" was an equivalent or synonym for the same phrase. When the story was remarkably good it was usual to add "close."

**Taken on** (turf), another term for welshed.

The old man has been *taken on* to the extent of a fiver.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Take one's hook.** *Vide* **HOOK**.

She asked him to come in the house,  
Then begged that he would stay  
And take some tea along with her,  
And on the Indian drum play.  
She told me I could *take my hook*,  
And leave the place at once;  
I was no good—a chump of wood,  
In fact, a perfect dunce.

—*Song*.

**Takes the gloss off** (tailors), it takes away the profit, or materially detracts from its value.

**Take the biscuit, to,** a variation of "take the cake." *Vide* CAKE and BUN.

I think you will admit this fairly *takes the biscuit* for a detective story.—*Sporting Times*.

**Take the cake, to.** *Vide* CAKE.

**Take the diploma (American), to** take the prize, take the cake, to be pre-eminent.

**Take the field, to** (turf), to stake one's money against the favourite, thus backing all the rest against a single horse.

**Take the rag off the bush, to** (American), precision and excellence in action or thought. An illustration drawn from the wild life of the Far West, when at improvised shooting competitions the hunters and trappers would hang a rag on a bush as a target, and few of them would miss lifting it.

**Take the starch out, to** (American), to *take the starch out* of a man is to extinguish his conceit, nerve, or pluck. It is widely applied to weakening, refuting, or deterioration of any kind.

The forthcoming Women's Bible will *take more of the starch out* of St. Paul, so to speak, in one edition, than the combined assaults of infidels have done in 1800 years.—*Chicago Tribune*.

**Take up a collection** (American). This is often heard humorously applied to any one who in an emergency, not being able to

do any good, nevertheless suggests something which has some shade or colour of a relation to the subject. Also to a man who avails himself of the least excuse to raise money. It is said that when some men were in a boat in a storm on Lake Superior, and expected every minute to go down, as none of them knew a prayer or a hymn, they did the next best thing they could as "a religious exercise," and *took up a collection*.

The President's sole recommendation with reference to the Civil-Service question, is that the salaries of the Civil Service Commission be increased. We suspect Mr. Cleveland of being the man who, in a sinking boat where some religious services were suggested, enthusiastically declared himself in favour of *taking up a collection*.—*Philadelphia Press*.

**Take up one's connections, to** (American University), to leave college.

**Taking the nap** (theatrical), making pretence to be struck, by slapping the hands together unseen by audience, *à la* clown and pantaloon. *Vide* KNAP, TO.

**Taking the stage** (theatrical), assuming a commanding position in the centre of the stage, or crossing from the right hand side to the left, or *vice versa*. The movement with which a well-graced tragedian, in a burst of passionate emotion, dashes from one side of the stage to the other, or down to the foot-lights and up again. An almost exploded artifice, and one which

requires an artist of great skill to accomplish with precision.

**Taking up one's bed** (tailors), leaving the shop for good.

**Talent, the** (racing). The ring is, in racing phraseology, *the talent*. Common in Australia.

And sinks from view for ever, while *the talent*  
Declare they never saw a sight so gallant.  
—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Talk a donkey's hind leg off, to** (American), to talk to no purpose.

They may talk a donkey's hind leg off, and I wouldn't send a single line to the New York papers to tell them what was said nor what they wore.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Talking through one's neck** (Australian), talking foolishly. A young lady, who had been impressing the dangers of football upon her small brother with more ardour than discretion, wound up with, "If you were my son I wouldn't let you go to a boarding-school at all without I had you safe home every night," which was met with a contemptuous "Oh, you're talking through your neck."

**Talk, to** (stable), said of a horse that roars. (American), *tall talk*, explained by quotation.

The word *cheek*, as synonymous with conceit or impudence, is, notwithstanding its relative antiquity, still largely patronised by the lovers of argot; but were it not for the obliging correspondent of—if we mistake not—the *Daily Telegraph*,

*tall talk*, a Transatlantic phrase of apparently similar import and of undoubted originality, might never have been naturalised among us.—*Belgravia*.

The expression is now common in England. In quotation *tall* refers to an incredible story.

The new Enoch Arden story which has turned up at East Greenwich is certainly *tall*. It reminds one instinctively of the American tree so high that it took two men to look to the top, one beginning where the other left off, and forty men to believe the tale.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Pedestrian), the term is applied to a great rate of speed.

**Tally** (popular), to live *tally* is to live as man and wife though not married. Hence a *tally* wife, "femme de la main gauche."

**Talusk** (tinker), weather.

**Tambour** (Punch and Judy), the drum. French.

**Tame cats** (society). Thus defined by the *Saturday Review* :—

"There is a class of men, who are not at all young by any means, who in society are termed *tame cats*; these men present rather a ludicrous spectacle for their foolishness. They are by no means vicious, but they are by no means manly. They continue to attend all entertainments till they are well on in the sere and yellow leaf; they have no occupations; they are neither men of letters nor of arts; they are not political; and, last of all, they are in no way sportsmen, neither shoot-

ing, hunting, driving, nor fishing. The *raison d'être* of their existence seems hard to define; their daily occupation is wandering round from house to house, and exchanging gossip and scandal with old ladies and young alike. They have the *entrée* to many houses where they are welcome at all times, and are not looked upon as eligible husbands for the daughters of the house; they are made use of to fill up vacancies at dinner, theatre parties, &c., and, above all, they are essentially good-natured."

**Tame cheater** (thieves), a false player.

**Tan** (gypsy), a tent, a place, a resting-place. A word of very general application. To *tan*, to encamp or rest. "Kek *tan* to hatch"—"No place to rest." "Chiv a *tan* apró"—"Pitch a tent." "Kánná bóro bávol se, huller the *tan* parl the wáver rikk páli the bor"—"When there is a great wind, move the tent to the other side behind the hedge." (*Tana*, Hindu.)—*Gypsy Saying*.

**Tangle-footed, tangle-legged** (American), drunk. *Tangle-foot* (from *tangle-footed*), bad whisky or spirits. Derived from the idea that a man when intoxicated has a tendency to entwine or *tangle* his feet together, or to get them locked in every obstacle in the way.

"Drink a pint of *tangle-foot*,  
You'll catch your boot  
In every root."

**Tāni** (gypsy), small, young; *tanirāni*, young lady; *tanopen*, childhood, youth.

**Tanner**, a sixpence. Hotten says of it, "Perhaps gypsy *tawno* (*tāno*), little, or Latin *tener*, slender." It is more likely to have been derived directly by the ancestors of the gypsies from the Indian silver coin *tanga* or *tana*, which has been rated from fivepence (Malcolm, 1815), to sevenpence-halfpenny, which is its present value in Turkestan (Anglo-Indian Glossary). This would make its average value sixpence. The obvious derivation is the Sanskrit *tañka*, a weight of silver equal to four moshas, a stamped coin. The word has been in use over a vast extent of territory. The threepenny piece (*ruppeny bitto*) is the only coin which is specially called little in gypsy, and it is most unlikely that a sixpence would be called a particularly small coin while fourpenny, threepenny, and even twopenny silver coins were in circulation.

Old Alec don't like to win with favourites. I shall 'ave my *tanner* on Timothy.  
—*Sporting Times*.

**Tanning** (common), a beating.

**Tan**, to (common), to beat or thrash. Exists in several English dialects, with variations,

such as *tan base*, *tan baste*, *tancel*, but is used slangily. French slang, *tanner le cuir*. Exists in gypsy as *tanner*, from *tanava*, I beat. Hindu *tan*, abuse.

**Tanyok** (tinker), halfpenny. (Query *tāni*, little, Romany, and *nyok*, a head?)

**Tap** (tailors), getting the *tap* of the job, getting the upper hand.

**Tape** (popular), liquor. Red *tape*, wine. White *tape*, gin. *Vide* WHITE TAPE.

Oh! those jovial days are ne'er forgot!  
But the *tape* lags—  
When I be's dead, you'll drink one pot  
To poor old Bags!  
—*Lytton: Paul Clifford*.

(Sporting), a small telegraphic machine kept at clubs, public offices, and some of the public-houses where sporting goes on.

And Ascot week! ye little gods  
And fishes; ay, a deluge  
Might swamp us as we took the odds  
From ring-men in their hell huge.  
Then wise in time at home we'll stay;  
The *tape* shall see us punting,  
From Ascot tempests far away,  
The oof bird we'll be hunting.  
—*Topical Times*.

Gambling will be all the go  
By-and-by;  
*Tapes* you'll find in every show  
By-and-by.  
—*Atkin: House Scraps*.

(American), explained by quotation.

His white tie was not of lawn, but of that most approved Bond Street pattern known as *tape*.—*American Magazine*.

**Tape-worm** (Stock Exchange), a nasty name for a man who

walks about the House collecting prices of different stock to telegraph on the *tape*.

**Tapper** (old cant), bailiff, tipstaff. In provincial English it means an innkeeper.

**Tapping the admiral**, secretly boring a hole through a spirit cask and sucking the contents out through a quill or straw. An admiral died aboard ship some distance from England. He had wished to be buried at home, and to preserve his body the officers placed it in a cask filled with spirits, and securely nailed the head of the cask down. During the voyage home an Irishman of the marines was continually drunk, and it was a great mystery to see where he got his liquor from. For some drunken breach of discipline he was ordered to be flogged, but he was promised forgiveness if he would tell who had supplied him with drink. Upon that he confessed that he had been "so hard up for a dhrink, that bedad he'd *tapped the admiral*," *i. e.*, made a hole in the cask and sucked out through a tobacco pipe the spirit in which the admiral's body was preserved.

**Taps** (American). "To be on one's *taps* is to be on one's feet, literally on one's soles; on the move, or ready to move. A metaphor preserved from the shoemaker" (Bartlett). To *tap* is provincial English for to sole shoes.

(American cadet), a bugle-call.

*Taps* had sounded (at 10 P.M., after which no one is permitted to cross the sentinel's posts without the countersign).—*The West Point Scrap Book*.

**Tap the claret, to** (pugilistic), to give a blow on the nose which draws blood.

He was thoroughly conversant with the sporting slang of Tintinnabulum's Life when he told Verdant that his *claret* had been repeatedly *tapped*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Tap the wire, to** (American), to obtain surreptitious possession of the electric telegraph wire and extract the information with which it is charged. General Morgan, the Confederate officer, once when *tapping the wire* was in ignorance of the name of the station in the hand of the Federals, and to obtain the information he adopted the following ruse. He telegraphed, "A gentleman in the office bets me two cigars you cannot spell the name of your station." Answer, "Take the bet. Lebanon Junction—is this not right; how did he think I would spell it?" General Morgan replied, "He gives it up; he thought you would put two b's in Lebanon." Answer, "He is a green one." *Vide TELEGRAM, MILKING A.*

**Tap, to** (thieves), to break into a house.

The most difficult part of all is to dress so as to escape a description which the

police have of your usual appearance. Often they will redress themselves under a tree, in a field or a barn in the vicinity of the house they are about to *tap*, but as a rule they dress as becomes a poor specimen of the middle class.—*Tit-Bits*.

**Tap tub, the** *Morning Advertiser*, so called by vulgar people from the fact that this daily newspaper is the principal organ of the London brewers and publicans (Hotten).

**Taradiddles** (society), falsehoods, travellers' tales or yarns.

**Tar brush** (nautical), any one of mixed blood is said to have had a touch of the *tar brush*.

**Tare, tear** (American), a frolic, spree, riot, bender, batter, or rampage.

I'm on a rare (rear),  
I'm on a *tare*;  
On a high old circumbendibus,  
Such as will be  
A sight to see,  
When the boys pull into the rendyvoos.  
—*American Newspaper*.

**Tarryin** (tinker), rope.

**Tart** (common), a young lady, an actress of smart personal appearance and fine manners. There seems some doubt as to whether the term is an aspersion on the lady's character or not, as may be seen from a case of an actress who brought an action against the *Sporting Times* for calling her a *tart*, which created much amusement at the time.

The word *tart* also designates a mistress or girl with whom one has had only casual intimacy, or even a wife. Also any girl or woman. Formerly one's mistress was termed "my jam," or "my little bit of jam." The term is apparently from a simile between a sweet jam *tart* and a girl (compare "cherry-pie" for a girl), but it has been suggested that it originated in the song "Good-bye, sweetheart." *Tart* was originally schoolboys' slang, probably abbreviated from *tartar* in this instance.

I remember, I remember, though Time's progress is so fleet,  
How I doated on my juvenile sweet-hearts,  
And I remember that I thought them so superlatively sweet,  
That I spoke of them admiringly as *tarts*.  
But *now!* Well, times have altered, and I'm not prepared to say  
If a girl's "a *tart*" or not—so here I'll pause,  
For it's probable that if I called a girl "a *tart*" to-day,  
She would summons me next week to show just cause!  
—*Sporting Times*.

The latest synonym for *tart* is "bun." *Tart* is a word generally recognised and understood in the United States. It is sometimes used as an uncomplimentary epithet, an abbreviation from *tartar*.

**Tartlet** (London), usually applied to a lady of the demi-monde, or even quart-de-monde. A diminutive of "tart."

VOL. II.

E'en *tartlets* are stale, be they ever so tasty—

The magic has fled from their languorous looks:

They're not fairies in fake, their complexions seem pasty—

I've no wish for a place in their very best books.

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Tashi shingomai** (tinker), to read the newspaper.

**Tasser** (gypsy), to suffocate, drown, or strangle. "Beng *tasser tute!*"—"May the devil strangle you!"

**Tat-box** (gambling), a dice-box; *tats* are dice.

**Tatch** (popular), a hat; a corruption of "thatch."

**Taters.** *Vide* STRAIN YOUR TATERS.

**Tater-trap** (popular), for potato-trap, mouth.

Up goes the jug to Ginger's *tater-trap*.  
—*Brighton Beach Loafer*.

**Tatols** (Winchester College), tutors in Commoners who came into course in alternate weeks to be present at meals and Toys, and for names-calling, and to go round galleries at 9.15.

**Tats** (canting), old rags. Gypsy *tat* or *tats*, not only rags, &c., but coarse sack-cloth. Hindu *tāt*, sack-cloth. Hence *tatters* in English. Milky *tats*, white linen.

Y

Now I'll tell you about the *tat*-gatherers; buying rags they call it, but I call it bouncing people.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

**Tatter** (tramps), a rag-gatherer.

**Tatties** (Anglo-Indian), a frame composed of thick jungle grass, the inside being interlaced with layers of slender fibrous roots, on which water is constantly thrown to cool the air.

As a rule, during the very hottest months all the doorways situate on the sides of the buildings towards which the breeze may be blowing are usually fitted with portable arrangements called *tatties*.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks.*

**Tattle or tattler** (thieves), a watch.

A fumble, a *tattle*, and two pops  
Had my bowman when he was ta'en.  
—*Frisky Moll's Song.*

I have made a grab at a bunch of onions to-night, but the jockey wore a guard to his *tattler*.—*Disconsolate William.*

To speak to the *tattler*, to steal a watch.

Speak to the *tattler*, bag the swag,  
And finely hunt the dummy.  
—*C. Hindley: Life and Times of James Catnach.*

To nin a *tattler*, to steal a watch. *Tattler*, a dog that barks. In French argot "tambour" or "alarmiste."

**Tatogeys** (old cant), players who play with loaded dice. *Vide* TAT-BOX. The *tatogey* was the dice-cloth.

**Tattoo** (Anglo-Indian), a pony.

**Taut hand** (nautical), a strict disciplinarian, a martinet.

Sir Hannibal regulated his household as he did his ship; he was, in truth, what

is termed a *taut hand*; at the sound of his stump cook and housemaid held their peace, while his lady-wife scarcely dared to bless herself without permission.—*Scraps.*

**Tav** (gypsy), string, thread, fine cord, strip, lace. *Tel*, thread.

**Tax collector** (old), a highwayman, a bandit. So called from the forcible extraction of money and kind from his victims—a sarcastic reference to the similar tactics of "the powers that be." In America a "road agent."

**Tea-boardy** (studios), an epithet applied to an inferior picture, which reminds one of the old-fashioned lacquered tea-trays with landscapes on them.

**Tea chop** (nautical), small craft used to bring a cargo of tea alongside the ocean-going vessel.

**Teach-guy** (costers), back slang for eight shillings.

The exception to the uniformity of the "gen" enumeration is in the sum of eight shillings, which, instead of "teach-gen," is *teach-guy*.—*Mayhew.*

**Tea-fight** (society), an evening party.

**Tea-kettle** (popular), *tea-kettle* grooms, or coachmen, are those who do general work. *Tea-kettle* purgers are scullery-maids.

A decent allowance made to seedy swells, *tea-kettle* purgers, head-robbers, and flunkies out of collar.—*A Tailor's Advertisement.*

**Team** (Oxford and Cambridge Universities), the pupils of a



coach or private tutor. It frequently, indeed usually happens that a "coach" of reputation declines taking men into his *team* before they have made time in public. (American), it is remarkable that *team*, as now used in America to signify a company or party, or number of people, is old Saxon, or, as Etmüller defines it, "*Tedm*, longus ordo cujusvis generis," a series of any kind."

"He Nôe bearn and his wife and his *tedme* at tham mielan flôde"—"He preserved Noah and his wife and his *team* (*suboles*, offspring) in the great flood." Hence to *team* with, associate. "Godes bearn *tjmdon* vid manna dohtru"—"And the children of God *teamed* with the daughters of men" (Etmüller, Anglo-Saxon Lexicon).

**Teapot** (American), a mispronunciation of *depôt*, *i.e.*, a railway station.

Then outspoke a man unnoted  
Hitherto: "I heard the fellow  
Say just now to the conductor  
Ere we reached the second *teapot*,  
That he reckoned he must hook it  
This here time a little sooner  
If he hoped to get his portion."

—*In Nevada.*

(Cricketers), a *teapot* stroke, hit up in the air giving an easy catch, a result of "spooning." (Prison), smashing the *teapot*, losing the privilege of tea from bad behaviour, and returning to the third-class. Having

one's *teapot* mended, being restored to the higher class and its privileges. Also called "getting it down the spout."

**Teapot sneaking** (thieves), stealing plate, teapots.

"*Teapot sneaking* your mark!"

"Something better."—*Sporting Times.*

**Teapot soak** (thieves), a thief who steals plate, teapots, &c.

*Teapot soaks* will have the twitters,  
Garrotters oft will suffer pain.

—*Fun Almanack.*

**Tearing his seat** (tailors), trying to do more than he can.

**Tear up**, a (criminal), explained by quotation.

Going a day or two back into the casual ward of my union, I found a policeman standing waiting in the day room. Guessing that he had come to remove a casual to the police court, "What is it this time? Anything serious?" I asked. "Oh no, sir; only a *tear up*," was the reply. This, of course, was so far satisfactory; but as it is possible that among the readers of the *St. James's Gazette* there may be some who are unacquainted with the accepted method of obtaining a fresh outfit among the casual poor, it may be worth while to explain a little further. But first let us visit the unfortunate creature that the constable has come for.

In a small room, some seven feet by four, the furniture of which consisted of a bed and a wooden stool (it is usual to call these rooms "cells," and it must be confessed that "cell" is more accurately descriptive of the facts than "room" or "cubicle," which has also been suggested as the proper term), we found a broken-down, dejected-looking man of about forty. He was dressed in a brown cloth coat that had seen better days, a pair of almost new corduroy trousers, and boots which, though not new, were stout and serviceable. At

his feet, in a heap on the floor, lay some filthy rags of cloth and cotton, the remnants of what had recently been his garments; on the top of them the sole and a fragment of the upper part of one of his boots. The heap was the result of the *tear up*.—*St. James's Gazette*.

**Teaser** (pugilistic), a maddening blow.

The latter planted a *teaser* on Sam's mouth, which produced the claret in streams.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Tease, to** (prison), to flog; to nap the *tease*, to be flogged.

**Teaspoon** (sport), five thousand pounds.

**Tec or teck** (popular and thieves), explained by quotation.

The "detective" was always an untold terror, because he could not see him, and every suspicious man was to him a *teck*. He despised the "bobby" or the "copper," but he had an untold dread of the *teck*.—*Evening News*.

"Hulloh, father!" cried Shakspeare, "look here! Isn't that the 'tec that we see so often at the races?"—*G. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds*.

**Teck** (Harrow school), mathematics.

**Teddy Hall** (Oxford University), St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford.

**Teejay** (Winchester College). When a new man comes, he is given by his house-master to an old man to be protected and instructed in notions. From the French *protégé*.

**Teek** (Anglo-Indian), exact, close, precise, parsimonious. Hindu *thick*.

**Teeth** (nautical), to have one's "back *teeth* afloat," to be very much intoxicated.

**Teeth-drawing** (medical students), wrenching off knockers.

**Teetotal hotel**, her Majesty's (prison), a prison.

**Telegram, milking a**, a telegram is said to be *milked* when the message sent to a specific party is surreptitiously made use of by others (Dr. Brewer).

They receive their telegrams in cipher to avoid the risk of their being *milked* by rival journals.—*The Times*.

**Telescoped** (Australian popular), suppressed, silenced. *Telescoped* signifies "shut up" like a telescope is shut up, *cf.* "shut up" itself. Possibly also when they use it, people may think of it in its railway-accident sense of one carriage being forced into another.

At first the widow flew into a rage and used indignant language to her pastor, who felt quite *telescoped*.—*New South Wales Paper*.

**Té-li-man** (pidgin), tailor.

**Tell-box** (American gamblers). The *tell-box* is an improvement on the "gaff" (*q. v.*), and has a fine spring attached to it. The object of it is to cheat the dealer. The dealer plays with a pack of cards which the player has had a chance to handle, and he nebs the backs of certain of them with sandpaper. The rough

card adheres to the smooth one, and the fact that it does not move a hairsbreadth in the box enables him to know the card that is covered, and he plays accordingly. He can also play in the same manner with a new pack of cards without sanding them, as certain cards require a greater amount of ink than others (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Tell Chapman to crow!** (American). About fifty years ago, it was made the subject of a political revelation or scandal that an eminent Democratic politician (we think it was John Van Buren) had written to an associate bidding him "*tell Chapman* (an editor), *to crow*," i.e., to make a bluster and brag in his newspaper. This caused a great deal of laughter, and from that time "*Crow, Chapman, crow!*" became a byword. From this originated the custom of announcing political victories by putting pictures of crowing cocks at the head of the column. Once an editor, named John Du Solle, in Philadelphia, announced a Democratic victory, only unfortunately "a little too previously," as it appeared a few hours after that the Democrats had lost the battle of the ballot. More unfortunately still, Colonel Du Solle had ordered the "rooster" crowing to be put at the head of the "grand victory and overwhelming defeat," but in the haste of "making

up," the typo put it in upside down, so that the cock of triumph appeared like that described by Washington Irving as sprawling ignominiously on his back. From that time, perhaps, even here and there to the present day, a defeat is announced by reversing the gallant bird.

**Teller** (pugilistic), a well-planted blow that tells.

Each cove vos teased with double duty,  
To please his backers, yet play booty,  
Ven luckily for Jem a teller  
Vos planted right upon his smeller.

—Ainsworth: *Rookwood*.

**Temples** (Winchester College), explained by quotation.

On the last night of term there is a bonfire in Ball Court, and all the temples or miniature architectural excavations in "Mead's" wall are lighted up with candle-ends.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Temps.** For this there is no English equivalent. Hoffman, translating Robert Houdin, writes that it is "the opportune moment for effecting a given disappearance or the like, unknown to the spectators" ("Conjuring and Magic").

**Ten-cent man, a** (American), a small, narrow-minded, or trifling man.

You can get more wind out of a ten-cent fan than you can from a \$500 one. It's the same way with a ten-cent man.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Tench** (thieves), abbreviated from House of Detention.

I fell at Isleworth for being found in a conservatory adjoining a parlour, and got remanded at the *tench*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Ten commandments** (popular), fingers or nails.

**Tender-foot** (American), one who is new to the country, a green-horn or "griffin." Applied in the West to those whose feet are not yet accustomed to much walking, or probably to those unused to moccasins.

Stebbins fell an easy victim to the cigarette and smoked incessantly. The effect of the habit on him was not noticed until one day he fired at a *tender-foot* from the East, three times in succession, and missed him every time.—*Detroit Free Press*.

How an American ever expects to digest his food is a problem to a *tender-foot*, as they call us new-comers.—*Phillips-Wolley: Trottings of a Tender-foot*.

A yell as I put my naked foot on a cactus, and thus made my first acquaintance with a noteworthy member of the flora of the sandy prairies, is a reminiscence of that night, and I realised in a substantial form the nickname that is given to the new-comer out West of *tender-foot* or pilgrim.—*A. Staveley Hill: From Home to Home*.

**Tenner** (prison), a sentence of ten years' penal servitude.

The speaker, in a stage whisper, would continue: "It's all right. Don't turn your head." After another journey round the ring, he would again hiss: "How long have you got?"

"A *tenner* and my ticket," would be the reply.—*Evening News*.

(Common), a ten-pound note.

"No money?" "Not much; perhaps a *tenner*."—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford*.

*Bookie* (holding out his hand): "Evens." *M.P.*: "Yes; a *tenner*. I'll settle after the race."

*B.*: "All right. What name?"

*M.P.*: "Brown-Smith, R.H.A."

*B.*: "Oh, one of your bloomin' initials is enough!"—*Sporting Times*.

**Ten-strike** (American), a *ten-strike* is the highest "count" which can be made at the game of ten-pins. Applied to a very lucky hit at anything, or to an unusual stroke of success.

Oh, vot ish all dis earthly pliss?

Oh, vot ish man's soockcess?

Oh, vot ish various kinds of dings?

Und vot ish hoppiness?

Ve find a pank-note in de sbtreet,

Next dings der pank ish break,

Ve falls und knocks our outsides in,

Ve ven a *ten-shrike* make.

—*The Breitmann Ballads*.

**Ten up!** (Stock Exchange). If a broker's credit is at all *shaky*, or it is thought he is unable to carry out his contracts, he is required to lodge ten per cent. of any stock bought before the contract can be considered valid. This is called *ten up*.

**Terri** (tinker), coal.

**Terry** (tinker), a heating-iron.

**Tertians**. *Vide* BEJANT.

**Teviss** (costers and tramps), a shilling.

**Thanks, no** (society), an expression meaning one does not intend to be taken in. There are variations of this, as "Not in these boots," &c.

**Thari** (tinker), to talk, language, conversation. Also *bug*. "Can you *thari* Shelta, sublee?"—"Can you talk Shelta, man?"—"Do you grani the Minklas *thari*?"—"Do you know the tinkers' tongue?"

**Thatch** (popular), a person's hair; well *thatched*, with a good head of hair. Also a straw hat.

**That-side** (pidgin), there. "*That sidey* sittee he compladore." *This-side*, here. "Hab makee stop *this side*."

**That's too rich for your blood** (American), too good for any one.

You go a visitin' Miss Perkinblower! You makin' calls on a judge's daughter! *That's too rich for your blood*—why, they'll jest tell the servant to carry you out on a chip and heave you into the barn-yard.—*Newspaper Story: MS. Americanisms*, by C. Leland Harrison.

**That's where your toes turn in** (American), one of many popular expressions, equivalent to "That is where you make a mistake."

"My frens," continued the speaker, "de rich man walks on welwet ca'pets, an' he sots doun on stuffed cheers, an' he has Saratoga' taters ebery meal. He jists rolls in ham an' eggs, an' he walks all ober fricassed chicken. De poo' man walks on a bare flo', sots on a hard cheer, an' his taters am biled wid de hides on. Yet who am de happiest? You will say de rich man, of co'se—but *dat's whar yer toes turn in*.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Theatre** (thieves), a police court. (Army), Irish *theatre*, the guard-room.

**Theddy, tedhi, thedi** (tinker), fire.

**There's no knowing what an ox may do** (American). This, which was once a popular expression, may still be heard occasionally in New England.

"There was once a Yankee in Montreal who was about to race horses with an Englishman for a thousand dollars a side. Two days before the run was to come off, the Yankee learned that his horse had not a ghost of a chance to win. While walking about town, he saw an immense prize ox adorned with ribbons, preceded by a band of music. This gave him an idea. He went to the Englishman, and proposed a preliminary examination of both their 'beasts.' The Englishman assented, and said, 'Well, show your horse.'"

"'Horse!' said the Yankee. 'I ain't got no horse. Why, Squire, don't you know—my critter's an ox. Didn't you see him goin' about town this arternoon?'"

