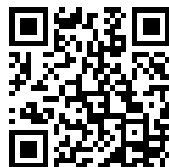


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**DICTIONARY**  
**OF**  
**AMERICANISMS:**

**A GLOSSARY OF WORDS AND PHRASES**

**USUALLY REGARDED AS PECULIAR TO**  
**THE UNITED STATES.**

**BY**  
**JOHN RUSSELL BARTLETT.**

**FOURTH EDITION,**  
**GREATLY IMPROVED AND ENLARGED.**

**BOSTON:**  
**LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.**  
**1877.**



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## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

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THE second edition of this Dictionary was published in Boston in 1859, and a third the following year. The former was greatly enlarged from the first edition, the latter was a reprint of the second edition without alterations.

During the eighteen years that have passed since the last revision, the vocabulary of our colloquial language has had large additions, chiefly from the sources whence additions usually come. To the Indian, the Dutch, the German, the French, and the Spanish elements, there have been but few contributions. From the arts, from new inventions, from new settlements, particularly those in mining districts, from commerce, many words have been adopted; while the late civil war has also furnished its share. But, perhaps, the larger share of additions is from the vocabulary of slang, which may be divided into several classes. First are the terms used by the bankers and stock-brokers of Wall Street, which are well understood, and employed by those who operate in stocks in all our large cities. These may be classed among the more respectable slang. They are employed not only by merchants, but by all who have money to invest, or who operate in stocks. Educated men also make use of them, for the reason that there are no terms which so well express the operations connected with money. Next we have "College Slang," or words and expressions in common use among the students in our colleges and pupils of our higher schools. These



words are so numerous that, when explained at length, and accompanied by examples, they make a volume of themselves. Then there is the slang of politicians, of the stage, of sportsmen, of Western boatmen, of pugilists, of the police, of rowdies and "roughs," of thieves, of work-shops, of the circus, of shop-keepers, workmen, &c., which taken together form a rich mine whence new words are derived ; some of which, after a struggle, become engrafted on our language, and finally obtain places in "Webster's Unabridged."

Objections have been made to the incorporation of slang terms in a work like the present, on the ground that it tends to preserve them and perpetuate their use. It is true that it does preserve them, but it does not perpetuate their use ; for they often disappear as suddenly as they come into existence. Slang terms will remain in use only so long as they may be useful in colloquial language. They may then be supplanted by others more expressive, and sink into oblivion. But, even though they may become obsolete, it is no reason why they should not be included in a Dictionary or Glossary. Words having a political significance sometimes have an existence of ten or twenty years. They are employed by the newspaper press, are heard in the halls of legislation, and find a place in our political annals. The extinction of an old political party, the organization of another with new issues and a new platform, will be accompanied by new terms which will become the shibboleth or watchword of the party. The names of the older parties cease to be used, and are soon forgotten. Such is the history of the terms *Federals*, *Bucktails*, *Barnburners*, *Old Hunkers*, *Loco-Focos*, *Silver Greys*, and *Know-Nothings*. The clubs and flashy young men have their slang, often growing out of the fashion of the day, or out of the customs of society ; while the number introduced from the humbler classes is much greater. Sometimes these strange words have a known origin ; but, of the larger number, no one

knows whence they come. Slang is thus the source whence large additions are made to our language.

A writer in "Household Words" (No. 183) has gone so far as to remark that a person "shall not read one single parliamentary debate, as reported in a first-class newspaper, without meeting scores of slang words," and "that from Mr. Speaker in his chair to the Cabinet Ministers whispering behind it, from mover to seconder, from true-blue Protectionist to extremest Radical, the New House of Parliament echoes and re-echoes with slang."

"The universality of slang," says Mr. Hotten,<sup>1</sup> "is extraordinary. Let any person for a short time narrowly examine the conversation of their dearest and nearest friends; aye, censor-like, even slice and analyze their own supposed correct talk, and they shall be amazed at the numerous unauthorized, and what we can only call vulgar, words they continually employ. . . . I am aware that most new words are generally regarded as slang, although afterwards they may become useful and respectable additions to our standard dictionaries."

Within the last few years, several English writers have had the courage to acknowledge the importance of the slang element in our language, and to write in its defence. Among them is Mr. E. B. Tylor, the learned author of "Primitive Culture," and of "Researches into the Early History of Mankind," who thus writes:—

"Slang, despised and ignored till lately by the lexicographers, is a genuine and influential branch of speech. It is one of the feeders of what may be called standard language, which with little scruple adopts and adapts the words it happens to want, whether from the technical terms of shopmen and artisans, or out of the quainter vocabularies of coster-mongers and prize-fighters, school-boys and fops. This practical importance

<sup>1</sup> Slang Dictionary, p. 40.

entitles it to be treated linguistically, like any other working dialect. Nor is its theoretical value inconsiderable to the student. Like other dialects, slang is developed according to the general laws of language, and very striking are some of its illustrations of those laws. Many a philological hint may be gleaned from the talk of factories and stables, music-halls and thieves' kitchens and pawnbrokers' shops, which would be more hardly sought from the super-refined English of the school-room."<sup>1</sup>

Philologists and other scholars, when a term is wanted for some new invention, some new product in the arts, in machinery or manufactures, usually form one from the Greek or Latin. A word thus formed may be plain to scholars familiar with those languages; but, where one comprehends the meaning, a hundred fail to do so. This is particularly the case with the scientific names of plants and flowers. The botanist creates a name from the Latin, which is only familiar to scholars; while the common people invent a name which is descriptive of the plant, or of its habits, to which they cling with great tenacity, and by which the plant is ever after known. Such are the "Pitcher-plant," "Love-lies-bleeding," "Sweet William," "Jack-in-the-pulpit," "None-so-pretty." So, too, of birds. The peasant christens them, like his flowers, after their habits.

The late civil war has given rise to many singular words. Some of these, in common use among our soldiers during the war, have since been dropped. Others have not only been preserved in our colloquial dialect, but have been transplanted to and adopted in foreign countries where the English language is spoken. Among the former are the words *contraband*, as applied to slaves, *bummer*, *copperhead*, *confederates*, *carpet-baggers*, *jay-hawker*, *greenback*, *monitor*, *ku-klux*, *skedaddle*, *skyugle*, &c.

In the mining districts of California and Nevada, many strange words and phrases have sprung into existence, some of

<sup>1</sup> The Philosophy of Slang, in *Macmillan's Mag.*, Vol. XXIX. p. 502.

which have so taken root that they are heard in the colloquial language of the towns and cities, and have even crept into the ephemeral literature of the Pacific States. By no writers has this peculiar idiom been so much employed as by Bret Harte and Mark Twain. In speaking of the language of the mining regions, the latter says: "The slang of Nevada is the richest and most infinitely varied and copious that ever existed anywhere in the world, perhaps, except in the mines of California in the 'early days.' It was hard to preach a sermon without it, and be understood."<sup>1</sup>

The term "Americanisms," as used in this Dictionary, will be found to include the following classes of words:—

1. Archaisms, *i. e.* old English words, obsolete, or nearly so, in England, but retained in use in this country.
2. English words used in a different sense from what they are in England. These include many names of natural objects differently applied.
3. Words which have retained their original meaning in the United States, although not in England.
4. English provincialisms adopted into general use in America.
5. Newly coined words, which owe their origin to the productions or to the circumstances of the country.
6. Words borrowed from European languages, especially the French, Spanish, Dutch, and German.
7. Indian words.
8. Negroisms.
9. Peculiarities of pronunciation.

This fourth edition contains about one-third more matter than the preceding. In preparing it, I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the following gentlemen, who have rendered me

<sup>1</sup> To any one desirous to become familiar with the slang of the mining regions of Nevada and California, we would recommend a perusal of chap. 47 of Mark Twain's "Roughing It," in which he relates the interview between Scotty Briggs and the clergyman. A notorious character named Buck Fanshaw having "passed in his checks," Scotty desired for him a funeral which "should be no slouch."



aid : to the Hon. J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL, of Hartford, for lists of words, together with examples of their use, and particularly for his etymologies of Indian words ; to the Hon. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, Professor WILLIAM EVERETT, and Mr. WILLIAM BOYD of Cambridge, for copious lists of words ; to the Rev. R. MANNING CHIPMAN, of New Lisbon, Conn., for annotations on the previous edition of this work and very copious lists of words ; to Messrs. CHARLES E. STRATTON of Boston, EDWARD SPENCER of Randallstown, Maryland, JOHN D. SEARS of Upper Sandusky, Ohio, G. H. CURTIS of New Orleans, Dr. F. C. CLARKE of Providence, Professor WILLIAM F. ALLEN of the University of Wisconsin, Mr. ALBERT R. COOKE of Chicago, and to Miss CHRISTINE LADD of Union Springs, New York, for lists of words and phrases.

At the end of the volume will be found an Addenda, containing words and phrases which were prepared too late for insertion in their proper places. Also a collection of Proverbs and of Similes ; and the names of the States and principal cities, accompanied by their vulgar or nicknames.

J. R. B.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.,  
November, 1877.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE first edition of this Dictionary was published in New York in 1848. It met with a quick sale, and soon passed out of print. Aware of its many imperfections, I began my preparations for a new edition before it had fully left the press. From that time to the day the last sheets of this edition left my hands for the printer, now ten years, I have been more or less occupied in its preparation. Nearly three years of this period I spent in the interior of the country, in the service of the United States as Commissioner on the Mexican Boundary; but, even there, I failed not to note the peculiarities of the familiar language of the frontier, and carefully recorded the words and phrases I met with for future use. This experience enabled me to collect the singular words occurring in prairie and frontier life, as well as those common to Texas, New Mexico, and California. Most of these have come from the Spanish, and are now fairly engrafted on our language.

The other alterations and improvements made in this edition consist in the addition of a very large number of words and phrases peculiar to the United States; so that it now contains probably twice as many as the first edition. The examples or illustrations from authors, showing the use of words, have also been greatly multiplied. This seemed desirable, as examples convey a far more correct idea of their meaning and use than a simple definition. The histories of words and their definitions have also been corrected and improved.

In the additions to this work, I have to acknowledge valuable contributions from several friends, who took an interest in the subject. To the Rev. WM. S. MURPHY, President of the University of Missouri, I am indebted for many words and phrases peculiar to the West; to Mr. JOHN GILMARY SHEA, for New York words; to Dr. A. L. ELWIN, of Philadelphia, for the use of a manuscript vocabulary of Americanisms collected by him; to Mr. JAMES MITCHELL, of Nantucket, for words in use in that island; to Professor GEO. C. SCHAEFFER, of Washington, for many terms of natural history, words relating to the arts, and Westernisms; and to Dr. FRANCIS LIEBER, of Columbia College, New York, for many sound remarks, of which I have availed myself in the pages of the work.

Large additions have been made to the common terms of plants, trees, and fruits of the United States, as well as of those which enter into our commerce. These, being familiar words of our language, seem as worthy of being noted and explained as others. For valuable contributions to this class of words, I am indebted to Dr. EDWARD FOREMAN, of Washington; while Mr. ALEX. J. COTHEAL, a merchant of New York, and well known in the field of Oriental literature, has kindly furnished me the common names of the trees, fruits, nuts, &c., which enter into our commerce.

In preparing the first edition of this work, I was at a loss what to include in the collection of words; and, preferring to err on the side of copiousness, admitted many words common to the colloquial language of England and this country, which have now been rejected to make way for pure Americanisms. Of the words so rejected there are nearly eight hundred. The following are examples: *above-board, Adam's ale, to advocate, afeard, afore, afterclaps, bamboozle, to bark one's shins, bobtail, bogtrotter, bolt-up-right, boozy, bo-peep, to bore, born days, bran new, brown study, by-the-by, to hold a candle, to catch a Tartar, caterwaul, catspaw, to chalk out, chink, chouse, chuffy, circumbendibus, clip-trap, clincher,*

*clout, cool, cosey, oowlick, crambo, criss-cross, cross-grained, crotchety, crowsfeet, curmudgeon, curry favor, to cut one's acquaintance, cut and run, cut a dash, dabster, dead alive, dawdle, demi'john, duds, Dick's hatband, dilly-dally, dog cheap, down in the mouth, driving at, dumpy, elbow grease, to feather one's nest, &c., &c.*

A good many such words have nevertheless been retained, on the principle that a word now used only in some out-of-the-way locality in England, but quite general here, may be regarded as a peculiarity of the English language as spoken in America, *i. e.* an Americanism; but, as it is often impossible to know with exactness to what extent a word is used in England, it is likely that many of these should properly have been omitted.

Many words common to the colloquial language both of England and America have been allowed to remain, because they have not yet been honored with a place in the current standard Dictionaries. Of these there are many which in the glossaries are ascribed to "various dialects," and which should be inserted in any general Dictionary of the English language which aims at completeness. Were such a work as the new English Dictionary projected by the Philological Society of London already in existence, the insertion of a large number of words of this class could have been dispensed with.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the present edition, while it does not wholly reject words of English origin, claims to be more strictly American than the first. At the same time, the first edition will still have a value of its own, as showing more fully how much of the colloquial language of England is retained in use in this country.

Due attention has been given to some valuable criticisms on the first edition, in a paper by the late Dr. Felix Flügel, entitled "*Die englische Philologie in Nordamerika*," which appeared in Gersdorf's Repertorium for 1852; also, to criticisms which appeared in the "Western Continent" newspaper of Philadelphia,



and the "Literary World" of New York, soon after the publication of the volume. Some excellent illustrations have been obtained from a paper on "Canadian English," by the Rev. A. Constable Geikie, read before the Canadian Institute, 28th of March, 1857, and printed in its Journal.

The first edition was translated into the Dutch language under the title of "*Woordenboek van Americanismen, etc. Bewerkt door M. Keijzer. Gorinchem, 1854,*" leaving out the quotations which illustrate the use of words. It was hoped that this work would furnish assistance in settling the etymology and meaning of some of the old Dutch words still used in New York; but it has proved of little use.

At the close of the book will be found a collection of American similes and proverbs, together with the abbreviations of the names of States, &c., which were inserted in the body of the first edition.

To my friend, Mr. WILLIAM W. TURNER, of Washington, I take pleasure in again making my acknowledgments for the valuable aid furnished me in the present as well as in the former edition, not only for the contribution of numerous words and illustrations, but for his correction and supervision of the whole work.

J. R. B.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., March, 1859.

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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IN venturing to lay before the public a Vocabulary of the colloquial language of the United States, some explanation may be necessary for the broad ground I have been led to occupy.

I began to make a list of such words as appeared to be, or at least such as had generally been called, Americanisms, or peculiar to the United States, and at the same time made reference to the several authors in whose writings they appeared; not knowing whether, in reality, they were of native growth, or whether they had been introduced from England. When this list had expanded so as to embrace a large number of the words used in familiar conversation, both among the educated as well as among the uneducated and rustic classes, the next object was to examine the dialects and provincialisms of those parts of England from which the early settlers of New England and our other colonies emigrated.

The provincialisms of New England are more familiar to our ears than those of any other section of the United States, as they are not confined within the limits of those States, but have extended to New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, which States have been, to a great extent, settled by emigrants from New England.

On comparing these familiar words with the provincial and colloquial language of the northern counties of England, a most striking resemblance appeared not only in the words commonly regarded as peculiar to New England, but in the dialectical pro-

nunciation of certain words, and in the general tone and accent. In fact, it may be said, without exaggeration, that nine-tenths of the colloquial peculiarities of New England are derived directly from Great Britain; and that they are now provincial in those parts from which the early colonists emigrated, or are to be found in the writings of well-accredited authors of the period when that emigration took place. Consequently, it is obvious that we have the best authority for the use of the words referred to.

It may be insisted, therefore, that the idiom of New England is as pure English, taken as a whole, as was spoken in England at the period when these colonies were settled. In making this assertion, I do not take as a standard the nasal twang, the drawling enunciation, or those perversions of language which the ignorant and uneducated adopt. Nor would I acknowledge the abuse of many of our most useful words. For these perversions I make no other defence or apology but that they occur in all countries and in every language.

Having found the case to be as stated, I had next to decide between a vocabulary of words of purely American origin, or one in which should be embraced all those words usually called provincial or vulgar, — all the words, whatever be their origin, which are used in familiar conversation, and but seldom employed in composition, — all the perversions of language, and abuses of words into which people, in certain sections of the country, have fallen, and some of those remarkable and ludicrous forms of speech which have been adopted in the Western States. The latter plan seemed the most satisfactory, and this I determined to adopt.

With so broad a ground, many words must necessarily be embraced which are to be found in the dictionaries of Drs. Johnson and Webster, with the remark that they are low or vulgar, or only to be heard in familiar conversation. Another class, not in the dictionaries referred to, is contained in the provincial glos-

saries of England. A third class, entirely distinct from the preceding, consists of slang words which are not noticed by lexicographers, yet are so much employed as to deserve a place in a glossary.

Such is the plan which I have thought most advisable to adopt, and which I hope will give satisfaction. In carrying out this plan, I have endeavored to give the most accurate definitions, citing the authorities in all cases where I have been enabled to find any. Except as regards words of purely American origin (*e. g.* those derived from the Indian languages and from the Dutch), I have generally kept aloof from etymologies and etymological discussions. These the reader will find in abundance — such as they are — in the works of Johnson, Todd, Webster, Worcester, and others.

Words of a provincial character, and such as have become obsolete in composition, are often of doubtful signification. Illustrations from well-known authors, wherein such words are employed, are of service in arriving at their true meaning. These have been employed in the present Glossary, and serve the double purpose of illustration, and of rendering the book more readable than if confined to a dry collection of definitions. This mode of showing the sense in which words have been employed by authors was first practised on a comprehensive scale by Dr. Johnson, whose labors are thereby greatly enhanced in value to the philologist; and has since been carried out more completely in Mr. Richardson's dictionary.

The class of words which are purely American in their origin and use, I have also attempted to illustrate, by extracts from American authors whose writings relate to that class of people among which these words are chiefly found. These books contain descriptions of country life, scenes in the backwoods, popular tales, songs, &c., in which the colloquial or familiar language of particular States predominates. The humorous writings of

Judge Haliburton of Nova Scotia give a tolerably correct though exaggerated specimen of the provincialisms of New England. The letters of Major Downing are of the same character, and portray the dialect of New England with less exaggeration.<sup>1</sup> There are no books in which the Western words and phrases are so fully exhibited; though all the works which aim to illustrate Western life contain more or less of the idioms peculiar to the people. Judge Hall, Mrs. Kirkland (Mary Clavers), the author of the *New Purchase*, Charles F. Hoffman, and various tourists, have displayed in their several works the peculiarities of the people of the West, and occasionally their language. Mr. Crockett, however, himself a native of that region, associating from infancy with its woodsmen, hunters, and farmers, whose language is full of quaint words and figures of speech, has unintentionally made us better acquainted with the colloquial language of the West than any other author.

I am also indebted to a series of books published by Messrs. Carey and Hart, called the "Library of Humorous American Works," which consist of a series of tales and adventures in the South-west and West, by Wm. T. Porter, editor of the "New York Spirit of the Times;" John S. Robb and J. M. Field, Esqs., of St. Louis, Missouri; the editor of the "New Orleans Picayune;" and some anonymous writers. In these several works, the drolleries and quaint sayings of the West are admirably incorporated into tales of the settlers, their manners and customs, vivid descriptions of Western scenery, political and dramatic scenes. We have no books which present so graphic an account of Western life, related in the exaggerated and metaphorical language peculiar to the people of that region.

<sup>1</sup> Among other books from which I have quoted examples of the use of words common to New England and the Northern States are Judd's "Margaret," the "Widow Bedott Papers," "The Biglow Papers" of James Russell Lowell, and the Sermons of Dow, Junior (Elbridge G. Page), "My Acquaintances and Betsy Bobbet's."

In Southern provincialisms, I find myself most deficient, having seen no books except Major Jones's "Courtship" and "Sketches," "Georgia Scenes," and "Sherwood's Gazetteer of Georgia," in which, however, a considerable number of local words are to be found.

The newspapers have afforded me many illustrations of the use of words, which I have not failed to make use of. These illustrations, it will be seen, are chiefly from the New York papers, viz. the "Commercial Advertiser," the "Tribune," and the "Herald," for the simple reason that I have been in the practice of reading them daily. When I met with a word or phrase peculiarly American, or one which was employed in a sense differing from the use of the same in England, it was at once noticed and secured. All our newspapers contain more or less colloquial words; in fact, there seems no other way of expressing certain ideas connected with passing events of every-day life, with the requisite force and piquancy. In the English newspapers, the same thing is observable, and certain of them contain more of the class denominated *slang* words than our own. The Whig papers throughout the United States employ certain political terms in advocating the principles of their party, and in denouncing those of their opponents. The Democratic papers pursue a similar course. The advocates and opponents of Abolition, Fourierism, &c., invent and employ many words peculiar to themselves. So with the religious sects: each new-fangled notion brings into existence some addition to our language, though that addition is not always an improvement.

The value of this Glossary would have been greatly enhanced, if, as is usual in the compilation of similar works, I had been able to avail myself of the assistance of persons residing in various parts of our country. No collection of words, professing to contain the colloquial language of the entire country, can approach any degree of completeness or correctness, without the

aid of many hands and heads. None but a native of New England, educated on her soil, and who has mingled with all classes of society, has the requisite familiarity with the words and phrases peculiar to her people. So with the Western and Southern provincialisms. One born and brought up where they are spoken, who has heard and used them when a boy, and grown up in their midst, can alone portray them in their true sense. The aid of such persons it was impossible to procure; and the words here brought together have been, with very few exceptions, collected by myself. The deficiencies and imperfections are such, therefore, as could not be avoided under the circumstances.

The words of Dutch origin, most if not all of which are used or understood in the city of New York and those portions of its vicinity colonized by natives of Holland, were furnished by Mr. ALEXANDER J. COTHEAL, a gentleman born and educated in New York, whose learning in other branches of philological science is well known to many. A few other words have been given me from time to time by other friends, who knew that I was making this collection. To all of these I am happy to express my acknowledgments.

When the work had advanced far towards completion, and one-half had been put in type, the occurrence of some terms common in political language, the exact meaning of which was not clear, led me to apply to my friend JOHN INMAN, Esq., editor of the New York "Commercial Advertiser," for aid. He readily complied with my request, and kindly furnished the definitions of several terms of daily occurrence in the political language of the day. I regret that I did not have his valuable aid in defining and illustrating the use of words and phrases which occur in the early part of this Glossary. The contributions of Mr. Inman are acknowledged where they appear.

To my friend Mr. WM. W. TURNER I am under great obligations for aid rendered me in preparing this work for the press.

Mr. Turner's extensive acquaintance with the European and Oriental languages, together with an unusual sagacity in philological criticism, have peculiarly fitted him to give aid in the preparation of a work like this. I have therefore submitted the whole to his supervision, and adopted his views in all my conclusions. At his suggestion, I have struck out many etymologies taken from standard dictionaries, which it was evident were wholly erroneous.

In noticing the words embraced in this Glossary, the reader will probably think that many have been admitted which ought not to have a place in a Dictionary of American Provincialisms. From what has already been said, it will be seen that it is very difficult to draw the line between what should be admitted and what excluded; and I have thought it better to err on the side of copiousness, than by too rigid a system of selection to run into the opposite extreme.

A careful perusal of nearly all the English glossaries has enabled me to select what appeared most desirable to embrace, and what to avoid, in an American book of a similar kind. Cant words, except such as are in general use, the terms used at gaming-houses, purely technical words, and those only known to certain trades, obscene and blasphemous words, have been discarded.

For a better understanding of the subject, as well as to show the importance of collecting and preserving the colloquial dialects of our country, I have prefixed to the Vocabulary some remarks on language, in which the reader will find that the study of dialects and provincialisms is considered as worthy the attention of philologists as the investigation of the language of literature.

J. R. B.

NEW YORK, 1848.





# INTRODUCTION.

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## DIALECTS OF ENGLAND.

THE most recent investigations in which the science of philology has been brought to bear on the English language have shown that it is of purely Gothic origin, descended through languages of which sufficient remains to make grammatical as well as etymological comparisons practicable. It is true that some have regarded it as a perfect mongrel, without any natural parent, compounded of various languages and dialects, Greek, Latin, Saxon, French, Welsh, &c., &c. But, although the language is very much mixed, it is a question whether it is not as pure, and as closely allied to the Anglo-Saxon and Mæso-Gothic, as the languages in the south of Europe are to the Latin. Or, in other words, it is probable that the English is not more impregnated with words of the Latin stock than the Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese are with words of the Teutonic stock.

The natural tendency of language is to improve ; and, when a people cannot express in a comprehensive manner a particular idea or shade of meaning, they either form a word to denote it from a root or roots already in the language, or borrow a word from other languages which expresses it already.

With regard to the English language, this last-mentioned process has been adopted to an extent which, while it has enriched our vocabulary with a vast number of terms, has, it must be confessed, greatly impaired its reproductive power. The original substratum of Anglo-Saxon speech has been overlaid with multitudes of common and conversational words from the French,

literary and ecclesiastical terms from the Latin, and technicalities from the Greek ; and the process is constantly going on. Yet, in spite of these immense accessions to its vocabulary, the structure of the English has remained in all essential respects the same from the period when it first became a language. Moreover, the number of foreign importations contained in our dictionaries gives by no means a correct idea of the number of such words which we actually make use of. The greater part of our household, colloquial, and poetical expressions are Saxon, and so are all those important words called particles, on which the whole structure of speech hinges ; whereas, an immense number of the words derived from other sources belong exclusively to the language of books, and many even to particular sciences.

There is another fact to be observed, which is that these different classes of words are not used in the same proportion by all members of society. Persons without education, and who are consequently not familiar with the language of literature, employ almost exclusively in their conversation the simple and expressive Saxon terms ; while persons belonging to the more favored classes of society supply the place of many of these terms by others derived from the language of books. The old words thus discarded, which are often far more expressive and more consonant to the genius of the language than the apparently more elegant novelties by which they are supplanted, are from that time considered as the exclusive property of the common people, and receive the name of *provincial*, *colloquial*, or *vulgar*.

But, notwithstanding all this, the common speech often enters largely into composition, and in some instances constitutes the chief excellence of a writer. In dramatic composition, the colloquial language predominates. In Shakespeare, we find every variety of diction of which the English language is susceptible, from the loftiest flights of the statesman and philosopher to the familiar language of the lowest of the people. In Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Shirley, and the other dramatic authors, we find the familiar idiom to be the most prevalent.

If we examine the literature of other countries, we shall find that the colloquial tongue has been employed in written com-

positions of a similar kind, and with equal success. In addition to Aristophanes and Plautus among the ancients, Cervantes may be mentioned as an example in Spain, and the writings of Rabelais and Molière in France. The colloquial dialect is generally more ancient than the literary language, as the latter is constantly changing, while the former remains nearly stationary.

If any person will take the trouble to examine the early dictionaries of the English language, or the dictionaries of which English forms a part, he will be surprised at the large number of words which have become so completely obsolete as to be undeserving a place in modern compilations. Even the English dictionary of Bailey, which at the time Dr. Johnson published his was the standard, abounds in words which are now never used in composition. This class of words was employed by authors from Chaucer's time, or about the year 1400, to the beginning of the seventeenth century. By the middle of that century, they had ceased to be used in books, but were preserved in dictionaries for a century longer. The great mass of them, however, are found in one or more of the numerous provincial dialects of England to the present day.

The dialects of the English language now spoken in England have existed from a very early period. It is not pretended by writers on the subject that any are of recent origin. "In early times," says Dr. Bosworth, "there was clearly a considerable dialectic variety in the writings of men residing in different provinces. The differences observable in the language of the most cultivated classes would be still more marked and apparent in the mass of population, or the less educated community. These, from their agricultural pursuits, had little communication with the inhabitants of other provinces; and, having few opportunities and little inducement to leave their own neighborhood, they intermarried among each other, and, from their limited acquaintance and circumscribed views, they would naturally be much attached to their old manners, customs, and language. The same cause operating from age to age would keep united the greater part of the population, or the families of the middle stations of life: it may, therefore, be well expected that much of the peculiarity of dialect prevalent in Anglo-Saxon times

is preserved even to the present day in the provincial dialects of the same districts. In these local dialects, then, remnants of the Anglo-Saxon tongue may be found in the least altered, most uncorrupt, and therefore its purest state.”<sup>1</sup>

In an ethnological point of view, the English dialects afford important materials for elucidating that portion of English history which relates to the early colonization of Great Britain; for, if history were silent on the subject, a philological test applied to the dialects of the country would show what nations contributed to its colonization.

The “Edinburgh Review” for April, 1844, in an article on the Provincialisms of the European Languages, gives the following results of an inquiry into the number of provincial words which had then been arrested by local glossaries:—

Shropshire . . . . .	1,903	Sussex . . . . .	371
{ Devonshire and Cornwall . . . . .	878.	Essex . . . . .	589
{ Devonshire (North) . . . . .	1,146	Wiltshire . . . . .	592
{ Exmoor . . . . .	370	{ Hallamshire . . . . .	1,568
Herefordshire . . . . .	822	{ Craven . . . . .	6,169
Lancashire . . . . .	1,022	North County . . . . .	3,750
Suffolk . . . . .	2,400	Cheshire . . . . .	903
Norfolk . . . . .	2,500	Grose and Pegge <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	3,500
Somersetshire . . . . .	1,204		<hr/> 30,687

“Admitting that several of the foregoing are synonymous, superfluous, or common to each county, there are nevertheless many of them which, although alike orthographically, are vastly dissimilar in signification. Making these allowances, they amount to a little more than 20,000; or, according to the number of English counties hitherto illustrated, to the average ratio of 1478 to a county. Calculating the twenty-six unpublished in the same ratio (for there are supposed to be as many words collected by persons who have never published them), they will furnish 36,428 additional provincialisms, forming in the aggregate 59,000 words in the colloquial tongue of the lower classes, which can, for the chief part, produce proofs of legitimate origin.”

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, p. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Set down as Metropolitan.

Since the above was written, a most important contribution to this department of literature has been made in the publication of "A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words, Obsolete Phrases, Proverbs, and Ancient Customs, from the fourteenth century. By J. O. Halliwell. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1847." This admirable work actually contains 50,000 words, a great portion of which are illustrated by extracts from manuscripts. It will be found by most persons to amply supply the place of the numerous separate glossaries for studying the dialects of England, while it affords indispensable assistance for the correct understanding of the early writers. A still later publication of the same description, and which has constantly been consulted with advantage in preparing the second edition of the present work, is the "Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English, containing words from the English writers previous to the nineteenth century, which are no longer in use, or are not used in the same sense, and words which are now used only in the provincial dialects. Compiled by Thomas Wright, Esq. 2 vols. 12mo. London, 1857."

As it does not fall within the scope of these inquiries to discuss the languages to which the English bears a relationship, we shall pass over these, and come at once to the Anglo-Saxon. This forms the basis of the English language, and is to be considered as the *mother-tongue*, upon which many words and phrases from other languages, at successive periods, during a space of fourteen centuries, have been engrafted.

The Saxons brought their language into Britain in the year 449, when the invasion under Hengist took place. What the language was at this period it is impossible to show, as no writings of the time have come down to us. It probably approached nearer to its immediate progenitor, the Low German and Mæso-Gothic, than the form it assumed several centuries later, when we first find written documents.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is true that the celebrated Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf is considered to be contemporary with Hengist. But its editor, Mr. Kemble, states that the poem as contained in the Cottonian MS., British Museum, is not so old; and there occur in it Christian allusions which fix this text at least at a period subsequent to A. D. 597.

The large number of invaders who followed Hengist compelled the ancient inhabitants to retire; and in about a century the whole country was formed into a Saxon kingdom, wherein their language took the place of the Celtic. This language, thus introduced and so firmly established, has been called *pure Saxon* by the learned Dr. Hickes in his “*Thesaurus Veterum Linguarum Septentrionalium*.”

The languages of the Angles and Saxons were closely allied to each other. In fact, from a comparison of the earliest specimens that have come down to us, it is evident that they were merely dialects of the same tongue, spoken by people living contiguous to each other. The other Gothic invaders or colonists of Britain, who have left traces of their language, are the Jutes of Jutland and the Friesians of Friesland.

The Danes made their first descent on the English coast in 787, and were soon repelled. Successive invasions followed; and, when Charlemagne compelled them to retreat before his victorious armies, they sought a refuge in Britain, laying waste the country and plundering wherever they came. The Saxons always got rid of them as soon as possible, either by force of arms or contributions of money. Yet in many instances they established colonies, and after 230 years of warfare they succeeded in raising a Danish king to the throne of England in the year 1017. His reign, however, was short; for in twenty-four years the Danish dynasty was extinct, and a Saxon king again succeeded.

This is the period where Dr. Hickes places the second stage of the Anglo-Saxon language, being that in which it was affected by the Danish invasions, receiving new words or dialectical changes. Mr. Forby, in his remarks on the dialect of East Anglia, says that no part of England was more completely overrun or longer occupied than this; but he denies that a number of words sufficiently large was imported to give a new color and character to the Saxon tongue.<sup>1</sup>

“The French element appeared in our language with the battle of Hastings (A. D. 1066), perhaps in a slight degree during

<sup>1</sup> Forby's *Introd. to the Vocab. of East Anglia*, p. 31.

the reign of Edward the Confessor.”<sup>1</sup> It is the dialect spoken in the northern parts of France, and denominated Norman-French, which has had the greatest influence upon the English language.

Those parts of Great Britain which have contributed most to our provincialisms are the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Scottish Borders. It was chiefly from these counties that New England was colonized; hence, their peculiarities of language are most numerous in the New England States. The provincialisms used in the districts referred to have been collected and published in Forby's Vocabulary of East Anglia, 2 vols. 12mo, London, 1830; Moor's Suffolk Words and Phrases, 12mo, London, 1823; Brockett's Glossary of North Country Words, with their etymology, 3d edition, 2 vols. 12mo, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1846; and Carr's dialect of Craven in the West Riding of York, 2 vols. 12mo, 2d edition, London, 1828.

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### AMERICAN DIALECTS.

DIALECTS originate in various ways. First, by the proximity of nations speaking different languages, in which case many words and phrases are borrowed from one into the other; witness the Scotch and Irish dialects of the English. Secondly, by migrations. This is the most fruitful and permanent source of dialects. We see its effects in the language of England; for the immigrations of various nations into Great Britain from the Saxons down to the period of the Norman conquest are yet distinctly marked in the dialects of that country.

In the United States, it is easy to point out causes which, in the course of a few generations, will materially affect the English language in the particular districts of country where those influences are at work. Dialects will spring up as marked as

<sup>1</sup> Latham on the English Language, p. 45. 1st edit.



those of Great Britain. A free intercourse may in some cases check the permanency of these dialects; but in those parts of the country aside from the great thoroughfares, where a dialect has once become firmly established, a thousand years will not suffice to eradicate it.

The State of New York was originally settled by the Dutch. The number of their colonists was never large, nor did they extend their settlements beyond the valley of the Mohawk and lands adjacent; yet we find even in this thickly settled State, after a lapse of two hundred years, that they have left evident traces on our spoken languages. In the cities of New York and Albany, many Dutch words have become incorporated into the common speech. In some of the inland villages of Dutch origin, the inhabitants still use the language of their fathers; and there are even individuals who never spoke any other.

The words so adopted by us embrace geographical names, — a class of words which the first colonists of a country or the primitive inhabitants themselves generally leave to their posterity or to the subsequent occupants. Many of the other words which the Dutch have left us are terms belonging to the kitchen. These have been preserved and handed down by cooks and domestic servants, until from constant use they are become familiar to all. Among these terms are *cookey*, *cruller*, *olykoke*, *spack* and *applejees*, *noodlejees*, *rullichies*, *koolslaa*, *pit*.

The terms for various playthings, holidays, &c., preserve among children their original Dutch names; as, *scup*, *snore*, *hoople*, *peevee*, *pile*, *pinkster*, *paas*. Other words confined to children are *pinky*, *terawchy*.

Articles of wearing apparel in some instances retain their Dutch names; as, *barracade*, *clockmutch*.

Besides these there are terms, the use of which is not confined to the districts originally colonized from Holland, but has been extended to New England and several of the Northern States, and even to Canada; such as *stoop*, a porch, *boss*, a master-workman, &c.

If a few Dutch colonists mingled with the English have been able to engraft so many words on our language, what may we not expect from the hundreds of thousands of Germans in the

State of Pennsylvania? There the German language will doubtless exist for centuries; for although they are situated in the midst of an English-speaking population, far more numerous than themselves, and although the government and laws are conducted through the English language, still the tendency of a people of common origin to cling together, — the publication of newspapers, almanacs, and books in German, — and the cultivation to some extent of German literature, will tend to preserve the idiom and nationality of the people. It is true the language is already much corrupted, and in the course of time it must give way to the English; but it will leave behind it an almost imperishable dialect as a memento of its existence. In the States of Ohio and Texas, where there are large settlements of Germans, a similar result must follow.

In the State of Illinois is a colony of Norwegians. These people before coming to America sent out an agent, who selected and purchased for them a large tract of land in one section of that State. They were accompanied by their clergyman and schoolmaster. They are thus kept together, and will for a long time preserve their language and nationality. But it must also eventually give way, after engrafting on the English language in that vicinity a Norwegian dialect.

There are large settlements of Welsh emigrants in the States of Pennsylvania and New York. In the latter, in Oneida County, one may travel for miles and hear nothing but the Welsh language. These people have their newspapers and magazines in their native tongue, and support many churches wherein their language alone is preached. The Welsh, however, are not in sufficient numbers, nor are they sufficiently isolated, to retain for any length of time their native form of speech; neither can they produce any sensible dialectical change in our language, owing to the great difference between it and their own. They will, however, add some words to it.

In the State of Louisiana, which was colonized by the French, and in Florida, which was colonized by the Spaniards, there are many words of foreign origin, scarcely known in the Northern States. The geographical divisions, the names of rivers, mountains, bays; the peculiarities of soil and climate; all that re-

lates to the cultivation of the earth, the names of fishes, birds, fruits, vegetables, coins, &c., &c., retain to a great extent the names given them by the first possessors of the country. The same classes of words are preserved in Lower Canada, where they were originally given by the French. We have adopted them into our own tongue, where they will for ever remain in use. Among the words of French origin are *bagasse, banquette, cache, chute, bodette, bayou, sault, levee, crevasse, habitan, portage, voyageur*.

The Spanish colonists in Florida, and our intercourse with Mexico and the Spanish main, were the means of introducing a few Spanish words. Since the annexation of Texas, New Mexico, and California, our vocabulary has received numerous additions from this source. These consist of geographical terms, as *arroyo, acequia, barranca, canyon, cienega, cieneguita, faralones, loma, mesa, mesilla, playa, ojo, sierra, jornada*; of names of articles of food, as *tortilla, frijoles, atole, pinole, chile*; and of various other terms, as *arriero, adobe, corral, chaparal, pistareen, rancho, rancharo, lariat, lasso, fandango, stampede, serape, tinaja, vamos, vaquero*.

The Indian terms in our language, as might be supposed, are numerous. First, as to geographical names. These abound in every State in the Union, though more in some States than in others. In New England, particularly on the coast, Indian names are very common. Nearly all the rivers, bays, and prominent landmarks bear them, as *Housatonic, Connecticut, Winnebepesaukie, Quinnebaug, Pawcatuck, Merrimack, Kennebec, Penobscot, Narragansett, Passamaquoddy, &c.* In other parts of the country, too, the rivers retain their aboriginal names, as the *Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Susquehanna, Roanoke, Altamaha, Chattahoochee, Alabama, &c., &c.* And the same may be said of the great lakes; as, *Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan*, as well as the lesser ones of *Seneca, Cayuga, Canandaigua, Oneida, Winipeg, Winnebago*; and also of nearly all the bays, mountains, and numerous geographical divisions and localities. Many of the aboriginal names, however, have been discarded for others less appropriate. In New England, the towns and villages were chiefly named after the towns in England from which the early

colonists emigrated. In the State of New York there is a strange discrepancy in the names of places. Before the Revolution, the people seemed to prefer the aboriginal names: not only the rivers, lakes, hills, &c., but many of the towns, received them. After the war, the names of distinguished statesmen and soldiers were applied to the new counties and towns. Besides geographical names, the Indian languages have supplied us with: 1st, many names of beasts and fishes, as *caribou*, *cayman*, *chipmuk*, *moose*, *ocelot*, *opossum*, *raccoon*, *skunk*, *manitee*, *squeteague*, *menhaden*, *pauhaugen*, *scuppaug*, *quahaug*, *terrapin*; 2d, of plants, as *persimmon*, *chincopin*, *pecan*, *tuckahoe*, *maize*, *kinnikinnik*, *tobacco*, —particularly preparations of them for food, as *samp*, *hominy*, *succotash*, *supawen*, from Indian corn, and, from the cassava plant, *mandioca* and *tapioca*; 3d, names of articles known to and used by the Indians, and which the Europeans did not possess, as *canoe*, *hammock*, *moccasin*, *wampum*, *sewan*, *wigwam*, *tomahawk*, *pemmican*, *tepee*, *toboggin*; and, 4th, names applied by Indians to themselves in their various relations, as *inca*, *cazique*, *cockarouse*, *mingo*, *sachem*, *sagamore*, *squaw*, *pappoose*.

The greatest perversions of the English language arise from two opposite causes. One of them is the introduction of vulgarisms and slang by uneducated people, who, not having the command of proper words to express their ideas, invent others for the purpose. These words continue among this class, are transmitted by them to their children, and thus become permanent and provincial. They are next seized upon by stump-speakers at political meetings, because they are popular with the masses. Next we hear them on the floor of Congress and in our halls of legislation. Quoted by the newspapers, they become familiar to all, and take their place in the colloquial language of the whole people. Lexicographers now secure them and give them a place in their dictionaries; and thus they are firmly engrafted on our language. The study of lexicography will show that this process has long been going on in England, and doubtless other languages are subject to similar influences.

But the greatest injury to our language arises from the perversion of legitimate words and the invention of hybrid and other inadmissible expressions by educated men, and particularly

by the clergy. This class is the one, above all others, which ought to be the conservators rather than the perverters of language. It is nevertheless a fact which cannot be denied, that many strange and barbarous words, to which our ears are gradually becoming familiar, owe to them their origin and introduction: among them may be mentioned such verbs as to *fellowship*, to *difficult*, to *eventuate*, to *resurrect*, to *doxologize*, to *happify*, to *donate*, to *funeralize*, &c., &c.

Political writers have made, and are constantly making, large additions to our stock of words and phrases. Alex. Hamilton's writings abound in newly coined expressions; many of which have been adopted by Dr. Webster, and have a place in his dictionary. But few, however, have come into general use, as his writings have not been widely diffused, and there is nothing to recommend them for adoption by scholars. Mr. N. P. Willis, also, has the reputation of inventing many new words, some of which, though not yet embodied in our dictionaries, are much used in familiar language. Judge Story has contributed his share of new words; but, as they are confined to legal treatises and works on the Constitution, they can never seriously affect the language.

Writers of political articles in the newspapers, stump-orators, and the members of legislative bodies, have added much to the English vocabulary. This class of words, though not remarkable for their elegance, are often highly expressive, and become more widely known than other classes. In many instances, however, their existence is but short. They often spring up with a party; and as the parties become extinct, or give place to new ones, the terms which express their peculiar ideas or doctrines likewise fall out of use. In this class may be included such terms as *Old Hunker*, *Bucktail*, *Federalist*, *Barnburner*, *Locofoco*, *Young Democracy*, *Democratic Republican*, *Know-nothing*, *Native American*, *Nullifier*, *Nullification*, *Coon*, *Coonery*, *Fire-eater*, *Black Republican*, *Silver-gray*, *Wire-puller*, &c.

There are words, however, in this class, which, having grown out of our peculiar institutions, are of a permanent nature. The origin of some of these is involved in obscurity, while that of others is well known. Sometimes a little incident trivial in

itself has brought into existence words which are extremely expressive, and which will remain as long as our institutions exist. In this class, we find *caucus*, *mass-meeting*, *buncombe* or *bunkum*, to *lobby*, to *gerrymander*, *mileage*, *gubernatorial*, *senatorial*, *squatter sovereignty*, *stamping ground*, *stump*, &c.

The peculiar physical features of the country — its animals, productions, aborigines, forest-life, &c. — have been a most fruitful source, from which have sprung perhaps the largest number of new words, as necessary and useful to ourselves as any derived from our Saxon ancestors. These terms are not used in England, for the simple reason that there they are not wanted. Although I cannot agree with Dr. Webster, that “we rarely find a new word introduced into a language which is entirely useless,” — for there are unquestionably thousands of words encumbering our dictionaries which might well be dispensed with, — yet there is no doubt that, in most instances, “the use of new terms is dictated by necessity or utility: sometimes to express shades of difference in signification, for which the language did not supply a suitable term; sometimes to express a combination of ideas by a single word, which otherwise would require a circumlocution. These benefits, which are often perceived, as it were, instinctively by a nation, recommend such words to common use, till the cavils of critics are silenced by the weight of authority.” — *Letter to J. Pickering*, p. 7.

Were we to classify the periods when names were applied to places in the State of New York, for example, we would call that in which the Indian names were applied the *aboriginal* period. This is as far back as it would be safe for ordinary mortals to go, leaving the “*antediluvian*” period to the second-sight of such seers as Mr. Rafinesque.<sup>1</sup>

The Indian names seem to have prevailed till the Revolution. Then came a burst of patriotism among the settlers, many of whom doubtless had served in the war, and every new place was christened with the names of the warriors and statesmen of the day. Thus arose *Washington County*, *Washington Village*, and *Washington Hollow*; *Jefferson County*, *Village*, *Lake*, &c. The State

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction to History of Kentucky.

of New York has thus perpetuated, in her towns and villages, the names of *Adams, Jay, Lafayette, Hamilton, Madison, Pinckney, Putnam, Pulaski, Schuyler, De Kalb, Steuben, Sullivan, Gates, Franklin, Greene, Monroe, Washington, Wayne, &c.* This may well be styled the *patriotic period*. The names of statesmen and generals, however, did not suffice for the patriotism of our early pioneers; for we find interspersed among them the names of *Freedom, Freetown, Freeport, Friendship, Independence, Liberty, Victory, Hopewell, Harmony, Concord, Union, &c.*

Next comes the *classical period*; for by what other term could we designate a period when towns were christened by the names of such men as *Homer, Virgil, Solon, Ovid, Cato, Euclid, Brutus, Pompey, Tully, Cicero, Cincinnatus, Aurelius, Scipio, Ulysses, Seneca, Hannibal, Hector, Romulus, Lysander, Manlius, Camillus, and Marcellus*; or of such places as *Athens, Sparta, Marathon, Troy, Corinth, Pharsalia, Palmyra, Utica, Smyrna, Attica, Macedonia, Ithica, Phœnicia, Tyre, Rome, and Carthage.*

Testimony to the piety (to say nothing of the good taste) of our forefathers is also afforded by the occurrence of such names, also in the State of New York, as *Eden, Paradise, Babylon, Nineveh, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, Jericho, Hebron, Goshen, Canaan, Bethany, Bethlehem, Bethpage, Sharon, Sodom, Siloam, Lebanon, Moriah, &c.* Of the names of European cities there are *Antwerp, Amsterdam, Berlin, Boston, Cambridge, Copenhagen, Dresden, Dundee, Florence, Frankfort, Geneva, Genoa, Hamburg, Hague, Lisbon, Leyden, Liverpool, Manchester, Madrid, Milan, Moscow, Naples, Oxford, Odessa, Parma, Palermo, Paris, Rome, Riga, Stockholm, Turin, Verona, Vienna, Versailles, Venice, and York.* There are towns in the same State named after nearly every country in Europe, as *Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Poland, Greece, Italy, Sardinia, Holland, and Wales.* There is a town of *Mexico, Chili, Peru, Lima, Havana, Cuba, Cairo, Alexandria, Memphis, Egypt, Arabia, Persia, China, Pekin, Canton, Delhi, Bombay, Manilla, Batavia, Java, and Yeddo.* Distinguished authors and statesmen of England are remembered in the towns of *Addison, Burns, Burke, Byron, Clarendon, Chesterfield, Dryden, Gray, Granville, Hampden, Hume, "Junius," Locke, Marlborough, Milton, Scott, Sheridan, Sidney, Spencer, Somers, and Walton.* But little fond-

ness is exhibited for dramatic authors, as the name of the greatest of them all has been forgotten; not even a pond, a hollow, or a swamp in the United States has been honored with the name of Shakspeare. If we were to classify all the names of places in the State of New York, we should be puzzled to find a place for the names of *Big Indian*, *Cow Neck*, *Half Way*, *Half Moon*, *Mud Creek*, *Mosquito Cove*, *Oblong*, *Owl Pond*, *Oxbow*, *Painted Post*, *Pitcher*, *Red Jacket*, *Rough and Ready*, *Success*, *Speonk*, *Sing Sing*, *Sugar Loaf*, *Yaphank*, and the like. The name of *Penn Yan* is said to have been manufactured by the first settlers, part of whom were from Pennsylvania and the rest from New England, by taking the first syllable from "Pennsylvania," and the last from "Yankee."

In California, many places have been absurdly named from some trifling incident connected with the first settlement; such are *Hangtown*, *Shirt Tail Canyon*, *Flapjack Canyon*, *Whiskey Gulch*, *Port Wine Diggins*, *Humbug Flat*, *Murderer's Bar*, *Jackass Gulch*, *Red Dog*, *Travellers' Rest*. Some of these retain their names even after they become populous villages. The following are sufficiently important to have post-offices, as appears from the official Postal Guide: *Big Trees*, *Big Pine*, *Dutch Flat*, *Big Oak Flat*, *Black Bear*, *Buck Eye*, *Hay Fork*, *Happy Camp*, *Horseshoe*, *Fair Play*, *Grizzly Flat*, *Gas Jet*, *Left Hand*, *Two Rocks*, *Uncle Sam*, *You Bet*, and *Zum Zum*.

But California is not alone in the oddness of the nomenclature of her towns. If any one curious in the subject will turn to the pages of the United States Postal Guide, he will find names quite as odd in some of the older States. In Arkansas will be found *Black Fish*, *Bright Star*, *Black Jack*, *Blue Ball*, *Big Bottom*, *Buck Horn*, *Due West*, *Evening Shade*, *Oil Trough*, *Opposition*, *Rocky Comfort*, *Social Hill*, *Sub Rosa*, *Ten Mile*, and *War Eagle*; while Illinois glories in her *Bible Grove*, *Lone Tree*, *Moonshine*, *Sugar Loaf*, *Fair Weather*, *Red Bud*, *Robin's Nest*, and *Blue Glass*. From the Western States we turned to Georgia, one of the old original "Thirteen" States, to see what her nomenclature is, and found some names quite as odd as those of the new States. Among them are *Air Line*, *Anvil Block*, *Cold Water*, *Cheery Log*,



*Dirt Town, Pine Log, Rising Fawn, Saw Dust, Social Circle, Talking Rock, Ty Ty, Wolf Skin, and War Woman.*

Strangely formed factitious words are much affected at the West, *abskize, absquatulate, catawampously, exflunctify, obscure, slantendicular, &c., &c.*; and in the South such onomatopoees as *keslosh, kesouse, keswollop, kewhollux, &c.*

The battle-fields of the Mexican war are commemorated in eighteen *Buena Vistas*, sixteen *Montereys*, nine *Palo Altos*, and three *Resacas*. And the names of its heroes have given birth to a host of *Taylors* and *Taylorvilles*, *Worths* and *Worthvilles*, *Pierces* and *Piercevilles*, besides *Piercetown, Pierceland, and Pierce Point*; also several *Polks* and *Polkvilles*, together with *Polktown, Polk City, Polk Patch, Polk Precinct, and Polk Run*; and two additional *Quitmans*. The officers who distinguished themselves in the late civil war, and the statesmen of the day, will not be forgotten as the new States fill up.

In consequence of the variety of origin of the names of States and towns, the formation of nouns from them to denote the native or citizen of such State or town is sometimes difficult and even impossible. Thus *New Yorker, Vermonter, Rhode Islander*, will do well enough; and so will *Virginian, Georgian, Philadelphian, Bostonian, Mobilian*; but *Buffaloan, Illinoisian, Ohioan*, are hardly admissible; while Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Arkansas refuse to yield to the process at all.

The class of new words and new meanings of old words which owe their origin to circumstances or productions peculiar to the United States, such as *ark, backwoods, backwoodsmen, breadstuffs, barrens, blaze, bottoms, broad-horn, buffalo-robe, cane-brake, cypress-brake, clearing, corn-broom, corn-shucking, deadening, diggings, dug-out, flat-boat, hog-wallow, husking, interval, location, pine-barrens, prairie, pre-emption, reservation, salt lick, savannah, snag, sawyer, squatter, &c.*, are necessary additions to the language.

The metaphorical and other odd expressions used first at the West, and afterwards in other parts of the country, often originate in some curious anecdote or event, which is transmitted from mouth to mouth, and soon made the property of all. Political writers and stump speakers perform a prominent part in the invention and diffusion of these phrases. Among these may

be mentioned *to cave in, to acknowledge the corn, to flash in the pan, to bark up the wrong tree, to wake up the wrong passenger, to pull up stakes, to be a caution, to fizzle out, to flat out, to peter out, to fix his flint, to be among the missing, to give him Jessy, to see the elephant, to fly around, to spread one's self, to tucker out, to use up, to walk into, to cotton, to hifer, to chisel, to slope, to lobby, to gerry-mander, to splurge, &c., &c.*

Our people, particularly those who belong to the West and South, are fond of using intensive and extravagant epithets, both as adjectives and adverbs, as *awful, powerful, monstrous, dreadful, mighty, almighty, all-fired, &c.*; while euphemistic oaths are one of the characteristics of the Yankee dialect.

The words *bankable, boatable, dutiable, mailable, mileage*, are well formed and useful terms, which have been generally adopted by those who have occasion to make use of them. But the words *dubersome, disremember, decedent, docity*, and the like, can hardly be called necessary additions to our language.

There is a diversity in the pronunciation of certain words in different parts of the United States, which is so perceptible that a native of these particular districts may be at once recognized by a person who is observant in these matters. Residents of the city of New York are perhaps less marked in their pronunciation and use of words than the residents of any other city or State, the reason of which is obvious. The population is so fluctuating, so many people from every part of the country, as well as from England, Scotland, and Ireland, are congregated there, who are in daily contact with each other, that there is less chance for any idiom or peculiarity of speech to grow up. Nevertheless, grammatical inaccuracies are far from uncommon in the speech of the wealthier classes, and slang is cultivated to an increasing extent by the "rowdy" portion of the population.

The large number of educated men in New England, her admirable schools and higher institutions of education, have had a powerful influence in moulding the language of her people. Yet, notwithstanding this fact, in Boston and other towns in Massachusetts, there exist some glaring errors in the vulgar speech. There are peculiarities also to be observed in the literary language of the Bostonians. The great extent to which

the scholars of New England have carried the study of the German language and literature for some years back, added to a very general neglect of the old masterpieces of English composition, have had the effect of giving to the writings of many of them an artificial, unidiomatic character, which has an inexpressibly unpleasant effect to those who are not habituated to it.

The agricultural population who live in the interior of New England have a strongly marked provincial dialect, by which they may be distinguished from the people of every other part of the Union. The chief peculiarity is a drawling pronunciation, sometimes accompanied by a speaking through the nose, as *eend* for *end*, *dawg* for *dog*, *Gawd* and *Go-od* for *God*, &c. Before the sounds *ow* and *oo*, they often insert a short *i*, which we will represent by the letter *y*; as, *kyow* for *cow*, *vyow* for *vow*, *tyoo* for *too*, *dyoo* for *do*, &c., &c. The numerous words employed in New England which are not heard in other parts of the country are mostly genuine old words still provincial in the north of England: very few are of indigenous origin.

A very common mispronunciation in New England is in such words as *New*, *Tuesday*, *Dew*, *Duke*, where the vowel-sound in *stoop* is given for the vowel-sound in *few*, thereby pronouncing them *Noo*, *Toosday*, *Doo*, *Dook*. This error among us is noticed by all English people, who are very particular in giving these and similar words their correct pronunciation. The educated in the Middle States pronounce these words correctly.

Among some of the Western people there are strange ideas regarding the use of certain words, which has led the mock-modest to reject them and substitute others. Thus, to speak of the names of animals only, the essentially English word *bull* is refined beyond the mountains, and perhaps elsewhere, into *cow-creature*, *male-cow*, and even *gentleman-cow*! A friend who resided many years in the West has told me of an incident where a gray-headed man of sixty doffed his hat reverently and apologized to a clergyman for having used inadvertently in his hearing the plain Saxon term. *Mule sheep*, *male hog*, &c., are of a piece with the preceding, to which we may add *rooster*, *he biddy*, *game chicken*, &c.

The chief peculiarity in the pronunciation of the Southern and Western people is the giving of a broader sound than is proper to certain vowels ; as, *whar* for *where*, *thar* for *there*, *bar* for *bear*. *Ear* and *here* are both pronounced like *year* ; *house*, *about*, &c., have a pronunciation approaching to *hoose*, *aboot*, &c. ; and the final *r* is omitted, as *you do* for *your door*, &c.

In the following table of words incorrectly pronounced, such as belong to New England are designated by the letters N. E. ; those exclusively Western, by the letter W. ; the Southern words, by S. ; the rest are common to various parts of the Union. In this attempt at classification there are doubtless errors and imperfections ; for an emigrant from Vermont to Illinois would introduce the provincialisms of his native district into his new residence. Many of these inaccuracies are also heard in England.

actilly	for actually.	curous	for curious.
airn	„ earn.	cupalo	„ cupola.
airy	„ area.	curchy	„ curtesy.
allers	„ always, S. W.	cuss	„ curse.
arethmetic	„ arithmetic.	dar	„ dare, W.
arrant	„ errand.	darter	„ daughter.
arter	„ after.	deef	„ deaf.
ary	„ e'er a.	dew	„ do, N. E.
attackted	„ attack'd.	deestric	„ district, N. E.
anywheres	„ anywhere.	desput	„ desperate, N. E.
bachelor	„ bachelor.	dooz	„ does, N. E.
bar	„ bear, W.	drap	„ drop, S.
becase	„ because.	dreffle	„ dreadful, N. E.
bellowses	„ bellows.	dribble	„ dribblet.
ben	„ been, N. E.	drowned	„ drown'd.
bile	„ boil.	druv	„ drove.
bimeby	„ by and by.	dubous	„ dubious.
bust	„ burst.	eend	„ end.
caired	„ carried, N. E.	everywheres	„ everywhere.
caze	„ because.	fer	„ for.
cheer	„ chair.	forrerd	„ forward, N. E.
chimibly	„ chimney.	fust	„ first.
chist	„ chest, N. E.	gal	„ girl.
clar	„ clear, W.	gin	„ given.
closte	„ close.	gineral	„ general.
considable	„ considerable.	git	„ get.
cotch'd	„ caught, W.	gownd	„ gown.
crick	„ creak.	grievous	„ grievous.
critter	„ creature.	gwine	„ going, S.
cunle	„ colonel.	har	„ hair, W.

<b>bath</b>	<b>for hearth, S.</b>	<b>ruff</b>	<b>for roof, N. E.</b>
<b>bankecher</b>	„ handkerchief.	<b>sarce</b>	„ sauce.
<b>hender</b>	„ hinder.	<b>sarcer</b>	„ saucer.
<b>blst</b>	„ hoist.	<b>sarve</b>	„ serve.
<b>bolt</b>	„ hold.	<b>sartin</b>	„ certain, N. E.
<b>buff</b>	„ hoof.	<b>sass</b>	„ sauce, N. E.
<b>bull</b>	„ whole, N. E.	<b>sassy</b>	„ saucy.
<b>hum</b>	„ home, N. E.	<b>scace</b>	„ scarce, W.
<b>humblly</b>	„ homely, N. E.	<b>schollard</b>	„ scholar, S. W.
<b>idea</b>	„ idea, S.	<b>sen</b>	„ since.
<b>ile</b>	„ oil.	<b>shet</b>	„ shut, S.
<b>injine</b>	„ engine.	<b>shuk</b>	„ shook, W.
<b>innards</b>	„ inwards.	<b>sich</b>	„ such.
<b>inter</b>	„ into.	<b>skeart</b>	„ scared, S. W.
<b>innemy</b>	„ enemy.	<b>sorter</b>	„ sort of.
<b>janders</b>	„ jaundice.	<b>smaart</b>	„ smart, S.
<b>jedge</b>	„ judge, N. E.	<b>spettacle</b>	„ spectacle.
<b>jest</b>	„ just.	<b>spile</b>	„ spoil.
<b>jine</b>	„ join.	<b>spose</b>	„ suppose.
<b>jiste</b>	„ joist.	<b>squinch</b>	„ quench.
<b>keer</b>	„ care.	<b>stan</b>	„ stand.
<b>ketch</b>	„ catch.	<b>star</b>	„ stair, W.
<b>kin</b>	„ can.	<b>steeple</b>	„ staple, W.
<b>kittle</b>	„ kettle.	<b>stiddy</b>	„ steady.
<b>kiver</b>	„ cover.	<b>stun</b>	„ stone, N. E.
<b>larn</b>	„ learn.	<b>streech</b>	„ stretch, W.
<b>larnin</b>	„ learning.	<b>stupenduous</b>	„ stupendous.
<b>lawth</b>	„ loath.	<b>süthin</b>	„ something, N. E.
<b>leetle</b>	„ little.	<b>tech</b>	„ touch.
<b>lieves</b>	„ lief.	<b>tend</b>	„ attend.
<b>mash</b>	„ marsh.	<b>tell'd</b>	„ told, N. E.
<b>million</b>	„ melon.	<b>tew</b>	„ to, N. E.
<b>mischievious</b>	„ mischievous.	<b>thsr</b>	„ there, W.
<b>mountanious</b>	„ mountainous.	<b>tole</b>	„ told.
<b>naaink</b>	„ nothing, L. I.	<b>fossel</b>	„ tassel.
<b>nary</b>	„ ne'er a.	<b>tuck</b>	„ took.
<b>nigger</b>	„ negro.	<b>torectly</b>	„ directly, S.
<b>nuss</b>	„ nurse.	<b>tremenduous</b>	„ tremendous.
<b>ole</b>	„ old.	<b>twiste</b>	„ twice.
<b>öny</b>	„ only, S.	<b>umberell</b>	„ umbrella.
<b>onst</b>	„ once.	<b>valeation</b>	„ valuation.
<b>pint</b>	„ point.	<b>varmint</b>	„ vermin, W.
<b>pooty</b>	„ pretty.	<b>wal</b>	„ well, N. E.
<b>punkin</b>	„ pumpkin.	<b>whar</b>	„ where, W.
<b>pus</b>	„ purse, N. E.	<b>wünt</b>	„ won't, N. E.
<b>racket</b>	„ rocket.	<b>wünst</b>	„ once, W.
<b>rale</b>	„ real.	<b>wüs</b>	„ worse.
<b>rayley</b>	„ really.	<b>yaller</b>	„ yellow.
<b>rayther</b>	„ rather.	<b>year</b>	„ ear, S.
<b>rench</b>	„ rinse.	<b>yere</b>	„ here, S.
<b>rheumatiz</b>	„ rheumatism.	<b>yourn</b>	„ yours.