"The Englishman was bewildered. He *had* seen the ox, and believed the Yankee. 'The race is off!' he exclaimed. 'I'll run my animal against any horse, but *there's no knowing what a d—d ox may do!*'"

**There you ain't** (popular), this expression expresses a failure. It is the converse of "There you are" (*q.v.*).

I saw a lady, I rose my cadie,  
I went like this, and then I did a wink,

I said you're tasty, very tasty,  
Then proposed adjourning for a drink.  
But she was stuck up, and turned her  
nose up,  
And tried to look as though she were a  
saint,  
I did just what I thought, but she wasn't  
quite my sort,  
*So there you ain't, there you ain't, there  
you ain't.*  
—*Music Hall Ballad (Francis & Day).*

**There you are** (popular), meaning  
that you are all right. "Manage  
it properly, and *there you are.*"

Nod politely, but do it nicely,  
And if the chance occurs, just do a wink;  
Don't be hasty, but if it's tasty,  
Try within your own her arm to link.  
While you're talking, and onward walking,  
Be careful that you do not go too far,  
And if the girl's the proper sort, and you  
do just what you ought,  
Why, *there you are, there you are, there  
you are.*  
—*Music Hall Ballad (Francis & Day).*

**Thick** (popular), cocoa. (Common),  
intimate.

"You haven't been round to see me so  
often as you used to?"

"No; I've made a new set of acquaint-  
ances."

"What's that to do with it?"

"Well, you see, they're very *thick*. The  
consequence is, I'm either hoodman or  
getting over an attack of D.T."—*Bird o'  
Freedom.*

To lay it on *thick*, to flatter in  
an exaggerated manner. (Win-  
chester College), a *thick*, a stupid  
fellow.

**Thick 'un** (common), a sovereign.

"Have you sufficient confidence in me  
to lend me a sovereign?" "Oh! yes,  
I've the confidence, but I haven't the  
*thick 'un.*"—*Atkin; House Scraps.*

I forfeited three *thick 'uns* entrance fee  
at Alexandra Park over a horse which I

have never seen, which was sold to me for  
nothing by a man that it didn't belong to  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Thieves, murdering** (army), the  
(now extinct) military train.

**Thieving-irons** (old), scissors.

Bill placed his canister under the *thiev-  
ing-irons*, while Dick and the barber gave  
play to their velvets.—*J. Burrowes: Life  
in St. George's Fields.*

**Thilly** (tinkers), a make-weight.

"You're welcome to your fun this  
mornin', Jim," replies Jack, "but wouldn't  
you have the halt, and that bit of a spavin  
your baste have, go agin one another? and  
maybe you'd give us a pair of specs a blind  
horse could see wud, by way of a *thilly*;  
for your hunter will soon want that same  
sort of a spy-glass."—*Sporting Times.*

**Thimble.** This, in canting, gene-  
rally means a watch. The  
gypsies, however, apply it to  
both watch and purse; and  
this confusion of terms is also  
to be found occasionally among  
thieves in America. It is pro-  
bable that the Romany word  
meaning purse is by far the  
oldest, since in Hindu *zambil*  
is a purse or wallet. Gypsy is  
popularly supposed to be a *mé-  
lange* of many languages; but  
in the Anglo-Romany about  
forty-nine words out of fifty  
are not merely Hindustani, but  
to a very great extent indeed  
Hindi-Persian, approximating  
often much more closely to an  
old form than modern Hindu  
itself. This was the opinion of  
the late Professor E. H. Palmer.

**Thimble-rigger** (common), a sharper who practises the *thimble-rig*, a cheating game, played thus: A pea is placed on a table, and the man rapidly covers it successively with three or four thimbles, which are then laid on the table. You are then asked to point out the thimble which is supposed to cover the pea, but which is concealed under the cheat's nail or up his sleeve.

The poor trumpery beggars—converted clowns, and dog-stealers, and tramps, and *thimble-riggers*—a poor out-at-elbows crew.—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple.*

**Thimble-twister** (thieves), a thief who steals watches from the person.

**Things, the** (thieves), base coin.

**Thin 'un** (popular and thieves), half a sovereign.

**Thirteen clean shirts, getting** (prison), three months' imprisonment, shirts being changed once a week in prison.

**Thoker** (Winton), a large, thick slice of bread, baked after being soaked with water.

**Thoke, to** (Winchester College), to rest. Old provincial English *thoky*, sluggish. A *thoke* is rest, lying in bed. (Winchester), to lie in bed late. But "to *thoke* upon anything" is to look forward with pleasurable anticipation to its enjoyment.

**Thomyok, tomyok** (tinker), magistrate. Literally great head.

**Three-by-nine smile** (American), a laugh or smile to the full extent of the jaws. A pun on the word benign.

"Papa, don't you think young Mr. Canter has a benign smile?"

"Yes, my dear, *seven-by-nine*. I never see him do it without wishing to throw a shovelful of corn into his mouth."—*New York Journal.*

I found Mrs. Langtry engaged in practising a new fall, and she smiled a *three-by-nine smile* on me. — *New York Morning Journal.*

**Three cheers and a tiger** (American). In the United States, after three cheers are given, it is usual to add a howl, called "the *tiger*," in order to intensify the applause. Bartlett gives a very meaningless account of doubtful authenticity as to the origin of this phrase, saying that a man once cried to the Boston Light Infantry, "Oh, you *tigers*," and that they began to growl. The true origin seems to be as follows: Once the famous wit and politician, S. S. Prentiss, being on a stumping tour, came to a town where there was a small menagerie on exhibition. Thw he hired for a day and threw it open to all comers, availing himself of the occasion to make a political speech. The orator, holding a ten-foot pole, stood on the tiger's cage, in the roof of which there was a hole, and

whenever the multitude applauded one of his "points" with three cheers, Mr. Prentiss poked the tiger, who uttered a harsh roar. From this *three cheers and a tiger* spread over the country. The writer had this anecdote from a relative of Mr. Prentiss, and can vouch for its authenticity.

"Three cheers and a *tiger*" are the inseparable demonstrations of approbation on all festive and joyous occasions in New York.—*Boston Evening Post*.

The phrase, which was new in 1842, has become common since that time, and has extended from New York to every part of the country where political and social gatherings are held.

**Three-decker** (booksellers), a three-volume novel.

**Three draws and a spit** (common), a jocular phrase for a cigarette.

**Three-legged mare**, the gallows, because originally formed of three parts.

For the *mare with three legs*, boys, I care not a rap,  
'Twill be over in less than a minute.  
—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

Also called the "triple tree."

**Three-pair back** (popular), a back room on third floor.

So they eloped together from the work-house, and took shelter in a *three-pair back*.  
—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

**Three-ply** (American), a Mormon name for a man with three wives. How the *three-ply* system works is set forth in the following extract.

Other wives again, through policy, and for their children's sake, become good girls, and jog along in misery as best they can. But when the lord after some time—shorter or longer—becomes somewhat cooled off in his affection for the "second," or perhaps sees another woman who strikes his fancy, he at once feels the necessity of his still greater exaltation in both worlds, and becomes a *three-fly*.—*New York Herald*.

**Three ride business**, the crack way of running over hurdles, in which just three strides are taken mechanically between each hurdle.

**Three sheets in the wind** (common), originally a sea phrase; intoxicated, or nearly so.

Many of these votaries of Bacchus were *three sheets in the wind*.—*Punch*.

It should be enacted, in addition, that the drunkard should wear a badge, . . . let the heralds invent a cognizance for *three sheets in the wind*.—*Illustrated London News*.

A woman who scrubs  
Over lathery tubs,  
Though not of a bibulous mind,  
Has no cause to faint  
If folks make a complaint  
Of her having *three sheets in the wind*.  
—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Three X's** (army), the 30th Regiment of Foot, from the Roman numerals XXX.

**Throttle** (popular), throat.

Sam's *throttle* napt a rum one, but the latter put in his one two with heavy effect.  
—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.



**Through a side-door** (common), "the child came *through a side-door*," i.e., is illegitimate.

Some wicked wretches say, but I  
My indignation smother,  
That I came *through a side-door*,  
Into this world from the other.  
—H. Wilson: *The Blessed Orphan*.

**Throwing off** (American gamblers), a term used by gamblers when a capper is the partner of a sucker (dupe). The capper can lose when he pleases, thereby *throwing off* the sucker (New York Slang Dictionary).

**Throw off the belt, to** (American), to stop a machine, to cause anything to cease. "Oh, just *throw off the belt*, and stop your wheels," i.e., cease talking.

There seems to be a tolerably general demand that the controller of Lord Tennyson's poetical machine should *throw off the belt*.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Throw up a maiden, to** (cricket), to bowl an innings without any runs being made by the batsman.

**Thrums** (costermongers), three-pence.

**Thrups** (popular), three-pence.

**Thugs** (American). This word is in the United States applied to the adherents of the native American party and others by their opponents, also to roughs and villains generally.

**Thumper** (common), a gross falsehood.

**Thumpers** (showmen, itinerants), dominoes.

**Thumping** (common), very large.

**Thunderer, the** (journalistic), the *Times* newspaper. This sobriquet was given to the chief London daily because of the unusual force and vigour displayed in a series of articles formerly contributed to its columns by Captain Edward Stirling.

**Thundering** (common), very large, superlative.

Young women employed in drapery establishments may be interested to learn that if their employer accuses them of telling *thundering* lies, they are justified in leaving their situation without notice.—*Globe*.

He took me into his confidence, with the professed object, as he himself declared, of proving to me "what a *thundering* fool he had been."—J. Greenwood: *Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Thunder-mug** (American low), a chamber utensil.

The first place our Sophomore got in his scenic work was on the slab fence opposite the Presbyterian Church. On the topmost slab he traced, in burning letters a foot long, "T. Williams and Son sell Bugs, Jugs, Rugs, and *Thunder-Mugs*." A few ornamental flourishes that would have made Michael Angelo look about for a place in which to lie down and die, completed the first venture.—*He'd Paint, so He Would: An American Story*.

**Tib** (old cant), a goose.

On red shanks and *tibs* thou shalt every day dine.

—*Retoure, my dear Dell*.

Also "*tib* of the buttery." *Tib* is provincial English for a calf.

**Tibby** (popular), the head.

I'm a chickaleery bloke with my one, two, three,  
Whitechapel is the village I was born in,  
For to get me on the hop, or my *tibby* drop,  
You must wake up very early in the mornin'.  
—*The Chickaleery Cove.*

It has been suggested that *tibby*, or a thick skull, is discoverable in *tibbad*, thickness, a blockhead, explained in Shaw's Gaelic Dictionary published more than half a century ago. More probably from *tab*, *tib*, end piece. To "drop on the *tibby*" is to startle or alarm any one, to take him unawares.

**Tib's Eve**, on (popular), on the Greek Kalends, *i.e.*, never, at no time.

**Tichborne's own** (army), the 6th Carabineers.

**Tick** (common), credit. "What is the damage of the *tick*," what is the amount of the bill on credit. *Tick* is old English, now used slangily.

I confess my *tick* is not good.—*Sedley: The Mulberry Garden*, 1668.  
What, Timon, does old age begin t' approach  
That thou thou droop'st under one night's debauch,  
Hast thou lost deep to needy rogues on *tick*,  
Who ne'er could pay, and must be paid next week?  
—*The Earl of Rochester's Works.*

When you've got lots of money  
You're a brick, brick, brick;  
When you've got lots of money  
All your friends to you will stick;  
But when you've got no money  
All the world has lost its honey,  
And you'll find your name is Dennis  
When you want *tick, tick, tick.*  
—*Broadside Ballads.*

Some dads leave houses to their sons,  
Mine ne'er left me a brick,  
And so just like my watch, by Jove,  
I always go on *tick.*  
—*G. W. Hunt: The Customs of the Country.*

In the seventeenth century a *ticket* was a tradesman's bill or written acknowledgment of a debt or score, and hence the phrase on *ticket*, on trust, on account, on credit, on *tick*, signified the same. In French slang the equivalent is "avoir l'ardoise," alluding to the slate on which accounts are recorded at wine shops.

Your courtier is mad to take silks and velvets  
On *ticket* for his mistress.  
—*Cotgrave.*

No matter upon landing whether you have money or no—you may swim in twentie of their boats over the river upon *ticket*.—*Decker: Gull's Horn Book*, 1609.

Also a watch. Same in German cant. In French cant "tocante."

You know you'll buy a dozen or two of wifes, dobbin cants, or a farm, or a *tick* with any rascal.—*Parker: Variegated Characters.*

**Ticker** (thieves), a watch.

For seven long years have I served them,  
And seven long years I have to stay,  
For meeting a bloke in our alley,  
And taking his *ticker* away.  
—*Inscribed on a Prison Wall.*

"And always put this in your pipe, Nolly," said the Dodger. "If you don't take fogles and *tickers*—if you don't take pocket-handkerchers and watches—some other cove will."—*Charles Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

As it is, we're doing proper, and nicking our ten or a dozen *tickers* in the course of a single afternoon.—*Funny Folks.*

(American University), one who does not know what he is talking about.

**Ticket** (common and American), that's the *ticket*, that is the proper thing, exactly what is required. In this sense *ticket* is the equivalent of the French *étiquette*, of which the original meaning is label, notice posted up, hence arrangement, ceremonial.

Quite the real *ticket* if the dons as wholesales the blacklead would make it up to sell in ha'porths and penn'orths.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

"Deed, that ain't the *ticket*, Miss Mary Jane," I says, "by no manner of means."—*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn.*

"What's the *ticket*?" what is the programme? what is to be done? In French "quelle est la marche du bœuf gras?" alluding to the pageant and procession of the prize ox in the streets of Paris (now a thing of the past). (American), "what's the *ticket* on it?" what is the price of it? what will be the result. (Theatrical), *ticket* night, a night on which the friends of the supers at a theatre are allowed to buy *tickets*, on the understanding that it is

some advantage to the supers, who have a percentage on the receipts. (Australian), to go on a *ticket*, to be in favour of, to adopt the policy of. Probably adopted from the United States. It signifies to make a thing one's policy. Thus Mr. Gladstone would be said to be "going on the Home Rule *ticket*."

**Tickler** (common), a small short poker used to save the ornamental fire-irons. A regular *tickler*, a poser. (Popular), a whip.

I don't recollect whether Mrs. Joe Gargery's *tickler*, which was the terror of Pip's life, was minutely described in "Great Expectations."—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

(American), explained by quotation.

The drummer never travels without a *tickler*, which is not, as the name might seem to imply, a sportive term for a bowie-knife, but a small pocket ledger, in which are carefully noted all the debts incurred by the parties with whom the drummer does business; and which consequently enables him to refresh, or *tickle*, the memory of firms who are a little behind-hand with their payments.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Tickler**, *titler* (gypsy and probably provincial also), a butterfly. Hindu *tittā*, a butterfly.

**Ticks** (sporting), debts. From *tick*, credit, or written acknowledgment of a debt.

**Tick up**, to (popular), to put to one's account.

It was handed round, and everybody praised the ale. . . . Some adding that they would *tick it up* this time, but that the next time they happened to be passing they would be sure to call in and rub off the score.—*Household Words: Lodged in Newgate.*

**Tiddlywink** (provincial), a leaving shop, where money is lent on goods without a pawnbroker's license.

**Tied his hair, that** (tailors), that puzzled him, he had to give it up, could not do it.

**Tied his wool** (tailors), *vide* TIED HIS HAIR.

**Tie-drive, tie** (American), timbers tied together, rafts.

The "boys" are men engaged in landing *ties* thus floated down; and sitting around the red-hot stove, they make the evening jolly with songs and yarns of *tie-drives* and of wild rides down the long "V" flume.—*James Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Tied up** (popular), given over, finished.

**Tied up prigging** (thieves), given over thieving.

**Tiffin** (Anglo-Indian and pidgin), luncheon, at least in English households. Also to *tiff*, to take luncheon. As there is no plausible or possible derivation of the word from any Eastern tongue, the authors of the Anglo-Indian Glossary believe it to be a local survival of our old English colloquial or slang term. Grose (1785) de-

fines *tiffin* as eating or drinking out of meal time, or, as Americans would say, "drinking in between drinks." To take a little *tiff* is an old-fashioned term for such a mere bit and sup (especially the sup) in the United States (*tiff*, old English for a draught of liquor. Also *tift*, common in America), where it has certainly no Anglo-Indian connection. It is probably an old derivation from the same root with "tip" and "tipple." To *tiff* or take luncheon is correct. To *tiffin* is generally used by lady-novelists who have not been in India, and it is denounced as "bad grammar, according to Anglo-Indian use," in the Anglo-Indian Glossary. The Anglo-Indian word *tiffin*, according to G. A. Sala, is in common use in hotel advertisements in South Africa.

Lawn-tennis, picnics, and flirtation fill up the time of the poor expatriated wives and daughters from *tiffin* to afternoon tea.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Tiger** (workmen). The navvies call streaky bacon by this name. *Vide* THREE CHEERS AND A TIGER.

(American), to fight the *tiger*, to gamble with professionals. From the stripes on a faro table.

**Tiger Bay**, one of the slums of London.

As soon as her eyes are open in the morning, the she-creature of *Tiger Bay* seeks to cool her parched mouth out of the gin-bottle; and "— your eyes, let us have

some more gin!" is the prayer she nightly utters before she staggers to her straw, to snore like the worse than pig she is.—*Seven Curses of London.*

**Tigers, Bengal (army), the 17th Foot, from their badge.**

**Tight (common), drunk.**

And I lie in such pose  
On my pallet to-night  
(With my boots unremoved),  
That you fancy me *tight*—  
And I rest so at large  
On my pallet to-night  
(With my head to its foot),  
That you fancy me *tight*—  
That you frown as you look at me,  
Thinking me *tight*.

—*Funny Folks.*

He's had his day, and had his night,  
And now when he did get *tight*,  
He used to go it proper right,  
Did grandfather!

—*C. H. Ross: The Husband's Boat.*

In about half-an-hour they were as thick as thieves again, and the *tighter* they got, the lovinger they got.—*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn.*

This corresponds to the French slang word "rond," drunk, *i.e.*, distended by drink. Mr. George Augustus Sala tells an amusing story of Macready in connection with this word. To enable the reader to understand the point of the anecdote, it is essential to state that in America there is a harmless bird called a peep, which, in consequence of being purblind, flies in a groggy and erratic manner, continually striking its wings against the branches of trees. Hence it is popularly known as the boozy bird.

While playing in Philadelphia, Macready was much distressed by the actor who played Horatio being very drunk. Coming off the stage, the star encountered the manager, to whom he pointed out the peccant player.

"Do you see that beast, sir?" inquired the enraged tragedian, pointing to the drunken Horatio.

"I do, sir," replied the manager; "and I guess he's *tight* as a peep."

"Oh, indeed!" growled Mac. "I was not aware that that was the gentleman's name; but it's my private opinion, sir, that Mr. Titus Peep is as drunk as a lord!"

(Popular), "blow me *tight*!" an exclamation. A variation of "jigger me *tight*!" which originally was probably obscene.

"Good people, he disowns me—he's a false, deceitful churl!"

And if that's not right—well, *blow me tight!*" She was a vulgar girl!

—*Sporting Times.*

**Tightener (general), a meal, or a hearty meal.**

Why I've cleared a "flatch-enork" (half a crown), but "kool esilop" (look at the police), namnus (be off), I'm going to do a *tightener* (have my dinner).—*Diprose: London Life.*

(Popular), do the *tightener*, to dine.

**Tight fit (Vermont University), a good joke. The one telling it is said to be "hard up."**

• **Tilbury (old cant), a sixpence.**

**Tile** (common), a hat, sometimes also used for any head covering by the lower orders.

At a few minutes before one, Sam threw his *tile* into the ring.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports.*

John, Lord Kinsale,  
A stalwart old Baron, who acting as  
henchman

To one of our early kings, killed a big  
Frenchman:

A feat which his Majesty deigning to  
smile on,

Allowed him henceforth to stand with his  
*tile* on.

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

Tried to get to the bottom of the three-card trick, but fellow was too deep a card. Got my new *tile* flattened by a fellow taking me for a welsher.—*Moonshine.*

The comparison of the head to a house or habitation is obviously appropriate and familiar. Thus the metaphor of a *tile*, as the covering of the house or head, is not incongruous. The hat, or *tile*, as used in this sense, is erroneously supposed to be a corruption of pantile or sugar-loaf, because hats shaped like a sugar-loaf were sometimes worn. By a similar metaphor the hat, and sometimes the hair, was called the "thatch," and less commonly the "slate." The similarity in idea of many expressions of the slang of different nations, is exemplified in this as in other instances. Thus in French argot, *ardoise*, a slate, stands for hat or cap, as well as *tile*, and in Spanish cant *tejado*, or *techo*, is literally a tile-roof. Dr. Brewer thinks *tile* is from Saxon *tigel*, to cover, to

which is due the English provincial *teag*, an article of head-dress.

**Tile-frisking** (thieves), stealing hats from halls.

"What's the programme?" said the Dude to the Baby Hippo, last Saturday afternoon.

"Going on a circular tour."

"Personally conducted? Black Maria? Case of *tile-frisking*, I suppose?"—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Tile loose** (common), to have a *tile loose*, to be slightly deranged. Also a "tile off" or slate loose."

Questioned by Mr. Finlay, witness said the feather came from Mount Calvary. She thought the major had got a *tile loose*.—*Daily Telegraph.*

**Till-sneak** (thieves), a rogue that robs tills.

**Tilt on**, to (American), to tumble on, come across, meet. From to tilt up, or tilt over.

If there are any blooming young Beechers, or flourishing clerical cocks, who expect a hen-reward for their devotion, let them beware, lest when they *tilt on* something extra sweet, they tilt up. Tilting on and tilting up, my young friends, is by far too favourite a vanity among you all.—*Sermon by Don the Third.*

**Timbers** (popular), the legs. Also "stems," "pegs."

**Timber-tuned** (musical), said of a person who has a heavy wooden touch on the piano, or other instrument.

**Time of day** (popular and thieves), that's the *time of day*, that's the

thing, how matters stand, or ought to stand.

Pop that shawl away in my castor, Dodger, so that I may know where to find it when I cut; that's the *time of day!*—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

To know the *time of day*, to be wide-awake; to be put up to the *time of day*, to be initiated, made expert. Alluding to teaching a child how to tell the time from a clock. Compare with "to know what's o'clock."

Then "Royal" Prescott dares the fray,  
And teaches us the *time of day.*

—*St. Helen's Lantern.*

"To be fly to the *time of day*,"  
to be initiated, expert.

Who should I meet but a jolly blowen  
Who was fly to the *time of day.*

—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Song.*

**Timer** (thieves), used in the phrase first, second, &c., *timer*.

**Time, to do** (thieves), to serve out a term of imprisonment.

**Tin** (general), money. Also "pewter."

We never put *tin* on a horse to win,  
Lack of oof explains it partly,  
But the horse that will be in the final three,  
Is the one that races Smartley.

—*Sporting Times.*

(Pidgin), thin, *i.e.*, light, not heavy, short weight. Probably the origin of the American phrase "too thin," *i.e.*, shallow, wanting in reason. "That excuse is too *thin*." "You talkee my t'at one catty ginger—t'at too *tin* he allo samee play, pidgin—you want-chee cheatec my, no can do."

VOL. II.

**Tindal** (Anglo-Indian), a native petty-officer of lascars, or the overseer of a gang of labourers.

**Tinge** (tailors), special percentage allowed to drapers' assistants when old or damaged stock is sold.

**Tin-horn lot**, a (American, Western), a term used to express contempt, implying that the one "contempered" is a small-minded, mean fellow. In London "tin-pot."

There wasn't none of this small-minded scraping and shaving, and adding up and keeping tally. Them as got it paid, and them as hadn't it didn't, and that's there was to it; and if anybody said anything ugly about it, you just blowed the top of his head off, and set up the drinks, and there was an end of him. As to these here Californians that's come out since then—they're a *tin-horn lot* compared, half Jew, half Chinaman, on'y fit to take their pleasure in a one-horse hearse.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Tinkers' news** (common), news that has been heard or told before. In Scotland the term is "pipers' news," the idea being that information supplied by these people soon gets stale on account of their peregrinatory habits.

**Tinkler** (common), explained by quotation.

"Hark!" cried the Dodger at this moment, "I heard the *tinkler*." . . . The bell was rung again.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

French thieves call a bell  
"une retentissante."

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**Tin-pot** (common), low, mean, as a *tin-pot* game; worthless, as in a *tin-pot* company.

I shall have correspondents all over the world, and I shall have information of every dodge goin', from an emperor's ambition to a *tin-pot* company bubble.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

Most of the men whom one met at the Castle had been under the patronage of sportsmen amongst the Upper Ten, and no *tin-pot* heroes could get a footing.—*Sporting Life*.

(Naval), a contemptuous term for an ironclad.

**Tip** (general), a bribe or gratuity to servants or others, in reward for services or information furnished or expected. From *tipe*, to toss, as money was at one time commonly thrown to servants. The word is so extensively used as to be hardly slang.

Even instances have come to our notice of men in a good position in society being blackmailed when returning homelate, and, under the threat of being run in as drunk and disorderly, giving the necessary *tip* rather than have to go to the police-station, and perhaps get their names brought prominently before the public.—*Saturday Review*.

We do not desire to suggest that a judicious *tip* from Miss — to Constable E—, when he first addressed himself to her, would have released her from the further effects of his zeal.—*The World*.

In the sporting world, *tip* has also the signification of private information, on the chances of a horse winning, supposed to be derived from some trustworthy source. Straight *tip*, direct information from the owner or trainer of a horse,

and generally direct information or hint on any subject. From *tip*, a cue, in showman's slang.

I don't know how he knows about horses, but he does; he is generally right. He's a tout—makes it his living going round giving *tips*.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

No matter what paper or tout proclaims, Take only the *tip* from "Truthful James;" He is up to all the dodges and games, And money's not wasted by "Truthful James."

—*Sporting Times*.

(Popular), to sling the *tip*, to give information, give a hint.

Kim here, you confounded young jossler, while straight  
From the shoulder I *slings you the tip*,  
As regards a bad habit you've taken of late.

—*Sloper's Vagaries*.

(Common), that's the *tip*, that is the proper thing to do; to miss one's *tip*, to miss one's opportunity, fail. (Old), a *tip*, a drink, Provincial English diminutive, *tipple*.

*Miss* (with a glass in her hand)—"Hold your tongue, Mr. Neverout, don't speak in my *tip*."—*Swift: Polite Conversation*.

**Tip and a bopatte** (provincial), a shop in country villages, where everything may be had from a shirt to a lucifer match.

**Tip a stave, to** (common), to sing.

Miss Amy — can also *tip you a stave* with an ability something above the common.—*Fun*.

**Tip one's boom off.** *Vide To Tip*.



**Tipperary lawyer** (Irish), a bludgeon or shillelagh.

Next he produced a shillelagh—a real *Tipperary lawyer*—and, taking off his hat and turning back his cuffs, he proceeded to wield it in a defiant manner, finally bringing it down with a sounding thwack on the lid of the japanned box.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Tippery** (common), payment.

In plain words, he wished to have the *tippery* for his toggery.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

**Tipping** (American). “*Tipping* about on her toes.” Used in Philadelphia to mean a mincing gait. This agrees, certainly by mere accident, with the Yiddish *tippeln*, to come and go (Hebrew *tapoph*), walking with a minced or tripping gait. (Public and military schools), it is *tipping*, it is first-rate, jolly.

**Tipster** (turf), an agent who procures special information for his clients on the condition of horses, their capabilities, &c.

It is an open secret that *tipsters* pay for their advertisements on an unusually high scale.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

“Sir, I am a *tipster!*” he said proudly. “I seldom bet for myself.”—*Sporting Times*.

**Tip the double, to** (common), to decamp.

In plain words he fairly *tipped 'em the double*, he was vanished.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

**Tip the little finger, to** (slangy Australian), to drink. The expression is taken from the posi-

tion of the little finger in emptying a glass. When a man takes to drink, or injures his position or business by drinking too much, Australians say that he is a little too fond of *tipping the little finger*.

**Tip, to** (common), to give, convey.

There are many applications of this word in English, which may be translated by “give.” Thus “*tip the wink*,” a silent request to act with caution, or to abstain from crediting all that is said. Very old. In Colley Cibber's “*Flora, or Hob in the Well*,” ii. 2, the servant says, “Know you, sir! Why, I bought one of your ballads for her, and she *tipt the wink* upon me, with as much as to say, desire him not to go till he hears from me.”

Sudden she storms! she raves! You *tip the wink*;

But spare your censure: Silia does not drink.

—*Pope's Moral Essays*.

At which words Sextus *tipped me the wink*, but I did not observe that Licinius was at all displeased with them.—*Valerius*.

As we went by our house I wished I hadn't sent Mary Jane out of town; because now, if I could *tip her the wink*, she'd light out and save me.—*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn*.

“*Tip us your fin*,” shake hands. Also “*tip us your daddle*,” or “*your flipper*,” &c.

*Tip us your daddle*.

She *tipped me her sweet little paw*.

—*Punch*.

Old Bottleblue *tipped me his flipper*, and 'oped I'd refreshed and all that.—*Punch*.

*Tip* me the clank like a dimber mort or you are trim a ken for the gentry-cove, he is no lanswardo, or I am a kinchin.—*Beaconsfield: Venetia.*

To give a gratuity.

"Which they're the very moral of Christyuns, sir!" observed Mrs. Tester, who was dabbing her curtsies in thankfulness for the large amount with which our hero had *tipped* her.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

"What's the *tip*?" what is to be given or paid, same as "what's the damage?" (Popular and thieves), to *tip* the cole, to pay money.

For when that he hath nubbed us,  
And our friends *tip* him no cole,  
He takes his chive and cuts us down,  
And *tips* us into the hole.

—*The Life and Death of the Dark-man's Budge.*

To "*tip* the cole to Adam Tyler," to pass the stolen money to an accomplice. To "*tip* the loaver," to pay money.

. . . Just by sweetening them, and then they don't mind *tipping* the loaver.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

(Popular), to *tip* one's boom off, to depart, from a sailor's phrase.

Tip-top (common), of the best kind, first-rate.

*Tip-top* swells used to come among us, and no mistake; real noblemen, sir.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

Perhaps a *tip-top* cracksman be,  
Or go on the high toby.

—*The Song of the Young Prig.*

Tip-topper (popular), a gentleman, one of the best class, first-rate. Also "topper."

Tip up, to (popular), to pay.

"Come on," whispered Mouldy, first looking up and down to see that we were not observed; "*tip up*, Smiffield."

"*Tip up!*" I repeated, in amazement, seeing that he as well as Ripston were looking perfectly serious.

"Fork out," said the boy last mentioned.—*The Little Ragamuffins.*

Tire, to be tired (American), to be afraid of, alarmed at, timid.

"Sir, I thank you for not giving him your gun (revolver). Perhaps you saved my life." Then getting ferocious, "Not that I'm scared at him." Then a short silence, and glaring fiercely at me, "Nor of you either. I've seen cow-boys, bigger men than you, and with bigger hats too—but they didn't *tire* me. No, they didn't *tire* me any."—*Morley Roberts: The Western Avernus.*

Tish (Oxford Military College), partition or cubicle.

Title-page (printers), a face. A well-displayed *title-page* is a handsome, open face.

Titter (popular), a girl.

Only a glass of bitter!  
Only a sandwich mild!  
Only a stupid *titter!*  
Only she's not a child!

—*Song: Only a Penny Blossom.*

From *tit*, used by Dryden as a contemptuous term for a girl. Wright gives *tit* as provincial for smart or proud girl; a light *tit*, a strumpet. Probably from *titmouse*. Tytmouse, the *pub. fem.* (Halliwell).

Tizzy (common), perhaps a corruption from *tester*, an old English word for a sixpence.

There's an old 'oman at the lodge who will show you all that's worth seeing—the walks and the toy cascade—for a *tizzy*.—*Lytton: The Caxtons.*

**Tizzy Poole** (Winchester), an old term for a fives' ball. They cost sixpence, and were sold to the boys by a head porter named Poole.

**Toadskin** (American boys' slang), a five-cent postage-stamp.

"Why, ma, don't you know what a *toadskin* is?" said Billy, drawing a dingy five-cent stamp from his pocket. "Here's one, and don't I wish I had lots of 'em!"—*Fitz-Hugh Ludlow: Little Brother.*

**Toasting-fork or iron** (common), a sword.

If I had given him time to get at his other pistol, or his *toasting-fork*, it was all up.—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

I served in Spain with the King's troopers until . . . and hung up my *toasting-iron*.—*Thackeray: Pendennis.*

**Toast, on** (common), to have one *on toast*, to place another in a corner or dilemma. In America a very common phrase for anything nicely served.

**Toasty** (studios) is said of a picture painted in very warm tints. French painters call this *rôti*.

**Tobacco-curers** (South Carolina), explained by quotation.

"Barns" were built or repaired, cheap thermometers—or *terbacker kyovers*, as they are called there—are bought, and the golden-leaved luxury—the bane of the revenue reformer—is cut from a thousand steep and stony hillsides, and hung in "chinked and daubed" air-tight barns.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Tobur, toba** (showmen, &c.), the ground or field at fairs, hired to put the waggons on for show or circuses, or other *al fresco* entertainments, which does not amount to much, so that a man or manager is considered very hard up if he has not enough to pay the *tobur*. Gypsy *tober*, the road, hence ground.

**Toby** (cant), highroad. This word is as much in use as ever among "travellers," who now call it "tober." "Tober" is probably the older word. See above.

You are a capital fellow! and when the lads come to know their loss, they will know they have lost the bravest and truest gill that ever took to the *toby*.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

**Toby consarn** (old cant), a highway expedition. *Toby*, highway.

**Tobyman** (old cant), highwayman. *Toby*, the highway.

All the most fashionable prigs, or *toby-men*, sought to get him into their set.—*Lytton: Paul Clifford.*

**Toco or toks** (popular), to give *toco*, to thrash. From Italian *tocco*, touch, stroke, or *stock*, stick.

The school-leaders come up furious, and administer *toco* to the wretched fags nearest at hand.—*Hughes: Tom Brown's School-Days.*

Dear Charlie,—Ascuse shaky scribble; I'm writing this letter in bed.

Went down to the Square, mate, last Sunday, and got a rare clump on the 'ed. Beastly shame, and no error, my pippin! *Me* cop it! It's too jolly rum.

When a reglar Primroseer gits *toko*, one wonders wot *next* there will come.

—Punch.

**Toddle, to** (common), to be off, to walk. Provincial English, to walk with short steps.

"Then *toddle* to bed as soon as you like," said Mr. Belcher. "Can you find your way back?"—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

"We're a-going Hitchin way," said the companionable linker, "we'll *toddle* together."—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

**Toe-fil-tie** (Winton), to tie string or cord to the toes of sleeping boys with the object of waking them by pulling the string.

**Toeing** (pugilistic), *toeing* the scratch or mark, beginning the fight, that is, placing one's foot on the scratch or line in a prize fight.

Wednesday was "presentation day" at London University. The gentleman who gained the greatest applause on "*toeing* the mark" before the Chancellor was William Waterloo Wellington Rolleston Napoleon Buonaparte Guelph Saunders, B.A., and the clerk of the course was fairly out of breath when he had got to the end of this appalling cognomen. Even the sweet girl graduates smiled.—*Sporting Times*.

(Common), *toeing* one, kicking one behind.

**Toff** (popular), a dandy, a swell, one who appears well. Also *toffer*, a well-dressed gay woman. Derived from the Yiddish or Hebrew *toff*, *tov*, *tw*, literally good, and used in an extended sense which perfectly warrants its application to good or a fine appearance. *Toff*, good; *töfffer*, better; *töffest*, best; *jom toff*,

good day, a festival; *toff peg*, a good groschen; *tof malluschim*, fine clothes. A probable derivation is from *tiff*, to deck oneself out, or *toft*, a dressy individual. *Toff*, often applied to an over-dressed clerk or draper's assistant, who apes the swell. An old *toff*, an old beau.

A magistrate recently sentenced a woman, who made her hundredth appearance at the court, to fourteen days' hard labour. "You are an old *toff*," warbled the lady, "and if you sit there long enough, I'll certainly treat you. I am now going to eat some bread and onions I have in my pocket." "Saints preserve us!" groaned the magistrate. "Remove the lady with electric rapidity, gaoler, and get rid of those onions as quickly as possible," he continued. The gaoler obeyed orders, and as he re-entered the court, a powerful aroma floated round, and the worthy beak was heard to ejaculate "pah!"—*Judy*.

The sort of old *toff* as a cove would be proud of for a dad.—*Punch*.

Up! sport-loving *toffs*, tool your drags o'er the sward,

And, forsooth! since a coster may elbow a lord,

At Epsom, let coves who from White-chapel hail,

Drive their nags and their barrow close up to the rail.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Tofficky** (popular), dressy, fine, nice.

**Toffishness** (popular), explained by quotation.

Taking the average, it may be set down at ten for each of the two hundred, or two thousand slices in all—thick slices, bear in mind: anything under an inch thick would be regarded with contempt by the bony young barrowman, and perhaps with an uncomfortable suspicion that you have designs to inveigle him into the detestable

ways of gentility. He calls it *toffishness*. He is peculiar in his views in this respect.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

### Togged (popular), dressed.

He was *togg'd* gnostically enough.—*Scott: St. Ronan's Well.*

So I've *togged* myself up to the nines.  
—*Punch.*

In London many female servants seldom remain long in one situation; just long enough to get *togged* and fed up. Then my lady must have a spree for a few days.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

Shakespeare has *toged*, gowned.

### Toggerly (popular and thieves), clothing.

Next slit off his bottom clo'ing,  
And his ginger head topper gay.  
Then his other *toggerly* stowing,  
Tol lol, &c.,

All with the swag I sneak away.  
—*Burroues: Vidocq's Song.*

But in Edward the First's days, I very much fear,  
Had a gay cavalier thought fit to appear  
In any such *toggerly*—then 'twas term'd  
"gear"—  
He'd have met with a highly significant sneer,  
Or a broad grin extending from ear unto ear,  
On the features of every soul he came near;  
There was no taking refuge too, then, as with us,  
On a slip-sloppy day, in a cab or a 'bus.

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

But take a pal's advice, and don't be over nice,  
Though your suit of *toggerly* ain't a very flash 'un;  
You'd better far put up with the rig than tear it up,  
And be measured for the latest "parish" fashion.

—*J. Greenwood: A Night in a Workhouse.*

**Toggy, togman** (old cant), a coat.

**Togman** (thieves), a cloak or coat.

I towre the strummel trine upon thy nachbet and *togman*.—*Harman: Caveat.*

**Togs** (common), clothes.

Look at his *togs*! Superfine cloth, and the heavy swell cut! Oh, my eye, what a game!—*Dickens: Oliver Twist.*

"It mightn't spoil some sort of *togs*," I replied, with a scornful glance at poor Sam's wretched rags. "I shouldn't like to get the soot over my clothes wot I wears of Sundays, so I tell yer. I'm going to have another suit to follow my trade in."  
—*The Little Ragamuffins.*

My friend could play the fiddle and declaim, and I can dance, whistle, and sing with anybody; so, having obtained my pension, we bought an old violin and suitable *togs*, and started to do a bit of nigger minstrel business in the country, where such things are nearly unknown.—*Thor Fredur: Sketches from Shady Places.*

*Togs* was used for garments in the time of Henry VIII. From the Anglo-Saxon *tygan*, or else from the same root with the Latin *toga*, a covering; like *tugurium*, but or roof. Indo-Germanic *teg*, to cover; hence *tego*, *tegere*. German *dach*, a roof. "Thatch," and the Greek *στέγη*, a roof, are of the same family. This word seems to be the same as the old term *tugs*, same meaning, as in under *tug*, a petticoat. *Tug* clothes, working clothes.

Also possibly from the Anglo-Saxon *teog*, material, stuff, and *tege*, a binding, tying (*ligatura*, *rexus*). *Tygan* (Boswell), to tie together. *Togged* out reminds

us of *teokjan*, from the same root, signifying to adorn, trick out, *exornare* (Beowulf, 5871). Latin *toga*.

**Toheno, tohereno** (costermongers), pronounced *tocheno* or *tochereno*, very nice; literally a transposition of "hot one."

**Toke** (popular and thieves), bread. Same as "tack."

One night coming home to the crib where he lived,  
Found two cripples a munching dry *toke*  
as they sat.

—*J. Greenwood: A Night in a Workhouse.*

For breakfast there is bread and scrap,  
And something she calls tea;  
I only know it's wet and warm  
And disagrees with me;  
I wouldn't mind so much for that  
If the *toke* was not so thick,  
For each slice is two inches high,  
And hard as any brick.

—*Broadside Ballad.*

Pieces of bread.

He could devour as many surplus *tokens*  
as an elephant at the Zoo on an Easter  
Monday.—*Evening News.*

**Token** (printers). *Vide* BULLOCK'S HEART. Printers in working off sheets reckon their work by *tokens* of two hundred and fifty impressions.

**Tol** (old cant), a sword. Evidently abbreviated from Toledo, when the blades manufactured in that town had a world-wide reputation.

Merrily over the common he flies,  
Fast and free as the rush of the rocket,

His crape-covered vizard drawn over his  
eyes,  
His *tol* by his side, and his pops in his  
pocket.

—*Ainsworth: Rookwood.*

(Costermongers' back slang), stock, share, or lot.

How is a man to sell fine cherries at 4d. a pound that cost him 3½d., when there's a kid alongside of him a selling his *tol* at 2d. a pound?—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

**Tol lol**, happy, pretty well.

**Toll-loll-loll-kiss-me-dear** (bird fancier), explained by quotation.

"Just the same," put in old Master Nosey Warren; "just the same as the Middlesex finch calls hisself *toll-loll-loll-kiss-me-dear*; it's the nat'ral note of 'em."  
—*Greenwood: In Strange Company.*

**Toll-shop** (provincial), a prison, a variation of *toll-booth*. "The prison was so called in Cambridge, as it still is in Scotland. Corbel uses the word as a verb, and explains it in a note, 'Idem quod Bocardo apud Oxon.' The English Dictionary gives it as meaning custom-house" (Lewis O. Davies).

The Maior refused to give them the keys of the *toll-booth*, or town prison.  
—*Fuller: History of Cambridge.*

**Tolly** (public schools), a candle; from *tallow*.

**Tolly up, to** (Harrow School), to keep a candle alight after the gas has been turned off.

**Toloben** (old cant), the tongue. Also *tollibon, tullibon*. Possibly

from *toll*, to ring a bell, and *bene*, well. This derivation is supported by similar metaphors: English slang "clapper," a tongue, especially a busy tongue; French slang "battant" (tongue of a bell), tongue; "avoir un bon battant," to be a great or loud talker; Italian cant "scampanare" (literally to toll), to talk loud. Or from *tal* (tell), and *bene*, well, or gypsy termination *ben* or *pen* to every verbal noun. The gypsies use the term under the form of *tálloben*. Again, the term may owe its origin to *tully*, red silk, "red rag" being the modern phrase for tongue; in French slang "chiffon rouge." *Toloben rig*, fortune-telling.

**Tolsery** (old cant), a penny. Literally the price of toll. "Tolsery" is provincial for a place where tolls were taken.

**Tom and Jerry shop** (popular), a low drinking-shop.

**Tomarter or tomato**, a (American), "he caught a *tomarter* that time." A substitute for "a tar-tar," provided by Artemus Ward.

**Tom astoners** (nautical), dashing fellows. From astound or "astony," to terrify (Smyth). *Tom* is tinker for great.

**Tombstones** (popular), largeteeth. Pawn tickets, all that remains of the departed property.

The collection for master amounted to 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d., and a *tombstone* for ninepence on a brown Melton overcoat.—*Sporting Times*.

**Tombstone style** (printers), a slang term to indicate a particular kind of display in setting up—similar to that used in monumental inscriptions.

**Tom-John, tonjon** (Anglo-Indian), a sort of sedan or portable chair.

**Tom mies** (popular), a name for tomatoes.

Now that the wholesome "love-apples," with their delicious sub-acid flavour, have become cheap, the masses in their thousands may be seen continually munching them, not only because the *tom mies* are nice, but because they are red.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Tommy** (popular), bread, food. The usual name for food amongst navvies. Probably from Irish *tiomallain*, I eat.

One finger is what you've got to look out for. The job what Rip's got will get us the coffee; now, if we can find summat else while he's a-doin' of it, that'll be the *tommy*; which I hopes we shall, cos coffee wirrout *tommy* don't make much of a breakfast. So keep your eyes open, Smiffield.—*The Little Ragamuffin*.

Also inferior. *Tom* seems to enter into many disparaging phrases. The exchange of labour for goods. *Tommy-shop*, a place where a variety of articles, mainly food, are sold. From provincial English *tommy*, provisions.

The proprietor keeps a "tienda" or *tommy-shop* on his estate, just as the Australian squatter keeps his store at his station.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Also a baker's shop. Originally a store belonging to an employer

whose workmen were obliged to take out part of their earnings in *tommy* or food.

**Tommy Atkins** (army), a familiar term given by soldiers to their pocket ledger or small account-book. The origin of this name arose from every document, paper, &c., being headed, for convenience sake, "I, *Tommy Atkins*," &c. In general parlance the term is applied to a soldier.

**Tommy Dodd**, in tossing, when the odd man either wins or loses, as per agreement (Hotten).

**Tommy rot** (common), rubbish, nonsense.

Wen he sez my god's "go"—well he's 'it it. Great Scott! wot is life *without* "go?"

But "loud, slangy, vulgar"? No, 'ang it, young man, this is—well, there, it's *low*.

*Me* vulgar! a Primrosen, Charlie, a true "Anti-Radical" pot!

No, excuse me, St. J., I admire you; but this is all dashed *tommy rot*.

—*Punch*.

**Tom-pats**, in canting, shoes. In gypsy, feet. Hindu *tal-pat*, trampled on. To *patter-alay* in gypsy, is to trample on, *alay*, being an abbreviation of *talé* or *tal*. (Old cant), rum *tom-pat*, a real clergyman, in opposition to the "patrico," which see.

**Tom Topper** (popular), freshwater mariner, ferryman. Also "Tom Tug."

**Tongs** (American), an old word used for boys' jackets and trousers. Probably a form of the old English *togs*, aided by the resemblance of trousers to *tongs*, in the forked shape.

(Medical), a familiar name amongst medical students for the midwifery forceps.

**Tony catchy, tunnyketch, tawnykertch** (Anglo-Indian). In Madras the domestic water-carrier, generally a woman. Tamil, *tannir-kassi*.

**Too big for his boots** (theatrical), a phrase invented by the late F. B. Chatterton, manager of Drury Lane, to denote an actor who, having made a hit, gave himself airs, and became obstreperous and presuming.

**Too forth-putting** (American), too demonstrative or "too pre-vious."

The Taylor gush in Tennessee is getting tiresome. At the latest "rally" both were presented with pathetic speeches, and Bob got a bass viol of red roses and Alf a ship of white roses, and both were nominated for Vice-President on the next Presidential tickets. These gentlemen are quite *too forth-putting*. The public is fatigued and would fain seek repose.—*Washington Post*.

**Toofered** (gypsy), mended.

Tacho, true. But an old coat can hold out better than a man. If a man gets a hole in him, he dies; but his chukko (coat) can be *toofered* and sived apré (mended and sewed up for ever).—*The English Gypsies*.

**Tool** (studios), artists give this appellation to their brushes.



(Popular), a poor *tool*, a clumsy fellow, a bad hand at anything, a whip. (Burglar), a small boy whom housebreakers employ to enter a house by a small aperture.

**Tooler** (thieves), a pickpocket; moll-*tooler*, female pickpocket. To *tool* is applied to stealing, picking pockets, and burglary; derived beyond doubt from the gypsy word *tool*, to hold, handle, or take. In all the Continental Romany dialects it is *tullivava*.

**Tool, to** (general), to drive, to hold and manage the reins, to "handle the ribbons." Probably from an association with *tools* and skilful handling. To do a thing in workmanlike style. Suggested to be from the gypsy *tul*, indicative present *tullivava* (vide **TOOLER**), I hold, also generally applied to driving. *Tul tiro chib*, hold your tongue; *tul o solivaris*, hold the bridle, *i.e.*, ride.

He could *tool* a coach.—Lytton: *The Caxtons*.

A coach he'd *tool*. You've coaches still,  
I've heard that they're not driven ill,  
But where's the fun without the spill?  
Says Grandfather.

—C. H. Ross: *The Husband's Boat*.

Mr. Carnegie was taking the peace gentlemen with him, and he is well-known to be a generous host. Who has not read of his coaching tours in England, when he *tooled* Mr. Matthew Arnold, Mr. John Morley, Mr. William Black, and other men of light and leading behind his teams of prancing nags.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

(University), to *tool* along, to go or cause to go at a great pace.

**Too much bag** (American), needless disquisition, padding, superfluity.

There is a great deal of *bag* and a strong sense of too-muchness in this tale. It bulgeth.—*Western Newspaper*.

**Toother** (pugilistic), a blow on the mouth.

I found . . . two knuckles cut to the bone almost, so I must have got in one pretty good *toother*.—*Sporting Life*.

**Tooth-music** (popular), mastication.

**Toot, on a** (American), raising the devil, making a noise, on a spree. *Toot*, the devil (English provincial, Wright). *Toot*, to blow a horn; Anglo-Saxon *tutan*, to swell, to grow; *tanta* (*i.e.*, *toot*), to murmur, sound; *getete*, show, ostentation; *totjam*, *eminere*, *micare*, to cut a shine. All agreeing with the modern forms.

**Too-too** (society), exceedingly, an expletive. Thomas Scott, in his "Philomythia," employs this phrase, which, after an oblivion of nearly three centuries, has been revived. Speaking of the weathercock, he says, "his head was *too-too* great," and again, "his tail was *too-too* weak," referring to its irregularities.

**Tootsies** (common), feet, those of ladies and children in particular.

**Top!** a signal among tailors and sempstresses for snuffing the

candle. One cries *top!* and all the others follow; he who last pronounces this word has to snuff the candle (Hotten). An abbreviation of "*top* the glim." To *top* is to burn off the long cotton end of a candle. (American), first-rate. An abbreviation of "*tip-top*."

The third suddenly becomes a very swash-buckler of a young woman. Hitherto she has spoken English; now she falls into an unknown dialect. "How is your mother, Jenny?" she is asked by the visitor. "Oh, *top!*"—*The Youth's Companion*.

**Top-dressing** (journalistic), a large-type introduction to a report, generally written by a man of higher literary attainments than the ordinary reporter who follows with the details (Hotten). (Common), doing the hair, coiffure.

The Roman Emperor Caracalla, when he made a progress in Germany, tried to conciliate the fierce Teutons by having his sable locks cropped close to his head, and assuming a *top-dressing* in the shape of a tawny rig.—*Daily Telegraph*.

The coarseness of thy tresses is distressing,

With grease and raddle firmly coalescing,

I cannot laud thy system of *top-dressing*.

—*J. E. Stephens: To a Black Gin*.

Shakspeare uses the word *top* for head :

All the starred vengeance of Heaven fall  
On her ungrateful *top*.

**Topee** (Anglo-Indian), a hat of any kind. Hindu *topī*. Incorrectly limited in popular English

parlance to the *sola* (not *solar*) helmet.

**Top o' reeb** (costermongers' back slang), pot of beer.

**Top-heavy** (common), drunk. Unsteady, like anything having the upper part too heavy for the lower, as of a boat or ship.

**Top-joint** (thieves' back slang), a pint of beer.

**Top-lights** (nautical), the eyes. In French slang, "quinquets;" Spanish cant, "lanternas;" Italian, "lampante."

**Topped** (thieves and popular), hanged, "may I be *topped!*"

**Topper** (common), excellent, as a *topper* at billiards. The *toppers*, swells, fashionable people.

But I twigged that the *toppers* left early;  
Yours truly ain't 'ooked for a flat!

—*Punch*.

(Thieves), head *topper*, a hat or wig. (Popular), tobacco left in the bowl of a pipe, a tall hat. (Pugilistic), a blow on the head.

Vile Jem, with neat left-handed stopper,  
Straight threatened Tommy with a *topper*.  
—*Ainsworth: Rookwood*.

**Topper hunter** (popular), poor men who pick up cigar ends and pieces of tobacco, which they chop up.

**Topping** (popular), elegant, swell, great. (Nautical), pretentious, as *topping* the officer; also fine, gallant.

**Topping cheat** (old cant), the gallows. *Topping*, hanging, and *cheat*, a thing.

**Top-sawyer** (general), a term denoting excellence, superiority. It is derived from the rule of the sawpits; the top man has to work harder and is more responsible for the job than the man who stands below. This term is of many special applications. (Sporting), a renowned horse, that excels others in speed and endurance.

There will be at least a dozen runners—more, probably, should the favourite develop more fibrine in the blood—and far more interest attaches to the race than in years past, when there has usually been a *top-sawyer* in the field.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Thieves), an expert thief, one who has gained distinction among his fellows by his achievements.

Wasn't he always a *top-sawyer* among you all? Is there one of you that could touch him, or come near him on any scent?—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

They planned their work and executed it without any assistance; not because they declined to associate with the old ones—as the candidate for platform employment hastened to add, with undisguised contempt for the whole race of paltry pretenders—but because they were unacquainted with any of the school, being themselves green hands and novices, who were ambitious “to be *top-sawyers* when as yet they were fit for nothing but to pick up chips.”—*J. Greenwood: A Converted Burglar*.

(Common), a rich person.

“I'll marry a *top-sawyer*,” he used to say, whenever his uncle broached the question of his settlement in life. “Why, bless ye, it's the same tackle and the same

fly that takes the big fish and the little one.”—*Whyte-Melville: M. or N.*

A great person.

He had paid the postboys, and travelled with a servant like a *top-sawyer*.—*Thackeray: The Newcomes*.

Also applied to a thing.

“Well then,” says I, “I have made a spec, general, and such a spec too as ain't often made now-a-days nother. It's a *top-sawyer* one, I do assure you.”—*Sam Slick*.

Formerly a dandy, an exquisite.

When the perfumed mane of the Persian lion flowed over his high coat-collar, and in conjunction with an exuberant pointed beard, imparted a formidable ferocity to his strongly-marked lineaments, his contemporary, the London *top-sawyer*, went about clean-shaven, save for a mutton-chop whisker or so, and with hair sedulously curled but symmetrically trimmed.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Costers), the largest and best fruit placed at the top of a basket. (Tailors), a collar. Also applied to the fore part of a garment.

**Top shuffling** (gambling cheats), explained by quotation.

He will make up the hand he wants out of the discards, or else hold out the necessary cards until he gets enough, and it is his deal. Then he drops it on the top of the pack, and performs a very neat little piece of work known as *top-shuffling*, which consists in shuffling the lower half of the pack over the upper half without disturbing it. When this is over the hand he wants is still on top. The cut, of course, buries it, but by a very simple movement he gets the cards back in their original condition. This is called “shifting the cut,” and can be done with one hand or two. Nothing then remains but to go

ahead and deal. Dexterity in over-shuffling and shifting the cut are the two things that modern gamblers cultivate in all their leisure hours, and with these accomplishments, and coolness and nerve, little else is required.—*Star*.

**Tops**, short for top-boots, also upper garments.

Tom is the one to patter flash,  
And make the coveys laugh;  
With whites and *tops* he cuts a dash,  
And like a beak can chaff.

—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Topsman** (thieves), the executioner. *Vide* TOPPED.

**Topsy-boozy** (popular), very drunk.

Yes, that's it, you laughter-loving jokers and corkers! If you get "screwed," *topsy-boozy*, or "three sheets in the wind" in a dedicated road, the blue-coated warriors may nab you.—*Toby*.

**Top-yob** (thieves' back slang), a pot-boy.

**Top your boom.** *Vide* BOOM.

**To rights** (common), in the proper way, completely. *Vide* RIGHTS.

The comedy provides you with hilarity *to rights!*

With Lottie Venne and Penley in the wild Arabian Nights.

—*Fun*.

**Torpids**, the eight-oared races at Oxford rowed in the spring, in contradistinction to the summer eights. It is in these races that the freshmen are able to distinguish themselves, and qualify

for their college boat in the next term.

**Torrac** (costermongers), back slang for a carrot.

**Tortle** (American), a Philadelphia expression meaning go or walk away, or "turtle off." In the "Charcoal Sketches," by J. C. Neal, one man advises another to put on his "skeets" (skates) and *tortle*. Early English, *tortyll*, to twist or wriggle away.

**Tortoise, Pump and** (army), "the 38th Foot, on account of their great sobriety and equally remarkable slowness when once stationed at Malta" (*Chambers's Journal*).

**Tosh** (public and military schools), a foot-bath, any bath. Perhaps a corruption of "toe-wash;" but it is curious to note that in Turkish-Persian *tasi* is a copper basin used in the bath, from which "tosher" (which see) is probably derived.

A *tosh* pan, an important utensil for periodical ablutions on stated nights, is also provided.—*Pascoe: Life in our Public Schools*.

(Royal Military Academy), the *tosh*-pond is the bathing-pond.

**Tosher** (nautical), a man who steals copper sheathing from ships' bottoms, or from dock-yard stores. Probably from *tasi*, a copper basin in Turkish-Persian. (Oxford), an unattached student. (Gypsy, obsolete), food, victuals. Hindu *tosha*, provisions.

**Toshing** (nautical). *Vide* TOSHER.

**Tosh-soap** (Charterhouse School),  
cheese. *Vide* TOSH.

**Toss** (Billingsgate), a measure of  
sprats.

**Tot** (popular), a small glass.  
(South African), a drink.

**Tot**, or **tots**, **old** (army), old  
bones, the kitchen refuse which  
is often bartered to some bar-  
rack sutler who supplies in  
exchange the crockery for the  
barrack men. One of the slang  
names of the 17th Lancers—  
"the Death or Glory Boys"—  
is the *Old Tots*, because they  
carry the device of a skull and  
crossbones. (School), *tots*, addi-  
tion sums; to *tot* up, to add  
up, abbreviation of "total."

**Tote** (popular), a hard drinker.  
From old English *totted*, drunken.

As well we'd another old chum,  
By all of his mates called the *Tote*,  
So named on account of the rum  
He constantly put down his throat.  
—*He Hasn't Got Over it Yet*  
(*Francis & Day*).

A teetotaller, an abstainer  
from all intoxicating drinks.

You'll always find the sober *Tote*  
With a few pounds at command,  
He can buy a house to live in,  
Or else a lot of land.  
His home is peace and happiness,  
His children and his wife  
They never know keen hunger,  
Or hear wild drunken strife.