Americanisms exhibit themselves, not in the use of peculiar words and pronunciations alone, but also in some points of grammar. Thus, to mention a few:—

The termination *-ity* for abstract nouns is preferred in many cases to the English *-ness*; so that we have, for instance, such words as *accountability*, instead of *accountableness*; *obtusity* for *obtuseness*, &c. Of a like nature are *rendition* for *rendering*, *reservation* for *reserve*.

The terminations *-er* and *-est*, which indicate the degrees of comparison of adjectives, are often discarded for the adverbs *more* and *most*, even before monosyllables, contrary to good English usage. And the possessive relation is often denoted by the preposition *of*, where the termination *'s* would be neater and more idiomatic.

The influence of the French language seems to be visible, not only in the preceding instances, but also in the use of the definite article before the names of diseases; as, *the* gout, *the* consumption, *the* headache, *the* erysipelas, &c.

It may be owing to the influence of the German language, in which the adverbs are nothing but apocopated adjectives, that the adjectival ending is so often omitted by vulgar speakers; as, "I have got wet *bad*;" "See that you do it *good*;" "He'll take cold *sure*."

On the other hand, it seems owing to the teachings of some priggish pedagogue, who had learned that "adverbs qualify verbs," and knew nothing beyond it, that adverbs are now often employed where idiomatic usage requires an adjective; as, "I feel very *badly*;" "You look *charmingly*," &c. So that we may expect soon to hear, "She seems *ignorantly*;" "He became quite *crazily*," &c.; and to be unable any longer to make the distinction between "He feels *warmly*" and "He feels *warm*." The ladies seem more especially to affect this form of speech, which is more common at the South than at the North; whence it is likely that it originated in a Southern boarding-school. The persons who use it are not aware that it is really the person or thing which is qualified in these cases, and not the action or state of being.

Among the American peculiarities of style, one of the most

remarkable is a tendency to exaggeration. "The use of extravagant terms," says Dr. Lieber, in one of his letters to me on the subject, "is very common. These are often used by deficiently educated persons who edit newspapers, and more frequently by the same class of people when speaking in public. In the South and West, this custom prevails to a greater extent than at the North. 'This is the finest cow in the State of South Carolina,' observes one. 'The handsomest woman south of the Potomac,' says another. And a man who kept a country school with ten small scholars was said to be making 'bushels of money' by it."

This sort of exaggeration frequently assumes the form of what in England is very appropriately termed "fine writing," but which with us is better known as "highfaluten." Thus, a Western critic, speaking of the acting of a Miss Logan, says the way in which she chanted the *Marseillaise* was "terrible in its intensity," and that the impression made "must create for her a name that will never die." This, however, "does not begin" with Miss Wyatt, whose performances at Springfield, Illinois, are thus described in a criticism in one of the papers of that city:—

"Illumined by the lyric muse, she is magnificent. All nerve, all palpitantion, her rounded form is the fittest setting for her diamond soul! She has grace which is more than beauty, and distinction which adorns still more than grace. She appears the incarnation of genius!—it struggles within her!—inspiration quivers down her snow-white arms, and trembles on her fingers' ends,—passion wrestles in her quivering frame, and shudders through her limbs. Her soul flickers in every accent, and looms up in every pantomime, while serene smiles play about her mouth. Her drapery follows her gestures,—her gestures her passions. Every attitude is a model, every pose is a classic statue."

"The very opposite," says Dr. Lieber, "is the case at present in England. There has been no period and no country in which perspicuity, simplicity, and manliness of style are so general as at present in English Reviews; even newspapers, *e. g.* the "London Spectator," are models of these attributes of a good

style. Monckton Milnes, M. P., told me he had not the least doubt but that the House of Commons of the present day would not stand the eloquence of Fox, Sheridan, or Burke. I asked, 'What would they do?' 'The members would instantly leave their seats,' was the reply. Mr. Milnes also spoke of several American writers whose style was correct; still, he could always detect some florid expression characteristic of their people."

Before closing these observations on American provincialisms, I should do injustice to previous writers on the same subject, not to speak of their works. The earliest of these, as far as my knowledge extends, is that of Dr. Witherspoon. In a series of essays entitled "The Druid," which appeared originally in a periodical publication in 1761, he devotes numbers 5, 6, and 7 of these essays, about twenty pages in all, to Americanisms, perversions of language in the United States, cant phrases, &c. They were afterwards published in his collected works, in 4 vols. 8vo, Philadelphia, 1801, and may be found in the fourth volume.

The most important work of the kind is that of the late Hon. John Pickering. He began with an article in the "Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," Boston. This was soon after enlarged and published in a separate volume entitled "*A Vocabulary, or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America. To which is prefixed an Essay on the Present State of the English Language in the United States.*" Boston, 1816. pp. 206. (Containing about 520 words.) This valuable and interesting work received much attention, and in the following year appeared a pamphlet, entitled "*A Letter to the Hon. John Pickering, on the Subject of his Vocabulary, or Collection of Words and Phrases supposed to be peculiar to the United States.*" By Noah Webster. 8vo. Boston, 1817. pp. 69.

In the Transactions of the Albany Institute, 1830, Vol. I., is an article entitled "*Notes on Mr. Pickering's Vocabulary, &c., with Preliminary Observations.*" By T. Romeyn Beck. In Mr. Sherwood's "*Gazetteer of Georgia*" is a glossary of words provincial in the Southern States. The latest work on provincialisms, but chiefly of errors in grammar, is "*A Grammatical*



*Corrector, or Vocabulary of the Common Errors of Speech ; alphabetically arranged, corrected, and explained for the Use of Schools and Private Individuals.*" By Seth T. Hurd. 12mo. Philadelphia, 1847.<sup>1</sup>

Since the publication of the first edition of this work, there have been published two additions of a work entitled "*A Collection of College Words and Customs.*" By B. H. Hall. 12mo. Cambridge. The last edition in 1856. This is a very complete work in its way, and contains many Americanisms which originated at Colleges. An excellent little volume, by Dr. A. L. Elwyn of Philadelphia, entitled "*Glossary of Supposed Americanisms,*" has also appeared. This is a useful work, and shows how many of our supposed Americanisms are really English.

As the charge has been frequently made against us by English critics of perverting our vernacular tongue, and of adding useless words to it, it will not be out of place to state here that, in the belief of the author, the English language is in no part of the world spoken in greater purity by the great mass of the people than in the United States. In making this assertion, he does not depend wholly on his own observation : it has repeatedly been made by intelligent Englishmen who have travelled in the United States, and had an opportunity of judging. On this subject, the author of an English work, entitled the "*Backwoods of Canada,*" has the following judicious remarks :—

"With the exception of some few remarkable expressions, and an attempt at introducing fine words, the lower order of Yankees have a decided advantage over our English peasantry in the use of grammatical language : they speak better English

<sup>1</sup> In preparing this work, I have examined all the English provincial glossaries, and the principal English dictionaries ; which it was necessary to do, in order to know what words and phrases were still provincial in England. Many of the facts in that portion of the Introduction which treats of English dialects have been drawn from similar essays appended to the several glossaries. But I am chiefly indebted to the enlarged Preface to Dr. Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, which presents the best historical analysis extant of the English language ; and to the admirable and later work of Professor Latham, "*The English Language,*" London, 1841, which is unquestionably the most valuable work on English philology and grammar which has yet appeared.

than you will hear from persons of the same class in any part of England, Ireland, or Scotland ; a fact that we should be unwilling to allow at home." — p. 83.

The Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, President of Princeton College, born and educated in Scotland, made a similar remark in 1784. In an essay on the language, he says : —

"The vulgar in America speak much better than the vulgar in Great Britain, for a very obvious reason ; namely, that being much more unsettled, and moving frequently from place to place, they are not so liable to local peculiarities either in accent or phraseology." — *Works*, Vol. IV. p. 281.

The "London Quarterly Review," in noticing Silliman's "Travels in England," quotes his remark on the use of the English language in England and in America, wherein the Professor insists that it is "*more correctly spoken* at this time (1805) by the mass of the Americans than by the mass of the English nation." "This assertion," adds the reviewer, "is founded upon a common and very easy mistake as to the nature of provincial dialects, and upon a curious fact in the history of language. There are no provincial dialects in America : emigrants from all parts of Great Britain have met there, and intermixed with each other, and with natives of the country. The peculiarities of dialect have necessarily been melted down into the general speech, which is common English ; and this is the language, therefore, which all children learn as their mother tongue. The low-bred Londoner does not transmit his vulgar shibboleth, and the child of the Northumbrian is free from the *burr* which sticks in the throat of his father. Dialects can only be preserved by collective bodies speaking the language which they acquired in their youth ; they cannot therefore continue in promiscuous colonies." — Vol. 15, p. 61.

We cannot say as much, however, in favor of our literary dialect. The ripest scholars among us acknowledge the fact that in the best authors and public speakers of Great Britain there is a variety in the choice of expressions, a correctness in the use of the particles, and an idiomatic vigor and raciness of style to which few or none of our writers can attain. The unfortunate tendency to favor the Latin at the expense of the Saxon ele-

ment of our language, which social and educational causes have long tended to foster in the mother country, has with us received an additional impulse from the great admixture of foreigners in our population. It is not likely that the pure old idiomatic English style can ever be restored in this country ; but there is no good reason to doubt that the fusion of the present rather heterogeneous elements of which our society is composed will result in the production of a style and a literature which will also have their beauties and their merits, although fashioned after a somewhat different model.

**AMERICAN WORDS AND PHRASES.**



# DICTIONARY

OF

## AMERICAN WORDS AND PHRASES.

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### A.

**A 1.** The highest classification of a vessel on Lloyd's list. Sometimes "copper-bottomed" is added. Years ago it was common to see the mark appended to the name of a vessel in an advertisement for freight or passengers. So far the term and its use are English; but, in a commercial country, the use of such terms is often extended beyond their original application.

It is well known to those who are in turn well known to Stewart, and who stand on his books rated *A No. 1* for the length of their bills, that the fitting out a young lady nowadays for a winter season in town, or a summer season at a watering-place, assimilates more nearly to preparing a vessel for a voyage around the world than any other analogous undertaking. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

The Niagara, New Orleans, and Louisville packet is one of the most magnificent steamers now running the river. Her interior arrangements are complete, and her officers *A No. 1*. — *Western Paper*.

Got a prime nigger, said the slave-dealer; an *A number one* cook and no mistake! Picked her up cheap. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 313.

**Abergoin.** The term "aborigines" is corrupted by some of the illiterate people of the West into *Abergoins* or *Abrogans*.

**Abisselfa.** A, by itself, A. It will be recollected by many that in the olden time the first letter of the alphabet was denominated "abisselfa" when it formed a syllable by itself, as in the word *able*. The scholar, in spelling the word, was taught to say, "a, by itself, a (rapidly, *abisselfa*), b, l, e, ble, able." We derive this word and the use of it from England, where it is used in Suffolk county. See Moor's Glossary.

**To abolitionize.** To convert to the doctrines of the abolitionists.

**Abolitiondom.** Said in the Confederate States, during the late civil war, of the loyal States.

They [the people of Tennessee] cannot be sold to *Abolitiondom*. — *Knoxville, Tennessee Register*, 1867.

**About Right.** To do a thing *about right* is to do it well.

I fell foul of the old mare; and if I didn't give it to her *about right*, then there 's none o' me, that 's all. — *New England Stories*.

**Above one's Bend.** Out of one's power. A common expression in the Western States. *Above one's huckleberry* is a vulgarism of the same signification.

I shall not attempt to describe the curiosities at Peale's Museum; it is *above my bend*. — *Crockett, Tour down East*.

**Above Par.** A term originally applied to stocks, but often transferred to other things which are superior; as, "This horse is above par;" "These goods are above par;" meaning that they are above the ordinary standard, better than common.

**Above Snakes.** Exaggerated cant for "from the ground," or more than above the ground.

Those two tall Kentuckians, with their tufted chins, somewhere about seven feet *above snakes*. — *Wortley's Travels in the United States*.

**To absquatulate.** To run away, to abscond. A factitious vulgarism.

W—— was surrendered by his bail, who was security for his appearance at court, fearing he was about to *absquatulate*. — *N. Y. Herald*, 1847.

A railroad station-master at Oakdale has *absquatulated* with funds belonging to the railroad and various individuals. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Hope's brightest visions *absquatulate* with their golden promises before the least cloud of disappointment, and leave not a shimplaster behind. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 309.

**According to Gunter.** Gunter was a distinguished arithmetician, and the inventor of a chain and scale for measuring. The Laws of Rhode Island, both colonial and recent, referring to measures, say, "All casks shall be gauged by the rule commonly called 'gauging by Gunter.'" This refers to the instrument called "Gunter's Slide-rule," adapted for gauging. Hence any thing correctly and properly done is said to be "according to 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*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The expression "according to Hoyle" is also common; and an old fellow, who never played a game of whist in his life, always said "according to *Hodge*."

**Account.** "These hogs are of *no account*," meaning of no value. The word is used in the West to the exclusion of other shades of meaning. See *No Account*.

**Accountability.** The state of being accountable. In England, the form *accountableness* is used. The same difference is observable in a number of words.

**Acequia.** (Span.) The irrigating ditches used in Texas and New Mexico are called *Acequias*. The larger or principal one, which supplies the smaller, is called the *Acequia Madre*, or main ditch. The word is sometimes spelled *azequia* or *zequia*.

As the mustang sprang over the *zequia*, the flowing skirt of the manga was puffed forward. — *Mayne Reid, The War Trail*.

**To acknowledge the Corn.** An expression of recent origin, which has now become very common. It means to confess or acknowledge a charge or imputation. The following story is told as the origin of the phrase : —

Some years ago, a raw customer, from the upper country, determined to try his fortune at New Orleans. Accordingly he provided himself with two flat-boats, — one laden with corn and the other with potatoes, — and down the river he went. The night after his arrival he went up town, to a gambling-house. Of course he commenced betting, and, his luck proving unfortunate, he lost. When his money was gone, he bet his "truck ;" and the corn and potatoes followed the money. At last, when completely cleaned out, he returned to his boats at the wharf ; when the evidences of a new misfortune presented themselves. Through some accident or other, the flat-boat containing the corn was sunk, and a total loss. Consoling himself as well as he could, he went to sleep, dreaming of gamblers, potatoes, and corn. It was scarcely sunrise, however, when he was disturbed by the "child of chance," who had arrived to take possession of the two boats as his winnings. Slowly awakening from his sleep, our hero, rubbing his eyes and looking the man in the face, replied: "Stranger, *I acknowledge the corn*, — take 'em; but the potatoes you *can't* have, by thunder!" — *Pittsburg Commercial Advertiser*.

The Evening Mirror very naively comes out and *acknowledges the corn*, admits that a demand was made, &c. — *New York Herald*, June 27, 1846.

Enough, said the Captain. I'm hoaxed, I'm gloriously hoaxed. *I acknowledge the corn*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 80.

None of my enterprises, however, have been omitted; and, though a portion of my "Confessions" may by some be considered injudicious, I prefer frankly to *acknowledge the corn* wherever I have had a hand in plucking it. — *P. T. Barnum*.

**Across Lots.** By short cuts, in the quickest manner.

I swore in Nauvoo, when my enemies were looking me in the face, that I would send them to hell *across lots* if they meddled with me. — *Speech of Brigham Young*, 1857.



**Acting.** Acting as; fulfilling the duties; holding the position of. It is said of one who, not formally inducted into an office or position, performs the duties of it *ad interim*; as "Acting Governor," "Acting Pastor," &c.

**Action.** An amusing article appeared in the "National Intelligencer," Washington, in 1846, on the abuse of this word. The writer says:—

"The *proceedings* of Congress; the *decision* of Congress, or either House; the *vote* of the Senate or of the House, preliminary or final; the *consideration* of a bill or measure; the *signature* of the President after a bill has passed both Houses; or the *sanction* or *approval* of the President,—these are modes of expression no longer known. The words I underscore have disappeared—gone for ever, it would seem. Nobody hears of them more. It is the *action* of the House, or the House taking *action*; the *action* of the Senate, or the Senate taking *action*; or what *action* will the House take, or what *action* will the Senate take; or both Houses are waiting for the *action* of the President."

**Adam and Eve.** (*Aplectum hyemale*.) Putty root, so called from the bulb of the preceding year being always connected with the new one.

**To admire.** 1. To wonder at; to be affected with slight surprise. — *Ray*.

In New England, particularly in Maine, the word is used in this sense. Some of the old English writers so employed it.

I perceive these lords  
At this encounter do so much *admire*,  
That they devour their reason. — *Shakspeare*.

2. To like very much. This verb is often and very absurdly used in New England in such expressions as, "I should *admire* to see the President."

**Adobies.** (Span. *adobes*.) Sun-baked brick used for building houses, fortifications, and making enclosures, in Texas, New Mexico, &c.

The large and economical *adobe* brick, hardened in the sun and without fire, supersedes other materials for walls and fences in this dry atmosphere [that of the great Plains], and, as in Syria and Egypt, resists decay for centuries. — *W. Gilpin in Nat. Intel.*, 1857.

**Adulterer.** A person who adulterates.

One of the gentlemen, while conversing with the Committee, remarked that his friend (indicating him) knew all about the adulteration of liquors; . . . whereupon the proverbial joker, Mr. Thaddeus Stevens (chairman of the Committee), said: "Then let the *adulterer* speak for himself." — *N. Y. Herald*, 27 March, 1862.

**Adventism.** See *Millerism*.

**Adventist.** See *Millerite*.

**Affinity.** A man or a woman for whom one of the opposite sex feels a strong attachment, amounting to a passion; indeed, so strong is this passion claimed to be, that husbands leave their wives, and wives their husbands, for one for whom they possess a stronger affection, and between whom they pretend there is a stronger affinity. This individual they call their "affinity." The following example conveys the meaning of the word:—

"Ain't Theron Gusher a married man?" [inquired Josiah Allen's wife of Miss Betsy Bobbet].

"Oh, yes, some."

"Some!" I repeated in a cold accent. "He is either married, or he hain't married, one or the other;" and again I repeated coldly, "Is he a married man, Betsy?"

"Oh, yes, he has been a married man a few times, or what the cold world calls marrying,—he has got a wife now; but I do not believe he has found his *affinity* yet, though he has got several bills of divorcement from various wimmien, trying to find her."—*Betsy Bobbet*, p. 190.

"Says she [i. e. Miss Bobbet], 'When a woman finds that her soul is clogged and hampered, it is a duty she owes to her higher nature to find relief.'"

"Says I [i. e. Josiah Allen's wife], 'When a woman has such feelin's, instead of leavin' her husband, and goin' round huntin' up an *affinitee*, let her take a good thoroughwort puke.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 327.

Referring to the four millions of Spiritualists which Judge Edmunds declared to be in the United States, J. Warren Chase affirms that all these Spiritualists accept the doctrine of special *affinities* between man and woman: *affinities* which imply a spiritual relation of the sexes higher and holier than that of marriage. — *Dixon, Spiritual Wives*, p. 75.

**To Africanise.** To place under Negro domination.

**Africanisation.** The act of placing under Negro domination. This and the preceding are words of recent introduction by Southern political writers.

**After Night.** After nightfall; in the evening; as, "A meeting will be held in the court-house *after night*." This expression is said to be peculiar to the Middle States. — *Hurd's Grammatical Corrector*.

**Aguardiente.** (Span.) On the Mexican frontier, as well as in Spanish America, any distilled liquor, whether rum, brandy, or whiskey.

General Sherman, in speaking of a dinner at San Francisco, on the 4th July, 1848, says:—

"A man of some note, named Sinclair, presided, and, after a substantial meal and a reasonable supply of *aguardiente*, we began the toasts." — *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 49.

**Agur-forty.** Aqua-fortis, vulgarly so called at the South-west.

The doctors fed me on lodlum tea and epecac, washed down with myrtle tea, — 't wa'n't of no manner of use; they then tried *agur-forty*, — if it had been agur-hundred, 't wouldn't have done. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Tale.*

**Aguy and Agur** for *ague*; *fever-an'-aguy* for "fever and ague;" common among the uneducated, wherever this distressing disease is known. The word *ague* is pronounced in some localities so as to rhyme with *plague*.

**Ahead.** Forward, in advance. This word, originally a sea term, is now in very common use by all classes of speakers and writers.

Our banks, being anxious to make money for their stockholders, are probably right to drive *ahead*, regardless of consequences, &c. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Nov. 29, 1845.

**Agee.** Askew; as "to have one's hat *agee*." From the term *gee* used in driving cattle.

**Airy.** Conceited. Said of one who puts on airs.

**Alamo.** (Span.) (*Populus monilifera*.) See *Cotton-Wood*.

**Albany Beef.** Sturgeon; so called because a part of the sturgeon's flesh has much the look, and not a little of the taste, as well as texture, of ox muscle. It abounds in the Hudson River, and is much eaten in the city of Albany.

**Albany Hemp.** (*Urtica Canadensis*.) Canada nettle, so called from the use made of its fibrous bark.

**Albany Regency.** A name popularly given in the United States to a junto of astute Democratic politicians, having their head-quarters at Albany, who controlled the action of the Democratic party for many years, and hence had great weight in national politics. — *Wheeler, Dict.*

**Alcoholism.** The practice, the results of using alcohol; drunkenness.

Three deaths of *alcoholism*; three of diseases of the bones, joints, &c.; forty of the brain and nerves. — *N. Y. Herald*, March, 1862.

**Alder.** Beside the true alders, various shrubs belonging to quite different families are so called, generally on account of a resemblance in the leaves; thus, *Rhamnus alniflorus* (alder-leaved buckthorn) is "dwarf alder;" *Clethra alnifolia* (sweet pepper-bush) is "spiked" or "white alder;" *Prinos verticillatus* (winter berry) is "black alder."

**Alewife, plur.** Alewives. (*Alosa vernalis*, Storer.) A fish of the herring kind, abounding in the waters of New England. In Maryland and Virginia they are called "old wives;" *Alewchap*, plur. *Alewchaps*, in Connecticut.

The name appears to be an Indian one, though it is somewhat changed, as appears by the earliest account we have of it. In former times, the Indians made use of these fish to manure their lands, as the *menhaden* are now used. Mr. Winthrop says: "Where the ground is bad or worn-out, they put two or three of the fishes called *akoofes* under or adjacent to each corn-hill; whereby they had many times a double crop to what the ground would otherwise have produced. The English have learned the like husbandry, where these *akoofes* come up in great plenty." — *Philosophical Trans.*, 1678.

High up in the open fire-place were two dozen hard-wood rods, that severally supported about a dozen gasperaux, or *alewives*, that were undergoing the process of smoking. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 128.

**Alfalfa.** A plant derived from Chili, and now extensively cultivated in California. It is understood to be simply the lucerne of Europe (*Medicago sativa*), differing in habit of growth, if at all, only as a result of difference of soil and climate. It is a plant allied to the clover family. It has lately been introduced into Texas, and is found to be admirably adapted to the black prairie soil of that State. — *U. S. Agricultural Report* for 1875, p. 394.

Mr. Squier, who found the plant growing luxuriantly in Peru, thus speaks of it: —

Our mules pricked up their ears, and, with visions of infinite *alfalfa* before them, broke into a lively trot. — *Travels in Peru*, p. 475.

**Algic.** Relating to the Algonkin tribes. Formed by Mr. Schoolcraft from the word *Algonkin*.

**Alienage.** The state of being an alien. — *Webster*. Neither this nor the following word is to be found in the English dictionaries, except the recent one of Mr. Knowles. They are common, however, in professional books.

Where he sues an executor, &c., the plaintiff's *alienage* is no plea. — *Laires's Pleading on Assumpsit*, p. 687.

To restore estates, forfeitable on account of *alienage*. — *Judge Story*.

**Alienism.** The state of being an alien. — *Webster, Knowles*.

The prisoner was convicted of murder; on his arraignment he suggested his *alienism*, which was admitted. — 2 *Johnson's Reports*, 381.

The law was very gentle in the construction of the disability of *alienism*. — *Chancellor Kent*.

**Alkali Desert, Alkali Land.** Wide districts of land in Colorado and Nevada, and more appropriately called a desert, covered with an efflorescence of alkali.

As you drive over the uncultivated part of the plain, you see occasionally the white flowery efflorescence of *alkali*. Frequently a farm would extend into the midst of this *alkali land*. — *Nordhoff's California*, p. 144.

And now we entered upon one of that species of deserts whose concentrated hideousness shames the diffused and diluted horrors of Sahara, — an *alkali desert*.

For sixty-eight miles there was but one break in it. The *alkali dust* cut through our lips, it persecuted our eyes, it ate through the delicate membranes and made our noses bleed and kept them bleeding. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 143-4.

**All any more.** A common expression in Pennsylvania among the illiterate to mean "all gone." Thus a servant will say, "The potatoes is *all any more*, i. e. are all gone; or she will say simply, "They's all."

**All-Day.** Continuing a whole day, able to work a whole day or every day; steady; strong. "An *all-day* horse," &c.

**All-fired.** Enormous, excessive; enormously, excessively. A low expression; probably a puritanical corruption of *hell-fired*, designed to have the virtue of an oath without offending polite ears.

I was woked up by a noise in the street; so I jumps up in an *all-fired* hurry, ups with the window, and outs with my head. — *Sam Slick*.

I'm dying — I know I am! My mouth tastes like a rusty cent. The doctor will charge an *all-fired* price to cure me. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, 1845.

The first thing I know'd, my trowsers were plastered all over with hot molasses, which burnt *all-fired* bad. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 87.

Old Haines sweating like a pitcher with ice-water in it, and looking *all-fired* tired. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 58.

You see the fact is, Squire (said the Hoosier), they had a mighty deal to say up in our parts about Orleans, and how *all-fired* easy it is to make money in it; but it's no ham and all hominy, I reckon. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 67.

**All-firedly.** Enormously, excessively.

Rum does every thing that is bad; wonder if it is rum that makes potatoes rot so *all-firedly*. — *Milne, Farm Fence*, p. 8.

**All-holler.** To beat one *all-holler*, or *all hollow*, is to beat him thoroughly.

**All-possessed.** Affected by evil spirits, or demons; possessed.

Bill Jenkins was a dreadful mean man; used to get drunk every day, and swore like *all-possessed* when he got mad. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 30.

**All Sorts.** Heel-taps of drinks of all sorts left in glasses at a public house, poured into a common receptacle, and sold to poor drinkers at half price. — *Baltimore Farmer*.

**All Sorts of.** A Southern expression, synonymous with expert, acute, excellent, capital. It answers to the English slang term *bang-up* or *out-and-out*. It is a prevalent idiom of low life, and often heard in the colloquial language of the better informed. A man who in New England would be called a *curious* or a *smart* fellow would in the South be called *all sorts of* a fellow; expert in many ways.

She was *all sorts of* a gal, — there warn't a sprinklin' too much of her: she had an eye that would make a fellow's heart try to get out of his bosom, her step was light as a panther's, and her breath sweet as a prairie flower. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

If you can only get Kit rid of them little failings [blindness and deafness], you'll find him *all sorts of* a horse. — *Traits of Amer. Humor.*

To pen an Ode upon Oil-of-Bob  
Is *all sorts of* a job. — *Poe, Life of Thingum Bob.*

**All-to-pieces.** 1. Excessively; as, "I beat him last night at poker *all-to-pieces.*"

2. Excessive, out-and-out.

Miss G—— sat down in a rocking-chair, hauled out her snuff-box (for she was an *all-to-pieces* snuff-taker), and began to rock and snuff and rock as hard as ever she could. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 124.

The expression is used in England, and is noticed by Halliwell, in the Int. to his Dictionary.

They growl, shud you not own that it  
Beats Danbury *all-to-pieces.* — *Poem in Essex Dialect.*

**All-to-smash.** Smashed to pieces. This expression is often heard in low and familiar language. It is an English provincialism. Mr. Halliwell says, that a Lancashire man, telling his master the mill-dam had burst, exclaimed, "Maister, maister, dam's brossen, and aw's-to-smash." — *Archaic and Prov. Dictionary.* See *Smash.*

**Alley.** 1. A place where the game of nine or ten pins is played; usually called a nine or ten pin alley, and sometimes simply an alley.

2. An ornamental marble, used by boys for shooting in the ring, &c.; also called in England a *taw*. It is made of marble or of painted clay or of alabaster. In some cities, the boys call white marbles *alleys*.

Jim, I'll give you a marble. I'll give you a white *alley*. White *alley*, Jim! And it's a bully *taw*. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 27.

**Alligator.** 1. A large American reptile, resembling the Egyptian crocodile, having a wide, obtuse muzzle and unequal teeth. Though still numerous in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, they are no longer regarded as very dangerous. The name, according to Cuvier, is a corruption of the Spanish and Portuguese *el lagarto*, equivalent to the Latin *lacerta*.

2. In the Western States, the name is applied also to the *Menopoma allegheniensis*, a salamandroid animal.

**Alligator Gar.** The gar-fish of the South, so called from the resemblance its long jaws bear to those of the alligator.

**Alligator Pear.** (*Laurus persea*.) A West Indian fruit, resembling a pear in shape. It contains within its rind a yellow butyraceous substance, which, when the fruit is perfectly ripe, constitutes an agreeable food, an English corruption of the Spanish *avocado* and

French *avocat*. In England this is sometimes called Vegetable Marrow, and so is the succada squash.

**To allot upon.** To intend, to form a purpose; as, I 'lot upon going to Boston. Used by uneducated people in the interior of New England. See *Lot upon*.

**Allotment Certificate.** A certificate specifying the land, &c., allotted to a person named in said certificate.

President Lincoln has appointed the following persons to provide for *allotment certificates* among the volunteers from New York State. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1861.

**To allow.** 1. To declare; assert; maintain; affirm; common in the Middle and Southern States, but never heard in New England.  
2. To think; to suppose. Western.

The lady of the cabin seemed kind, and *allowed* we had better stop where we were. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*.

Gentlemen from Arkansas *allowed* that California was no better than other countries; and the proof of it was, that they could only get twenty dollars a week and board offered them for driving an ox-team. — *Farnham, California*.

He 'lowed he'd ge me half a crown,  
An treat me wud some beer,  
If I wud make it up wud him,  
An let un goo off clear.

*Tom Cladpole's Journey to Lunnun.*

**Allspice.** 1. The aromatic berry of the *Eugenia pimenta*, the Allspice Pimento or Bayberry Tree, a native of South America and the West India Islands. From being cultivated in Jamaica, it is often called Jamaica Pepper.

2. The "sweet-scented shrub" (*Calycanthus floridus*) is also known as Carolina Allspice, the bark and wood having a somewhat spicy flavor.

**All-two.** The word *both* is so expressed by the negroes of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. — *W. F. Allen, Int. to Slave Songs*. In the following definition of *love* by a slave, the words appear in the last sentence: —

Arter you lub, you lub, you know, boss. You can't broke lub. Man can't broke lub. Lub stan' —'e ain't gwine broke. Man hab to be berry smart to broke lub. Lub is a ting stan' jus' like tar; arter he stick, he stick, he ain't gwine move. Hab to kill *all-two* arter he lub befo' you broke lub. — *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.

**Almighty Dollar.** A term applied to the love of money as "the root of all evil." "Almighty gold" is used by Farquhar in the "Recruiting Officer," Act iii. Sc. 2.

The *almighty dollar*, that great object of universal devotion throughout our land, seems to have no genuine devotees in these peculiar [Creole] villages. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 40.

The *almighty dollar* exerted a more powerful influence in California than in the old States; for it overcame all pre-existing false notions of dignity. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 165.

**Along.** Forward, on. Mrs. Trollope has the following words: "We must try to get *along*, as the Americans say." Lover also was puzzled to discover what the young American lady meant by saying that she was so unwell that she "could not get *along*." An Englishman would say, *get on*.

**Alonsenel.** The Mexican name for *Cowania stansburiana*, a plant growing extensively in the vicinity of Salt Lake, and held in great esteem as a styptic in hemorrhages, and as a general astringent.

**Alum-Root** (*Henchera Americana*.) A plant so called from its astringency.

**To amalgamate.** This word, which properly denotes the uniting of mercury with other metals, is universally applied, in the United States, to the mixing of the black and white races.

**Amalgamation.** The mixing or union of the black and white races.

**Ambia.** Used in the South and West for tobacco juice. It is a euphemism for the spittle produced by this voluntary ptyalism. More commonly spelled and pronounced *Ambeer*, probably from *Amber*,—denoting its color.

**Ambition.** In North Carolina this word is used instead of the word *grudge*; as, "I had an *ambition* against that man." I am credibly informed that it is even employed in this manner by educated men.

**Ambitious.** Angry, enraged. A native of Georgia was heard to say, "I was powerful *ambitious* and cussed snortin'." The word is used in the West in a similar sense. Thus, they say an "*ambitious* horse," meaning thereby a horse that is fiery and unmanageable. In Massachusetts and Connecticut, energetic, industrious.

**Amenability.** State of being amenable or answerable. — *Judge Story, Welster*. Not in the English dictionaries.

**Americanism.** A way of speaking peculiar to this country. — *Witherspoon*.

"By *Americanism*," says Dr. Witherspoon, "I understand a use of phrases or terms, or a construction of sentences, even among persons of rank and education, different from the use of the same terms or phrases, or the construction of similar sentences, in Great Britain. In this sense it is exactly similar in its formation and signification to the word '*Scotticism*.'" — *Works*, Vol. IV.



**To Americanize.** To render American; to naturalize in America. — *Webster*.

**Americanization.** The act of rendering American, or of subjection to the laws and usages of the United States.

**Among,** for *between*. This word is often used when reference is made only to two persons. *Ex.* : "The money was divided among us two."

**Among the Missing.** To be *among the missing* is to absent one's self.

If a person inquires if you are at home, the servant is directed to say, No, if you don't want to be seen, and choose to be *among the missing*. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 17.

The crowd of office-seekers in Washington will be *among the missing*, when they learn the President's decision. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Anagreeta.** "Corn gathered before maturity, and dried in an oven or the hot sun, by which means it retains its sweetness, and is easily dressed, making a fine mixture in puddings, especially with pease; but this is only practised in the provinces of New York and New Jersey." — *Romans's Nat. Hist. of Florida*, p. 122.

**Anan** (from *anon*). How? What do you say? It is made use of in vulgar discourse by the lower class of persons addressing a superior, when they do not hear or comprehend what is said to them. It is going out of use now. — *Halliwell*. The word is common in Pennsylvania.

**Anchovy Pear.** (*Grias cauliflora*.) A fruit of Jamaica. It is large, contains a stone, and is esculent. This plant is imperfectly known to botanists, and does not yet appear to be classed.

**Ancient Dominion.** Virginia. See *Old Dominion*.

**Andpersand.** 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.

**Annatto.** (Anotta, Annotto, *Webst.*) The West Indian name of the dye "*orlian*," called by the Indians *anoty*. — *De Vries*, 1634.

**Annexation.** Often used in the restricted sense of the addition of new territory to that of the United States, and often with the accessory idea of unlawful acquisition.

**Annexationist.** One who favors the policy of annexation.

**Annexion** was solemnly advocated by Mr. Sumner as a better word than *annexation*.

**Anog.** An andiron. Amasa Lincoln's inventory of Mary Stratton's estate, Athol, Mass., 1840. See *Hand-dog*.

**To ante.** To risk; to venture a bet. The *ante* is the stake first put up, before the cards are dealt, or betting on the hands begins. Each player puts his *ante* in the pool, before [*ante*] beginning the game or hand.

You have heard of the difficulty that "The Bulletin" has fallen into. I have had to *ante up* there at the rate of \$200. I hope the friends there have made arrangements which will ensure the permanency of the paper. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug. 10, 1861, *Letter of Truston Polk, of Tennessee*.

**Antehumous.** Published before the death of the author; as *posthumous* is after the death. In speaking of a forthcoming work called the "Life and Times of James Buchanan," the "New York Herald," Jan. 3, 1862, says:—

The venerable ex-President could not wait until the grass grew over his grave to have his life written, for the popular estimation of Mr. Buchanan is too well settled to be disturbed or altered by this *antehumous* attempt at self-justification.

**Anti-Bank.** Adverse to banking.

Had this constitution been submitted whole, with all its *anti-Bank*, *anti-Negro* imperfections on its head, it would have stood a better chance. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 23, 1862.

**Anti-Federalist.** "This word was formed about the year 1788, to denote a person of the political party that opposed the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, which was then always spoken of by the name of the *Federal* Constitution. The word is not now much used; having been superseded by various other names, which have been successively given to the same party." — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**Anti-Mason.** One hostile to masonry or free-masonry. — *Worcester*.

**Anti-Masonic.** Hostile to masonry.

**Anti-Masonry.** Hostility to masonry.

**Anti-Negro.** Hostility to Negroes. See *Anti-Bank*.

**Anti-Rentism.** An organized opposition to manorial rights of agricultural lands in the State of New York. The early Dutch land proprietor of New Netherland (now New York) was invested with titles and privileges of a lord patroon or protector, and his colony or manor was governed by the same customs and laws as were the feudal manors of Holland. A large number of manors were created under the Dutch, and subsequently under the English colonial government, and existed at the outbreak of the American Revolution. The result was, that at the close of the Revolution a large proportion of this land in the settled parts of the State was held by the *patroons*, and the cultivators occupied their farms on leases, for one

or more lives, or from year to year, stipulating for the payment of rents, dues, and services, copied from the feudal tenures of England and Holland. In 1779 and 1785, laws were enacted abolishing feudal tenures; but the proprietors of manor grants contrived to form a deed by which the grantees covenanted to perform certain services, and pay rents and dues, similar to the feudal incidents abolished. After many years of suffering under these exactions, the tenants, in 1839, held meetings to form some plan to rid themselves of their grievances. Societies to effect this object were formed, which became known as *anti-rent associations*. Following these came a secret armed organization, extending through several counties, pledged to protect tenants from arrest, and to guard their property from levy and sale upon execution. These armed bodies, dressed as Indians, appeared masked, and prevented the sheriff from performing his duties. They insulted all who sympathized with the patroons, and held public meetings, and passed resolutions denouncing the landed proprietors. These violent proceedings finally led to bloodshed. In 1842, a commission, appointed to hear witnesses and counsel, failed to accomplish any thing. The disaffection increased, owing to the unyielding exactions of landlords. Governor Wright finally felt compelled to issue a proclamation declaring one of the counties in a state of insurrection. Trials and convictions followed. Next came the organization of a political party which favored the measures of the *anti-renters*. At the State Constitutional Convention of 1846, so many members had been elected in the interest of the *anti-renters*, that they were enabled to procure the insertion of a clause in the new constitution, abolishing all feudal tenures and incidents, and forbidding the leasing of agricultural land for a term not exceeding twenty years. After 1847, no instance of resistance to law or to the serving of process occurred. The excitement died out, and the *anti-rent* influence ceased to be a disturbing force in politics. The organization contented itself with efforts to contest the validity of the titles of their landlords, and to the legality of the conditions and covenants contained in the manor grants. — *American Cyclopaedia*.

**Anti-Slavery.** 1. Hostile to slavery. 2. Hostility to slavery.

**Anti-Slaveryist.** An opposer of slavery.

He [President Lincoln] had been teased and pressed by radical *anti-slaveryists* until he was compelled to offer a compromise. — *Speech of Mr. Wadsworth of Kentucky, in Congress, N. Y. Herald*, March 13, 1862.

**Anti-Southern.** Opposed to the alleged interests of Southern men.

I was stigmatized as an Abolitionist or Black Republican, an anti-Southern man, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1861, *Letter of W. S. Speer, of Tennessee*.

**Anti-Union.** Hostility to the American Union.

**Any how you can fix it.** At any rate whatever.

**Any Thing Else.** A hyperbolical phrase, denoting a strong affirmation, which has recently sprung up and become quite common, is given in the following quotation:—

*Loco-Foco.* Didn't General Cass get mad at Hull's cowardice, and break his sword?

*Whig.* He didn't do any thing else. — *Newspaper.*

**Anxious Meeting.** A religious meeting consequent on a revival.

**Anxious Seat.** A term used in revival phraseology. A seat occupied by those who feel anxious about their spiritual welfare. In Maryland called *the mourners' bench*.

**Aparejo.** (Span., pron. *aparáho*.) A pack-saddle. The word is employed in the countries acquired from Mexico, where pack-saddles are used.

**Apishamore.** (Chippewa, *apishamon*.) Any thing to lie down on; a bed. A saddle-blanket, made of buffalo-calf skins, used on the great prairies.

Wolves are a constant annoyance on the plains, creeping to the camp-fires, and gnawing the saddles and *apishamores*. — *Ruxton, Far West.*

**Appellate.** Relating to appeals.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, &c., the supreme court shall have *original* jurisdiction: in all other cases before mentioned, the supreme court shall have *appellate* jurisdiction. — *Constitution of the United States*, Art. 3.

The king of France is not the fountain of justice: the judges, neither the original nor the *appellate*, are of his nomination. — *Burke, Revolution.*

For a fuller account of this word, about which there has been much discussion by lexicographers, see Mr. Pickering's Vocabulary, where many authorities are cited. It was first given by Mason, in his supplement to Johnson's Dictionary, and was afterwards adopted by Todd.

**Appetitical.** Pertaining to the appetite. See the illustration to *Planked Shad*.

**Appetizer.** That which will provoke an appetite. The verb to *appetize* is provincial in the north of England.

**Apple.** This name is given in the tropics to fruits of various kinds which are not apples; as the Bel-apple, Cashew-apple, Custard-apple, Conch-apple, Ground-apple, Mamma-apple, Monkey-apple, Pine-apple, Sugar-apple, Wood-apple, &c.

**Apple-Butter.** A sauce made of apples stewed down in cider. This is generally made in quantity, and kept for use during the winter.

The manufacture occupies a whole night, and is made the occasion of a frolic among the young folks.

Oh, dear, I am so thirsty;  
I've just been down to supper;  
I drank three quarts of apple-jack,  
And a pound of *apple-butter*. — *Comic Song*.

**Apple-Brandy.** A liquor distilled from fermented apple-juice; also called Apple-Jack and Cider-Brandy.

It was feared that the conquerors of Goed Hope, flushed with victory and *apple-brandy*, might march to the capital, take it by storm, and annex the whole province to Connecticut. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**Apple-Cart.** "He upset his apple-cart," i. e. he knocked him down. See *Lobster Cart*.

**Apple-Cut.** A collection of young people for the purpose of cutting up apples for drying; also called an Apple-Bee. These gatherings, like husking-bees, which take place in the country, are the occasion of much merriment. See *Bee*.

I have seen enough boldness used by a parcel of girls at one huskin' or *apple-cut*, to supply four presidential elections. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 290.

**Apple-Jack.** A liquor distilled from fermented apple-juice; apple-brandy. In England the term is applied to *flapjacks*. — *Forby*.

Young's men, dressed in the Confederate uniform, mingled with the people, told them the news and got news of them, cursed the Yankees, and drank stirrup-cups of *apple-jack* to their discomfiture. — *Woodbury, Hist. 2d R. I. Reg't*, p. 337.

**Apple-Leather.** Apples parboiled and stirred into a paste of considerable consistency; then rolled out and dried in the sun. When dry, it is about as tough as leather, and comes away in sheets of the thickness of tanned cowhide, — whence its name. — *Pennsylvania and Maryland*.

**Apple-Peeling.** A gathering of neighbors in the country for the purpose of peeling apples for drying or preserving; an *Apple-Cut* or *Apple-Bee*, which see above.

I never knowed but one gal in my life as had cyphered into fractions, and she was so dog on stuck up, that she turned up her nose one night at an *apple-peelin'* bekase I tuck a sheet off the bed to splice out the table-cloth, which was rather short. — *Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster*.

**Apple [of] Peru.** See *Jamestown Weed*.

**Apple-Toddy.** A favorite mixture made of whiskey or brandy, resembling punch, in which roasted apples take the place of lemon-peel.

In speaking of the Swedish invaders of New Netherland, Irving says : —

Like [the Yankees] they were great roysterers, much given to revel on hoe-cake and bacon, mint-julep, and *apple-toddy*. — *Knickerbocker*, p. 247.

**Applicant.** One who applies himself closely to his studies. A sense of the word common in New England.

The English appear to use the word only in the sense of "one who applies for any thing," in which sense it is most commonly employed by us.

**Appointable.** That may be appointed or constituted; as officers are appointed by the Executive. — *Federalist*, *Webster*.

**To appreciate, v. a.** To raise the value of. — *Webster*. This sense of the word is not in any English dictionary except Knowles's, which is quite a recent work.

Lest a sudden peace should *appreciate* the money. — *Ramsay*.

Also, *v. n.*, to rise in value; as, "The currency of the country appreciates." — *Webster*. The common acceptation of the word, however, with us, as in England, is to estimate correctly; to put a thing at its right value.

**Appreciation.** A rising in value; increase of worth or value. — *Webster*. This noun, like the verb from which it is derived, is commonly used by us in its appropriate meaning of estimation, valuation; and this will hereafter be understood of all similar words where a peculiar meaning is assigned to them, unless an express statement is made to the contrary.

**To approbate.** (Lat. *approbo*, to approve.) This word was formerly much used at our colleges, instead of the old English word *approve*. The students used to speak of having their performances *approved* by their instructors. It is now in common use with our clergy as a sort of technical term, to denote a person who is licensed to preach; they would say, such a one is *approved*, that is, licensed to preach. It is also common in New England to say of a person who is licensed by the county courts to sell spirituous liquors, or to keep a public house, that he is *approved*; and the term is adopted in the law of Massachusetts on this subject. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

Dr. Webster observes that this is a modern word, but in common use in America. Mr. Todd introduces it in his edition of Johnson, from Cockeram's old vocabulary, the definition of which is, "to allow, to like." Mr. Todd says it is obsolete.

All things contained in Scripture is *approved* by the whole consent of all the clergy of Christendom. — *Sir T. Elyot's Governor*, fol. 226.

**Arab.** "Street Arabs" is a term applied to ragamuffin boys, or what are in France called *gamins*.

**To argufy.** To argue; also to import, signify. This word has a place in several of the English glossaries. In this country it is only heard among the most illiterate.

**Argufying.** Arguing.

I listen to a preacher, and try to be better for his *argufying*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature.*

**Aristocratic.** Strangely misapplied in those parts of the country where the population is not dense. The city, in the surrounding country towns, is deemed "aristocratic." The people in the villages consider the inhabitants of the towns "aristocratic," and so on. The term is not applied so much to those who make pretensions as to those who live in better style, and have more of the comforts and refinements of life about them; it is very common in small country newspapers and in political speeches in out-of-the-way places.

There have been more than one hundred steamboat arrivals here since our last issue. We believe that the *aristocratic* "Mayflower" was among them. — *Illinois paper.*

**Ark.** A large boat, employed on our rivers before the introduction of steamboats, to transport merchandise. These boats are first mentioned in "A Description of the Settlement of Genesee County, N. Y.," published in 1799. The writer says: "When the waters of the Susquehanna are high by the melting of the snow on the Alleghany Mountains, a species of boat may be made to descend the stream, that will carry from two hundred to five hundred barrels of flour." In a note, it is stated that these boats were invented by a Mr. Knyder, of Juniata River, who first tried the experiment, and reached Baltimore in safety. "They are made of plank, are broken up after discharging their cargo, and sold for lumber, with little or no loss. They are navigated by three or five men, and will float down at the rate of eighty miles a day; they are called *Arks*." See also *Doc. Hist. of New York*, Vol. II. p. 668. See *Flat-Boat*.

**Arkansas Toothpick.** A bowie-knife of a peculiar kind, the blade of which shuts up into the handle.

Straightway leaped the valiant Slingsby

Into armor of Seville,

With a strong *Arkansas toothpick*

Screwed in every joint of steel.

*Bon Gaultier, American Ballads.*

**Armory.** A place or building where fire-arms are manufactured; as, the "Springfield Armory."

**Around.** About, near; as, "Sam is *around* in New York."

I was standing *around* when the fight took place. — *Police Gazette.*

A friend assures me he has heard a clergyman in his sermon say of one of the disciples that "he stood *around* the cross."

**Arrastra.** (Span., properly *Arrastre.*) The drag-stone mill for pulverizing or amalgamating ore.

**Arriero.** (Span.) A muleteer. The Mexicans, who are the most expert in this business, are invariably employed in Texas, and for all mule-trains used in the commerce of the prairies.

**Arrow-Head.** (*Sagittaria variabilis.*) A common and very variable aquatic plant, so called from the shape of its leaf.

**Arrow-Wood.** (*Viburnum dentatum.*) It is from the long and straight stems of this shrub that the Indians between the Mississippi and the Pacific make their arrows.

**Arroyo.** (Span.) 1. A small river; a rivulet.

2. The dry bed of a small stream; a deep ravine caused by the action of water. Common in New Mexico and California.

Down the *arroyo*, out across the mead,  
By heath and hollow, sped the flying maid.

*Bret Harte, Friar Pedro's Ride.*

**As, for that, which;** as, "Nobody *as* I ever heard on." This vulgarity is confined to the illiterate. It is noticed in the Craven and Herefordshire Glossaries.

**Ascotch.** A name given by boys in New York to a small mass of wet gunpowder.

**As good as.** In the phrase, I'd *as good's go* to New York, instead of, "I might as well go to New York." Only heard among the illiterate.

**As long as.** Because, since. "We 'll come, *as long as* it's pleasant." New York.

**Ash-Cake.** A corn-cake baked in the ashes. Southern.

**Ash-Cart.** A cart that goes from door to door to collect ashes.

**Ash-Hopper.** A lye-cask, or an inverted pyramidal box to contain ashes, resembling a hopper in a mill. They are common in the country, where people make their own soap.

**Ashlanders.** A club of Baltimore rowdies, so named from Ashland Square, near which they lived.

**Assemblyman.** A member of the House of Representatives in New York, and in some of the New England States.



A small party of the members of the Legislature, both Senators and *Assemblymen*, accompanied the Commissioners. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1861.

**Assistant.** A member of the Governor's Council. An officer both judicial and executive, next in rank to the Chief Magistrate. New England, 1621 to 1848. See *Court of Assistants*.

**Associated Press.** A number of newspaper establishments in New York and elsewhere, which have entered into a joint arrangement for procuring telegraphic and other news to be equally furnished to them all, have assumed the name of "The *Associated Press*."

**Association.** In civil affairs, this word is much used at the present day, to denote the principle of uniting the producing classes in societies, for the purpose of obtaining for themselves a larger share of the fruits of their labor.

We do not claim that our rules are perfect, but we wish to make them so; being firmly convinced that the science taught by Fourier will ultimately lead us into true *Association*, if we follow it as a science, and that we must have some correct rules of progress to govern us during the transition period from civilization to *Association*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Associational.** Pertaining to an association of clergymen. — *Webster*.

In order to obtain a license, and afterwards to be admitted to ordination, they [the students in divinity] must, in each case, pass through the *Associational* or Presbyterian examination. — *Quarterly Review*, 1815.

**Associationist.** One who advocates the Fourier doctrine of association.

**At.** Used as a verb; as, "I *at* him to do it." To demand; to require.

We was a-layin' out to carry half a barrel of pork [to the donation party], and I made a big jar of butter, and sold it for five dollars, and I *atted* Josiah to sell the pork, and get the money for that. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 206.

**At, for by.** Used in the expression, "sales *at* auction."

The English say, "sales *by* auction," and this is in analogy with the expressions, "sales *by* inch of candle;" "sales *by* private contract." — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**At, for in.** The very common expressions "at the North," "at the West," instead of "in the North," "in the West," offend an English ear.

**At** is often used superfluously in the South and West, as in the question, "Where is he *at*?"

**Atajo.** (Span., pron. *atáho*.) A drove of pack-mules.

**Atamasco Lily.** (*Amaryllis atamasco*.) A small one-flowered lily, held in like esteem, in Virginia and North Carolina, with the daisy in England.

**Athens of America.** A name sometimes given to Boston, Massachusetts. Also called *Modern Athens* and *The Hub*, which see.

**Atlantic States.** States bordering on the Atlantic.

**Atolé.** In the Spanish portions of North America, gruel, generally of corn-meal.

**At that.** A cant phrase, which has recently become popular. It is used to define more nearly or intensify something already said; as, "He 's got a scolding wife, and an ugly one *at that*."

"Liquor up, gentlemen." We bowed. "Let me introduce you to some of the most highly esteemed of our citizens." We bowed again. "Now then, Mister," turning to the man at the bar, "drinks round, and cobblers *at that*." — *Notes on the North-western States, Blackwood*, Sept., 1855.

**A-tremble.** Trembling, quivering; deeply moved.

And beholding a noble and venerable tree, he says, "Oh, what majesty and glory! Five hundred years sit enthroned on the top of that monarch of the forest." And he feels himself all *a-tremble*. — *The Independent*, Aug. 14, 1862. *Sermon by H. W. Beecher*.

**Attitudinize.** To assume affected attitudes. — *Worcester*.

**Authority.** In Connecticut the justices of the peace are denominated *the civil authority*. — *Webster*.

Mr. Pickering says: "This word is also used in some of the States in speaking collectively of the professors, &c., of our colleges, to whom the government of those institutions is intrusted."

The *authority* required him to give bonds for his good behavior. — *Miss H. Adams's History of New England*, p. 64.

**Available.** That may be used with success or advantage. — *Worcester*.

For some months past, a regular system of crying down Mr. Clay as *unavailable* has been prosecuted with indefatigable energy and adroitness throughout the Union. . . . Mr. Clay is a great man — able statesman — all of us prefer him to anybody else if he could be elected, but I'm afraid he isn't *available*. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, May, 1848.

**Availability.** Quality of being available. — *Worcester*. That qualification in a candidate which implies or supposes a strong probability of his success, apart from substantial merit, — a probability resulting from mere personal or accidental popularity. The thing has long existed in the papal government, where the advanced age of a candidate for the triple crown has often been the motive of his election; the idea being that he would soon die out of the way, and leave the chair vacant for a new trial of strength under more favorable auspices, perhaps, for some of the electing cardinals. Inoffensiveness — exemption from strong hostility in any quarter — is a frequent element of availability. — *J. Inman*.

As this word is not noticed by any lexicographer except Dr. Worcester, and is now much used, it is thought advisable to give several examples of its use.

These political conventions are certainly becoming more odious and objectionable from year to year; and *availability*, not merit or qualifications, is the only requisite to secure a nomination. — *Baltimore Cor. of the N. Y. Herald*, May, 1848.

The only possible motive for the choice of Mr. Cass, that we can imagine, is his presumed *availability*, the elements of this being his known predilection, real or assumed, for territorial acquisition in all quarters, by warlike means as well as others, and his avowed devotion to the Southern or slave-holding interest. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, May 26, 1848.

The Whigs, within the last few days, have presented candidates for the highest office in the gift of the people, who are without any principles. . . . What do they mean by this in thus presenting candidates who have no principles? They proceed on the principle of mere *availability*, and nothing else. They are again going to insult your judgments, and tarnish the character of the nation, by their exhibitions of coon-skins and hard cider, and their midnight debaucheries, as they did in 1840. — *Speech of J. Bowlin, N. Y. Herald*, June 12, 1848.

**Availed.** Dr. Witherspoon notices this word as used in the following example: "The members of a popular government should be continually *availed* of the situation and condition of every part." — *Works*, Vol. IV. p. 296.

The newspapers sometimes say, "An offer" (for instance) "was made, but not *availed of*."

**Avalanche.** A Texan corruption of the French *Ambulance*. A spring waggon.

**Avocado Pear.** See *Alligator Pear*.

**Awful.** 1. Disagreeable, detestable, ugly. A word much used among the common people in New England, and not unfrequently among those who are educated. The expression "an *awful*-looking woman" is as often heard as "an ugly woman." The word is now more common in England than in the United States.

The country people of the New England States make use of many quaint expressions in their conversation. Every thing that creates surprise is *awful* with them: "What an *awful* wind! *awful* hole! *awful* hill! *awful* mouth! *awful* nose!" &c. — *Lambert's Travels in Canada and the United States*.

The practice of moving on the first day of May, with one half the New-Yorkers, is an *awful* custom. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

2. Very great, excessive.

Pot-pie is the favorite dish, and woodsmen, sharp set, are *awful* eaters. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 182.

It is even used in this sense adverbially, and with still greater impropriety, like many other adjectives. Thus, we not unfrequently hear such expressions as "an *awful* cold day."

There was Old Crane pokin' round among the gals, and mighty particular to Kezier Winkle. Ain't it ridiculous? I don't see what he could fancy about her. I never thought she was so *awful* handsome as some folks does. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

3. Enormous, flagitious; as, "an *awful* crime."

**Awfully.** 1. Exceedingly, excessively. Now an adjective of all work in English society. "O thanks very much! I'm so *awfully* obliged!"

2. Enormously.

The chimneys were *awfully* given to smoking. — *Carlton, New Purchase*.

**To axe.** (Ang.-Sax., *acsian*, *axian*.) To ask. This word is now considered a vulgarity; though, like many others under the same censure, it is as old as the English language. Among the early writers it was used with the same frequency as *ask* is now. In England it still exists in the colloquial dialect of Norfolk and other counties. "A true-born Londoner," says Pegge, "always *axes* questions, *axes* pardon, and at quadrilles *axes* leave."

And Pilate *axide* him, Art thou Kyng of Jewis? And Jhesus answeride and seide to him, Thou seist. — *Wicliff, Trans. of the Bible*.

A poor lazar, upon a tide,

Came to the gate, and *axed* meate. — *Gower, Conf. Amantis*.

Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, in a letter to her son, Henry VII., concludes with —

As herty blessings as ye can *axe* of God. — *Lord Howard*.

In the next reign, Dr. John Clarke writes to Cardinal Wolsey, and tells him that —

The King *axed* after your Grace's welfare. — *Peggy's Anecdote*.

The word is much used by the uneducated in the United States.

Day before yesterday, I went down to the post-office, and *ac'd* the postmaster if there was any thing for me. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 172.

I have often *axed* myself what sort of a gall that splendidous Lady of the Lake of Scott's was. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 30.

## B.

**Babes.** The name of a set of Baltimore rowdies.

**Back, v.** To *back* a letter is Western for to "direct" it.

**Back** is often used for *ago*; as in the phrase, "a little while *back*," i. e. "a short time ago."

**Back and forth.** Backwards and forwards, applied to a person in walking; as, "He was walking *back and forth*." A common expression in the familiar language of New England.

**Backbone.** Moral stamina, strength of will, firmness of purpose; the antithesis to doughface. A figurative expression recently much used in political writings.

Infirmity of purpose is the cause of more serious lapses of infirmity of principle. Men do not know how to resist the small temptations of life, from some deficiency in their dorsal arrangements; and the natural result is a departure from the right. *Backbone* is the material which is designed to make an upright man; and he must be firm on all points, if he would pass scatheless through the struggle of life. — *The Republic*, 1857.

**Back Country.** The interior and sparsely settled portions. See *Backwoods*.

**To back down.** To back out; to retreat.

**Back-Furrow.** To plough so that the second and fourth ridge of earth made is laid against or on the first and third ridges; to turn the soil every other time reversely.

**Back-House.** A necessary house, privy; so called from its position. In some parts of England it is called the Backward. Comp. the Lat. *posticum*.

**To back out, v.** To retreat from a difficulty, to refuse to fulfil a promise or engagement. A metaphor borrowed from the stables. Equivalent expressions are *to back water*, *to take the back track*. Or from passengers who have met in a road not wide enough for one to pass by the other.

Mr. Bedinger, in his remarks in the House of Representatives on the Mexican war, Jan. 25, 1848, said: "He regretted the bloodshed in Mexico, and wished it would stop. But, he asked, would gentlemen be willing to *back out*, and forsake our rights? No, no. No turning back. This great country must go ahead."

The Whigs undertook to cut down the price of printing to a fair rate, but at last *backed out*, and voted to pay the old prices. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

To all appearance, we are on the eve of a bloody contest, if not a revolution. What will be the consequence? One or the other party must *back out*, or no one can tell what will be the result. — *National Intelligencer*.

'T would save some whole cart-loads of fuss, an' three or four months o' jaw, If some illustrious patriot should *back out* and withdraw.

*Biglow Papers*, p. 124.

**Back out.** To give up.

Well, boys, you know Hoss Allen, — no *back out* in him, anyhow! — *Hoss Allen, of Missouri*.

**Back Track.** To *take the back track* is to retrace one's steps, to retreat; and hence is equivalent to *to back out*. Western.

**To back Water, v.** To retreat, or withdraw; a Western metaphor, derived from steamboat language.

**Backing and Filling.** Advancing and retreating, shilly-shally, indecision. A nautical metaphor, used also, it is believed, in England.

There has been so much *backing and filling* not only upon the Cuba question, but upon every other, that no confidence can be placed in the declaration which either General Pierce or his cabinet may make. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 15, 1854.

A *backin' and fillin'* and wrigglin' policy will never fetch any thing about. — *Major Downing*.

**Back-Log.** A large piece of wood used in fire-places where wood is burned. Fore-sticks form part of the same fire.

**Backward.** Is sometimes used in the West for *bashful*, unwilling to appear in company, on the same principle as "forward" in correct language means the very contrary.

**Backwoods.** The partially cleared forest region on the Western frontier of the United States, called also the *back settlements*. This part of the country is regarded as the back part or rear of Anglo-American civilization, which fronts on the Atlantic. It is rather curious that the English word *back* has thus acquired the meaning of *western*, which it has in several Oriental languages, and also in Irish. Probably, for the like reason.

**Backwoodsman.** In the United States, an inhabitant of the forest on the Western frontier. — *Webster*.

The project of transmuting the classes of American citizens and converting sailors into *backwoodsmen* is not too monstrous for speculators to conceive and desire. — *Fisher Ames's Works*, p. 144

I presume, ladies and gentlemen, it is your curiosity to hear the plain, uneducated *backwoodsman* in his home style. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 126.

**Bacon-Color.** Being of a color of bacon.

Maria is eighteen years old, very likely; has a very pleasant countenance, light *bacon-colored* skin. Plato is nineteen years old, *bacon-color* and squarely built. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Letter from Norfolk, May 19, 1862.

**Bad Lands.** "In the arid region of the Western portion of the United States, there are certain tracts of country which have received the name of *mauraises terres*, or bad lands. These are dreary wastes, naked hills with rounded or conical forms, composed of sand, sandy clays, and fine fragments of shaly rocks, with steep slopes, and, yielding to the pressure of the foot, they are climbed only by the greatest toil, and it is a labor of no inconsiderable magnitude to penetrate or cross such a district of country." — *Powell's Exploration of the Colorado of the West*, p. 149.

There is an immense clayey formation that extends towards the south, producing, in the vicinity of drainage courses, a series of *bad lands*, that probably causes this region of *bad lands*. — *Captain Luillow, Reconnaissance of the Black Hills of Dakota*, p. 58.

**Bad.** Badly; greatly, very much. Examples: "That bile hurts me bad;" "I want to see him *bad*."

**Bagasse.** (Fr.) Stalks of sugar-cane, from which the juice has been expressed. It is used as fuel under the sugar-kettle. Called also Cane-trash.

**Bagasse Furnace.** A furnace arranged to burn the sugar-cane stalks.

**Baggage.** Literally, what is contained in a bag or bags; the clothing or other conveniences which a traveller carries with him on a journey. The English appear to have discarded the word altogether for the less appropriate term *luggage*.

Having despatched my *baggage* by water to Altdorf. — *Coxe, Travels*.

This is sometimes called more fully *bag and baggage*.

Seventeen members of Congress arrived to-day with their *bag and baggage*. — *Washington paper*.

Get ye packing then out of our churches, with your *bags and baggages*, hoys up sail for New England, &c. — *Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 167.

**Baggage-Car.** The car on a railroad in which the baggage is stowed. It is placed next behind the tender.

**Baggage-Smasher.** 1. A man who transfers baggage to and from railroad cars, steamboats, &c. So called from the reckless manner in which these persons handle the property of travellers.

The following is from the Ballad of the "*Centennial Baggage Smasher*," printed in the "*Indianapolis Sentinel*:" —

Pete was a tip-up baggage-man: he ran on Number 4,  
Where the tears and groans of travelling folks unflinchingly he bore;  
He cared not how the women wept, or strong men raved and swore,  
While he mutilated sample-cases, desolated Saratogas, annihilated ordinary luggage,  
Immolated carpet-bags, exterminated handboxes, and extinguished travellers' outfits by the score, —

This fine old T. P. baggage-man, one of the modern time.

Then Pete he seized a shabby trunk, with snorts of wrath and scorn,  
And in two seconds both the handles from the ends had torn;  
And, heedless of the pleadings of the passenger forlorn,  
He banged the trunk on the platform, and then threw it over the top of the car, and let an omnibus run over it.

2. A rough, brutal person.

Gamblers, ticket-swindlers, emigrant robbers, *baggage-smashers*, and all the worst classes of the city. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 23, 1861.

**Bagging.** See *Cotton-Bagging*.

**Ball.** The handle of a bucket or pail. New England; and provincial, Norfolk County, England. — *Forby's Glossary*.

**Bait.** A fulcrum. A term common in New England.

**Baiting.** Lunch in the field at hay-time.

**Bake-Oven.** (Dutch.) This term is often used in the West for the simple word *oven* in a bakery. It is also applied to the iron bake-pan.

**Bake-Shop.** The place where articles made by bakers are sold. Southern.

As a general thing, the stores are closed; . . . the *bake-shops*, however, seem to be driving a great business. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 16, 1862, *Letter from Norfolk, Va.*

**Balance.** 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 remainder of any thing. The *balance* of money, or the *balance* of an account, are terms well authorized and proper; but we also frequently hear such expressions as the "*balance* of a speech;" "The *balance* of the day was idly spent;" "A great many people assembled at the church: a part got in, the *balance* remained without."

The yawl returned to the wreck, took ten or eleven persons and landed them, and then went and got the *balance* from the floating cabin. — *Albany Journal*, Jan. 7, 1846.

Most of the respectable inhabitants held commissions in the army or government offices; the *balance* of the people kept little shops, cultivated the ground, &c. — *Williams's Florida*, p. 115.

The boats of the South Ferry forced their way through the ice, and kept up their communication for the *balance* of the day. — *New York Tribune*.

The monopoly of the things of this world that are necessary to human subsistence by a few constitutes those few the masters of the *balance* of mankind. — *The States (Washington)*, March 26, 1858.

**Bald Face.** Common (penny) whiskey, particularly when it is new; also figuratively and appropriately called "Red Eye" or "Pine Top;" perhaps from the suspicion that it contains a large proportion of turpentine. This latter sort is also called "Lightning Whiskey," because "warranted to kill at forty rods."

**Bald-headed.** To go *it bald-headed*; in great haste, as where one rushes out without his hat.

**Balk, baulk.** A balky horse. This word has been considered an Americanism, but it is found in Spenser's *Faery Queene*. See *Baulk*.

**Ball-Face.** A contemptuous epithet applied by negroes to white persons, Salem, Mass., 1810-20.

**Ballot-Box Stuffing.** A new name for a new crime. This consists in the use of a box for receiving ballots at an election, so constructed with a false bottom and compartments as to permit the introduction of spurious ballots to any extent by the party having it in charge. The most outrageous frauds have been committed by this means.



Three or four men are here [in Indianapolis] from New York and Baltimore, who are in reality detectives sent on to look after the Democratic roughs and *ballot-box stuffers*. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, Oct., 1876.

The following telegram was received from Cincinnati a few days preceding the Presidential election, Nov. 7, 1876.

The city is strangely quiet to-night. Both parties are full of business. Several experts at *ballot-box stuffing* were spotted here to-day.

The Rev. Mr. Tallmadge, of Brooklyn, in his sermon, when speaking of the Presidential candidates, Hayes and Tilden, said:

If either accepts the Presidential chair at the hands of the *ballot-stuffers*, he will be but the bramble of discord therein. — *N. Y. paper*.

**Ballooning**, in Wall Street parlance, is running up a stock beyond its value, by newspaper articles, fictitious sales, or other means.

**Ballyhack**. "*Go to Ballyhack!*" A common expression in New England. I know not its origin. It savors in sound, however, of the Emerald Isle.

"You and Obed are here too."

"Let Obed *go to Ballyhack*. Come along out." — *Margaret*, p. 55.

**Balm of Gilead**. (*Populus caudicans*.) A tree, which extends from New England to Wisconsin and Kentucky. It is rare in a wild state, but common in cultivation. — *Gray*.

**Balsam Fir**. (*Abies balsamea*.) A slender tree growing in cold, damp woods and swamps, from New England to Pennsylvania and northwards. The blisters under the bark furnish the well-known "Canada Balsam;" hence its name. It is also called Canada Balsam and Gilead Fir.

**Balsam Poplar**. (*Populus balsamifera*.) A tall tree growing from New England to Wisconsin and northwards. Its large buds are varnished with a fragrant, resinous matter. — *Gray*.

**To bamboo; to bam**. To cheat; to bamboozle. Connecticut, but probably imported from the South. Bam is provincial in England. — *Wright*.

**Banana**. The fruit of the *Musa sapientum*, a well-known tropical fruit, imported into the United States from the West Indies.

**Band**. A troop or herd of bisons is called, in prairie parlance, "*a band of buffalo*."

**Banded Drum**. See *Grunter*.

**Bango!** A common exclamation among the Negroes both North and South.

**Bang up**. Any thing of good quality; superior; first rate. "*This cloth is bang up*."

**Banjo.** Probably a corruption of the O. E. *bandore*. A rude sort of guitar, a favorite instrument with the Negroes. The term itself is probably of negro origin. Spelled by Miss Edgeworth, who was very familiar with West India usages, *Banjah*. — See *Belinda*.

How oft when a boy, with childish joy,  
I've roam'd at the close of day,  
When our work was done, to have some fun,  
And hear the *banjo* play. — *Negro Melody*.

Ole Nashville dey say is a very nice town,  
Dar de niggers pick de cotton till de sun goes down;  
Dey dance all night to de ole *banjo*,  
Wid a corn-stalk fiddle and a shoe-string bow. — *Negro Melodies*.

**Bankable.** Receivable at a bank, as bills; or discountable, as notes. — *Webster*.

Among the great variety of bank-notes which constitute our circulating medium, many are below par, and consequently are not received at the banks. Those only which are redeemed with specie or its equivalent are received at the banks, and are of the class called *bankable*.

**Banker.** A vessel employed in fishing on the banks of Newfoundland. "There were employed in the fisheries 1,232 vessels, — namely, 584 to the Banks, 648 to the Bay and Labrador; the *bankers* may be put down at 36,540 tons."

The vessels that fish at the Labrador and Bay are not so valuable as the *bankers*, more particularly those from Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. — *J. Q. Adams on the Fisheries*, p. 219.

**Bankit.** (Fr. *banquette*.) Sidewalk. Louisiana.

**Banquette.** The name for the sidewalk in some of our Southern cities.

**To banter.** To challenge, defy; namely, to a race, a shooting-match, &c. Southern and Western.

**Banter.** A challenge. Southern and Western. "There will be a *banter* on the bare ground," meaning a shooting-match.

**Bar,** for *bear*. The common pronunciation in certain parts of the Southern and Western States.

**Barbecue.** (Span. *barbacóa*.) A term used in the Southern States and in the West Indies for dressing a hog whole; which, being split to the backbone, is laid flat upon a large gridiron, and roasted over a charcoal fire. — *Johnson, Webster*.

A writer in the "Westminster Review" supposes the word to be a corruption of the French *barbe-à-queue*, i. e. from snout to tail. Comp. *cap-à-pié*, from head to foot.

Oldfield, with more than harpy throat endued,  
Cries, "Lend me, gods, a whole hog *barbecued*." — *Pope*.

Now the festive board with viands is stored.

Savory dishes be there, I ween;

Rich puddings and big, and a *barbecued* pig,

And ox-tail soup in a China tureen. — *Ingoldsby Legends*.

This word is now much used in the South and West for a public meeting in the open air with a dinner or other refreshments.

A genuine Virginia *barbecue*, whether of a social or a political character, is a rural entertainment which deserves more praise than censure; and we know of none which affords the stranger a better opportunity of studying the character of the yeomanry of the Southern States. — *Lanman's Adventures*, Vol. II. p. 259.

**To barberize.** A term among country hairdressers. "I can *shoemake* through the week, and *barberize* on public days;" that is, on days of public business, which call farmers to the country town. *To barber* is so used in old writers.

**Barely tolerable.** Referring to the state of one's health. "How are you, Mr. B.?" "Wall, I'm *barely tolerable*."

**Barfoot.** "I take my tea *barfoot*," said a backwoodsman when asked if he would have cream and sugar; *i. e.*, without either.

**Barge.** A vessel of burden, employed on the Mississippi and its tributaries before the introduction of steamboats. It is thus described by Flint: "The *barge* is of the size of an Atlantic schooner. It had sails, masts, and rigging, not unlike a sea vessel, and carried from fifty to an hundred tons. On the lower courses of the Mississippi, when the wind did not serve and the waters were high, it was worked up stream by the operation that is called 'warping,' — a most laborious, slow, and difficult mode of ascent, in which six or eight miles a day was good progress." — *Hist. and Geogr. of Miss. Valley*. See *Safety Barge*.

**To bark a Tree.** To make a circular incision through the bark so as to kill the tree. See *Girdle*.

**To bark off Squirrels.** A common way of killing squirrels among those who are expert with the rifle, in the Western States, is to strike with the ball the bark of the tree immediately beneath the squirrel, the concussion produced by which kills the animal instantly without mutilating it. — *Audubon, Ornithology*, Vol. I. p. 294.

**To bark up the Wrong Tree.** A common expression at the West, denoting that a person has mistaken his object, or is pursuing the wrong course to obtain it. In hunting, a dog drives a squirrel or other game into a tree, where, by a constant barking, he attracts its

attention until the hunter arrives. Sometimes the game escapes, or the dog is deceived, and *barks up the wrong tree*.

If you think to run a rig on me, you have made a mistake in the child, and *barked up the wrong tree*. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 124.

When people try to hunt [office] for themselves, . . . and seem to be *barking up the wrong sapling*, I want to put them on the right trail. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 205.

**Barm.** (Ang.-Sax. *beorm*.) Yeast. This old English word is preserved in New England.

**Barnburners.** A nickname given in the State of New York to the more radical and progressive section of the Democratic party, otherwise called the Young Democracy, as opposed to the conservative tendencies of old Hunkerism. See *Hunker*.

This school of Democrats was termed *Barnburners*, in allusion to the story of an old Dutchman, who relieved himself of rats by burning down his barns which they infested, — just like exterminating all banks and corporations, to root out the abuses connected therewith. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

“A certain hind, it has been said,  
Whose weakest member was his head,  
But full as wise as Democrats,  
Burned down his barn to kill the rats.”

*Pills, Poetical, Political, and Philosophical*, and by *Peter Pepper Box*, Phila., 1809.

**Barrack.** (From the Haitian *bajaraque*, a large house capable of holding many persons, whence Span. *barraca*, Eng. *barracks*. Wedgwood derives it from the Gaelic *barrach*. The Indian origin is the most plausible.) A straw-thatched roof supported by four posts, capable of being raised or lowered at pleasure, under which hay is kept. Also called, in New York, *hay-barrack*, probably from the Dutch. In Maryland, and perhaps elsewhere, the term is applied to any kind of building intended for the reception of straw or hay. See *Hay-Barrack*.

**Barraclade.** (Dutch, *barre kledeeren*, cloths undressed or without a nap.) A home-made woollen blanket without nap. This word is peculiar to New York City, and those parts of the State settled by the Dutch.

**Barracoön.** (Span., *barraca*; Haitian, *bajaraque*.) A slave-house, or enclosure.

**Barranca.** (Span.) A deep break or ravine, caused by heavy rains or a watercourse. The banks of such are always steep and abrupt, like a wall, owing to the tenacity of the soil, and the suddenness with which they are made. A sloping bank by a river's side, or a similarly formed ravine, is not a *barranca*. These perpendicular

walls of earth are found in Texas and New Mexico, and are a marked feature in their topography.

**Barrens.** Elevated lands or plains upon which grow small trees, but never timber. They are classed as Pine-barrens, Oak-barrens, &c., according to the kind of tree which prevails upon them. In Kentucky, the term is applied to certain regions in the carboniferous limestone formation, the soil of which is really very fertile. Hence Barren County and Barren River. In these places, the water flows in subterranean channels; and hence a dryness of the surface, which, according to some, has permitted annual fires to sweep off the timber, while, according to others, it has not permitted its growth.

**Barren-Ground Reindeer.** (*Tarandus arcticus*, Rich.) A species of Caribou confined almost entirely to the "Barren Grounds," the north-eastern corner of North America. It occurs also in Greenland. — *Baird*.

**Base.** A game of ball much played in America, so called from the three *bases* or stations used in it. A country game mentioned in Moor's *Suffolk Words*. Yet it is asserted by the English cricket-players that the game was wholly unknown in England until introduced from this country. Of all games of ball, this is now played more than any other, and it is only known as "*Base-Ball*."

**Base-Burner.** A sheet-iron stove for burning anthracite coal, which is only fed at the top, while the fire is confined to the base, or lower part, of the stove.

**Basket Meeting.** In the West, a sort of picnic, generally with some religious "exercises."

**Bass.** A name applied to several species of excellent sea and lake fish. See *Black Bass*, *Sea Bass*, *Striped Bass*.

**Basswood.** (*Tilia Americana*.) A tree resembling the European lime or linden; from the use of its inner bark for making mats or cordage, the tree is also called *bast* or *bass*. The name, however, is now obsolete in England. In the United States, it is also called *White-wood*.

From its want of strength (both in the bark and wood), the name of the tree is made a reproach in the following extract from one of Brigham Young's "sermons!"

I say, as the Lord lives, we are bound to become a sovereign State in the Union, or an independent nation by ourselves; and let them drive us from this place if they can, — they cannot do it. I do not throw this out as a banter. You Gentiles and hickory and *basswood* Mormons can write it down, if you please; but write it as I speak it.

**To bat.** *To bat the eyes*, in Southern parlance, is to wink. We also hear the expression “to bat a man over the head;” i. e., to strike him.

**Battery.** A sort of boat used for duck-shooting in the Chesapeake, in which the shooter lies below the surface of the water. It is also called, among other local names, a Surface-boat, Coffin-boat, Sink, or Box. — *Leicis, American Sportsman.*

A friend in Maryland informs me that the usual term there is *Sink-boat*, — so called, because the whole body of the boat is below the surface, — one of the common forms being a hogshead, ballasted so that the upper end shall be only an inch or two above water.

**To baulk.** A horse in harness who stands still and refuses to go forward is said to *balk*. *Baulking* is one of the most serious vices of a horse. The word is noticed by Webster, but not by Worcester; nor is it found in this sense in the English dictionaries or provincial glossaries. See *Balk*.

Nervous, well-bred horses are more susceptible of the influences which induce *baulking* than are cold-blooded and indolent ones. — *Jennings, The Horse and his Diseases*, p. 200.

**Baulky.** A *baulky horse* is one that stands still and refuses to go forward.

**Bay.** 1. A well-known Southern tree, sometimes called *Bay-Laurel*. It is of the same family as the *Magnolia grandiflora*, which it resembles except in size.

2. A piece of low, marshy ground, producing large numbers of Bay-trees. North Carolina.

3. An arm of a prairie extending into, and partly surrounded by, woods.

**Bayberry.** (*Myrica cerifera*.) A shrub, with fragrant leaves, having an odor resembling that of the bay. The berries, when boiled in water, yield a fragrant green wax, known as “bayberry tallow,” used for making candles, &c.

**Bay Laurel.** See *Bay*, above.

**Bay Rum.** A liquor obtained by distilling the leaves of the bay-tree. It is chiefly used for the purposes of the toilet.

**Bay State.** The State of Massachusetts. The original name of the colony was *Massachusetts Bay*. Hence among the New England people it was usually called the *Bay State*.

Lift again the stately emblem on the *Bay State's* rusted shield,  
Give to Northern winds the pine-tree on our banner's tattered field! — *Whittier*.

When first the Pilgrims landed on the *Bay State's* iron shore,  
The word went forth that slavery should one day be no more. — *Lowell*.

**Bayou.** (Fr. *boyau*, a gut. See Fr. *boyau*, *voyau*; Fr. *voie*, a way, a course.) In Louisiana, the outlet of a lake; a channel for water.

**Beach-Combers.** 1. The long waves rolling in from the ocean.

2. A term much in vogue among sailors in the Pacific. "It is applied to certain roving characters, who, without attaching themselves permanently to a vessel, ship now and then for a short cruise in a whaler, but upon condition only of being honorably discharged the very next time the anchor takes hold of the bottom, no matter where they are. They are, mostly, a reckless, rollicking set, wedded to the Pacific, and never dreaming of ever doubling Cape Horn again on a homeward-bound passage. Hence their reputation is a bad one." — *Melville, Omoo*, p. 109.

**Beach Plum.** See *Sand Plum*.

**Bean.** This word unqualified means, in America, the various kinds of *kidney-beans* (*phaseolus*), called in England French beans; while the simple word beans, in England, would imply the varieties of broad-bean (*faba*).

**Bear.** A word to denote a certain description of stock-jobbers. — *Johnson*. The same term is used among the brokers and stock-jobbers of Wall Street, New York. Their plans of operation are as accurately described in the annexed extract from Warton as they can be at the present moment: —

He who sells that of which he is not possessed is proverbially said to sell the skin before he has caught the *bear*. It was the practice of stock-jobbers, in the year 1720, to enter into a contract for transferring South Sea stock at a future time for a certain price; but he who contracted to sell had frequently no stock to transfer, nor did he who bought intend to receive any in consequence of his bargain; the seller was therefore called a *bear*, in allusion to the proverb, and the buyer a *bull*, perhaps only as a similar distinction. The contract was merely a wager, to be determined by the rise or fall of stock: if it rose, the seller paid the difference to the buyer, proportioned to the sum determined by the same computation to the seller. — *Dr. Warton on Pope*. The "bear" pulls down (with his paws); so the broker buying lowers the price.

There has been a very important revolution made in the tactics of a certain extensive operator in Wall Street. The largest *bull* in the street has become a *bear*, and the rank and file have been thrown into the greatest confusion and left without a leader. — *New York Herald*.

My salary was doubled when Bullion & Co.  
Decided that into the street I should go,  
And attend all the buying and selling of shares,  
As well keeping track of the *bulls* and the *bears*:

A few lucky hits, when the *bears* were all short,  
And a twist of my own, where the *bulls* were all caught,  
Gave me prestige and fame, so what could I fear?  
I was sailing ahead on three thousand a year.

*Reynolds, Romance of Smoke*, p. 22.

**Bear-Grass.** (*Yucca filamentosa*.) Sometimes called Silk Grass, from the fibres which appear on the edges of the leaves. It is not a grass.

**Bear State.** A name by which the State of Arkansas is known at the West. I once asked a Western man if Arkansas abounded in bears, that it should be designated as the "Bear State." "Yes," said he, "it does; for I never knew a man from that State but he was a *bar*, and in fact the people are all *barish* to a degree."

**To bear the Market.** To operate upon the stock market by selling or agreeing to deliver a large amount of a particular stock which the seller does not possess; to influence or affect the price of stocks by sensational reports.

There is no truth in the startling developments, implicating British officials, in the "Herald's" despatch. . . . His Lordship is wholly guiltless of the charge which the "Herald," in its anxiety to *bear the market*, has brought against him. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 29, 1861.

**Bear-Wallow.** See *Hog-Wallow*.

**Beast.** A common name for a horse in the Southern and Western States. It is quite common to see in villages the invitation to travellers, "Entertainment for man and beast;" and in the Bible we read, "A certain Samaritan . . . set him on his own *beast*."

**To beat.** 1. To excel, surpass in a contest. Thus we say, one racer or steamer *beats* another. So, too, "It *beats* all creation," i. e. surpasses every thing.

The Widow Bedott is the brazen-facedest critter t' ever lived, — it does *beat* all. I never see her equal. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 77.

2. To overcome with astonishment, to amaze, astound. We sometimes hear, especially from the mouths of old people, such expressions as, "I felt *beat*," "I was quite *beat*," i. e. utterly astonished.

There is a common expression, "That *beats* Buck," synonymous with the Irish, "That bangs Bannagher."

**Beat, n.** One who excels or surpasses another, a superior. See *Dead-Beat*.

Sam Slick was a queer chap. I never see the *beat* of him. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

**To beat all hollow.** To beat thoroughly.

**Beat 'em.** "Well, that is *the beat 'em*;" i. e., it beats all, it sur-



passes all others. The thing in question may be better, or it may be worse than any other.

**Beat out.** Tired or fagged out.

**Beau.** This word, nearly obsolete in England, is in common use with us to mean a lover, sweetheart.

The expression is quite familiar in a less intimate sense, also; as for young ladies to speak of *the beaux*, meaning simply the young gentlemen who used to "wait on" them.

**To beau.** To act in the capacity of a gallant or beau.

Well, I got to *beauin'* Miss Patience about a spell; and kept my eye on Nance, to see how the cat was jumpin'. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

**Beaver-Dam.** The obstruction placed across a stream by beavers.

**Beaver-Tree.** (*Magnolia glauca*.) Called also Beaver-wood, and sometimes Castor-wood, probably from the preference shown by the beavers for the bark as food, or for the wood as useful in their structures. The Hoop-ash (*Celtis occidentalis*), or Hackberry, is also called Beaver-wood.

**Bed-Spread.** In the interior parts of the country, the common name for a bed-quilt, counterpane, or coverlet. See *Spread*.

**Bee.** An assemblage of people, generally neighbors, to unite their labors for the benefit of an individual or family. The *quilting-bees* in the interior of New England and New York are attended by young women, who assemble around the frame of a bed-quilt, and in one afternoon accomplish more than one person could in weeks. Refreshments and beaux help to render the meeting agreeable. *Apple-bees* are occasions when the neighbors assemble to gather apples or to cut them up for drying. The terms *apple-cut* and *peach-cut* are also common. *Husking-bees*, for husking corn, are held in barns, which are made the occasion of much frolicking. *Spelling-bees* are assemblages for competition in spelling, which see elsewhere. In new countries, when a settler arrives, the neighboring farmers unite with their teams, cut the timber, and build him a log house in a single day; these are termed *raising-bees*, alluding to a bee-swarm. See *Spelling-Bee*.

**Bee-Hive.** A mercantile establishment in which activity is, or is assumed to be, exhibited in receiving and attending to many customers.

**Beech-Drops.** A term applied to various plants without green foliage, parasitic on the roots of the beech.

**Beef.** In Louisiana, Texas, and some other parts of the South-west, an ox is called a *beef*; and oxen, *beeves*: in New York, and occasionally in New England, any grown animal of the ox-kind.

**Beef-Cattle.** Oxen for the beef-market; or to be sold for food.

**Beef-Dodger.** Meat biscuit. Comp. *Corn-Dodger*.

It is a small party, but great in the requisite qualifications, and goes unincumbered with superfluities: no wheels, two or three mules apiece, and pinole, pemmican, and *beef-dodgers* for their principal support. — *Speech of Colonel Benton*, May 7, 1853.

**Bee-Gum.** In the South and West, a term originally applied to a species of the gum-tree from which beehives were made; and now to beehives made of any kind of boards. See *Gum*.

**Bee-Line.** Bees, after having loaded themselves with honey, always fly back to the hive in a direct line. Hence, a *bee-line* is the straightest course from one point to another. It is sometimes called an *air-line*.

In England, the expression "as the crow flies" would convey the same idea.

This road is one of nature's laying. It goes determinedly straight up and straight down the hills, and in a *bee-line*, as we say. — *Mrs. Clavers*.

The sweetened whiskey I had drank made me so powerful thick-legged, that when I started to walk my track warn't any thing like a *bee-line*. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

We moved on like men in a dream. Our foot-marks, seen afterwards, showed that we had steered a *bee-line* for the brig. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. I. p. 198.

Sinners, you are making a *bee-line* from time to eternity; and what you have once passed over you will never pass again. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 215.

**Bee-Tree.** In the South and West a tree, often found hollow, in which the wild honey-bee makes its hive or nest. See *Gum-Tree*.

• **Beggar-Ticks.** A species of *Bidens* whose seeds (fruit) adhere to the clothes. The term is also applied to a species of *Desmodium* whose pods break at the joints; the latter is sometimes called Beggar-lice. See *Harvest Lice*.

**Behindments.** Arrearages.

**Being.** Pres. part. of the verb *to be*, equivalent to *because*.

This word is noticed by Boucher, as much in use in the Middle States of America, and as an idiom of the Western counties of England. It is also heard among the illiterate in New England.

The word is used in the same way that we hear *seeing as* employed in common speech; a usage which we have directly from the English vulgar, and which is the idiomatic form in French. E. g.:

"Well, sir, *seein'* as it's you;" "*seein'* as how I couldn't help it."

I sent you no more peasen, *been* the rest would not have suited you. — *Boucher's Glossary*.

And *beinge* that a barrell of furs was lost in the shippe, the collonie hath taken order for the recruitinge of that loss. — *Rhode Island Records*, 1658.

The charge of the matter shall be borne by the towne of Warwick, *beinge* they have been at some charges already. — *Ibid.*, 1659.

"Got a prime nigger," said the slave-trader; "an A number one cook, and no mistake! Picked her up real cheap, and I'll let you have her for eight hundred dollars, *being* as you 're a minister." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 313.

The mug cost fifteen pence when 't was new; but *bein'* it had an old crack in it, I told her she needn't pay but a shilling for it. — *Major Downing*.

*Bein'* ye 'll help Obed, I 'll give ye the honey. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

**Beliked.** Liked, beloved. A Western term.

I do believe me and Nancy was *beliked* by the Indians; and many's the venison and turkey they fotch'd us as a sort of present, and maybe a kind of pay for breadstuffs and salt Nancy used to give them. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*.

This gentleman is generally *beliked* by his fellow-citizens. — *Baltimore Cor. of the N. Y. Herald*.

**Belittle.** To make smaller, to lower in character. — *Webster*. To speak of a thing in a depreciatory or contemptuous way.

Mr. Pickering says: A well-known English Review, in enumerating the faults of our writers, thus mentions this, among other words: "President Jefferson talks of *belittling* the productions of nature." — *Quart. Rev.*, X. 528.

We fear men's minds grow really *belittled*, where they ought to be enlarged. *Brook Eastford*, p. 124.

Mr. Goodrich, in his "Reminiscences," says, when he returned to his native place, after many years' absence in Europe: —

Every thing looked *belittled*, degenerated in dimensions. The church seemed small, the galleries low, the pulpit mean. — Vol. I. p. 309.

"I won't stand that," said Mr. Slick, "I won't stay here and see you *belittle* Uncle Sam for nothin'. He ain't worse than John Bull, arter all." — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 19.

An article in the "New York Times," Jan. 10, 1857, relative to Congressional corruptions being made the subject of discussion in the House of Representatives, says: —

Upon a motion being made for a committee of investigation, the usual efforts were made to *belittle* the press, and treat its censures with contempt. — *N. Y. Times*.

**Bellows Fish.** See *Sea-Devil*.

**Bellows-Top.** "When egg was beaten in it [flip], it was called *bellows-top*; partly, perhaps, from its superior quality and partly from the

greater quantity of white froth that swelled to the top of it." — *Joel Parker, Centennial Address*, 1873.

**Belly-Bender.** Floating pieces of ice, or weak ice, which bend under one, as he passes from one cake to another. Boys take great pleasure in this precarious amusement.

**Belly-Bound.** A sort of apple. (Fr. *belle et bon*.) Connecticut.

**Belly-Bumbo.** A mode of sliding down hill by boys on their sleds, when lying on their bellies. See *Belly-Guts*.

**Belly-Button.** The navel.

**Belly-Plumper.** (Germ. *plumpen*, to plump; to plunge.) The same as *Belly-Guts*, No. 1. Sometimes when the slide is without the sled. Eastern Massachusetts.

**Belly-Guts.** More commonly *Belly Gutter*. 1. A term applied by boys to the manner of sliding down hill on their sleds, when lying on their bellies. Boys also characterize this sport by the names of *belly-flounders*, *stumps* and *bump*. See *Belly-Plumper*, *Belly-Bumbo*.

2. In Pennsylvania, molasses candy is so called.

**Bellwort.** The popular name of plants of the genus *Uvularia*.

**Belongings.** In the "Washington Union" is an advertisement headed "Gentlemen's *Belongings*;" from which it appears that this term means the under-garments of gentlemen, such as shirts, drawers, stockings, &c. The term is merely a Saxon translation of appurtenances.

**Bender.** In New York, a spree, a frolic. To "go on a *bender*" is to go on a spree. In this case, a man comes under spiritual influences so potent, that, not being able to stand straight under them, he must *bend*.

The friends of the new-married couple did nothing for a whole month but smoke and drink metheglin during the *bender* they called the honeymoon. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 276.

A couple of students of Williams College went over to North Adams on a *bender*. This would have been a serious matter under the best of circumstances, but each returned with "a brick in his hat," &c. — *Newspaper*, April, 1857.

I met her at the Chinese room;  
She wore a wreath of roses,  
She walked in beauty like the night,  
Her breath was like sweet posies.  
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*, Aug., 1854.

A passenger on board a Mississippi steamboat, fast aground on a sand-bar, thus describes the state of things: —

The captain and bar-keeper were playing poker, . . . the crew all *on a bender* in the engine-room, firemen all drunk on the boiler-deck, and everybody generally enjoying themselves. — *Doesticks*, p. 169.

**Bermudian Vine.** See *Chicken-Grape*.

**To best.** To get the better of. “I’ve *bested* him more than he ever *bested* me.”

**Bestowment.** 1. The act of giving gratuitously; a conferring. — *Webster*. This word, which is much used by our theological writers, is not in the English dictionaries.

God the Father had committed the *bestowment* of the blessings purchased to his Son. — *Edwards on Redemption*.

If we consider the *bestowment* of gifts in this view. — *Chauncy, U. Lab.*

2. That which is conferred or given. — *Webster*.

They strengthened his hands by their liberal *bestowments* on him and his family. — *Christian Magazine*, III. 665.

The free and munificent *bestowment* of the Sovereign Judge. — *Theody*.

Mr. Todd has *bestowal* in his edition of Johnson, but cites no authority for its use. Dr. Webster thinks *bestowment* preferable on account of the concurrence of the two vowels in *bestowal*.

**Betterments.** (Generally used in the plural number.) 1. The improvements made on new lands, by cultivation and the erection of buildings. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

2. The improvement received by an estate from the widening of a highway, and also the sum assessed upon such estate for such improvement.

“This word,” adds Mr. Pickering, “was first used in the State of *Vermont*, but it has for a long time been common in the State of *New Hampshire*; and it has been getting into use in some parts of *Massachusetts*, since the passing of the late law, similar to the *Betterment Acts* (as they are called) of the States above mentioned. It is not to be found in Mr. *Webster's* nor in any of the *English dictionaries* that I have seen, except *Ash's*; and there it is called ‘a bad word.’ It is thus noticed by an English traveller in this country, in speaking of those people who enter upon new lands without any right, and proceed to cultivate them:—

These men demand either to be left owners of the soil or paid for their *betterments*; that is, for what they have done towards clearing the ground. — *Kendall, Travels in the United States*, Vol. III. p. 160.

**Bettermost.** The best. The word, which is provincial in England, is used in New England.

The *bettermost* cow, an expression we do not find in Shakspeare or Milton. — *Mrs. Kirkland*.

Sometimes is heard the expression *bettermost best*; as, "These girls are dressed in their *bettermost best*."

**Betty.** (Ital. *bocchetta*.) A pear-shaped bottle wound around with straw, in which olive oil is brought from Italy. Called by chemists a "Florence flask."

**Between Hay and Grass.** Neither one thing nor another. Between boyhood and manhood. Between two stages of existence, of progress, age, development, &c.

**Bevel.** A slope, or declivity. Long Island. "The road is laid on a *bevel*," i. e. higher in the middle. — *Forby's Vocab. of East Anglia*.

**B'hoys, i. e. Boys,** a name applied to a class of noisy young men of the lower ranks of society in the city of New York.

The "New York Commercial Advertiser," April 12, 1847, in speaking of the approaching election, uses the following language:—

All the *b'hoys* will vote, — ay, more than all. Let every Whig do his duty. Another year with a Democratic mayor, — and such a mayor as the *b'hoys* would force upon the city! Who can tell what the taxes will be?

Then come, every friend of the Union,  
Come, old men, and come, ye *b'hoys*;  
Let's go it for old Rough and Ready,  
Who never was scared at a noise! — *Political Song*.

**Bible Christians.** The "Philadelphia Mercury" thus gives a summary of the creed of this new sect: "This denomination abstain from all animal food and spirituous liquors, and live on vegetables and fruits. They maintain the unity of God, the divinity of Jesus, and the salvation of man, attainable only by a life of obedience to the light manifested to his mind and a grateful acknowledgment of his indebtedness to the great Giver of all."

**Biddable.** This Irish word is in use in the West. "White servants are not *biddable*;" that is, manageable, obedient, tractable.

Teach your boys, too, to yoke up the young steers, to use them kindly, with patient perseverance, to make them as *bidable* [sic] as this boy has made these [now on exhibition]. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 9, 1861, *Letter from Watertown, N. Y.*

**Biddy.** An Irish servant girl, probably from *Bridget*, a common name among the class.

**Big.** Great, fine, excellent. The "*big bell*," the "*big altar*," and the "*big desk*" of a church, are assuredly big vulgarisms. The "*big horn*," for the last trumpet, is almost profane.

"Hello!" sez he, "what 's that?"

"That ere," sez I, "'s some o' the *biggest* whiskey that ever slipped down a feller's throat, without smellin' o' the customs." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Big Bugs.** People of consequence. Probably the origin of this word lies hid in some anecdote that would be worth finding out.

Then we 'll go to the Lord's house, — I don't mean to the meetin' house, but where the nobles meet, pick out the *big bugs*, and see what sort o' stuff they 're made of. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 24.

These preachers dress like *big bugs*, and go ridin' about on hundred-dollar horses, a-spungin' poor priest-ridden folks, and a-eaten chicken-fixens so powerful fast that chickens has got scarce in these diggins. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 140.

The free-and-easy manner in which the hare-brained Sir Robert Peel described some of the *big bugs* at Moscow has got him into difficulty. — *N. Y. Times*, February, 1857.

Miss Samson Savage is one of the *big bugs*, — that is, she 's got more money than a'most anybody else in town. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 301.

**Big Dog.** In some parts of the country, the principal man of a place or in an undertaking is called the *big dog with a brass collar*, as opposed to the little curs not thought worthy of a collar.

**Big Drink.** 1. A large glass of liquor.

2. A cant term applied, at the South-west, to the Mississippi River.

Well, as I was sayin', off I sot, went through Mississippi, crossed the *big drink*, come too now and then, when the chill come it too strong, but couldn't git shut of the ager. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Incident*.

**Big Figure.** To go the *big figure*, or do things on the *big figure*, means to do them on a large scale. This vulgar phrase is used at the West and South.

Well, I glory in her spunk, but it's monstrous expensive and unpleasant to do things on the *big figure* that she 's on now. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Biggest.** Greatest, finest, most excellent; as, "He's the biggest kind of a musician."

The thermal springs are regarded by the trappers as the breathing-places of his Satanic majesty; and considered, moreover, to be the *biggest* kind of medicine to be found in the mountains. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 129.

**Biggest Toad.** *Biggest toad in the puddle.* A Western expression for a head-man; a leader of a political party, or of a crowd. Not an elegant expression, though sometimes well applied. Thus a Western newspaper, in speaking of the most prominent man engaged in the political contest for one of the Presidential candidates before Congress, says: "Mr. D. D. F. — is the *biggest toad in the puddle.*"

**Big Head.** 1. A swelling of the head in cattle.

2. A term used in the West to denote that affection in youth which has recently found a more elegant designation in the term

"Young America." It is applied to boys who smoke cigars, chew tobacco, drink strong liquors, gamble, and treat their parents and superiors as their inferiors. Of such a boy it is said, "He has got the *big head*." Also called *swell head*.

**Big Horn.** (*Ovis montana*.) Another name for the Rocky Mountain Sheep, an animal extensively distributed through North America along the highlands of the Rocky Mountains from California to the parallel of 68°. — S. F. Baird.

**Big Meeting.** Common in the West for "protracted meeting." In country towns where there are no churches and where preachers are seldom seen, the arrival of one is a matter of importance to the whole surrounding region. The people assemble in great numbers and from a distance, and, having come so far, one sermon will not suffice; so for several days together religious services are held. This has originally no reference to any especial interest in the hearers, but the transition to the ordinary "protracted meeting" is natural.

**Big Trees.** (*Sequoia gigantea*, *Washingtonia*, *Wellingtonia*.) The giant pine trees of California are universally known as the *Big Trees*.

Professor Brewer saw trees on the western flanks of the Sierra Madre, one of which measured one hundred and six feet in circumference four feet above the ground, and was two hundred and seventy-six feet in height. Another is spoken of which measured one hundred and twelve in circumference, but had been broken off at the height of three hundred feet, where it was eighteen feet in diameter. It was conjectured that, when entire, it could not have been less than four hundred feet in height. The Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), another of these giants of the forest, has been found growing to the height of two hundred and seventy feet.

The industries of the Pacific coast, like the *big trees*, grow in great clumps; and a single axe well laid at the roots will do surprising things among them. But the ground will shake when these Bonanza kings come down. — *Providence Journal*, May 5, 1876.

**Bilberry.** (*Vaccinium*.) The popular name of shrubs belonging to different species of whortleberry.

**Biling, Bilen.** A vulgar pronunciation of *boiling*. The phrase *the whole* (or more commonly *hull*) *kit and bilin'* means the whole lot, applied to persons or things.

The United States Marshal, who was looking for crooked whiskey, was on his way to arrest the *whole bilin'* of [men] for treasonable proceedings. — *Petroleum V. Nasby*.



Yes, Evelina, I've been pisoned, — so are all the Lowerys, the *whole bilin'* of them; and somebody ought to be hung for it, — who, I can't say. — *Grinder Papers*, p. 101.

**Bilk.** In the Far West, the most degrading epithet that one can apply to another is to call him a *bilk*.

The term was entirely novel to me, and I first asked its meaning of a landlord, who explained to me by saying that a *bilk* is a man who never misses a meal and never pays a cent. — *McClure, Rocky Mountain*, p. 211.

**Bill-Board.** A board on which to affix handbills or bulletins.

A bill-board is the only news-sheet we know of which is subject to the editorial supervision of every man who comes along; yet people who fail ignominiously in their efforts to edit a bill-board are firmly convinced that they could edit a newspaper. — *Rome (N. Y.) Sentinel*.

**Bill-Fish.** (*Belone truncata*.) A small sea-fish fond of running up into fresh water during the summer, and often taken a considerable distance from the ocean. Also called Sea-pike, Silver Gar-fish, &c.

**Billy.** A weapon used by desperadoes, and sometimes carried by policemen. See *Slung-Shot*.

A day or two since a poor German was taken to prison, and, on examining him, it was discovered that he was a victim to the *billy*. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Bindweed.** The popular name in Massachusetts for the *convolvulus*. — *Bigelow's Flora*. This term is preferable to the provincial English "Robin run over the hedge."

**Bindery.** A place where books are bound.

**Bird's-eye Limestone.** The name of a formation in the New York system of Geology.

**Bishop.** An appendage to a lady's wardrobe, otherwise called a Bustle.

I sing the *bishop*, alias the bustle,  
A theme transcendent for a human tongue;  
Prepare, my muse, for a heroic tussel!  
Let every nerve with energy be strung!  
*The Bustle, a Philos. Poem.*

Mr. Saxe, in his poem on "Progress," says that Imperial Fashion decides the gravest questions which divide the world.

If wrong may not, by circumstance, be right, —  
If black cravats be more genteel than white —  
If, by her *bishop*, or her "grace," alone  
A genuine lady, or a church, is known.

**Bison.** See *Buffalo*.

**Bit.** (Span. *pieza*.) The name, in some Southern States, of a silver coin of the value of one eighth of a dollar, the Spanish real (*de*

*plata*). It is called also an *eleven penny bit* or a *levy*. See the article *Federal Currency*.

**Black, n.** A slave.

**Black, adj.** Pertaining to, consisting in, favorable or unfavorable to, a negro or slave.

They proclaim the emancipation of the whites from slave-holding thralldom, and predict that the downfall of *Black* bondage is not far distant. — *The Independent*, Nov. 14, 1861, *Art. by H. Greeley*.

**Black Bass.** 1. A favorite game fish, found in abundance in most of our Northern lakes and Western rivers.

2. On the Jersey coast, this name is also given to the Sea Bass. (*Centropristes nigricans*.)

**Blackberry.** This term is universal in the United States for the English Bramble-berry.

**Blackberry Bush.** Bramble-bush.

**Blackfish.** See *Tautaug*.

**Blackgum.** (Genus *Nyssa*.) A tree common to the Middle States.

**Blackie.** A negro; formerly in the Southern States, a slave.

Families and hotels cannot depend on their servants [*i. e.* slaves] remaining to cook the morrow's dinner; and helpless misses and masters, who have needed *Blackie* to pull on their stockings and brush their hair, are brought to contemplate the awful time when they must take care of their own hose and hair. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 13, 1862, *Letter from Beaufort, N. C.*

**Black-Jack.** 1. The *Quercus nigra*, or Barren Oak; its more common name is *Scrub Oak*.

2. Rum sweetened with molasses. New England.

3. A face blackened by difficulty of breathing; as the cause of such a face, hanging.

If the rebel troops become guerillas, they will have to be hung. The *black-jacks* will be far more fatal to them than yellow jack was to our troops. — *N. Y. Observer*, June 5, 1862.

4. A miner's name for an ore of zinc. It is composed of sulphur and zinc, and chemically is sulphuret of zinc. It is often associated with a lead ore called galena, and its presence in such cases is always objectionable and lessens the value of the lead ore. The *Black Hills' Cor. of the Philadelphia Times* says:—

"We found here a small layer of silver ore containing lead and some copper, and a large underlayer of *black-jack* of too poor a quality to work. The green-horns here call this *black-jack* galena, and some are actually putting it up for galena."

**Black Maria.** A close, box-carriage, generally painted black, used for carrying convicts to a prison or penitentiary.

**Blackstrap.** Gin and molasses. The English sailors call the common wines of the Mediterranean *blackstrap*. — *Falconer's Marine Dictionary*.

Come, Molly dear, no *blackstrap* to-night, switchel or ginger pop. — *Margaret*, p. 300.

Mister, I guess you never drink'd no *blackstrap*, did you? Why, bless you, it's the sweetest drink that ever streaked down a gullet. — *Hill's Yankee Stories*.

Blackstrap in old times was the common beverage of engine companies at fires in Boston, and is thus poetically alluded to by one of her writers: —

But oh! let *blackstrap's* sable god deplore  
Those engine-heroes so renowned of yore!  
*Harvard Register*, p. 235.

**Blackwood.** Hemlock, pine, spruce, and fir. Maine.

**Bladder-Tree.** (*Straphylea*.) A handsome shrub, from six to ten feet high, remarkable for its large inflated capsules. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*.

**Bladder-Wort.** (*Utricularia vulgaris*.) The popular name of an aquatic plant, appearing above water only with its stalks and flowers. — *Ibid*.

**Blamed.** A euphemism for doomed or damned. New England.

**Blanket.** A term used distinctively for the clothing of an Indian. To say of one's father or mother that they "wore the blanket" implies that they were but half-civilized Indians. Western.

**Blanket Coat.** A coat made from a blanket, common in the West, and often seen with the black stripe of the border of the original blanket crossing various parts of the garment. Such a coat, of a bright blue, would be deemed a great oddity in the Atlantic States; in the West, a green one would be considered equally ridiculous. See *Mackinaw Blanket*.

**Blanket Indian.** A wild Indian, whose principal article of dress is the blanket.

**Blatancy.** A blatant habit; quality of being blatant.

The senile weakness of Crittenden, the loud-mouthed *blatancy* of Vallandigham, and the harmless venom of Cox. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 15, 1862, *Letter from Washington*.

**Blauser.** (Dutch, *blazer*, a blower.) The name given by the Dutch settlers to the hog-nosed snake, from its habit of distending or blowing up the skin of its neck and head. The other popular names in New York are Deaf-Adder and Buckwheat-nosed Adder. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Blaze.** In traversing the dense forests of the West, a person would soon lose his way and find it difficult to retrace his steps, without some landmark. This is made by cutting a piece out of the side of trees at a sufficient distance from each other to enable the traveller readily to discover them, and thus follow the direct path or road. Such a mark is called a *blaze*, and trees thus marked are said to be *blazed*. "That horse has a *blazed* forehead," meaning a white spot on it.

Three *blazes* in a perpendicular line on the same tree indicating a legislative road: the single *blaze*, a settlement or neighborhood road. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*.

After traversing a broad marsh, however, where my horse seemed loath to venture, I struck a burr-oak opening, and soon found my way by the *blazed* trees back to the mail trail. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*.

I kept the banks of the bayou, and determined to mark the tree with a *blaze*. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 63.

Do you see that *blaze* in the hemlock tree? Well, he up and as quick as a wink fired and hit it in the centre. — *S Slick, Human Nature*, p. 112.

**To blaze or blaze out.** To designate by blazing (see the preceding article); to mark out.

Champollion died in 1832, having done little more than *blaze* out the road to be travelled by others. — *Nott's Chronology, Ancient and Scriptural*, p. 36.

**Blazing Star.** (*Aletris farinosa*.) A plant, the root of which is greatly esteemed by the Indians and people of the West for its medicinal virtues. It is also called Devil's Bit. Both names are also applied to other and very different plants.

**Blickey.** (Dutch, *blik*, tin.) In New York and New Jersey, a tin pail.

**Blind Eel.** When a fisherman brings up a piece of sea-weed on his hook, he is said to have caught a *blind eel*.

**Blizzard.** A poser. This word is not known in the Eastern States.

A gentleman at dinner asked me for a toast; and, supposing he meant to have some fun at my expense, I concluded to go ahead, and give him and his likes a *blizzard*. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 16.

**Bloated Eels.** Eels skinned and eviscerated. Connecticut.

**To blind a Trail.** To conceal a person's foot-prints, or to give them the appearance of going in a different direction; and, figuratively, to deceive a person by putting him on the wrong track.

**Block.** A term applied in America to a square mass of houses included between four streets. It is a very useful one. The term is used in the "London Quarterly Review," vol. lxxxviii. p. 477, in an article on "Sanitary Consolidation." It is also applied, sometimes.

to large houses or other large buildings, which have accommodations for several families, several shops, &c.

Such an average *block*, comprising two hundred and eighty-two houses and covering nine acres of ground, exists in Oxford Street. It forms a compact square mass, or "insula," to borrow a term from the Romans, favorably situated for military engineering.

This term is not universal, for in many cities *square* is used.

A *block of shares* is a Wall Street phrase, and means a large number of shares in a railroad or other stock company massed together and sold in a lump.

**Blockade.** Embarrassment to shipping by ice; an ice-field.

The condition of the ice at Port Huron, Michigan, is unchanged. The field has reached St. Clair River. . . . The *blockade* will remain until, &c. — *Boston Journal*.

**Block-Island Turkey.** Salted codfish. Common in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Comp. *Taunton Turkey*.

**Blooded.** *Blooded cattle*, or *stock*, is a term applied to horses, horned cattle, swine, &c., of choice breeds.

**Blood Orange.** An orange, the pulp and juice of which are reddish or blood-like in their color.

**Blood-Root.** (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*.) The plant is so called from the blood-red juice which exudes from a fresh root when broken. See *Puccoon*.

**Blood-Tubs.** A set of rowdies in Baltimore, chiefly butchers, who got their epithet from having on an election day dipped an obnoxious German head down in a tub of warm blood, and then drove him running through the town. See *Plug-Ugly*.

From the song of the Irish Legion, written after the attack on the Union soldiers while passing through Baltimore, in 1861:—

*Blood-Tubs* and Plug-Uglies, and others galore,  
Are sick for a thrashing in sweet Baltimore;  
Be jabbers! that same I 'd be proud to inform  
Of the terrible force of an Irishman's arm.

**Bloomer.** The *Bloomer costume* is one devised by a Mrs. Bloomer, and worn by some of the more ardent advocates for woman's rights. It consists of a short gown, reaching a little below the knees, and pantalettes.

**To blow.** 1. To boast, brag; to "talk big." "You *blow* behind my back, but dare not say any thing to my face."

2. To expose one.

3. To flout at; to reproach; to censure.

**Blower.** 1. A plate of sheet-iron, used to partially stop the opening of a grate or furnace, and thus increase the draft.

2. A braggart; a teller of incredible anecdotes, feats, and hair-breadth escapes.

**Blowin' his Bazoo.** Gasconade; braggadocio. Tennessee.

**Blow of Cotton.** In the South, the bursting of the pods.

**Blow out.** A festive entertainment. Frequently used for a party or ball. "Mr. B—— gave a big '*blow out*,' last night," &c.

**To blow out.** To talk violently or abusively. The pious Uncle Tiff, as related by Mrs. Stowe, wonders how people get to heaven among the conflicting doctrines.

Dere's de Methodists, dey cuts up de Presbyterians; de Presbyterians pitch into de Methodists, and both are down on de Episcopal; while de Baptists tink dey none on dem right; and while dey's all *blowing out* at each other dat ar way, I's wondering whar's de way to Canaan. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 276.

**To blow up.** To give one a *blowing up* is to accuse, berate, or denounce him; to scold.

**Blowth.** (Ang.-Sax. A blossom.) The blossoming of flowers. "Ther's ben a good *blowth* o' apples this year;" i. e., the flowers are numerous. The word is provincial in the west of England, and is preserved in New England.

The first age after the flood was, by ancient historians, called Golden. Ambition and covetousness being as then but green and newly grown up; the seeds and effects whereof were as yet but potential, and in the *blowth* and bud. — *Raleigh, Hist. of the World*, Part 1, book 1, ch. 9, p. 107, edit. 1677.

**Blue.** 1. Gloomy, severe; extreme, ultra. In the former sense, it is applied especially to the Presbyterians, to denote their severe and mortified appearance. Thus, beneath an old portrait of the seventeenth century, in the Woodburn Gallery, is the following inscription:—

A true *blue* Priest, a Lincey Woolsey Brother,  
One legg a pulpit holds, a tub the other;  
An Orthodox grave, moderate Presbyterian,  
Half surplice cloake, half Priest, half Puritan.  
Made up of all these halves, hee cannot pass  
For any thing entirely but an ass.

In the latter sense, it is used particularly in politics.

The *bluest* description of old Van Rensselaer Federalists have followed Colonel Prentiss (in Otsego County). — *N. Y. Tribune*.

2. A synonyme in the tippler's vocabulary for *drunk*. To drink "till all's *blue*" is to get exceedingly tipsy.

**Blue Backs.** A term applied to the paper money of the Confederate

government in contradistinction to the *Greenbacks* of the North. When they depreciated, they became known as *shucks*.

**Blue-Berry.** (*Vaccinium tenellum*.) A fruit resembling the whortleberry in appearance and taste.

**Blue-Blood.** An aristocrat; one of high family.

"The Nation" itself declares that Professor Seelye was elected to Congress by a thoroughly *blue-blood* Massachusetts community. — *Let. of Gail Hamilton in N. Y. Tribune*. The writer adds, "No sooner did Professor Seelye deliver an opinion opposed to that of 'The Nation,' than that journal — to use a pioneer [backwoodsman's] but picturesque Western phrase — sat up on its hind legs and howled."

**Blue-blooded.** Proud of assumed high descent; regarding one's self as of good birth.

This high-toned and *blue-blooded* Christian statesman was [so thought or said "The Nation"] the victim of disease. — *Ibid*.

**Blue-Book.** A printed book containing the names of all the persons holding office under the government of the United States, with their place of birth, amount of salary, &c. It answers to the Red-Book of England and Canada.

**Blue Curls.** (*Trichostema dichotomum*.) From the shape and color of its flowers. A common plant resembling pennyroyal, and hence called bastard pennyroyal.

**Blue-Fish.** (*Temnodon saltator*.) A salt-water fish of the mackerel order, but larger in size. It is one of the most voracious fishes on the Atlantic coast. It bites readily at any object drawn rapidly through the water; as a bone squid or metal spoon, a minnow, white rag, and in fact any conspicuous bait. On the Jersey coast, these fish are called Horse-mackerel; and in Virginia, Salt-water Tailors. Another name is the Skip-jack. On the Jersey coast, the name *Blue-fish* is applied to the Weak-fish, Squeteague, or Chickwit. See *Horse-Mackerel*.

**Blue-Grass.** The name of the grass of the rich limestone land of Kentucky and Tennessee. It affords pasture for ten or eleven months in the year, and flourishes in the partial shade of the woods in which there is no undergrowth. The change from the fertile soil upon which this grass flourishes to that which is poorer is sudden and well marked. Hence the term "Blue-grass" is applied both to the region and its inhabitants. "Grape-vine," for similar reasons, is used in opposition to "Blue-grass," although not with equal propriety, as the vine *does* grow well on either soil, while the blue-grass does not. — *Owen's Geological Survey of Kentucky*.

A look at the *Blue-Grass* region of Kentucky will of itself make one forget the fatigues of a journey from New York. "God's own country" was the characterization given by one gentleman. Here are the celebrated stock farms, where the racehorses of the country are bred. — *Corr. N. Y. Post*, June, 1877.

In Maryland and some other States, the term is applied to a species of grass that volunteers and causes much trouble; being injurious to wheat and clover, and hard to eradicate. In Connecticut, *Quickgrass*, or *Twitchgrass*.

**Blue Hen.** A popular name applied to the State of Delaware.

**Blue Hen's Chickens.** The sobriquet or cant name of the people of Delaware.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary war, there lived in Sussex County of that colony a gentleman of fortune, named Caldwell, who was a sportsman and breeder of fine horses and game-cocks. His favorite axiom was, that the character of the progeny depends more on the mother than on the father, and that the finest game-cocks depended on the hen, rather than on the cock. His observation led him to select a *blue hen* and he never failed to hatch a good game-cock from a blue hen's egg. Caldwell distinguished himself as an officer in the First Delaware Regiment for his daring spirit. The high state of its discipline was conceded to his exertions, so that when officers were sent on recruiting service it was said that they had gone home for more of Caldwell's game-cocks; but, as Caldwell insisted that no cock could be truly game unless its mother was a *blue hen*, the expression *Blue Hen's Chickens* was substituted for game-cocks. — *Delaware State Journal*, July, 1860.

Let the word be Forward! Until you see the Stars and Stripes floating over Sumter, and every other fort in the harbor in the city of Charleston. Delaware's honor is in your hands. . . . **BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS** to the front! Forward! March! — *Delaware Inquirer*, May 5, 1861.

**Blue Laws.** Where and how the story of the New Haven *Blue Laws* originated is a matter of some curiosity. According to Dr. Peters, the epithet *blue* was applied to the laws of New Haven by the neighboring colonies, because these laws were thought peculiarly sanguinary; and he says that *blue* is equivalent to *bloody*. It is a sufficient refutation of this account of the matter to say that, if there was any distinction between the colony of New Haven and the other united colonies of New England in the severity of their punishments, New Haven was the last of the number to gain this bad pre-eminence. Others have said that certain laws of New Haven, of a more private and domestic kind, were bound in a blue cover; and hence the name. This explanation has as little probability as the



preceding for its support. It is well known that, on the restoration of Charles II., the Puritans became the subject of every kind of reproach and contumely. Not only what was deserving of censure in their deportment, but their morality, was especially held up to scorn. The epithet *blue* was applied to any one who looked with disapprobation on the licentiousness of the times. The Presbyterians, under which name all dissenters were often included, as they still dared to be the advocates of decency, were more particularly designated by this term; their religion and their morality being marked by it as mean and contemptible. Thus Butler :—

For his religion, it was fit  
To match his learning and his wit;  
'Twas Presbyterian true *blue*. — *Hudib.*, Canto I.

That this epithet of derision should find its way to the colonies was a matter of course. It was here applied not only to persons, but to customs, institutions, and laws of the Puritans, by those who wished to render the prevailing system ridiculous. Hence probably a belief with some, that a distinct system of laws, known as the *Blue Laws*, must have somewhere a local habitation. — *Prof. Kingsley's Hist. Discourse*.

#### **Blue Law State.** Connecticut.

**Blue-Lights.** During the war of 1812, while the British fleet lay off New London, blue lights were often seen at night near the shore, which were attributed by Commodore Decatur (whose vessels lay there for security) to persons who were friendly to the British, and hence traitors. The conclusion was an unjust one, as no American was ever discovered or even suspected of burning them. Hence, says Mr. Goodrich, "*Blue-lights*, meaning treason on the part of Connecticut Federalists during the war, is a standard word in the flash dictionary of Democracy." "Even to this day," he says elsewhere, "Connecticut *Blue-Lights* are the grizzly monsters with which the nursing fathers and mothers of Democracy frighten their children into obedience—just before elections!" — *Recollections*, Vol. I. p. 439 and 484.

Horace Greeley, and a train of real *blue light* Clayites from your State, have arrived this morning, and make their head-quarters at the Franklin. Horace has fastened on his armor with rivets and hammer, and the Taylor men will find him a regular "barnburner!" — *New York Herald*.