I think I've shown, dear friends,  
Drink leads to sin, while Temperance  
To every comfort tends.

So look upon these pictures :

The *Toper* and the *Tote*,  
And see which has most happiness,  
And which the better coat.  
—*Broadside Ballad: The Toper and  
the Tote*.

**Toted** (American), led, or more  
commonly carried, to be made to  
act not of one's own free will.

I cannot think Mr. Ulysses S. Grant will  
degenerate into becoming a puppet to be  
played by wires held in the hand by gen-  
tlemen from Illinois, or that he will de-  
generate into a kind of hand-organ to be  
*toted* around on the back of a gentleman  
from Illinois.—*Mr. Donnelly's Speech in  
Congress on the Impeachment of President  
Johnson*.

**Tote**, to (American), to carry or  
bear. Peculiar formerly to the  
South. Bartlett says that it  
has been "absurdly enough de-  
rived from the Latin *tollit*," and  
thinks it is of African origin.  
Anglo-Saxon *teohan*, *teon*, to  
lead, carry, draw. "*Tedh* his  
nett on lande"—"Drew his net  
on land." Also to take; hence  
*tôtehan*, "*altrahere*," and *tohte*,  
"*expedito*." Hence in provincial  
English *tath*, *taketh*. It is not  
impossible that the Dutch *tot*,  
to, or unto, may have influenced  
the formation of this word.

Dey say fetch an' *tote* 'stead of bring and  
carry,  
An' dat dey call grammar!—by de Lawd  
Harry!

—*Old Negro Song*.

I *toted* up a load, and went back and  
sat down on the bow of the skiff to rest.—  
*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn*.

**T'other side of Jordan** (Ameri-  
can), a phrase expressive of no-  
where, the Unknown, or "gone

into de Ewigkeit." From a popular song of Methodist origin.

"Oh, I looked to de north an' I looked to de souf,  
And I saw a mighty charret a comin',  
Wid forty grey hosses a-crackin' on de lead,

To take us to de odder side of Jordan.

Oh, take off yer coat and roll up yer sleeve,

Jordan am a hard road to trabble;  
Take off yer coat and roll up yer sleeve,  
Jordan am a hard road to trappel, I believe."

**T'other-sider** (Australian popular, but growing obsolete), a convict. Cf. "Sydney-sider," "Van Demonian," &c. There never were any convicts transported to Victoria after its erection into a separate colony; hence they can afford to speak contemptuously of convicts from the Sydney side, or Van Diemen's Land. The inhabitants of that island, to escape the odious old convict associations, have changed its name to Tasmania.

**Tot rakers** (popular), men who go about picking up odds and ends from refuse heaps. Also "tot-pickers." From *tot*, anything very small.

**Tottie** (popular), a girl, a fast girl. A term of endearment, from English *tot*, anything small.

**Totting** (popular), explained by quotation.

P'raps he's goin' a-tottin' (picking up bones).—*Greenwood: The Little Ragamuffins.*

Vide **TOT RAKERS.**

**Tottle, tottlish** (American), from "totter" (Bartlett). To walk unsteadily. Anglo-Saxon *tealt*, vacillating, unsteady; *tealtrjan mid f6tum*, tottering with the feet.

**Totty-headed** (popular), slow to understand. English provincial *tot*, a fool, *i.e.*, one with little brains; Suffolk dialect, *totty*, little.

**Touch** (common), synonymous with cost or "damage;" a penny ride in an omnibus is a penny *touch*.

At night went to the ball at the Angel, a guinea *touch*.—*Phillip: Diary.*

(Eton School), a present of money. Formerly a cant word for a slight essay (Swift).

**Toucher** (coaching), as near as a *toucher*, as near as possible without actually touching. The old jarveys, to show their skill, used to drive against things so closely as absolutely to touch, yet without injury. This they called a *toucher*, or "touch-and-go," which was thence applied to anything which was within an ace of ruin (Hotten).

**Touch, to** (thieves), to steal or to succeed in getting.

One day I took the rattler from Broad Street to Acton. I did not *touch* them, but worked my way to Shepherd's Bush.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(Common), to borrow money.

He was down on his luck altogether, dead broke, his clobber seedy. He was altogether a woeful object when he ran against a wealthy friend whom he thought to *touch*. "No, my boy," said the friend, "I never give or lend money."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Toughs**, old (army), the 103rd Regiment. The nickname was gained by hard service in India. Some of the nicknames of other regiments are as follows:—"Royal Goats," or "Nanny Goats," the 23rd; the "Blood Suckers," the 63rd; "Mud Larks," the Royal Engineers. The "Blind Half-Hundredth," "Fighting Fiftieth," or "Dirty Half-Hundredth," is the 50th Regiment. The "Supple Twelfth," the 12th Lancers; the "Dumpies," the 20th Hussars; the "Cherry Pickers," the 11th Hussars; the "Ragged Brigade," the 13th Hussars (not as incorrectly stated under RAGGED BRIGADE); "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard" (the oldest of British regiments), the 1st Foot; the "Rib-breakers," the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards; the "Slashers," the 28th Foot; the "Cheesemongers," the Regiment of Household Cavalry; the "Steel Backs," the 58th; the "Death or Glory Men," the 17th Lancers; the "Excellers," the 40th; the "Bloody Eleventh," the 11th of Foot; the "Die Hards," the 57th; the "Old Dirty Shirts," the 101st. The Military Train were the "Mur-

VOL. II.

dering Thieves;" the "Springers," the 62nd; the "Sweeps," Rifles, &c.

**Toure, towre** (old cant), see.

Bing out bien morts, and *toure* and *tourre*,  
Bing out of the Romeville fine.

—*The English Rogue*.

**Tout** (turf), an agent on the lookout for any information as to any circumstances as to a horse's capabilities or condition, or for anything else, hotels, railways, theatres, &c.

The *tout* being haled before him, said that he had already "got three races" for his master that morning.—*Truth*.

**Touting ken** (old cant), a bar in a public-house. Probably one frequented by inn touts.

**Touze** (popular), the whisker worn bushy, or mass of frizzled, ragged hair. From *touzele*, to tug at, to entangle, rumples.

With spreads of pink shoulders; slim twisters with *touzles* of tow-coloured 'air.

—*Punch*.

**Tow** (Shrewsbury School), a run in "hare and hounds."

After that last "all up," there is a *tow* or continuous run of from one to three miles.—*Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

**Towelling, to give a** (common), to thrash. Provincial English *towl*, to beat with a stick. In Norfolk a man who has been cudgelled is said to have been "rubbed down with a black-thorn *towel*."

2 A

Frankly shaking his cane, bid him hold his tongue, otherwise he would dust his cassock for him. "I have no pretensions to such a valet," said Tom; "but if you should do me that office, and over-heat yourself, I have here a good oaken *towel* at your service."—*Smollett: Humphrey Clinker.*

I got a *towelling*, but it did not do me much good.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

**Towels, lead** (old cant), pistols, with which to wipe a man out of existence.

**Tower-Hill vinegar** (old), the block. Executions used very frequently to take place on *Tower-Hill.*

**Town bull** (old), a bawd, a very licentious man, popular among women.

**Townie** (army), a comrade who comes from the same town or part of the world. In French *pays.*

**Town-lout** (Rugby School), a pupil who resides in the town with his parents.

**Tow-pows** (popular), Grenadiers (Hotten).

**Towzery gang** (popular), swindlers who have sale-rooms for mock auctions of cheap and worthless goods. From *towze* or *touse*, to make a noise, a disturbance; *towser*, one that makes a bustle or stir. Hence "Towser," a name for a dog.

**Toy** (thieves), a watch; a white *toy*, a silver watch; a red *toy*, a gold watch.

Me and the other one went by ourselves; he was very tricky (clever) at getting a poge or a *toy*, but he would not touch *toys* because we was afraid of being turned over (searched).—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Toy-getter** (thieves), a watch stealer.

**Toys** (Winchester College), explained by quotation.

The clock striking seven, each junior retires to his *toys* or bureau for an hour and a half during what is known as "toy-time."—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Toy-time** (Winchester College), evening preparation.

During what is known as *toy-time*, when the work of the next morning and the week's composition have to be prepared.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Tracks, to make** (common). *Vide* MAKE TRACKS.

You will be pleased to *make tracks*, and vanish out of these parts for ever.—*C. Kingsley: Two Years Ago.*

He said he was a banker, did our smart Teutonic Max, And many a quid he'd given her, before he *made his tracks.*

'Twas only when the "thick 'uns" proved but Hanoverian Jacks

That she knew he was a "smasher."  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Track up the dancers, to** (thieves), to go upstairs. *Dancers*, stairs, or flight of stairs.



**Trade-mark** (common), a scratch or wound in the face.

I know what the old woman is when she is drunk,  
She pawns everything in the place;  
And if I correct her for what she has done,  
She draws her *trade-mark* down my face.

—C. Cornell: *Father, Take a Run.*

(Servant-girls), a servant's cap.

**Tradesman**, a regular (popular), a term of encomium meaning one who thoroughly understands his business, whatever his profession (honest or the reverse) may be.

**Trafficking** (prison), the interchange of money, prohibited articles, food, between prison officers and prisoners, and between prisoners themselves. The practice in the former case is an offence at common law, and when prosecution follows may lead to imprisonment. Between prisoners it is a breach of discipline entailing dietary and other punishment.

Prisoners usually volunteer to serve as permanent "orderlies" for *trafficking* purposes. *Trafficking* means giving of food, exchange of books, or passing of letters or writing materials from one prisoner to another.—*Evening News.*

**Tragedy Jack** (theatrical), a term of derision for a heavy tragedian.

**Train up**, to (popular), to hurry.

**Tra-la-la** (popular), the wealthiest and most extravagant class of

dissipated men. The "bucks of the very first water"—the music-hall ideals.

I will not sing of city swells,  
Your La-di-dahs,  
At such cheap toffs we've laughed enough.  
I sing of swells you know so well,  
The *Tra-la-las!*

The style's the same,—but better stuff,  
With glossy hat and spotless boots,  
From top to toe, quite *comme il faut*,  
You know them by their perfect suits  
From far-famed Poole of Savile Row.

—*Music-Hall Ballad: Tra-la-la.*

**Trampoline** (circus), a double spring-board. This seems to be a very old term, from *tram*, a small bench (generally used for setting a tub on), Herefordshire, and *poling*, a plank.

**Tramoose** (American), to walk or tramp. "*Trampoosing* about all over town," gadding here and there. From *tramp*, and an affix very common in America.

**Tranklements**, trolleybobs (popular), entrails, intestines. Given by Wright as "trolley-bags."

**Tranko** (circus), the elongated barrel which a performer man-ages with his feet, and keeps up in the air while lying on his back. It is said to be from the Spanish *tranco*, a threshold, as the shape is almost like that of one. But the ordinary Spanish word for threshold is *umbral*. The trick is very ancient, and was originally performed by kicking a spear in the air.

**Translated** (popular), second-hand, as applied to shoes or

boots repaired and sold by a cobbler.

Baeker had to limp in his socks to the New Cut, and purchase a pair of *translated* crab-shells to go home in.—*Sporting Times*.

(Tailors), is said of a coat which is cut down and turned; also a garment made to fit a smaller man.

**Translator** (popular), a cobbler, one who turns worn-out shoes into good ones, or "as good as new." It was an established word more than a century ago. Sewell, 1757, gives the Dutch *schoenlappen* as its equivalent; literally shoe-patcher.

It was not likely to occur to me that Sunday morning when I interviewed the kind-hearted old *translator* of old boots into new ones, in his kitchen in Leather Lane.—*J. Greenwood: The Woodchopper's Wedding*.

*Translators* are also second-hand boots.

He will part with anything rather than his boots, and to wear a pair of second-hand ones, or *translators*, as they are called, is felt as a bitter degradation by them all.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Trap** (popular), up to *trap*, wide-awake, not to be deceived or caught easily. The metaphor is obvious.

Not the least mite *up to trap*.  
—Punch.

To smell *trap*, explained by quotation.

They can discover the detective in his innocent-looking smock-frock or brick-

layer jacket, while he is yet distant the length of a street. They know him by his step, or by his clumsy affectation of unofficial loutishness. They recognise the stiff-neck in the loose neckerchief. They smell *trap* and are superior to it.—*Seven Curses of London*.

"You do not understand *trap*," "vous n'y entendez pas finesse" (Boyer's Dictionary, 1748). It is worth observing that, in gypsy, *drab* or *trap* (which words were pronounced alike by the first gypsies who came from Germany to England) is used for medicine or poison, and the employment of the latter is regarded, even at the present, as the greatest Romany secret. A gypsy said, "If you know *drab*, you're up to everything; for there's nothing goes above that." (Common), that *trap* is down, the attempt is a failure.

**Traps** (thieves), a very old term for the police, detective force.

"But where are the lurchers?" "Who?" asked Wood. "The *traps*," responded a bystander. "The shoulder-clappers," added a lady.—*Ainsworth: Jack Sheppard*.

"What's become of the boy?" . . . "Why the *traps* have got him, and that's all about it," said the Dodger sullenly.—*Dickens: Oliver Twist*.

**Trash** (gypsy), fear, to fear; *trásherdo*, afraid; *trásheno covva*, an awful or fearful thing; *tráshhipen*, terror; *trásherdo müllo*, scared to death.

**Trash a trail, to**, is an expression used in the West, meaning to conceal the direction one has taken by walking in a stream,

or in fact taking water in any way. The fox, deer, and other animals understand this mode of escape as well as man (Bartlett's Dictionary).

**Trat** (popular), a pretty girl, a "tart." Probably an anagram of "tart."

**Travel in the market** (sport), how backed, what the odds are about a horse.

These are to be found in the well-doing and health of horses, in the way in which they have stood training, or in the manner in which they *travel in the market*, and a host of other things.—*Sporting Life*.

**Traveller** (tramps), a tramp.

There are many individuals in lodging-houses who are not regular patters or professional vagrants, being rather, as they term themselves, *travellers*.—*Mayhew*.

(Thieves), a thief who goes from town to town.

**Traveller, to tip the** (common), to humbug. This refers to the wonderful tales, like those of "Baron Munchausen," sometimes told by travellers.

Aha! dost thou *tip me the traveller*, my boy?—*Smollett: Sir L. Greaves*.

**Traverse the cart, to.** *Vide* CART.

**Tray** (thieves), three months' imprisonment; obviously from the French, possibly *vid* the lingo of the card-table. Also *tray* of moons.

The other gentleman remained, was discovered, and did a *tray* of moons.—*Sporting Times*.

**Tray soddy mits** (popular), three-pence halfpenny, a corruption of *trois et demi*, used to express the amount of points in whist in Clerkenwell, Saffron Hill, and the districts where there are a mixture of nationalities.

**Treacle** (popular), to talk about *treacle*, to talk about love and love affairs. (Publicans), thick, bad port.

**Treacle-moon** (popular), the honeymoon.

**Treaders** (popular), shoes. Dutch thieves' slang, *treded*; from *treden*, to tread, step. Evidently from "tread."

**Tread the boards, to** (common), to appear on the scene in order to compete at anything.

**Treat** (popular), he's such a *treat*, *i.e.*, he is such a cunning person or animal, such a nuisance.

**Tredde**, a cant term for a prostitute (Wright); from *tread*, the copulation of fowls.

**Tree-moon** (tinker), three months, a "drag." *Vide* TRAY.

**Trek, to** (South African), to move away, depart. The expression "let's *trek*," *i.e.*, let's go away, is used in England. A figure of speech. Properly to yoke oxen to a waggon.

The Boers of the Transvaal do not like it at all. They are selling their lands and

*trekking* away into regions unpolluted by the presence of the miner.—*Pall Mail Gazette*.

**Trials** (Harrow School), examinations.

**Triangles** (popular), a corruption of *delirium tremens*.

**Trick and tie** (sport), to be *trick and tie*, or touch and go, is to be equal in a race, or other athletic performance.

**Tricks** (Texas), one's personal belongings; thus one has *tricks* instead of things in a house, and similarly *tricks* and not baggage on a journey.

**Trick with a hole in it**, a (American), an extraordinary device or performance. "When it comes to making a duck-stew, I can show you a *trick with a hole in it*."

**Trike** (common), a tricycle; *triking*, cycling. Do you bike or *trike*? do you ride a bicycle or tricycle.

**Trim a jacket**, to (nautical), to rope-end the wearer.

**Trimmer** (cricketers), a ball delivered in very good style. (Common), explained by quotation.

What is a *trimmer*?—"A man who runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds," who tries to face two sides, and sometimes several sides at the one time; one who says to-day what he tries to explain away to-morrow, and re-explains away again

the day following—a jelly-fish man, who is a reformer, and at the same time a fossil.—*Toby*.

**Trine**, to (old cant), to hang.

Now toure the cove that cly'd your dusd  
Upon the chats to *trine*.

—*The English Rogue*.

From old English to *trine*, to put in the aspect of a *trine* (old English *trine*, triple), a triad, alluding to the three beams of the gallows, formerly termed the "triple tree," or "mare with three legs." In gypsy *trin* (three) *bongo drums* means the cross or the crooked road.

**Trinkerman** (nautical), the Thames tidal fisherman.

**Trip** (theatrical), a dance. *Pas de deux*, by harlequin and columbine, so called because they *trip* across the stage from one side to the other, and then make their exit. This dance usually commences each scene in what is called the harlequinade. (Thieves), a prostitute, concubine. Possibly in allusion to *tripping* about. The same idea occurs in old English *trapes*, a slattern; from *trape*, to walk about idly and sluttishly (German *trappen*). "Trot," an old woman, "troll," "trull," &c.

It was at one of these places I palled in with a *trip*, and stayed with her until I got smuggled.—*Horstey: Jottings from Jail*.

I was fullied, and then got three stretch for the job,  
And my *trip*—cuss the day as I seen her—

She sold off my home to some pals in her  
mob  
For a couple of foont and ten deaner.  
—*The Referee.*

**Tripes** (popular), the belly.

**Triple-tree** (old cant), the gallows.

For whether I sink in the foaming flood,  
Or swing on the *triple-tree*,  
Or die in my bed as a Christian should,  
Is all the same to me!  
—*Meister Karl's Sketch-Book.*

**Tripper up** (thieves), a thief.

**Troc** (London), the Trocadero  
Music Hall.

He murmured o'er a glass of hock,  
"It's barely nine o'clock—  
Shall it be the Royal, Pav., or *Troc?*"  
And echo answered, "*Troc!*"  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Trolly-wags** (popular), trousers,  
breeches. A corruption of the  
word *trousers* by costermongers,  
who naturally have the *trolly*  
uppermost in their minds as  
being the means of their getting  
a livelihood, and a further face-  
tious distortion of *bags*. Com-  
pare the synonym "trucks."  
Or possibly from provincial  
"trolly-bags," intestines, tripe.

**Tronk** (South African). This is  
a Cape Dutch expression for  
gaol, just as in English a prison  
is called a "stone jug."

He informed me that he had just been  
in the *tronk*, and on my asking why, re-  
plied, "Oh, for fighting and telling lies!"  
—*Lady Duff Gordon's Letters from the  
Cape.*

**Tros-dab** (costermongers' back  
slang), "I've had a regular *tros-  
dab*," i.e., bad sort of day.

**Trosseno** (costers), back slang for  
one sort, a "had one."

"He's a regular scab!" cried another;  
and a coster declared he was "*a trosseno*,  
and no mistake!"—*Mayhew.*

**Trotter** (University), a tailor's  
man who goes round for orders.  
In French slang, "trottin" is a  
young girl employed by dress-  
makers to do errands.

**Trotter boxes** (popular), shoes.

**Trotter cases** (popular and  
thieves), shoes or boots.

"If the tottering Edifice were to be  
hanged privately, I presume they would  
not allow his sorrowing survivors to cling  
to his *trotter cases*," plaintively murmured  
Alexandry, the Blue-Eyed Blossom.—*Ally  
Sloper's Half-Holiday.*

**Trot, to** (auctions), to run up, i.e.,  
bid against. (Thieves), to steal  
in broad daylight. (Common),  
to *trot* out, to draw one out in  
order to bring into evidence his  
capability or foibles, the simile  
being a horse that is trotted up  
and down by a horsedealer in  
the presence of a purchaser.

**Trout, Nor-loch** (old Scottish  
cant), a leg of mutton. Other  
quaint terms for different kinds  
of food are, "German duck,"  
a sheep's head stuffed with  
onions, a dish much affected  
by the German sugar-bakers in  
the East End of London; a  
"Bombay duck" is a species of

dried fish in Western India. Shrimps are "Gravesend sweetmeats;" a red herring is a "pheasant," a "Yarmouth capon," also "Norfolk capon," "Dunbar wethers," or "Gourock ham." Potatoes are "Irish apricots" or "Munster plums," &c. "Albany beef" in America is sturgeon; "Cape Cod turkey" is cod. Herrings are "Taunton turkeys" or "Digby chickens."

**Truck** (nautical), a hat. From the cap on the top of the mast. (American), odd bits and ends, rubbish, plunder of little value. From provincial English *truck*, rubbish.

No use to take *truck* and leave money.  
—*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn.*

It also means by extension bad food, and corresponds in this instance to the English "seran," broken victuals, food; from *serans*, refuse.

**Trucks** (popular), trousers. Synonymous with "trolley-wags," which see.

**True inwardness** (American). It has always been the fashion in Boston to affect a kind of transcendental metaphysical language, and "the true inwardness" of anything is a term probably derived by some Carlyleist from the German *innerlichkeit*. It is also now used in England.

Mr. Gerald Massey, the poet, who knows all the *true inwardness* of the how and the why, the when and the where-

fore of Shakspeare's sonnets, announces a course of lectures on all sorts of occult matters.—*Entertainment Gazette.*

**Truk**, a prostitute of the lowest class, defined by Grose as "a soldier's or tinker's female companion," and in Hotten's Slang Dictionary as "a dirty, slatternly woman and prostitute, the word being a corruption of troll, or trollop." In reality, the derivation can be traced to old English *trug*, a prostitute; "*trug-ging-place*," a whore-house.

**Trump**, a colloquialism signifying an excellent person, a fine fellow, from the card term (French *triomphe*). It verges on slang, but can hardly be classified as such.

He passes by Waithman's emporium for shawls,  
And, merely just catching a glimpse of St. Paul's,  
Turns down the Old Bailey,  
Where in front of the jail, he  
Pulls up at the door of the gin-shop, and gaily  
Cries, "What must I fork out to-night,  
my *trump*,  
For the whole first-floor of the Magpie and Stump?"

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

I stands a quart, like the *trump* as I are.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Trumped** (common), defeated by superior skill in a device or scheme.

Gambling supplies many like "within an ace," "played out," *trumped*, and "euchred."—*Standard.*

**Trunks** (theatrical), short breeches worn over tights. Also bathing drawers.

**Trunk, shove his** (old cant), to go away, *trunk* being the body.

**Trüppo** (gypsy), the body, the trunk.

**Trushull** (gypsy), a cross. Supposed to be derived from *triquila*, the trident of Siva. *Vide* Pott's "Thesaurus."

**Try a smile.** *Vide* INVITATIONS TO DRINK.

**Trying it on a dog** (American), a metaphor, as of anything of a doubtful nature put to the test by first giving some to a dog.

"Bootle's Baby" will on the 7th of May be produced somewhere in the provinces. This is what the Americans call *trying it on a dog*; if the dog don't die, the baby will come up to London and be on view at the Circus later on.—*Sporting Times*.

**Tub**, very modern slang for a morning bath. The word has been adopted across the Channel.

When I got home, and had my *tub*, and looked at myself in the glass, I found my frontispiece much disfigured.—*Sporting Life*.

Formerly a bath was termed a bathing-tub.

**Tubbing** (University), boating, generally in a broad boat, called a tub.

If "up" at the University, we will probably pass our time between "grinding hard" and *tubbing* on the river.—*Morning Advertiser*.

So to the river he next day went, and made his first essay in a *tub*.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

Also before a crew take to their racing craft, they have some preliminary practice in a wide pair-oared boat, called a tub pair. This practice is called *tubbing*. The same term is also applied to the coaching given to new oarsmen. (Prison), imprisonment. "Nantes from the Rents (Fuller's or Tullwood's Rents in Holborn), smuggled to rites, pilled, expects a *tubbing*;" inscription in a prison cell.

**Tub-man**, an appointment given to a barrister practising in the old Exchequer Court, which gave him a precedence in all "motions," or applications to the judge. This was a great advantage to its possessor, and was always given to one who had a good practice in that court.

**Tubs** (American cadet), a sobriquet for a very corpulent man, one who, so to speak, possesses a self-contained corporation.

**Tub-thumper** (common), a street-corner parson.

"But I know a lady friend, an awful nice girl, who's out of an engagement" — But the *tub-thumper* had fled.—*Sporting Times*.

Dr. — is a frothy *tub-thumper*, whose sermons (they are published in one of the London "religious" weeklies) are models of what pulpit eloquence should not be.—*Evening News*.

"Tub-preacher" is an old term for a ranting, dissenting preacher. Also "tub-drubber."

Business and poetry agree as ill together as faith and reason; which two latter, as has been judiciously observ'd by the fam'd *tub-drubber* of Covent Garden, can never be brought to set their horses together.—*T. Brown's Works*.

**Tub-thumping** (common), street preaching.

Another, who waxed rather warm, was requested not to do any *tub-thumping*.—*Funny Folks*.

**Tuck** (schoolboys), food, especially sweet-stuff, pastry.

The slogger looks rather sodden, as if he didn't take much exercise and ate too much *tuck*.—*Hughes: Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

To *tuck* is a provincialism signifying to eat, hence *tuck*; *tuck-shop*, a pastry cook-shop.

Come along down to Sally Harrowell's; that's our school-house *tuck-shop*. She bakes such shining murphies.—*Hughes: Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

**Tuck-'em-fair** (old cant), place of execution. From *tuck-up*, to hang.

He was *tucked-up* so neat and pretty.—*Death of Socrates*.

**Tuck in your twopenny**, a recommendation by boys playing at leap-frog to the one who stoops to bend his head.

**Tuck-man** (mercantile), the partner who brings the money to a business is so called. From *tuck*, food.

**Tuck on**, to (popular), to *tuck on* a price is to charge exorbitantly without reference to the real value of an article.

**Tuck out, tuck in** (boys), explained by quotation.

The understood terms were a *tuck out*, which in Hale's Street is short and simple language for as much as can be eaten.—*Greenwood: In Strange Company*.

**Tuft** (University), explained by quotation.

The lad . . . followed with a kind of proud obsequiousness all the *tufts* of the university.—*Thackeray: Shabby-Genteel Story*.

As *tuft* and *tuft-hunters* have become household words, it is perhaps needless to tell any one that the gold tassel is the distinguishing mark of a nobleman.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Tuft-hunter** (society), any one who seeks after and hangs on to the society of people of title. The derivation of the word is from the *tuft* or gold tassels the noblemen and fellow commoners used to wear at the University. The expression is now general in society.

He was at no time the least of a *tuft-hunter*, but rather had a marked natural indifference to tufts.—*Carlyle: Life of Sterling*.

At last a lugubrious crew  
Rode pensively over the plain,  
Composed of the *tuft-hunters*, who

No Jubilee honours could gain.  
Levy-Lawson, he headed the train,  
And as they moved gloomily by

The band played a sorrowful strain;  
The soldiers were ordered to cry  
Boo-hoo!

The soldiers were ordered to cry!  
—*Funny Folks*.

**Tug** (Winchester College), usual, ordinary, common, stale, as *tug-clothes*, every-day clothes. Also stale news. (Eton), a col-



leger or boy on the foundation. *Tug* was supposed to be short for *tug-mutton*, as the collegers were then allowed by the college statutes to have no meat but mutton.

The long-looked for St. Andrew's Day arrives, when the great match of collegers, or, as the small oppidan would term it, *tugs*, and oppidans is to be played.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Tuggery** (Eton), explained by quotation.

My interlocutor was a red-headed, freckled little boy of eleven, who had come from Aberdeen, "to try for *tuggery*," that is, to try and pass on to the foundation as a King's scholar.—*Brinsley Richard: Seven Years at Eton.*

**Tulip** (roughs), "Go it, my tulip!"

A street phrase during the tulip mania in 1842, when one bulb was sold for £640.

**Tum** (American), stylish, "in proper form."

By the way, gold spoons and forks for dessert have come in again, and you get them everywhere. Indeed, no table seems to look quite *tum* for a big occasion without them.—*J. W. K., in Chicago Tribune.*

**Tumasha** (Anglo-Indian), an entertainment, a spectacle, a popular excitement. Arabic *tamāshā*.

**Tumbies** (University), ablutions.

Our hero soon concluded his *tumbies* and his dressing.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

**Tumbler** (printers), a synonym for a printing machine, the cylinder of which has a peculiar

rocking motion. (Thieves), cart; to nap the flog at the *tumbler*, formerly to be whipped at the cart's tail. (Turf), a term applied to a worthless horse not steady on its legs.

Its representatives likewise cut a better figure than Tom Fergusson's three *tumblers*.—*Sporting Times.*

**Tumble, to** (American), agree to anything, assent. A variation of "fall in," to concur. The French have *tomber d'accord*.

Now as for this speculation which you propose. It may be a very fine thing, but I don't *tumble* to it.—*American Newspaper.*

Also to understand. In this sense to *tumble* is very general in England among turfites, costermongers, roughs and thieves.

"Eh, Johnson, ever see a nicer run o' sleighing?"

"Yes, Mr. Green."

"When and where?"

"In the West Indies in 1857."

Three weeks later Mr. Green meets Mr. Johnson and exclaims:

"Ah! I *tumble!* Of course, it's winter ten months in the year down there. Ha! ha! Good joke!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

"Well, any woman that's dyin' has to be braced up, an' if she's faintin' has to be brought to. Medicine is the thing. Patent medicine of *course*. S'pose you're doin' *Frou-Frou*—last act. Bottle of 'Warner's Certain Cure'—big label—on the mantelpiece. Husband in tears rushes to bottle and pours out cupful: 'Take this, my darling, my wayward child, it will keep you with us a moment longer, if it does not pull you through.' One line, twenty dollars a night—*we divide—tumble!*'

"I am not a *tumbler*," she said, with rising indignation.—*Green-Room Jokes.*

Although I did not *tumble* to the real essence of the business for some minutes, yet I got in at the finish.—*Sporting Times*.

“To *tumble* to *barrikin*,” to understand language.

“I can't *tumble* to *that barrikin*,” said a young fellow, “it's a jaw-breaker.”—*Mayhev: London Labour and the London Poor*.

“I *tumble* to your *barrikin*,” I understand you, I twig. To *tumble* to the *dodge*, to perceive the trick.

Jack always believed that he had been robbed by one of his former “pals,” who, in the language of the profession, had “*tumbled* to the *dodge*.”—*George R. Sims: The Doll's Secret*.

To *tumble* to it is to allow oneself to be taken in, to believe a falsehood, implying a certain degree of eagerness. (Provincial), to *tumble* to the *racket*, to get accustomed to a thing.

**Tumble to pieces, to**, to be safely delivered, as in childbirth.

**Tump, to** (American), a Maine word meaning to pull or draw. Bartlett thinks it may be Indian. Till this is established, it may possibly be regarded as related to the Anglo-Saxon *tebn*, to draw. Also a slang word, to poke, push into; so used in a song in an obscene sense. From *tamp*, to fill up a hole in a rock for the purpose of blasting; to plug.

**Tum-tum** (Anglo-Indian), a dog-cart.

**Tund** (schoolboys), *tunding* at Winchester School is thrashing, and *Punch* puts into the mouth of a Wykhamist the confession—

I like to be *tunded* twice a day,  
And swished three times a week.

**Tunding** (Winchester), explained by quotation.

It was the prefect of hall who ordered the infliction of a public *tunding*. . . . The following simple and truthful statement of what a public *tunding* was may enable those who take an interest in the matter to form some reasonable opinion whether the infliction of such punishment were a good or a bad thing. . . . Some dozen or so of boys, who had the best capacities for the performance, were appointed by him for the purpose, and the whole assembly stood around the dais, while the hymn *Te de profundis* was sung. When all were thus assembled, and before the singers commenced, the culprit who had been sentenced to a *tunding* stepped out, pulled off his gown, and received from the hands of one deputed by the “prefect of hall,” and armed with a tough, pliant, ground-ash stick, a severe beating.—*T. A. Trollope: What I Remember*.

I never heard of any case in Eton like the *tunding* which, some years ago, brought our mother-school into disagreeable notice.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools*.

From *tund*, to beat, same as “to tan;” “tan,” a switch; “tancel,” to beat.

**Tunker** (popular), a street preacher.

**Tunny** or *turnee* (Anglo-Indian), an English supercargo. Sea-Hindu, and probably a corruption of attorney (Roebuck, cited in the Anglo-Indian Glossary).

**Tup**, properly a ram, occurs in the slang phrase a "stray *tup* on the loose," *i.e.*, a man looking out for a girl.

**Tuppennies** (London), women who for twopence will take articles to a pawnbroker's shop, deposit them, obtain the money and ticket, and take them to the owner.

In those parts of London where pawnshops and poverty abound there is a class of women who go by the name of *tuppennies*, and who make it their business to be intermediaries between the lenders and the borrowers of money on articles of property.—*Tit-Bits*.

**Turkey merchant** (tramps, &c.), a stealer of fowls.

"We'll make a *Turkey merchant* of you yet," said an old gypsy, "never fear that."—*Beaconsfield: Venetia*.

Also a dealer in plundered or contraband silks.

**Turkey, to talk** (American), to *talk turkey* is to converse on profitable business, to "talk iron" signifies the contrary. "Now you begin to *talk turkey*," said a man in Philadelphia to one who at last told him how much he was to have out of a certain transaction. It is derived from a well-known story. A white man and an Indian went hunting, with the understanding that the game was to be divided piece by piece. The result of the sport was two wild turkeys and three crows. The white man, who took it on himself to count out, began by allotting a crow to the

Indian, then a turkey to himself, then another crow to the Indian, appropriating, of course, the second turkey. To which the native demurred, saying: "You *talk all turkey* for you, and only talk crow for Injun" (C. G. Leland).

**Turn** (theatrical), length of performance of an actor or singer.

'Twas plain that ere her *turn* had ceased,  
Her talent had, on him at least,  
Created a most palpable impression.

—*Sporting Times*.

(Stock Exchange), an American term, very common in Wall Street, signifying a method of eluding the risks pertaining to an infringement of the usury laws — for example, when a broker "carries stock" (which see) for a client, in order to pay for it he often has to seek the aid of bankers or private money-lenders, hypothecating the stocks in return for an advance. When money is tight, the bank, in addition to the legal interest which it is empowered to charge, levies also an additional commission. This, in the slang parlance of the Stock Exchange, is called a *turn*. Also the profit on a bargain.

**Turned** (prison), converted, by abbreviation from *turned square*, the contrary of being crooked, or on the crook. A conversation between two thieves was overheard in Clerkenwell Prison. "That chaplain!" "What

of him?" "He's a rum 'un; he come into my cell, and said, 'Look here, you talk straight to me, and I'll talk straight to you.' Ah! and he do talk straight, don't he? I think he's one of us—turned, you know."

**Turned up** (thieves), arrested.

**Turning cart-wheels** (popular), a feat performed by circus-clowns and street boys of rolling over and over in such a manner that only the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet touch the ground. In French, "faire la roue."

The urchin who watches the passing 'bus in order to mount it while the conductor is collecting fares; who gets a gratuitous ride behind growlers and drays; who sells matches, and opens cab doors, and carries luggage, and directs strangers, and *turns cart-wheels*—precocious brattlings of this sort are well known to the true Londoner, who marvels at their extraordinary sharpness and unquenched vitality.—*Daily Telegraph*.

**Turnips** (common), to get *turnips*, to be taken in, to be jilted. To "turn it up."

One day I got a letter,  
It came from Betsy Gay;  
She said she'd given me *turnips*;  
With another she'd run away.  
—*London: The Prize Songster*.

**Turn one's coat, to**, explained by quotation. This is an almost recognised phrase. French "retourner sa veste." A man who changes his political opinions is termed a "turncoat."

Thinking men of both parties who have hitherto strenuously opposed the introduc-

tion of politics into municipal elections, are beginning, as it has become the silly fashion to designate a change of opinion, to *turn their coats*.—*St. Helen's Lantern*.

**Turn one over, to** (thieves), to search on the person.

"What catch would it be if you was to *turn me over*?" So I took him into a pub which had a back way out, and called for a pint of stout, and told the reeler to wait a minute.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Turn out** (society), a very favourite word in London society, meaning *entourage*, get up. "A very smart *turn out*" is often applied to a carriage which is well and smartly got up, with good horses, harness, and everything well done. It is also applied to people who dress well and look smart. "Mrs. — is always so well *turned out*." (Popular), the name given by working girls to the toilette hired by them to go to pleasure gardens.

"And what should you say it would cost a girl on an average who hired a full *turn out* on Monday and Saturday evenings?"

"If she was a regular customer, it wouldn't cost her more than two shillings, ostrich and all."—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag & Co*.

**Turn out slap, to** (tailors), to execute work expeditiously.

**Turnover** (trade), an apprentice transferred from one master to another is called a *turnover*.

**Turnpike sailor** (popular), a vagabond who shams the shipwrecked sailor.

I became a *turnpike sailor*, as it is called, and went out as one of the Shallow Brigade, wearing a guernsey shirt and drawers, or tattered trousers.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

**Turn the game up, to** (common), to give up one's occupation or pursuits, generally dishonest ones.

Marston had long ago announced his intention to *turn the game up*; Brook had determined to get out of the country for a bit in case of accidents.—*G. Sims: Rogues and Vagabonds.*

**Turn turtle, to** (nautical), to capsize.

**Turn-up** (common), a prize-fight. Also a street fight.

I'd describe now to you as "prime a set-to," and "regular *turn-up*," as ever you knew; not inferior in "bottom" to aught you have read of.—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

A sudden piece of luck. (Sport), bookmakers are said to have a *turn-up* when an unbacked horse wins.

"Ah, well," said young Bob. "I suppose we shall still be allowed to have our private *turn-ups*, and I can tell you it's pretty warm work sometimes."—*Punch.*

**Turn up Jack** (American), a phrase borrowed from card-playing.

Mad dogs, mad cows, and mad men are reported as *turning up Jack* in almost every direction.—*Milford (Massachusetts) Journal.*

**Turtle-doves** (thieves), rhyming slang for gloves.

**Tusheroon** (tinker, also canting), a crown. Also a "bull," a "cart-wheel."

**Tut-work** (workmen), piece-work.

**Tweak** (old), difficulty, perplexity. "He was in a sad *tweak*." Also a prostitute.

Thence to Bantree, as I came there  
From the bushes near the lane there,  
Rushed a *tweak* in gesture flaunting,  
With a leering eye and wanton.

—*Drunken Barnaby's Journey.*

**Tweedle** (thieves), a spurious ring, used to swindle jewellers and pawnbrokers.

**Twelve apostles**, the last twelve men in the mathematical tripos at Cambridge.

**Twelve godfathers**, a jury who have to decide whether a prisoner has been guilty of manslaughter, justifiable homicide, or murder, *i.e.*, to give a name to crime.

**Twelver** (thieves), a shilling.

**Twicer** (printers), a man that professes to work both at case and press or machine, is generally termed a *twicer*. Country hands coming to town are often looked on as such, for in their native places, owing to a limited number of hands and amount of work, they are expected to turn their hands to either. The Cockney printer as a rule follows but one branch.

**Twig, in prime** (popular), in first-rate condition, in high spirits. *Twig* is provincial for brisk, active.

**Twig, to** (popular), a Lincolnshire term, to understand, but commonly used in slang with the further meaning of perceive, see, notice, observe. From the Irish *tuigim*, I understand, discern. Whitley Stokes compares Irish *tuigim*, old Irish *tuccu*, with old Latin *tongere*, Gothic *thagkjan*, Icelandic *thekkja*, English *think* (Irish Glossaries).

"They're a *twiggin'* of you, sir," whispered Mr. Weller.—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers*.

A landsman said, "I *twig* the chap—he's been upon the mill."—*Ingoldsby Legends*.

I see you *twig*.—*Punch*.

The giant kept dropping in, usually followed by a crowd of ragamuffins, whilst the gamin shouted in French the equivalent of "*Twig* his legs, Bill?" for he was dreadfully in-kneed.—*Moonshing*.

Henceforth we'll speak with common throat,

For common party ends combine.

Here, put this primrose in your coat ;

That orchid I will place in mine.

Henceforth in concert we will jig,

To Solly's piping—eh, my boy ?

We can't afford to tiff, you *twig*,

If we'd the Gladstonites annoy !

—*Funny Folks*.

Also possibly from the Anglo-Saxon *twig-spræc*, *geminata loqula*, *ambiguitas* (Ettmüller, *Lex. Ang. Sax.*), an ambiguous, double-meaning speech. Hence *tveogan*, to doubt. "Ne mægic thäs nâ tveogan," I cannot doubt

this, *i.e.*, I *twig*. *Vide HOP THE TWIG*.

**Twilight** (schools), toilet.

It was no use doing the downy again, so it was just as well to make one's *twilight* and go to chapel.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.

**Twine, to** (prison), explained by following extract from *Temple Bar*:—"Suppose you start in the morning with a good sovereign and a snyde half-sovereign in your pocket. You go into some place or other and ask for change of the sovereign; or you order some beer, and give the sovereign in payment. It is likely you will get half-a-sovereign and silver back in change. Then is the time to *twine*. You change your mind after you have rung your snyde half-quid with the good one, and, throwing down the snyde half, say you prefer silver. The landlord or landlady, or whoever it is, will pick up the snyde half-quid, thinking, of course, it is the same one they have given you."

From to *twine*, to twist or complicate.

**Twinkler** (thieves), a light. The burglar is said to hold three things in abhorrence when found in a house he intends to rob—a *twinkler*, a tinkler, and a tattler, *alias* a light, a bell on the shutter, and a barking dog.

**Twins** (American), a now almost obsolete New England term, meaning "dinner and tea at

one meal. The custom of having *twins* in the short days of winter was formerly very common" (Bartlett). In England such a meal is called by commercial travellers "Box Harry" (Hot-ten), a term used in Lincolnshire to mean economy of any kind after extravagance. Probably from the idea of beating or robbing "old Harry," or the devil, who dances in an empty pocket.

**Twirlers** (thieves), sharpers with a round-about at fairs.

**Twirls** (burglars), skeleton keys.

He was very lucky at making *twirls*, and used to supply them all with tools.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

**Twist** (common), a good appetite, alluding probably to the *twisting* or gnawing sensation in a hungry man's stomach—to the pangs of hunger, which is exactly rendered by the French slang phrase "avoir une crampe au pylore." It is curious to note also the term "tortiller," to eat, literally to twist, coil. Formerly "tordre." "Il ne fait que tordre et avaler," said of a glutton. Oliver Twist was apparently so called by Dickens on account of his "hero's" propensity to ask for "more."

"An egg," cried Shakebacon, who has a *twist*. "Bosh!"

"Well," replied Gubb, "I once hunted all day after breakfasting on two-thirds of one, and never felt a pang till night time."

Shaky looked incredulous.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(Low), brandy and gin mixed.

VOL. II.

**Twister** (popular), a falsehood, imaginary story; "he can spin a *twister*," he is clever at telling a falsehood.

**Twistical** (American), having a twist, tortuous; hence perverse, unfair, dishonest. In Northamptonshire *twister* means cross, perverse.

**Twist on the shorts** (Stock Exchange), said when the market has been puffed up by irregular and artificial means, and the *shorts* (which see) have been compelled to settle at a ruinous loss, in consequence of being heavily undersold.

**Twist, to** (thieves), to hang.

**Twitch a twelve, to** (American University), to get the highest number of marks.

**Two d.** (popular), twopence. A costermonger will say, "I'll take *two d.* for it."

**Two-eighteener** (American), a man or woman of the fastest kind, the allusion being to the highest record in trotting matches, about two minutes eighteen seconds being the fastest time for a mile.

**Two-er** (popular), a florin. Also a hansom cab.

**Two-eyed steak** (familiar), a dried herring or bloater.

A few weeks ago said my groom to my housemaid, "Wouldn't you like what I

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am going to have for breakfast?" "What is it?" "A *two-eyed steak*," which turned out to be a Yarmouth bloater. — *The Reader*.

**Twofer** (common), a term applied to a loose woman.

**Two fours** (army), the 44th Regiment of Foot.

**Two-nick** (printers), a vulgar allusion to infants of the female sex.

**Two penny** (popular), the tongue.  
"Two penny red rag."

Why, you're going into Newgate Street, the Lord Mayor bawls,  
But John said "Tuck your *two penny* in—  
I'm going around St. Paul's."  
—*A Ballad: The Lord Mayor's Coachman*.

**Two penny damn**, probably analogous to "not worth a curse," "a tinker's curse." The Duke of Wellington is alleged to have said that he did not care a *two penny damn* what became of the ashes of Napoleon Buonaparte; and a correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, Series iii., 326, anxious to redeem the Iron Duke's memory from the charge of profanity, thinks that it was a cant reminiscence of his Indian service—a dam being a coin and weight which had become depreciated in value to about twopence; hence a *two penny dam* would naturally pass into ordinary speech. This, however, is very problematical.

We don't—we quote, mind you, our contemporary—we don't care a *two penny damn* for the argument about Probate.—*Star*.

**Two penny hop** (thieves), a cheap dance.

The girl is invited to "raffles," and treated to *two penny hops* and half-pints of beer.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Two penny rope** (popular), explained by quotation.

"And pray, Sam, what is the *two penny rope*?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"The *two penny rope*, sir," replied Mr. Weller, "is just a cheap lodgin'-house where the beds is twopence a night!"

"What do they call a bed a rope for?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Well, the advantage o' the plan's obvious. At six o'clock every mornin', they lets go the ropes at one end, and down falls all the lodgers. Consequence is that, being thoroughly waked, they get up very quickly, and walk away."—*Dickens: Pickwick Papers*.

The French have "coucher à la corde," to sleep in such lodgin'-houses.

**Two-pipe scatter-gun** (Canadian), a double-bore rifle.

"Oh, durn your rifles!" said an old settler to me. "Give me a *two-pipe scatter-gun* and a spike-tailed smell-damp and I'm fixed." And this gentleman's neatly expressed opinion seems to be pretty generally received.—*Phillipps: Wolley: Trottings of a Tenderfoot*.

**Two pun' ten** (trade), an expression used by assistants to one another in shops when a suspected customer enters. The phrase refers to "two eyes upon ten fingers," shortened as above.

**Two sevens** (army), the 77th Regiment. Also "Pot-hooks."

**Two-thirty**. Vide FULL DRIVE.



**Two to one shop**, the pawnbroker's; in allusion, says Grose, to the three blue balls, the sign of that trade; or, perhaps, from its being *two to one* that the goods pledged there are ever redeemed. The balls are not now of necessity blue, as they appear to have been in Grose's time. The slang of the present day for this convenient banker of the poor, is "my uncle" (in France it is "my aunt," *ma tante*), and the act of pledging is to "spout" or to "pop."

**Two twos** (army), the 22nd Regiment of Foot, formerly known as the "Red Knights," from being once served out with complete suits of scarlet.

**Tyburn** (old), *Tyburn* blossom, a young thief. To preach at *Tyburn* cross, to be hung, alluding to the penitential speeches made on such occasions.

That soldiours sterne, or prech at *Tiborn* crosse.—*Steele Glas.*

Also to fetch a *Tyburn* stretch. *Tyburn* show, hanging, hanged.

If I'm not lagged to Virginia-nee,  
I may a *Tyburn* show be.

—*The Song of the Young Prig.*

A *Tyburn* tippet, a halter.

**Tyconna, tyecana** (Anglo-Indian), an underground room or cellar, in which people can take refuge during the hottest part of the day. Persian *tah-khāna*, nether house.

**Tyke**, a dog. This is old English, from Icelandic *tík*, a bitch, but only used now by slang-talking classes. Shakspeare uses the word (*Henry V.*).

There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;  
A towsie *tyke*, black, grim, and large,  
To give them music was his charge.

—*Burns: Tam o' Shanter.*

When I got there I found it so hot,  
because there had been so many *tykes*  
poisoned, that there was a reeler at almost  
every double, and bills posted up about  
it.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

Also a countryman, clod-hopper.

**Tyker**, a man who takes charge of dogs.

"Put some in your pocket, you'll want 'em on the course," observes my guide. And I sigh for the capacious pockets of the gamekeeper or the "kick" of the *tyker*, yet manage to stow a dozen or so about my person.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Tyler, Adam.** *Vide* ADAM TILER, to which may be added: this probably has no reference to a man's name, *adam* being short for *adamed*, married, united; hence in confederacy. A "mason and *tyler*" were swindlers in close association, the first being also called "masoner" (which see), a Yorkshire term for a bricklayer.

**Type-lifter** (printers), a term generally applied to fast compositors of type.

**Type-slinger** (printers), an expeditious but slovenly compositor, who composes rapidly regardless of errors and blunders.

**Typhoon** (maritime), a storm. It is not generally known that the exact Hindu word *tufan*, a storm, is used in the same sense by English gypsies.

**Typo** (printers), a term of familiarity applied by one typo-

grapher to another, the abbreviation being apparent. Also French.

**Tzing tzing** (London), excellent, elegant, dashing, synonymous with "slap up," "chic," but seldom heard now.

 **GLIES** (theatrical), *delirium tremens*.

**Uhlan** (tailors), a tramp.

**Ullages**, a nautical term, meaning the remainder in a cask, which has leaked; hence the wine of all sorts left in the bottom of glasses at a public dinner. Hotten suggests Latin *ullus*, any, but it is more probably from the French *coulage*.

**Ultramarine** (London), "blue," that is, more or less indecent.

Woe to the cracker of a "risky" wheeze; pity the dancer of an *ultramarine* step, for the order of the boot is kept ready behind the bar for these offenders.—*Sporting Times*.

*Ultra det.* **Ultray** (Punch show), very; *ultray* cativa, very bad.

"How are you getting on?" I might say to another Punch-man. "*Ultray* cativa," he'd say.—*Mayhev*.

**Unbleached American** (American), a negro, a man of colour. An expression which sprang up during the war. "Am I not a

man and a brother?" was converted about the same time into "Am I not a man and a bother?"

**Uncertainties** (printers), a vulgarism applied to babies of the female sex.

**Uncle** (common), pawnbroker.

"Dine in your frock, my good friend, and welcome, if your dress-coat is in the country." "It is at present at an *uncle's*."—*Thackeray: The Newcomes*.

We find him making constant reference to an *uncle*, in respect of whom he would seem to have entertained great expectations, as he was in the habit of seeking to propitiate his favour by presents of plate, jewels, books, watches, and other valuable articles.—*Dickens: Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Woe! woe! to that jock,  
My watch is in soak,  
More aid from my *uncle*  
I vainly invoke.  
I'm a wave on the sea of misfortune,  
And—what's frequent with breakers—  
I'm broke!  
—*Turf, Field, and Farm*.

It has been suggested that *uncle* is from *uncus*, a hook (French *au clou*, in pawn), but it is evidently derived from a jocular allusion to a fond

uncle or a mysterious rich uncle—"oncle d'Amérique"—as in Dickens's quotation. Uncles have always been considered as the natural prey of spendthrift nephews. The French term the pawnbroker "ma tante" or "ma tante Dumont" (du mont-de-piété). Also "mon oncle Du Prêt." "Oncle" is a very old term for a usurer, and also means a jailer, prisoners considering themselves as being in pawn.

**Uncork the swag** (American), deliver! literally, unlock the portmanteau.

Once more, you bloke, will you *uncork that swag*?—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Uction, blue** (popular), mercurial ointment. Also "blue butter."

**Undergraduates** (turf), horses that are being trained for steeple-chasing.

It seems to me that the *undergraduates* comprise far better material than what is generally drafted from the ranks of the flat racers . . . the best of the lot are in the hands of trainers who lay themselves out for the preparation of jumpers.—*Referree*.

**Undergrounder** (cricket). An *undergrounder*, a "daisy cutter," a "daisy trimmer," or "sneak," is a ball bowled all along the ground, without a proper pitch.

**Understandings** (common), shoes, feet, in opposition to *tops*, upper garments or tops of boots, and bottom clothing.

The massive Kadoudja found a fitting exponent in Miss —, whose short Circassian skirt admitted of the display of a pair of shapely *understandings*.—*Modern Society*.

**Understudy** (theatrical), an actor or actress engaged to understudy, and to act, if necessary, the parts of principal performers—so that, in the event of accident, or indisposition, the run of a piece may not be suspended.

Her voice was no fortune, but it sufficed for the chorus in comic opera, and she was offered an *understudy* of a few lines in the preceding farce.—*Society Times*.

**Unicorn** (thieves), two men and one woman, or two women and one man associated to steal. From *unicorn*, two horses abreast with a leader.

**Universal staircase** (thieves), the treadmill.

Well, the beaks got up to the dodge, and all the Spanish lurkmen in their turns got to work the *universal staircase*.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Unlimber** (American), deliver! out with the money.

No monkeying! *unlimber!* produce the scads.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Unload, to** (Stock Exchange), to sell. (American), *unload* your boodle, empty your pockets, deliver up the property.

Cheese your patter! Don't you see I've got the drop? *Unload* your boodle.—*Detroit Free Press*.

**Unmentionables**, a silly euphemism for trousers. Also "unutterables, unwhisperables, ineffables, inexpressibles."

**Unregenerate chicken-lifter** (American), a petty thief beyond all hope of reform. Mr. Stevens applies this beautiful term to an Austrian gypsy.

**Unrigged** (thieves and popular), naked; *rigged out*, dressed.

**Unsalted** (American), fresh, green, "young," or inexperienced.

He was an *unsalted* young man at the oyster festival given the other night by the Dorcas Aid Society of Christ Church, and he was seated in front of half-a-dozen fried.—*Washington Critic*.

**Unsweetened** (popular), gin.

Those who are partial to the *unsweetened* or "Old Tom."—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Up and down place** (tailors), a situation where a man is required to cut and fill up time in sewing. *Up and down* is old for "in every respect."

He was euen Socrates *up and downe* in this pointe and behalfe, that no man euer sawe hym either laughe or weepc.—*Udal: Erasmus's Apophtegms*.

**Up a tree, treed** (American), in difficulty, cornered, unable to do anything.

A Something, apparently intermediate between man and monkey, now ornaments a Bowery museum. This Something is believed to be a primeval m—gw—mp. The modern m—gw—mp, it will be remembered, has long ears, and he is arboreal in his habits. That is, he's always *up a tree*.—*New York Sun*.

Also much used in England.

How he lived I can't conjecture; he was always *up a tree*,  
Though 'tis fair to state he often borrowed  
half-a-crown of me.

—*Funny Folks*.

**Uphill player** (cricketers), a player who plays a good losing game under disadvantage, one who never says "die."

**Up in his hat** (Irish), drunk, corresponding to English slang "elevated."

**Upon my Sam** (common), upon my soul. A piece of slang at one time very common in the mouths of women.

**Upper Benjamin** (popular), a topcoat.

A greatcoat, a sort of *upper Benjamin*, hanging on loosely and unbuttoned.—*Sporting Times*.

Originally a cloak or upper garment was a "Joseph." The connection is obvious.

**Upper crust** (common), the higher society. Originally American. *La haute*.

Since then our nearest synonym to *chic* has been "good form," a later outgrowth of British *upper-crust* slang.—*Daily Telegraph*.

(Pugilistic), the skin.

Sam's nob had been in pepper alley, and his *upper crust* was rather changed.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Upper Roger** (Anglo-Indian), young king. "This happy example of Hobson-Jobson dialect

occurs in a letter dated 1755, from Captain Jackson, at Syrian in Burma. It is a corruption of the Sanskrit *yuvah-rajah*, 'young king,' the Cæsar or heir-apparent" (Anglo-Indian Glossary). In a similar way Surajah Dowlah was commonly called by the soldiers Sir Roger Dowler.

With our energetic hero he at once commenced to play,  
And then left him on the pavement, in the rain;  
And his notes on the inquiry were not statements *à la mode*,  
But a message worded, "Vine Street  
(*up the spout*),  
There is barrack room in plenty to be found in this abode,  
Only send along some oof to bail me out!"

—*Sporting Times*.

**Upper shell** (old cant), a coat.  
"Under shell," a waistcoat.

**Upper storey** (popular), the head; rats in the *upper storey*, crazy. Also "upper works."

**Upright man** (old cant), the head of a gang of mendicants.

**Upset his apple-cart** (American), generally heard in this form—  
"Look out, or you'll upset your apple-cart and spill the peaches," *i.e.*, "Take care, or you'll come to grief."

**Up stakes** (American), "*up stakes* and off," meaning the same as "to cut stick," *i.e.*, to depart in a hurry.

Jemmy Jed went into a shed,  
And made a ted of straw his bed.  
An owl came out and flew about,  
And Jemmy Jed *up stakes* and fled.  
Wasn't Jemmy Jed a staring fool,  
Born in the woods to be scared by an owl?  
—*Mother Goose*.

The reference appears to be a pulling up of tent-pegs or stakes before decamping.

**Up the spout** (common), in pawn. Hence imprisoned.

**Up to Dick** (popular), a phrase which has become very popular of late years, having very extensive application to many circumstances. A man who is clever is *up to Dick*, as is one who is gifted with presence of mind. One who is well off, or rich, or generous, or wise in managing matters; also one who is quick and ready to please is quite the same. It also means to be well, satisfied, or jolly. There is a popular comic song in which all of these applications are made to the phrase. It is very evidently derived from the gypsy *dick* or *dikk*, which is also common in ordinary slang, meaning to see, to perceive. "He is dressed *up to Dick*," *i.e.*, so that it is worth while to see him, is an old popular phrase borrowed from the Romany.