#### **Blue-Nose.** The slang name for a native of Nova Scotia.

"Pray, sir," said one of my fellow-passengers, "can you tell me why the Nova Scotians are called '*Blue-Noses*'?"

"It is the name of a potato," said I, "which they produce in great perfection, and boast to be the best in the world. The Americans have, in consequence, given them the nickname of *Blue-Noses*." — *Sam Slick*.

The sort o' trash a feller gits to eat doos beat all nater.

I'd give a year's pay for a smell o' one good *blue-nose tater*.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

Do you know the reason monkeys are no good? Because they chatter all day long, — so do the niggers, — and so do the *Blue-Noses* of Nova Scotia. — *Sam Slick*.

After a run [in the steamer] of fourteen days, we entered the harbor of Halifax, amid the hearty cheers of a large number of *Blue-Noses*. — *Sir George Simpson's Overland Journey*, Vol. I. p. 19.

**Blue Perch.** See *Burgall*.

**Blue Pill.** A bullet.

Between *blue pills*, halters, and the penitentiary, we shall soon work off this element of rascaldom and horse-thieves. — *N. Y. Tribune*, *Let. from Missouri*, Nov. 19, 1861.

**Blue-Skins.** A nickname applied to the Presbyterians, from their alleged grave deportment.

**Blue-Stocking.** The American avocet (*Recurvirostra Americana*). A common bird in the Northern States.

**Bluets.** (*Oldentandria cærulea*.) A delicate little herb, producing in spring a profusion of light-blue flowers fading to white, with a yellowish eye. — *Gray, The Houstonia* of Linnæus.

**Blue Weed.** (*Chicorium*.) Wild endive, bearing a large dark-blue flower. New England.

**Bluff, n.** A high bank, almost perpendicular, projecting into the sea.

In America, it is applied to: 1. A high bank, presenting a steep front along a river, in the interior of the country. Hence it is also used as a geological term to denote the lacustrine formation where these high banks occur.

Here you have the advantage of mountain, *bluff*, interval, to set off the view. — *Margaret*, p. 232.

2. A game of cards, alias *Poker*.

**To bluff off.** To put off a troublesome questioner or dun with a gruff answer; to frighten a person in any way, in order to deter him from accomplishing his ends.

"I goes you five dollars, this time," says Jim, posting at the same time the tin.

"I sees dat, and I goes you ten better," said Bill; "you ain't a-goin' to *bluff* dis child, nohow you can fix it."

"I sees you again," said Jim, "and goes you forty better; dis Orleans nigger won't stay stumped, dat I tells you, sartin." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

In the course of the dispute, Jim let out some offensive remark, which brought a rejoinder from Joe. The former tried the *bluffing system*; but Joe said he had stood enough, and would put up with no more insults from his bullying neighbor. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 137.

**To bluff on Poker** is to bet on a worthless hand as if it were a good hand, and force your antagonist to back down in fear; so to *bluff a man*, and to *bluff him off*, are slightly different, the latter probably being English, the former the technical form of "Bluffing off," which the game brings about.

**Blummechies.** (Dutch.) This Dutch word for small flowers is still preserved in the New York markets.

**Blummies.** (Dutch.) Flowers. In the State of New York, and particularly in the city and along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers.

A gentleman, ruralizing along the banks of the Hudson, stopped to pick some wild flowers near where sat an aged man, and said: —

"These flowers are beautiful, — it is a treat for one from the city to gaze on them!"

"Flowers?" replied the old man, with an air of bewilderment. "Flowers! what be they?"

"Why, these!" replied I, stooping and picking some.

"Oh, the *blummies*! Yes, the blummies be very thick hereabouts!" he replied. *Newspaper*.

**Blur-eyed.** Blear-eyed. "The *blur-eyed* slanderer." — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 14, 1862.

**To board round.** To supply, to receive board in rotation; as, "to board round." "They will board him round." In New England, formerly a general expression, relating to a custom once prevalent in rural districts, when the school-teacher received board in different families from which children were sent to school.

**Boards.** In the South-west, boards are strips of wood from two to four feet in length, riven from blocks, and differing only in size from shingles. All sawed stuff, which at the North is called *boards*, is here called *plank*.

**Boatable.** Navigable for boats or small river-craft. — *Webster*. This useful word has only recently been adopted into the English Dictionaries.

The inhabitants of this State shall have liberty . . . to fish in all *boatable* and other waters, not private property. — *Constitution of Vermont*, 1786, ch. ii.

The Seneca Indians say, they can walk four times a day from the *boatable* waters of the Alleghany to those of the Tioga. — *Morse's Geography*.

This word, says Dr. Webster, though of modern origin, is well formed according to the English analogies, like *fordable*, *creditable*, &c. The advantage of using it is obvious, as it expresses an important distinction in the capacity of water to bear vessels. *Navigable* is a generic term, of which *boatable* is the species; and as the use of it saves a circumlocution, instead of being proscribed, it should be received as a real improvement. — *Letter to J. Pickering on his Vocabulary*, p. 6.

The objection to this word is that it is a hybrid, composed of a Saxon noun and a Latin ending. It is like *fordable*, but not like *creditable*, which is all Latin. We should hardly use the word *trustable*. We can well enough do with *trustful*.

**Boating.** Transporting in boats. — *Webster*.

**Bob.** A knot of worms or chicken-guts on a string, used in fishing for eels, and in the South for trout. The bob is frequently made of colored rags, red, black, &c.; and, for large trout, it is a bait equivalent to the artificial fly.

**Bobolink.** (*Icterus agripennis*.) A lively little bird, so called from its notes, which in the fall frequents the wild rice of shallow rivers and marshes, where it becomes very fat. It is highly esteemed by epicures. Other popular names by which it is known in different parts of the country are Rice-bird, Rice-bunting, Reed-bird, Meadow-bird, May-bird, Butter-bird, American Ortolan, and lastly — and most inappropriately — Skunk Blackbird.

The happiest bird of our spring is the *Bobolink*. This is the chosen season of revelry for him. He comes amidst the pomp and fragrance of the season; his life seems all sensibility and enjoyment, all song and sunshine. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*.

Philosophers may teach thy whereabouts and nature,

But wise, as all of us, perforce, must think 'em,

The school-boy best has fix'd thy nomenclature,

The poets, too, must call thee *Bob-o-Linkum*. — *Hoffman, Poems*.

Merrily swinging on briar and weed,

Near to the nest of his little dame,

Over the mountain side or mead,

Robert of Lincoln is telling his name,

*Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,*

*Spink, spank, spink*. — *W. C. Bryant*.

**Bob-Sled.** A sled much used for the transportation of large timber from the forest to a river or public road. Maine. Its peculiarity consists in its having two pair of bobs or short runners. So is also the *Bob-sleigh*.

**Bockey.** (Dutch, *bokual*.) A bowl or vessel made from a gourd. A term peculiar to the city of New York and its vicinity.

**Bocking.** So called from the name of the town in Essex County, England, where made. A kind of baize or woollen cloth, either plain or stamped with colored figures, used to cover floors or to protect carpets. It is also called *floor-cloth*.

I knew that the large cloth which covered the middle of the floor, and which the women call a *bocking*, had been brought and nailed down there, after a solemn family council, as the best means of concealing the darns . . . in the carpet. — *Mrs. Stowe (House and Home Papers), Atlantic Monthly*, Jan., 1864, p. 43.

**Bodette.** (Fr. *beaudette*.) In Canada, the common name for a cot-bedstead.

**Bodewash.** (Fr. *bois de vache*.) Dried cow-dung, used for fuel on the treeless plains of the Far West. Also called *Buffulo Chips*, which see.

**Body-Bolt.** A king-bolt.

The front wheels of the wagon became detached, and the *body-bolt* . . . was driven into the ground up to its head. — *The Press*, Philadelphia, Nov. 17, 1869.

**Bogue.** "I don't git much done without I *bogue* right in along with my men."

**Bogus, n.** A liquor made of rum and molasses. Comp. *Calibogus*.

**Bogus, adj.** Counterfeit, false.

The "Boston Courier" of June 12, 1857, in reporting a case before the Superior Court in that city, gives the following as the origin of this word: "The word *bogus* is a corruption of the name of one *Borghese*, a very corrupt individual, who, twenty years ago or more, did a tremendous business in the way of supplying the great West, and portions of the South-west, with counterfeit bills and bills on fictitious banks. The Western people fell into the habit of shortening the name of *Borghese* to that of *Bogus*; and his bills, as well as all others of like character, were universally styled by them "*bogus currency*." By an easy and not very unnatural transition, the word is now applied to other fraudulent papers, such as sham mortgages, bills of sale, conveyances, &c.

"Look at these bank-bills," said the stranger; "keep those that are good, and return me the bad."

"I guess the whole pile are *bogus*," said Confidence Bob, as he turned over his roll. — *North, The Slave of the Lamp*, p. 33.

The wide-awake citizens of Boston have been sadly bitten by a *bogus* issue of the old "Pine-Tree Shilling currency," got up by a smart Gothamite. — *American Notes and Queries*, July, 1857.

The Know-Nothings of Massachusetts must behave themselves better than they did in their visit to the Catholic nunnery, or they will be repudiated by their brethren in other States, as *bogus* members of the order. — *N. Y. Herald*.

Not one cent should be given to pay the members of the *bogus* legislature of Kansas, or for the support of the *bogus* laws passed by them. — *Boston Atlas*.

**Bogusly.** In a false way.

I and my assistants [in Tennessee] are loyal to the United States; that when this office came under the rebel government, and the oath was sent to us, we filed it *bogously* [*sic*], and sent it to Richmond without swearing to it. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 2, 1862, *Washington Letter*.

**Boiled Shirt.** A white shirt. Western.

In order to attend the Governor's reception, I borrowed a *boiled shirt*, and plunged in with a Byron collar, and polished boots, and also the other necessary apparel. — *McClure, The Rocky Mountains*, p. 412.

'Twas only last night, sure, they gave me a call

To deliver a lecture at Hibernia Hall.

I put on a *biled shirt*, and hastened there quick,

But the blackguards did serve me the devil's own trick. — *Ed. Burton's Songs*.

**Bois d'Arc.** (*Maclura aurantiaca*.) The Osage orange of Missouri and Arkansas, which see.

The bows [of the Comanches] are made of the tough and elastic wood of the *bois d'arc*, or Osage orange, strengthened and reinforced with the sinews of the deer stretched firmly around them. — *Murcy, Exp. of the Red River*, p. 98.

**Bois de Vache.** See *Buffalo-Chips*.

**Bolivar Hat.** A Leghorn bonnet with a broad brim, worn a few years since.

**To bolt.** To omit voting for; to reject; to desert a political party suddenly; as, "Mr. B—— was dissatisfied with the political platform, and *bolted*."

We may *bolt* particular candidates on those tickets. *Bolt* a fraudulent nomination, scratch every unworthy candidate, but sustain the Union ticket and cause. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 3, 1861.

This sense of the word is derived from its sense as meaning to spring aside; to be off from.

**Bombo.** An animal of North Carolina, said to resemble the hedgehog, and by some called a Badger.

When the people [of North Carolina] entertain their friends, they fail not to set before them a capacious bowl of *Bombo*, so called from the animal of that name. — *Westover Papers*, p. 28.

**Bonanza.** (Span. prosperity; success.) In California and Nevada, a rich mine; a lucky hit; a successful enterprise, particularly in gold and silver mining.

The principal place for mining is at the foot of a naked granite mountain, the so-called *Bonanza*. — *Wislizenus, Northern Mexico*, 1847.

The contract for the Legislative printing, awarded by the Controller to Parmenter, of Troy, has been generally regarded here as in the nature of a big *bonanza*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 2, 1876.

The recent rapid decline in *Bonanza* stocks in the San Francisco market has occasioned considerable uneasiness among the holders of these securities. . . . A reporter interviewed Mr. Flood on the subject. The *Bonanza* king was bitterly indignant at the means employed to depreciate his mines. — *Boston Post*, May 5, 1876.

The buyer of lottery tickets is ever hopeful of a big *bonanza*, that he may recover the thousands of dollars sunk during many years of indulging in this folly. — *Boston Herald*, March, 1875.

**To bone.** To apply one's self closely. "To *bone* into it."

**Bone.** A term well understood in New York, and perhaps in other large commercial cities; it means a fee paid by passengers to custom-house officers for permission to pass their baggage with a slight examination. If the *bone* is large, the trunks may not be opened at all.

**Bones.** Substitutes for castanets, so called from the substance from which they are made. Among "negro minstrels," one is always a performer on these instruments, whence he is styled "Brudder *Bones*."

'T was the finest place for miles around,  
And ole galls wouldn't all come down.  
And they 'd so light on every night  
To the old banjo's sweet sound.  
The fiddle there, and den de *bones*,  
And de merry tambourine,  
Oh, wish dat I could see again  
De ole plantation green. — *Negro Melody*.

**Boneset.** (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*.) The popular name of a medicinal plant. So called because it was popularly reported to be a specific for the Dengué, or *Breakbone* fever. — *Rafinesque's Med. Flora*, I. 179. Its properties are sudorific and tonic.

**Bony-Fish.** See *Menhaden*.

**Booby-Hut.** A carriage-body put upon sleigh-runners. New England. It is a slight alteration of the term *booby-hutch*, used in the east of England to denote a clumsy, ill-contrived, covered carriage or seat.

**Boodle.** (Fr. *botel*, *boteau*, a bundle; Germ. *beutel*.) "The whole kit and boodle of them," i. e. all, the whole. New England. Perhaps from the O. Eng. *bottel*, a bunce, or a bundle, as of straw. See *Caboodle*.

**To boo-hoo.** To cry aloud; to bawl, bellow, roar.

The little woman *boo-hoo'd* right out, threw herself incontinently full on his breast, hung around his neck, and went on in a surprising way for such a mere artificial as an actress. — *Field, Drama in Pokerville.*

O ye rash and inconsiderate children of iniquity! You will go down to your graves *boo-hooing* like a kicked booby, soul-shattered, body-tattered, looking as though you had made your escape from a regiment of wild-cats. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 277.

**Bookstore.** A place where books are kept and sold. It is the common term in the United States for what is called, in England, a *bookseller's shop*.

**Boonder or Bounder.** A scrubbing-brush. New York.

**To boost.** To lift or raise by pushing. — *Webster*. Chiefly used by Northern boys, who apply it to the act of shoving a person by the posteriors up a tree or over a fence. “*Boost* me up this tree, and I'll hook you some apples.”

He clambered back into the box (in the theatre), the manager assisting to *boost* him with the most friendly solicitude. — *Field, Drama in Pokerville.*

I have often noticed the alacrity with which the policemen of New York pilot unprotected females across the street, and *boost* them into stages. — *Doesticks*.

It is just as difficult to *boost* a sinner up to heaven without corresponding effort on his part, as it would be for a child to shoulder a sack of Turk's Island salt — *Dow's Sermons*.

Office-seekers ask you to give them a *boost* into the tree of office. And what do they do? They eat the apples, and then throw the cores at your heads. — *Dow's Sermons*.

Lord Palmerston was *boosted* into power by the agricultural interests of England. — *New York Herald*.

**To boot.** To “boot a man” is to kick him.

**Bootee.** A kind of short or half boot. — *Worcester*.

**Boot-Lick.** One who cringes to and flatters a superior for the purpose of obtaining favors; a lickspittle, a toady.

**Borning-Ground.** Native soil. West Indies, as given in Thorne's Report, &c.

**Bosaal.** (Span. *bozal*, a muzzle.) A peculiar kind of halter, used in breaking and riding unruly horses.

**Boss.** The *o* pronounced like *a* in *all*. (Dutch, *baas*.) A master, an employer of mechanics or laborers. Hence we hear of a *boss*-carpenter, a *boss*-bricklayer, *boss*-shoemaker, &c., instead of master-carpenter, &c. The word probably originated in New York, and is



now used in many parts of the United States. The blacks often employ it in addressing white men in the Northern States, as they do *massa* (master) in the Southern States.

At a meeting of the journeymen boot and shoemakers in New York, April 9, 1850, it was

"*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that it is very desirable that the boot and shoemakers form an incorporated company for the purpose of securing to its members constant employment and direct patronage of shoe-buyers, and independence from the tyrannical dictation of intermediate capitalists or bosses."

It isn't saying much for your boss politicianer that he chose you, when I was on his list for promotion. — *J. Neal, Peter Brush.*

The Eternal City is in a very curious position. The Pope has returned to his ancestral home; but he has nothing in his pocket, and Rothschild refuses to let him have any more money. A thousand years ago, and the boot would have been on t'other leg. . . . To-day it is very different. The Father of Holiness is the dependent of the Jew, and Rothschild is the real Pope and boss of all Europe. — *New York Herald*, May 24, 1850.

A correspondent of the "New York Times," Oct. 21, 1876, on board the U. S. ship "Franklin," thus wrote of a notorious character whom they were carrying to New York from Spain:—

We are conveying no less public celebrity than *Boss Tweed*; . . . but the slippery old eel may again evade the clutches of the law, and want to know "what we are going to do about it." The old *Boss* looks quite jolly, &c.

The candidates named by John Kelley, the *Boss* of Tammany Hall, for city officers, furnish a bone of contention among Democrats. — *New York papers*, Oct., 1876.

**Boss.** (Lat. *bos*.) Among the hunters of the prairies, a name for the buffalo.

**Boss**, *adj.* Some late writers are so fond of this word, that they use it as an adjective. Thus one says: "Veteran Hatch caught the *boss* string of trout," meaning probably a very large lot.

**To boss.** To rule over; to direct. To "*boss* a job" is to superintend it

Let his Woman's Rights companion  
*Boss* the house and take the money,—  
*Boss* them, and cut off the dead-heads  
 When she made it pay expenses. — *Pluribustah.*

"What detains you at court?" said a lawyer to an unsophisticated countryman attending in a court-room in Arkansas.

"Why, sir," said the countryman, "I'm fctched here as a jury, and they say if I go home they will have to find me, and they moutn't do that, as I live a good piece."

"What jury are you on?" asked a lawyer.

"What jury?"

"Yes, what jury? Grand or traverse jury?"

"Grand or travis jury? Dad-fetched if I know."

"Well," said the lawyer, "did the judge charge you?"

"Well, squire," said he, "the little fellow that sits up in the pulpit, and kinder *bosses* it over the crowd, gin us a talk; but I don't know whether he charged any thing or not."

The crowd broke up in a roar of laughter, and the sheriff called court. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Nov. 3, 1856.

**Bossy.** A familiar name applied to a calf. In Dorsetshire, England, a spoilt child is called a *bossy calf*. Cf. *μῶσχος*.

**Bothersome.** Inconvenient; vexatious.

The *entente cordiale* does not include this particular point of policy, as it might prove a trifle *bothersome*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The great naval expedition has been a laughably *bothersome* subject to the New York press. — *Winstead Herald*, Oct. 1, 1861.

**Bottom Dollar.** The last dollar. When a man's money is gone, he will say, "I've seen my *bottom dollar*."

The brother of Miss Kate Field, having witnessed the opening of Parliament, said to her:—

I saw the whole play; admired the Queen's dignity, and you may bet your *bottom dollar* I don't want to go again. — *London Truth*, Feb. 8, 1877.

**Bottom Fact.** An undoubted fact; that which is unquestionable.

"The Methodist" newspaper, in speaking of raising money for churches, says:—

"Take it altogether, there is no way to raise money for the church without giving it. And here is the '*bottom fact*' in the trouble: we want the church to have the money; but we want somebody else to pay it."

The public has a large interest in the case of the election of Senator Grover [of Oregon]. Curiosity has been on the tiptoe these many weeks to know the *bottom facts* in it. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 17, 1877.

**Bottom-Lands.** In the Western States, this name is given to the rich flat land on the banks of rivers, which in New England is generally called "interval land," or simply "interval." — *Pickering's Vocab.*, Webster.

Our sleigh, after winding for some time among this broken ground, and passing over one or two small but beautiful pieces of *bottom-land* among the ravines, reached at last the top of the bluff. — *Hoffman*.

**To bouge.** (Old Fr. *bouge*, swelling. — *Cotgrave*.) To swell out, to bulge. This old word is noticed by Dr. Johnson. It is nearly obsolete in England, but is preserved in the interior of New England.

When the sun gets in one inch, it is ten o'clock; when it reaches the stone that *bouges* out there, it is dinner-time. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

**Boughten.** Which is bought. This is a common word in the interior of New England and New York. It is applied to articles purchased from the shops, to distinguish them from articles of home manufacture. Many farmers make their own sugar from the maple-tree, and their coffee from barley or rye. West India sugar or coffee is then called *boughten sugar*, &c. "This is a home-made carpet; that a *boughten one*," i. e. one bought at a shop. In the north of England, bakers' bread is called *bought-bread*.

I'm going to buy a dress and half a dozen pairs of stockings. Common ones I knit, but I took a notion for some *boughten* ones for best. — *Grinder Papers*, p. 20.

**To bounce.** A word now extensively used for the forcible excluding of a troublesome or noisy person from a house or bar-room, a car, &c., sometimes with the addition "out." — "I daresn't go in there, the bar-tender's drunk, and I might get *bounced*." The word may be found in the police reports. See *Bounce* in Addenda.

**Bound.** 1. Determined, resolved. A vulgarism not peculiar to the United States.

A handsome nigger's *bound* to shine,  
Like dandy Jim of Caroline. — *Song*.

I'm on the way to be as sombre and solemn as you are, but I'm *bound* to have a good time first. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*.

You see, my buck brethren, that the women are *bound* to get the better of us. If they can't do it in one way, they will in another. In them you behold the wild-cat, the lamb, and the dove. They first let loose their untamed feline propensities; next they give the juvenile sheep a trial; and, if that fail, they rely upon the loving pigeon. — *Dow's Sermons*.

2. Certain. To a limited extent, *bound* has been made synonymous with sure, certain. Thus it is said of a young man of talent, "He is *bound* to succeed;" of a candidate for political office, "He is *bound* to be elected;" of a young and growing village, "It is *bound* to become a large place." This is a revival of the old sense of the term, which has been obsolete or provincial in England, and has no sanction from Johnson, Richardson, or any of our leading lexicographers. — *Webster*.

**Bounty-Jumper.** A term applied during the late civil war to men who received a bounty when enlisting; who then ran away, enlisted in another State, and received a second bounty. Instances are known where men received three bounties in this way.

My song is of a fast young man whose name was Billy Wires;  
He used to run with the machine, and go to all the fires:  
But as he loved a soldier's life, and wished strange things to see,  
So the thought struck him that he would go and *jump the Bounti-e*.

*Song of the Bounty-Jumper.*

**Bourbon.** 1. Whiskey from Bourbon County, Kentucky. A term generally used to distinguish the better kinds of whiskey, which are mostly made from corn instead of rye.

2. A political name for a Democrat, especially of one factious or turbulent.

The *Bourbons* in South Carolina, as everywhere else, makes a tremendous racket, but he dwindles when the vote is taken. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 17, 1877.

It seems hardly credible, yet the Mississippi journals assert that ex-Governor Humphreys is almost certain to be the Democratic candidate for Governor of that State. He is an irredeemable *Bourbon*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 15, 1877.

The temper of it [Senator Morton's letter] may repel or harden the hearts of the fire-eating *Bourbons*. — *Cor. Washington Star*.

**Bow-dark Tree.** (Fr. *bois d'arc*.) The Osage orange (*Maclura aurantiaca*). A Western tree, much used by the Indians to make bows from. See *Osage Orange*.

**Bower.** In the game of euchre, the two highest cards are called *bowers*. The knave of trumps is the *right bower*; the knave of the suit of the same color, the *left bower*. The name comes from the German packs of cards, in which the card corresponding to our knave is a peasant, called *bauer*.

But the hands that were played  
By that heathen Chinese,  
And the points that he made  
Were quite frightful to see, —  
Till at last he put down a *right bower*,  
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

*Bret Harte, The Heathen Chinese.*

**Bowie.** A bowie-knife.

He has already made 12,000 pikes and a number of *bowies*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 12, 1862, *Despatch from Richmond*.

**Bowie-Knife.** (Pron. *boo-ee*.) A knife from ten to fifteen inches long, and about two inches broad, so named after its inventor, Colonel Bowie. They are worn as weapons by persons in the South and South-western States only, and concealed in the back part of the coat or in the sleeve. Bon Gaultier, in his *American Ballads*, describes a scene in Congress, where a young member turning to Mr. Clay asks, "What kind of a Locofoco's that?" alluding to a conspicuous character who had just entered.

"Young man," quoth Clay, "avoid the way of Slick of Tennessee,  
Of gougers fierce, the eyes that pierce, the fiercest gouger he;  
He chews and spits as there he sits, and whittles at the chairs,  
And in his hand, for deadly strife, a *bowie-knife* he bears."

I advise you, one and all, to enter every election district in Kansas, and vote

at the point of the *bowie-knife* and revolver. Neither give nor take quarter, as our case demands it. — *Speech of Gen. Stringfellow in the Kansas Legislature.*

There 's some men here as I have got to shoot,  
There 's some men here as I have got to stick,  
Let any on you jest my words dispute,  
I 'll put this *bowie-knife* into him, slick.

*Song of the Border Ruffian.*

**Bowling-Alley.** A place for playing at bowls, or ten-pins. In England, long bowling, as described by Strutt, was played on the ground; our game is played on a plank flooring. There were other differences, which it is not necessary to specify.

**Bowman.** A term used in Virginia for a military body-servant.

Each captain and lieutenant was entitled, and I believe is so now, to select from the rank of his company a soldier to wait on him, to carry messages, to cater for him, and to cook for him; and the soldier thus selected was called *bowman*. The term is very ancient, and traces as far back as before the invention of gun-powder and muskets. — *Sketches of Virginia.*

**Bowman's Root.** (*Gillenia trifoliata.*) A medicinal plant; also called Indian physic.

**Box.** 1. A boat for duck-shooting. See *Battery*.

2. An incision made in trees so as to hold a quantity of the sap exuding into it, as, in North Carolina, for collecting turpentine. — *Olmsted's Sea-Board Slave States.*

**To box.** In North Carolina, to make the box, or bowl-like incisions in trees. — *Olmsted.*

**Box-Car.** A house-car, so called; a close car used to convey merchandise on railroads.

**Box-Coat.** A heavy overcoat, originally worn by coachmen; when not in use, usually carried by teamsters and drivers under their box or seat.

**Box-Elder.** (*Negundo aceroides.*) Sometimes ash-leaved maple.

**Box-Settle.** A settle whose seat is the cover of a box (*i. e.* a bunk). *O. W. Holmes.*

**Box-Turtle.** A species of tortoise, the lower shell of which has, in one variety two parts, in another variety three parts, joined by a sort of ligamentous hinge. It moves so as to enclose the body as if in a box.

**Boy.** At the South, the universal name for a black male servant. In Ireland, the word denotes an unmarried man in any menial employment, whatever his age. In many languages, as in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, the same word expresses a male child and a serving-man; just as "girl" and "maid" denote a female servant.

**Brack.** A break or crack, a flaw. — *Halliwel*. This old word is still used in New England, as it is by early English authors, of a break or flaw in a piece of cloth. See *Brash*.

Having a tongue as nimble as his needle, with servile patches of glavering flattery to stitch up the *bracks*, &c. — *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602.

The calico was beautiful, while not a *brack* could be found in it. — *New England Tales*.

**Brahma.** *Brahma fowls*. From Brahmapootra, a river in India. Also called *Bramans*.

**Brainy.** Having brains; clear-headed. A fresh, clean *brainy*, courageous man. — *Albany Journal*, March, 1877.

**Branch.** A brook. Almost every stream in the South is known either as a river, a bayou, or a *branch*; bayou being synonymous with creek, and *branch* with brook. "*Branch-water*" is distinguished from "well-water."

The pasturage of the prairies was scanty and parched; and most of the *branches*, or streams, were dried up. — *W. Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Bran-Duster.** A sort of bolt in which the bran is freed from adhering flour.

**Brash.** Brittle. In New England, this word is used in speaking of wood or timber that is brittle. In New York, it is often heard in the markets, applied to vegetables. Ex. : "These radishes are *brash*," i. e. brittle. In many parts of England, twigs are called *brash*. See *Brack*.

**Brave.** An Indian warrior; a term borrowed from the French.

The Count promised himself many hardy adventures and exploits in company with his youthful *brave*, when we should get among the buffaloes in the Pawnee hunting-grounds. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Breachy.** A term applied to unruly oxen in New England, particularly to such as break down fences or through enclosures. It is provincial in the south of England in the same sense.

**Bread-Root.** (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A plant resembling the beet in form, which is found near the Rocky Mountains, sometimes growing from twenty to thirty inches in circumference. It contains a white pulpy substance, sweet and palatable. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 50.

**Bread-Stuff.** Bread-corn, meal, or flour; bread. — *Webster, Pickering*. This very useful word is American. Mr. Pickering says, "It was first used in some of the official papers of our government, soon after the adoption of the present Constitution. . . . It has probably

been more readily allowed among us, because we do not, like the English, use the word *corn* as a general name for all sorts of grain, but apply it almost exclusively to *Indian corn*, or maize." He cites the following authorities :—

The articles of exports . . . are *breadstuffs*; that is to say, bread-grains, meals, and bread. — *Report of the Secretary of State (Mr. Jefferson) on Commercial Restrictions*, Dec. 16, 1793.

One great objection to the conduct of Britain was her prohibitory duty on the importation of *breadstuff*, &c. — *Marshall, Life of Washington*, Vol. V. p. 519.

In Jamaica, the term *bread-kind* is applied to esculent roots, &c., substituted for bread.

**Break.** A regular sale of tobacco at the "breaking" or opening of the hogsheads. Local in Virginia.

**Break.** *A break in the stock-market.* A Wall Street phrase : where stock is kept up by artificial means, and a money stringency, or similar cause, makes it difficult to carry a load, the attack of a bear clique or the actual inability to holders will produce a decline in value. The market *breaks down*. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*.

The Rev. Mr. Cuyler visited the Stock Exchange about the time of the Erie *break*, and reported his views to a religious paper. . . . The clerical looker-on took a cheerful view of things, and was confident that a fair proportion of these keen stock-heroes were not unfitted for spiritual communion. — *Ibid.*, p. 327.

**Break-Back.** A term applied to a peculiar roof, common in the country, where the rear portion is extended beyond the line of the opposite side, and at a different angle. The addition thus acquired is used as a wash-room, a storehouse, or for farming implements.

The house of neighbor B— was a low edifice, two stories in front; the rear being called a *break-back*, that is sloping down to a height of ten feet. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 78.

**Breakbone.** A species of fever.

The warm weather is adding to this the typhoid, the bilious, and another fever to which the natives [of the South-western States] give the name (said to be very graphic) of *Breakbone*, in which every bone in the body feels as if it were broken. It is a cousin-german to the typhus. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 16, 1862, *Letter from Cincinnati*.

**Breakbone Fever.** A term commonly used to denote the "Dengué," a malarious fever of the South. It is so called either from the "pain in the bones," of which the patients complain, or from the great debility which follows the attack; both reasons have been assigned for the appellation.

**Break-down.** 1. A riotous dance, with which balls are often terminated in the country.

Take up the carpet — move the bed — call the fiddler, and let's have a regular *break-down*. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 60.

Come, hold on, boys, don't clear out when the quadrilles are over, for we are going to have a *break-down* to wind up with. — *New England Tales*.

2. A dance in the peculiar style of the Negroes.

3. Failure of an attempt; withdrawing from what one had begun.

The District Attorney entered a *nolle prosequi* in its [a court's] indictment of . . . It would be interesting after this flat *break-down*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 11, 1877.

**To break down.** To produce strong emotion in; greatly move; as, "He broke right down," *i. e.* was deeply affected.

Oh, you don't know what a new life it put into me and my husband. It was such a kind, touching letter, it *broke* us both *down*, and filled us with joy. — *Lett. in Home Missionary*, May, 1877.

**Breakish.** Frail; brittle. See *Breaky*.

**To break out in a New Spot.** To do some new thing; to do something else.

**Breaky.** As *breakish*. New England.

**Bream.** See *Sunfish*.

**Breesy.** Noisy.

**Brewis.** In the North of England, a pottage made of slices of bread with fat broth poured over them. — *Halliwel*.

In New England, the term is applied to crusts of rye and Indian or other bread softened with milk and eaten with molasses.

**Brick in the Hat.** "He has got a *brick* in his hat" is an expression applied to an intoxicated person; meaning he is top-heavy, and cannot walk steady.

**Brickley**, for brittle. (Du. *brickle*.) Used in Georgia. — *Sherwood's Gazetteer*.

**Brief.** Rife, common, prevalent. This word is provincial in England, and is much used by the uneducated in the interior of New England and in Virginia, when speaking of epidemic diseases. It is probably a corruption of *rife*.

**Bright.** Intelligent, quick, having an active mind. A term often applied to children; as, "Although he has had but little schooling, our Jonathan is a *bright* lad."

**Brill.** Rough edge of tin, &c., made by cutting; a burr. Eastern Massachusetts.



**Britishers.** The use of this word is often by British writers ascribed to the Americans. The charge is unjust. We never heard an American call an Englishman a "Britisher;" yet, by English authors, it is constantly put in the mouth of Americans. Thus Lord Macaulay, in his journal, says:—

An American has written me from Arkansas, and sent me a copy of Bancroft's "History." Very civil and kind; but by some odd mistake he directs to me at Abbotsford. Does he think that all *Britishers* who write books live together?—*Life and Letters*, Vol. II. p. 250.

**Broadbill.** (*Anas marila*.) The common name of a wild duck, which appears on our coast in large numbers in October. On the Chesapeake it is called Black-head; and in Virginia, Raft-duck.

**Broad-Horn.** A name by which the flat-boats on the Mississippi were formerly known. See *Flat-Boat*.

At Wheeling, I embarked in a flat-bottomed family boat, technically called a *broad-horn*, a prime river conveyance. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 258.

"Been boating, Ben, since I met you?" I inquired, after a short pause.

"Well, yes, mostly," answered Ben, deliberately. "Drove a pretty fair business last year; only sunk one *broad-horn*, and that war snagged on the Mississippi." — *Ben Wilson's Jug Race*.

I'm the man that, single-handed, towed the *broad-horn* over a sand-bar, — the identical infant, who girdled a hickory by smiling at the bark; and if any one denies it, let him make his will and pay the expenses of a funeral. — *Thorp, in Harper's Mag.*

**Brogues.** (Dutch, *broek*.) Breeches.

[General Von Poffenburgh's] men being thus gallantly arrayed, — those who lacked muskets shouldering spades and pickaxes, and every man being ordered to tuck in his shirt-tail and pull up his *brogues*, &c. — *Knickerbocker, N. Y.*

**Broncho.** A native California horse.

If low in purse, [the miner] traverses the mountains on foot; but, if able to own an animal, he has a *broncho* (native or Californian) pony, mule, jack on which he carries his outfit, consisting of grub, pan, spade, blanket, and revolver. — *McClure, The Rocky Mountains*, p. 319.

The emigrants travelled in an old wagon, drawn by a pair of *broncho* or native horses, and would probably be six or eight months on the road [to Missouri]. — *Nordhoff's California*, p. 138.

**Broom-Corn.** (*Sorghum saccharatum*.) A species of corn which grows from six to eight feet high, from the tufts of which brooms are made. Very different plants are used for this purpose in Europe, and the English broom is as unlike ours as possible.

**Brother Jonathan.** The origin of this term, as applied to the United States, is given in a recent number of the "Norwich Courier." The editor says it was communicated by a gentleman now upwards

of eighty years of age, who was an active participator in the scenes of the Revolution. The story is as follows: —

When General Washington, after being appointed commander of the army of the Revolutionary war, came to Massachusetts to organize it and make preparations for the defence of the country, he found a great want of ammunition and other means necessary to meet the powerful foe he had to contend with, and great difficulty to obtain them. If attacked in such condition, the cause at once might be hopeless. On one occasion, at that anxious period, a consultation of the officers and others was had, when it seemed no way could be devised to make such preparation as was necessary. His Excellency Jonathan Trumbull the elder was then governor of the State of Connecticut, on whose judgment and aid the general placed the greatest reliance, and remarked: "We must consult 'Brother Jonathan' on the subject." The general did so, and the governor was successful in supplying many of the wants of the army. When difficulties afterwards arose, and the army was spread over the country, it became a by-word, *We must consult Brother Jonathan*. The term Yankee is still applied to a portion; but *Brother Jonathan* has now become a designation of the whole country, as John Bull has for England.

**Brotus.** (Pron. *brought us*.) A word found exclusively in the mouths of negro market women and itinerant street hucksters and school-boys, in Charleston, S.C., — who always ask for it in their purchases of peanuts, plums, chinquapins, chestnuts, &c. *Brotus* means the superfluity of a helping, — the running over of a measure which has been "heaped up and shaken down." It is the extra and gratuitous surplusage which the vendor of peanuts gives her customer for his patronage. In New Orleans, the Creole word (in Gumbo French) which exactly represents *brotus* is *lagniappe* (lan-yap).

**Broughtens up.** Bringing up, educating. A vulgar corruption, often used jocosely.

I'm a Yankee, said Slick, and I ain't above ownin' to it, and so are you; but you seem ashamed of your *broughtens up*, and I must say you are no great credit to them. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 83.

**Brown.** A colored person of lighter hue than a black.

The jealousy between the blacks and *browns*, which has done so much mischief in the West Indies, is not fostered by American people of color. — *The Independent*, April 10, 1862.

**Brown.** To do a thing up brown is to do it to perfection. A common vulgarity, derived from the kitchen.

"Well, I think Ellen 's a *doin' it up brown*! There 'll be another weddin' soon, I guess." — *Southern Sketches*, p. 57.

From Jefferson Davis's Proclamation, freely paraphrased from Vanity Fair: —

To pay his best in duty bound each faithful rebel knave is,  
So let the thing be *done up brown*, for things look black,  
*Jeff. Davis.*

John Bull, slyly winkin', then said unto he:  
 "My dear *Times*, my old covey, go pitch into he;  
 Let us wallop great Doodle now when he is down;  
 If we wallops him well, we will *do him up brown*."

*The London Times on American Affairs, 1861.*

**Brown-Bread.** Bread made of rye meal and Indian meal (maize) baked very slowly in an iron vessel. Much used in New England; hence, in other States, it is generally called Boston Brown Bread.

**Brown Stone.** A dark variety of the red sandstone, now so fashionable as a building material that its imitations in paint and mastic outdo the original in darkness, and rows of houses in some of our cities are now to be seen almost black.

**Brown Thrasher.** (*Turdus rufus*.) The popular name of the Ferruginous Thrush, called also the Brown Thrush. It is also called the Ground Mocking-bird. In Maryland, it is called the French Mocking-bird.

I love the city as dearly as a *brown thrasher* loves the green tree that sheltered its young. — *C. Matthews, Works*, p. 125.

**Brummagen.** A worthless copper coin, said to have been made formerly in Birmingham, England. Hence, any thing of no worth; factitious; spurious.

This silence on the part of the Rebel President as to the cause of the war, and the sole reason for setting up his *brummagen* government, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 28, 1861.

**Brung**, for *brought*. Used by ignorant persons, especially by blacks, at the South.

**Brush**, for *brushwood*, is an Americanism, and moreover is not confined to undergrowth, but comprises also branches of trees.

In Maryland, the term is applied to whatever wood, in clearing up wood-land, cannot be cut into *cord-wood*. It is piled up into *brush-heaps*, suffered to dry, and is then burned.

**Bubber.** A stout or stoutly mammalated old woman. Used in Salem, Mass., in 1820, and since. "Bubber Jones." (Fr. *poitron*, old woman; Old Fr. *pect*, *poitron*; Lat. *pectus*, the breast.)

**Bubbler.** A fish found in all the waters of the Ohio River. Its name is derived from the singular grunting noise which it makes, a noise which is familiar to every one who has been much on the Ohio. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley*.

**Buccaneer.** A long musket, a term applied to it by the early settlers of New England.

One Woodcock discharged his long musquet, called in those days a *buccaneer*,

at a single Indian, and broke his thigh-bone. — *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, 1 Ser. Vol. X. p. 139.

**Buck.** (Swed. *bock*, Du. *bok*, a he-goat.) 1. A frame or stand of peculiar construction, on which wood is sawed for fuel. In New England it is called a Saw-horse. See *Sawbuck*.

2. The Pennsylvanian does not saw wood; he "*bucks*" it.

**Buck.** A "*buck nigger*" is a term often vulgarly applied to a negro man. Western. So in London, a "*buck sweep*," among the populace.

During the discussion preceding the Presidential election, in 1880, one argument against the Republican ticket was, "Should you like to have your sister marry a big *buck nigger*?"

The Indians [of Utah] wander about in squads, the *bucks* and the squaws, as they are designated, always separate. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 151.

**To buck.** 1. Used instead of *butt*, applied to animals pushing with their head and horns, and metaphorically of players at football and such games, pugilists, &c. Comp. *Bunt*.

2. To rear up, applied to horses and mules. Western.

As if some devilish infection pervaded the atmosphere, one of our horses, a Kiyuse, or native pony, took a fit of *bucketing* soon after we left, and was particular to select the most dangerous portions of the road for the display of his skill in that line. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 301.

A correspondent of the "*Chicago Tribune*," writing from Texas, has a word of caution to those who have to travel on horseback in that country: —

"In this event," writes he, "do not select a mustang . . . unless you want to be initiated into the mysteries of *bucketing*. The mustang is the only animal in the world that can *buck*, and it ought to be a source of thanksgiving that such is the case. The *buck* consists of the mustang's springing forward with quick, short, plunging leaps, and coming down stiff-legged, with his head between his fore-legs, and as near the ground as possible."

**Buck Beer.** (German, *bock bier*.) The strongest kind of German beer, said to be so called from causing the drinker to caper like a goat (*bock*). It is, of course, intoxicating.

**Bucket.** The term is applied, in the South and West, to all kinds of pails and cans holding over a gallon.

**Buckey.** An alewife. Western Connecticut. See *Alewife*.

**Buckeye.** 1. (*Æsculus glabra*.) A small tree growing on the river banks from West Pennsylvania and Virginia to Michigan and Kentucky, the bark of which exhales an unpleasant odor. Other species have the same name. The word is in some places applied to the horse-chestnut.

2. A native of the State of Ohio, in which the *Æsculus glabra* abounds.

A newspaper correspondent, speaking of the Western soldiers, says:—

The Hoosiers and *Buckeyes* hankered after the hot wheaten cake with which their States are always so abundantly supplied,

**Buckeye State.** The State of Ohio; so called from the Buckeye-tree, which abounds there.

When President Hayes visited Providence, on the 28th June, 1877, after being introduced by Mayor Doyle, he was greeted with cheers, and spoke as follows:—

It is with the greatest pleasure that I meet you here. For the past hour I have been shaking hands, but we have found it impossible, in this retail way, to greet all the people of the State. We have, accordingly, thought it best to exchange greetings with you by wholesale. I, therefore, ask every lady and gentleman to consider that here and now I give you a hearty *Buckeye* shake.

**Buck Fever.** Agitation of inexperienced hunters, caused by seeing a deer, or other large game.

Smith blazed away at the deer; but where the ball went, mercy knows. The animal dashed forward and went crashing up the hillside. Smith acknowledged to a severe attack of the *buck fever*. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 127.

The sensation is also called the *Buck-ague*, the term used by Mr. Kendall, who was so agitated that he missed several fine shots at deer.

There is a very common disease prevalent among young and inexperienced hunters in Texas, which is known as the *Buck-ague*. — *Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. II. p. 321.

**Buck-Fly.** An insect which torments the deer at certain seasons.

**Buckra.** A white man. A term universally applied to white men by the blacks of the African coast, the West Indies, and the Southern States. In the language of the Calabar coast, *buckra* means devil; not, however, in the sense we apply to it, but that of a demon, a powerful and superior being. The term *swanga buckra*, often used by the blacks, means an elegantly dressed white man or dandy. I am indebted to the Rev. J. L. Wilson, who is familiar with the African language alluded to, for the etymology of this word.

Which country you like best? *Buckra* country very good, plenty for yam (food), plenty for bamboo (clothing). *Buckra* man book larn. *Buckra* man rise early,—he like a cold morning; nigger no like cold. — *Carmichael's West Indies*, Vol. I. p. 311.

Great way off at sea,  
When at home I binny,  
*Buckra* man take me  
From de coast of Guinea. — *Song*.

Sometimes the negro owns a spider, and generally a coffee-pot and mill, which as before have been broken to use in the *buckra's* house. — *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1877, p. 678.

**Buck-Shot.** Large shot, or small bullets, used in deer-shooting.

The reason that so many more of the King's troops were wounded than killed in the late action [of Breed's Hill] in New England is that the Americans use a small shot, called *buck-shot*, which is much smaller than the soldiers' bullets. — *Letter from an English Officer, in General Gage's Army, in Gaines's Mercury*, Aug. 14, 1775.

**Buckskins.** A term applied to the American troops during the Revolutionary war. The Marquis de Chastellux, in his *Travels in North America*, in 1780–82, says: "The name of *Buckskin* is given to the inhabitants of Virginia, because their ancestors were hunters, and sold buck or rather deer skins."

As applied to certain American soldiers, we are inclined to believe that from their wearing garments made of dressed deerskins the term was applied to them.

Cornwallis fought as long 's he dought,  
An' did the *buckskins* claw him. — *Burns*.

**Bucktails.** The name of a political party in the State of New York, which sprung up about the year 1815. Its origin is thus described by Mr. Hammond: "There was an order of the Tammany Society who wore in their hats, as an insignia, on certain occasions, a portion of the tail of the deer. They were a leading order, and from this circumstance the friends of DeWitt Clinton gave those who adopted the views of the members of the Tammany Society, in relation to him, the name of *Bucktails*; which name was eventually applied to their friends and supporters in the country. Hence the party opposed to the administration of Mr. Clinton were for a long time called the 'BUCKTAIL PARTY.' " — *Polit. Hist. of New York*, Vol. I. p. 450.

That beer and those *bucktails* I never forget;  
But oft, when alone and unnoticed by all,  
I think, Is the porter cask foaming there yet,  
Are the *bucktails* still swinging at Tammany Hall?

*Halleck's Fanny.*

**Buffalo.** 1. (*Bison Americanus*.) This, the most gigantic of the indigenous mammalia of America, once overspread the entire Northern half of the American continent. At the time of the discovery by the Spaniards, an inhabitant even down to the shores of the Atlantic, it has been beaten back by the western march of civilization, until, at the present day, it is only after passing the giant Missouri and the headwaters of the Mississippi that we find the American Bison or *Buffalo*. — *S. F. Baird*.

The term *buffalo* is often used independently for "buffalo robe," whence a story is told of two Englishmen just arrived at Boston. They ordered a sleigh, having heard of such a thing in a general way, without being conversant with the particulars. "Will you have one *buffalo* or two?" asked the hostler. "Why," said the cockney, looking a little frightened, "we 'll have only one the first time, as we 're not used to driving them!"

Edward Everett used to tell this story somewhat differently. The sleigh being ordered, the stable-keeper said to the hostler, "Put in a *buffalo*, Bill." "Well," said the Englishman, "if you 've got a horse, I 'd rather drive him."

He tears along behind him a sleigh of the commonest construction, furnished with an ancient and fragmentary *buffalo*, which serves for robe and cushion both. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 17.

2. A sort of fresh-water fish resembling the Sucker. It is found in the Mississippi and other Southern rivers.

**Buffalo-Berry.** (*Shepherdia argentea*.) A small tree growing in thickets on the banks of streams in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. Its scarlet berries are eaten by the Indians.

**Buffalo-Bush.** A shrub growing near Humboldt River, Utah. Its fruit is called *Bull-berry*.

**Buffalo-Chips.** The dry dung of the buffalo, used for fuel on the prairies, and hence called by the French *bois de vache*. The dung of cattle is extensively used for the same purpose in other parts of the world. In Armenia, according to Mr. Curzon, it is collected from the cattle-yards and mixed with chopped straw by tramping on it with the naked feet while it is in a moist state. It is then cut into square blocks and treasured up for winter's use, forming the exclusive fuel, under the name of *tezek*, for all classes. In Thibet it is used under the name of *arghol*. Huc, in his travels in Mongolia, describes its use there. In fact, throughout all Tartary or Turkestan, where there is a deficiency of wood, this article is in universal use for fuel. On the woodless plains of Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua, travellers use dry cattle-dung for fuel, gathering it up near springs frequented by cattle.

We were fortunate enough to find some lodge-poles, which, eked out by *bois de vache* for fuel, served to give us a capital roast of buffalo-meat. — *Stansbury's Salt Lake Exp.*, p. 37.

**Buffalo-Clover.** (*Trifolium reflexum* and *stoloniferum*.) The Western species of clover.

**Buffalo-Gnat.** A small black insect found on the prairies, which not only attacks the face and hands, but insinuates itself under the

clothing, upon the arms and breast. Its bite is poisonous, hence it is more dreaded than the mosquito. — *Gregg, Com. of the Prairies*, Vol. II. p. 28.

**Buffalo-Grass.** (*Seteria dactyloides*.) A species of short grass from two to four inches high, covering the boundless prairies on which the buffaloes feed. A remarkable characteristic of some varieties of this grass is that "the blade, killed by the frost of winter, is resuscitated in spring, and gradually becomes green from the root up, without casting its stubble or emitting new shoots." — *Colonel Dodge*. "The buffalo grass of the high plains and the gramma grass are identical, though entirely different in growth and appearance." — *Plains of the Great West*, p. 32.

**Buffalo-Nut.** (*Pyrularia oleifera*.) Oil nut. Western.

**Buffalo-Robe.** The skin of the buffalo, dressed for use.

Not having time to robe myself exactly for a daylight street-walk, I donned a *buffalo-robe*, slipped on my boots, and put out. — *Life on the Prairies*.

**Buffalo-Wallow.** A depression in a prairie caused by heavy rains. The water being soon absorbed, the ground opens in cracks; when another hard rain comes, it is again absorbed, leaving wider cracks than before. This process is repeated until quite a depression is made in the soil, which has become so hardened that it will retain water. When the buffalo is shedding his hair, for the want of trees he rolls and rubs himself in these water-holes, which are his especial delight. Sometimes the prairie will be dotted for a mile with these holes, which are from five to ten feet in length and from six inches to two feet in depth. — *Dodge, Plains of the Great West*, p. 27.

**Bug.** In the United States, coleopterous insects are generally called *bugs*; thus May bug, June bug, Golden bug, &c. In England, they are called *beetles*, and the word *bug* is restricted to the species found in bedding. The Spanish word *chinch* is in more general use at the South.

**Bug Juice.** Bad whiskey.

We have taken wood, eggs, cabbages, lumber, saur krout, coon-skins, and *bug juice* on subscriptions in our time, and now a man writes us to know if we would like to send our paper six months, for a large owl. If we come across any fellow who is out of owl we'll do it. — *Osborne (Kansas) Farmer*.

**Bugle-Wood.** (*Lycopus Virginicus*.) A plant which has much reputation for its medicinal properties. It is also known as the Virginian Water-horehound.

**To build a Fire**, instead of *to make a fire*, is a common phrase, originating, probably, in the backwoods, where large fires are made of logs piled one above the other.



**To build up.** To erect; and, metaphorically, to establish.

In this manner, it was thought we should sooner *build up* a settlement, as the phrase goes. In America, the reader should know, every thing is *built*. The priest *builds up* a flock; the speculator, a fortune; the lawyer, a reputation; and the landlord, a settlement. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*.

Mr. R. has never done any thing to the "Courier" and "Enquirer" to make them hunt him down or cast ridicule on him, while endeavoring to *build up* for himself an unsullied character among his fellow-men. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1848.

*To build clothes.* Tailors use this expression for making clothes. "Guess we can *build* you a neat pant off these goods, sir."

Cf. Ger. *bilden*.

**Bulger.** Something uncommonly large, a whopper. Western.

We soon came in sight of New York; and a *bulger* of a place it is. — *Crockett*, p. 37.

**Bull.** A stock-exchange term for one who buys stock on speculation for time, i. e. agrees with the seller, called a "bear," to take a certain sum of stock at a future day at a stated price; if at that day stock fetches more than the price agreed on, he receives the difference; if it falls or is cheaper, he either pays it, or becomes a "lame duck." This description of a *bull*, from Grose's Slang Dictionary, corresponds precisely with the *bulls* of Wall Street, who speculate in stocks in the same manner. See *Lame Duck* and *Bear*.

There was a *saure qui peut* movement to-day in the stock-market; and the clique of *bulls*, finding it impossible to stem the rush, gave up the attempt to sustain the market, and let things go down with a run. . . . Such a state of the market as is now exhibited is nearly as bad for the bears as the *bulls*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845.

**Bull-Bat.** (*Caprimulgus Americanus*.) Night-hawk; whippoorwill. A gang of blackguard boys in Washington City have adopted this very appropriate name.

**Bull-Boat.** A boat made of ox-hides, used for crossing rivers in the Far West.

We obtained hides, and, by the aid of some Indians, constructed a *bull-boat*, by taking willow rods and laying a keel and ribs between two stakes driven in the ground, . . . and then cross-sticks, tied with thongs, making the skeleton of a canoe. Three hides were sewed together, and stretched over the willow-work. — *Stansbury's Salt Lake*, p. 21.

**Bull Briar, Bamboo Briar.** A large briar in the alluvial bottoms of the South-west, the root of which contains a farinaceous substance from which the Indians make bread.

**Bulldoze, Bulldoze.** To intimidate.

The origin of this term has been furnished me by Dr. J. Dickson Bruns, of New Orleans. *Bulldoze* originated in Louisiana with the "Union Rights Stop" Leagues (Negro), whose enthusiasm on the

suffrage question led them to form oath-bound societies, which scrutinized closely the politics of disaffected brethren; and if any Negro were found voting, or was suspected of an intention to vote the Democratic ticket, he was first warned, then flogged, and, if these milder measures failed to convert him to the true faith, shot.

Give him a *bulldoze* meant give him a flogging, — a “cowhiding,” — the cow’s hide (a strip of untanned hide, rolled into a whip) standing for the bull’s hide, — the “koorbach” of Egypt, made there of the hide of the rhinoceros.

Hence, from the noun, “*bulldoze*,” the verb “to *bulldoze*,” — erroneously spelled “*bulldoze*,” — and its participle “*bulldosing*.”

The “New York Tribune” gives the following explanation of the term : —

The term “*Bulldozers*,” which is so variously printed in the New Orleans despatches, is the name applied to an organization of armed white men, whose ostensible business it is to keep the Negroes from stealing the cotton crop. On election day, however, the “*Bulldozers*” go gunning for Negroes who manifest a disposition to vote the Republican ticket.

**Bulldozing.** Intimidating by violent means.

There was a bad case of “*bulldozing*” in Cincinnati on Monday night. A handful of bold Democrats had gathered to let out their pent-up desire for Tilden or blood. . . . Mr. C — was in the chair, and was warming up the faithful with an address, when the Republicans crowded around him in so threatening a manner that he mounted the table, shook his address in their faces, and declared, like a true hero, that he was not to be “intimidated.” — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec., 1876.

We are told, and there is cause to believe, that the record of neither party in Louisiana is perfectly clean, and that upon both sides there has been no lack of “bulldozing.” — *N. Y. Times*.

“But you *shall* go to school,” said a Chicago man to his youthful son, one morning this week, “and I want no more argument about it.”

Then, as the paternal reached for something hanging up behind the stove, the boy looked him sadly in the eye, and inquired : “Father, would you *bulldoze* me into it?” — *Chicago Journal*.

The “*Providence Journal*,” Jan. 31, 1877, alluding to the wintering of the Russian ships of war in New York, says : —

The Russian fleet is not engaged in a *bulldozing* mission in American waters, but in the safer occupation of keeping out of the way

**To bulldoze.** To intimidate by violent and unlawful means.

The “New York Tribune” of Dec. 23, 1876, in an article entitled “Not to be *Bulldozed*,” says : —

If the State of Connecticut . . . had any apprehensions lest, in the present unloosing of tongues in Congress, their representatives . . . might be intimidated,

or *bulldozed*, or terrorized, or choked down by usurpation and tyranny, Senator Eaton dispelled it in his courageous utterances on the floor of the Senate.

The "Providence Press," in its New Year's Address for 1877, when speaking of the political situation in several of the Southern States, says : —

Louisiana, too, was mixed,  
And ere they got the matter fixed,  
*Bulldozing* had been introduced,  
And many from their homes vamoosed.

A man and a brother was *bulldozed* into buying a large number of small flags by a gang of street Arabs in City Hall Park. This intimidation was doubtless a delicate compliment to the Southern atmosphere that visited the city yesterday. *N. Y. Herald*.

The "New York Herald," March 7, 1877, in speaking of the new cabinet of President Hayes and the desire of the party leaders to dictate who shall compose it, says : —

If he yields, he will only be nominal President; not even a peer of the party leaders, but a *bulldozed* vassal. . . . If he has strength of character and tact, the *bulldozers* cannot subdue him. . . . If he gives up Mr. Evarts, he can make a stand on nobody, and the *bulldozers* will dictate his cabinet.

The carpet-bagger and *bulldozer* are not successful agents of civilization. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Bullionist.** One that favors coin instead of paper, as a monetary currency.

**Bullion State.** The State of Missouri; so called in consequence of the exertions made by its Senator, Mr. Benton, in favor of gold and silver currency, in opposition to banks and a paper currency. The honorable Senator was hence often nicknamed *Old Bullion*, and the State he represented the *Bullion State*.

At the Democratic meeting in New York, June 12, 1848, to ratify the nomination of General Cass, the Hon. James Bowlin, of Missouri, in denouncing the Whig party, said : —

I deny that the election of 1840 was carried by the people. It was carried by duplicity. It was carried by the unfortunate state of the times, which was not the result of Democratic rule, and by false charges against the American Democracy; and, thank God, in my own State, in the *Bullion State*, they did not succeed in depreciating our majority. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 13, 1848.

**Bull-Lion.** John Bull; England.

This profuse magnanimous Lion, or *Bull-Lion*, [talks] as if it were glory to adore guineas, and shame to be fond of dollars, — as if *Bull-Lion*, as he is, would not give Magna Charta, Milton, *Shakspeare*, and even Bacon, for the convenience and profit of a single cotton crop. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 1, 1862.

**Bull-Nut.** A large kind of hickory-nut.

**Bull's-Eye.** A small and thick old-fashioned watch.

**Bully, adj.** Fine, capital. The highest term of commendation. A low word, used in the same manner as the English use the word *crack*; as, "a *bully* horse," a *bully* picture."

The *bully* steamboat "Crystal Palace" passed up to St. Louis on Monday. We have no doubt she left papers. — *Cairo City Times*, 1855.

I don't want no better friend than Buck Fanshaw. . . . Take him all round, pard, there never was a *bullier* man in the mines. . . . No man ever know'd Buck to go back on a friend. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 333.

The Mississippi boatman, when engaged in a race, exclaims: —

Now is the time for a *bully* trip,  
So shake her up and let her rip. — *Boatman's Song*.

Ha! *Bully* for me again, when my turn for picket is over;  
And now for a smoke, as I lie, with the moonlight in the clover.  
*Shanley, The Brier-wood Pipe*.

The following stanza is from a poem on American affairs that appeared in England during the late civil war. It has reference to blockade runners sent by John Bull from England.

So he sent not a vessel across the broad sea,  
Vich vas hawful 'ard times for poor Jefferson D.,  
And wrote unto Doodle, "Hold on, and be true!"  
And Jonathan answered Bull, "*Bully* for you."

You're doin' the politics *bully*, as all our family agree;  
Just keep your old goose-quill a-floppin, and give 'em a good one for me.  
*Carlton, Home Ballads*, p. 86.

**Bullyrag.** To revile in vulgar terms; to abuse or scold vehemently. — *Forby's Glossary*.

I don't want nothing better 'n this; I don't git enough to eat gin'all'y, — and here they can't come and pick a feller and *bullyrag* him so. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 118.

**Bummer.** An idle, worthless fellow without any visible means of support. A word much used by our soldiers during the late civil war. The "New York Herald," May 2, 1876, thus describes the individual: The army *bummer* is usually a "General" who has been in the Quartermaster's or Commissary Department, and whose rank represents influence about the War Office, and days and nights of hard duty about Willard's and the Arlington. Since the war, he has been very "loyal." He has "sustained" the Union, and "supported" the government. Unable to earn an honest living, without brains for any position higher than that of a car conductor, he lives by lobbying. He knows the inside of every office, the favorite wine of a secretary, and the kind of dinner fancied by this statesman or the other. So, in time, he finds himself in the enjoyment of a good income, for which he does nothing but eat and drink and

talk. He is a disgrace to the army, whose uniform he wears for his own gain.

When it was reported that the Federal government refused to recognize Confederate prisoners as "prisoners of war," General Jackson and myself advocated that the Confederate government should then proclaim a "war to the knife," neither asking nor granting quarter. We thought that the war would thereby sooner come to an end, with less destruction of life; we thought also that such a mode of warfare would inspire terror to the armed invaders and reduce the number of army followers, *bummers*, &c., who were the curse of all armed invasions. — *Extract of Letter from General Beauregard to the Governor of Tennessee, N. Y. Herald*, April 30, 1875.

So long as substantial citizens choose to leave politics to shoulder-hitters, rum-sellers, and *bummers* of every degree, so long will they be robbed at every turn. — *N. Y. Commercial Adv.*, Sept. 9, 1874.