When, lo! a dear relation died,  
Who left me lots of tin.  
I often think with gratitude  
About the dear old flick,  
Who left me cash to cut a dash,  
And set me *up to Dick*.  
*Up to Dick*, boys, *up to Dick*,  
At trifles never stick.

Be like me, a jolly brick,  
That's the style, boys, *up to Dick*.  
—*Cainach Press Ballad*.

Also in good health.

**Up to dictionary** (popular),  
learned.

**Up to sample** (common), equal  
to anticipation, of sufficiently  
good quality.

This combat is *up to sample*.  
—*Punch*.

**Up to snuff.** *Vide* SNUFF. *Up to snuff* appears to be literally "up to scent," and a metaphor like "smell a rat," "up to trap," &c.; but it was perhaps first popularised as meaning "stylish enough to take snuff," when snuff was still a luxury, and afterwards applied to familiarity with fashionable usages, &c.

**Up to the door** (popular), to the last degree, as fine as possible. Probably a variation of "up to the knocker."

Yes, and we goes out respectable, I can tell you. None of your half-and-half turn-outs. I'm togged *up to the door*, a pair of respectable "round my owers," a two quid "I'm afloat," a silk "wipe" tied round my "top-deck," and a "bruiser's cady" on the top of the nob.—*T. Browne: Coster Joe; or, the Happy Trio*.

**Up to the knocker.** *Vide* KNOCKER. This term usually occurs in the phrase "dressed up to the knocker," *i.e.*, very elegantly dressed, which probably arose from the practice of tying a glove to the knocker of a

house when a lady was in child-bed, the idea of the height of elegance being, in the popular mind, inseparable from the wearing of gloves, specially kid gloves. Hence, *up to the knocker*, supremely elegant, completely, to the last degree, proficient. "Up to the door" appears to be a variation of this. "Kid," in its meaning of "swell," and "kiddily," fashionably, in fine style, skilfully, probably arose from a like appreciation of the use of kid gloves. Again, it is possible that *up to the knocker* owes its origin to the "knocker" or breast-pin which was formerly in fashion, and which was like a knocker on a door.

I shall have 'em all on to-morrow—tidy sort of weskit, cuffs, collar, and dicky—all *up to the knocker*.—*J. Greenwood: Under the Blue Blanket*.

**Up to the mark.** *Vide* MARK.

**Up to the ropes** (London), sagacious, knowing.

Her style and her talk were decidedly "gay,"

And any one *up to the ropes*,  
Will guess that, of course, in the usual way,

I took her to supper at "Pope's."

—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**U.S. cove** (American thieves), a soldier, a man in the service of the American government. "U.S. plate," handcuffs.

**Use at, to** (thieves), frequent.

I got in company with some of the wisest people in London. They used to *use at* a pub in Shoreditch.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Very common in Western America. To *use* round a place, to haunt it.

**Usher** (thieves), yes; from the Yiddish *user*, it is right, it is so.

When I got into Shoreditch I met one or two of the mob, who said, "Hallo, been out to-day? Did you touch?" So I said *usher*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Utilities** (theatrical), minor parts for beginners. "Responsible *utilities*" are somewhat more important parts than ordinary *utilities*.

**Utter** (society), excellent, most elegant.

**Uzar** (gypsy), by chance. (Hindu *usar*, by chance.)



**VACCASHO** (gypsy), a calf, also a lamb.

**Vag.** (American), a vagabond. The

Vagabond Act is always called in police circles the *Vag. Act*.

By the way, Billy, why ain't I in with the other *vags*. or the S. D.'s (Simple Drunks)? You're treating me as royally as a murderer.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Vakeel** (Anglo-Indian), a barrister.

**Valley tan** (American), a kind of whisky sold in the Mormon country is known as *valley tan*.

**Valleys** (pantomime, &c.), explained by quotation.

Cascades and *valleys* are trundling and gymnastic performances, such as tumbling across the stage on wheels and catching hold of hands and twirling round.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Vamos** (American). The soldiers who returned from the war with Mexico brought with them several Spanish phrases, such as *vamos*, let us go, which they

speedily changed to *vamo*, very properly described by Bartlett as "a curious grammatical perversion." With this came *ranch*, a farm; hence the popular saying, "Let us *vamos* the *ranch*."

**Vamose, vamoose, to** (common), to depart, run away. *Vide VAMOS*.

And he *vamosed* with that clear conscience that belongs to him that giveth away his fellow-man.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Vamp** (thieves), a robbery. In for a *vamp*, convicted of stealing.

**Vamper**, a horse-dealer that "vamps" up, cobbles up a horse; that is, makes him appear sound by certain tricks and devices. *Vide To VAMP*.

By what process of diabolical conjuration it is contrived, it is, of course, impossible for me to say, but it is beyond dispute that in the hands of the experienced horse-*vamper* the most wretched used-up screw in existence may, for a brief hour or so, be made to exhibit an amount

of fire and spirit that if persisted in for a longer period would inevitably shake its ramshackle carcass all to pieces.—*J. Greenwood: Undercurrents of London Life.*

Also a thief.

**Vamping** (musical), a musical term, introduced from America. "It means a plan of playing an accompaniment at sight, by simply knowing the key and the time to which the song is set. In the Western States men make a good living by teaching it in eight lessons, for which they charge ten dollars (£2)" (*Tit-Bits*).

The man at the shop had no guitar to sell,  
So I purchased a banjo, which did just as well;

The hour it was late, and the night it was damp,  
But my mind was made up, and I started to vamp.

—*Song by Jas. Tabrar.*

**Vampire** (American), a man who lives by following men and women about until he has proof of their undue intimacy, and then blackmailing them. (Punch and Judy), the ghost.

**Vampo** (theatrical), the clown.

**Vampoose, to** (popular and thieves), to decamp. Obsolete English, *vamp*, to go, to travel, influenced by *vamoose*.

Has he *vampoosed* with the contents of a till?—*Kingsley: Two Years Ago.*

**Vamp, to** (popular), to leave in pawn, to do a thing carelessly, slovenly, anyhow, so that it will pass muster for the time being.

*Vamped* is said of anything falsified, arranged so as to make it appear genuine.

**Vanish**, in conjuring, used almost invariably as a verb active. To *vanish* an object is to make an object disappear from sight of the audience.

**Van John**, a common corruption of the game of *vingt-et-un*.

**Vantage** (printers). *Vide FAT.* An old term, according to Moxon, 1683, for good paying work—"fat" being the modern equivalent.

**Van-ts'ang-koon-sz** (pidgin), the Pacific Mail Steamship Company of Shanghai. An American who heard this name remarked that the *Van Zang coons* must be of the Knickerbocker Kuhn family to judge by their name.

**Vardo, wardo**, a waggon. According to Hotten this word is "old cant," according to fact it is old Romany, *wardo* being in some form or other found in all gypsy dialects. It is also applied to cards, and to a wheel, from the old gypsy *wortin*, a vessel.

"Awer bñkdom dovo *wardo* léski Pátserdo, te yúv te vél kek pessur"—

"But I sold him that waggon on credit, and he will not pay (for it)."

(Roughs, itinerants, stróllers, &c.) *Vardo!* or *varder!* look, see. From Italian *vedere*.



**Varmint** (University), spruce, natty, good all round.

A *varmint* man spurns a scholarship, would consider it a degradation to be a fellow.—*Gradus ad Cantab.*

The handsome man, my friend and pupil, was naturally enough a bit of a swell, or *varmint* man.—*Alma Mater.*

**Varmint men** (University), those who used, like Jemmy Gordon, to write themes for Cantabs too idle to do it themselves.

**Varnister** (thieves), an utterer of false sovereigns.

**Varsity** (Oxford and Cambridge), a common pronunciation of university.

With Le Maitre only half a yard worse than 50¢ sec. for the Quarter, it doesn't look as if the Cantabs will have a smell at the Quarter, the Half, or the Mile, at the next *Varsity* contest.—*Sporting Life.*

**Vaseline** (Royal Military Academy), butter.

**Vássavo, vessavo** (gypsy), bad, naughty.

"Awer tu shan *vassavi* lübbení  
Sár gorgiko rát to be kambli"—

"But thou art a bad harlot to be with child with Gorgio blood."—*George Borrow: Lavengro.*

**Vaulting-house** (common), a house of ill fame. See "Ballads and Songs," seventeenth century.

**Velvet** (thieves), the tongue; "especially," says Hotten, "the tongue of a magsman." This circumstance would support the derivation of magsman from to

*mag*, to talk persuasively. (Common), men, especially racing men, who have succeeded in their speculations, are said "to stand on *velvet*."

**Ventilator** (theatrical), a piece, or an actor who ventilates, *i.e.*, empties the house. An amusing story is told of a certain tragedian, who was popularly known as the champion *ventilator*. While acting Othello in the Cork theatre, he became disgusted with the coldness and want of sympathy on the part of the audience. Being extremely short-sighted, the poor fellow could not distinguish whether the house was a good or a bad one, so he sent his dresser—a native of the Emerald Isle—into the pit to discover the state of the land. During his rendition of the crucial scene in the third act, his performance was of such a character that the few people who were in the pit began to straggle out. When the dresser came round at the end of the third act, his master opened fire with, "Well, Larry, I think I had them in that act."

"Faith, you may say that, sor."

"Yes, I flatter myself I moved them in the farewell."

"You did, sor; you moved them so, that, begorra, they've all moved out, and there's nothing left but the binches to play to."

That was the champion *venti-*

- lator's* last engagement in Cork, or anywhere else for that matter. He has now retired, and lives on his means—"a prosperous gentleman."
- Verge** (thieves), a gold watch.
- Vert**, frequently used during the Tractarian Controversy, is a *pervert* or *convert* from the Church of England to that of Rome.
- Vertical case-grinder**, the (prison), the treadmill.
- Very like a whale.** *Vide* WHALE.
- Vest** (common), to lose your *vest*, to lose your temper.
- Vestas** (Stock Exchange), Railway Investment Company Deferred Stock.
- Vet.**, an abbreviation for veterinary surgeon. In the United States it is a common term for a veteran.
- I had hired a trap from an innkeeper who was also a *vet.*—*Chambers's Journal.*
- Vice**, the (University), obvious corruption of Vice-Chancellor.
- Victim** (society), a very common expression for any one who is desperately in love.
- Victualling department** (pugilistic), the stomach. Also "victualling office," "bread basket," "dumpling depôt." In French slang "panier au pain;" in Italian cant "fagiana," literally the bean box.
- Vile** (thieves), a town; from the French *ville*. In ancient cant London was termed Rome-vile, the fine town. *Deuce-a-vile*, the country.
- And prig and cloy so benschly  
All the *deuce-a-vile* within.  
—*The English Rogue.*
- In old English "vill," a village.
- Vile child** (Eton), explained by quotation.
- Being called a *vile child*, the which I subsequently learnt was a very frequent term of mild reproach, and had no particular reference to the age of the individual to whom it was addressed. As a proof of this I may add that, being at Eton for the Winchester Match in 1833, I (*moi-qui-vous-parle*, height 6 feet 2 inches, and weight 14 stone 7 lbs.) was called a *vile child* for being on a committee to oppose a certain obnoxious Indian Bill! I wasn't sorry when tea was over, although many most pleasant evenings did I afterwards spend in that room.—*Polytechnic Magazine.*
- Village bustler** (old cant), an active thief, that steals anything.
- Village**, the (London), a playful appellation for London.
- Vim**, from the Latin, claimed as American, but well known to English schoolboys,—strength, spirit, activity, pluck.
- Virginia city is sobering down with the ebbing tide into substantial legitimate business, but Helena has all the *vim*, recklessness, extravagance, and jolly progress of a new camp.—*Tour through Rocky Mountains.*
- Vincent's Law**, the act of cheating at cards.

**Vinegar on his oysters** (American), applied to men not perfectly familiar with the minor refinements of highly civilised life.

"What kind of man is he—a gentleman?" "Oh yes, he believes himself to be one, calls himself 'an American,' takes *vinegar on his oysters* instead of lemon-juice, very often skips his daily bath, and never mentions a picture, or a horse, or a human being, without telling you how much it, or he, or she is worth."—*Newspaper Letter*.

**Violets** (common), an euphemism for sage and onions.

**Virgins** (Stock Exchange), Virginia New Funded.

**Virgin Mary's Bodyguard**, a nickname for the 7th Dragoon Guards, from having served under Maria Theresa of Austria. Also "Black Horse," and "Straw Boots."

**Vocaller** (American), a singer.

Let things alone, and presently that young lady discovers that she is not likely to get cracked up as a *vocaller*.—*The Golden Butterfly*.

**Voker**, a word found only in Hotten, who says that it is the gypsy to talk ("Can you *voker* Romany?"), and derives it from the Latin *vocare*. He was probably misled by a misprint or mis-writing of *röker*, *råker*, or *rækker*, being the true word. It is true that *veråkava* or *v-rækkerava* is found in continental gypsy dialects, but it is very doubtful whether it exists in England.

**Vongar, wongur** (gypsy), coals. Also *hangars* and *angars* (Sanskrit *angara*), money; *angaren-gro*, a tinker or smith. "It came out in the course of an examination at the Guildhall that receivers of stolen goods are in the habit of carrying small pieces of coal about with them. When they see a thief who seems to be rather shy, they will walk up to him, take out a purse, and innocently show him a bit of coal. It has been suggested that this proceeding is analogous to taking salt together among the Arabs as a sign of good faith and mutual hospitality. In several languages "glowing coals" is a slang synonym for money, e.g., French *braise*.

**Voucher** (old cant), a rogue who passed base coin.

The first was a Coiner, that stampt in a mould;  
The second a *Voucher*, to put off his gold.  
—*The Twenty Craftsmen*.

**Vowel mauler** (common), one who pronounces his words incorrectly.

**Vowel, to** (common), to *vowel* a debt is to acknowledge with an I.O.U.

**Vulgus** (Winchester College), explained by quotation.

The mention of a *vulgus* requires some explanation. Every inferior, i.e., non-perfect in the school was required every night to produce a copy of verses of from two to six lines on a given theme—four or six lines for the upper classes, two for the lowest.

This was independent of a weekly verse task of greater length, and was called a *vulgus*, I suppose, because everybody—the *vulgus*—had to do it.—*T. A. Trollope: What I Remember.*

**Vum** (American), a form of swearing. “‘*I vum!*’ for ‘*I vow!*’ is a euphemistic form of oath often heard in New England” (Bartlett). As the writer has heard

“‘*I vum!*’ innumerable times in his boyhood, he always understood it to be much more strongly expressive than “*I vow.*” It is worth observing that, in Anglo-Saxon, *vomm* or *vamm* (*peccatum, erimen*, horror), and *vom*, full of evil, formed a malediction or curse, *e.g., vome*, malediction (Caedmon).

**WAD**, straw. A common abbreviation for *wadding*, which, as padding, means the stuffing of a bed, and dates from the times when straw and hay were used for the purpose for which cotton or other wadding is now employed.

Moll in the *wad* and I fell out,  
I'll tell you what 'twas all about;  
She had money, I had none,  
That was the way the row begun.

—*Old Popular Song.*

(American), a roll of bank-bills, hence a fortune.

Many scores of these philanthropists, who have spent their lives in looking for men to enrich, whilst anxious only to make a small *wad* for themselves, have I encountered.—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**Waddle out of the alley.** *Vide* DUCK.

**Waddler** (popular), a duck.

**Waddy** (Australian), the Australian natives' club, a native word adopted by the whites.

Nulla Nullas, *waddies*, or clubs, used chiefly for hand-to-hand encounters, but also for throwing; the sharpened points cause terrible stab-wounds. The timbers chosen are the hardest and heaviest obtainable in the forests of the different districts, iron bark, myall, swamp myrtle, &c.—*New South Wales Catalogue.*

Dear Peter from my threshold went  
One morning in the body,  
He “dropped” me, to oblige a gent,  
A gent with spear and *waddy*.  
—*H. Kendall: Peter the Piccaninny.*

**Waddy** is also slang for any kind of stick. A young colonial will speak in joke of his walking-stick as his *waddy*.

Thanks, generous colonial,  
Thou art very, very kind;  
Now pick a thickish *waddy* up  
And plug my wound behind.  
—*J. B. Stephens: The Headless Trooper.*

**Waffle** (printers), to *waffle* is to be endowed with the “gift of the gab,” or talk of any kind to an excess; popular equivalent would be to “jaw.”

**Wagon** (American), a bicycle.

**Wag-tail**, a prostitute, a harlot.

**Wailo, wylo** (pidgin-English), go away! away with you! to go, depart, gone, departed, went.

There was an Englishman in Canton who kept a cow, with a maid to milk it, and a dog to guard it. One morning there was no milk, and the gentleman scolded his comprador or steward, who in great agitation burst into poetry and said:—

T'at cow hab die-lo,  
T'at dog hab wylo,  
T'at woman cathee chilo—  
How can hab milk?

—*The Cow and the Comprador.*

**Waistcoat, scetid**, a term current in 1859 for a low, flaunting, vulgar pattern.

**Wake up the wrong passenger**, to (popular), a phrase of American origin, and derived from railroad terminology. On long distance journeys, when travellers sometimes spend several days and nights on board a car, it occasionally happens that the attendant, not being sure of the identity of a passenger, wakes up the wrong man. The expression therefore indicates uncertainty as to identity, always meaning to catch a Tartar.

**Walk** (bankers), the round of a banker's collecting clerk is so called. A rich *walk* is one where a large sum of money is got in.

**Walk down a person's throat**, to (common), to rate or scold any one soundly. Sometimes for "walk," "jumped" is used.

**Walker**, a vulgar exclamation to express incredulity.

All this in her ear, he declared, but I fear That her senses were wandering—she seem'd not to hear,  
Or, at least, understand—for mere unmeaning talk her  
Parch'd lips babbled now, such as "Hookey," and *Walker!*  
She expired, with her last breath expressing a doubt  
If "his mother were fully aware he was out."

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

The remark which was made, after perusing the book by that eminent botanist, my friend Professor Hookey, was *Walker!*  
—*Punch.*

(Popular), *walker*, a postman.

It was reported recently that the Prince of Wales, on calling to see Lord Tennyson at Freshwater, was denied admittance by the small page who answered the bell until he had given his name. When the Prince gave his name accordingly, the same little boy, disbelieving him, "took a sight" (*q.v.*), and crying "*Walker!*" shut the door against the royal visitor. The story is possibly apocryphal, but may serve to illustrate the meaning of the vulgarism.

**Walking mort** (old cant), a concubine, the *autem mort* being the lawful spouse.

**Walking papers** (American), to dismiss one is to give him his *walking-papers*.

**Walk into**, to (common), to strike, thrash.

When he told Verdant that . . . his bread-basket *walked into*, his day-lights darkened.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green.*

(Metaphorically), to demolish.

A hungry man *walked into* a pigeon-pie.  
—*Punch*.

To *walk into* the affections, to scold or thrash; also to run into debt.

**Walk one's chalks, to** (popular), to walk straight, to be compelled to behave well, to go away, abscond.

That artist was a keen observer, as all true artists should be, so finding the corner was getting too hot for him he simply *walked his chalks*.—*Moonshine*.

Hotten gives the explanation, "An ordeal for drunkenness used on board ship, to see if the suspected person can walk on a *chalk* line without overstepping it on either side" (the device in the army is putting a man suspected of drunkenness through his facings); another explanation of the phrase is "a person who has run up a score or *chalk* at a public-house or shop, walking off without paying for it."

And if you want fresh liquor, you must pay,  
For *chalks* too often walk themselves away.  
—*Albert Smith: Alhambra*.

**Walk over** (society), when any one wins or succeeds very easily it is called a *walk over*. It is borrowed from racing language. When a horse *walks over* the course, not having any opponents in the race.

Besides his monetary advantage and personal gifts, he could sing well and talk

admirably, and he was considered sure to "*walk over* the course."—*H. L. Williams: Buffalo Bill*.

The latest batch we have received are from W. Hazelberg, of Berlin and London Wall, who evidently does not intend that the English manufacturers shall have a *walk over*.—*Sporting Times*.

**Wallaby track, to go on the** (Australian), to go on foot, up-country, in search of work.

**Wallflowers**, second-hand garments exposed for sale in Seven Dials. A common expression for ladies in a ballroom who, either from choice or otherwise, sit looking on without dancing.

**Wall, to** (Oxford University), confining a student to college. (Popular), *to wall it*, to post the account for drink on the wall at a public-house.

**Waltzing about** (tailors) is said of a man who makes himself a nuisance.

**Wanky** (printers). This expression is used to denote a spurious or wrong article. A bad sixpence given amongst change for a larger coin would be described as a *wanky* sixpence.

**Wanted** (common), *wanted* by the police for an offence, or by one's creditors.

The police, on their part, caused it to be understood that until he was really *wanted* on a specific charge, a thief should in no case be interfered with, nor any measures be taken to put the public on their guard against him.—*J. Greenwood: Tag, Rag, & Co.*

The landlady's certain to peach  
 When she finds not a thing do I own.  
 The Bobby's come into the lane,  
 And somebody's wanted, I see,  
 They pass me again and again,  
 But haven't found out that it's me.  
 —*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Wapping.** *Vide* TO WAP.

**Wap,** to (old cant), futuere. *Wap-pen* is provincial English.

**Ward-heeler** (American), the *ward-heeler* is a power in American politics. He raises the money by which city elections are carried, and when some "prominent politician" is sent to prison, the *ward-heeler* represents to the magistrate or judge the inexpediency of weakening "the party" by withdrawing an "influential" partisan from his sphere of activity. Chiefly applied to men who solicit money, generally without authority from candidates, for electioneering purposes.

**Ware hawk!** (old cant), a cry of warning, especially when the police are espied. Sir Walter Scott puts the term in the mouth of De Bracy in "Ivanhoe."

**Warehousing** (society), taking to the pawnbroker's. The more genteel are called "warehousemen," and their shops "warehouses."

**War-hat,** or **war-pot** (army), the new helmet with a spike.

**Warming-pan.** In clerical circles a *warming-pan* is an incumbent  
 VOL. II.

who accepts a benefice on the condition of resigning it in favour of some other presentee so soon as the latter shall be able to assume its duties. He keeps the place "warm" for the son or other friend of the patron. (Common), a large watch.

**Warm member** (society), a fast man or woman. Also a "hot 'un," a "scorcher."

**Warm 'un** (common), one who is immoral, fast, dissipated.

They call me Salvation Sarah,  
 A *warm 'un* I have been;  
 But now I am converted,  
 I'll never go wrong again.  
 So come and join our army,  
 And better you'll all be;  
 And instead of beer,  
 Then live on prayer,  
 Peace, sherbet, love, and tea.  
 —*Song of Salvation Sarah.*

**War-paint** (theatrical), *paint* for the face.

Stickin' on a few feathers an' a bit o' *war-paint!*—*Sporting Times.*

Also a common expression for official costume or evening dress, a phrase originally used by some women who dressed, as the Americans say, to kill, determined to make conquests at evening parties.

*She*—"Have you seen the hero of the evening?"

*He*—"Who? Do you mean the Portuguese governor in his *war-paint!*?"—*Rider Haggard: Dawn.*

**War-pot.** *Vide* WAR-HAT.

**Wash** (printers). When a printer "slings the hatchet," that is, exaggerates or tells a falsehood, his companions proceed to *wash* him in a somewhat emphatic and noisy manner, by banging or knocking on their cases. This is another and older expression for "whack," which see. An apprentice coming out of his time would receive a "washing" or "jerry." See Hansard's "Typographia," 1825.

**Washing** (tailors), to get a *washing* is to have one's workmanship or conduct criticised in language more forcible than pleasant. In French "laver la tête." *Washing* day, dinner at the shop. (Stock Exchange), a fictitious bargain or sale, in which one broker agrees with another to purchase a given stock when put up for sale, the object being to keep it on quotation. If the deal is a large one it may send up the price, in which case the object is sometimes so to increase its value as to form a basis for a genuine deal.

**Wash one's ivories, to** (society), to drink. In French slang "se rincer la dent."

**Wash-outs** (American), ragged, stony sides of hills.

Where scraggy-looking latitudinous *wash-outs* are awaiting a chance to commit a murder, or to make the unwary cyclist who should venture to "coast," think he had wheeled over the tail of an earthquake. — *T. Stevens: Around the World on a Bicycle.*

**Wash, to** (common), in the sense of to do, to serve.

The conversation, as a rule, ended in Charley's giving them an order too. Of course this little "caper" would only *wash* once.—*Hindley: Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.*

This will not *wash*, this will not stand test, as of colours that will not bear washing.

**Waste-butt** (thieves), an eating-house.

**Wasters** (gypsies), hands. (Pronounce *a* as in glass.)

"And as they were gillerin' and huljerin' him, Samson chivved his *wasters* kettenus the boro chongurs of the suraben, and bongered his kokerus adrée, an' sār the ker pet a lay with a boro gudli, an' sār the pooro mushis were mulled an' the ker poggered to bitti cutters"—

"And as they were making fun of him and teasing him, Samson threw his hands around the great pillars of the prison, and bowed himself in, and all the house fell down with a great noise, and all the poor men were killed and the house broken to small pieces."—*C. G. Leland: The English Gypsies.*

**Waste, to** (sporting), to reduce one's weight by certain means which bring on profuse perspiration.

He had often heard Archer say that he was so exhausted at the end of the season that he could not ride. But he had to *waste*: that was different from Wood.—*St. James's Gazette.*

**Watch and seals** (popular), a sheep's head and pluck.

**Watcher** (special meaning), explained by quotation.



So I do, but not alone. Dress lodgers are never allowed to do that, sir. I haven't been one long, but long enough to find that out. There's always a *watcher*. Sometimes it's a woman—an old woman, who isn't fit for anything else—but in general it's a man. He watches you always, walking behind you, or on the opposite side of the way. He never loses sight of you, never fear.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

**Watchmaker** (thieves), a thief who steals watches.

**Water** (Westminster School), explained by quotation.

Boating, or *water*, as it is called at Westminster, is in a very flourishing condition.—*Pascoe: Everyday Life in our Public Schools.*

**Water a stock**, to (Stock Exchange). *Watering* is generally resorted to by companies whose fortunes are on the down grade. It consists in enhancing the total of capital stock by new issues, on the ground that the profits already accrued, or in anticipation, justify such a course.

**Waterloo-day** (army), pay-day, a day of victory and rejoicing.

**Watersman** (costers, pugilistic, &c.), a sky-coloured silk pocket-handkerchief.

**Water the dragon**, or **water one's nag**, a hint for retiring (Hotten).

**Wattles** (popular), the ears.

**Wavy in the sy's** (theatrical), unsteady in the syllables, loose

in the words, imperfect in the text.

**Wavy-rule** (printers), an inebriated person is said to be making *wavy-rule* ~~~~~ if his gait is unsteady.

**Wax** (general), in a *wax*, in a rage.

She is in a terrible *wax*, but she'll be all right by the time he comes back from his holidays.—*H. Kingsley: Ravenshoe.*

"*Wax*, to be angry or vexed, is evidently identical with Scottish *wex*, i.e., *vex*" (A. S. Palmer).

And mak thi self als merry as yhoue may,  
It helþith not thus fore to *wex* al way.  
—*Lancelot of the Laik.*

**Waxed** (tailors), to have him *waxed*, to know all about one, alluding to a thread well waxed before it is used.

**Waxy** (common), angry. *Vide* WAX.

It would cheer him up more than anything if I could make him a little *waxy* with me; he's welcome to drop into me right and left, if he likes.—*Dickens: Bleak House.*

**Wayzgoose** (printers). Essentially a printer's term for the annual dinner or "beanfeast." Derived from the old English word *wayz* or stubble, when the dinners were usually held at the season of the wheat-stubble, the head dish at these entertainments being a *wayz-goose* or stubble-goose. Bailey gives *wayz-goose*, a stubble-goose, and *wayz*, a bundle of straw. Old

English *wase*, a wisp. These festive occasions are usually celebrated earlier in the year now—generally July.

The master-printer gives them a *waygoose*, that is, he makes them a good feast.—*Moxon: Mechanick Exercises.*

After the *wayzgoose*: a moment immense! Gargantuan the feasting has been.

—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Weak** (popular), tea is so called in the low coffee-shops.

*hurdle 7<sup>th</sup>*  
*in self p: or*  
*to 1: other*  
*during in p: or*  
*ab: when.*  
**Weaver**, query *wheezzer*, a broken-winded horse, a "roarer." The definition given to the writer by a stable-keeper was, "a horse that over-gorges himself," probably the cause for the effect, as over-feeding, in the case of horses, often produces thick wind.

The horse was a *weaver*, if iver one was, as any could ha' told as had come within a mile of him.—*Mrs. Gaskell: Sylvia's Lovers.*

Again, it is possible that *weaver* refers to a horse that rolls from side to side when trotting, one that rocks. *Vide TO WEAVE*, and *WOBBLER*.

**Weave**, (American), to work along from one side to the other, as a shuttle flies right and left in a loom. A drunken man "*weaves* along."