In speaking of the order of General Grant sending General Custer to his regiment, the "New York Herald," May 4, 1876, says: —

This action of the President in the case of General Custer is unfortunate. If he had any thing against the General, he should have ordered him before a Court of Inquiry. But because Custer has evidence of the corruption of certain army *bummers*, he is sent to his regiment under circumstances that amount to a humiliation.

A bill is before the Legislature of Illinois, with a view to control the operations of the *bummer* element in the primary meetings of political parties. — *Boston Herald*, April 8, 1877.

"The Bar-tender's Story," portraying a frequenter of the bar-room, says: —

For he got to increasin' his doses,  
And took 'em more often, he did;  
And it growed on him faster and faster,  
Till into a *bummer* he slid.

**Bummerism.** Character of a *bummer*; *bummers* collectively regarded.

If Deputy Sheriffs might attend without scandal; if beautiful *bummerism*, feminine and fair, &c. — *Philadelphia Press*, Jan. 5, 1870.

**Bumper.** That part of the frame of a railroad car which is provided with springs for an elastic material to meet the shock of the similar part of the next car. In England, they use the words *buffer* and *bunter*.

**Bumptious.** Self-conceited; forward; pushing. — *Halliwel*. See *Gumptions*.

Sir E. L. B. Lytton, in "My Novel," gives an amusing disquisition on the words *gumption* and *bumptious*: —

"She was always — not exactly proud-like — but what I call *gumptions*."

"I never heard that word before," said the parson. "*Bumptious*, indeed, though I believe it is not in the dictionary, has crept into familiar parlance, especially amongst young folks at school and college."

"*Bumptious* is *bumptious*, and *gumptious* is *gumptious*," said the landlord. "Now, the town beadle is *bumptious*, and Mrs. Avenel is *gumptious*."

"She is a very respectable woman," said Mr. Dale.

"In course, sir; all *gumptious* folks are; they value themselves on their respectability, and look down on their neighbors."

*Parson*. "Gumptious — gumption. I think I remember the substantive at school; not that my master taught it to me. Gumption — it means cleverness."

*Landlord*. "There's *gumption* and *gumptious*! Gumption is knowing; but when I say that *sum un* is *gumptious*, I mean — though that's more vulgar like — *sum un* who does not think small beer of hisself. You take me, sir?"

**To bunch.** To bring together; to corral, which see.

The horses not captured by the Indians have been *bunched* at either end of the hostile, and I doubt if there will be regular coaches for a month to come. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 99.

**Bunch-Grass.** A species of *Festuca* which grows on the plains of New Mexico.

**To bundle.** Mr. Grose thus describes this custom: "A man and woman lying on the same bed with their clothes on; an expedient practised in America on a scarcity of beds, where, on such occasions, husbands and parents frequently permitted travellers to *bundle* with their wives and daughters." — *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*.

The Rev. Samuel Peters, in his "General History of Connecticut" (London, 1781), enters largely into the custom of bundling as practised there. He says: "Notwithstanding the great modesty of the females is such that it would be accounted the greatest rudeness for a gentleman to speak before a lady of a garter or leg, yet it is thought but a piece of civility to ask her to *bundle*." The learned and pious historian endeavors to prove that *bundling* was not only a Christian custom, but a very polite and prudent one.

The Rev. Dr. Emmons asks, —

Is not this custom, which has no name in the dictionary, but which is commonly called *bundling*, a sinful custom? — *Works*, Vol. I. p. 81.

The Rev. Andrew Barnaby, who travelled in New England, in 1759–60, notices this custom, which then prevailed. He thinks that though it may at first "appear to be the effects of grossness of character, it will, upon deeper research, be found to proceed from simplicity and innocence." — *Travels*, p. 144.

Van Corlear stopped occasionally in the villages to eat pumpkin-pies, dance at country frolics, and *bundle* with the Yankee lasses. — *Knickerbocker, New York*.

Bundling is said to be practised in Wales. — *Wright's Dictionary*. Whatever may have been the custom in former times, I do not think *bundling* is now practised anywhere in the United States.

Mr. Masson describes a similar custom in Central Asia: "Many

of the Afghan tribes have a custom in wooing similar to what in Wales is known as *bundling-up*, and which they term *namzat bazé*. The lover presents himself at the house of his betrothed with a suitable gift, and, in return, is allowed to pass the night with her, on the understanding that innocent endearments are not to be exceeded." — *Journeys in Beloochistan, Afghanistan, &c.*, Vol. III. p. 287.

**Buncome, Bunkum.** Judge Halliburton, of Nova Scotia, thus explains this very expressive word, which is now as well understood as any in our language: "All over America, every place likes to hear of its member of Congress, and see their speeches; and, if they don't, they send a piece to the paper, inquirin' if their members died a natural death, or was skivered with a bowie-knife, for they hante seen his speeches lately, and his friends are anxious to know his fate. Our free and enlightened citizens don't approbate silent members; it don't seem to them as if Squashville, or Punkinsville, or Lumbertown was right represented, unless Squashville, or Punkinsville, or Lumbertown makes itself heard and known, ay, and feared too. So every feller, in bounden duty, talks, and talks big too, and the smaller the State, the louder, bigger, and fiercer its members talk. Well, when a crittur talks for talk's sake, jist to have a speech in the paper to send to home, and not for any other airthly puppus but electioneering, our folks call it *Bunkum*."

The origin of the phrase, "talking for Buncombe," is thus related in Wheeler's History of North Carolina: "Several years ago in Congress, the member from this district arose to address the House, without any extraordinary powers, in manner or matter, to interest the audience. Many members left the hall. Very naïvely he told those who remained that they might go too; he should speak for some time, but 'he was only talking for *Buncombe*.'"

Mr. Goodrich, in his pleasant "Reminiscences," in describing his native valleys, says:—

On every side the ear was saluted by the mocking screams of the red-headed woodpecker, the cawing of congresses of crows, clamorous as if talking to *buncombe*. — Vol. I. p. 101.

Mr. Saxe, speaking of the Halls of Congress, says:—

Here, would-be Tullys pompously parade  
Their tumid tropes for simple *buncombe* made,  
Full on the chair the chilling torrent shower,  
And work their word-pumps through the allotted hour.

*Progress, A Poem.*

Come on, ye stump men eloquent, in never-ending stream,  
 Let office be your glorious goal, and *bunkum* be your theme;  
 The vast and vaulted capitol shall echo to your jaws,  
 And universal Yankeedom shall shout in your applause.

*Dr. Bigelow, Am. Rejected Addresses, The American Congress.*

The House of Representatives broke down upon the corruption committee's bill to protect the integrity of members of Congress, having first passed it for *buncombe*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 2, 1857.

Here is an amusing biography of General Houston, bulky in size, capital in paper, and evidently got up for *buncombe*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Our people talk a great deal of nonsense about emancipation, but they know it's all *buncombe*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 175.

*Bunkum* is also used as an adjective.

General Sibley was within thirty miles of Fort Craig, with twenty-five hundred Texans, with artillery, and had issued a *bunkum* proclamation. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 11, 1862, *Despatch from Kansas*.

**Bungay.** *Go to Bungay!* A mild way of saying, "Go to h—;" Bungay being a place where there is supposed to be less caloric. New England.

**Bungo.** (Span. *bongo*.) A kind of boat used at the South.

The most urgent steps were being taken to press every *bungo* and canoe to the immediate relief of the people along the coast, in order to embark them without delay. — *N. O. Picayune*.

**Bungtown Copper.** A spurious coin, of base metal, a very clumsy counterfeit of the English halfpenny or copper. It derived its name from the place where it was first manufactured, then called *Bungtown*, now Barneyville, in the town of Rehoboth, Mass. The *Bungtown copper* never was a legal coin. The British halfpenny or copper was. The term is used only in New England.

These flowers wouldn't fetch a *Bungtown copper*. — *Margaret*, p. 19.

Anti-slavery professions just before an election ain't worth a *Bungtown copper*. — *Biglow Papers*, p. 147.

The last thing I remember [having been tipsy] was trying to pay my fare with a *Bungtown copper*. — *Doesticks*, p. 62.

**Bunk** 1. (Ang.-Sax. *benc*, a bench, a form.) A wooden case, used in country taverns and in offices, which serves alike for a seat during the day and for a bed at night. The name is also applied to the tiers of standing bed-places used in the lowest class of lodging-houses.

Dr. Jamieson has the word *bunker*, a bench or sort of low chests, that serve for seats, — also, a seat in the window, which serves for a chest, opening with a hinged lid. — *Etym. Dict. Scottish Language*.

*Ithers frae off the bunkers sank,*

*We e'en like the collops scor'd.* — *Ramsay's Poems*, Vol. I. p. 280.



In some parts of Scotland, a *bunker* or *bunkart*, which Dr. Jamieson thinks to be the same word, means an earthen seat in the fields. In the north of England, a seat in front of a house, made of stones or sods, is called a *bink*.

2. *Bunk*, also applied to berths in second-class steamboats. In some of them, the engine-house has a *bunk-room*, and those who sleep there at night are termed *bunkers*. The same language applies to the "cribs" of rowdy clubs; and the word "to bunk" has become very generally engrafted upon our common language of the streets.

3. A piece of wood placed on a lumberman's sled to enable it to sustain the end of heavy pieces of timber. — *Maine*.

**To bunk.** 1. To retire to bed in a bunk.

2. Among lumbermen, to pile wood deceitfully so as to increase the apparent quantity in the survey.

**Bunker.** (*Alosa menhaden*.) The Menhaden or Mossbunker, an abbreviation of the latter, which see; also Menhaden.

In an article on the Long Island Fishery, the "Sag Harbor Express" says:—

During the last two weeks, the *bunker* or menhaden fishery has been very brisk. During the last week, the Sterling Oil Works at Cedar Point took in 800,000 fish, and in three days of the same week Wells's factory took 1,000,000. The "Greenport Times" states that large quantities of *bunkers* are taken in pounds, as high as 50,000 being secured in some of them at a single lift.

**Bunkum.** See *Buncome*.

**Bureau.** 1. The name commonly given, in America, to a chest of drawers.

2. A subdivision of one of the government departments, as the "Indian Bureau," the "Pension Bureau," &c.

**Burgall.** (*Ctenolabrus cæruleus*.) A small fish, very common in New York; also found on the coast of New England, and as far south as Delaware Bay. The usual length is about six inches, though they are sometimes found twelve inches. Other names for the same fish are Nibbler, from its nibbling off the bait when thrown for other fishes; Chogset, the Indian name; and in New England, those of Blue Perch and Conner.

**Burgaloo.** Pear. See *Virgalieu*.

**To burgle.** To commit burglary; to break into; to rob.

Robbed. The Waverly National Bank *burgled*. — *Phila. Press*, March 15, 1870.

**To burn up.** In correct English, papers, haystacks, briars, &c., are

burned up. The grass is also said to be burned up by drought; but it is hardly proper to say that such a man was ruined by being burned up. "Mr. Smith's factory was burned up," it should be "burned down;" and, applied to a man, "burned out."

**Burr-Oak.** (*Quercus macrocarpa*.) A beautiful tree, more than sixty feet in height, laden with dark tufted foliage. It is found mostly beyond the Alleghanies, in the fertile districts of Kentucky and West Tennessee, and in Upper Louisiana near the Missouri. It is also called Overcup White Oak. — *Michaux*.

The trees, with very few exceptions, were what is called the *burr-oak*, a small variety of a very extensive genus; and the spaces between them, always irregular and often of singular beauty, have obtained the name of "openings." — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**Burr-Stone.** A species of *silex* or quartz occurring in amorphous masses, partly compact, but containing many irregular cavities. It is used for mill-stones. — *Cleveland's Mineralogy*.

**Burst.** A form of the past tense and participle frequently employed instead of the correct form, *burst*. So "bust" and "busted." Vulgar.

**Bush.** (Dutch, *bosch*, a wood.) The woods, a forest, or a thicket of trees or bushes. This term, which is much used in the Northern States and Canada, probably originated in New York.

**Bush-Bean.** (*Phaseolus vulgaris*.) The useful vegetable, brought originally from Asia and long cultivated in Europe, called in England Kidney-bean and French Bean. With us they are also called String-beans and Snap-beans, or Snaps.

**Bush-Meeting.** Gatherings in the woods for the purpose of religious worship. A few rough benches are put up at some convenient point, and the meeting lasts from early morning till late at night. Distinguished from *camp-meetings* in the fact of lasting only one day (the Sabbath usually), having no tents put up, and being in every respect more impromptu. At present they are done away with in many places, except at the South among the Negroes, to whom there can be no more delightful frolic than a *bush-meetin'*.

**Bushwhacker.** 1. One accustomed to beat about or travel through bushes; a clodhopper, raw countryman, greenhorn.

Do you think all our eastern dignitaries combined could have compelled young *bushwhackers* to wear coats and shoes in recitation-rooms? — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 87.

The Van B—s of Nyack were the first that did ever kick with the left foot; they were gallant *bushwhackers* and hunters of raccoons by moonlight. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

Every *bushwhacker* and forest ranger thought he knew where to find the trees. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 15.

2. In the late civil war, an irregular, or guerilla Confederate soldier.

Should guerillas or *bushwhackers* molest our march, or should the inhabitants burn bridges, or otherwise manifest local hostility, then army commanders should order and enforce a devastation more or less relentless. — *General Sherman's Field Order*, Nov. 9, 1864.

3. A scythe or other instrument used for cutting brush or bushes.

I know not the victim soon destined to fall before the keen-edged *bushwhacker* of Time, or I would point him out. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**Bushwhacking.** 1. Travelling or pulling through bushes.

The propelling power of the keel-boat is by oars, sails, setting-poles, the cordelle, and, when the waters are high and the boat runs on the margin of the bushes, *bushwhacking*, or pulling up by the bushes. — *Flint's Hist. and Geogr. of Mississippi Valley*.

2. Fighting in guerilla style, much in vogue at the South during the late civil war.

The fiends in small parties select a position behind fences, trees, &c., fire upon the Union troops as they pass, and then run. . . . This infernal *bushwhacking* shall not be practised on the men of my command, without my enforcing the severest retaliation. — *Colonel Deitzler, in N. Y. Herald*, June 29, 1862.

**Bust.** A burst, failure. The following conundrum went the rounds of the papers at the time the Whig party failed to elect Mr. Clay to the Presidency: "Why is the Whig party like a sculptor? Because it takes Clay, and makes a *bust*."

2. A frolic; a spree. Vulgar.

In old times, Joshua sent Jericho on a *bust* with his horns. — *N. Y. Herald*, Jan. 11, 1862.

And when we get our pockets full  
Of this bright, shinin' dust,  
We 'll travel straight for home again,  
And spend it on a *bust*. — *California Song*.

**To bust.** To burst; to fail in business. This vulgar pronunciation of the word *burst* is very common.

I was soon fotch'd up in the victualling line—and I *busted* for the benefit of my creditors. — *J. C. Neal, Dolly Jones*.

When merchants fondly trust to paper,  
And find too late that banks betray,  
What art can help them through the scrape, or  
Suggest the means wherewith to pay?

The only way to stop each croaker,  
And pay the banks to whom they trust;  
To bring repentance to the broker,  
And wring his bosom, is "to *bust*." — *N. Y. Evening Post*.

**Buster.** 1. A roistering blade, a dashing fellow.

I went on, larning something every day, until I was reckened a *buster*, and allowed to be the best bar-hunter in my district. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas.*

Applied also to any large person, especially to overgrown children.  
 "Ain't he a *buster*." "Come here, *buster*," in the sense of "sonny,"  
 "who's your daddy?"

2. A frolic, a spree.

**Bust-Head**, i. e. Burst-head. Common whiskey.

**Butcher-Bird**. See *Nine-Killer*.

**Butt**. 1. The small pipe affixed to the hose of a fire-engine.

2. The buttocks. The word is used in the West in such phrases as, "I fell on my *butt*," "He kick'd my *butt*." In the west of England, it denotes a buttock of beef.

3. A sort of flat and short hinge, that, when folded, *butts* on itself.

**To butt**. To oppose. South-west.

**Butte**. (French.) This word is of frequent occurrence in books that relate to the Rocky Mountain and Oregon regions, "where," says Colonel Frémont, "it is naturalized, and, if desirable to render into English, there is no word which would be its precise equivalent. It is applied to the detached hills and ridges which rise abruptly, and reach too high to be called hills or ridges, and not high enough to be called mountains. *Knob*, as applied in the Western States, is their most descriptive term in English; but no translation or paraphrasis would preserve the identity of these picturesque landmarks." — *Exped. to the Rocky Mountains*, p. 145.

Sir George Simpson, in his "Overland Journey," when traversing the Red River country, speaks of a conspicuous landmark in the sea of plains, known as the *Butte aux Chiens*, . . . towering with a height of about four hundred feet over a boundless prairie as level and smooth as a pond. — Vol. I. p. 54.

On entering the broken ground, the creek turns more to the westward, and passes by two remarkable *buttes* of a red conglomerate, which appear at a distance like tables cut in the mountain side. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 241.

**Butter-Bird**. See *Bobolink*.

**Butter-Bush**. The *Cephalanthus Canadensis*, or *butter-bush*, grows in swamps and low, wet, marshy grounds in almost every part of the United States. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 24, 1861. This is a corruption of *Button-Bush*, which see.

**Butter-Fish**. (*Muraenoides*.) So called from the slime with which

it is covered, rendering it difficult to handle. Found all along our coast.

Perch are found about the rocks, and lump or *butter-fish* are sometimes caught. — *Thaxter, I. of Shoals*, p. 88.

**Butterine.** Another name for oleomargarine, or butter made of fat, and greasy or oily substances. See *Oleomargarine*.

**Butternuts.** A term applied to the Confederate soldiers during the late civil war, so called from the color of their clothes, a cinnamon color, which color is obtained from the skins of the *butternut*.

We marvelled as we went by that no ambitious *butternut* discharged his rifle or shot-gun at the fleet as it passed; but he did not. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 11, 1862, *Letter from Tennessee*.

The *butternut* gentry . . . about four hundred of them [here prisoners] are in the camp hospitals. — *The Independent*, March 22, 1862, *Letter from Chicago*.

**Button-Bush.** (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*.) A shrub which grows along the water-side, its insulated thickets furnishing a safe retreat for the nests of the blackbird. Its flowers appear at a distance like the balls of the sycamore tree; hence its name. — *Bigelow*.

**Buttoning up.** A Wall Street phrase. When a broker has bought stock on speculation and it falls suddenly on his hands, whereby he is a loser, he keeps the matter to himself, and is reluctant to confess the ownership of a share. This is called *buttoning up*. — *A Walk in Wall Street*, p. 47.

**Buttonwood or Button-Tree.** (*Platanus occidentalis*.) The popular name, in New England, of the sycamore-tree; so called from the balls it bears, the receptacle of the seeds, which remain on the trees during the winter. — *Michaux's Sylva*. Sometimes called Button-ball tree.

**Buyer's Option.** A purchaser of stocks at the broker's board, *buyer's option*, thirty, sixty, or ninety days, can call for the stock any day within that time, or wait until its expiration. He pays interest at the rate of six per cent up to the time he calls. A purchase on *buyer's option* is generally a fraction above the cash price.

**To buy in.** The act of purchasing stock in order to meet a "short" contract, or to enable one to return stock which has been borrowed. *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*.

**To buy one's Time.** An apprentice "buys his time;" i. e., he pays his employer, to whom he is bound, a certain sum of money, to release him before his term of apprenticeship has expired.

**To buy or sell Flat.** A broker's phrase, meaning to buy or sell dividend-making stocks, or securities having interest coupons attached.

without making account of the interest accrued since the last preceding payment of dividend or interest.

**Buzzer.** A pickpocket.

While the [New York] police had no right to arrest pickpockets unless they caught them committing a theft, yet as they had the power to do so, they exercised it, and many were the *car-buzzers* they led captives to police head-quarters. *Galaxy* for 1867, p. 634.

**By and again.** Occasionally, now and then. A Southern expression. "By and then" is given in "Robinson Crusoe" as Friday's corruption of by and by.

**By and large.** From every point of view; on the whole; after due consideration.

*Taken by and large*, it [General Sherman's prediction] was a good philosophical forecast. — *Boston Journal*.

*Taken by and large*, it has been a profitable season for business. — *State of the Markets*.

**By-Bidder.** A person employed at public auctions to bid on articles put up for sale, to enhance the price.

**By Sun.** Before sunset. Georgia.

**By the Name of.** Some persons will say, "I met to-day a man by the name of Smith." An Englishman would say "of the name," &c.; except in such phrases as "he went by the name of Smith."

## C.

**Cabbage-Tree.** (*Palma altissima*.) A palm-tree found in East Florida. From its pith very good sago is made, and its long trunks serve for pipes to convey water underground. — *Bartram's Florida Journal*. This name, according to locality, is given to all palms that bear an esculent shoot. See *Palm Cabbage*.

**Caberos.** (Span. *cabestro*, a halter.) A rope made of hair, used for catching wild horses and cattle. It is used in the same manner as the "lariat," which is made of raw hide. These two words are in common use in Louisiana and Texas, and imply what is, at the North, termed a *lasso*.

Bill Stone had his rifle for himself and a strong *caberos* for his horse, and so did n't bother anybody about feeding. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

**Cablegram.** Telegram by the Atlantic Cable.

*Cablegrams* received by the State Department indicate that there is no longer any possibility of averting war between Russia and Turkey. — *Telegraphic Report*, April 21, 1877.

**Caboodle.** The whole *caboodle* is a common expression, meaning the whole lot. It is used in all the Northern States as well as in some of the Southern. The word *boodle* is used in the same manner.

They may recommend to the electors of Hamilton County to disregard so much of the law as constitutes two election districts of Hamilton County. Having done this, Medary will be looking out for a job; Olds will be often in Fairfield cozening for a nomination to Congress; and the *whole caboodle* will act upon the recommendation of the "Ohio Sun," and endeavor to secure a triumph in the old fashion way. — *Ohio State Journal*.

Up with the stripes and stars, and down with stars and bars,  
Let the cry of the Eagle still be Union.  
Hail Columbia, Yankee Doodle, God bless the whole *caboodle*.

*Christy's Songster.*

When Josiah Allen's wife visited Stewart's great store in New York, she says, in describing her visit, —

I walked up to the counter as collected lookin' as if I owned the whole *caboodle* of them, and New York village and Jonesville. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 351.

**Caboose Car.** The last car of a freight-train on a railway for the conductor's use.

**Cacao.** The fruit of the cacao-tree (*Theobroma cacao*), of which chocolate is made; hence also called Chocolate-nuts, commonly spelled and pronounced Cocoa.

**Cache.** (French.) A hole in the ground for hiding and preserving provisions which it is inconvenient to carry. Travellers across the prairies, hunters, and the settlers in the Far West, often resort to this means for preserving their provisions.

The term *cache* is also used to designate other means of preserving articles of various kinds. See in "Harper's Mag." for Nov., 1869, description and illustrative woodcut of a *cache*, which was a platform on which, supported on branches of trees, provisions, &c., were kept from the reach of bears and other animals.

I took advantage of a detached heap of stones, to make a *cache* of a bag of pemmican. — *Back, Journal of an Arctic Voyage*.

The *cache*, which I had relied so much upon, was entirely destroyed by the bears. — *Dr. Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. I.

**To cache.** To hide or conceal in the ground.

We returned to camp, and *cached* our meat and packs in the forks of a cotton-wood-tree, out of reach of wolves. — *Ruxton's Adventures in New Mexico*.

When Dr. Hovey's party reached Mann's Fort, they were well-nigh exhausted. The fort was vacant, but after much search they found plenty of salt pork which had been *cached* by its former occupants. — *New York Tribune*.

**Cachunk!** A word like *thump!* describing the sound produced by the fall of a heavy body. Also written *kerchunk!* A number of

fanciful onomatopoeic words of this sort are used in the South and West; in all of which the first syllable, which is unaccented, is subject to the same variety of spelling. These words are of recent origin.

**Cacique or Canique.** (W. Ind. *cazic*, *cachic*.) A chief or king among the aborigines of the West India Islands. This, like other terms of the sort, has been extended by the whites beyond its original limits.

**Cack.** A small shoe; a shoe for a child. Massachusetts.

**Cacomite.** A name for the bulbous root of a species of *Tigridia* from which a good flour is prepared, in Mexico.

**Cade.** A calf; a pet.

**Cadeau.** (Fr.) A present; gift; compliment.

A present, a gift, as some wretched beings affecting to adorn English say, a *cadeau*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1861.

**Cahoot.** (Perhaps Fr. *capute*, a hut, a cabin.) It is used in the South and West to denote a company, or partnership. Men who live in the same hut or shanty, or who make one family, are "in *cahoot*."

Pete Hopkins ain't no better than he should be, and I wouldn't swar he wasn't in *cahoot* with the devil. — *Chronicles of Pineville*.

I'd have no objection to go in *cahoot* with a decent fellow for a character, but have no funds to purchase on my own account. — *New Orleans Picayune*.

The Hoosier took him aside, told him there was a smart chance of a pile on one of the [card] tables, and that if he liked he would go in with him — in *cahoot*! — *Field, Western Tales*.

**To cahoot.** To act in partnership.

Commodore Morgan sells out his interest to Commodore Garrison in the Nicaragua line, and Garrison settles his difficulties with Commodore Vanderbilt, and they all agree to *cahoot* with their claims against Nicaragua and Costa Rica. — *New York Herald*, May 20, 1857.

**Cahot.** (Fr. *Jolt*.) A bank of snow across a road made by sleighs, which heap up the snow in front and leave a corresponding depression or hollow. *Cahots* are common throughout Canada where the snow is deep, and are great obstructions to travelling. A particular kind of sleigh called a "traineau" chiefly cause these *cahots*. An effort was made by act of Parliament a few years since to prevent the use of the *traineaux*, but it met with so much opposition from the Canadians that the law could not be enforced. In the United States, we call these "*thank-ye-ma'ams*."

**Calabash.** 1. A large gourd, the fruit of the *Cucurbita lagenaria*, or calabash vine.



2. (*Crescentia cujete*.) A gourd that grows upon trees in Spanish America and the West Indies. The fruit is large and round, and serves for bowls. That of another species or variety is oval, and furnishes drinking-cups and chocolate-cups. In South America, the name is *Totuma*; in Central America, *Jicara*; and in Cuba, *Guira*.

3. A humorous name for the head, generally implying emptiness; as, "He broke his *calabash*." Possibly a corruption of the Spanish *cabeza*.

**Calaboose.** (Fr. *calabouse*; Span. *calabozo*.) In the South-western States, the common jail or prison.

There's no peace in a steamer, it is nothing but a large *calaboose* chock full of prisoners. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

I went on board the other day,  
To hear what the boatmen had to say;  
While there I let my passion loose,  
When they clapped me in the *calaboose*. — *The Boatman's Song*.

**To calaboose.** To imprison. South-western.

We have a special telegraphic despatch from St. Louis, giving the information that Colonel Titus, late of Nicaragua, now claiming to be of Kansas, was *calaboused* on Tuesday for shooting at the porter of the Planters' House. — *Cincinnati Commercial*, 1857.

**Calash.** (Fr. *calèche*.) 1. A two-wheeled carriage, resembling a chaise, used in Canada.

2. A covering for the head, usually worn by ladies to protect their head-dresses when going to evening parties, the theatre, &c. It is formed of hoops after the manner of a chaise-top.

**To calculate.** 1. This word, which properly means to compute, to estimate, has been erroneously transferred from the language of the counting-house to that of common life, where it is used for the words to esteem; to suppose; to believe; to think; to expect; intend, &c. It is employed in a similar way to the word *guess*, though not to so great an extent. Its use is confined to the illiterate of New England. *Calculated* is, in New England much, by some almost exclusively, used in the sense of adapted (to), designed (for); and in the former of these mischosen and ill-applied applications is seen in English writers, e. g. Harris's "Great Commission" (often).

Mr. Cram requested those persons who *calculated* to join the singin' school to come forward. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Vol. XVII.

2. To adapt, as in "calculated."

**Calf-Kill.** (*Kalmia angustifolia*.) A plant, so called from its poison-

ous properties, which are, however, not so great as the name imports. Also called Lamb-kill and Sheep Laurel.

**Calibogus.** Rum and spruce-beer. — *Cartwright's Labrador* (1792), Vol. III. Glossary. An American beverage. — *Grose*.

**Calico.** The word was originally applied to white cottons from India. In England, white cotton goods are still called *calicoes*. In the United States, the term is applied exclusively to printed cotton cloth.

**Call.** An invitation from the vestry of a church to a clergyman to occupy their pulpit is technically termed a *call*, the loudness of which call is considered to be in a direct ratio to the salary offered.

The renowned Mr. Dow, Jr., at the close of one of his sermons, said: —

I have observed that a great many country people have lately joined my congregation. Let the good work go on! I hope to coax a few more such sheep into my fold before I preach my farewell sermon; and that may be pretty soon, as I have had a loud \$600 *call* elsewhere. — *Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 317.

**Call Contract.** A contract for the future delivery of stock is termed a *call*, and gives the holder the privilege of purchasing of the party with whom the contract is made a certain number of shares of the stock named, within a definite time, at a stipulated price.

**Callithumpians.** It was a common practice in New York, as well as other parts of the country, on New Year's Eve, for persons to assemble with tin horns, bells, rattles, and similar euphonious instruments, and parade the streets, making all the noise and discord possible. This party was called the *Callithumpians*, or the *Callithumpian band*. An allusion to *Calliope* and as well to *thumping*. Fortunately, the custom has now fallen almost, if not entirely, into disuse.

A gang of Baltimore rowdies once assumed the name. The present substitute for this is a similar procession at sunrise on the 4th of July, in grotesque or worse attire, calling themselves "Antiques and Horribles," a corruption of the venerable *Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company* of Boston.

Applied also to any burlesque serenade, particularly when given to unpopular persons on their marriage.

**Call-Loans.** Loans on call are loans of money where the borrower agrees to pay at any moment when called for. Banks having large deposits which are liable to be called for any day often loan money at less than the ordinary rates in this way to brokers.

To speculate in fancy stocks on *call-loans* is simply to put your hand in the lion's mouth, or yourself in the hands of a Shylock, with the expectation of getting out without being fleeced. — *N. Y. Herald*.

If the merchants of New York in this year 1870 wish to warn the banks against *call-loans*, by which our present trade is imperilled, let them organize a subscription for an accurate history of banking in the metropolis during 1853-54. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 308.

**Calla.** Operations of this kind are made generally by those "curbstone brokers" who are under the impression that higher prices will soon rule in certain stocks. A speculator is desirous of making a little operation, and he offers to give \$50 for the privilege of calling for 100 shares New York Central Railroad stock at 91 per cent in ten or fifteen days. The price fixed on the part of the buyer is always a fraction above the cash price. If the stock goes down ten, twenty, or thirty per cent, the party buying the *call* can only lose \$50. If it goes up to 91½, he gets his money back, and all above that is so much profit. This business is confined almost entirely to the curbstone brokers: it is a species of betting about on a par with "roulette." — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, 1857.

**Calumet.** Among the aborigines of America, a pipe, used for smoking tobacco, whose bowl is usually of soft red marble, and the tube a long reed, ornamented with feathers. An old Norman word derived from *chalumeau*. — *Charlevoix*, Vol. II. 212. It was introduced into Canada by the settlers from Normandy. The Iroquois name for a pipe is *ganondaoe*, and among some other tribes *poagan*. The *calumet* is used as a symbol or instrument of peace and war. To accept the *calumet* is to agree to the terms of peace; and to refuse it is to reject them. The *calumet of peace* is used to seal or ratify contracts and alliances, to receive strangers kindly, and to travel with safety. The *calumet of war*, differently made, is used to proclaim war.

As soon as we sat down, the Illinois [Indians] presented us, according to custom, their *calumet*, which one must needs accept, or else he would be looked upon as an open enemy or a mere brute. — *Marquette*, 1673.

The savages make use of the *calumet* in all their negotiations and state affairs; for when they have a *calumet* in their hand, they go where they will in safety. — *La Hontan, Voyages dans l'Amérique* (1704).

**To camp.** (Old Eng. To contend.) To kick with the foot, especially a ball, so as to raise it in the air. Eastern Massachusetts. The word is also provincial in England for a game of ball. — *Wright*.

**Campaign.** The season of political excitement preceding an election. The word "canvass," which the English use with this meaning, is much used with us for the official counting of votes. See, for instance, the Election Laws of the State of New York, "of the canvass and estimate of the votes."

**Campbellite.** A follower of the doctrines of Alexander Campbell.  
See *Christian*.

**Camphene.** Pure oil of turpentine, a compound of eight parts of hydrogen and ten of carbon. Used for burning in lamps.

If a man will light his lamp with whale oil when gas and *camphene* are at hand, he must be content with a bad illumination. — *E. Forbes, Literary Papers*, p. 158.

**Camp-Meeting.** A meeting held in the wood or field for religious purposes, where the assemblage encamp and remain several days. These meetings are generally held by the Methodists. The Mormons calls it a *Wood-meeting*.

**To can.** To put into cans; to preserve by "canning," as meats, fruits, &c.

**Cañada.** (Span., pron. *canyàda*.) A narrow valley or glen between mountains; a small cañon.

**Cañada Balsam.** See *Balsam Fir*.

**Canada Nettle.** See *Albany Hemp*.

**Canada Rice.** (*Zizania aquatica*.) A plant which grows in deep water along the edges of ponds and sluggish streams, in the Northern States and Canada. It is called, in some places, Wild Rice and Water Oats.

**Cancer Root.** A species of *orobanche* of Linnæus. Yellowish plants, famous as ingredients in "cancer powders."

**Candidacy.** Candidateship; the position of a candidate. — *Webster*.

Mr. Opdike then boldly came forth, and, by the unprecedentedly brilliant and energetic canvass made under his *candidacy*, carried the party with vast prestige, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 22, 1861.

**To candidate.** To be a candidate; to act, or be received as a candidate.

Setting him to be *candidate* in season. — *The Congregationalist*, Jan. 6, 1870.

**Candidateship.** The state of being a candidate. — *Webster*.

**Candle-Lighting.** Time of, or near the time of lighting candles; as, "at early candle-lighting;" sometimes we hear, "at early candle-light." New England.

**Cane-Brake.** A thicket of canes. They abound in the low lands from South Carolina to Louisiana.

Did you ever hear of a bar bustin' in through a *cane-brake*, and know how near a hurricane it is? — *Story of the Bear-Hunter*.

**Cane-Meadow.** The Carolinian name for a cane-brake. — *Bartram*.

**Cane-Trash.** See *Bagasse*.

**Caney.** *Caney Fork* or *Branch* is a frequent name for streams in Kentucky and Tennessee, undoubtedly from canes having grown there formerly, although now extirpated.

**Can-Hook.** A rope with an iron hook at each end, used for hoisting casks. See *Cant Hook*.

**Canker-Rash.** The disease called Scarlatina.

**Canoe.** (West Indian, *canahua*, *canôa*.) An Indian boat made of bark or skins.

**Canoe Birch.** (*Betula papyracea*.) Also called *Paper Birch*, the *Boleau à canot* of the French Canadians. Common in the forests of the Eastern States north of lat. 43°, and in Canada, where it attains the height of seventy-five feet. Its bark is a brilliant white: it is often used for roofing houses and for the manufacture of small boxes; but its most important use is for canoes. — *Michaux*.

**Cañon.** (Span., pron. *canyon*.) A narrow, tunnel-like passage between high and precipitous banks, formed by mountains or table-lands, often with a river running beneath.

The Platte forces its way through a barrier of table-lands, forming one of those striking peculiarities incident to mountain streams, called a *cañon*. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 111.

Major Powell, in describing the topography of the country watered by the Colorado of the West, gives a particular account of the great *cañon* of that river through which he passed in a boat, the only instance known of any one having descended it in safety. After describing the formation of *cañons* in general, he thus writes: —

“For more than a thousand miles along its course, the Colorado has cut for itself such a *cañon*; but at some few points, where lateral streams join it, the *cañon* is broken, and narrow, transverse valleys divide it properly into a series of *cañons*.” Twelve rivers, whose names are given, “have also cut for themselves such narrow, winding gorges, or deep *cañons*.”

“Every river entering these has cut another *cañon*; every lateral creek has cut a *cañon*; every brook runs into a *cañon*; every rill born of a shower, and born again of a shower, and living only during these showers, has cut for itself a *cañon*; so that the whole upper portion of the basin of the Colorado is traversed by a labyrinth of these deep gorges.”

The longest *cañon* of the Colorado is 217½ miles in length; then there is a break, which is followed by 65 miles more; its sides in many places vertical, and from 1,000 to 3,500 feet in height.

**Can-Opener.** An instrument for opening tin cans of preserved meats, vegetables, sardines, &c.

**Can't come it** is a vulgar expression for cannot do it. "You *can't come it* over me so;" i. e., you cannot take such an advantage of me. Mr. Hamilton notices this expression among the provincialisms of Yorkshire. — *Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 353.

The following dialogue is reported to have occurred in a crowded New York omnibus: —

*Old Gent.* Let me take you on my lap.

*Woman.* No, you *can't come that*, old chap;

He that takes that task to do

Must be some likelier one than you.

**Cant-Hook.** A wooden lever with an iron hook at one end, with which heavy articles of merchandise or timber are canted over. Sometimes called Can-hook.

**Canticoy** or **Cantica.** An Algonkin word, denoting an act of worship; applied by the early Dutch of New Netherland to social gatherings. Campanius, in his Vocabulary of New Sweden (Delaware), has *succhiman chintika*, priest, spiritual (or religious) man; and in his translation of the Lord's Prayer has *chintikat* for "hallowed be" of the English. So *chintika manetto*, for "God the Holy Ghost," or third person of the Trinity. The word is still used by aged people in New York and on Long Island. Mr. Murphy, in a note to his translation of Dankers's and Sluyter's "Voyage to New York," 1679–80 (p. 275), says the *Canticoy* appears to have been a dance which the Indians practised on various occasions. Denton calls it "a dancing match, where all persons that came were freely entertained, it being a festival time. — *Desc. of New York*, 1670.

The first of these Indians having received a horrible wound . . . wished them to let him *kinte-kaeye*, — being a dance performed by them as a religious rite, &c. — *Brood Advice* (1649), 2 *N. Y. Hist. Coll.*, 3. 258.

These Indians had *canticoyed* (*gekintekayt*) there to-day, that is, conjured the devil, and liberated a woman among them, who was possessed by him, as they said. — *Dankers, Voyage to N. Y.* (1679), p. 275.

**Canuck.** A Canadian; colloquial and in newspapers.

**Canvas-Back.** (*Anas valisneriana*.) A wild duck, found chiefly in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and highly esteemed for the delicacy of its flesh. It derives its name from the color of its back.

When all the folks who love good eating,  
And think of little else but treating,  
With pleasure oft their lips will smack,  
When speaking of a *canvas-back*.

*Miss Ramsay, Poetical Picture of America*, p. 56.

**To cap all.** To surpass all; to cap the climax.

Well, the horse got stuck in one of them snowbanks, and there we sot unable to stir; and, to *cap all*, Deacon Bedott was took with a dreadful crick in his back. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**Cape Cod Turkeys.** Codfish. See *Marblehead Turkeys*.

**Cape May Goody.** The name given, on the Jersey coast, to the Lafayette fish.

**Capper.** A by-bidder; men and women in the employ of auctioneers in the city of New York, to bid on articles put up for sale.

**Cap-Sheaf.** A small sheaf of straw forming the top of a stack. — *Dorset Glossary*. Figuratively used, in the United States, to denote the highest degree, the summit.

Of all the days that I ever did see in this 'ere world, moving-day in New York is the *cap-sheaf*. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 43.

There 's one manufacture in New England that might stump all Europe to produce the like, — the manufacture of wooden nutmegs. That 's a *cap-sheaf* that bangs the bush. — *Sam Slick*.

Sam Pendergrass's wife has been tellin' me about the party; and of all the strains ever I heard on, I should think that the *cap-sheaf*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 88.

The *cap-sheaf*, though, of mean Americans,  
Is the blowin' Congressman, that goes an' stan's  
Afore the wisdom o' this mighty nation,  
Forgettin' all about his lofty station.

*Ballad from Vanity Fair.*

Josiah Allen's wife, in describing a female lecturer on woman's rights, says: —

I didn't like her looks. Of all the painted, and frizzled and ruffled, and humped-up and laced-down critters I ever see, she was the *cap-sheaf*. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 337.

**Captain's Beat.** The limits within which the members of a military company reside. Within the same limits the votes are received on election days. Southern.

**Caption.** This legal term is used in the newspapers in cases where an Englishman would say *title*, *head*, or *heading*.

**To captivate, v. a.** (Lat. *captivo*; Fr. *captiver*.) To take prisoner; to bring into bondage. — *Johnson*. To seize by force; as an enemy in war. — *Webster*.

How ill-becoming is it in thy sex,  
To triumph like an Amazonian trull  
Upon their woes, whom fortune *captivates*! — *Shakespeare*.

They stand firm, keep out the enemy, truth, that would *captivate* or disturb them. — *Locke*.

The unnatural brethren who sold their brother into captivity are now about to be *captivated* themselves, and the *binder* himself to be bound in his turn. — *Dr. Adam Clarke, Reflec.*, 4th Genesis.

I have an English engraving published in 1756, entitled "A Prospective View of the Battle fought near Lake George, 8th September, 1755, . . . in which the English were victorious, *captivating* the French general with a number of his men, and putting the rest to flight."

In his remarks on this word, Mr. Pickering says it was new to him, and that he had never seen it in the newspapers. Subsequently, however, he discovered it in two or three of our authors. It cannot be said to be in use among writers at the present day. It is well known that Congress, in adopting the Declaration of Independence, prepared by Mr. Jefferson, omitted certain passages contained in the original draft. Among these was the following paragraph relating to the slave-trade: —

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, *captivating* and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to more miserable death in transportation thither.

In noticing the above passage, Lord Brougham says: The word *captivating* will be reckoned an Americanism (as the Greeks used to say of their colonists, a Solæcism). But it has undoubted English authority, — Locke, among others. — *Statesmen of George III.*

Twenty-three people were killed in this surprisal, and twenty-nine were *captivated*. — *Belknap, Hist. New Hampshire*, Vol. I. ch. 10.

The singularly interesting event of *captivating* a second Royal army [Lord Cornwallis's] produced strong emotions. — *Ramsay, History American Revolution*, Vol. II. p. 274.

**Car.** 1. The carriages that compose a railway train are, with us, called "railroad cars." These are of various kinds: as the *palace* or *drawing-room cars*, which are luxuriously fitted up; the *sleeping-car* and the ordinary *passenger-cars*, one of which is the *smoking-car*, for those who must needs indulge in that luxury; the *baggage-car*; and the *mail-car*. Sometimes a whole train is composed of *freight-cars*. The English travel by "rail," or take the "train" from one place to another. We go by the *cars*, or take the *cars*.

2. A square box, in which, floating, live fish are preserved. In England, it is called a *cawf*.

**To carbonado.** To boil; to cook upon coals. Southern. See *Olmstead's Seaboard Slave States*.

**Car-Brake.** A lever which, acting by friction on the wheels, helps to stop the train.



**Carcajou.** A name now appropriated to the American Badger, (*Meles Labradorica*, a species so named, apparently, because *not found* in Labrador), but which originally was applied to the *Cercoleptes caudivolvulus*. See *Kinkajou*.

Not unlike a badger, only they are bigger and more mischievous. — *La Hontan, Voyages* (1703), Vol. I. p. 81.

DeKay makes the *carcajou* of La Hontan the *Wolverene* (*Gulo luscus*), or Glutton, which, as John Hunter informed him, was called by the Indians of his tribe *gwingwahgay*, which he interpreted a "tough thing," and afterwards explains it as "a hard character." But Charlevoix (Vol. II. 129) describes the Canadian *carcajou*, or *quincajou*, as having a long tail (which the wolverene has not), and of a reddish-brown color.

This creature [the *carcajou*] is of the cat kind. . . . He comes upon [his enemy] . . . unperceived, or climbs up into a tree, and, taking his station on some of the branches, waits till one of them takes shelter under it; when he fastens upon his neck, soon brings blood, and drags his prey to the ground. This he is enabled to do by his long tail, with which he encircles the body of his adversary. — *Travels*, p. 450.

**Carf.** The mark made in a tree to be felled.

**Car-House.** A building in which railroad cars are kept.

**Caribou.** The American reindeer, of which there are two species, the Barren Ground and the Woodland Caribou.

Harts and *caribous* are killed, both in summer and winter, after the same manner with the elks; excepting that the *caribous*, which are a kind of wild asses, make an easy escape, when snow is at hand, by virtue of their broad feet. — *La Hontan, North America*, 1704.

**Carlicues** or **Curlycues.** Boyish tricks, capers. *To cut* or *cut up carlicues* is to cut capers. From curly and cue; or, perhaps, a corruption of the Fr. *caracole*, Span. *caracol*. Comp. "cavort," by transposition made from *curvet*.

"Sally," says I, "will you take me for better or worse?"

This put her to considering, and I gave a flourishing about the room, and *cut a curlycue* with my right foot, as much as to say, "Take your own time." — *McClintock's Tales*

It is generally supposed that nature is perfect in all her works, — except when she gets odd freaks in her head, and *cuts up carlicues* by way of experiment. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 48.

**Carolina Allspice.** See *Allspice*.

**Carolina Potato.** The sweet potato (*Convolvulus batata*), so called in the Eastern States.

**Carpet-Baggers.** "Unprincipled adventurers, who sought their fortunes in the South by plundering the disarmed and defenceless

people. Some of them were the dregs of the Federal army, — the meanest of the camp followers; many were fugitives from Northern justice; the best of them were those who went down after the peace, ready for any deed of shame that was safe and profitable. These, combining with a few treacherous 'scalawags,' and some leading negroes to serve as decoys for the rest, and backed by the power of the general government, became the strongest body of thieves that ever pillaged a people. Their moral grade was far lower. . . . They swarmed on all the States from the Potomac to the Gulf, and settled in hordes, not with the intent to remain there, but merely to feed on the substance of a prostrate and defenceless people. They took whatever came within their reach, intruded themselves into all private corporations, assumed the functions of all offices, including the courts of justice, and in many places they even 'run the churches.' By force of fraud, they either controlled all elections, or else prevented elections from being held." — *North American Review*, for July, 1877.

We are indebted to President Hayes for his idea of what constitutes a *carpet-bagger*. It appears that on the 12th June, 1877, a delegation from Alabama waited upon the President. After discussing various matters, the telegraphic report to the newspapers says: —

The conversation turned upon the subject of *carpet-baggers*, when the President said he did not regard as a *carpet-bagger* a man who went South to become a *bona fide* resident. Only those who went South for the purpose of holding office as a matter of business should be stigmatized as a *carpet-bagger*.

We are fortunate in obtaining a description of the *carpet-bagger* from Wade Hampton, Governor of South Carolina, who, in a speech made at Auburn, N. Y., on the 19th June, 1877, in alluding to the late political contest in that State, said: —

It was a contest waged by the people of South Carolina not, as demagogues would tell you, against Northern men. It was a contest waged against *carpet-baggers*, and when I say *carpet-baggers* I mean by that thief. We do not call any Northern man, any Irishman, any German, any Englishman who settles in our midst as an honest citizen, a *carpet-bagger*. We welcome such with open arms. We tell them to come to our genial skies and fertile soil. Come one, come all, and pledge them in the name of the State a hospitable, warm-hearted reception.

"You call me a *carpet-bagger*," contemptuously exclaimed an indignant but witty Republican, who had been interrupted in a political speech in a Mississippi back county. "I am a *carpet-bagger*. I have neither house nor land nor shelter nor property of any kind. I am a *carpet-bagger*, — perhaps the only one you ever saw. You people are great fools. You call Governor Ames a *carpet-bagger*. He's no *carpet-bagger*: he owns a house in Boston." Whereat the whole crowd shouted assent. — *Washington Cor. N. Y. Herald*.

Dr. O. W. Holmes, in a recent poem upon the contest in Congress on the Presidential question, entitled "How not to settle it," says:—

One half cried, "See! the choice is S. J. T.!"  
 And one half swore stoutly it was t' other;  
 Both drew the knife to save the Nation's life  
 By wholesale vivisection of each other.

Then rose in mass that monumental Class, —  
 "Hold! hold!" they cried, "give us, give us the daggers!"  
 "Content! content!" exclaimed with one consent  
 The gaunt ex-rebels and the *carpet-baggers*."

We have an amusing instance of "What's in a name?" Captain Parr, a delegate from Nansemond to the recent Constitutional Convention in Virginia, was the inventor of the now well-known epithet "*Carpet-bagger*." In consequence of this term, *carpet-bags* have fallen into such disrepute that not one can be sold in the South; and those have suffered who had a stock on hand of an article before readily salable. As usual, men have run into the opposite extreme; and although the habits of the *carpet-bagger* have changed as little as his wardrobe has increased, yet nothing but trunks the size of a Newfoundland's kennel will now suffice, and the railway officials are disgusted at the change. — *Anglo-American Times*.

The *carpet-bag* Governments of the Southern States, under the protection of Grant's bayonets, have rolled up an aggregate debt in the nine cotton States of \$194,000,000. — *N. Y. World*.

See also the poem on the Carpet-bagger at the word "*Some*."

**Carpet-Weed.** A small spreading plant, common in cultivated ground. (*Mollugo*.) — *Bigelow's Plants of Boston*.

**Carrom.** (Fr. *carambole*.) In the game of billiards, the act of hitting two balls at once with the ball struck by the cue. — *Hoyle*. A *carom*, or *carrom*, therefore, is a lucky blow.

Dana hit Greeley over the head with the account books of the establishment; but this proved to be a blank shot. Greeley retaliated by overwhelming him with back files of the "Tribune." . . . Dana knocked Greeley into a cocked hat by a splendid chance *carrom* with one of A. Oakey Hall's pamphlets. — *N. Y. Herald*, April 3, 1862.

**To carry away.** To move to ecstasy, to transport, to be charmed. A puritanical deacon, shocked at the idea of introducing an organ into a church, getting much excited, exclaimed:—

Organs of wood and brass seem like idolatry, as if we couldn't praise the Lord with our natural voices! I got *carried away*, and am certainly afraid all this care for the outer portion will only make it worse for the better part of us. — *Eastford, or Household Sketches*.

"Do you remember old Jabe Green's wife up to Wiggletown?" said the Widow Bedott. "She was always *carried away* with every new thing. Two or three years ago, when Millerism was makin' such a noise, she was clear killed

up with it. Again she was wide awake against Sabbath-breakin', — then 't was moral reform." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 123.

I was completely *carried away* with the music.

Comp. Job xv. 12 with Psalms xc. 5.

**Carry.** A portage. Maine.

**Carry-All.** A four-wheeled pleasure carriage, capable of holding several persons or a family; hence its name. Some, however, consider it a corruption of the French *carriole*. The name is common in the Northern States. In Canada, it is applied to a sleigh.

**Carry Guts to a Bear.** "He ain't fit to *carry guts to a bear*" is a phrase that expresses a degree of worthlessness impossible to be equalled.

**Carry-Log.** A set of wheels used for transporting timber.

One day, 'bout two weeks after I commenced workin' for the Squire, I was drivin' 'long, settin' straddle of a stock on my *carry-log*, when I sorter druv over a little stump, and the durned log come unfastened. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

The only *carry-log* we could obtain broke in attempting to transport the first gun. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 27, 1862, *Letter from Roanoke Island*.

**To carry on.** To riot; to frolic.

We notice some young scapegraces, who get up their wild freaks at night and continue them till morning. Sometimes they *carry on* even longer than this. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To carry Stock.** When a broker is holding stock for a customer, retaining it in his own possession until ordered to sell, he is said to be carrying the stock for his customer's account.

Mr. M — [who had failed, subsequently] paid up every dollar of his indebtedness, entering the market as an outside bull operator, and invariably *carrying* whatever stock he touched, until it reached a figure admitting of superb realizations. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 189.

**Carryings-on.** Riotings, frolickings.

There is good authority for the use of this term by English writers of the seventeenth century.

Is this the end

To which these *carryings-on* did tend ?

*Butler's Hudibras*, Pt. 1, Cant. 2.

Everybody tuck Christmas, especially the niggers, and sich *carryin's-on* — sich dancin' and singin' — and shootin' poppers and sky-rackets — you never did see. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

When he reflected that wherever there were singin' schools, there would be *carryings-on*, he thought the cheapest plan would be to let them have their fun out. — *Peter Cram, in Knickerbocker Mag.*

"Jeff, let them seminary galls alone," said his aunt; "they are a wild set; and don't have such *carryins-on* with them." — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**Cartman.** (Pron. *carman*.) One who drives a cart. New York.

**Case.** A character, a queer one; as, "That Sol Haddock is a *case*."

"What a hard *case* he is," meaning a reckless scapegrace, *mauvais sujet*.

"I say, Jekyl," said Tom Gordon, "this sister of mine is a pretty rapid little *case*, as you saw by the way she circumvented us this morning." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**Cashaw**, sometimes spelt *kershaw*. (Algonkin.) A pumpkin.

[The Indians of Virginia] have growing near their towns Peaches, Strawberries, *Cushawes*, Melons, Pompions, &c. The *Cushawes* and Pompions they lay by, which will keep several months good after they are gather'd. — *Beverly, Hist. of Virginia* (1722), p. 152.

**Cassareap.** The juice of the bitter yucca-root boiled down to a sauce. Heat dissipates the poisonous property of the fresh juice. West Indies.

**Cassava** or **Cassader**. (W. Ind. *casavi*.) The native name of a shrub of Central and South America, from the root of which Tapioca and Mandioca are extracted. See *Tapioca*.

The plant of whose root the Indian bread *cazava* is made is a low herbe. — *Gerard, Herbales*, ed. of 1633, p. 1543.

Hariot in speaking of the plant says: —

Some of our company called it *Cassary*; . . . it groweth in very muddie pooles and moist groundes. Being dressed according to the countrey, it maketh a good bread, and also a good spoonemeate, and is used verie much by the inhabitants. — *Newfoundland of Virginia*, 1590, p. 17.

And here *Cassawder*, to which, though its juice  
Be Poyson, yet they now have a device  
To press and grate it, so in time of need,  
And sometimes else, they safely on it feed.

*Hardie's Last Voyage to Bermudas* (1671), p. 11.

**Castañas**, or **Chestnuts**, in tropical America, is the name given sometimes to the Jack Fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and sometimes to the edible fruit of the Screw Pine (*Pandanus*).

**Castoria.** Castor oil so prepared that its offensive properties are removed.

**Caswash!** Dash! splash! The noise made by a body falling into the water. See *Cachunk*.

**Catalpa.** (*Catalpa cordifolia*.) An ornamental tree; a shade-tree with large flowers, common in the Middle and Southern States. The aboriginal name.

**Catamount.** A name applied synonymously with Panther and Painter to several wild, fierce animals analogous to *Felis concolor*, but not specially employed to designate that species.

**Catawampously or Catawamptiously.** Fiercely, eagerly. To be *catawamptiously chawed up* is to be completely demolished, utterly defeated. One of the ludicrous monstrosities in which the vulgar language of the South-western States abounds.

In this debate, Mr. B. was *catawamptiously chawed up*; his arguments were not only met, but his sarcasm returned upon himself with great effect. — *Charleston Mercury*.

There is something cowardly in the idea of disunion. Where is the wealth and power that should make us fourteen millions take to our heels before three hundred thousand slaveholders, for fear of being *catawamptiously chawed up*? — *Speech of Fred. Douglass*, 1857.

Citizens and fellers: on the bloody ground on which our fathers *catawampously* poured out their claret free as oil, let the catamount loose, and prepare the engines of vengeance. — *S. H. Hill, Speech on the Oregon Question*.

**Catawba Grape.** A cultivated variety of *Vitis labrusca*. It is the great wine-grape of the United States.

**Cat-Bird.** (*Minus Carolinensis*.) A bird of the thrush family.

**Catch.** A term used among fishermen to denote a quantity of fish taken at one time. In some districts, they say "a haul of fish."

It is said that the *catch* of blue fish in the inlet and river is greater than ever known so early in the season, and that they are served up *secundum artem* at Mr. Williston's. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*, June 24, 1858.

**To catch.** To catch the railway train is to be in time for obtaining a passage in it.

**To catch a Weasel asleep.** It is supposed that this little animal is never caught napping, for the obvious reason that he sleeps in his hole beyond the reach of man. The expression is applied to persons who are watchful and always on the alert, or who cannot be surprised; as, "You cannot deceive me, any sooner than you can catch a weasel asleep," or "You can't catch a weasel asleep." The expressions are common.

**To catch up.** Among travellers across the great prairies, the phrase means, to prepare the horses and mules for the march.

The mule must have been there seven or eight hours, by the grass she had *cat*; a pony had been hitched there too, and after the mule had been *caught up*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Tale*.

They travelled all night, and when day broke took to the bush, camped down a smart piece off the trail, stayed till about noon, *caught up* their fresh horses, took a bee-line through the timber, and, when night came, pushed for the trail again. — *Ibid.*

Come, boys, it's daylight, we've a long march before us; so *catch up*, and we'll be off. — *Prairie Scenes*.

**Catechise.** A vulgarism once common in New England, among school-children and their elders, for catechism (*i. e.* the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism). Boys and girls "said their catechise."

All seeming, to his knowing eyes,

Familiar as his *catechise*,

Or "Webster's Spelling Book."

*Whittier, Extr. from a N. Eng. Legend.*

**Catfish.** (Genus *Pimelodus*. Cuvier.) This fish, in several varieties, is common throughout the United States under different popular names. It is also called by the name of Horned-pout, Bull-head, Mud-pout, Minister, or simply Cat. Often called *catties* by the Negroes, especially in many parts of the South. There is a very large species called the Channel Catfish, which is noticed by Dr. Kirtland in his Report on the Geology of Ohio.

**Cat-Rig.** A boat-rig with one mast near the bow with only one sail, and that one a boom-sail.

**Catstick.** A bat or cudgel, used by New England boys in a game at ball. It is known by the same name in England, though used for a different play. In Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Maryland, and further South, the term is applied to small wood for burning. In "Ernest Bracebridge," a very nice boy's book, a similar meaning is given to *Dogstick*.

When the cat is laid upon the ground, the player with his cudgel or *catstick* strikes it smartly, it matters not at which end, and it will rise high enough for him to beat it away as it falls, in the same manner as he would a ball. — *Strutt, Sports and Pastimes*.

Armed with a few rusty swords, *catsticks*, pitchmops, and clubs, &c. — *Drake's Hist. of Boston*, Vol. I. p. 624.

**Cat-Tail Grass.** Herd's-grass, or timothy.

**Catting.** Fishing for "cat." Thus, a story is told of an old Negro, who, while fishing, was seen to keep only the catfish and throw all others, even of the better kinds, back into the water. On being asked the reason, he replied, "Lilly massa, when I goes a *cattin'*, I goes a *cattin'*."

**Cattle-Mark.** The brand bearing the owner's name.

**Cattle-Range.** In Kentucky, a park.

**Cattle-Train.** See *Stock-Train*.

**Caucus.** A private meeting of the leading politicians of a party, to agree upon the plans to be pursued in an approaching election.

Gordon, in his History of the American Revolution, 1788, says :

"The word is not of novel invention. More than fifty years ago, Mr. Samuel Adams's father, and twenty others, one or two from the north end of the town, where all ship business is carried on, used to meet, make a *caucus*, and lay their plan for introducing certain persons into places of trust and power. When they had settled it, they separated, and used each his particular influence within his own circle," &c. — Vol. I. p. 240.

"From the above remarks of Dr. Gordon on this word," says Mr. Pickering, "it would seem that these meetings were in some measure under the direction of men concerned in the '*ship business*;' and I had therefore thought it not improbable that *caucus* might be a corruption of *caulkers*', the word '*meetings*' being understood. I was afterwards informed that several gentlemen in Salem and Boston believed this to be the origin of the word."

The earliest mention of this word, that has come under my notice, is in John Adams's *Diary*, under date of February, 1763, where he says :—

This day learned that the *caucus club* meets, at certain times, in the garret of Tom Dawes, the adjutant of the Boston regiment. — *Works*, Vol. II. p. 144.

I'll be a voter, and this is a big character, able to shoulder a steamboat, and carry any candidate that the *caucus* at Baltimore may set up against the people. What's the people to a *caucus*? Nothing but a dead ague to an earthquake. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 206.

**Causalty.** Much used for *casualty*.

**To be a Caution.** To be a warning. A common slang expression.

The way the Repealers were used up *was a caution* to the trinity of O'Connell, Repeal, and Anti-Slavery, when they attempt to interfere with true American citizens. — *New York Herald*.

There's a plaguy sight of folks in America, Major, and the way they swallow down the cheap books *is a caution* to old rags and paper-makers. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 3.

Moses wound up his description of the piano, by saying that the way the dear creatures could pull music out of it *was a caution* to hoarse owls. — *Thorpe's Mysteries of the Backwoods*, p. 24.

A large portion of Captain Marryatt's "*Travels of Mons. Violet*" is stolen from the "*New Orleans Picayune*;" and it will not be surprising if Kendall [the author] lets his sting into this trans-Atlantic robber. He can do it in a way that will be a *caution*. — *Providence Journal*.

Our route *was* along the shore of the lake in a northerly direction, and the way the icy blast would come down the bleak shore *was a caution*. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 234.

*Caution to Snakes* is often heard.

**Cavendish.** Tobacco softened and pressed. — *Webster*. Also called *Negro-head*.



**Cavern Limestone.** The carboniferous limestone of Kentucky, so called from the innumerable caves which its hard strata contain. In the softer limestone of the West, the roof of the cavern falls in and forms on the surface a "sinkhole," a funnel-shaped depression, which, if the opening is not closed, sometimes proves fatal to animals and even to man.

**Cavallard.** (Span. *caballada*, pron. *cav-vy-yard*.) A term used, in Louisiana and Texas, by the caravans which cross the prairies, to denote a band of horses or mules.

The *chef d'œuvre* of this Indian's rascality was exhibited in his stealing our whole *cavallard*, consisting of ten head of horses and mules, which he drove to the mountains. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 80.

Two or three were mounted, and sent into the prairie in search of the *caviarde* of horses. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 97.

**Cave.** A caving in; a yielding, submission.

There is evidence all around that the disaffected portion of the people of Nashville and vicinity are becoming more reconciled to the Union "invasion." . . . While I do not believe that there will be a speedy general *cave* of all Secession sympathies, I am satisfied that the majority of our citizens will feel little regret at the change of rulers. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 31, 1862, *Lett. from Nashville*.

**To cave in.** Said of the earth which falls down when one digs into a bank. Figuratively, to break down; to give up.

He was a plucky fellow, and warn't a-goin' to *cave in* that way. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 55.

At the late dinner, Mr. W — arose to make a speech, but soon *caved in*. — *Washington Paper*.

The South-western and Western Locos, it is thought, will *cave in*, and finally go for the Treaty [of peace with Mexico], though they talk loud against it now. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 4, 1848.

Dr. Kane, in alluding to the weak state of his companions, says, Morton felt so much better that he got up at six; but he *caved in* soon after. — *Arctic Explorations*, Vol. II. p, 94.

**Caveson.** (Fr. *careçon*.) A muzzle for a horse. New England.

There, Chilion, it is just as I told you. The rake-shame put a *caveson* on him. — *Margaret*, p. 304.

**To cavort.** To ride; to prance; to curvet.

He tossed himself into every attitude which man could assume on horseback. In short, he *cavorted* most magnanimously. — *Georgia Scenes*.

For several days past, they [the soldiers] have *cavorted* around the suburbs in sufficient numbers to pillage with impunity. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 9, 1862, *from Richmond, Va., Despatch*.

**Cavortin'.** A corruption of the word "curvetting," applied to horses and their riders when prancing about in order to show off; and then figuratively to any person capering about. A word chiefly used in the Southern States.

A whole gang of fellers, and a heap more of young ladies, came ridin' up and reinin' in, and prancin' and *catortin'*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 41.

Old Alic had a daughter, that war a most enticin' creatur; and I seed Tom Settlers *catortin'* round her like a young buffalo. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

There 's some monstrous fractious characters down in our best, and they mustn't come a *catortin'* about me when I give orders. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 20.

**Cawhalux !** Whop ! The noise made by a box on the ear.

I hadn't sot no time before, *cawhalux !* some one took me the right side o' the head with a dratted big book. The fire flew out of my eyes like red coals. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Cayman.** (West Indian.) This native name for the alligator is still retained in the West Indies.

**Cedar.** A name applied in the United States to different genera of the Pine family. The Red Cedar (*Juniperus Virginiana*) is a juniper.

The White Cedar (*Cupressus thyoides*) is a cypress, which is found in the "Cedar Swamps."

**Cent.** A copper coin of the United States, whose value is the hundredth part of a dollar. — *Webster*. There is a bad habit, west of New England, of calling a cent a *penny*.

**Centre.** The central part of a township, where, if not elsewhere within the township, are usually a church, and more or less of a village. In Killingly, Connnecticut, are North Killingly, South Killingly, East Killingly, and "Killingly Centre." Many other townships in New England have similar divisions.

**Centre-Board.** A board or plank keel which is drawn up or let down through a case made in small craft that ply in shallow waters; a sliding keel.

**Certain**, for certainly. "He 's dead *certain*." "I 'll go to-morrow, sure and *certain*." "*Certain sure*" and "*Sartin sure*." All very common.

While the flames were getting the better of our firemen, in their attempts to save the Baptist church, an aged African shouted out, "De idea ob tryin' to save a *Baptiss* ediffis by sprinklin', — nuffin but 'mersion do dat work dis time, *sartin sure !*" — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To certificate off.** Sometimes the "*off*" is omitted; as, "He certificated," i. e. he went off by, after having presented a certificate. See *Sign off*.

**Chained Lightning.** Western, for forked lightning.

**Chalk.** A long chalk vulgarly means a great distance, a good deal.

When a person attempts to effect a particular object, in which he fails, we say, "He can't do it *by a long chalk*."

'Twas about calf-time, and not a hundred year ago, *by a long chalk*, that the biggest kind of rendezvous was held to Independence, a mighty handsome little location away up on old Missouri. — *Ruzton, Far West*, p. 14.

Put on your hat, or you may get a sunstroke, which will cause you more pain than the helmet did *by a long chalk*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

If Nova Scotia is behind in intelligence, it is a *long chalk* ahead on us in other respects. — *Sam Slick*.

**To chance.** To risk.

**Change.** To meet with a change is to have change of heart, to experience religion.

"Do you mean to insinuate that ye've met with a change?" said the Widow Bedott to Jim Clarke, the peddler.

"I think I may confidently say I hev," said Jim.

"How long since?"

"Wall, about a year and a half. I experienced religion over in Vermont, at a protracted meetin'. I tell ye, Widow, them special efforts is great things; ever sence I've come out, I've felt like another critter." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 108.

**Chaparral.** In Spain, a *chaparral* is a bush of a species of oak. The termination *al* signifies a place abounding in; as, *chaparral* a place of oak-bushes; *almendral*, an almond orchard; *parral*, a vineyard; *cafetal*, a coffee plantation, &c.

This word, *chaparral*, has been introduced into the language since our acquisition of Texas and New Mexico, where these bushes abound. It is a series of thickets, of various sizes, from one hundred yards to a mile through, with bushes and briars, all covered with thorns, and so closely entwined together as almost to prevent the passage of any thing larger than a wolf or hare.

We had, too, a lieutenant of His Majesty's Royal Marines, another of Nature's noblemen, who preferred a camp to the toils of field sports, when a scrub was to be crawled under or forced through at the risk of tattered garments, scratched hands, and bleeding noses, to say nothing about a basking rattlesnake or so, as formidable as the *chaparral* of Palo Alto, defended by gigantic cactus here, sharp-pointed yuccas there, and cat-claw briars everywhere. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

The Mexicans laid their plans right well,  
And placed their men in a *chaparral*,  
But Rough-and-Ready made them smell  
Gunpowder à la Polka. — *Comic Song*.

**To chaw up.** To demolish, discomfit.

I heerd Tom Jones swar he'd *chaw* me up, if an inch big of me was found in them diggins in the mornin'. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 63.

Miss Patience smiled, and looked at Joe Cash. Cash's knees trembled. All eyes were upon him. He sweat all over. Miss Patience said she was gratified to hear Mr. Cash was a musician; she admired people who had a musical taste. Whereupon Cash fell into a chair, as he afterwards observed, *chawed up*. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 28.

**To chaw up one's Words.** To eat one's words; to retract.

Do you want me to tell a lie by *chawing up my own words*? — *Southern Sketches*, p. 34.

**Cheat.** See *Chess*.

**Chebacco Boat.** A description of fishing vessel employed in the Newfoundland fisheries. So called from Chebacco Parish, Ipswich, Mass., where many were fitted out. They are also called Pinksterns, and sometimes Tobacco Boats.

**Checker-Berry.** (*Mitchella*.) A handsome little plant, the only species of its genus. Also called Chickberry. The Wintergreen (*Gaultheria*) is also in some places called *Box-berry* and *Tea-berry*.

**Check Guerilla.** One who frequents gambling rooms, and solicits money, or the checks used therein to represent money, from the proprietors, by-standers, or betters, and who has no other means of living other [*sic*] than the money so obtained. — *Statutes of Nevada* (1877), chap. cx. sec. 2.

**Checks.** 1. Money, cash. See *Pass in one's Checks*.

The old man's toast: "It's hard work to keep your sons in check while they're young; it's harder to keep them in *checks* when they grow older."

2. Counters used in gambling, which are handed in to the banker at the end of the game; hence "*Passing in his checks*" is a euphemism for dying.

How Jimmy Bludsoe *pass'd in his checks*,

The night of the "Prairie Belle." — *John Hay, Jim Bludsoe*.

From a fugitive poem in a newspaper, entitled "Grandpa's Soliloquy," in which many slang words are used: —

Of death we spoke in language plain,

That no one would perplex;

But in these days one doesn't die,

But *passes in his checks*.

**Check.** Courage; impudence. Provincial in England. — *Wright's Prov. Dic.*

I've known men rise by talent, though such are exceptions rare,

And some by perseverance and industry and care;

There are men who build up fortune by saving a dollar a week;

But the best thing to make your way in the world is to travel upon your *check*.

*Boston Traveller, P. Thompson.*

**Cheese.** That's *the cheese*, i. e. just the thing; that was well done.

If greenbacks ain't not *just the cheese*,  
I guess there's evils that's extremer;  
For instance, — shinplaster ideas,  
Like them put out by Gov'nor Seymour. — *Lowell*.

**Cheese Box.** 1. A box in which cheese is kept.

2. A cupolated iron-cased gunboat (in allusion to its cupola or round tower). The Confederates termed the "Monitor" a *cheese-box* on a raft.

Where is the "Monitor"? We have not heard a word of the little *cheese-box* since the repulse in James River until yesterday. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 10, 1862.

**Chemiloon.** A dress-reform garment combining the chemise and drawers in one garment. From the Fr. *chemise*.

"I feel awful good in my *chemiloon*," she said, "and then I wear suspenders."  
*Dr. Mary Walker, Lect. on Dress.*

**Chequet.** An Indian name of the *Labrus squeteague*, or weak-fish, retained in parts of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Fish have been scarce and high. A fine lot of *Chequet*, a scarce fish in this market, made their appearance yesterday and sold readily at 12½ cents a pound.  
— *Hartford Market Rept.*

**Cherimoya.** West India and South America. The fruit of the *Anona cherimolia*, full of white, creamy, and custard-like pulp. Much esteemed. A variety (*A. glabra*) is called by the Spaniards of Cuba *Mamon*; by the French, *Cachiment cœur bœuf*.

**Cherry-Tomato.** See *Tomato*.

**Chess.** (*Bromus secalinus*.) A troublesome weed, often found in wheat-fields, which gave rise to the erroneous opinion that it was degenerated wheat. It is also called *Cheat*.

**Chessycat.** (Cheshire Cat.) Although Charles Lamb's query as to the reason why cats grin in Cheshire has not yet met with a satisfactory solution, still the fact itself seems to remain undisputed. A correspondent of the "New York Tribune," discussing the distinctive quality that separates man from the brute creation, observes, "Rabelais, forgetting the hyena and the *Chessycat*, says it is laughter."

**Chewink.** The ground robin; so called from its peculiar note. On Long Island it is called the Towhee Goldfinch; and in Louisiana, from its plumpness, *Grasset*. — *Natural History of New York*.

**Chicha.** (West Ind.) A sweet fermented liquor made of Indian corn, pine-apple, banana, &c.

**Chickadee.** (*Parus atricapillus*.) The black-cap titmouse, a very common little bird, so called from its peculiar note. — *Audubon, Ornith.*

Far distant sounds the hidden chickadee  
Close at my side; far distant sound the leaves. . . .

*Lowell, An Indian Summer Reverie.*

When the chickadee is peeping  
In the branches overhead,  
And the bluebird seems to listen  
To each loving word that's said. — *T. L. Mitchell.*

**Chickaree.** (*Sciurus Hudsonii*.) The popular name of the Red Squirrel.

**Chickasaw Plum.** (*Prunus chicensis*.) A plum growing on the banks of the Red River, Arkansas, upon small bushes from two to six feet high. They are very large and sweet, and vary in color from a light pink to a deep crimson. — *Capt. Marcy's Report*, p. 19.

**Chicken Fixings.** In the Western States, a chicken fricassee.

The remainder of the breakfast table [in New York] was filled up with some warmed-up old hen, called *chicken fixings*. — *Rubio, Travels in the U. S.*

We trotted on very fast, in the assurance of rapidly approaching a snug breakfast of *chicken fixings*, eggs, ham doins, and corn slapjacks. — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 69.

I guess I'll order supper. What shall it be? Corn-bread and common doins, or wheat-bread and *chicken fixings*? — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., p. 118.

**Chicken-Grape.** The River Grape, or *Vitis riparia*; also called Frost-Grape. The sterile vine is cultivated for its sweet-scented blossoms, and is then called Bermudian Vine.

**Chicken Snake.** A name popularly applied to various species of snakes which are considered as particularly destructive to chickens and eggs.

**Chickwit** or *Chickewit*. The "weak-fish." Connecticut. See *Blue Fish*.

**Chigoe**, spelled also *chigre*, *chigger*, *jigger*, &c. 1. (*Pulex penetrans*.) Sand-fleas, which penetrate under the skin of the feet, particularly the toes. As soon as they accomplish this, an itching sensation is felt; when the *chigre* ought to be removed by means of a needle breaking the skin. No uneasiness follows; but, should this precaution be neglected, the insect breeds in the toe, and sometimes produces dreadful sores. These insects are found in the West Indies and the adjacent shores of the Gulf of Mexico. — *Carmichael's West Indies*, Vol. I. p. 189.

2. In Kentucky, the term is applied to a minute red *acar*, or tick, which buries itself in the skin, while the true chigo of the

South (a *pulex*) causes torment by the growth of the eggs which it deposits under the skin. They are found in abundance in the sand along the bays and rivers of Maryland and Virginia.

**Child.** *This child* is a common expression in the West for "this person," i. e. myself.

Human nature can't go on feeding on civilized fixings in this big village; and *this child* has felt like going West for many a month, being half froze for bufler meat and mountain doin's. — *Ruxton, Far West.*

**Chili Colorado.** (Span.) Red pepper. In California, Texas, and in the States bordering on Mexico, the Spanish term is universally used. It is used as a liquid, and in great quantities.

I was helped to a dish of rabbit, with what I thought to be an abundant sauce of tomato. Taking a good mouthful, I felt as though I had taken liquid fire. The tomato was *Chili colorado*. — *General Sherman's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 22.

**Chills and Fever.** A name for fever and ague.

**Chincapin, Chinquapin.** (Powhatan Ind.) (*Castanea pumila*.) A diminutive species of chestnut, shaped like a boy's top, common south of Pennsylvania.

They have a small fruit growing on little trees, husked like a chestnut, but the fruit most like a very small Acorne. This they call *Chechinquamins*, which they esteeme a great daintie. — *Smith's General Hist. of Virginia*, 1624.

Their nuts, black walnuts, persimins,  
Kiscatoma nuts and *chinquapins*.

*Ramsay, Picture of America*, p. 161.

**Chince.** A marble.

**Chinch or Chintz.** (Span. *chince*.) The name given in the Southern and Middle States to the Bed-bug (*cimex*).

*Chinches* are a sort of flat bug, which lurks in the bedsteads and bedding, and disturbs people's rest a-nights. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705.

Miss Ramsay, in her poetical account of her residence in Virginia, in describing the apartments she occupied, says: —

I thought I on the wall espy'd innumerable insects move,  
And swiftly o'er the whitewash rove;

She called the mistress, and asked "who owned this live and moving wall?"

"Oh ma'am, they 're *chintzes*," she did say.

"*Chintzes*," said I; "pray what are they?"

"They 're insects, ma'am," she coolly said,

"That sometimes trouble us in bed."

*Poetical Picture of America*, p. 72.

**Chinch-Bug.** A fetid insect, destructive to wheat, maize, &c., in the Southern and Western States. — *Farm. Encyclop.*

**Chinese Sugar-Cane.** See *Sorghum*.

**To chink.** To fill up chinks, or interstices. The process of filling with clay the interstices between the logs of houses in the new countries, and then plastering them over with the same material, is called *chinking and daubing*. In the north of England, it is called *daubing and filling*. — *Moor*. Also to *chince*.

Our loghouse quarters, however, were closely *chinked and daubed*, and we passed a comfortable night. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Exp.*, Vol. I. p. 28.

The interstices of the log wall were "*chinked*," the *chinking* being large chips and small slabs, dipping like strata of rocks in geology; and the *daubing*, yellow clay ferociously splashed in soft by the hand of the architect. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 61.

A huge pair of antlers occupied a conspicuous place in the little cabin, and upon its *unchinked* walls many a coon and deer skin were drying. — *The Fire Hunt*.

I met with a lot of these the other day in Southern Illinois; and, as it can have no bearing upon the election now, perhaps you would like to have it to use for *chinking* in among your election returns. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Chinsing.** Filling with moss the vacancies between the studs of houses, to keep out wind and frost. — *Cartwright's Labrador* (1792), Vol. III. Glossary.

**To chip in.** To put in a piece of money or a bank-note; to contribute.

An idea seems very generally to prevail that the printer should "*chip in*" to every charitable and religious operation. — *The Winstead (Conn.) Herald*, Nov. 22, 1861.

**Chipmuk, or Chipmonk.** The popular name for the Striped Squirrel (*Sciurus striatus*). Probably an Indian word.

The children were never tired of watching the vagaries of the little *chipmonk*, as he glanced from branch to branch. — *Mrs. Clayers's Forest Life*.

**Chipper.** Lively.

Over the hill to the poor-house I'm trudging my weary way, —  
I, a woman of seventy, and only a trifle gray, —  
I, who am smart and *chipper*, for all the years I've told,  
As many other woman that's only half as old.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 51.

**Chip-Yard.** A yard, or that portion of a yard, in which logs are chopped for fuel.

If the soil around the body of the trees should become too stiff, it may be carefully removed and its place supplied by coarse manure, or the scrapings of the *chip-yard*. — *New England Farmer*.

**Chiravari.** (Fr., pron. *chevaree*.) A custom that prevails in those parts of the United States which were originally colonized by the French, as Louisiana, Missouri, &c. Also common in Canada. When an unequal match takes place, when an old bachelor marries,



or a widow or widower marries soon after they become such, their friends assemble on the night of the wedding with tin horns, bells, tin kettles, and whatever will make a discordant noise. This "serenade" is nightly continued until the party is invited in and handsomely entertained. See *Callithumpians*.

**Chirimoya.** (*Annona chirimoya*.) The Custard Apple of the more temperate part of the tropics.

**Chirk.** 1. Lively, cheerful, in good spirits, in a comfortable state; as when one inquires about a sick person, it is said, he is *chirk*. The word is wholly lost, except in New England. — *Webster*. It is doubtless derived from the old verb *to chirk*. (Ang.-Sax. *cercian*), i. e. to chirp, which is found in old English writers.

2. To make more comfortable. Connecticut.

Afore I had mixed a second glass of switchel, up they came, and the General looked as *chirk* and lively as a skipper. — *Major Downing's Letters*.

**To chisel.** To cheat; to swindle. Comp. *To gouge*. A Western word.

The banking-house of — have, by their recent failure, *chiselled* the people of California out of a million of dollars. — *Alta Californian*.

To those who are in the habit of being *chiselled* by their butchers and grocers, we would advise a visit to the governor's room and examine the standard of weights and measures. — *New York Herald*.

"State your case," said a Western lawyer to a "sucker," who had applied for advice.

"It's an infarnal mean case of woman-swindling; it sets my teeth a gritten to think on it. I've been owdaciously *chiselled*, dan darn my foolish pictur! I might have known that puke warn't to be trusted. — *St. Louis Reveille*.

**Chisel.** *To go full chisel*, to go forcibly, earnestly, violently, or as at great speed. Connecticut. See *Full Chisel*.

**Chitlins.** (A contraction of *chitterlings*.) Rags, tatters.

While I was in this way rolling in clover, they were tearing my character all to *chitlins* up at home. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

They did all they could to tear my reputation to *chitlins*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 188.

I told you it wur a sorrowful story; but you would hev it out, and jest see how it makes perfect *chitlins* of your feelin's. — *Western Tales*.

**Chiv.** The California term for Southerner, — an abbreviation for Chivalry.

**Chivalry.** A cant term for the people of the South.

Had the Free States been manly enough, true enough, to enact the Wilmot Proviso as to all present or future territories of the Union, we should have had just about the same didoes cut up by the *chivalry* that we have witnessed, and with no more damage to the Union. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 10, 1851.

**Chock-full.** Entirely full; see also *Chuck-full*.

I'm *chock-full* of genius and running over, said Pigwiggin. — *Neal*.

By this time we got into a shabby-looking street, *chock-full* of hogs and boys. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

**Chock up.** Close, tight; said of a thing which fits closely to another.

**Chogset.** (Indian.) A small fish common along the coast of New England and farther South; also called Salt Water Perch. In New York, it is called a *Burgall*, which see.

**Choke-Berry.** (*Pyrus arbutifolia*.) A plant having astringent properties.

**Choke-Cherry.** The popular name of the *Prunus Virginiana*, so called from its astringent properties.

**To choke off.** To stop (a person) in the execution of a purpose. A figurative expression, borrowed from the act of choking a dog to make him loose his hold. To arrest a public speaker when growing tedious is called *choking him off*. This is done by shuffling the feet, applauding where applause is uncalled for, by putting questions of order, &c.

I spent a couple of hours in the House, amused by watching the dignified proceedings of our Representatives. The operation of "*choking off*" a speaker was very funny, and reminded me of the lawless conduct of fighting school-boys. — *N. Y. Express*, Feb. 21, 1848.

**Choker.** A cravat. See *Whitechokered*.

**To chomp.** To chew loudly; to champ. This pronunciation is common to the north of England and to New England. (Also used in the West and South.)

**Chompins** or **Champins.** The residuum of an apple or other fruit after it has been chewed, or "*chomped*," and the juice only swallowed.

**Chop.** A Chinese word signifying quality; first introduced by mariners in the China trade, but which has now become common in all our sea-ports. Originally the word was applied only to silks, teas, or other goods from China; now the phrase *first-chop* is an equivalent to "*first-rate*," and applied to every thing.

A smart little hoss, says I, you are a cleaning of: he looks like a *first-chop* article. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

I went to board at a famous establishment in Broadway, where sundry young merchants of the *first-chop* were wont to board. — *Perils of Pearl Street*.

**Chore.** A small piece of domestic work; a little job; a char.

In England, the word *char* is used both as a noun and as a verb.

The pronunciation also varies; in some of the southern counties, it is pronounced *cheure*, or *choor*.

In America, only the noun is employed, and generally in the plural. The pronunciation is uniformly *chore*. It is mostly confined to New England.

"Hunting cattle is a dreadful *chore*," remarked one of our neighbors, after threading the country for three weeks in search of his best ox. — *Mrs. Claver's Forest Life*.

Radney comes down and milks the cow, and does some of my other little *chores*. *Maryaret*, p. 388.

Girl-hunting is certainly among our most formidable *chores*. — *Mrs. Kirkland, Western Clearings*.

The editor of the "Boston Daily Star," in recently relinquishing his charge, gives the following notice:—

Any one wishing corn hoed, gardens weeded, wood sawed, coal pitched in, paragraphs written, or small *chores* done with despatch and on reasonable terms, will please make immediate application to the retiring editor.

**To chore.** (*Anglice, char.*) "Bridget was *choring* [working] when I left home." To "chore about." Connecticut.

**Chore-Boy.** A boy who does *chores*. In the north of England where "*char*" is still used, they have *char-boys* and *char-women*. — *Wright*.

And look that the hangings in the matted room be brushed down, and the *char-woman* rub the rest of the rooms. — *Revet, The Town Shifls*, 1671.

**Chowder.** A favorite dish in New England, made of fish, pork, onions, and biscuit stewed together. Cider and champagne are sometimes added. Picnic parties to the sea-shore generally have a dish of *chowder*, prepared by themselves in some grove near the beach, from fish caught at the same time. Grose describes the same as a sea-dish. A veal chowder when fish are scarce is a very agreeable soup.

**Chowderhead.** A word corresponding with the forcible, if not classical, terms numskull and dunderhead. See *Muttonhead*.

**Christian.** (Pron. with the first *i* long.) A name assumed by a sect which arose from the great revival in 1801.

**Christianization.** This substantive is to be found occasionally in our religious publications. The verb *to christianize*, which is in the dictionaries, is in use among the English writers; but the substantive is never employed by them. — *Pickering, Vocabulary*.

**Chub.** 1. A name sometimes given to the Blackfish.

2. A round squash. Connecticut.

**Chub Sucker.** A sea-fish, otherwise called the Horned Sucker.

**Chuck-a-Luck.** A Western game played with dice.

At Holly Fork, Tenn., any one can be accommodated. Cards or *chuck-a-luck*, old corn or cider, a fight or a foot-race mattered not: it was to be had at a moment's notice. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 160.

**Chuck-full.** Entirely full. Common in familiar language, as well as *chock-full*, which see for other examples.

[At dinner] the sole labor of the attendants was to keep the plates *chuck-full* of something. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 181.

I'll throw that in, to make *chuck-full* the "measure of the country's glory." — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 86.

**Chuck-Will's-Widow.** The common name of a bird of the whip-poorwill family. (*Caprimulgus Carolinensis*.) Mr. Audubon says: "About the middle of March, the forests of Louisiana are heard to echo with the well-known notes of this interesting bird. No sooner has the sun disappeared, and the nocturnal insects emerge from their burrows, than the sound '*Chuck-will's-widow*,' repeated with great clearness and power six or seven times in as many seconds, strike the ear." — *Ornithology*, Vol. I. p. 273.

**Chufa.** (See *Earth Almond*.)

**Chuk!** A noise made in calling swine. Always repeated at least three times. *Ciacco* is one of the Italian words for hog.

**Chunk.** A short, thick piece of wood, or of any thing else; a chump. The word is provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States.

I rode an all-fired smart *chunk* of a pony, — real creole, — cane-raised, — walk six miles an hour, and run like a scared deer in a prairie a-fire. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Frontier Incident*.

It is true that now and then a small *chunk* of sentiment or patriotism or philanthropy is thrown in awkwardly among the crudities and immoralities [of the stage], but it evidently has no business there. — *New York in Slices, The Theatre*.

**To chunk.** To throw sticks or chips at one. Southern and Western.

**Chunked.** Any person who is impudent or bold, at the South-west, is said to be *chunked*. See *chunk*.

**Chunk-Head.** A name of the *Trigonocephalus contortrix*, red snake, or copper-head. See *Storer and Holbrook*.

**Chunky.** Short and thick. Often applied to the stature of a person, as "he is a *chunky* little fellow."

**Chunk Yard or Chunkee Yard.** A name given by the white traders to the oblong four-square yards adjoining the high mounts and rotundas of the modern Indians of Florida. In the centre of these

stands the obelisk; and at each corner of the further end stands a slave post, or strong stake, where the captives that are burnt alive are bound. — *Bartram*.

The pyramidal hills or artificial mounts, and highways or avenues, leading from them to artificial lakes or ponds, vast tetragon terraces, *chunk-yards*, and obelisks or pillars of wood, are the only monuments of labor, ingenuity, and magnificence, that I have seen worthy of notice. — *Bartram, Travels in Florida* (1773), p. 518.

This is doubtless an Indian term, and the enclosure a place where the natives played a game called *chunkee*, as will appear by the following extract from Du Pratz : —

“ The warriors practise a diversion which they call the *game of the pole*, at which only two play at a time. Each pole is about eight feet long, resembling a Roman f; and the game consists in rolling a flat, round stone, about three inches in diameter and one inch thick, and throwing the pole in such a manner that when the stone rests the pole may be at or near it. Both the antagonists throw their poles at the same time, and he whose pole is nearest the stone counts one, and has the right of rolling the stone.” — *History of Louisiana*, 1720.

Speaking of the Indians of Florida, Romans says, —

Their favorite game of *chunké* is a plain proof of the evil consequences of a violent passion for gaming, upon all classes; at this they play from morning till night, . . . and they bet high. — *Nat. Hist. of Florida*, 1776, p. 80.

**Church.** Mr. Pickering has the following remarks on this word : “ A church, as a *body of persons*, is distinguished, in New England, from a *congregation*, by the privileges which the former in general reserve to themselves of receiving exclusively in that church the sacrament and baptism, in consequence of their having publicly declared their assent to the creed which that church maintains. Marriage, burial, and public worship are open to the members of the congregation at large, according to the forms and methods employed in each church; as are also catechising for children and visits to the sick.” — *Vocabulary*.

**Church-Maul.** To call to account; to discipline by ecclesiastical methods. N. England. Vulgar.

**Chute.** 1. A rush; a stampede.

The Douglas and Breckenridge men . . . are rushing to Lincoln with a perfect stampede. Besides this, the Bell men are also taking the same *chute* every day. — *Baltimore Patriot*, Sept., 1860.

2. A bayou; a side channel. Louisiana and along the Mississippi River.

When we came to a bayou or *chute*, the fleet would divide, part going the irregular way, and part keeping the direct course. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 11, 1861, *Lett. from Fort Pillow, Tenn.*

We were running *chute* after *chute*, — a new world to me, — and if there was a particularly cramped place in a *chute*, we were pretty sure to meet a broadhorn there; and, if he failed to be there, we would find him at the head of the *chute*. *Mark Twain, in Atlantic Monthly*, for April, 1875.

3. (Fr. *chute*.) A water-fall; a cascade. See *Shoot* and *Schute*.

**Cider.** *All talk and no cider* is a phrase equivalent to "great cry and little wool."

**Cider Brandy.** See *Apple Brandy*.

**Cider Oil.** Cider concentrated by boiling, to which honey is subsequently added. Also called *cider royal*, probably the original name; such being found in old receipt books, and is perhaps English, or may come from the supposed superior quality of the beverage.

**Cienega.** (Span.) A marsh. New Mexico and Texas. A small marsh is called a *cienequita*.

**Cimlin.** A squash, so called in the Middle and Southern States. See *Cymbing*.

**Cincinnati Oysters.** Pigs' feet.

**To circulate.** To travel. Used in this sense many times in a pamphlet on the "Frauds, Extortions, and Oppressions of the Railroad Monopoly in New Jersey." In comparing the rates of travel in various States, by which it is shown that the rates in New Jersey are the highest in the world, the author says of the traveller: —

Arriving in Maryland, a slave State, he *circulates* at a cost of from three to five cents per mile.

**Circumstance.** *Not a circumstance*, in the sense of a thing of no account, nothing in comparison, is a vulgarism which has become popular within the last few years.

I never saw so lean and spare a gill as Miss A — since I was raised. Pharaoh's lean kine warn't the smallest part of a *circumstance* to her. I had to look twice before I could see her at all. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 184.

**Cisco.** The popular name of a fish of the herring kind which abounds in Lake Ontario, particularly in Chaumont Bay at the east end, where thousands of barrels are annually caught and salted.

**Citified.** Having and exhibiting the peculiarities of residents of cities. New England.

**To citizenize.** To make a citizen; to admit to the rank and privileges of a citizen. — *Webster*. Rarely used.

Talleyrand was *citizenized* in Pennsylvania, when there in the form of an emigrant. — *T. Pickering*.

**Citron.** Sweetmeats made from a melon, so as closely to resemble that made from the fruit of the citron-tree.

**Citron Melon.** The sort of melon employed for that purpose.

**City.** The new settlers and miners in the far Western States and Territories, anxious that the particular spots upon which they have built their rude cabins or pitched their tents, or where they have "located," may become a great town or city, at once add the word "city" to the name they have chosen. For example, at the present time (Dec., 1876), when it is hardly safe for white men to be in the district in Wyoming and Dakota known as the "Black Hills," seven places are marked on the maps bearing the names of "Crook City," "Gay City," "Deadwood City," "Spring City," "Golden City," "Custer City," and "Rapid City." Modest towns and villages are unknown. It is safe to say that there are not five hundred inhabitants in either of these so-called cities. In New England, too, many villages are so named.

**Civil Authority.** Justices of the peace are considered as the *civil authority* of the town in which they dwell. — *Swift's System of the Laws of Connecticut* (1795), I. 109.

The term is yet retained in the Connecticut Statute Book, and in common use.

**Civism.** Love of country; patriotism. — *Webster*. This, like the preceding word, is one of the productions of the French Revolution; and, though frequently used several years ago, is now obsolete here as well as in France. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**Claim.** A piece of public land which a squatter marks out for himself and settles upon, with the intention of purchasing it when the government will offer it for sale. There are also claims for mines.

**To claim.** To assert.

This verb, although in common use, is not found in the dictionaries.

A boy of fourteen, named George LaDoo, applied for a night's lodging at the Third Police Station last evening, and stated that he had left his home in Greenfield, N. H., that morning, at the command of his parents, who *claimed* to be unable to support him. — *Boston Journal*.

John Belcher has brought a writ against John F. Costello, to recover on certain notes given by the latter for a grocery store in Winthrop. The notes are *claimed* to be worthless.

There is a curious legal complication in our courts pending the distribution of the estate of the late John D. Lewis, a deceased wealthy merchant of this city. . . . He never made known his history, and *claimed* he had no relations living. *Boston Transcript*, Feb. 7, 1876.

**Claim-Jumper.** One who violently seizes on another's land claim.

**Claim-Jumping.** Violently seizing on another's claim.

**Clam.** The popular name of certain shell-fish, highly esteemed for food. They are of two principal kinds: —

1. The Hard Clam (*Venus mercenaria*), a very common mollusk, found buried in the sand or shores of marine districts at half-tide. See *Quahog*.

2. The Soft Clam, or Mananosay (*Mya arenaria*), obtained from the shores of tidal rivers by digging one or two feet in the loose sand. It has a long, extensible, cartilaginous snout, or proboscis, through which it ejects water; whence it is also called Stem-clam. Abundant on the shores of Narragansett Bay.

A friend informs me that in Maryland the latter is always called the *maninose*, and never *soft-shell clam*.

**Clam-Bake.** Clams, baked in the primitive style of the Indians, furnish one of the most popular dishes on those parts of the coast where they abound, and constitute a main feature in the bill of fare at picnics and other festive gatherings. The method of baking is as follows: A cavity is dug in the earth, about eighteen inches deep, which is lined with round stones. On this a fire is made; and, when the stones are sufficiently heated, a bushel or more of soft clams (according to the number of persons who are to partake of the feast) is thrown upon them. On this is put a layer of rock-weed gathered from the beach, and over this a second layer of seaweed. Sometimes the clams are simply placed close together on the ground, with the hinges uppermost, and over them is made a fire of brush. This is called an *Indian bed* of clams. Clams baked in this manner are preferred to those cooked in the usual way in the kitchen.

Parties of ten or twenty persons, of both sexes, are the most common. Often they extend to a hundred, when other amusements are added; and on one occasion, that of a grand political mass-meeting in favor of General Harrison on the 4th of July, 1840, nearly 10,000 persons assembled in Rhode Island, for whom a *clam-bake* and *chowder* were prepared. This was probably the greatest feast of the kind that ever took place in New England.

The "Boston Atlas" quotes the following as the opinion of a German Professor who had written on the United States: —

The people assemble at the side of the river, and feast upon a species of oyster called the clam, after which they grow noisy and clamor about their rights.

*Clam-bakes* are a Rhode Island institution, so much so that the



aldermanic proportions of some of her jolliest sons rise and fall with the tide; and they are notoriously happy at high-water. When given *pro bono publico*, clam-bakes are like cattle-show dinners in mammoth tents; but when enjoyed by a select party, on some retired beach or tiny islet, they are gorgeous.

"At such times,  
With shoes and stockings doffed, and trowsers rolled  
Above their knees, the men adventurous wade  
Through mud and water 'for to dig for clams;'  
While on some smooth-worn stones the maidens pile  
A heap of sun-dried branches, which enflamed  
By loco-foco match or other means,  
Kindles straightway, and heats the hearth beneath;  
Next sweeping off the ashes, lay the clams,  
And cover o'er with seaweed, that may keep  
Enclosed the fierce caloric. Then when done,  
And the shell opens of itself, the morsel sweet  
Is gobbled from that natural spoon, its juices all  
Retained, its flavor full and perfect." — *Perley*.

**Clam-Shell.** The lips, or mouth. There is a common though vulgar expression in New England of "Shut your *clam-shell*;" that is, "Shut your mouth, hold your tongue." The padlock now used on the United States mail-bags is called the "Clam-shell padlock."

You don't feel much like speakin',  
When if you let your *clam-shells* gape, a quart of tar will leak in."  
*Lowell, Biglow Papers*, Vol. II. p. 19.

**Clapboard.** A thin, narrow board, used to cover the sides of houses, and placed so as to overlap the one below it. Originally *clove-board*, or board made by *cleaving*. In England, according to Bailey's Dictionary, a *clapboard* is a thin board formed ready for the cooper's use, in order to make casks or vessels.

Ship-plankes, clove-board and pike-staves, these lade home ships twice a year hence. — *Desc. of New Albion* (1648), *Force's Repr.*, p. 31.

Mr. Oldham had a small house near the weir at Watertown, made all of *clapboards* [*i. e.* of cloven boards, without timber], burned August, 1632. — *Winthrop, Journal*, Vol. I. p. 87.

Richard Longe was fined, in 1635, for riving divers good trees into *clapboards*. *Mass. Records*, Vol. I. p. 163.

**To clapboard.** To cover with clapboarding.

The house was neat and comfortable. It was a small frame building, *clap-boarded* on the sides and roof. — *Margaret*, p. 18.

**Clape.** The common name of the Golden-winged Woodpecker, in the State of New York. Dr. DeKay thinks it "a provincial word, introduced by the early English colonists." It is elsewhere called High-hole, Old Eng. *Hygh-whele*, Hig-hawe; mod. Hickwall and

Hickway (Booth); Yucker, *Yuckel* (Wiltshire); Flicker, Wake-up, Pigeon Woodpecker, and Yellow-hammer; in Louisiana, *Pique-bois-jaune*. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Clapmatch.** 1. A kind of woman's cap. See *Clockmatch*.

2. A kind of seal-skin.

**Clatterwhacking.** A clatter, racket.

When we went a bar hunting, I heard the darndest *clatterwhacking* and noise in the road behind us. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

**Clay-Eaters**, otherwise **Dirt-Eaters**. A miserable set of people inhabiting some of the Southern States, who subsist chiefly on turpentine whiskey, and appease their craving for more substantial food by filling their stomachs with a kind of aluminous earth which abounds everywhere. This gives them a yellowish, drab-colored complexion, with dull eyes, and faces whose idiotic expression is only varied by a dull despair or a devilish malignity. They are looked down upon by the Negroes with a contempt which they return by a hearty hatred. — *Ida May*. See fully in "Thompson's Practice of Medicine."

**The Clean Thing.** A low expression, denoting propriety, or what is honorable.

It is admitted that sending out ships to plunder your neighbor or adversary is as much as mere words in making war. I don't like it. It isn't the *clean thing*. *Crockett, Tower*, p. 193.

A man may be the straight thing, that is, right up and down like a cow's tail; but hang me if he can do the *clean thing* any how he can fix it. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 53.

**Clean Ticket.** The entire regularly nominated ticket at an election; a ticket without any erasures; also called a "*straight ticket*."  
"He went the *clean ticket* on the Whig nominations."

**Clear Grit.** The right sort; having no lack of spirit; unalloyed; decided.

Nor do we think the matter much mended by a *clear grit* Republican convention, putting one or two Democrats at the foot of their ticket. — *New York Tribune*, Oct. 10, 1861.

In Canada, a *Clear Grit* means a Liberal in politics.

**Clearing.** A place or tract of land cleared of wood for cultivation; a common use of the word in America. — *Webster*.

After we reached the boundaries of the *clearing* and plunged into the timbered land, this heat was exchanged for a grotto-like coolness. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 64.

**Clearing House.** An establishment recently organized in the city of New York, where clerks from the various banks daily meet to settle the balances of their respective institutions.

**To clear out.** To take one's self off; to depart, decamp. A figure borrowed from the custom-house. A vessel "takes her clearance papers," or "clears out" for departure.

This thing of man-worship I am a stranger to; I don't like it; it taints every action of life; it is like a skunk getting into a house,—long after he has *cleared out*, you smell him in every room and closet from the cellar to the garret. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 74.

I turned round, and was going to *clear out*. But, says he, Stop, Mister! — *Major Downing's May-day in New York*.

Not a soul has disturbed our peaceful repose, except that Colonel Colden and the Dickens came, one night after we had gone to bed, and *cleared out* the next day at noon. — *Ticknor's Life and Letters, Lett. to H. S. Legaré*, Vol. II. p. 207.

**Clear Swing.** Good opportunity. See *Full Swing*.

As soon as civilization arrives at years of discretion, we expect to see our cities purged of rowdyism, incentives to vice abated, and a *clear swing* and ample reward granted to labor and intelligence. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To clerk or to clerk it.** To act in the capacity of a clerk. In common use at the West, and occasionally heard in New York.

Teaching, *clerking*, law, &c., are so very precarious, except to men of established reputation and business, that it is next to madness for a youth to come here relying upon them. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 19, 1849.

Young Soubllette had been *clerking* down to the fort on the Platte, so he know'd something. — *Ruxton, Far West*, p. 17.

I was struck with the original mode in which the young gentleman who was *clerking* it managed his spelling. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 197.

**Clever.** The following are the English senses of this word as given by Dr. Worcester: Dextrous, skilful (*Addison*); just, fit, proper, commodious (*Pope*); well-shaped, handsome (*Arbuthnot*).

In the United States, *clever* is much used as a colloquial word in the sense of good-natured, well-disposed, honest; and the phrase "*clever man*" or "*clerer fellow*" is employed to denote a person of good-nature, good disposition, or good intention. — *Worcester's Dictionary*.

The landlord of the hotel was a very *clever* man, and made me feel quite at home in his house. — *Crockett's Tour down East*, p. 22.

It is related that an English lady arriving in New York, being recommended to take a servant-girl who was described to her as *clerer*, but not *smart*, answered that such a maid would suit her admirably. But she soon learned that her new acquisition was merely inoffensive and dull; whereas, she had expected one brisk and intelligent, without being showy or dressy. We sometimes hear the expressions "*English clever*" and "*Yankee clever*" used to indicate the sense in which the word is to be taken.

We have also heard the word used in a sort of hybrid sense, as in the question and answer: "How are you getting on?" "First-rate, thank you." "Well, *that's clever*."

**Cleverly.** This is much used in some parts of New England, instead of *well* or *very well*. In answer to the common salutation, "How do you do?" we often hear, "I am *cleverly*." It is also used in the sense of fairly, completely.

The landlord comes to me, as soon as I was *cleverly* up this morning, looking full of importance. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 8.

**Cleverness.** Mildness or agreeableness of disposition; obligingness; good nature. Used in New England. — *Webster*.

**Clevis, or Clevy.** (Fr. *clef*, *clavette*.) An iron, bent to the form of an ox-bow, with the two ends perforated to receive a pin, used on the end of a cart-neap, to hold the chain of the forward horse or oxen; or, a draft-iron on a plow. — *Webster*.

**Cliff.** A part of the Silurian limestones of the West have been called "*Cliff* limestone," from the bold cliffs found on the banks of streams. The word much used in this way is usually pronounced *clifts*, and hence the adjective *clifty*, frequently applied to streams as a proper name. Thus, "*a clifty country*" is one abounding in cliffs.

**Climb down.** To climb is to ascend, to mount, to rise, but in no sense to descend. Yet we sometimes find it used with the latter signification. Thus, Mr. H. Ward Beecher, in describing his visit to Oxford, says: —

To *climb down* the wall was easy enough, too easy for a man who did not love wetting.

And again: —

I partly *climbed down*, and wholly clambered back again, satisfied that it was easier to get myself in than to get the flowers out. — *Star Papers*, p. 41.

**Cling or Clingstone.** A variety of the peach in which the flesh adheres, or clings, firmly to the stone. When the stone readily separates from the flesh, they are called *free-stones* or *open stones*. The word *peach* frequently designates the free-stone, while the others are called *clings*.

**Clingjohn.** A soft cake of rye.

**Clinker-built.** A term applied to a class of boats in which the lower edge of every plank overlays the next under it, like clap-boards on the side of a house. It is a variation of the English term *clinker-built*.

**Clip.** A blow or stroke with the hand; as, "He hit him a *clip*." — *Webster*. Provincial in England and the Northern States.

**Clipper-Ship.** Ships built in the clipper style, with a special view to quick voyages; clipper-built ships. They owed their origin to the immensely profitable trade which sprang up between the Atlantic sea-ports and San Francisco, soon after the occupation of California by Americans from the United States.

**Clique.** A combination of stock-brokers or capitalists, for the purpose of increasing or diminishing the price of stocks, in order to break down the market. Also called a *ring*.

**Clitchy.** Clammy, sticky, glutinous. — *Pickering's Vocab*. Mr. Pickering says he has "heard this word used in a few instances by old people in New England; but it is rarely heard." In Devonshire, England, they use the verb *to clitch*, meaning to stick, to adhere, to become thick or glutinous. From this our word is evidently derived.

**Clockmutch.** (Du., *klapmuts*, a night-cap) A woman's cap composed of three pieces, — a straight centre one, from the forehead to the neck, with two side pieces. A New York term.

**Close.** Held firmly; difficult to obtain; scarce. Usually said of money; as, "Money is *close*."

**Cloud.** A woman's knit head-covering.

**To cloud up.** To grow cloudy; to cloud over.

Although the morning was fine and pleasant, it *clouded up* before eight o'clock and commenced raining. — *Bryant's Journey to California*, p. 43.

**Club-Tail.** The common shad, the fatter portion of which have the tail swollen, and on the coast of Carolina, where they are taken, are called *club-tails*. — *Nat. Hist. N. Y.*

**Coachée.** Fr. A coachman; a stage-driver.

**Coach-Whip.** In Virginia, the name of a snake.

Of no description I shall make  
Of either glass or rattle-snake;  
I've not the *coach-whip*, or the green,  
The moccasin or wampum seen.

*Ramsay, Picture of America*, p. 166.

**Coal.** The anthracite coal of commerce is thus classified in the markets where sold: 1. Broken or furnace coal, being the largest lumps; 2. Stove or range coal; 3. Pea or nut coal; 4. Egg coal; 5. Coal dust.

**Coal-Oil.** Oil extracted from certain coal; petroleum.

**To coast.** To slide down hill with sleds on the snow; a term used by boys in New England. See *Tabogganing*.

**Coasting.** The amusement of sliding down hill with sleds on the snow.

I guess Aunt Libby never broke one of the runners of her sled some Saturday afternoon, when it was prime *coasting*. — *Fanny Fern*.

**Coat.** Used in the South for *petticoat*. Formerly common, and still provincial, in England.

**Cob.** The spike on which the kernels of maize, or Indian corn, grow. When the corn is attached to it, it is called an "ear." The old English word *cob*, the top or head (from the Saxon *cop*), is doubtless the origin of the term.

The following short but pithy dialogue is represented as passing between two Virginia Negroes soon after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, at the siege of Yorktown:—

*Mingo.* Halloo, brudder Sam; how you do?

*Sam.* Oh, don't know, brudder Mingo; mighty poorly.

*Mingo.* Poorly! indeed! you no hear de news?

*Sam.* No. What sorter news?

*Mingo.* Why, don't you know dat are great man dey call Cornwallis?

*Sam.* Yes, I hera nuff 'bout him spooting after white folks all over de country.

*Mingo.* Well, I s'pose you know Gin'ral Washington?

*Sam.* Oh, yes! I know ole masser.

*Mingo.* Well, I tell you what: he no Cornwallis now, he *Cobwallis*; Gin'ral Washington shell all de corn off him *too slick*. — *Cherokee Phoenix*, May 21, 1828.

**Cobb.** A blow on the buttock. Wright, in his Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English, explains the word as follows: "A punishment used among seamen for petty offences or irregularities, by bastinadoing the offender on the posteriors with a cobbing-stick or pipe-staff."

Should any Negro be found vending spirituous liquors, without permission from his owner, such Negro so offending shall receive fifteen *cobbs* or paddles for every such offence from the hands of the patrollers of the settlement or neighborhood in which the offence was committed. — *Cherokee Phoenix*, April 10, 1828.

**Cobbler.** 1. A drink made of wine, sugar, lemon, and pounded ice, and imbibed through a straw or other tube; as, a "sherry *cobbler*."

2. A sort of pie, baked in a pot lined with dough of great thickness, upon which the fruit is placed; according to the fruit, it is an apple or a peach *cobbler*. Western.

**Cocash** and Squaw-weed. Names given to *Erigeron Canadense* (and other species of the genus), used by the Northern Indians for medicine. — *Rafinesque, Med. Flora*, I. 167.

**Cockarouse.** A title of honor among the Indians of Virginia, and long afterwards used by the English settlers as a term for a person of consequence. "Werowance or cockarouse," says Captain John Smith, "means a captain." — *Hist. Virginia*, 1621.

A *cockarouse* is one that has the honor to be of the king or queen's council, with relation to the affairs of government. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book III.

With spur of punch which lay in pate,  
Ere long we lighted at the gate;  
Where in an ancient cedar house,  
Dwelt my new friend, a *cockerouse*.

*The Sot-weed Factor; or, A Voyage to Maryland*, 1708.

**Cocktail.** A stimulating beverage, made of brandy, gin, or other liquor, mixed with bitters, sugar, and a very little water. A friend thinks that this term was suggested by the shape which froth, as of a glass of porter, assumes when it flows over the sides of a tumbler containing the liquid effervescing. "A bowie-knife and a foaming *cocktail*." — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 8, 1862.

In the American's Apostrophe to Bon Gaultier, addressed to Dickens, after his visit to the United States, he says:—

Did we spare our brandy *cocktails*, stint thee of our whiskey-grogs?  
Half the juleps that we gave thee would have floored a Newman Noggs.

*Book of Ballads.*

**Coco Grass.** An insidious grass or weed much dreaded by Southern planters, as it will speedily overrun and ruin any field in which it takes root.

**Cocoa-Nut.** 1. The well-known fruit of the *Cocos nucifera*, a kind of palm which is a native of the West Indies and South America, as well as of the other parts of the world.

2. The head.

**Coco-Plum.** (Sp. *hicaco*. *Chrysobalanus hicaco*.) A fruit grown at Barbadoes.

**Cocos or Eddoes.** The tuberous root of the *Arum esculentum*, the principal dependence for a supply of food among the laboring population of the West Indies.

**C. O. D.** Collect on delivery. Letters put upon packages sent by express, the charges on which must be paid on delivery.

**Codding.** Fishing for codfish. A common term in New England seaports, where vessels are fitted out for the purpose.

**Codfish Aristocracy.** A class of people who, with wealth, are too apt to be deficient in intelligence and good manners, and who, nevertheless, assume airs of importance. See *Shoddy*.

**Coffee-Tree or Kentucky Coffee-Tree.** (*Gymnocladus Canadensis*.)

An ornamental tree with valuable wood, the seeds of which were once used as a substitute for coffee.

**Coffin-Boat.** See *Battery*.

**Coheses.** A term applied to the people of certain settlements in Western Pennsylvania from their use of the archaic form *Quo' he*, — “Quoth he.”

**Cohosh**, sometimes called Black Cohosh or Black Snake-root (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), a well-known medicinal plant. There are also (*Actæa alba*) White Baneberry, Blue Cohosh, (*Leontice thalictroides*) Pappoose Root, or Squaw Root, and other allied plants.

White *cohush* will bring out the whelk in less than no time; and brook lime will break any fever. — *Margaret*, p. 375.

**Cold**, *adj.* 1. Applied in a peculiar way to those who do not engage in some particular undertaking, *e. g.* a revival in a church (this seems to be the original use), a railroad company, a bank, or even a conspiracy to cheat some one. He who does not earnestly engage in it is said to be *cold*.

How many shares in the — Bank have been subscribed to-day? Why, Smith took ten and Jones twenty. And how many did Jackson take? Oh, he's *cold*, he'd only take one, provided I'd swap horses with him.

2. In poker, to have a good hand *cold* is to have it dealt you at the start, without having to draw new cards.

3. Distant. Said of one who, in play hunting to find the thing concealed, is remote from it. New England.

**Cold as Presbyterian Charity.** A relic of the dislike had towards Presbyterians when Episcopacy was established in Virginia by law, and the leaders of Virginia society sympathized with the English Presbyterians, especially as Cromwell and the other Puritans about 1640-1645 were known as Presbyterians.

They are *cold as Presbyterian charity*, and mean enough to put the sun in eclipse, are the English. — *Sam Slick in England*.

Why, Colonel, the river is pretty considerable for a run; but the water is *cool as Presbyterian charity*. — *Crockett's Tour*.

It was common in England, particularly during and after Cromwell's time, to ridicule the Presbyterians; thus Hudibras says: —

When thou at any thing would'st rail,  
Thou mak'st Presbytery thy scale.  
As if Presbytery were a standard  
To size whatever's to be slandered.

Part I. Canto 3.



**Cold Bread.** The adjective *cold* is constantly applied to bread that is not *cold* at all, but simply not *hot*; also, to stale bread.

**Cold Slaw.** See *Kool Slaa*.

**Cold Sore.** An eruption usually about the mouth, and generally accompanying a cold in the head.

**Collapsity.** Collapt; collapsion.

Many emigrants arriving at that state of *collapsity* termed flat broke stayed at Los Angeles because they could not go on. — *San Francisco paper*.

**Collar.** *To wear the collar.* To be under the control of another; to be subject to.

So, when one 's chose to Congress, ez soon ez he 's in it,  
A collar grows right round his neck in a minnet.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

**Collards.** A corruption of Colewort, a kind of cabbage grown in the South, the leaves of which do not form a close head, and which are much used as "greens." In the South they are called *collards*. "Bacon and *collards*" are a universal dish there.

The poor trash who scratched a bare subsistence from a sorry patch of beans and *collards*, and the staggering bully, who did not condescend to do any thing. — *Gilmore, My Southern Friends*, p. 54.

In England, young cabbage is called *colewort*.

How turnips hide their swelling heads below,  
And how the closing *coleworts* upwards grow. — *Gay*.

**Collarette.** (Fr.) A peculiar shaped collar of muslin, lace, or linen worn by ladies.

**Colonel.** A title of courtesy. There is a great fondness in the West and South for the higher military titles, but particularly for that of Colonel. New England, too, may be charged with the same weakness.

A friend has related to me the following anecdote: —

A gentleman had taken a fine stallion to a fair in Kentucky, and was received with great cordiality and respect. He had never held any military rank, and noticing that he was addressed by every one as Colonel, although others of the party were not, he inquired the reason, and received the following reply: "Well, sir, *Colonel*, sir, is a title of courtesy; and here in Kentucky, sir, we always give it to any gentleman who keeps a hotel or owns a stud horse, sir."

**Cold Flour.** A preparation made of Indian corn (maize) parched and pulverized, mixed with one-third its quantity of sugar. Two or three teaspoonfuls of this compound stirred in a glass of water will answer for a meal when food is scarce. See *Nocake* and *Pinole*.

**Collect.** (Du. *kolk*, a pit, a lake.) A pond supplied by rain; a water-puddle. New York. That portion of the city of New York

now occupied by the "Tombs," the "Five Points," and vicinity, was formerly known as "The Collect."

**Collector.** There are three principal officers in each of the large Custom Houses in this country, the Collector, Naval Officer, and Surveyor.

It is the duty of the *collector* to receive all manifests, reports, and documents required to be made or exhibited on the entry of any vessel or cargo; record all manifests, and, together with the naval officer, estimate the amount of duties payable on imports, indorsing the same on the respective entries; receive, or secure by bond, payment of duties; grant permits for the unloading or delivery of imports; and, with the approbation of the Secretary of the Treasury, employ persons as inspectors, weighers, gaugers, measurers, and clerks. — Act March 2, 1797.

**To collide.** To strike or dash against each other; to strike or dash, — followed by *with*. — *Webster*. To come into collision, particularly in the case of railroad trains approaching each other from opposite directions.

Many objections have been made to the use of this word, under the impression that it is new and coined for the occasion; but it has long been used by English writers precisely in the sense now used when speaking of collisions of railway trains.

The flints that hide

The seeds of fire, thus tossed in air, *collide*.

*Dryden, Ovid, Metam., b. xv.*

The outward [ayre], being strucke or *collided* by a solid body, still strikes the next ayre. — *Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy* (1632), p. 274.

**Colored.** A term applied to persons who have Negro blood in their veins. They are called "people of color," "colored people."

**Comb.** A ridge or hill; a bluff.

The position of Drury's Bluff possesses a natural strength. . . . The turn of the river that brings the boats in sight is only 600 yards distant. The bluff is a high ridge or *comb*. — *Richmond Enquirer*, May 19, 1862.

**To come.** To make come, in Western parlance, applied to game, means to bring it down with your rifle.

Well, them English are darned fools, they can't fix a rifle any ways; but that one did shoot "some;" leastwise, *he* made it throw plumb-centre. He *made* the buffer *come*, he did, and fout well at Pawnee Fork too. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

To make drunk come means to produce intoxication.

**To come around.** To coax, wheedle, entice. To get around is used in the same sense.

Mrs. Truxton, besides doing the washing for a number of families, and making shrouds on funeral occasions, was a great stickler for equal marriages; and ob-

served that "it was onaccountable to her that such a proper nice young man as Mr. Paddelford could be prevailed on to go and marry sech a gal as that Sally Ann Lynes." "But yet," she continued, as though she had reflected further on the subject, "I can tell you how it's all been brought about; they've *come around* that young man, they've *come around* him. Oh, don't I know that old Mrs. Lyons," (she meant Sally Ann's mother,) "she's cunning as a shark." *A Wedding at Nutmegville.*

**To come in with.** To bear, bring forth, have. "The mare will come in next summer." "The cow comes in with a calf in good time." Connecticut.

**To come it strong.** To work vigorously.

Alluding to the Chinaman Ah Sing, when playing euchre, Bret Harte says:—

In his sleeves which were long  
He had twenty-four packs,  
Which was *coming it strong*,  
Yet I state but the facts. — *The Heathen Chinee.*

**To come out.** 1. An expression used among certain religious enthusiasts, meaning to make an open profession of religion.

I experienced religion at one of brother Armstrong's protracted meetin's. Them special efforts is great things, — ever since I *come out*, I've felt like a new critter. *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 108.

2. "How did you *come out*?" means, how did you fare in your undertaking? *Come off* would be more agreeable to English usage. *To come out at the little end of the horn* means to fare badly, to fail.

Can you wonder that the blue noses who keep such an unprofitable stock *came out at the small eend of the horn* in the long run? — *Sam Slick*, 1st Series.

3. A young lady when she first makes her appearance in society is said to *come out*.

Clara, just seventeen, and a very pretty girl, is looking forward with impatience to next year, and *coming out* in society. — *Miss Gould, Marjorie's Quest*, p. 46.

**Come-Outers.** This name has been applied to a considerable number of persons in various parts of the Northern States, principally in New England, who have recently *come out* of the various religious denominations with which they have been connected; hence the name. They have not themselves assumed any distinctive organization. They have no creed, believing that every one should be left free to hold such opinions on religious subjects as he pleases, without being held accountable for the same to any human authority.

They hold a diversity of opinions on many points, — some believing in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and others that they

are but human compositions. They believe Jesus Christ to have been a divinely inspired teacher, and his religion a revelation of eternal truth; that, according to his teachings, true religion consists in purity of heart, holiness of life, and not in opinions; that Christianity, as it existed in Christ, is a life rather than a belief. — *Evans's History of Religions, with Additions by an American Editor.*

I am a Christian man of the sect called *come-outers*, and have had experience; and when I meet the brethren, sometimes I speak a word in season. — *S. Säck, Human Nature.*

In describing Harry Franco, Mr. Lowell says, he —

Is half upright Quaker, half downright *Come-outer*,  
Loves Freedom too well to go stark mad about her. — *Fable for Critics.*

**To come over.** *To come over*, or *come it over one*, means to get the advantage of one. Vulgar.

**To come up to the Chalk.** To come up to the mark, i. e. to do one's duty, fulfil one's promises.

**To come upon the Town.** To be supported at the public charge, or in the poor-house. Common in all parts of New England.

*To come upon the town*, in America, does not mean precisely the same thing as for a lady to come upon the town in London. It is like a poor person in England *coming upon the parish*, or becoming a public charge. — *Note to the English ed. of McFingal* (1792), p. 10, at the lines (referring to the debts of "Mother Britain"): —

And now 't was thought, so high they 'd grown,  
She 'd break, and *come upon the town*.

**Coming-out Sunday.** The day on which a new-married couple made their first appearance at church; usually, the Sunday after the wedding. "This custom continued more than a century after 1719 [when Mather mentioned it]. It was termed 'coming out groom and bride.' It still remains in many places." — Judd's *Hadley*, p. 244.

**Commander.** A beetle or wooden maul. New York.

**Commissioner.** 1. A government officer, the next in rank to a Secretary. Thus the *Commissioner* of patents, the *Commissioner* of the Land Office, and the *Commissioner* of Indian Affairs, are subordinates of the Secretary of the Interior.

2. Corporator: corporate members of the A. B. C. F. M.

**Common.** "As well as *common*" is an expression much in use for "as well as usual."

**Common Doings.** Originally employed in the West to designate plain or common food in opposition to dainties, but now applied to

persons, actions, or things in general of an inferior kind. See *Chicken Fixings*.

**Community** is by some persons used as is "society," for persons, neighborhood, &c.,—without the definite article prefixed. See *Felt's Eccles. Hist. of N. E.*

**Compassive.** Compassionating. (Sp. *compasivo*.) — *C. A. Goodrich*.

**Complected.** Of a certain complexion, colored in the face. Western.

That lady is mighty pale *complected*. I'm afeard she's consumed; she's always complaining of some misery. — *Western Sketches*.