He began in earnest too; and went *weaving* first to one side of the platform and then the other.—*Mark Twain: Huckleberry Finn.*

Hence to get into a *weaving* way, to walk or stagger along

recklessly, not to care what one is doing.

When I git in a *weaving* way,  
I spend my money free;  
Oh den I hab a merry time,  
And Jenny am de girl for me.  
—*Old Negro Song.*

**Weaving** (cardsharppers), a trick performed by keeping some particular cards on the knee and using them when required.

**Wedge** (thieves, itinerants, strollers, &c.), a very old term for silver money.

I succeeded in getting some *wedge* and a kipsy full of clobber.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

*Wedge-feeder*, a silver spoon; *wedge-hunter*, one who purloins plate from unguarded kitchens. Spelled *wage* in some old cant vocabularies, which perhaps gives a clue to the origin as meaning pay.

**Weed** (common), a cigar.

A cigar is figuratively styled a *weed*, an innovation applicable enough to the anomalous compounds of nastiness retailed at the Derby, the Boat Race, and other public gatherings, but an evident misnomer as regards the fragrant samples issuing from Mr. Benson's emporium.—*Belgravia.*

So you see, Mr. S., that the modest request on which you so coolly insist, Would probably to the establishment tend of a kind of gigantic free list, On which would be found every law-maker's name, and which in its limitless scope Would ensure him free shaving, free papers, free *weeds*, free candles, and pickles and soap.

—*London Figaro.*

**Weenie** (telegraph), the inspector is coming, used in the same sense as "cave."

**Wejee**, a chimney-pot; often applied to any clever invention, or to anything elegant, as "that's a regular *wjee*" (Hotten).

**Welscher** (common), a race-course swindler who makes bets, takes the money if he wins, and absconds if he loses.

Does the reader know what is a *welscher*, the creature against whose malpractices the sporting public are so emphatically warned? Probably he does not. It is still more unlikely that he ever witnessed a *welscher* hurt; and as I there have the advantage of him, it may not be out of place here to enlighten him on both points. A *welscher* is a person who contracts a sporting debt without a reasonable prospect of paying it. There is no legal remedy against such a defaulter.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London.*

The word has no connection with the natives of Wales, who are quite as honest as other people. *Welsch* in German argot signifies a foreigner, and *roth-welsch* or *red-welsh*, is the name applied to the canting language which thieves use among themselves. It is supposed with probability that the name was given to the brown or red-skinned gypsies or foreigners, who first swarmed into continental Europe from Central Asia. An account of *roth-welsch* appears as a supplement to the Dictionnaire d'Argot Français, by Francesque Michel. The word *welscher*, as used originally in England and

borrowed from the Germans, meant nothing more than an outsider, a foreigner, one who did not conform to the established laws of honest betting, and thus shared the double odium of being a stranger as well as a rogue. *Wälscher* is used in German slang in a discreditable sense, being derived from *wälsh*, Italian, or one of Latin race, and it is extremely probable that it came into English slang through the German Jews.

**Westphalia** (London), the behind, alluding to Westphalia hams.

**Wet** (common), a drink.

Many are the schemes, contrivances, and devices of some of the old toppers to obtain a *wet* or reviver, first thing in the morning, especially with some of those thoroughly saturated worthies who have had rather "more than 'nuff" the night previous.—*Brunlees Patterson: Life in the Ranks.*

The gas-glare—the horse-play—

The fume and the fret—

Have ceased, with the fever

That asked for a *wet*—

With the Jubilee fever

Demanding a *wet*.

—*Funny Folks.*

Oh, come,

We have no Wilfrid Lawson in Sicily yet;

All my Cyclops would strike. Yes! I'm game for a *wet*.

—*Punch.*

A *wet* night, a night of hard drinking.

As he knew he should have a *wet* night, it was agreed that he might gallop back again in time for church on Sunday morning.—*Thackeray: Vanity Fair.*

**Wet-bob** (Eton), explained by quotation.

It was the ambition of most boys to be a *wet-bob*, and to be "in the boats." The school was divided between *wet-bobs* and dry-bobs, the former taking their pleasure on the river, and the latter in the cricket-field.—C. T. Buckland: *Eton Fifty Years Ago*.

**Wetherall**, general in command (army), a term used when inclement weather prevents a parade. The health of the troops, from economic and prudential reasons, is always closely watched, and medical officers are always ready to interpose even when the commanding officer does not of his own motion yield before cold and wet.

**Wet quaker**, a man who pretends to be religious, and is a dram-drinker on the sly (Hotten). In America a *wet quaker* is a quaker who is limp or loose as regards observing the rules of the sect—one who is worldly-minded, not "dry" in religion.

Would you buy any naked truth, or light in a dark lanthorn? Look in the *wet quaker's* walk.—T. Brown's *Works*.

Socinians, and Presbyterians, Quakers, and *wet quakers*, and merry ones.—Ward: *England's Reformation*.

**Wet**, to (common), to have a drink. The same idea occurs in French slang "se mouiller."

Greatly as I stared to see him, my surprise I cannot forget,

When he paid me all he owed me, and invited me to *wet*.

—*Funny Folks*.

Also *wet* one's whistle or throttle.

"Well, as we have nothing to eat," said old Brooke,

"I move that each man *wet* his throttle; My hand I can place in a snug little nook, And fork out the housekeeper's bottle."

—H. J. Whymark: *The Bachelor's Dinner*.

(Navy), *wetting* a commission, giving an entertainment to ship-mates on receiving promotion. Among French soldiers "arroser ses galons" is treating one's comrades on being promoted to the rank of non-commissioned officer. Some of the synonyms for "to drink" are "to have a gargle, a *wet*, a dram, a quencher, something damp," "to moisten one's chaffer," "to sluice one's gob," "to lush," "to liquor up," and the American phrases "to smile," "to see a man," &c.

**Whack** (general), a share. Scotch *sweg* or *swack*.

This gay young bachelor had taken his share (what he called his *whack*) of pleasure.—Thackeray: *Shabby-Genteel Story*.

He complains of the food, and that he doesn't get his *whack*.—*Moonshine*.

So when we got there, there was some reeblers there what knew me, and my pals said, "You had better get away from us; if we touch you will take your *whack* just the same."—Horsley: *Jottings from Jail*.

To go *whacks*, to share.

"You agreed that we should go *whacks* in everything," I pleaded, appealing to his sense of justice, since I could not succeed in touching his generosity.—Greenwood: *The Little Ragamuffins*.

(Printers), *whack!* a very common and decided expression of

Their little *whack*.

Bk. Club: s. Price

Wilson Bk. Club

doubt or query to a companion's assertion. Generally a polite way of giving the lie direct.

**Whacker** (common), anything very large, identical with "whopper."

"Look what *whackers*, Cousin Tom," said Charley, holding out one of his prizes by its back towards Tom, while the indignant cray-fish flapped its tail.—*Hughes: Tom Brown at Oxford.*

(American), driver, drover.

There were only eight *whackers* left, and they were obliged to work day and night to keep the stock together.—*O'Keilly: Fifty Years on the Trail.*

Used in the phrases mule-*whacker*, bull-*whacker*, bush-*whacker*.

**Whacking** (popular), large.

"How kind of them," says he, "to gi'e me 'em, Since they're at such a *whacking* premium."

—*Atkin: House Scraps.*

**Whack, to** (general and American), to share.

As far as he was able to speak, it was the "new hands" who went in for revolvers, and not the old ones, who worked in "co.," and on the sound, old-fashioned principle of "sharing the danger and *whacking* the swag."—*J. Greenwood: A Converted Burglar.*

To *whack* up on the square, to share fairly.

He was trying to beat them out of their share of the swag. He ought to have *whacked* up on the square.—*Wall Street News.*

*Whack* up, share or hand up.

Clap a stopper on your gab and *whack* up, or I'll let 'er speak!—*Detroit Free Press.*

**Whacky** (tailors), one who does anything ridiculous.

**Whale** (Cheltenham College). Codfish, sardines, are called *whales* at the Royal Military Academy. (Common), anchovies on toast. "Very like a *whale!*" very much like a cock and bull story. From Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.

**Whale away**, to (American), to preach, talk, or lecture away continuously or vehemently. Probably from provincial English to *whale* (wale), to beat soundly, as of an orator's animated gestures, or by association from the common saying, "Going ahead like a *whale*." The association of greatness and strength with a *whale* led in the New England seaport towns to many comparisons and origins of this kind. Thus a powerful and large man was called "a regular *whale*," and "a whaler," while anything large and overwhelming was "whaling."

**Whaler** (American), anything of great or unusual size. Provincial English *whaler*, one that beats, a big strong fellow.

**Whang-doodle** (American). This eccentric word first appeared in one of the many "Hard-Shell Baptist" sermons which were so common in 1856. "Where the *whang-doodle* mourneth for her first-born." It refers to some

mystical or mythical creature. It was subsequently applied to political subjects, such as the Free Trade, Lecompton Democracy, &c.

**Whare** (New Zealand), a hut. The word is used by the settlers in New Zealand, and is a native term.

**What's the ticket on it?** *Vide* TICKET.

**Wheeler** (cycling), a cyclist.

**Wheel of life**, the (prison), the tread-wheel. *Vide* EVERLASTING STAIRCASE.

**Wheels** (cycling), a bicycle or tricycle.

**Wheeze** (common), a comic gag, a funny bit of "business," a joke. Possibly from *wheaze*, a puff.

Alas! at times on nights like these  
Poor is the plot and weak the *wheeze*,  
And the only pleasure one extracts  
Is 'tween the acts—yes, 'tween the acts.

—*Fun.*

"Swell vernacular"? *Swells* don't invent it; they nick it from *hus*, and no kid. Did a swell ever start a new *wheeze*? Would it 'ave any run if he did?

Let the ink-slingers trot out their kibosh,  
and jest see 'ow flabby it falls.

Bet it won't raise a grin at the bar, bet it won't git a 'and at the 'Alls.

—*Punch.*

To crack a *wheeze*, explained by quotation.

To crack a *wheeze* is to originate something smart, or to say something at the right moment, whether original or borrowed.—*Globe.*

**Wheeze**, to (thieves), to say, inform, as of one speaking under one's breath, in husky tones. The synonyms for inform are "to squeal, to scream, to blow, to whiddle."

Connor then asked if they (meaning the police) had got "the scout." To this she replied, "He didna *wheeze*," by which he understood her to mean that he (the superintendent) had given no indication whether or not.—*Scottish Newspaper.*

**Whid** (old cant), word; stubble your *whids*, hold your tongue; to cut *whids*, to talk, speak.

What! stowe your bene, cofe, and cut  
benat *wydds*.—*Harman: Caveat.*

To cut *bien whids*, to speak soft words.

This doxie dell can cut *bien whids*,  
And drill well for a win.

—*English Rogue.*

Also a falsehood.

Even ministers they have been kenn'd,  
In holy rapture,  
A rousin' *whid* at times to vend,  
And nail 't wi' Scripture.

—*Burns: Death and Dr.  
Hornbook.*

In the first edition of Burns the word *whid* did not appear, but instead of it—

"Great lies and nonsense baith to vend."

"This was ungrammatical, as Burns himself recognised it to be, and amended the line by the more emphatic form in which it now appears" (Dr. C. Mackay, "A Dictionary of Lowland Scotch"). Burns also uses the word with the mean-

ing of frisking about, gambols. "Hence," says Drennan, "it is obvious how *whid* applied to statements could come to mean a lie." The transition to "word" is easy, and the origin of *whid* might be thus traced; gambols (akin to said, as in the line "an arrow *whidderan*," *i.e.*, scolding), hence a lie, hence a word. It is now-a-days used with the signification of word, falsehood, joke.

The *whids* we used to crack over them.  
—*Hindley: Life of a Cheap Jack.*

**Whiddle, to.** To Hotten's definition, to enter into a parley, or hesitate with many words, must be added, to divulge; "he *whiddles* the whole scrap," he tells the whole secret. *Whiddler*, an informer, who betrays the secrets of the gang. *Vide WHID.*

**Whip** (parliamentary), a contraction of *whipper-in*, a member of the House of Commons whose duty is to collect his party and bring them to divisions.

Dickens, in "Sketches by Boz," tells us how "Sir Somebody Something, when he was *whipper-in* for the Government, brought four men out of their beds to vote in the majority, three of whom died on their way home again."—*Cornhill Magazine.*

They curse the nation that declines to believe their lies or to be influenced by their cant, they curse their *whips*, they curse their leaders, and they curse their fate.—*Truth.*

Also a notice requesting attendance at a division.

A four-line *whip* has been issued by the Government in opposition to the second reading of Lord Dunraven's Bill for the reform of the House of Lords.—*Standard.*

(Printers), quick setter of type. (Army), after the usual allowance of wine is drunk at mess, those who wish for more put a shilling each in a glass handed round to procure a further supply (Hotten).

**Whip-belly** (popular), bad beer. Also *whip-belly-vengeance.*

I believe the brewer forgot the malt, or the river was too near him. Faith, it's meer *whip-belly-vengeance.*—*Swift: Polite Conversation.*

**Whip-jack** (old cant), a vagabond who begged for alms as a distressed soldier. Also freshwater sailor.

Swaddlers,<sup>1</sup> Irish toys, *whip-jacks.*—*Oath of the Canting Crew.*

**Whipper-snapper** (popular), a youth, stripling, or youngster of precocious tendencies.

**Whipping.** *Vide WHIP.*

**Whip-round** (common), a subscription for a man in distress, or for a drink.

**Whipster** (thieves), a sly, cunning fellow.

**Whip-sticks** (Stock Exchange), Dunaberg and Witepsk Railway Shares.

**Whip the cat, to** (old cant), has reference to mechanics idling

their time, "derived from the practice of bricklayers' men, who, when repairing the pantiles, sneak into the adjacent gutters, pretending to be in pursuit of and *whipping the tom cats* and their moll rows" (Jon Bee). It is worthy of remark that the French use the phrase "il n'y a pas de quoi fouetter un chat," referring to a trivial offence; hence "j'ai d'autres chats à fouetter," I cannot waste my time on matters of such little importance. But the true derivation is from idling the time away at "whipping the cat," *i.e.*, playing tip-cat. To *whip the cat* is modern working-men's slang for shirking work and enjoying oneself on a Monday. (Carpenters), one who does private work by the day. (Tailors), working at the houses of the people for whom the garments are being made. This custom is now almost obsolete, owing to the cheapness of ready-made garments. It is very prevalent in France in the case of sempstresses.

**Whip the devil round the stump,** to (American), probably older English also, to evade, equivocate, say one thing, and virtually do another. Very common in New England, particularly in Maine, where the devil is whipped around the temperance stump in innumerable ways. There are several English uses of the word *whip*, all implying something round-

about, equivocal, or dishonest. Thus *to whip* is generally used to express anything dishonestly taken. It may be observed that there is an old negro camp-meeting hymn in which these lines occur—

Oh, *whip de debil roun' de stump*,  
Prayer and gospel make him jump.

In this the reference is to justifiably and properly deceiving the devil himself. It is possible that this may be the original source of the expression.

**Whip, to** (popular and thieves), to swindle.

It was I who got the money, and I swindled one of my confederates, pretending I got only a few shillings. This is a common practice amongst thieves, and is called in criminal parlance *whipping*. I have *whipped* many and have been *whipped* a few times myself.—*Joe Bragg: Confessions of a Thief*.

A naïve confession was made by a woman in the Thames Police-court to-day. The prisoner by way of defence said it all arose out of what happened a fortnight ago, when she and Scully robbed a sailor in Devonshire Street, and Scully was guilty of what is known in Billingsgate as *whipping*—that is, keeping part of the plunder.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**Whishler** (circus), the man with the whip, or the ring-master. The one who superintends the performances, who starts the horses, and acts as interlocutor with the clown.

**Whisker-bed** (pugilistic), the cheeks or face.

His worries rattled, his nozzle barked, his *whisker-bed* napped heavily.—*C. Bede: Verdant Green*.



**Whispering gill, or syl** (*i.e.*, syllable) slinger (theatrical), the prompter.

**Whisper, the angel's (army)**, the defaulter's bugle, the call to turn out to be mustered, or for pack or fatigue drill.

**Whisper, to** (popular), to borrow, generally a small sum; to *whisper* for a bob, to borrow a shilling. A *whisperer* is a man in the habit of borrowing.

**Whist** (Hibernian). "Hold your *whist*," *i.e.*, hold your tongue, is an Irishism which has passed into English slang. In gypsy *whistlers* mean lips.

This plea, for "little games" like chess and cards,

The Speaker hath (not chess-tingly),  
dis-carded,

And so the Members whom St. Stephen's  
guards

Are doomed, it seems, to pine all disre-  
garded.

But though with chess they mayn't the  
hours improve,

They still to "hold their *whist*" are not  
commanded;

Moreover, they're still up to many a  
"move,"

And are not for a "nap" entirely  
stranded—

Besides, while bent on legislation's aims,  
In "rowing" they keep up their "little  
games."

—*Fun.*

**Whistle**, a very ancient slang word for the throat or gullet. "To wet one's *whistle*," is to take a dram, or a drink. More correctly "to *whet* one's *whistle*," which phrase has its exact counterpart in the French slang

expression "s'affûter le sifflet." The expression is found in Chaucer, who says of the Miller of Trumpington's wife in his "Canterbury Tales":—

"So was hir joly *whistal* well y-wet."

**Whistle and ride** (tailors), work as well as talk.

**Whistle-belly-vengeance.** *Vide* WHIP-BELLY.

**Whistler** (horse-dealers), a horse that breathes hard.

He therefore excited plenty of bidding when put up for sale afterwards, and although a *whistler*, is worth the 500 guineas at which he was knocked down.—*The County Gentleman.*

"That horse of mine is the best I ever had. Very fast and a perfect fencer. I had very bad luck the other day, he overreached himself, and I had to turn him out on the grass."

*M.*—"Is he a *roarer*?"

*A.*—"No; nor a *whistler* either."

*M.*—"I suppose that's the reason you have to make all the noise for him?"—*Bird o' Freedom.*

**Whistling Billy, or puffing Billy** (popular), a locomotive.

**Whistling breeches** (popular), corduroys.

**Whistling-shop** (popular), a place in which spirits are sold without a license. Explained by Sam Weller.

**Whit** (old cant), prison.

He broke through all rubbs in the *whit*,  
And chiv'd his darbies in twain.

—*Frisky Moll's Song.*

And when we come unto the *whit*,  
 For garnish they do cry ;  
 We promise our lusty comrogues  
 They shall have it by and by.  
 Then ev'ry man with his mort in his hand,  
 Is forced to kiss and part ;  
 And after is divorced away  
 To the nubbing-cheat in a cart.

—*The Life and Death of the Dark-  
 man's Budge.*

#### Originally Newgate Prison.

There are three housebreakers that are lately come out of the *whit*.—*Hitchin: A True Discovery.*

Probably a form of *white*, as in Whitsuntide.

**White**, "as a slang term for blame or fault (Grose), as in the phrase 'You lay all the *white* off yourself,' or to *white*, to blame, is a corrupted form of the old English and Scottish *wite* or *wyte*, Anglo-Saxon *witan*, to know (something against one), to impute ; O. H. German *wizan*. Cf. *twit*, from Anglo-Saxon *edwitan*, old English *wite*, a fine or punishment ; Anglo-Saxon *wite*, Icelandic *viti*" (A. S. Palmer). To *white*, to blame.

"You lean all the *white* off your sell," *i.e.*, you remove all the blame from yourself.—*Ray: North Country Words.*

Alake ! that e'er my Muse had reason,  
 To *wyte* her countrymen with treason.  
 —*Burns: Poems.*

**White-boy**, a term of endearment in the seventeenth century for a favourite child or young man.

I am his *white-boy* and will not be gull'd.—*Ford: 'Tis Pity, &c.*

The name was assumed in Ireland early in the present

century, during the agrarian outbreaks, prior to the days of Daniel O'Connell, Smith O'Brien, Mr. C. Stuart Parnell, and the dynamiters. (American), disinterested, whole-souled.

A good fellow is Rayner, as *white* a man as I ever knew.—*The Golden Butterfly.*

**Whitechapel** (common), anything mean or paltry. (Billiards), to do *whitechapel*, to pot your opponent. (Cards), *whitechapel* play. At whist playing off all the winning cards without skill or plan. It used to be called *bungay* play in Norfolk. "Bungay," says Forby, "was a corruption from *bungar*, old English, synonymous with bungler." (Popular), *whitechapel* is a term used in tossing when "two out of three wins." *Whitechapel* fortune, a clean gown and pair of pattens. *Whitechapel* brougham, a costermonger's donkey-barrow.

**White choker** (common), a white tie.

Not only were *white chokers* seen in every part of the house, including the topmost gallery, but ladies in low dresses were content to brave the draughts of the pit.—*Daily Telegraph.*

A parson, from the white tie. On the resignation of his benefice by a divine still in the prime of life, he said at a farewell meeting that he had no intention of giving up the white tie. This a local journal printed as the white *lie*.

**White eye** (American), maize whisky, so called all over the United States.

**White-horsed in** (tailors), having procured a place by influence.

**White jenny** (popular), a silver Geneva watch, or any silver watch of foreign manufacture. Called by thieves a "white clock," or "white 'un."

**White man's hansom woman** (West Indian), a black mistress.

**White Mary** (blackfellows' lingo). The Australian blackfellows who come in contact with "stations" of the white men have a regular slang of their own. *White Mary* is their generic name for all female cooks, just as it is always "Mary, the maid of the inn," in England.

Blucher, as usual, had marched into the room on the morning in question, coolly ignoring the remonstrances of the irritated woman, when, her passion getting the better of her, she made a rush at him with the poker, which perhaps she had heated on purpose, and touched him on the bare leg—for, like all his race, when not on horseback, he doffed his trousers and boots, and wore nothing but a Crimean shirt. The pain of the wound was as nothing to the indignity. With a bound he rushed into the "Cawbawn Humpy," his eyes flashing with insulted pride, exclaiming, "Missus Fitzgell, *White Mary* cook, 'un me," pointing to his leg.—*A. C. Grant*.

**White mice** (pidgin), Chinese babes of the poorest class. When blind they are called blind mice. It is very generally believed in China, and

often said by Chinese who know better, that European missionaries buy *white mice* in order to make medicines or charms for sorcery out of their eyes.

**White-poodle**, a woolly, shaggy kind of cloth.

Peter wore a *white-poodle* upper Benjamin of his own make.—*J. Wight: Mornings at Bow Street*.

**White prop** (thieves), a diamond pin. Also "sparkle prop."

**White, smooth** (popular), a shilling.

With him half-crowns were half-bulls, and shillings *smooth whites*.—*Living Pictures of London*.

**White stuff** (street, strollers, &c.), silver. Also "white wedge."

**White tape** (popular), gin. Also "white satin." These terms for spirits, *white tape*, "red tape," "lace," &c., most probably originated in the practices of some of the "driz fencers," or sellers of cheap lace, who carried about their persons "jigger stuffs," or spirit made at an illicit still. "They sold it, I've heard them say, to ladies that liked a drop on the sly. One old lady used to give three shillings for three yards of 'driz,' and it was well enough understood, without no words, that a pint of brandy was part of them three yards" (Mayhew).

Jack Randall, then impatient, rose.  
And said Tom's speech was just as fine

If he would catch that first of goes,  
By that genteeler name "white wine."  
—*Randall: Diary.*

**White trash** (American), used by negroes to a white man as a term of opprobrium.

**White 'un** (popular and thieves), a silver watch, a shilling.

Then her eyes fell on the present, and she felt a most unpleasant  
Sort of shock, which made her rave, and swear, and sob.  
And her heart began to sicken, for, alas! it was no "thick 'un,"  
'Twas a *white 'un*—or, in other words, a hob?  
—*Sporting Times.*

**Whitewashed and fenced in** (American). This is a very common phrase applied sarcastically not only to towns whose inhabitants are vain of the beauty or other merits of their "place," but even to people themselves. It implies a sense of exclusiveness, pride, and hauteur, which is of all things most detestable to the Western American. Thus Bostonians, from their noted conviction of the superiority of "the Hub" as regards culture, are often asked if it is not yet *fenced in*. To explain the following illustration taken from the *Pittsburg* (Pennsylvania) *Dispatch*, it must be understood that the dwellers in the "Birmingham" of that state are supposed to be extremely ambitious.

"A few days since a verdant Oleander was searching through the city for a purchaser for a raft of lumber which he had tied up near Saw Mill Run. On the wharf he learned, much to his gratification, that

the Burgess wished to buy a very large quantity of lumber. But when he had found that official he was informed that he was certainly mistaken, the Burgess wanted no lumber. 'Why,' replied the Oleander, 'a man in Pittsburg told me that you wanted all that could be had to *fence in* the town.' And he left, not understanding why there was a roar of laughter from all present."

**White wine** (old slang), gin. In "A Picture of the Fancy," the old slang names for gin are thus amusingly grouped together. "The squeamish fair one, who takes it on the sly, merely to cure the vapours, politely names it to her friends as *white wine*. The swell chaffs it as *blue ruin*, to elevate his notions. The laundress loves dearly a dram of *Ould Tom*, from its strength to comfort her inside. The drag fiddler can toss off a quarter of *max* without making a wry mug. The costermonger illumines his ideas with a *flash of lightning*. The hoarse Cyprian owes her existence to copious draughts of *jackey*. The link-boy and mudlark, in joining their browns together, are for some *stark naked*. And the out-and-outers, by the addition of bitters to it, in order to sharpen up a dissipated and damaged victualing office, cannot take anything but *fullers' earth*."

**Whittled** (American), drunk.

Unquestionably Americans may evince a disposition to whittle without first getting *whittled*.—*Cowboys and Colonels.*

Also used in England.

**Whole boiling.** *Vide* BOILING.

**Whole-footed, whole-hearted, and whole-souled** are now cant, though once possessing a legitimate meaning. Says the *Philadelphia Age*, "Any devising man who invites a crowd to 'drinks all round' is instantly praised as a *whole-footed* man, and the calculating man who gives a piece of land for a church, with a view to the enhanced value of the adjoining lots which he retains, appears in the newspapers as a noble, *whole-souled* gentleman, whose liberality will earn him the thanks of his countrymen and the gratitude of coming generations."

**Whole kit and biling** (American), all, all the company.

Go 'long now, the *whole kit and biling* of ye, and don't come nigh me again till I've got back my peace of mind.—*Mark Twain: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

**Whole team, and a little dog under the waggon** (American).

This synonym, for completeness in every detail, is equalled by "a six-storey house—and a lightning rod." *Vide* TEAM.

**Whoop it up** (American), to keep up an excitement, such as hurrahing, gambling, or drinking.

Midnight is called the whiching time of night, because at that hour it is sometimes difficult to determine which to do, go home or *whoop it up* larger.—*Life.*

**Whopper** (colloquial and vulgar), anything large, applied especi-

ally to a monstrous lie. *Whop*, to beat; hence a *whopper*, one that beats anything. Originally "whapper."

When once you've passed the door—"Was you ever here before?"

Is the question that the cove on duty asks you;

But you've got your answer pat, and you won't be such a flat

As to let a little crammer flabbergast you. Check it proper—tell a *whopper*.

—*J. Greenwood: A Night in a Workhouse.*

**Whop-straw** (popular and thieves), a countryman.

**Who's your hatter?** Formerly a street catchword.

I shall not be surprised if the arrangement in black—this decorative tile which you describe—does not revive the now almost forgotten slang question, the sport of a bygone day, "*Who's your hatter!*" —*Punch.*

**Whynos** (American), a name for a large gang or class of the lowest villains and vilest desperadoes in New York.

The young men against the walls in the street were *Whynos*—that is to say, members of the most desperate gang of thugs and thieves in town—and Baxters, which is the name of the band from which the *Whynos* are recruited, a mob of boys between fourteen and seventeen, too young to have the nerve needed to be a *Whyo*.

. . . They were *Whynos*, also—pickpockets dressed to mingle in the crowds at the best up-town hotels and at the races and on the avenues, so as to drain fatter pockets than ever stray into Park Street, unless they bring them there after a night's work. They did not look like villains. . . . Bezie Garity was a typical *Whyo* girl. She was almost worshipped by the gang, she was so strong and coarse

and violent and depraved. . . . When she felt amiable she gave exhibitions of what she called her "nerve." At such time she planted herself squarely on her feet and challenged the strongest *Whyo* to hit her in the face with all his might.—*Philadelphia Press*.

**Wide** (thieves), well-informed, clever, short for wide-awake.

It was while I was with him that I got in company with some of the *widest* people in London.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

The bookies had been *wide*, and the plunger homeward hied,  
O'erladen he with champagne cup and sorrow.

—*Sporting Times*.

Cabby has none—cabbies are far too *wide*,  
So, after lots of hunting, and much bobbery,  
I pay two shillings for a half-mile ride.  
I call it robbery.

—*Punch*.

**Wide-awake** (common), a broad-brimmed felt or stuff hat. "So called," says Hotten, "because it never had a nap, and never wants one." This word is so universally used as to be almost recognised.

**Widdle, to** (thieves). "Oliver don't *widdle*," the moon does not shine. Literally, does not inform upon us. *Vide WHIDDLE*.

**Widow**, the gallows. In French slang "la veuve," now the guillotine, was formerly the gallows. "Epouser la veuve." *Widow* and "veuve" originally were terms to designate the rope or halter, in allusion to a metaphorical marriage knot, or wedlock with a widow of many husbands.

However, the Rev. A. S. Palmer thinks that *widow*, as a slang term for the gallows, is no doubt the same as Scotch *widdie*, a halter made of a flexible branch of withes, but this is very doubtful indeed.

(American), a grass *widow*, a wife a long time separated from her husband, or who has been deserted.

**Wife** (prison, old), a fetter fixed to the leg.

**Wife in water-colours** (society), a wife "de la main gauche." The French talk of an unmarried couple living as man and wife as "un collage à la détrempe," which is a very close rendering of the English phrase.

**Wig-block** (popular), the head.

**Wigger**. *Vide WIG, To*.

**Wigging** (common), a rebuke. When in private it is an "ear-wigging." Also "combing one's hair." In French "laver la tête" is to rebuke, scold; "donner une poignée," to thrash.

**Wigster** (theatrical), a wiggly actor—an actor whose theory of art is bounded by the idea of making his head a wig block.

**Wig, to** (pigeon-fanciers), to post a scout on the route of flight in a pigeon race with a hen pigeon, to attract the opponent's bird and retard his progress.

Probably a form of "to wool," to discomfit, which see.

"If I wigs, I loses," replied Tinker, evidently much hurt at the insinuation.

Instructed by Mr. Stickle, I learnt what *wigging* was, and no longer marvelled at Mr. Tinker's indignation. It is a fraudulent, and lamentably common practice amongst the vulgar "fancy."—*Greenwood: Undercurrents of London Life.*

**Wild** (old cant), the country, a village. *Wild* is frequently used by old authors for the "weald" (old English *woeld*, *wald*, open country) of Kent, as if it meant a *wild* or uncultivated region, a wilderness (Palmer).

I was borne in the *wylde* of Kent.  
—*Lyly: Euphues.*

There's a Franklin in the *wylde* of Kent hath brought three hundred marks with him in gold.—*Shakspeare: 1 Henry IV.*

**Wild-cat villages** (American), places with odd names. The following are all in existence:—

A. B. C.	Gunpowder.
Accident.	Hat Off.
Axle-Town.	Hat On.
Babylon.	High Up.
Beef-Hide.	Hobbie.
Big-Bag.	Jingo.
Braggadocio.	Johnny Cake.
Chicory.	Jump off Joe.
Coffee.	Kiss-Me (Fla.)
Cowboy.	Long-a-Coming.
Crab Tree.	Macphelah.
Dammit.	Mad Indian.
Dirt Town.	Matrimony.
Door-Way.	Mount Hugging
Frozen Creek.	(N.H.).
Good Land.	Nine Times.
Good Luck.	Number One.
Good Night.	Obligation.

VOL. II.

**Wild-cat villages—continued.**

Our Carter.	Rat.
Oz.	Shirt Tail Bend.
Pat's Store.	Squantum.
Patta Gumpns.	Swopetown.
Plevna (several).	U. Bet.
Quiz-Quod.	Yuba Dam.
Rabbit Hash.	

**Wilfreds** (popular), teetotallers.

Fill the bumper, crack the joke,  
We're not *Wilfreds*.

—*Punch.*

This has reference to Sir Wilfred Lawson, M.P., the great teetotal champion.

**William** (common), a jocose term for a bill.

**Willow** (cricket), a bat; from the material.

**Wilt, to** (London), to run away.

**Win, wyn** (old cant), a penny. Suggested to be connected with Welsh *gwyn*, white, i.e., the silver penny. Some thirty years ago in France pennies were termed "blancs" or "rouges," according to their more or less dark hue.

If we niggle or mill but a poor boozing-ken,  
Or nip a poor bung with one single *win*,  
Or dup but the gigger of a country-cove's ken,  
Straight we're to the cuffin queer forced to bing.

—*T. Decker: The Beggar's Curse.*

**Wind-jammer** (popular), a player on a wind instrument.

2 D

But hold, there's another, a puffer of fame,  
A noted *wind-jammer*, young Conlan's  
his name.

—*R. Blades: The Charing Cross Party.*

(Nautical), a sailing-ship.

Wind one's cotton, to (popular),  
to give trouble purposely.

Window fishing (burglars), bur-  
glarious entry at a window.

Windows (popular), the eyes.

Wind, raise the. *Vide RAISE.* To  
slip one's *wind*, to die.

Wind-sucker (stable), a term  
applied to a horse with the  
heaves. In gypsy "bavolengro,"  
*i. e.*, "air or wind master;" *wind  
sucker* is provincial for a kestrel.

Wine, a (University), a wine-  
party. A *wine* consists of des-  
sert, wine (usually only port,  
sherry, and claret, but at very  
big *wines* champagne), and tea  
and coffee later on. *Wines* are  
generally confined to men of  
the same college. It is un-  
usual to ask out-college men to  
a *wine* without asking them to  
dinner also.

Wing (prison), a small piece of  
tobacco.

A piece as large as a horse-bean, called  
a "chew," is regarded as the equivalent  
for a twelve-ounce loaf and a meat ration,  
and even a morsel—a mere taste that can  
only be laid on the tongue and sucked like  
a small sweetmeat (it is called a *wing*, and  
is not larger or of more substance than a  
man's little finger-nail), is "good" for a  
six-ounce loaf.—*J. Greenwood: Jail Birds  
at Large.*

Also a "wing of snout," "wing  
of stuff."

I had a screw who would sling a *wing*  
of stuff, and so long as I had a bit of to-  
bacco and did not hear a woman's jawing,  
I was werry comfortable.—*Evening News.*

Winging (theatrical), taking a  
part under exceptional circum-  
stances, at a moment's notice,  
and studying it in the wings.

Winkers (pugilistic), the eyes.

Wins the button (tailors), is the  
best, and is therefore entitled  
to the *button, i. e.*, medal.

Winter-cricket (popular), a tailor.

Wipe (popular and thieves), a  
pocket-handkerchief.

"How many *wipes* did you nibble?"  
"Only two, a bird's-eye and a hinky."—  
*Disconsolate William.*

Cold, callous man!—he scorns to yield,  
Or aught relax his felon gripe,  
But answers, "I'm Inspector Field!  
And this here warmint's prigg'd your  
*wipe.*"

—*Ingoldsby Legends.*

To see him splitting away at that pace  
. . . and me with the *wipe* in my pocket  
crying out arter him.—*Dickens: Oliver  
Twist.*

"As a matter of fact, I had my handker-  
chief in my pocket all the time, and I have  
it still," he said, producing a bloodstained  
*wipe*, with which he had sopped up the  
blood from his face on Bloody Sunday.—  
*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Also a blow, as a *wipe* on the  
kisser, across the chops, &c.

Wipe out, to (American), signify-  
ing to extinguish, is taken from  
the Pawnee Indian language. It



means to defeat, to destroy. Imported from America. "To *wipe* one's eye," to shoot game which a person has missed, as if correcting defective vision by wiping watery eyes. Hence to obtain an advantage by superior skill.

She had what is called a bow-gun when she was six years old, a rifle when she was nine, and from that time she has gone on shooting turkeys, red-heads, wild cats, cotton-tails, and pigeons, "*wiping* the eyes" of the boys along the Pacific Coast, and making her name celebrated, until Colonel Cody secured her for his show.—*Bailey's Monthly Magazine*.

**Wire** (popular), a telegram.

The boots' brother knewed him in Birmingham, and 'as got the tip direct from the stable. He is going to send us a *wire* from the course.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

(Harvard University), a trick or dodge. A pickpocket.

His fingers were very long, and no lady's could have been more taper. A burglar told me that with such a hand he ought to have made his fortune. He was worth £20 a week, he said, as a *wire*, that is, a picker of ladies' pockets.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Wirer, wire, or wire-hook** (English and American), a pickpocket.

**Wire, to** (common), to telegraph.

It cannot be called the most startling piece of intelligence ever *wired*.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

(Popular), to *wire* in, to go ahead, push on, go in with a will. Also to join, unite with.

And when larks and loyalty jine,  
I say *wire* in and bust the expense.

—*Punch*.

**Wire-worm** (Stock Exchange), a man who collects prices to "wire," *i.e.*, to telegraph to country clients.

**Wisty-castor** (pugilistic), a serious blow. Seems to be from *wistly*, earnestly.

Neal was always dangerous, and now and then put in a *wisty-castor*, which rather changed the look of Sam's front-piece.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Wobbler** (cavalry), an infantry soldier. (Common), a horse that swerves from side to side when trotting. French, "un cheval qui se berce."

**Wobble-shop** (popular), a shop where beer or spirits are sold without a license.

**Wolfer** (common), a man with a large appetite, or a hard drinker.

And a great, sad silence fell upon the crowd; for then, and not till then, did they realise what unwarrantable liberties they had been taking with their internal organisations, and everybody wished that they had been born an elephant or a megalosaurus, or something with a similar capacity for the storage of liquors, until confidence was restored by the reassuring remark of an adjacent whisky *wolfer*—"But it stretches, gentlemen, it stretches!"—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Wolf, to** (common), originally to ingurgitate ravenously, but now with extended meaning of simply to eat.

And then it transpires that Skipper Hammett is chewing bacca, and that Shifter has *wolfed* all the brandy. This is a cold world.—*Sporting Times*.

I've tasted *bouillabaisse*, and I've *wolfed* roast hare and pickled pork.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

Also to steal, to cheat out of.

It was generally considered that Custance, who was on Comforter in the City and Suburban of 1860, was *wolfed* by Wells on Lord Nelson, who made a dead heat of it, Comforter winning the decider.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

To *wolf* is said to be of American origin. The derivation is obvious.

George.—“Quite a snug pile.”

Tom.—“Yes. The boy was only seven years old, and, of course, there was a guardian, or rather a set of them, appointed for him and to take charge of the estate. Well, they *wolfed* him.”

George.—“Got away with it all?”

Tom.—“Nearly all.”

—*Missouri Republican*.

**Wolloping** (popular), thrashing, beating.

“Porliceman, father's giving mother such a *wolloping*, will you come?”—*Music Hall Song*.

**Wood** (clerical), the pulpit.

**Wood-and-water Joey** (Australian), a hanger about hotels.

**Wood-butcher** (tradesmen), workmen who have not thoroughly learned their business as carpenters or joiners.

Counting carpenters and *wood-butchers* together, it is estimated that about 20,000 men make their living in London as carpenters and joiners. Of these nearly 5000 are of the *wood-butcher*, or inexpert workmen class, and therefore do not belong to the trade societies.—*New York Herald*.

**Wooden fit** (popular), a swoon.

**Wooden spoon**, the last man in the mathematical tripos at Cambridge is generally referred to as the *wooden spoon* of his year; a common wooden spoon is often actually presented to him by the undergraduates in the gallery of the Senate House. When two or more “last” men are bracketed together, the group is termed the *spoon bracket*.

Winning perhaps eventually the *wooden spoon*, or worse, being utterly ploughed.—*Morning Advertiser*.

Spanish undergraduates wear a *wooden spoon* in their hats when in full costume, perhaps an allusion to the intellectual food provided by *Alma Mater*, but more probably from a custom of poor students in the Middle Ages, who often, like the old French poet Villon, associated with vagabonds, such as are depicted by Teniers with a spoon stuck in their hats. In France the practice still exists among tramps or other low class of people. This would tend to show that the university custom has been handed down from the Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century the “Chevaliers de la Cuiller” were an association formed by noblemen of Vaud who had boasted of eating up their enemies the Genevese, but to this of course is not due the origin of the ornamental spoon.

**Wooden wedge** (Cambridge University), the last name in the classical honours list at Cam-

bridge. From the name of a wrangler named Wedgewood, who was the last on the list of the first classical tripos in 1824.

**Wood merchant** (streets), explained by quotation.

When he can't get on that racket he'll turn mumper and *wood merchant* (which means a seller of lucifer matches).—*Temple Bar*.

**Wood-sawyer's clerk** (American), employed to indicate a man in the lowest possible or poorest employment. A clam-butchter is applied scornfully to one who is in similar circumstances.

**Wool** (popular), hair. "Keep your *wool on*," don't get angry, literally an intimation not to tear one's hair; or, more probably, to keep one's wig on. Compare "Dash my wig!" expressive of disappointment or angry excitement, which must have originated in the frequency of persons dashing their wigs in anger to the ground when it was the fashion to cover the shaven pate with that ornament, an act far more convenient than tearing the hair. (Pugilistic), pluck, courage. "*Woolled 'un*," or a rare "*wool-topped 'un*," a man of great courage. Said to be in allusion to coloured heroes of the prize-ring.

**Wool-bird** (popular and thieves), a sheep or lamb. French thieves call a sheep *lainé*.

**Wool-hole** (popular), a very old synonym for the workhouse. Perhaps more used by printers than any other class of work-people. Savage, 1841, quotes this term.

**Wool is up**, times are good; **wool is down**, times are bad (used by up-country slangy Australians). Wool being the staple of Australia, it is easy to see how a phrase, which at first was applicable only to the fortunes of the wool-growers, gradually passed into a metaphor.

Bother! how can I go steady,  
I'm worth thousands—*wool is up*.  
—*Garnet Walsh*.

I go where *wool* has gone—*down*, ever  
*down*.  
—*Garnet Walsh*.

**Woolly** (studios), a *woolly* painting is one painted in slack touches. (Common), irritable, angry. *Vide* WOOL. (Popular and thieves), a blanket.

**Woolly-headed boy** (tailors), a favourite.

**Wool-splitter** (tailors), a renowned tailor.

**Wool, to** (common), to get the better of, to discomfit. This phrase, allied to blinding a man in the sense of deceiving him, probably gave rise to the saying so common in America, "To pull the *wool* over one's eyes." German, "Er macht ihn mit sehenden Augen blind"—"He blinds him while he sees with his

eyes," is very old, and to be found in the *Hildebrandslied*.

**Working the shells** (American thieves), a variety of thimble-rig, in which walnut shells are used, instead of thimbles or little cups.

I was pinched for *working the shells* at Atlantic City last summer, and got two months for it. A gent in the crowd offered to bet me ten dollars he could tell which shell the ball was under, and of course I went him on it. As soon as I showed my money, he put his hands on me, and said he was a special officer in plain clothes. Low trick—wasn't it. They brought the *shells* into court, and they've got my table there now.—*Confidence Crooks* (Philadelphia Press).

**Works, the** (prison), a convict establishment, such as Portland, Portsmouth, or Dartmoor.

**Work the bulls, to** (coiners), to get rid of bad crown pieces.

**Work, to** (thieves), to steal. French slang, *travailler*; Spanish slang, *trabajar*.

**Worm** (popular), a policeman.

**Worm-crusher** (cavalry), a foot soldier.

**Worm-eater**, a man who sells as authentic articles of spurious historical value, manufactured for the purpose, or otherwise.

Now and then, it is true, he picked up some article to which the attached legends were a trifle apocryphal. That industrious artist, who is technically known as the *worm-eater*, was at times too much even for the editor of the *Architect*.—*Standard*.

**Worms** (Winchester College), explained by quotation.

Across the two ends of the ground a small trench is dug, about four inches wide and two deep, and a goal is obtained when the ball is fairly kicked across the trench (*Wiccamicé worms*).—*Pascoe*.

**Wrap-rascal** (old cant), a cloak.

**Wrens**, prostitutes who "squat-  
ted" amongst the furze of Curragh Common.

These creatures are known in and about the great military camp and its neighbourhood as *wrens*. They do not live in houses or even huts, but build for themselves "nests" in the bush.—*Greenwood: Seven Curses of London*.

**Wright, Mr.** (prison), a faithless prison officer, the intermediary between an incarcerated criminal and his friends outside. The title is so given in the clandestine letters sent out surreptitiously, in which the prisoner says *Mr. Wright*, who is all right or safe, will call.

**Wring oneself, to** (thieves), to change one's clothes.

I went home and *wrung myself*, and met some of the mob and got very near drunk.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

**Wrinkle** (common), properly a whim, fancy. Used slangily for a cunning trick or artful dodge.

I can put you up to a *wrinkle*. Tollit has got a mare who can lick Tearaway into fits. She's as easy as a chair and jumps like a cat. All that you have to do is to sit back.—*C. Bead: Verdant Green*.

Implying artfulness, this word was probably associated with

*wrinkle*, a fold or plait, as if it meant an involved proceeding, a piece of "duplicity" (*duplex*) or double-foldedness, as opposed to what is plain or "simple" (Latin *simplex*, one fold) (Palmer).

Palmer as he was a man symple and withoute all *wryncles* off cloked colusy-one, opened to hym his whole intent.—*Narratives of the Reformation.*

I know you're a little bit artful, old boy,  
And up to a *wrinkle* or two;  
You know this from that without any  
doubt,  
And many old fakements can do.  
—*Ballad: You're More Than Seven.*

**Writing a poor hand** (tailors), is said of one who sews badly; also "sore fist."

**Wrong** (common), *wrong* in the upper storey, crazy. In the *wrong box*, out of one's element. "You'll find yourself

in the *wrong box*," refers to being completely mistaken and finding oneself in embarrassment or jeopardy. "We are indebted for this to George Lord Lyttelton. He was of a rather melancholy disposition, and used to tell his friends that when he went to Vauxhall he was always supposing pleasure to be in the next box to his, or at least that he was so unhappily situated as always to be in the *wrong box*" (R. W. Hackwood, *Notes and Queries*).

**Wrong 'un** (common), anything or anybody that is artful or bad. (Turf), a horse not supposed to be meant to win. (Popular), a prostitute, a spurious coin or note.

**Wusser** (bargemen), a canal boat.



or letter *x*, a method of arrest used by policemen with desperate ruffians, by getting a firm grasp on the collar, and drawing the captive's hand over the holding arm, and pressing the fingers down in a peculiar way—the captured person's arm in this

way can be more easily broken than extricated (Hotten).

**X, Y, Z**, an (literary), a common literary caterer, so called from an advertiser under these initials in the *Times* offering to perform all descriptions of literary work at very moderate and unprofessional prices.



**YACK** (thieves), a watch.

From the gypsy *yack*, an eye or watch. Watches were at one time commonly known as bull's eyes. "To church a *yack*," or "christen a *yack*," to take the works out of the case, to avoid detection.

**Yaffle** (old cant), to eat.

**Yam** (West Indian negro, sailors, &c.), food.

**Yam**, to (popular), to eat. This is provincial English.

**Ya-mun, ya-men** (pidgin), a mandarin, a prefect's residence.

**Yank** (American), nickname for Yankee. A quick pull, snap; of very wide application.

No kid. I didn't get home till three o'clock, and the missis would have it I was boozed. I assure you, it rained tea-cups and hailed fire-irons for about half-an-hour, and I've felt like struck by lightning ever since. No; that *Yank* was about right, I guess.—*Bird o' Freedom*.

**Yank**, to (American), to remove by a quick motion, or a snap.

He moistens his hands, grabs his property vigorously, *yanks* it this way, then that.—*Mark Twain: A Tramp Abroad*.

A grasshopper sat on a sweet-potato vine,  
A sweet-potato vine,

A sweet-potato vine,

A great turkey gobbler came running up behind,

And *yanked* the poor grasshopper off the sweet-potato vine.

—*Popular Song*.

To *yank* the bun, a synonym for "to take the cake," meaning to take the prize, or to excel in some way.

**Yannam** (old cant), bread.

**Yarmouth bee** (tailors), a herring.

**Yarmouth capon.** *Vide* TROUT, NORLOCH.

**Yarmouth mittens** (nautical), bruised hands.

**Yarn-slinger**, one who writes tales in newspapers.

**Yarum** (old cant), milk; "poplars of *yarum*," milk porridge.

**Yaw-sighted** (nautical), squinting.

**Yellow belly** (nautical), a name given to a person born in the fens along our eastern shores. Also a half-caste. (American), a Dutchman; so called from "yellow belly," a frog.

**Yellow boy** (common), a gold coin, a sovereign. In French slang "jaunet," German cant "fuchs" and "gelbling," from *gelb*, yellow. Some of the synonyms for a sovereign are "canary," "couter," "gingle boy," "goldfinch," "monarch," "shiner," "quid," "meg," "James," "bean," "foont," "portrait," "thick-un," "skiv," "yellow mould."

The best of all robbers as ever I know'd,  
Is the bold fighting Attie, the pride of the road l—

Fighting Attie, my hero, I saw you to-day  
A purse full of *yellow boys* seize.

—Lord Lytton: *Paul Clifford*.

We shut the cellar door behind us, and when they found the bag they spilt it out on the floor, and it was a lovely sight, all them *yaller boys*.—Mark Twain: *Huckleberry Finn*.

**Yellow dog** (American). Dr. O.

W. Holmes, in "Elsie Venner," has written an amusing comment on the fact that in the New England States a *yellow dog* is a synonym for all that is contemptible.

"I am looked at as a blackmailer," said he, "and those who believe I have been bleeding that old man hold me in as much contempt as a *yellow dog*."—*American Newspaper*.

**Yellow fancy** (costers and pugilistic), silk pocket-handkerchief with white spots.

**Yellow fever**, formerly a cant term for drunkenness at Greenwich Hospital, where drunkards used to be punished by being made to wear a parti-coloured coat in which yellow predominated. (Australian mining), greed for gold. The expression has practically come to mean "Dreams of an Eldorado." In the same way ladies are said to suffer from "scarlet fever" when they run after military society.

**Yellow gloak** (old), a jealous man.

**Yellow hammer**, one of the synonyms for a gold coin.

**Yellow man** (prize ring), a yellow silk handkerchief,

Sporting the *yellow man*. The wipe was of bright yellow, made on purpose for him.—*Pierce Egan: Book of Sports*.

**Yellow-mould** (tailors), a sovereign.

**Yellow pine** (American), a word frequently used to indicate a quadroon or light mulatto.

**Yellow stuff** (thieves), gold. In French slang "jaune." Also counterfeit gold coins.

If he can manage to begin every morning with *yellow stuff*, he may make a couple of quid a day; but if he can only muster white stuff, why, of course he can't make so much.—*Temple Bar*.

**Yellows** (thieves), counterfeit gold coin; the silver coin is called blanks before impressed. Many of these are struck at Birmingham, but there was in the beginning of the century a large number made in London.

(Popular), Blue-coat or charity school boys.

**Yelper**, or bullet, got (popular), discharged.

**Yennep** (costers and thieves), back slang for a penny.

"All a fellow wants to know to sell potatoes," said a master street seller to me, "is to tell how many tanners make a bob, and how many *yenneps* a tanner."—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor*.

**Yeute** (Punch show), no, not, as in *yeute* lette, no bed.

**Yid, Yiddisher, Yeddán, or Yed-dican** (London), a Jew. From the German *Jüdisch*.

I might, if I had poached upon the province of the Pitcher,  
Have devoted just a verse or two to love  
among the *Yids*.

—*Sporting Times*.

**Yiesk** (tinker), fish (Gaelic *casg*).

**Ying-jen** (pidgin), Englishman.

**Yiu** (Punch and Judy), a street.  
Query French "rue"?

**Yob**, boy. An example of back slang largely used by costermongers, which simply consists in spelling (more or less accurately) words backwards. Thus, "Hi, *yob*, kool that enif elrig with the nael ekom. Sap her a top o' reeb or a tib of occabot," is "Hi, boy, look at that fine girl with the lean moke (donkey). Pass her a pot of beer and a bit of tobacco." The art or merit of this form of slang consists in the rapidity, often most remarkable, with which words can be reversed. Thus Mayhew, wishing to test the skill of a professor of the art with a word not in common use in the market, asked a coster friend what was the back slang for hippopotamus. At once he answered "sumatopoppy." Back slang largely mingles with the older and more legitimate argot or thieves' slang.

**Yob-gab** (costers and thieves), boys' talk. This is a jargon

used by costermongers, thieves, and tramps to enable them to talk about their doings without being understood by the uninitiated. It is seldom if ever seen written or printed. The "language" is simple enough, and when the key is known there is no difficulty in talking oneself, or in understanding the talk of others. The simplest form of *yob-gab* is the spelling of words letter by letter, with the addition of a consonant after each vowel, and a vowel after each consonant. Thus legs is *li-et-gi-si*; but as any vowel or consonant may be used, the same word may be expressed in several different forms; thus *la-el-go-su*, *le-em-gu-so*, *lo-es-ga-se*, *lu-es-ga-so*. Man is represented by *mu-al-nu*, *mi-at-ni*, *mo-ad-no*, and so forth, through numberless variations, which make the jargon more puzzling to any one who hears it spoken, the same word being varied at the will of the speaker. The jargon is easily learned, and amongst costers and their children it was, a quarter of a century ago, quite common, and teachers in the Ragged Schools in Kent Street, and the Mint in Southwark, and the district visitors got quite familiar with it, through hearing it in use by both parents and children.

**Yokuff** (thieves), a kind of back slang, or anagram, for coffer, that is, a box, chest.



**Yok, yoke** (tinker), a man. (English canting and old provincial), a countryman. The *el* final is a common termination (e.g., cockerel), like *er*.

**Yorkshire, to**, to cheat or cozen. Also to come *Yorkshire* over a person.

**You bet!** (American), an exclamation, a strong affirmative or negative. The writer has also heard it with the meaning of what next? Don't you think you may get it?

"You can be supplied cheaper than that, *you bet!* About ten bobs' worth of stephanotis, and half a dollar to the door-keeper"—

Another friendship severed.—*Bird o' Freedom.*

(American), this slang phrase has actually given a name to a settlement in the north-west. *Vide WILD-CAT VILLAGES.*

We at last got straightened up, and the snow came on with a heavy wind, but most fortunately it was behind us, so we kept before the storm, and reached, in the course of another two miles, the settlement of *Ubet*. . . . The name of *Ubet* had been selected from the slang phrase so laconically expressive of "You may be pretty sure I will."—*A. Staveley Hill: From Home to Home.*

**You bet your buttons!** (American), said of a man who will play at a gambling-table so long as he has money.

"*You bet your buttons!*" murmured Squito proudly, "Sam'll stay with 'em as long as he's got a check."—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**You bet your sweet life!** (American), meaning you may be

assured. Also used in England.

You can find me whenever you do; and you'll find me heeled, too, *you bet your sweet life.*—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

**You fasten on** (common), synonymous of "you go on."

**You'll do!** (American), uttered with a strong accent on the *you'll*. A strong approval, a declaration that the one addressed can take care of himself or hold his own, a note of admiration. In a police report in a Michigan newspaper, a vagrant brought before the mayor, being asked what caused the wound on his nose, replied, "I fell down and stepped on it." Being required to pay a fine, he produced a bank-bill, which he assured the magistrate was the last fragment of an immense fortune left to him by a fond and devoted uncle. He was, in short, so prompt with his replies, and showed such "a healthy indifference" to his adversity, that the magistrate dismissed him, exclaiming in admiration "*You'll do!*" "*I'll do*" is also commonly heard when a man is confident of his ability to succeed in anything, or to take care of himself.

And like a rat without a tail,  
I'll do, and I'll do, and I'll do.

—*Macbeth.*

**Your uncle** (American), an equivalent for "I."

**You say you can, but can you?** (American). "This was explained by one of my friends as being Chesterfieldian for 'you lie!'" (C. Leland Harrison, MS. Americanisms).

**You've fixed it up nicely for me** (popular), one of the numerous popular slang synonyms for saying that a man is not to be taken in. "No you don't," "Not for Joseph," or "Do you see anything green in my eye?"

Now grammar is all very well in its way,  
As taught to young folks in their teens—



**ZIFF** (thieves), a young thief.

**Zoo** (common), abbreviation for Zoological Gardens.

**Zooning** (American), used in the South. Humming, buzzing, barking.

Bre'r Bar, he low dat he kin hear de bees *a-zoonin*.—*Uncle Remus*.

**Zoucher** (thieves), a slovenly fellow.

**Zoyara** (American), an effeminate young man, a lady-gentleman, a "Molly." In 1860-61 there was a young fellow whose name "on

But as for myself I am sorry to say That I really don't know what it means. There is only one phrase I can safely employ,  
When a widow invites me to tea,  
I wink my left eye and I simply reply,  
*You've fixed it up nicely for me.*  
—*Robert Johnson: Ballad.*

**You've shot your granny** (American), you've found a mare's nest.

**Yoxter** (thieves), a convict returned from transportation before his time.

**Yum-yum** (London), first-rate, elegant.

*The hero in Gilbert's Sicilian  
the husband.*

the slangs" was *Zoyara*, a circus-rider, who affected the dress and airs of a girl so well that it was the town-question in New York for some time as to what the sex of the "phenomenon" really was. Of course every circus in the United States had for some time after a *Zoyara*.

The *London Globe* having inquired why the stage names of female acrobats and circus-riders so generally begin with *Z*, a correspondent (C. G. Leland) remarked that they are, as in *Zazel*, *Zaniel*, *Zoes*, derived from Hebrew or Yiddish words meaning devil or goblin.



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