You're rather dark *complected*, and blue is a trying color for dark skins. — *Widow Brdott Papers*.

**Compliment.** A present. South-western.

**Compus.** Sane; of sound mind; compos mentis. "He is not *compus*." Litchfield, Conn.

**Concageer.** A name applied to the small lizards and salamanders of the United States.

**To conceit.** (Pron. *consate* by those who use the word.) To form an idea; to think. An old English word, but now obsolete. It is preserved in the interior parts of New England; as, "She *conceited* she would go;" i. e., she thought strongly of going.

Those whose . . . vulgar apprehensions *conceit* but low of matrimonial purposes. — *Milton*.

Twice-laid dishes I can stand; salt fish and corn beef twice laid I sometimes *consait* is as good as when it was first cooked. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 12.

**Concern.** In mercantile usage, an establishment or firm for the transaction of business. It is provincial in England and Ireland, where it denotes a small estate; business.

**Concerned.** 1. (Pron. *consarned*.) A euphonistic Yankeeism, equivalent to deuced, devilish, i. e. very greatly.

2. Sorrowful, distressed; as, "Concerned for his soul."

You can keep your money. I'm *consarned* sorry for it, but I must take that ar yaller gal back with me. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 51.

**Concession.** A subdivision of townships in Canada, along each of which is a road.

**Conck.** A wrecker. The same as *Conk* and *Konck*.

A Negro on this Key, familiarly called Old Sandy, is a more successful cultivator of the soil than all the rebel *concks* together. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 27, 1861, *Lett. from Key West*.

**Concoa.** The butternut. So called (or oftener pronounced as the word *conquer*), and thus written and printed in Essex County, Mass. Perhaps of Indian origin.

**To conduct**, instead of "to conduct *one's self*;" leaving out the reflexive pronoun. This offensive barbarism is happily confined to New England, where it is common both in speech and writing. Like some other expressions in the same predicament, it has received the tacit sanction of Dr. Webster, himself a New England man.

**Conductor**. The man who takes the fare, and has charge generally of a railroad train.

**Conestoga Horse**. A heavy draught horse well known in the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Before the introduction of railroads, these horses were the great carriers of produce from the interior of Pennsylvania to the sea-board. Six and sometimes more of these noble animals, attached to a huge, white-topped wagon, were a marked feature in the landscape of this State. They originated in Pennsylvania towards the close of the last century, and are believed to have descended from a mixture of the Flemish cart-horse with an English breed. — *Herbert, Horse and Horsemanship*.

**Conestoga Wagon**. A wagon of the kind described in the preceding article, first made in Conestoga, Lancaster County, Penn.

The vast, white-topped wagons, drawn by superb teams of the stately *Conestogas*, were [once] a distinguishing feature of that great agricultural State. — *Jennings, The Horse*, p. 61.

**Confectioner**. Used in this country pretty much in the sense of the English *pastry-cook*. In England, a confectioner never sells cakes, ice-cream, &c.

**Confectionery**. In the South-west and some parts of the West, a bar-room.

**Confederate**. One who lives in, pertaining to, the so-called Southern Confederacy.

**Confederate States**. The term assumed by the government of Southern States on seceding from the United States.

Hurrah! for the Southern *Confederate States*,  
With her banner of white, red, and blue;  
Hurrah! for her daughters, the fairest on earth,  
And her sons ever loyal and true.

*Mason, Southern Poems of the War*, p. 41.

**Conference**. The name of a religious body or association.

In the published report of the Providence Annual Conference held at New Bedford, its name is used as follows without the article, the same as we speak of Congress.

Last evening it was announced that *Conference* would make a final adjournment this morning. . . . Not because they wish *Conference* to close, but because of the interesting character of certain features of this last assembling of *Conference*. — *Cor. of Providence Press*.

**Conference-House.** A chapel for week-day religious worship, &c. Connecticut.

**Conference-Meeting.** An assembly in which prayer and exhortations are made; a lecture-room for religious societies. New England.

**Conference-Room.** A room for conference and prayer, and for the pastor's less formal addresses.

**Confidence Man.** One who by plausible stories and falsehoods, or by assurance, obtains the confidence of kind-hearted people.

This well-known phrase is said to have thus originated: A few years ago, a man in New York, well dressed, and of exceedingly genteel manners, went about saying, in a very winning manner, to almost every gentleman he met, "Have you confidence enough in me, an entire stranger, to lend me five dollars for an hour or two?" In this way, he got a good deal of money, and came to be generally known in the courts and elsewhere as "the *confidence man*."

**Congress.** This term is applied by us especially to three differently constituted bodies of representatives of the people that have succeeded each other in the government of the country. The first is the *Continental Congress*, assembled in 1774, and which conducted the national affairs until near the close of the Revolution. The second is the *Federal Congress*, which met under the Articles of Confederation, adopted March, 1781, and ruled the country till 1789. The third is the *Congress of the United States*, which first met under the Constitution, on the 4th of March, 1789.

**Congressional.** Pertaining to a congress, or to the Congress of the United States; as, Congressional debates. — *Webster*.

The *congressional* institution of Amphictyons, in Greece. — *Barton*.

The conflict between *Congressional* and State authority originated with the creation of those authorities. — *Marshall, Life of Washington*.

**Congressman.** A member of Congress.

Our *congressmen*, my dear hearers, what are they? Nothing but bloodsuckers upon the cheek of the United States. They talk and drink for eight dollars a day, and you have to stand the treat. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 137.

From the ballad of the "Sharp Congressman," in "Vanity Fair," 1863: —

Not a brisker trade was going  
Worth knowing or showing  
Than that from contracts growing  
To the sharp *Congressman*.

**Coniacker.** A counterfeiter of coin.

**Connection.** "In *this connection*." In connection with this subject.

A New England phrase, used to such a degree that it has become quite shocking to nervous people.

**Conner.** See *Burgall*.

**Conniption Fit.** This term is exclusively used by the fair sex, who can best explain its meaning. Ex.: "George, if you keep coming home so late to dinner, I shall have a *conniption*." As near as I can judge, *conniption fits* are tantrums or hysterics.

Sam Slick, in his visit to a "female college," made proposals to the "presidentess," which she at first imagined was for her hand. On discovering her error, she fainted and fell into a *conniption fit*. — *Nature and Human Nature*.

**Consequentious.** Affectedly great; pompous; pretending to importance. New England.

**Consequentiousness.** That quality which is characteristic of a consequentious person.

He rides at the State's expense upon steamboats and railroad cars, seeking in all places to impress upon beholders an idea of his mighty *consequentiousness*. — *N. Y. Herald*, April 26, 1862.

**Considerable.** 1. A good deal This word is frequently used in the following manner in the Northern States: "He is *considerable* of a surveyor;" "Considerable of it may be found in the country." — *Pickering*.

Parson Tuttle's *considerable* of a man; but in my opinion he won't never be able to hold a candle to Elder Sniffles. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 128.

2. Pretty, considerably. A common vulgarism.

A body has to stir about *considerable* smart in this country, to make a livin', I tell you. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 6.

**To consociate.** To unite in an assembly or convention, as pastors and messengers or delegates of churches. — *Webster*.

**Consociation.** Fellowship or union of churches by their pastors and delegates; a meeting of the pastors and delegates of a number of Congregational Churches, for aiding and supporting each other, and forming an advisory council in ecclesiastical affairs. — *Webster*. *Consociation* of churches is their mutual and solemn agreement to exercise communion in such acts as aforesaid, amongst themselves, with special reference to those churches, &c. — *Result of the Synod*, 1662.

**Constable.** Mr. Webster notices the following distinction between the application of this word in England and in the United States: "In England there are high constables, petty constables, and constables of London. In the United States, *constables* are town or city



officers of the peace, with powers similar to those possessed by the constables in Great Britain." Mr. Pickering says that, "in many of the cities, boroughs, and other local jurisdictions in England, they have peace officers called *constables*, whose powers are not materially, if at all, different from those of our constables."

**Constituted Authorities.** The officers of government collectively, in a kingdom, city, town, &c. This expression has been adopted by some of our writers from the vocabulary of the French Revolution. — *Pickering*.

Neither could he perceive danger to liberty except from the *constituted authorities*, and especially from the executive. — *Marshall's Washington*.

**Constitutionality.** Used chiefly in political language, to signify the state of being agreeable to the constitution of a State or of the United States.

The argument upon this question has naturally divided itself into two parts, the one of *expediency*, the other of *constitutionality*. — *Debates in Congress in 1802*.

The judges of the Supreme Court of the United States have the power of determining the *constitutionality* of laws. — *Webster*.

**To contemplate.** To consider or have in view, in reference to a future act or event; to intend. — *Webster*. This sense of the word is not found in Johnson or Richardson.

If a treaty contains any stipulations which *contemplate* a state of future war. — *Kent's Commentaries*.

**Continental.** A word much used during the Revolution to designate what appertained to the Colonies as a whole. This originated before the Declaration of Independence, when the term "United States" was employed; yet *continental*, variously applied, was used during the war, as "*continental* troops," "*continental* money," &c. Mr. Irving, in his Life of Washington, in speaking of the organization of the American army, says: "Many still clung to the idea that in all these proceedings they were merely opposing the measures of the ministry, and not the authority of the crown; and thus the army before Boston was designated as the *Continental* army, in contradistinction to that under General Gage, which was called the Ministerial army."

This word will remind every one of the famous reply of Colonel Ethan Allen, when asked by what authority he summoned Fort Ticonderoga to surrender. "I demand it," said he, "in the name of the great Jehovah and of the *Continental* Congress!"

**Contrabands.** Negro slaves, first so called by General B. F. Butler, and treated as *Contraband of War*. The history of the application of the term is as follows: —

The establishment of a military post by General Butler at Newport News, on the 22d May, 1861, threw the white inhabitants of Hampton into such alarm that most of them prepared for flight, and many left their homes the same night. "In the confusion, three Negroes escaped, and, making their way across the bridges, gave themselves up to a Union Picket, saying that their master, Colonel Mallory, was about to remove them to North Carolina to work upon rebel fortifications there. . . . They were brought to Fortress Monroe, and the circumstance was reported to the general in the morning. He questioned each of them separately, and the truth of their story became manifest. He needed laborers. He was aware that the rebel batteries that were rising around him were the work chiefly of slaves, without whose assistance they could not have been erected in time to give him trouble. He wished to keep these men. The garrison wished them kept. The country would have deplored or resented the sending of them away. If they had been Colonel Mallory's horses, or Colonel Mallory's spades, or Colonel Mallory's percussion-caps, he would have seized them, and used them, without hesitation. Why not property more valuable for the purposes of the rebellion than any other? He pronounced the electric words: 'These men are *Contraband of War*. Set them at work.' " — *Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, and Sketch of Previous Career*, p. 127.

The escaped Negroes had scarcely been set at work, when an interview was requested by some of the Confederate officers with General Butler. At this interview, the question of these slaves was discussed. General Butler said: "I shall detain the Negroes as *contraband of war*. You are using them upon your batteries. It is merely a question whether they shall be used for or against the government." . . . "I greatly need the labor which has providentially fallen into my hands; but if Colonel Mallory [the owner] will come into the fort and take the oath of allegiance to the United States, he shall have his Negroes, and I will endeavor to hire them from him."

Butler pronounced the magic word "*Contraband*," and summoned the Negro into the arena. . . . *Contraband* is a bad word, and may be a bad law, but it is worth all the Constitution; for in a moment of critical emergency it summoned the saving elements into the national arena, and it showed the government how far the sound fibre of the nation extended. — *Speech of Wendell Phillips*.

I've just come from Virginny,  
Dat good ole Southern land;  
I'm a simple picaninny,  
Although a *contraband*.

A secesh soldier took my hand,  
 "Come fight wid us," says he.  
 Says I, "I'm but a *contraband*,  
 But you don't secession we."

*Song, The Intelligent Contraband.*

I owned a hundred niggers,  
 All sound and likely working hands,  
 Worth very pretty figgers,  
 But now they 're *contrabands*.

*The Complaint of the Planter, Vanity Fair.*

Good-evening, white folks, here am I from old Virginny shore,  
 A regular living specimen of a *contraband of war*.

*Song, The Happy Contraband.*

Dar 's a mighty famous Hunter in de 'partment of the Souf,—  
 An' he gubberns all ob Dixie, as you know,  
 An' he talks to de darkies by de words of his mouf, —  
 Sayin': "Niggers, you 's at liberty to go!"  
 You may lay down de shobel an' de hoe-o-o!  
 You may dance wid de fiddle an' de bow;  
 Dar is no more cotton for de *contraband* to pick,  
 Dar is no more cotton for to mow.

*Chorus.* — Den lay down, &c.

*New York Sunday Times, 1862.*

Although to General Butler has been ascribed the honor of the invention of the term "*contraband*" to slaves in the time of war, it had previously been applied to Negroes in Africa by Captain Canot. Speaking of the sale of Negroes by government officers and agents on the west coast of Africa, he remarks: —

It is even said that the Captain-General himself is sometimes present in the sanctuary, and, after a familiar chat about the happy landing of the *contraband*, the requisite rouleaux are insinuated into the official desk, under the intense smoke of a fragrant cigar.—*Twenty Years in an African Cruiser*, 1854, p. 108.

**Contraption.** Contrivance, device. A factitious word in frequent use.

**Contrive.** The use of this word in the sense of to *do* or *perform* any thing by contrivance is perhaps peculiar to America. It is noticed by Dr. Witherspoon, in the "*Druid Letters*." I have never heard it in New England.

Rash mortals, ere you take a wife,  
 Contrive your pile to last for life.

*B. Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanac for April, 1741.*

I am sorry for the accident of your son's captivity. . . . Any hard money which you may be able to forward to me, or Mr. Tilghman (who is of my family), shall be *contrived* to him, by some means or other. — *Letter from General Washington to Mrs. Graydon (Graydon's Memoirs)*, p. 229.

The expression is common among a portion of our countrymen,

and is not unusual, it is believed, in New England. — *Note by Editor, on the above.*

**To convene.** This is used in some parts of New England in a very strange sense; that is, *to be convenient*, fit, or suitable. Ex.: "This road will *convene* the public," i. e. will be convenient for the public. The word, however, is used only by the illiterate. — *Pickering.*

**Convenient,** used to signify "near at hand," "easy of access," is an Irishism frequently pointed out by English critics, which found its way even into President Polk's last message, where it is applied to timber for ship-building in the neighborhood of San Francisco.

**Convention.** An assembly of delegates to accomplish some specific object, civil, political, or ecclesiastical. — *Webster.*

**Conversationalist,** improperly used for *conversationist*, or *converser*.

**Conversions.** Bonds are frequently issued with a provision whereby they can at any moment be exchanged for equivalent stock. Such securities are called *convertible*, and the act of substitution is styled *conversion*. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street.*

**Coodies.** The name of a political sect in the State of New York, which originated in the year 1814. At that time, a series of well-written articles appeared in a New York paper, signed *Abimeleck Coody*. He professed to be a mechanic. "He was a Federalist, and addressed himself principally to the party to which he belonged. He endeavored to show the impropriety of opposing the war, and urged them to come forward in defence of their country. He also attacked De Witt Clinton with great severity." The writer was ascertained to be Mr. Gulian C. Verplanck, then, as now, distinguished for his talents. He was replied to by a writer under the signature of "A Traveller," said to be De Witt Clinton, who thus speaks of this party: "The political sect called the *Coodies*, of hybrid nature, is composed of the combined spawn of Federalism and Jacobinism, and generated in the venomous passions of disappointment and revenge, without any definite character; neither fish nor flesh nor bird nor beast, but a nondescript made up of 'all monstrous, all prodigious things.' " — *Hammond's Polit. Hist. of N. Y.*

**To cook.** "To cook an account" is equivalent to falsify accounts for fraudulent ends. *To cook up a charge*, in polite dialects, is to invent some criminal accusation to get rid of persons in any way obnoxious. Frequently practised by receivers of stolen goods.

**Cookey.** (Dutch, *koekje*.) A little cake. Used in New York and in New England. A *New Year's Cookey* is a peculiar cake made

only in New York, and at the Christmas holidays. In the olden time, each visitor, on New Year's day, was expected to take one of these cakes. The custom is still practised to a considerable extent.

Mrs. Child thinks it best to let the little dears have their own way in every thing, and not to give them more *cookies* than they, the dear children, deem requisite. — *Sunday Mercury, N. Y.*

**Cook-House.** 1. House for cook's use. Southern.

2. On board of ships. The galley.

**Cooler.** A drink of spirits.

**Cooling-Board.** The board on which a dead body is laid out. Pennsylvania and Maryland.

**Coolwort.** (*Tiarella cordifolia*.) The popular name of an herb, the properties of which are diuretic and tonic. It is prepared for sale by the Shakers.

**Coon.** 1. A popular contraction of *raccoon*, the name of an animal.

Autumnal eve, when shines the silver moon,  
The hunter seeks to find the fatted *coon*.  
Hard chased and routed by the hunting dog,  
He mounts a tree or finds a hollow log.

*E. H. Smith, Hist. of Black Hawk, p. 100.*

2. A nickname applied to members of the Whig party, which adopted the raccoon as an emblem.

Democrats, freemen! keep your council-fires brightly burning. Let no one remain listless, or doubt, or hesitate; "push on your columns," rout the *coons*, beat them, overwhelm them, and let the welkin ring with the soul-stirring tidings that Massachusetts is safe, — free from the curse of Whiggery. — *Boston Post*.

3. A *gone coon* is said of a man whose case is hopeless.

**Coon's Age.** A long time; as, "I have not been there in a *coon's age*."

The backwoodsman jumps from his horse, and, slapping the grave-looking gentleman on the back, says: "Hallo, old hoss, whar have you been this *coon's age*?" and they go in and wood up [*i. e.* drink]. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

This child hain't had much money in a *coon's age*. — *Southern Sketches*.

**Cooner.** A common term, at the South, for a canoe.

**Coonery.** Whiggery. See *Coon*, No. 2.

Democrats of the old Bay State, one charge more, and the work is thoroughly done. "Once more to the breach," and you will hear the shouts of Democratic victory and the lamentations of the vanquished. We must achieve a victory, — the people must be free, — *coonery* must fall with all its corruptions and abominations, never more to rise. — *Boston Post*.

**Coontie Adka or Coontie Chatta.** The name of an arrow-root

preparation obtained from the root of *Zamia integrifolia* by the Indians in Florida, where the plant is indigenous.

**Cooping of Voters.** Collecting and confining them, several days previous to an election, in a house or on a vessel hired for the purpose. Here they are treated with good living and liquors, and at a proper day are taken to the polls and "voted," as it is called, for the party.

**Coot.** (*Fulica*.) The name of a small water-fowl which lives in marshes, and, when closely pursued, buries its head in the mud. There is a species of the American *coot* that resembles a duck, and varies much from the European bird of the name. See Wilson's "Ornith.," Vol. III. p. 82. It is often applied by us to a stupid person; as, "He is a poor *coot*." Mr. Halliwell notices the old proverbial saying, "As stupid as a *coot*."

Little *coot*! don't you know the Bible is the best book in the world? — *Margaret*, p. 134.

**Copperhead.** (*Trigonocephalus contortrix*.) A poisonous serpent, whose bite is considered as deadly as that of the rattlesnake. Its geographical range extends from 45° north latitude to Florida. It has various other popular names, as Copper-belly, Red Viper, Red Adder, Red Eye, Deaf Adder, Dumb Rattlesnake, Chunk-head.

The mower mows on, though the adder may writhe,  
And the *copperhead* curl round the bleeding scythe.

2. A venomous biped, of Northern birth and Southern tendencies; a term applied early in the late civil war to Northern sympathizers with the Confederates; a disloyal person.

It is to be settled whether *Copperheads* or loyal men are to rule this country. There is a perfect understanding between the leading *Copperheads* in the North and the leading Rebels in the South. — *General Blunt's Speech in Kansas, N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 24, 1863.

From one of the best and bitterest political poems of the late civil war, entitled the "Copperhead," by John Hopely, we select the two following verses:—

Of all the factious men we 've seen,  
Existing now or long since dead,  
No one was ever known so mean  
As him we call a *Copperhead*;  
A draft-evading *Copperhead*;  
A rebel-aiding *Copperhead*;  
A growling, slandering, scowling, pandering,  
Vicious, States-rights *Copperhead*.  
When widows mourned their lonely lot,  
And orphan children wept their dead,

Who said their just deserts they got?  
 The Northern rebel *Copperhead*;  
 The widow-libelling *Copperhead*;  
 The grief-deriding *Copperhead*;  
 The false, conspiring, city-firing,  
 Booth-admiring *Copperhead*.

**8. A term of contempt with the early Dutch colonists.**

These were the men who vegetated in the mud along the shores of *Pavonia*, being of the race of genuine *Copperheads*. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**Copperheadism.** Acts or management, policy of *Copperheads*; sympathy with insurrectionists.

The celebrated People's Regiment, 44th New York, has spoken out in the matter of *Copperheadism*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 11, 1863.

**Coral Berry.** (*Symphoricarpus vulgaris*.) The Indian currant of Missouri.

**Cord.** A large quantity. Western.

**Cordelle.** (French.) A tow-line. Western.

The propelling power of the keel-boat is by oars, sails, setting poles, the *cordelle*, &c. — *Flint, Hist. of Miss. Valley*.

**To cordelle.** To drag by a tow-line. See *Keel-Boat*.

We were obliged to *cordelle* the boat along the left shore. — *Fremont's Report*.

**Corduroy Road.** A road or causeway constructed with logs laid together over swamps or marshy places. When properly finished, earth is thrown between them, by which the road is made smooth; but in newly settled parts of the United States they are often left uncovered, and hence are extremely rough and bad to pass over with a carriage. Sometimes they extend many miles. They derive their name from their resemblance to a species of ribbed velvet, called *corduroy*.

I had to cross bayous and criks (wall, it did beat all natur),  
 Upon a kind o' *corduroy*, first log, then alligator.

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

**To corduroy.** To lay logs upon; to convert into; to make a corduroy road.

We had perfectly impassable roads, until *corduroyed*. — *N. Y. Tribune, Letter from Camp Scott*.

**Cork.** A misuse for *caulk*, which sometimes is found in print. "A denial corked and graved." — *The Independent*, Feb. 13, 1862.

**Corked.** A term applied to wine which has acquired a taste of the cork.

**Corn.** (*Zea mays*.) Maize, throughout the United States, is called *Indian corn*, or simply *corn*.

In England, the term *corn* is applied generically to wheat, barley, and other small grains. For this we use the term *grain*.

Among the various articles of food made from Indian corn, cooked and uncooked, are the following : Ash Cake; Indian Bread; Boiled and Roasted Corn; Brown Bread; Corn Bread; Corn Cake; Corn Dodger; Corn Fritters; Corn Starch; Corn Oyster; Corn Juice (whiskey); Hasty Pudding; Indian Meal; Indian Pudding; Hoe Cake; Hominy; Johnny Cake; Farina; Mazina; Pinole; Pop Corn; Pone; Rye and Indian Bread; Succotash; and Tortillas.

**Corn.** *All for corn.* Honest, well-meant, sincere. "He took it all for corn;" i. e., he believed it to be true. "All for wheat" is also heard.

Surprised that he took it *all for wheat*, and in innocence of his heart was about to carry it into effect. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1877.

**Corn and Cob Mill.** A mill for grinding the entire ear of Indian corn.

**Corn Basket.** A large basket for carrying the ears of maize. — *Webster*.

**Corn-Blade.** The leaf of the maize. Corn-blades are collected and used as fodder in some of the Southern States. — *Webster*.

**Corn-Bread.** Unleavened bread made from the meal of Indian corn.

**Corn-Brooms.** Brooms made from the tops of a species of corn, called Broom-corn.

**Corn-Cob.** The spike on which the kernels of corn grow.

Byron is said to have remarked that "the greatest trial to a woman's beauty is the ungraceful act of eating eggs." Some Yankee rejoices that the poet could never have seen a lady hanging on by the teeth to a blazing hot *corn-cob*. — *Bull. Sun*.

**Corn-Cracker.** The nickname for a native of Kentucky. It is said that this term is applied in some of the Southern States to poor whites living in the mountain regions.

**Corn-Crib.** A structure raised some feet from the ground, and with sides made of slats some distance apart, or of lattice-work, to admit the air. In it the dried ears of maize are kept.

**Corn-Dodger.** A kind of cake made of Indian corn, and baked very hard. It is sometimes simply called *dodger* (which see). Much used in the South.

The universal food of the people of Texas, both rich and poor, seems to be *corn-dodger* and fried bacon. — *Olmsted, Texas*.

The Sucker State, the country of vast projected railroads, good *corn-dodgers*, splendid banking-houses, and poor currency. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 28.



He opened a pouch which he wore on his side, and took from thence one or two *corn-dodgers* and half a broiled rabbit, which his wife had put up for hunting provisions. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 170.

**Corn-fed.** Stout, plump, spoken of a woman. See *Bacon-fed* in *Grose*.

**Corn-Fodder.** Used especially of maize plants from seed sown broadcast and grown as oats are. Dried or undried, employed as fodder for cattle.

**Corn-Fritter.** A fritter in the batter of which green Indian corn has, after being grated, been mingled.

A very minute account which Mrs. Kittridge was giving of the way to make *corn-fritters* which should taste exactly like oysters. — *The Independent*, Feb. 13, 1862, by Mrs. H. B. Stowe.

**Corn-Husk or Corn-Chuck.** The coarse outer leaves which enclose the ear of Indian corn.

**Corn-Husking or Corn-Shucking.** An occasion on which a farmer invites the young people of the neighborhood to his house or barn, to aid him in stripping the husks from his corn. See *Husking*.

There was a *corn-husking*, and I went along with Sal Stebbins. There was all the gals and boys settin' round, and I got sot down so near Sal Babbit that I'll be darned if I did n't kiss her afore I know'd what I was about. — *Traits of American Humor*.

**Corn-Juice.** Whiskey. A Western term.

I informed the old fellow that Tom wanted a fight; and as he was too full of *corn-juice* to cut carefully, I didn't want to take advantage of him. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Old Monongahela whiskey,  
Whiskey made of Indian *corn-juice*. — *Pluribustah*.

**Corn-Oyster.** A fritter to which the combined effects of grated Indian corn (not quite ripe) and heated butter impart a taste like that of oysters.

In this secret direction about the *mace* lay the whole mystery of *corn-oysters*. Mrs. H. B. Stowe, in *The Independent*.

**Corn Pone.** A superior kind of corn bread, made with milk and eggs and baked in a pan. See *Pone*.

**Corn-Right.** In early times, a right acquired by settlers, who by planting an acre or more of corn were entitled to one hundred acres of land. These privileges which were acquired in Virginia were called *Corn-Rights*.

**Corn-Shuck.** The Southern term for *corn-husk*, which see.

You can have a mattress of bar-skin to sleep on, and a wild-cat skin pulled off whole, stuffed with *corn-shucks*, for a pillow. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

**Corn-Shucking.** The Southern term for *corn-husking*, which see.

The young people were all gibberin' and talkin' and laughin', as if they'd been to a *corn-shuckin'* more'n to a meetin' house. — *Major Jones*.

**Corn-Snake.** The *Coluber guttatus* of the Southern States.

**Corn-Stalk.** A stalk of corn, particularly the stalk of the maize. —

*Webster.* Mr. Pickering says, "The farmers of New England use this term, and more frequently the simple term *stalks*, to denote the upper part of the stalks of Indian corn (above the ear), which is cut off while green, and then dried to make fodder for their cattle. —

*Vocabulary.*

**Corn-Stalk Fiddle.** A child's plaything, made by loosening the external fibre of a corn-stalk, and placing a bridge under each extremity.

There is no more sentiment in the soul of an old bachelor than there is music in a *corn-stalk fiddle*. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**Corn-Traash.** The outer envelopes of Indian corn, also called *husks* and *shucks*. In Jamaica, they are cut in strips and used for stuffing mattresses. See *Shucks*.

The beds with which they provided their guests were not of feathers, but of wholesome fine picked *corn-trash*, with clean sheets. — *Dallas, Hist. of the Maroons*, Vol. I. p. 119.

**Corner.** When a party is made up to buy a large amount of stock, a larger quantity than is known to be at the time in the market, it is called a *corner*. The plan is generally kept very private. As soon as the clique is formed, the brokers purchase gradually large lots of stock on time. "buyer's option." After this has been fixed, they sell on time, "seller's option," if possible nearly to the extent of their purchases on buyer's option. The object of this is to provide a market for this stock after the corner has run out. This having been all arranged, the clique commence buying for cash, and in so doing put up prices rapidly. Having inflated the market pretty well, they make a sudden call for several thousand shares of stock on their buyer's option, and then there comes a sharp time among the sellers, who are generally all short. This creates an active demand, and the clique sell their cash stock to the bears or shorts, who purchase at high rates for delivery at much lower prices to the very parties selling. — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII. See also Medbery's "Men and Mysteries of Wall Street," for a more extended account of the process of cornering, p. 87-100.

The "New York Tribune," March 14, 1876, in speaking of the failure of Daniel Drew, who at one time was a large holder of Erie Railway stock, says:—

Being possessed of the facilities to guard against a *corner*, he began to sell Erie stock short at the prevailing high prices.

**To corner.** 1. To *corner* a person is to get the advantage of him in an argument, as though he were physically placed in a corner from which he could not escape. This use of the word can hardly be an Americanism; yet it is not found in the English dictionaries.

2. A Wall Street word, which means to raise artificially the price of stock in the manner described in the article *Corner*.

There is a large class of brokers in Wall Street, who sometimes control a good deal of money, and who make speculation their business. These generally unite in squads for the purpose of *cornering*, — which means that they first get the control of some particular stock, and then, by making a great many contracts on time, compel the parties to pay whatever difference they choose, or rather what they can get; for they sometimes overrate the purse of those they contract with. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 81.

The remarkable fluctuations in the stock-market are chiefly the result of a successful *cornering* operation. — *N. Y. Journal of Com.*

The Erie Railroad *cornering* has been a very unfortunate affair for many members of the board. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Corner-Trees.** See *Witness-Trees*.

**Corp.** A corpse is so called in Pennsylvania.

**Corral.** (Span.) A pen or place of security for horses and cattle in the form of a circle, often temporarily made with wagons, &c., by parties of emigrants crossing the prairies. The area of this circle is sufficiently large to permit the horses and cattle to graze during the night. On the outside of the *corral*, the tents are pitched, with their doors outward; and in front of these the camp-fires are lighted. — *Texas and New Mexico*. This is evidently the same as the Dutch *Kraal*, which in Southern Africa is used, like the Spanish, both as a noun and a verb.

Among the trees, in open spaces, were drawn up the wagons, formed into a *corral* or square, and close together, so that the whole made a most formidable fort, and, when filled with some hundred rifles, could defy the attacks of Indians or Mexicans. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 177.

I lost a portion of my cattle, which broke through the *kraal* in the night, and were never again heard of. — *Anderson, Lake N'gami*, p. 360.

**To corral.** To *corral* cattle is to secure them in an enclosure, to pen them. To coop up; to put into a close place.

During the stay of the Indians, the animals were all collected and *corralled*, as their *penchunt* for horse-flesh might lead some of the young men to appropriate a horse or a mule. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 238.

The hyenas were in the habit of harassing the goat-kids, which for security were *kraalled* against the wall of the house. — *Anderson, Lake N'gami*, p. 356.

Well, as soon as the animals were unhitched from the wagons, the governor

sends out a strong guard, seven boys, and old hands at that. It was pretty nigh upon sun-down, and Bill had just sung out to *corral*. The boys were drivin' in the animals, and we were all standin' round to get 'm in slick, when "howh-owh-owh-ough" we hears right behind the bluff, and 'bout a minute and a perfect crowd of Injuns gallops down upon the animals. — *Western Adventures*.

When the first edition of this work was issued, the word *corral* was used only in its original sense, as above given. But it is now used at the Far West and on the plains in a far more extended sense. Mr. McClure speaks of it as an expressive Westernism in common use. "If a man is embarrassed in any way, he is *corralled*. The Indians *corral* men on the plains; the storms *corral* tourists in the mountains; the criminal is *corralled* in prison; the tender swain is *corralled* by crinoline; the business man is *corralled* by debt, or more successful competitors; the unfortunate politician is *corralled* by the mountaineers, the gulchmen, or the settlers; the minister is *corralled* when he is called to be the pastor of a congregation; and the gambler *corrals* the dust of the miner. — *Rocky Mountains*, p. 210.

But the indications are that, between the brigade moving up from Fort Scott and this command, General Rains will get *corralled*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 10, 1862.

**Cotbetty.** A man who meddles in the woman's part of household affairs. North and East. It is probably of English origin. Halliwell and Wright give both *cot* and *cot-quean* with the same meaning. See *Betty*.

**Cotch, for caught.** A Negro vulgarism.

Snake baked a hoe-cake,  
Left a frog to watch it;  
Frog went to sleep,  
Lizard come and *cotch* it. — *Virginia Negro Song*.

**Cotton-Bagging.** A coarse, hempen cloth, chiefly manufactured in Kentucky, for packing cotton in. Sometimes called simply Bagging.

**Cottondom.** The States in which cotton is produced; generally at the South.

**Cotton-Grower.** A person who cultivates the cotton-plant.

It exhorts the *cotton-growers* of other countries to take courage and persevere. *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Cotton is King. King Cotton.** Before the late rebellion, and for a year or two after the war broke out, Southern people said, "*Cotton is King*;" that the Northern States could not do without cotton, and that it would eventually conquer. Writers and political economists all uttered the same cry, and claimed the triumph of cotton,

the great product of the South. A book by E. N. Elliott, bearing the following title, was published at Augusta, in 1860:—

Cotton is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments; comprising the writings of Hammond, Harper, Christy, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright on this subject.

See this new king who comes apace,  
And treats us like a conquered race:  
He comes from Dixie's Land by rail,  
His throne a ragged cotton bale.  
On to the White House straight  
He 's marching, — rather late;  
Clanking along the land,  
The shackles in his hand.  
Hats off, hats off,  
Ye slaves, of curs begotten,  
Hats off to great *King Cotton*. — *R.H. Stoddard*.

Some think it is Law that rules our land;  
Law in the popular British will;  
But I know better; I understand  
How the *Cotton King* holds the upper hand,  
For his spindles are standing still.

*Ballad for Ye Bold Briton, N. Y. Vanity Fair.*

"Old *Cotton*, the *King*, boys, — aha!  
With his locks so fleecy and white,"  
Descends like a falling star,  
To the sceptre he had no right.

Old *Cotton*, the once potent *King*,  
Is struck from his impotent throne;  
Each continent now claims a limb,  
His heart cold and chill it has grown.

*E. V. Smith, in N. Y. Evening Post.*

For when I stooped to steal and fight  
I thought that *Cotton* still was *King*.  
I did not know the Union's might,  
Nor count upon this sort of thing.

*The Ryme of the Rebel, Vanity Fair.*

**To cotton to.** "To cotton to one" is to take a liking to him, to fancy him; literally, to stick to him as cotton would. The term is common at the South and West.

There were divers queer characters on board the steamer, with whom Tom was a great favorite; but none of them *cottoned to* him more kindly than an elderly Hoosier from the depths of Indiana. — *Field*.

Ain't you, now, a consistent old critter?  
You that cracked yourself up as the great manumitter,  
.....  
To make love to the system you once proclaimed rotten,  
And *cotton to* slavery for slavery's *Cotton*.

*Ballad, Uncle Sam to Mother Britannia.*

In a poem in the "London Times," on American affairs, published in 1861, John Bull thus speaks: —

I knows Jefferson D. is a rascally chap,  
Who goes in for cribbin' the government pap;  
That Exeter Hall may be down upon me,  
But, as Jeff. has the cotton, I'll *cotton* to he.

The expression is in the first edition of this Dictionary, but was omitted from the second for the reason that it was found to be an old English one. We have been called to account on several occasions, by the "Atlantic Monthly" among others, for the omission of the expression, in the belief that it was an Americanism, and therefore give place to it again, with examples showing its ancient use.

Dr. Johnson has the verb To Cotton, "to unite with." Webster, "to unite; to agree; to adhere." The former quotes the following from Swift: —

A quarrel will end in one of you being turned off, in which case it will not be easy to *cotton* with another. — *Swift*.

Didst see, Frank, how the old goldsmith *cottoned* in with his beggarly companion? — *Walter Scott*.

Styles and I cannot *cotton*. — *Hist. of Capt. Stukely*, B. 2.

The following examples of the use of the expression may suffice to show its ancient use: —

So feyneth he, things true and false  
so always mingleth he,  
That first with midst, and midst with laste  
maye *cotton* and agree. —

*Drant, Horace, The Arte of Poetry* (1567).

He meanes whatever horseman next he spied  
To take his horse a frend or else a foe,  
At this is Discord pleas'd, and said to Pride  
That she was glad their bus'nes *cotned* so.

*Harrington, Orlando*, b. xvii. s. 17 (1561).

**Cottonia.** The same as *Cottondom*, which see.

The Confederates having determined to abandon all the Border States, and make a stand in Cottonia proper. — *Cincinnati Times*, April, 1862.

**Cotton-Mouth.** A poisonous snake of Arkansas.

**Cottonocracy.** A term applied to the Boston manufacturers, especially by the "Boston Whig" newspaper.

**Cotton Rock.** A variety of magnesian limestone, of a light buff or gray color, found in Missouri. It is very soft when fresh from the quarry, and can be easily wrought for building purposes. — *Swallow's Geology of Missouri*.

**Cotton-Wood.** (*Populus monilifera*.) A species of poplar, so called

from the cotton-like substance surrounding the seeds, which grows on the margins of lakes and streams from New England to Illinois and southward, especially westward. In Texas and New Mexico, it is called Alamo.

**Coulee.** (French.) A narrow rocky valley of great depth, with inclined sides, and from ten to fifty miles in length, distinguished from a *cañon* which has precipitous sides. They occur in Oregon.

**Council Fire.** The sacred fire kept burning while the Indians hold their councils.

**Councilmanic.** Pertaining to a councilman. "Fifth *Councilmanic* District. Delegates nominated." — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov., 1861.

**To count.** To reckon, suppose, think. "I *count* on going" is very common.

*Newman.* You'll pass muster! a proper fine fellow.

*Doolittle.* I calculate I be.

*Newman.* Ready to enter on duty?

*Doolittle.* I should be glad to know what kind of way you *count* to improve me. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

*Count St. Luc.* Read the superscription. You can read?

*Doolittle.* I *count* I can, — and spell, too. — *Ibid.*

**To counter-brand.** To destroy a brand by branding on the opposite side. In the prairie regions of the South-west, the calves are marked by cropping their ears, the cross as well as the brand of each stock-owner being recorded in the county records. When cattle are a year old, they are branded; and, if afterwards sold, the same brand is burnt in on the opposite side, thus destroying the original title.

**Counter-Jumper.** A clerk in a retail "store," whose place is behind a counter; sometimes called a *counter-hopper*.

With physical forces developed in the school of slavish endurance, and mind untasked and neglected, what wonder the farmer's boy deems the life of a city *counter-jumper* close upon the confines of heaven! — *Essay by L. P. Harvey, 1832.*

**Countersign Signal.** A signal which serves as a countersign; much used during the late civil war.

Day and night *countersign signals*, by which friendly regiments may be distinguished, will be adopted by the Army of the Potomac. — *General Order of General McClellan*, Oct., 1861.

**Country-Jakes.** People from the backwoods. Tennessee.

**County.** "In speaking of *counties*," says Mr. Pickering, "the names of which are composed of the word *shire*, we say the *county* of Hampshire, the *county* of Berkshire, &c. In England, they would say either Hampshire or Berkshire simply, without the word *county*; or, the county of Hants, the county of Berks, &c. The word *shire* of

itself, as everybody knows, means *county*; and in one instance (in Massachusetts) this latter word is used instead of *shire*, as a part of the name: 'The county of *Duke's County*.' — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**Couple.** A *couple* of any thing sometimes means a few; as, "Shall I go to market and get a *couple* of cherries?" Pennsylvania.

**Court.** In New England, this word is applied to a legislative body composed of a House of Representatives and a Senate; as, the *General Court* of Massachusetts. See *Charter* of Connecticut.

**Court-House.** The county towns of Virginia are often called so without regard to their proper names. Thus Providence, the county town of Fairfax, is unknown by that name, and passes as *Fairfax Court-House*; Culpepper *Court-House* has superseded its proper name of Fairfax, more common in Lower Virginia. The same practice has existed to some extent in South Carolina and Maryland.

**Court of Assistants.** A court formerly in existence in New England where a magistrate or an Assistant presided. . . . These courts were subsequently merged in the County Court. — *Caulkins's Hist. Norwich*. See *Assistant*.

**Cove.** A strip of prairie extending into the woodland.

**Cover.** *To cover one's shorts.* A Wall Street phrase. Where stock has been sold and the market rises, the seller buys where he can, in order to protect himself on the day of delivery. This is *covering short sales*. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 134.

The affairs of the organization were wound up, and on dividing the assets it was discovered that the Treasurer had used up all the funds in a frantic effort to cover. — *Ibid.*, p. 227.

**Coverclip.** (Genus *Achius*. Lacepède.) The popular name of the sole, a fish common in the waters of New York. *Calico* is another name for it — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Cowbird, Cow Blackbird, or Cowpen Bird.** (*Icterus pecoris*.) A bird allied to the Crow Blackbird and Orchard Oriole. So called from its often alighting on the backs of cattle and searching for worms in their dung.

**Cowberry.** (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*.) A plant resembling the common cranberry, but larger. It is found on certain mountains in Massachusetts. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*. Also in Maine. — *Thoreau's Maine Woods*, p. 316. The *Wi-sa-gu-mi-na* of the Crees.

**Cowboys.** 1. A contemptuous appellation applied to some of the tory partisans of Westchester County, New York, during the Revo-



lutionary war, who were exceedingly barbarous in the treatment of their opponents who favored the American cause.

2. Many things will be taught you [in Texas] by the *cowboys*. The *cowboy* is the cattle-herder and drover. A cow-pony the mustang he trains and uses. — *Texas Cor. Chicago Tribune*.

**Cowboyism.** Spirit and practices of the *Cowboys*. Applied, August, 1861, in Fairfield County, Connecticut, to semi-secessionists there and elsewhere in New England.

**Cow-Catcher.** A contrivance formerly fixed in front of a locomotive to take up cattle or other obstacles, and prevent them from getting beneath the wheels and throwing the cars off the track.

**Cow-Critter.** A cow. New England and Western.

And so that pourin' dissensions in our cup;  
And so that blamed *cow-critter* was always coming up.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 18.

**Cowhide or Cowskin.** A particular kind of whip made of twisted strips of raw hide; it is also called a Raw Hide.

**To cowhide.** To flog with a cowhide or cowskin.

To be out of office and in for a *cowhiding* is not a pleasant change from eight dollars a day and all sorts of nice pickings. [Alluding to an ex-member of Congress.] — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Cow-Lease.** A right of pasturage for a cow in a common pasture. New England. — *Pickering*. Provincial in the west of England.

**Cow-Parsnip.** (*Heracleum latanum*.) The popular name of a plant, classed among the herbs prepared by the "Shakers," as containing properties carminative and diuretic.

**Cow-Pease.** A small black bean growing luxuriantly in Texas. They are eaten alike by cattle and their owners.

**Cow-Pony.** A young and unbroken mustang. See *Cowboy*.

**Coyote.** (Mexican, *coyotl*.) The prairie-wolf (*Canis latrans*).

**Coyote Diggings.** Small shafts sunk by the gold miners in California, so called from their resemblance to the holes dug or occupied by the coyote. This animal lives in cracks and crevices made in the plains by the intense summer heat.

The *coyote diggings* require to be very rich to pay, from the great amount of labor necessary before any pay-dirt can be obtained. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 138.

**Crab-Grass.** (Gen. *Digitaria*.) A species of grass which grows spontaneously in the cultivated fields of Louisiana and Texas, is very injurious to the crops, and yet makes excellent fodder, being equal

to the best hay. In appearance, it resembles the Orchard grass of the North.

**Crab-Lantern.** A small turnover pie. South.

**Crab-Schooner.** The sort of vessel otherwise termed *Crab, Grab?*

The "Reliance," a vessel belonging to our Potomac flotilla, has captured a crab-schooner named the "Monitor."—*N. Y. Tribune*, June 14, 1862, *Letter from Washington*.

**Crack of Day.** Break of day, or, as they say in England, "creak of day." The narrow crack of light on the horizon which is the first appearance of dawn. — *Wedgwood*.

**Cracker.** 1. A little paper cylinder filled with powder, imported from China; called also a Fire-cracker. It receives its name from the noise it produces in exploding. In England, it is called a *squib*.

2. A small biscuit. So called also in the north of England. All the kinds of bread called *crackers* in this country are known as biscuit in England.

3. A nickname, applied to the poor white people of Georgia and South Carolina, otherwise called *Sand-hillers*, which see. Probably, says Olmsted, from their peculiar dialect, almost incomprehensible and difficult to report or describe.

"I was amused enough," said Nina, "with Old Hundred's indignation at having got out the carriage and horses to go over to what he called a *Cracker funeral*." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 152.

**Cracker-Boy.** A boy employed about the crackers (machines that crush anthracite coal).

Young boys — *cracker-boys* they are called — whose duty it is to pick out and throw away the bits of slate and other impurities which come whirling along with the coal — *The Independent*, March 13, 1861.

**Cracklings.** 1. Cinders, the remains of a wood fire; a word used in the Southern States.

When it lightened so, she said t' other eend of the world was afire, and we'd all be burnt to *cracklin's* before morning. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

2. The crisp residue of hog fat after the lard is fried out. It is kept for kitchen use. In New England called "pork scraps." *Crackling-bread* is corn bread interspersed with cracklings. In England, *crackling* is the crisp rind of roast pork.

Well, fetch up your nag. I am perhaps a leetle, just a leetle, of the best man at a horse swap that ever stole *cracklin's* out of his mammy's fat gourd. Where's your boss? — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

**Crack-Loo.** A game among bar-room loafers and others. Played by pitching coin so as to touch the ceiling, the object being to have

your coin fall as near as possible to the *cracks* in the floor; he who comes nearest winning.

**To crack on.** To put on; to apply; to do energetically.

It was a very easy matter for the lagging vessels, by *cracking on all steam*, to come up with the others. — *N. Y. Tribune, Letter from Steamer Atlantic.*

**Cradle-Scythe.** Called also simply a *cradle*. It consists of a common scythe with a light frame-work attached, corresponding in form with the scythe. It is used for cutting grain, instead of the sickle; and enables the farmer to perform treble the work that could be accomplished with the latter implement. On large farms, it is now superseded by the still more efficient Reaping Machine.

**To cradle.** To *cradle* grain is to cut it in the same manner that grass is cut or mowed with the implement above described.

The operation of *cradling* is worth a journey to see. The sickle may be more classical; but it cannot compare in beauty with the swaying, regular motion of the cradle. — *Mrs. Clavers, Western Clearings.*

**Cradle.** A machine resembling a child's cradle used in washing out the auriferous earth of California. Also called a *Rocker*.

**Cradle of Liberty.** The famous old building in Boston, known as Faneuil Hall, where the orators of the Revolution roused the people to resistance to British oppression.

**Cramp-Bark.** (*Viburnum oxycoccus*.) The popular name of a medicinal plant; its properties are anti-spasmodic. It bears a fruit intensely acid. In New England, it is called the Tree Cranberry.

**Cranberry Tree.** A popular name, in the North-eastern States, of the *Viburnum opulus vel oxycoccus*, a shrub bearing a bright pinkish berry, which has a sharp acid taste. The Moose-berry (*mongsöamina*) of the Crees. Charlevoix calls it the *Pemine*.

**Crank.** Unsteady, capricious. In this last sense, it is applied to character or manner, whence it has passed into the signification of obstinate, self-conceited, opinionative, abrupt.

If you strong electioners didn't think you were among the elect, you wouldn't be so *crank* about it. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 317.

**Cranky.** 1. Unsteady, as the gait of a tipsy man.

2. Queer, crotchety.

**Crawfish.** (*Astacus Bartonii*.) 1. The popular name of the freshwater lobster.

2. A political renegade. In English parliamentary phrase, "a rat."

**To crawfish.** To back out from a position once taken; particularly

applied to politicians, evidently from the mode of progression of the animal. Western. The English term is "to rat."

We acknowledge the corn, and retreat, retrograde, *crawfish*, or climb down, in as graceful a style as the circumstances of the case will admit. — *Cairo Times*.

**Crawfishy.** A term applied to wet land, because inhabited by *crawfish*. See *Spouty*.

**Crazy-Bone.** The point of the elbow.

**Creamery.** A place where butter is made; also, where milk and cream are put up in cans for market.

He recently purchased a *creamery*, and is putting up milk for the New York Market. — *Bridgeport Conn. Standard*.

In the general features of the butter market there is no change. The fine *creameries* are considered well sold at 23 cts.; . . . Western *creamery*, 22 cts.; State *creamery*, 20 cts. — *New York Bulletin*.

**To crease.** To shoot an animal so that the bullet will cut the skin on the upper part of the neck, without doing any serious injury. When a horse cannot be caught, he is frequently *creased*. Although he is not much hurt, he will fall at the touch of the bullet, and remain quiet and powerless until his pursuers secure him. Used only in the West.

Finding it impossible to get within noosing distance [of the wild horse], and seeing that his horse was receding and growing alarmed, Beatte slid down from the saddle, levelled his rifle across the back of his mare, and took aim, with the intention of *creasing* him. — *Iring's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Creature.** In the plural number, this word is in common use among farmers as a general term for horses, oxen, &c. Ex.: "The *creatures* will be put into the pasture to-day." — *Pickering*. In the South, a horse is generally called a *critter*; while, to other animals, the term *stock* is applied.

The owners or claimers of any such *creatures* [i. e. "swine, neat cattle, horses, or sheep"], impounded as aforesaid, shall pay the fees, &c. — *Provincial Laws of Mass — Statute 10, Wm. III.*

**Creek.** In New York, Connecticut, the Middle and Western States, and in Canada, a small stream is called a *creek*. The term is incorrectly applied; as its original signification, according to the dictionaries, is a small port, a bay or cove, from which it has gradually been extended to small rivers.

**Creek-Bottom.** Low land near a creek.

**Creper.** A shallow iron dish used in frying; a spider. New England.

**Creole.** In the West Indies, in Spanish America, and in the South-

ern States, one born of European parents; but as now used in the South it is applied to every thing that is native, peculiar to, or raised there. In the New Orleans market, one may hear of *creole* corn, *creole* chickens, *creole* cattle, and *creole* horses. In that city, too, a *creole* is a native of French extraction, as pure in pedigree as a Howard; and great offence has been given by strangers applying the term to a good-looking mulatto or quadroon.

**Creosote Plant.** (*Larrea Mexicana*.) This plant abounds from the Arkansas to the Rio del Norte, and in the sandy deserts of California. It is characterized by a resinous matter of powerful odor. Animals refuse to eat it. It is employed as an external application in rheumatism.

**Crescent City.** The city of New Orleans, so called from its peculiar shape.

In the *City of the Crescent*, by red Mississippi's waves,  
Walks the haughty Creole lady with her daughters and her slaves.  
*Ballad of the Crescent City, Harper's Weekly.*

The restoration of the authority of the United States . . . is a guarantee of the future prosperity and glory of the *Crescent City* under the protection of the American government. — *Proc. of Gen. Shepley, 1862.*

**Crevasse.** (French.) The breaking away of the embankments or levees on the lower Mississippi by pressure of the water.

**Crispse and Crispy,** for crisp and crispy.

**Critters,** for *creatures*, is a common vulgarism in pronunciation.

You hear folks say, such a man is an ugly-grained *critter*, he'll break his wife's heart; just as if a woman's heart was as brittle as a pipe-stalk. — *Sam Slick.*

**Croaker.** A small and very beautiful fish, found in great abundance in the bays and inlets of the Gulf of Mexico. It is sometimes found farther north. It derives its name from a peculiar croaking sound, which it utters when taken.

**Croke.** Miss Ramsay, speaking of the plants of Virginia, says: —

They send their Negroes to the fields  
For the wild salads nature yields,  
Such as lamb's quarters, dock and poke,  
Purslain, wild ivy, beet, and *croke*.

*Poetical Picture of America.*

**Croker.** A water-fowl that inhabits the Chesapeake and the larger rivers of Virginia.

**Crook-Neck.** A species of squash. New England.

**Crooked Stick.** A cross-grained, perverse person.

So as I ain't a *crooked stick*, just like, like old (I swow,  
I don't know as I know his name) — I'll go back to my plough.

*Biglow Papers.*

The widow R—— must have been dreadfully put to it for a husband, to take up with such a *crooked stick* as Elder B ——, — *Major Downing*.

**To crook.** To *crook* one's elbow or one's little finger is to tittle.

**Crooked as a Virginia Fence.** A phrase applied to any thing very crooked; and figuratively to persons of a stubborn temper who are difficult to manage.

**Crooked Whiskey.** Whiskey upon which the excise tax has not been paid. See *Whiskey*.

**Cropper.** One who cultivates a farm on shares, or raises a crop in consideration of receiving a portion of it.

**Cropping.** This term, in the South and West, means devoting the chief attention to the cultivation of one article.

**Cross-Fox.** (*Vulpes fulvus*.) A fox whose color is between the common reddish-yellow and the silver-gray, having on its back a black cross. These animals are rare, and their skins command a high price. Cartwright says, "The Cross Fox is bred between a silver and a yellow." — *Labrador*, Vol. III. Glossary.

**To cross one's Track.** To oppose one's plans; synonymous with the nautical phrase "to run athwart one's hawse."

**Cross Timbers.** A belt of forest or woodland, from five to thirty miles in width, which extends from the Arkansas River in a south-westerly direction to the Brazos, a distance of four hundred miles. The wood is chiefly post-oak and black-jack. The forest is passable for wagons, and is a marked feature in the region where it is found, being the boundary between the cultivable and the desert portions.

The whole of the *cross timber* abounds in mast. There is a pine oak which produces acorns pleasant to the taste. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Crotchical.** Crotchety. A common colloquial word in New England.

You never see such a *crotchical* old critter as he is. He flies right off the handle for nothin'. — *Sam Slick in England*.

**Crowd.** Any number of persons together is called, in Western parlance, a *crowd*; so that the word is often equivalent to "company."

The conveniences of the toilet were wanting, as in all far Western places. A couple of tin basins, filled with muddy water from the Missouri, stood on a board; while a square foot of mirror, with a brush and comb attached by means of a string, hung upon the wall for the use of the *crowd*. — *Description of a Hotel in Kansas*.

Here, boys, drink. Liquors, captain, for the *crowd*. Step up this way, old boss, and liquor. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas*, p. 43.

In a discussion pending the election of chaplain in the House of Representatives, Mr. Elliott, of Kentucky, nominated the Rev. John Morris : —

"He is," said Mr. E., "a regular member of the Hardshell Baptist Church, a very pious man, not of very eminent ability, but just the man to pray for such a crowd as this."

The "New York Tribune," of June 1, 1857, in speaking of Walker's party of filibusters from Costa Rica, says : —

Commodore Erskine has signified his intention not to carry any more of this crowd to Aspinwall, out of deference to the New Grenadian authorities.

I recognized a man as one of my fellow-passengers from New York to Chagres. I was glad to see him, as he was one of the most favorable specimens of that crowd. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 195.

**Crower.** Another squeamish substitute for *Cock*, like *Rooster*.

**Cruel.** One of the numerous substitutes for very, exceedingly. A man who had been seriously ill with cramp, or something of the kind, sent for the doctor, who arrived after the painful paroxysm had ceased, and when weakness had succeeded to pain.

"How are you, my friend?" said the Doctor. "Oh, Doctor, I'm powerful weak, but *cruel* easy."

**Cruller.** (Dutch *kruller*, a curler.) A cake, made of a strip of sweetened dough, boiled in lard, the two ends of which are twisted or curled together. Other shapes are also employed. The New Yorkers have inherited the name and the thing from the Dutch. In Maryland, the words *cruller*, *doughnut*, and *fossnock* are used indiscriminately for the same kind of cake.

**Crush-Hat.** A soft hat.

**To cry.** To publish the banns of marriage in church. New England.

I should not be surprised if they were *cried* next Sabbath. — *Margaret*.

**Cucumber Tree.** (*Magnolia acuminata*.) A tree, so called from a slight resemblance of its young fruit to a cucumber. As it grows, the resemblance is lost, and the fruit becomes pinkish-red.

**Cuffy.** A very common term for a Negro.

**To cultivate.** To use the implement named "cultivator;" as a verb tr. and intr. The ordinary word in Eastern Connecticut.

**Cunners.** Univalve shells of the genus *Patella*. New England.

Two fishermen had been despatched at daybreak to procure a supply of cod for a chowder and *cunners* for a fry, and we were expecting a rare supper. — *Lee, Merrimack*, p. 133.

**Cunning.** A word used chiefly by women; as, "a *cunning* little hat," meaning a neat, pretty hat; tiny.

**Cunnuck or K'nuck.** A name applied to Canadians by the people in the Northern States. See *Canuck*.

Missus didn't affection Yankees much; and *Cunnucks* she hated like poison, 'cause they enticed off Negroes. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**Cupalo**, for *cupola*, is a common error of pronunciation. It is also a very old one, as appears from the following passage:—

Whose roof of copper shineth so,  
It excells Saint Peter's *cupello*. — *Political Ballads*, 1660.

**Curb-Stone Brokers.** Stock-operators, whose place of business is on the edge of the pavement in the vicinity of the Merchants' Exchange, and whose account-books are said to be kept in their hats. "This is a very large class of speculators, and is composed of the oldest and most experienced operators in the street [Wall Street, New York]. Many of them have been members of the Stock Exchange, but from having failed to fulfil their contracts during some of the numerous ups and downs of the market have been compelled to vacate their seats, and lost their membership. The *curb-stone brokers* have leased a large room directly under that occupied by the regular board; and during the session of the board a communication is kept up between the rooms, so that any transaction is known below as soon as made. Upon information derived in this way, the *curb-stone brokers* operate among themselves, and frequently with, and for the account of, the outsiders. This class of speculators are particularly fond of operating in 'puts' and 'calls,' and in fact resort to all the different methods of doing a large business on a small capital." — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

A more recent name for curb-stone brokers is *gutter-snipes*.

The outside Board was becoming a power. There were two hundred regular brokers; but the irregular, *curb-stone*, outside phalanx was far more numerous; and the "New York Herald" asserted that the *curb-stone* men were held in better repute in matter of contracts than their competing brethren. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 305.

**Curios.** Curiosities. "He's a dealer in curios."

Japanese *curios* are as powerful as mercury to attract gold. — *Griffis, The Mikado's Empire*, p. 351.

**Curious.** "This word or *cur'ous* is often heard in New England among the common farmers, in the sense of *excellent*, or *peculiarly excellent*; as in these expressions: 'These are *curious* apples;' 'This is *curious* cider,' &c. This use of the word is hardly known in our seaport towns." — *Pickering*.

**Curleyones.** See *Carlicues*.



**Cuspidor, Cuspidore.** (Sp. *escupidor*, a spitter.) A spittoon, usually globe-shaped.

**Cuss.** A vulgar pronunciation of the word *curse*.

**Cuss** (for *customer*). A worthless fellow; a scamp. "An ugly *cuss*."

Colonel J—, of New York, and being a jovial, festive, and lively *cuss*, his comrades always spoke of him as the Gay Yorker. — *Leavenworth Conservative*.

The *cuss* that specs in man's necessities,  
An' makes big profits, in sich times as these,  
An' has to lie in poor men's doubtin' faces  
To help him out, is wus 'n t' other cases.

*Ballad, Vanity Fair, 1862.*

**Cussedness.** Malice; perverseness; spite.

The Constitution is about to be used once more by the Democrats as a screen for "pure *cussedness*." They have already started the inquiry whether or not it will be constitutional for Congress when it meets to appropriate money for the support of the army which the President has maintained in an unconstitutional manner? — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 12, 1877.

**Cuss-Words.** Oaths.

**Custard-Apple.** See *Sweet Sop*; also *Papaw*.

**Customable.** Subject to the payment of duties called *customs*. — *Webster*.

The term *dutiable* is in general use in New York; *customable* is rarely heard.

**Customer.** A chap; and, figuratively, an awkward person to deal with or manage; as "an ugly customer," a "rum customer."

**Cut.** A term used in colleges to denote the failure of either an officer or a student to appear at the appointed time and place for prayers and recitations.

**To cut Didoes.** Synonymous with *to cut capers*, i. e. to be frolicksome.

Who ever heerd them Italian singers recitin' their jabber, showin' their teeth, and *cuttin' didoes* at a private concert? — *S. Slick in England*.

Watchman! take that 'ere feller to the watch-house; he comes here a *cutting up his didoes* every night. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

On, on he splurged, until not two ounces of vital air filled his breathing apparatus; over the fence of his relative's grounds Nick flew, and up the lane he travelled, bustled into the house, foamed, fumed, and *cut up* such wondrous strange *didoes* that his wife and friends believed he had gone stark mad. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**To cut Dirt.** To run; to go fast. Synonymous with "to cut one's stick." A vulgar expression, probably derived from the quick motion of a horse or carriage over a country road, which makes the dirt fly.

Well, the way the cow *cut dirt* was cautionary; she cleared stumps, ditches, windfalls, and every thing. — *Sam Slick in England*.

*Now cut dirt!* screamed I; and, Jehu Ginerall Jackson! if he didn't make a straight shirt-tail for the door, may I never make another pass. — *Field, Western Tales*.

**To cut a Swathe.** The same as *to cut a dash*.

The expression is generally applied to a person walking who is gayly dressed, and has a pompous air or swagger in his or her gait, in allusion to the sweeping motion of a scythe.

The Miss A—— *cut a tall swathe*, I tell you, for they say they are descended from a governor of Nova Scotia, and that their relations in England are some punkins too. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

Awake! arouse ye, sinners! Know that you are but a notch or two lower than the angels; that you are not only put here to make money, kiss the women, and *cut a swathe*, but to fill a higher and more important destiny. — *Doie's Sermons*.

**To cut a Splurge.** The same as the foregoing, to make a show or display in dress.

Since Miss C—— has got a hyst in the world, she tries to *cut a splurge*, and make folks think she 's a lady. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**Cute.** (An abbreviation of *acute*.) Acute, sharp, keen. It is provincial in various parts of England. In New England, it is a common colloquialism, though never used by educated people.

Now, says I, I'm goin' to show you about as *cute* a thing as you've seen in many a day. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 214.

Mr. Marcy was a right *cute*, cunning sort of a man; but in that correspondence General Taylor showed himself able to defend himself against the fire in the rear. — *Mr. Gentry's Remarks at the Taylor Meeting in N. Y.*

Miss Allin, in her "Home Ballads," in describing the Yankee, says:—

No matter where his home may be,  
What flag may be unfurled,  
He'll manage, by some *cute* device,  
To whittle through the world.

**Cuteness.** Acuteness, keenness.

He had a pair of bright, twinkling eyes, that gave an air of extreme *cuteness* to his physiognomy. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Aug., 1845.

**Cut-Grass.** (*Leersia oryzoides*.) The common name of a species of grass, with leaves exceedingly rough backward, so as to cut the hands if drawn across them. — *Bigelow's Flora*.

**To cut it too Fat.** To overdo a thing. Synonymous with "going it too strong."

It's bad enough to be uncomfortable in your own house without knowing why; but to have a philosopher of the Sennaar school show you why you are so is *cutting it rather too fat*. — *Potiphar Papers*, p. 131.

When the U. S. mail was carried to California by stage, the con-

tractors claimed from the government damage for the loss of horses by the Indians.

When the teams are so placed as to invite the raids of the savage, and the government expected to pay the company double or treble value for practically handing over their stock to the Indians, it is *cutting it rather fat*. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 182.

**Cut-off.** 1. Passages cut by the great Western rivers, particularly the Mississippi, affording new channels, and thus forming islands. These *cut-offs* are constantly made.

When the Mississippi, in making its *cut-offs*, is ploughing its way through the virgin soil, there float upon the top of this destroying tide thousands of trees, that covered the land and lined its curving banks. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 172.

The settlement was one of the prettiest places on the Mississippi, — a perfect location; it had some defects, until the river made the *cut-off* at Shirt Tail Bend, which remedied the evil. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

Since my own day on the Mississippi, *cut-offs* have been made, . . . which shortened the river sixty-seven miles. In my own time, a *cut-off* was made at the American Bend which shortened the river ten miles or more. — *Mark Twain, in Atlantic Monthly*, for August, 1875, p. 198.

2. A part of a steam-engine. "The Corliss *cut-off*."

**To cut round.** To fly about; to make a display.

The widow made herself perfectly ridiculous. She was dressed off like a young gal, and *cut round*, and laughed, and tried to be wonderful interesting. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 91.

Instead of sticking to me as she used to do, she got to *cuttin' round* with all the young fellows, just as if she cared nothin' about me no more. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**To cut Stick or To cut one's Stick.** To be off; to leave immediately, and go with all speed. A vulgar expression and often heard. It is also provincial in England.

Dinner is over. It's time for the ladies to *cut stick*. — *Sam Slick in England*.

If ever you see her, and she begins that way, up hat and *cut stick* double quick.

**To cut under.** To undersell in price. New York.

**To cut up.** 1. To employ severe language towards a person; to shame, to put to pain, &c., chiefly used in a passive sense; as, "Mr. A. was quite cut up at what you said."

2. To interrupt one rudely in talk.

3. To be riotous.

Now, say, what 's the use  
Of all this abuse,  
Of *cutting up*, and thus behaving rioty,  
And acting with such awful impropriety?

*Leland, Meister Karl's Sketch-Book*, p. 265.

**To cut up Shines.** To cut capers, play tricks.

A wild bull of the prairies was *cutting up shins* at no great distance, tearing up the sod with hoofs and horns. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*

"What have these men been doing?" asked the Recorder.

"Oh, they were *cutting up* all kinds of *shins*; knocking over the ashes barrels, shying stones at lamps, kicking at doors, and disturbing the peace of the whole city." — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 61.

**Cutter.** A light one-horse sleigh.

Sleighs are swarming up and down the street, of all sorts and sizes, from the huge omnibus with its thirty passengers to the light, gayly painted *cutters*, with their solitary, fur-capped tenants, &c. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 4.

And then we'll go sleighing, in warm raiment clad,  
With fine horses neighing as if they were glad,  
The shining bells jingle, the swift *cutter* flies;  
And, if our ears tingle, no matter; who cries? — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Cuttoes.** (French *couteau*, a knife.) A large knife, used in olden times in New England.

There were no knives and forks, and the family helped themselves on wooden plates, with *cuttoes*. — *Margaret*, p. 10.

**Cymbling.** A variety of squash, so called at the South, in speaking of which Beverly says, "The Clypeatæ are sometimes called *cymnels*, from the lenten-cake of that name, which many of them much resemble." — *Hist. of Virginia*, p. 113. In the dialect of Somerset, *simlin* is a kind of cake; and elsewhere *simnel* is a rich cake of a peculiar form. In Salop the term is applied to a plum-cake with a raised crust. — *Halliwel*.

**Cypress-Brake.** A basin-shaped depression of land near the margin of shallow, sluggish bayous, into which the superabundant waters find their way. In these places, are vast accumulations of fallen cypress-trees, which have been accumulating for ages. These are called *cypress-brakes*. — *Dickeson on the Cypress Timber of Louisiana*.

## D.

**Daddock.** The heart or body of a tree thoroughly rotten. — *Asin*.

This old word is not noticed by Johnson, Todd, or Webster. It is introduced by Mr. Worcester in his new dictionary.

The great red *daddock*s lay in the green pastures, where they had lain year after year, crumbling away, and sending forth innumerable forms of vegetable life. — *Margaret*, p. 215.

**Daddy-Long-Legs.** A small-bodied spider with very long legs.

**Dagos.** Originally people of Spanish parentage, born in Louisiana, now applied there to all Italians, Sicilians, Spanish, and Portuguese.

**Damaged.** Intoxicated.

**Damson Plums**, of the West Indies. See *Star-Apple*.

**Dander.** 1. Scurf at the roots of the hair; dandruff.

2. *To get one's dander up*, or *to have one's dander raised*, is *to get into a passion*. Here, it would seem, the dandruff is ludicrously put for the hair itself, which is represented as being raised on end, like the fur of some animals when enraged. This as well as the preceding use of the word is found in English dialects.

The Department of State did not keep back the letters of Mr. Rives, in which he boasts that he had outwitted the French. Well, this sort of *put up the dander* of the French. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 198.

The fire and fury that blazed in her eye gave ocular evidence of her *dander being up* — *Pickings from the New Orleans Picayune*, p. 163.

As we looked at the immense strength of the "Northumberland's" mast, we could not help thinking that Neptune must have his *dander* considerably *raised* before he could carry it away. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

I felt my *dander risin'* when the impertinent cuss went and tuck a seat alongside of Miss Mary, and she begun to smile and talk with him as *pleasin'* as could be. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 77.

**Dandyfied.** Dandyish; like a dandy.

**Dandy-Trap.** Loose brick in the pavement; when stepped upon, the muddy water underneath gushes up and soils boots or clothing.

**Dangerous.** Endangered, being in danger. — *Forby*. This sense is local in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

**Dangle-Berry.** (*Gaylussacia*.) A species of the blue whortleberry.

**Dangnation.** A euphemism for damnation.

**Danites.**

If the enemies of the Mormons are to be trusted, they have a secret battalion of *Danites*, serpents in the path, destroying angels, who are banded for any deed of daring and assassination; and the frequent violent deaths of travellers are attributed to the treacherous stroke of some brother of the fraternity. — *North Am. Rev.*, *Article on Mormonism*, July, 1862.

**Dark and Bloody Ground** (The). An expression formerly much used in allusion to Kentucky, of which name it is said to be a translation. The phrase is an epitome of the early history of the State, of the dark and bloody conflicts of the first white settlers with their savage foes; but the name originated in the fact that this was the grand battle-ground between the Northern and Southern Indians. — *Wheeler's Dictionary*.

On the occasion of the reception of President Hayes at Louisville, Kentucky, Sept. 17, 1877, Gov. Wade Hampton said:—

I came here chiefly that I might extend a warm greeting to the President as he struck Southern soil, as he stood on the once *dark and bloody ground* of Kentucky, no longer so, but, as I trust in God, here and elsewhere a land of peace, prosperity, and happiness.

**Darky.** A common term for a Negro.

I wish de legislatur would set dis *darkie* free,  
Oh! what a happy place den de *darkie* land would be.  
We 'd have a *darkie* parliament,  
An' *darkie* codes of law,  
An' *darkie* judges on de bench,  
*Darkie* barristers and aw. — *Ethiopian Melodies* (1848).

**Dark Moon.** The interval between the old and the new moon.  
Western. Qu. Dark o' the Moon?

I always alter my colts and plant my 'taters during the *dark moon*. — *Letter from a Western Farmer*.

**Darsen't**, for *dares not*. It is vulgarly used in all persons and numbers.

**To deacon a Calf** is to knock it in the head as soon as it is born. — Connecticut.

**To deacon Land** is to extend one's fence so as to include a portion of the highway. — *Haddam*. Connecticut.

To "*Deacon Berries*" is to put the largest on top. To "*Deacon Apples*" is, when barrelling them for sale, to put the best on top.

**To deacon off** To give the cue to. Derived from a custom, once universal but now extinct, in the New England Congregational Churches. An important part of the office of deacon was to read aloud the hymns given out by the minister, one line at a time, the congregation singing each line as soon as read. — *Lowell*. In some of the interior parts of New England, the custom of *deaconing off* hymns is still continued. It used to be called "lining out the psalm."

The custom is nearly as old as the Reformation, and long antedates early colonial days in New England. It was recommended to churches not supplied with books, by the Westminster Assembly, in 1664; and Dr. Watts complained of its prevalence in congregations and private families in England, — in the preface to an early edition of his psalms. — *Hood's Hist. Music in New England*, p. 184, 201.

When all was ready [to commence the religious exercises], a prayer was made and the chorister *deaconed* the first two lines. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 77.

To funk right out o' p'lit'cal strife ain't thought to be the thing,  
Without you *deacon off* the tune you want your folks should sing.

*The Biglow Papers*.

**Deacons' Hiding-Places.** Curtained stalls in Boston oyster-saloons.

**Deacon's Meeting.** One, in the pastor's absence, conducted by a deacon.

**Deacons' Seat.** A pew formerly made on the pulpit's front, for deacons to occupy. The chief edifice at Hanover (Dartmouth College) had, in 1832, and before, a pulpit buttressed by two pews, the higher for a "ruling elder."

**Dead-Beat.** 1. A mixture of ginger-soda and whiskey, taken by hard drinkers after a night's carousal.

2. One who lives on others; a most hardened sponger.

**Dead-beat.** Worn out; exhausted; good for nothing.

**Dead-broke.** Utterly exhausted of cash, penniless.

Damphool squared up his board bill and paid his washer-woman, which left him *dead-broke*. — *Doesticks*, p. 141.

To be *dead-broke* was really, as far as a man's comfort was concerned, a matter of less importance in the mines than in almost any other place. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 255.

**To deaden.** 1. In newly settled parts of the West, where it is designed to make a "clearing," some of the trees are cut down; the others are girdled, or *deadened*, as they say, *i. e.* deprived of force or sensation. If the majority of trees are thus girdled, the field is called a *deadening*; otherwise, it is a clearing. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. 240.

2. A political candidate at the West *deadens* his competitor's votes in a district by doing away with false impressions, misstatements, &c., originating with the other party.

**Deadening.** A piece of land the trees on which have been deadened by girdling.

**Dead Heads.** Persons who drink at a bar, ride in an omnibus or railroad car, travel in steamboats, or visit the theatre, without charge, are called *dead heads*. These consist of the engineers, conductors, and laborers on railroads; the keepers of hotels; the editors of newspapers, &c.

"The principal avenue of our city," writes a learned friend in Detroit, "has a toll-gate just by the Elmwood Cemetery road. As the cemetery had been laid out some time previous to the construction of the plank-road, it was made one of the conditions of the company's charter that all funeral processions should go back and forth free. One day, as Dr. Price, a celebrated physician, stopped to pay his toll, he remarked to the gate-keeper: —

"'Considering the benevolent character of our profession, I think you ought to let us pass free of charge.'

"'No, no, doctor,' the keeper readily replied, 'we couldn't afford that. You send too many *dead heads* through here as it is.'

"The doctor paid his toll, and never asked any favors after that." — *Wash. Even. Star*, Oct., 1857.

**Deadheadism.** The practice of travelling with free tickets.

As I had never experienced the blessed privilege of *deadheadism*, I could not naturally resist the opportunity of enjoying so new a sensation; and I beg to assure you that it is by no means so unpleasant as you might imagine. It was a pleasure similar to that which Lucretius describes as enjoyed by standers on the shore when they see ships tossed about on the sea, to behold wretches crowding to the ticket-offices and disbursing their money, when you have nothing to do but to take your seat and be carried through the air without money and without price. *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1857.

It is also too much the practice of railway companies to give free passes to members of State Legislatures, in order to make them friendly disposed. In many instances, however, the members exact the privilege of riding free over the roads.

The Superior Court has enjoined the New York and New Haven Railroad from issuing free passes to members of the Legislature. . . . This action will be rather agreeable to the Railroad Company, as it will relieve all the railroads in the State from the practice of *dead-heading* members of the Legislature. — *Connecticut Paper*.

**Dead Horse.** Work for which one has been paid before it is performed. When a printer, on Saturday night, includes in his bill work not yet finished, he is said, on the following week, to "work off a *dead horse*." Also used in England.

**Dead Rabbits.** A name recently assumed by the Irish faction in the city of New York.

If the *Dead Rabbit* think he slays,  
Or the Plug-Ugly think he 's slain,  
They do but pave the subtle ways  
I've trod, and mean to tread again.

*Parody on Emerson's Brahma, N. Y. Even'g Post.*

**Dead-Set.** Opposition; resolute antagonism; hostility; as "it was a *dead-set* between them."

**Dead set against.** Strongly opposed to.

**Deaf Adder.** See *Blouser*.

**Deaf Nut.** A nut the kernel of which is decayed. Pennsylvania. Provincial in England.

**Death.** To be *death on* a thing is to be completely master of it, a capital hand at it; like the quack-doctor who could not manage the



whooping-cough, but was, as he expressed it, "*death on fits*." Vulgar.

Did you ever hearn tell of the man they calls Chunkey? born in Kaintuck and raised on the Mississippi! *death on bar*, and smartly in a panther fight. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Women, I believe, are born with certain natural tastes. Sally was *death on lace*, and old Aunt Thankful goes the whole figure for furs. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 225.

**Death-Horses.** An insect, perhaps the "death's head moth."

Among the insects of Virginia, Miss Ramsay mentions : —

Locusts, tobacco-worms, and slugs,  
*Death-horses*, or the hard-shell bugs.

*Poetical Picture of America*, p. 166.

**Decedent.** A deceased person. — *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

**Deceiving** for *deceitful*; as, "A very *deceiving* hole in the road."

**Deck.** A pack of cards. This term is old English. Thus Shakespeare says, —

But, whiles, he thought to steal the single ten,  
The king was slyly fingered from the *deck*. — 3 *Henry VI.*, v. 1.

I'll deal the cards, and cut you from the *deck*. — *Two Maids of Moreclucke*, 1609.

"Waiter," cried out an Arkansas traveller, "bring down my baggage."  
"What is it, sir?" "A bowie-knife, a pair of pistols, a *deck* of cards, and one shirt."

*Deck* is defined by Ash, "a pack of cards piled one upon another."

**Deck.** *Twenty-Deck Poker* is a variety where twenty cards are used.

**Declension.** We sometimes see this word used in the newspapers, in speaking of a person's declining to be a candidate for office. **Ex.:** In consequence of the *declension* of our candidate, we shall be obliged to vote for a new one. — *Pickering*.

**Declination.** Used in the same sense as the preceding word. It is said to have been first employed by Mr. John Pintard, when he declined a re-election as president of the American Bible Society.

**Decoration-Day.** Day appointed for decoration, especially of graves of soldiers and sailors, who fell in the late civil war.

**Deed**, for *indeed*. Very common throughout the South. Ask a Negro if it is cold, he will answer, "Deed it is."

**To deed.** To convey or transfer by deed. A popular use of the word in America; as, "He *deeded* all his estate to his eldest son." — *Webster*.

**Deestrick.** A common pronunciation among the illiterate for *district*.

**Deliver.** Many of the clergy now-a-days “deliver” the Scriptures and hymns to their hearers instead of reading them.

**Delivery.** In Wall Street parlance, when stock is brought to the buyer in accordance with the rules of the Stock Exchange, it is called a “good delivery.” When there are irregularities, the power of attorney not being satisfactory, or in some other way the rules of the Exchange are contravened, the *delivery* is pronounced bad, and the buyer can appeal to the Board. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 135.

**To demonstrate.** To show one's self; to make exhibitions.

Certain judges, hostile to the purpose and scope of the law, soon began to *demonstrate* against it. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 10, 1862.

**To demoralize.** To corrupt and undermine the morals of; to destroy or lessen the effect of moral principles on. — *Webster*. Professor Lyell, who visited Dr. Webster, says, “When the Doctor was asked how many words he had coined for his Dictionary, he replied, only one, ‘to demoralize;’ and that not for his Dictionary, but in a pamphlet published in the last century.” — *Travels in the United States*, p. 53. Mr. Jodrell, in his “Philology of the English Language,” gives the word a place, and cites as an example a passage from a speech by Lord Liverpool, in the House of Lords, March 11, 1817:—

They had endeavored to guard and protect the people against the attempts which were made to corrupt and *demoralize* them.

The native vigor of the soul must wholly disappear, under the steady influence and the *demoralizing* example of profligate power and prosperous crime. — *Walsh, Letters on France*.

**Dengué.** See *Break-Bone Fever*.

**Department.** (Fr. *département*.) The principal offices of the federal government at Washington, at the head of each of which is a Secretary, are styled *departments*. Thus we have the State Department, Interior Department, Treasury Department, &c. This expression and also the following are borrowed from the French.

**Departmental.** Pertaining to a department or division. — *Webster*.

The game played by the revolutionists in 1789 was now played against the *departmental* guards called together for the protection of revolutionists. — *Burke, Pref. to Brissot's Address*.

Which it required all the exertion of the *departmental* force to suppress. — *H. M. Williams, Letters on France*.

**Depot.** French. (Pron. *dee'po*.) A railroad station-house. In England, it is called a *Station*.

We have also *provision depots*, *butter depots*, &c.

**To deputize.** To depute; to appoint a deputy; to empower to act for another, as a sheriff. — *Webster*.

This word is not in any of the English dictionaries except one of the early editions of Bailey, where it appears in the preface among words in modern authors, collected after the Dictionary was printed. Mr. Pickering remarks that "the word is sometimes heard in *conversation*, but rarely occurs in *writing*, and has always been considered as a mere vulgarism."

They seldom think it necessary to *deputize* more than one person to attend to their interests at the seat of government. — *Port Folio*, January, 1811.

**Deseret.** A name (which they say means honey bee) given by the Mormons to the Territory of Utah, which they occupy. When Mr. Edward Everett was Secretary of State, he prevented the name being used as the official one for the Territory.

**Desk.** The pulpit in a church, and figuratively the clerical profession. "The Rev. Mr. Poundtext appears well at the *desk*." "He intends one son for the bar, and another for the *desk*." This New England word is not generally used in other parts of the country.

The pulpit, or as it is here [in Connecticut] called, the *desk*, was filled by three, if not four, clergymen; a number which, by its form and dimensions, it was able to accommodate. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. I. p. 4.

They are common to every species of oratory, though of rarer use in the *desk*, &c. — *Adams's Lecture on Rhetoric*.

**Dessert.** (Fr. *dessert*, *desservir*, to clear away.) This term, which properly signifies the fruits and nuts or second course brought on the table after the substantial parts of a dinner, is often improperly applied in the United States to the puddings and pies. A common error is that of accenting the first syllable.

**To desulphurize.** To take the sulphur out of vulcanized Caoutchouc.

**Devil's Darning-Needle, Devil's Needle.** A common name for the Dragon-fly. In England, according to Wright, it is called the Devil's Needle.

Now and then a long-legged spider would run across our track with incredible rapidity, or a *devil's darning-needle* would pertinaciously hover above our heads, and cause me, impressed with an old nursery caution, to duck and dodge, and hold my hands over my ears, until the winged spectre would fly away across the garden. — *Putnam's Monthly*, June, 1854.

**Devil-Fish.** (Genus *Lophius*. Cuvier.) 1. The common name of the *American Angler*, so called from its hideous form. It is also known by the names of Sea-devil, Fishing-frog, Bellows-fish, Goose-fish, Monk-fish, and others. — *Storer's Fishes of Mass.*

2. At the South, this name is applied to the *Stingray*, vulg. *Stin-*

*garee* (*Cephaloptera vampyras*), which sometimes grows to a great size. See *Stingaree*.

The *Devil-fish* of the Mediterranean is the *Octopus*, a gigantic squid.

**Devilment.** Deviltry; wickedness.

As those bridges took fire while I was out of town, they swore that I was the bell-wether and ringleader of all the *devilment* that was going on, and hence that I must have had a hand in it. — *N. Y. Herald, Speech of W. G. Brownlow of Tennessee.*

**Devil Wood.** (*Olea Americana*.) American olive growing in the Southern States. A small evergreen, but its fruit has no value. It is impossible to split, hence its name.

**Dewberry.** (*Rubus Canadensis*.) A low-trailing species of Blackberry. See *Low Blackberry*.

**Dicker.** Barter; also articles received in barter. Western.

Grant that the North 's insulted, scorned, betrayed,  
O'erreached in bargains with her neighbor made,  
When selfish thrift and party held the scales  
For peddling *dicker*, not for honest sales,  
Whom shall we strike? — *Whittier, The Panorama.*

**To dicker.** To barter. Used in New York and New England.

The white men who penetrated to the semi-wilds [of the West] were always ready to *dicker* and to swap, and to trade rifles and watches, and whatever else they might happen to possess. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings.*

**Difference.** Among stock operators, the price at which a stock is bargained for and the rate on day of delivery are usually not the same. The variation is known as the *difference*, and occasionally brokers pay over this money balance instead of furnishing the stock. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street.*

**Different from.** We say one thing is "different from" another. In England, the expression is "different to," and so the old English writers quoted in Richardson's Dictionary. Comp. *Averse*.

**Difficult.** Perplexed. Mr. Sherwood has this among the words peculiar to Georgia, and there are examples of its use to be found in some of our well-known authors. It is in common use at the bar: "The gentlemen, I think, will be *difficult* to find a parallel case."

There is no break in the chain of vital operation; and consequently we are not *difficult* at all on the score of the relation which the new plant bears to the old. *Bush on the Resurrection*, p. 51.

Dr. Jamieson has the verb *to difficult* in his Scottish Dictionary.

**Dig.** 1. A diligent student, one who learns his lessons by hard and long-continued exertion. — *Hall's College Words.*

There goes the *dig*, just look!  
How like a parson he eyes his book!

*N. Y. Literary World*, Oct. 11, 1851.

By this 't is that we get ahead of the *dig*.

'T is not we that prevail, but the wine that we swig.

*Amherst Indicator*, Vol. II. p. 252.

2. A thrust. "Hit him a *dig*." In vulgar use.

**Digger, Digger Indian.** A name applied to various wretched tribes of Indians, of California, too degraded or enfeebled to hunt. They live chiefly upon roots, which they obtain by digging. Hence their name.

**Digging.** 1. A word first used at the Western lead mines, to denote a place where the ore was dug. Instead of saying this or that mine, the phrase in vogue is *these diggings* or *those diggings*.

Mr. Charles F. Hoffman visited the Galena lead-mines, and while there was shown about to the various estates, where the people were digging for ore. The person who accompanied him said:—

Mr. ———, from your State, has lately struck a lead, and a few years will make him independent. We are now, you observe, among his *diggings*. — *Winter in the West*, Let. 25.

The principal *diggings* near Hangtown were surface *diggings*, but, with the exception of river *diggings*, every kind of mining was seen in full force. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 120.

In California, the term is applied to places near gold mines. *Wet diggings* are near rivers or wet places. *Dry diggings* are upon flats or higher lands which are usually dry.

The phrase *these diggings* is now provincial in the Western States, and is occasionally heard in the Eastern, to denote a neighborhood or particular section of country.

Boys, fellows, and candidates, I am the first white man ever seed in these *diggings*. I killed the first bar [bear] ever a white skinned in the county, and am the first manufacturer of whiskey, and a powerful mixture it is too. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

I ain't a vain man, and never was. I hante a morsel of it in my composition. I don't think any of us Yankees is vain people; it's a thing don't grow in our *diggings*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 24.

2. The act of studying hard; diligent application. — *Hall*.

I've had an easy time in college, and enjoyed the "otium cum dignitate,"—the learned leisure of a scholar's life,—always despised *digging*, you know. — *Harvard Reg.*, p. 194.

3. Dear or costly; as, "A mighty *digging* price." A Southern word. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

4. To *dig* is used among the lower classes at the South for the

act of *dipping* or rubbing snuff. A friend informs me that *to dig* is more common than *to dip* snuff.

**To dill.** (Probably the same as *to dull*.) To soothe. The word is used in the north of England.

I know what is in this medicine. It'll *dill* fevers, dry up sores, stop rheumatis, drive out rattlesnake's bite, kill worms, &c. — *Margaret*, p. 140.

**Dime.** (Fr. *dixme* or *dîme*, tenth.) A silver coin of the United States, in value the tenth of a dollar, or ten cents.

This term, peculiar to our decimal currency, is now in common use at the South and West; but in the Eastern and Northern States, whence the Spanish real and half-real, which long formed a large portion of the circulation, have only recently been banished, it is usually called a *ten-cent piece*, and the half-dime a *five-cent piece*.

Small articles are sold in the New Orleans markets by the picayune or *dime's* worth. If you ask for a pound of figs, you will not be understood; but for a *dime's* worth, and they are in your hands in a trice. — *Sketches of New Orleans*, N. Y. Tribune.

The currency [in New Orleans] is more truly national than that of any other part of the United States. Every thing sells by *dimes* and half-*dimes*, "bits" and "picayunes" being the same value; and as for copper money, I have not seen the first red cent. — *Bayard Taylor*, *Letter from N. O.*, July, 1849.

**Dimes.** Common in the West and South for money. "She's got the *dimes*;" i. e., she is an heiress.

**Dime Novels.** Cheap, trashy novels sold for a dime (ten cents) each. There is also a great variety of song books, known as "Dime Song Books."

**Ding.** Very, excessively. A Southern word. See *Darn*.

It was *ding* hot; so I sot down to rest a bit under the trees. — *Chron. of Pineville*.

**Dingbat.** A bat of wood that may be thrown (*dinged*); a piece of money; a cannon-ball; a bullet.

Instead of feathers and bristles flying in all directions [shooting fowls], it has been found necessary [by the United States government] to expend the *dingbats*, to put something more substantial on the "fly" [in motion] to bring our unruly relatives to their P's and Q's. — *N. H. Palladium*, *Letter from U. S. Ship "Cumberland"*, Dec. 25, 1861.

**Dinged.** Very, excessively. An expletive peculiar to the South, the equivalent of the Northern *darned*.

You know it's a *dinged* long ride from Pineville, and it took me most two days to get there. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Dingee, Dinky.** Common in New England for a flat-bottomed boat made of boards. Used indiscriminately with *Dory*.

**Dingling.** Tottering; insecure; prob. i. q. *dangling*.

We have been telling our readers that Federalism is just now in a very *dingling* way, while the "Express" insists that the Democracy is in the same condition. — *N. Y. True Sun*, Aug. 26, 1848.

**Dining-Room Servant.** A male house-servant or waiter.

**Dip.** Sauce for puddings. South-western. .

**To dip Snuff.** A mode of taking tobacco, practised by women in some parts of the United States, and particularly at the South, may be thus described: A little pine stick or bit of rattan about three inches long, split up like a brush at one end, is first wetted and then dipped into snuff; with this the teeth are rubbed, sometimes by the hour together. Some tie the snuff in a little bag, and chew it. These filthy practices originated in the use of snuff for cleansing the teeth.

**Dipper.** 1. A vessel, generally with a handle, used to dip water or other liquor.

2. The seven bright stars in the constellation of the Great Bear; popularly so called from their arrangement in the form of a dipper with a handle; they are also known as Charles's Wain.

3. A small aquatic bird, common throughout the United States; also called the Water-witch and Hell-diver. (*Horned Grebe*. Nuttall, Ornith.) — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Dippers.** Those who use snuff as above. "She's a dipper."

**Dipsy.** A term applied, in some parts of Pennsylvania, to the float of a fishing-line. From "deep sea." The deep sea or *dipsy* lead is used for obtaining soundings off-shore or in deep water.

**Dirt.** This word is used more commonly and frequently with us than in England, to denote earth, clay, &c. An English traveller in the United States observes that he heard a man speak of his having wheeled *dirt*, to repair a road. A "*dirt* road," as distinguished from a turnpike-road, is often heard in the West. The "*dirt*-cart," or cart which removes street sweepings, would in London be called a "dust-cart."

In California, "*dirt*" is the universal word to signify the substance dug, — earth, clay, gravel, or loose slate. The miners talk of rich *dirt* and poor *dirt*, and of stripping off so many feet of "top *dirt*" before getting to "pay *dirt*," the latter meaning *dirt* with so much gold in it that it will pay to dig it up and wash it. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 120.

**Dirt-Eaters, Dirt-Eating.** See *Clay-Eaters*.

**Disciples of Christ.** Sometimes called Campbellites, or Reformers. As is usual in similar cases, the brethren who unite under the name

of *Disciples of Christ*, or Christians, are nicknamed after those who have been prominent in gathering them together. — *Encyc. Religious Knowledge*.

Mr. Campbell, the author of the above "article," affirms that, in 1823, the Baptists at first favored his views. He had adopted their leading tenet. The editor of "The Christian Reformer," Rev. W. B. Orvis, "was originally a Baptist. He now recognizes no New Testament ordinances to be binding as a ritual law, in that respect agreeing with the Friends." Campbell was originally a Presbyterian.

**To disfellowship.** To dispossess of church-membership. A monstrous word. See *To fellowship*.

No person that has been *disfellowshipped*, or excommunicated from the church, will be allowed to go forth in the dance that is conducted by the sanction and authority of the church. — *Mormon Regulation, published in the Frontier (Iowa) Guardian*, Nov. 28, 1849.

**Disgruntled.** Disappointed; disconcerted.

Congressman Carr of Indiana was not brought up by hand. He misses no opportunity of getting in a whack at his *disgruntled* party friends. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 28, 1877.

At a hearing before the Legislative Committee of Rhode Island, on the subject of reducing the number of the school committee of Providence, Mr. D. R. Ballou made a speech against the measure, in which he said: —

We have had enough exercise of extraordinary power, and this continual grasping after authority for the purpose of meeting the individual case of some *disgruntled* persons should receive the stamp of this committee's disapprobation. *Providence Journal*, March 1, 1877.

The men of all others most inconsolable in view of the election of Hayes are the *disgruntled* Republicans who forsook their party and went over to Tilden, counting upon his success and the rewards he was to bestow on them. — *Orange (N. J.) Journal*.

We have also heard the word *undisgruntled* used.

Rev. Dr. Newman Hall, of London, tells how when he was journeying to Chicago, an apple-peddling boy, on the cars, without any preliminaries took hold of and immediately examined his breast-pin. Nevertheless the reverend gentleman, quite *undisgruntled*, remarked, "Was it not there to be seen? Was he not a man and a brother?" — *Springfield Republican*, Nov. 20, 1869.

**Disguised in Liquor**, or simply *disguised*. Intoxicated.

**To disremember.** To forget. Used chiefly in the Southern States.

"Well, I *disremember* about that," said the Widow Bedott, "but I do remember o' hearin' you blow the Elder up for goin' to Baptist meetin'." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 129.



It's a curious story, and I'll tell you all of it I can think on. But some things perhaps I may *disremember*. — *Western Tale, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I'll thank you, when we meet again, not to *disremember* the old saying, but let every man skin his own skunks. — *David Crockett*.

**Distressed.** (Pron. *dis-tress'-ed*.) Miserable; wretched. "*Distressed man!*" was, and perhaps is, a favorite exclamation with ladies at the North.

"Why," said the peddler to the Widow Bedott, who had selected an article for her wedding-dress, "a body 'd think 't was some everlastin' old maid, instead of a handsome young widder that had chosen such a *distressed* thing for a weddin' dress." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 113.

**District.** A common pronunciation of this word in the country is *Deestrick*.

**District Courts.** In American law. Courts held in each of the thirty-five districts into which the United States are divided, consisting each of a single judge, and which act both as courts of common law and as courts of admiralty.

**District School.** A public or free school within a district.

**District Schoolmaster.** The teacher of a district school.

The *district schoolmaster* hain't got a friend on the flat side of earth. The boys snowball him during recess; the girls put hot water in his hair-dye; and the school-committee make him work for half the money a bar-tender gets, and board him around the neighborhood, where they give him rye coffee, sweetened with molasses to drink, and codfish balls three times a day for victuals. — *Josh Billings's Works*, p. 325.

**Dite.** A little thing; a doit. "I don't care a *dite*." New England.

**Ditty-Bag.** A sailor's housewife, containing his thread, needles, tape, &c., for mending his clothes.

**Divide.** The name applied by Western hunters and guides to a ridge of land which divides waters running in different directions; a dividing ridge.

We commenced to ascend another *divide*; and, as we approached the summit, the narrow valley leading to it was covered with timber and long grass. — *Emory's New Mexico and California*, p. 105.

The eastern fork [of the Arkansas] skirts the base of the range, coming from the ridge, called the *divide*, which separates the waters of the Platte from the Arkansas. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 241.

Continued our route towards an opening in the elevated ridge which stretched across our path in a direction from north to south, called the *divide*. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*, Vol. I. p. 73.

**Divort.** This word expresses fully what no word at present does. The word "*divide*" is not etymologically applicable, as it does not convey the idea of altitude as the cause of separation; while the

word *divort* implies elevation, the cause of the *divortia aquarum*, whence its derivation also. — *Dr. Antisell, Geolog. Rept. Pacific R.R. Survey, Vol. VII.*

We think the word *watershed* expresses the meaning as fully.

On crossing the *divort* between the small stream, a tributary of the Salinas, and the waters of the San Antonio, this bed was found to occupy a large surface and to be the uppermost rock. — *Dr. Antisell, Ibid., p. 40.*

**Dixianic.** Noting Dixie and what pertains to it.

Unless the blockade is raised very soon, the *Dixianic* provinces will soon be resolved into . . . Egyptian darkness. — *Cincinnati Gazette, Feb., 1862.*

**Dixie, Dixie Land.** An ideal paradise in the Southern States.

In a small volume entitled Bryant's "Songs from Dixie's Land" is the following note on the origin of the term of *Dixie's Land*:—

"In the popular mythology of New York City, Dixie was the Negro's paradise on earth in times when slavery and the slave-trade were flourishing in that quarter. Dixie owned a tract of land on Manhattan Island, and also a large number of slaves; and his slaves increasing faster than his land, an emigration ensued, such as has taken place in Virginia and other States. Naturally, the Negroes who left it for distant parts looked to it as a place of unalloyed happiness, and it was the 'old Virginny' of the Negroes of that day. Hence Dixie became synonymous with an ideal locality, combining ineffable happiness and every imaginable requisite of earthly beatitude."

The sweetest, the happiest place on earth  
Is *Dixie*, sweet *Dixie* the land of my birth.

I wish I was in de land of cotton,  
'Simmon seed and sandy bottom—

*Chorus.* Look away—look away—*Dixie Land.*

In *Dixie's Land* whar I was born in,  
Early on one frosty mornin',

*Chorus.* Look away—look away—*Dixie Land.*

*Negro Melodies, Dixie's Land.*

**Dobber.** A float to a fishing-line. So called in New York.

The most singular luck attended Ten Broeck, who, falling overboard, was miraculously preserved from sinking by his nether garments. Thus buoyed up, he floated on the waves like an angler's *dobber*, &c. — *Knickerbocker, N. York.*

**Docious.** A corruption of *docile*, as "a *docious* young man," "a *docious* horse."

I was so mad that I swore just nigh on to half an hour, right straight on eend.  
I can hardly keep my tongue *docious* now to talk about it. — *Western Life, N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

**Docity.** (Fr. *docilité*.) A low word, used in some parts of the

United States to signify *quick comprehension*. It is only used in conversation, and generally with a negative, thus: "He has no *docity*." It is a provincial word in England. — *Pickering*.

**Dock.** We often apply the term to the "slip" or space between two piers for the reception of vessels. It is believed to be restricted in England to an enclosed basin. "Balance *dock*," "sectional *dock*," "screw *dock*," are none of them really docks, but contrivances by which vessels are raised from the water for repair.

**Dock-Loafer.** A loafer that hangs about the docks.

*Dock-loafers*, rag-pickers, wandering gypsies, wild Indians. — *The Independent*, March, 1862.

**Dockmackie.** (*Viburnum acerifolium*). Probably named by the Dutch, among whom the plant was used for external applications in tumors, &c., — a practice learned by them from the Indians.

**Dock Walloper.** A loafer that hangs about the wharves. New York.

**Doctor.** The cook on board a ship; so called by seamen.

**To doctor.** To cook up; manage, oversee, modify.

The news [of success to the United States armies, said the English leading journals] all came through Northern channels, and was *doctored* by the government which controlled the telegraph. — *H. Greeley*, in the *N. Y. Independent*, June, 1862.

**Dod Fetched.** A euphemistic form of swearing.

Liddy, don't be so pesky starch, I'll be *dod fetched* if I meant any harm. — *Southern Sketches*.

**Dodger.** A hard-baked cake or biscuit. *Dead* and *garred*, i. e. thoroughly done. *Dead gar*. — *Thomson's Eng. Etymons*. See *Corn-Dodger* and *Beef-Dodger*.

**Do don't**, for *do not* or *don't*, is a common expression in Georgia and South Carolina, and not by any means confined to the uneducated classes.

**Dod rot it, Dod drat it.** Confound it. A euphemistic oath.

He began cussin' like all wrath, and says he, *Dod rot* that old Mike Shouter. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

Here 's the old man agoin' to give you another wallopin'. I'll cut and run, and *dod* drop me if I don't. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 60.

**To dog.** To hunt with dogs.

What is to be the fate of Soulouque and his subjects? How long will it take to pick a quarrel with them, and when will regiments from the South, trained at home to the hunting and *dogging* of fugitive slaves, achieve what Bonaparte could not, the re-enslavement of Hayti, and wipe out in blood "the horrors of St. Domingo," the standing bugbear of emancipation? — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1854.

**Dog-gauned.** A euphemistic form of swearing. Southern.

If there 's a *dog-goned* abolitionist aboard this boat, I should like to see him. I'm the man to put a chunk o' lead into his woolly head right off. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas*, p. 46.

No, says I, I won't do no sich *dog on* thing; for when I likes a chap, I likes him. But if you want to fight, I'm your man. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 33.

Mr. Carlton, in describing the reception by the choir of the new church organ, says:—

But when that choir got up to sing,  
I couldn't catch a word;  
They sung the most *dog-gondest* thing  
A body ever heard! — *Farm Ballads*, p. 80.

**Dogged.** A euphemistic oath; as, "I'll be *dogged* if I do it."

**Doggery.** A low drinking-house. West and South. The "Cleveland Plaindealer," in speaking of the riotous proceedings connected with the Erie Railroad troubles, says:—

The mob crowded the sheriff on, and drove him into the Key Stone Saloon, a small *doggery*, where they kept him for half an hour.

**Dog my Cat.** Small swearing.

**Dog-Power.** 1. Force exerted by a dog.

2. A machine for churning worked by a dog. "The dog Carlo refused to go on the *dog-power*." Such machines are much used in Central New York, and probably elsewhere.

**Dog's Age.** A long time.

**Doings.** (Pron. *doins*.) Prepared food; victuals. A Western vulgarism. See *Chicken Fixings*.

If thar wasn't cold *doins* about that time (in the mountains), this child wouldn't say so. Thar was no buffalo and no meat, and we had been livin' on our moccasins for weeks; and poor *doins* that feedin' is. — *Ruxton's Life in the Far West*, p. 17.

**Dollar Mark (\$).** The origin of this sign to represent the *dollar* has been the cause of much discussion. One writer says it comes from the letters U. S. (United States), which, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, were prefixed to the Federal currency, and which afterwards, in the hurry of writing, were run into one another; the U being made first and the S over it. Another, that it is derived from the contraction of the Spanish word *pesos*, dollars, or *pesos fuertes*, hard dollars. A third, that it is a contraction for the Spanish *fuertes*, hard, to distinguish silver or hard dollars from paper-money. The more probable explanation is that it is a modification of the figures  $\frac{8}{1}$ , formerly used to denote a piece of eight reals, or, as a dollar was then called, a *piece of eight*.

As to my boat, it was a very good one; and that he saw, and told me he would buy it of me for the ship's use; and asked me what I would have for it. I told him that I could not offer to make any price of the boat, but left it entirely to him; upon which he told me he would give me a note of hand to pay me eighty *pieces of eight* for it in Brazil. He offered me also sixty *pieces of eight* more for my boy Xury, which I was loath to take; not that I was not willing to let the captain have him, but I was loath to sell the poor boy's liberty, who had assisted me so faithfully in procuring my own. — *Robinson Crusoe*, sec. 4.

A variety of other theories will be found in the "Historical Magazine," Vol. I. pp. 122, 186, 245.

**Doless.** Inefficient. "He's a *doless* sort of a fellow."

**Dolittle.** A drone; an idle person.

**Do me.** Such a thing will *do me*, meaning that it will answer my purpose.

**Domestics.** (Used only in the plural.) Domestic goods, *i. e.* cotton goods of American manufacture.

**To donate.** To give as a donation; to contribute. The word has only recently been admitted into the dictionaries of Worcester and Webster.

There have been received from the Foreign Bible Society \$7,000, not including \$1,000 recently *donated*. — *Baptist Missionary Herald*, *Rep.* 1846.

The display of articles exhibited [at the Fair in Albany] was very tasteful and attractive; and the friends of the cause in Massachusetts and other places *donated* liberally. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 6, 1846.

Mr. Peabody *donates* to the city of Baltimore an institute for the moral and intellectual culture of the inhabitants. — *N. Y. Herald*, Feb. 19, 1857.

**Donation.** That which is given or bestowed; a gift, a grant. *Donation* is usually applied to things of more value than *presents*. — Webster.

Webster says that *donation* is usually applied to things of more value than *presents*; but while such may be true in the States, I have known it applied here to a basket of musty cakes. I suppose that *donation* has a certain meaning in law. Its most ordinary English application is to a single gift in money, in contradistinction to the periodical payments of a fixed sum or subscription. When applied to a *present*, public or private, I apprehend such an application of the term has its origin in mere pomposity. The language stands in no need of such an expression so long as we have our old Saxon *gift*. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**Donation Party.** A party consisting of the friends and parishioners of a country clergyman assembled together, each individual bringing some article of food or clothing as a present to him. Where the salary of a clergyman is small, the contributions at a *donation party* are very acceptable. It is also called a *giving party*. See *Pound Party*.

In the "Bedott Papers" is an amusing description of a *donation party* given to a country minister who had a salary of but \$400 a year. On this occasion, the visitors were very numerous, and the articles presented so very few that the minister's family were compelled to contribute the larger portion of the refreshments. The poor clergyman sent in his resignation immediately after, and, on being asked by a deacon for the reason of his sudden withdrawal, answered:—

I've been your pastor two years, and you've had the kindness to give me two *donation parties*. I've stood it so far, but I can't stand it any longer; brethren, I feel convinced that one more *donation party* would completely break me down. p. 271.

Marietta Holley, in her amusing book called "My Opinions and Betsy Bobbet's," has an amusing account of a donation party.

Some folks carried the littlest things. There was a family of seven hearty men and women, and all they carried was a book-mark of perforated paper and a plate of cookeys. There were seven book-marks and fourteen pair of slips for the minister's only boy. Of course there were some other things; a few sassage, a little flour, and some dried blackberries. — *Ibid.* p. 207.

**Done**, instead of *did*; as, "I *done* it," "They *done* the business." A common vulgarism in the State of New York, also heard in the province of Leinster, Ireland. An officer wrote to his general, in the late war, that his troops "*done* their duty;" and in certain letters purporting to be from the "upper ten," in praise of Dr. Townsend's medicines, we read that "they *done* the writers great good."

**Done** with a past participle, as "he's *done* come, *done* gone, *done* said, *done* did it," &c., is a Negro vulgarism frequently heard at the South.

Oh! she waked me in the mornin', and it's broad day;  
I look'd for my canoe, and it's *done* gone away.

*Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 133.

I'm mighty easy on the trigger, and the next mornin' I was *done* gone. I kissed the old woman, spanked the children, threaten'd the niggers, promised the overseer a new covering and demijohn of red eye if all went straight, got all my little fixins together, and off I set. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

"Why, Tomtit, what upon earth is this for?" said Nina.

"Laws, missis, there's been a gentleman waiting for you these two hours. And, missis, she's *done* got on her best cap, and gone down in the parlor for him." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 139.

"How d'y Miss Kate," returned Bob, grinning; "Uncle Pete is *done* dead and buried."

"Is that a fact?" asked Mr. Mitchell, looking out.

"Fac truf, Mas'r! an' what's more, Aunt Milly is like to die too; she's gruv herself nearly to death 'bout it." — *Emma Bartlett*.

When you come in too late for the early breakfast at a Texas hotel, the sable attendant will tell you "dey 's all *done had* breakfast an hour ago." A thing is never done in Texas, it is *done done*. A person has never gone anywhere, but *done gone*. And if the waiter tells you he has really done something you have employed him to do, he will say that he has "*done gone and done done it*." His power of assertion can go no further. — *Texas Cor. Chicago Tribune*.

**Donock.** A stone; a term almost peculiar to Arkansas, though used more or less throughout the South. In the West it is *Dornick*.

Then bring me a couple of *donocks*,  
Place them at my head and my toe,  
And do not forget to write on it  
The name of old Rosin-the-bow. — *Song, Rosin the Bow*.

**Do-Nothing.** An idle, worthless fellow, who will take his ease in his own way, and labor only when compelled to.

Every New England village, if you only think of it, must have its *do-nothing* as regularly as it has its school-house or meeting-house. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, ch. iv.

There is on the face of the earth no *do-nothing* whose softness, idleness, general inaptitude of labor, and universal shiftlessness can compare with that of this worthy as found in a brisk Yankee village. — *Ibid.*, ch. iv.

The Rip Van Winkle of Irving is a good specimen of the *do-nothing* class of village idlers.

**Don't amount to much.** In speaking of a person of little account, or one of no consequence, it is common to say, "He don't amount to much." In England, they would say "no great shakes."

**Don't know.** Often, indeed generally, pronounced *dunno*.

**Don't know as I know.** These expressions are often used introductoryly in reply to a question. One asks a question, when the reply is, "Wall, don't know as I know," though pronounced *Donó-zi-nó*. A story told in Salem, Mass., runs thus:—

A West India merchant described to an English friend the Yankees as being remarkable for their want of information; they didn't know what they had, and they readily confessed to that effect. The friend was incredulous, but at that moment a Yankee skipper entered the counting-room, was asked, "What have you brought this time?" and replied "Well, I don't know: onions, flour, &c." Said the merchant to his friend, "Didn't I tell you the truth?"

**I don't know as I shan't,** for I don't know but I shall. This uncouth expression, Mr. Hurd says, is very common in the eastern towns of Massachusetts, near Cape Cod. — *Grammatical Corrector*.

**Don't see it.** *I don't see it* is a very common expression, equivalent to dissent.

**Doodle.** A Yankee-doodle; a Yankee; a Unionist.

Whoop! the *Doodles* have broken loose,  
 Roaring round like the very deuce!  
 Want a weapon? Why, capture one!  
 Every *Doodle* has got a gun,  
 Belt, and bayonet, bright and new,—  
 Kill a *Doodle*, and capture two.

*Rockingham Virg. Register, War Song.*

**Doodle Bug.** A kind of beetles which live in holes in the ground. By calling *doodle* several times near their holes, it is said the bugs will come out. Louisiana.

**To doom.** To tax at discretion. A New England term.

When a person neglects to make a return of his taxable property to the assessors of a town, those officers *doom* him; that is, *judge* upon, and fix his tax according to their discretion. — *Pickering*.

The estates of all merchants, shopkeepers, and factors, shall be assessed by the rule of common estimation, according to the will and *doom* of the assessors. — *Massachusetts Colony Laws*, p. 14, ed. 1660.

**Doomage.** A penalty or fine for neglect. Laws of New Hampshire. — *Webster*.

**Door-Rock.** The door stone or step. Western.

**Doree.** A fish commonly called *John Dory* with us as in England. This last name is a corruption of the French *jaune dorée*, golden yellow, which is the color of the fish.

**Dory.** A kind of boat for fishermen.

**Doted.** Changed, or half rotten; as, "*doted* wood." West and South.

**Do tell!** A vulgar exclamation common in New England, and synonymous with, Really! Indeed! Is it possible!

A bright-eyed little demoiselle from Virginia came running into the dairy of a country-house in New Hampshire, at which her mother was spending the summer, with a long story about a most beautiful butterfly she had been chasing; and the dairy-maid, after hearing the story through, exclaimed, *Do tell!* The child immediately repeated the story, and the good-natured maid, after hearing it through a second time, exclaimed again, in a tone of still greater wonder, *Do tell!* A third time the story was told, and the third time came the exclamation of wonder, *Do tell!* The child's spirits were dashed, and she went to her mother with a sad tale about Ruth's teasing her; while poor Ruth said that "those *doon* country gals were so strange; keep telling me the same thing over and over. I never see any thing like it!" — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

**Double.** A flower the number of whose petals is increased by cultivation is said to be *double*; when the increase is very great, it is termed *very double*!

**Double-End.** A kind of steam gunboat built and employed during the late civil war, round at both ends.

**Double-Horse.** Doing or attempting to do two things at once;



twaddling; having a two-faced character or position. See *One-Horse*.

Members of Congress who perform the great *double-horse* act of riding both [Gen. Fremont's] proclamation and Halleck's General Order No. 3 [regarded as contradictory to or inconsistent with said Proclamation].—*N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 27, 1861.

**Double-jaded.** To ride double-jaded is to ride with a pillion.

**Double Ripper.** Two sleds from six to ten feet apart connected by a plank, upon which boys slide down hill. Many accidents have been caused by their use. Also called a *Doubler*.

The *double-ripper* now is laid aside with other engines of calamity.—*Newspaper*.

**Dough.** Dough-facism; semi-secessionism; want of loyalty.

The Rhode Islanders should have given us our Loyalty and our *Dough* on separate plates; for the strongest stomachs will hardly relish such a salmagundi as this.—*N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 27, 1862.

**Dough-Faces.** A contemptuous nickname, applied to the Northern favorers and abettors of negro slavery. The term generally means a pliable politician, one who is accessible to personal influences and considerations. It was first applied, however, by John Randolph of Roanoke to such Northern members of Congress as manifested especial willingness to fall in with the views and demands of the South on questions involving the "peculiar institution." Speaking of the Northern Democrats, he bitterly said:—

I knew that these men would give way. They were scared at their own *dough-faces*,—yes, they were scared at their own *dough-faces*. We had them; and, if we had wanted more, we could have had them.

The truth is that, while the Southerners need and are willing to pay for the services of the *dough-faces*, they dislike their persons and despise their discourse. *N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1848.

Thanks to a kind Providence and the manly straightforwardness of John C. Calhoun, the great question of extension or non-extension of human slavery under the flag of this republic is to be pressed to a decision now. Desperate, idolatrous, and blind as is his devotion to slavery, we would sooner see him President to-morrow than any *dough-face* in the Union.

This term has also been applied to Southern men who are false to the principles of slavery, as Northern *dough-faces* are to the principles of freedom.

There was a disposition in the Senate to evade the question,—to slip a bill for the establishment of the Oregon territory through the Senate, without calling attention to the slavery question, and under the immediate pressure of the demand made for the military defence of the territory from the Indians. The Whigs of the North and of the South were silent. The Democratic Cass men of the North and of the South were *mum*. Two-thirds of the Senate were *dough-faced*. There are Southern as well as Northern *dough-faces*; men looking to the spoils care

not for principles, whether they be of the North or of the South. — *Washington Cor. N. Y. Com. Adv.*, June 4, 1848.

**Dough-Facism.** Truckling to the slave power.

The slaveholders will cling to the institutions of slavery as long as new markets are being opened for their slaves. Let the people of the free States see to it that it is circumvented by every reasonable means. If they are firm, the *dough-facism* of their representatives will be cured. — *Letter of J. C. Snodgrass, of Baltimore*, 1849.

**Dough-Head.** A soft-pated fellow, a fool.

**Doughnut.** A small, roundish cake, made of flour, eggs, and sugar, moistened with milk, and boiled in lard. — *Webster*. According to Halliwell, the term *donnut* is used in Hertshire, to denote a pancake made of dough instead of batter. In speaking of the preparations for a picnic, Mr. Shillaber says:

And then he lays in lots of pickings,  
Mammoth *doughnuts*, legs of chickens;  
For prices down at Hampton Beach  
Are very much beyond his reach. — *Poems*.

Mr. Elliott, in describing the manners and customs of the olden time in New England, says: —

At the supper-table many a sweet thing was whispered behind a *doughnut*, and many a sentiment tucked in a pie. — *New England History*, Vol. I. p. 468.

Hannah is a smart, willin' gall, and a rael worker, and a prime cook into the bargain; but let her alone for in the *doughnut* line and for pumpkin pies. — *McClintock's Tales*.

**Dove. Dived.** Very common among seamen, and not confined to them. The Rev. A. C. Geikie says: In England, when a swimmer makes his first leap, head foremost, into the water, he is said to *dire*, and is spoken of as having *dived*, in accordance with the ordinary and regular construction of the verb. Not so, however, is it with the modern refinements of our Canadian English. In referring to such a fact here, it would be said, not that he *dived*, but that he *dove*. Even Longfellow makes use of this form — so harsh and unfamiliar to English ears — in the musical measures of his *Hia-watha*: —

"Straight into the river Kwasind  
Plunged as if he were an otter,  
*Dove* as if he were a beaver," &c.

*Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**Dowd.** A woman's night-cap, composed of two pieces of cloth, the seam running from the forehead to the neck. It is sometimes called a "squaw-shaped cap." New York. The word is used in the same sense in Devonshire, England.

**Down.** A low condition; feeling less sanguine than is usual: as “*Up*” denotes a condition or state of mind higher than is usual. “He has his ups and downs.” “The ups and downs of business.” See at *In*.

**Down Cellar,** for down in or into the cellar, is a common New England expression. So, too, is “up garret.”

**Down Country.** Used in the interior to denote on or toward the sea-board; occasionally, the sea-board, or the land near a river’s mouth. Comp. *Up Country*, &c.

**Down East.** 1. In or into the Eastern States, *i. e.* New England.

2. Maine, sea-coast of Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

We have never heard of better missionary ground than *down East*; the people intelligent, the climate healthful, the villages numerous and wealthy. — *N. Y. Christian Enquirer*, Sept. 9, 1848.

Mr. Hill, in one of his visits *down East*, was belated one evening, and was compelled to seek shelter in a farm-house. — *G. H. Hill, Tales*.

**Down Easter.** 1. A New Englander.

2. Properly, as used in Massachusetts, a native or resident of Maine.

**Down upon.** To be down upon is to seize with avidity, as a bird of prey would pounce *down upon* its victim. Alluding to the state of the poultry market, the “*New York Tribune*” says:—

The boarding-house keepers are *down upon* geese.

This phrase is also used to express disapprobation, dislike, or enmity; as, “I’ll be *down upon* you,” *i. e.* I’ll come up with you, or pay you off for some injury or insult, &c. A common expression at the West is, “I’ll be *down upon* you like a thousand of brick.”

**To doxologize.** To give glory to God, as in doxology; to praise with doxologies. — *Webster*.

No instance is to be found in which primitive Christians *doxologized* the spirit of God as a person. — *Christian Disciple*, Vol. II. p. 295.

Mr. Pickering says he “never met with the word in any other American work nor in any English publication, but that it may possibly be a part of the professional language of divines.” Mr. P. further observes that he found it in the early editions of the dictionaries of Ash and Bailey, from which it was afterwards discarded.

**Drag out.** A “knock down and *drag out*” is a fight carried to extremities. The term *drag out* seems to be also used at the South, to denote a bully, a tearer.

“Knock down and *drag out*, —

Carry on the war, boys.” — *Old War Song of 1813*.

Set to your partner, Dolly, — cut him out, Jim, — Sal does put her foot down good. The yellow roan 's up! He 's a rael stormer, ring clipper, snow belcher, and *drag out*. — *Southern Sketches*.

**Dragged-out.** Fatigued; exhausted; worn out with labor.

**Drat it.** To curse a thing. Derived, probably, from the expression "Odd rot it."

**To draw a Bead.** To take aim with a rifle, by gradually raising the front sight, called the *bead*, to a level with the hind sight.

One look from the Colonel brought White's rifle up to his cheek; he *drew a bead* on him mighty quick, and the lawyer stopped his lumbering and moved off. *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

The Missourians, with their long, five-foot barrel rifles, which were their constant companions, could *draw a bead* on a deer, a squirrel, or the white of an Indian's eye, with equal coolness and certainty of killing. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 151.

The moon rose, . . . and rifle in hand we approached the trees where the unconscious birds were roosting. Creeping along the round, I raised my rifle and endeavored to obtain a sight, but the light was too obscure to *draw a bead*. *Ruston's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 181.

**To draw a Straight Furrow.** A metaphor taken from the ploughman. Also, "to *run a straight furrow*." To mind one's own business; to do one's proper work, without turning aside or being diverted to "side issues;" to go straight ahead.

Governor B. is a sensible man;  
He stays to his home and looks arter his folks;  
He *draws his furrow* as straight as he can,  
And into nobody's tater-patch pokes.  
*Lowell, The Biglow Papers*.

**Dreadful.** Very, exceedingly. This and the words *awful*, *terrible*, *desperate*, *monstrous*, &c., are indiscriminately used by uneducated people for the purpose of giving emphasis to an expression.

I never see a woman on the road so *dreadfull* late, in all the days of my 'versall life. Who are you? — *Madam Knight's Journal* (1704), p. 12.

A correspondent says, "I shall never forget how emphatically a man in about 1842 said what I did not understand, 'Dr. Fisk [of New Braintree, Mass.] is a *dreadful good* man.'"

There was a swod of fine folks at Saratoga, and *dreadful* nice galls. — *Major Downing's Letter*, p. 35.

It's a fact, Major, the public has a *dreadful* cravin' appetite for books. — *Ibid.*, *May-day in N. Y.*, p. 4.

The young ladies thought Mr. Harley's new storekeeper a *dreadful* nice young man, if he hadn't such a horrid nose. — *Chronicles of Pineville*.

She was a *dreadful* good creature to work. — *Mrs. Clavers*.

It is used in the same way in England, in the Westmoreland and Cumberland dialects:—

I send to this an, to tell thee amackily what *dreadful* fine things I saw i' th' road tuv at yon Dublin. — *Poems and Glossary*, p. 125.

**Dress.** A woman's gown.

**To dress.** *To dress to death, dress to kill, dress to the nines*, and, in the South, *to dress up drunk*, are women's phrases, which signify to overdress, dress to excess.

When you see a gentleman tiptoeing along Broadway, with a lady wiggle-wagging by his side, and both *dressed to kill*, as the vulgar would say, you may say that he looks out for himself and takes care of A. No. 1. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 208.

**Dressing.** Stuffing; forced meat; gravy.

**Drink.** A river. "The Big *Drink*" is a common term applied by South-western people to the Mississippi River.

The old boat was a rouser, — the biggest on the *drink*, had the best officers, and paid the best prices. — *Major Bunkum*, in *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

He kept shoving the boat out, and the first thing I knowd, down I went, ker-wash, into the *drink*. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 36.

About evenin' I got my small dug-out, and, fixin' my rifle in the fore eend, I jest paddled over the *drink*. — *A Night on the Missouri*.

**Drinking.** "He 's a *drinking* man," i. e. a toper.

**Drinks.** *Mixed Drinks.* See *Liquors*.

**Drive.** 1. In Texas, the annual gathering of large herds of cattle for the purpose of branding. This is provided for by law in California. See *Rodeo* and *Judges of the Plain*.

When a regular *drive* is made, a dozen neighbors, from twenty miles or more about, assemble at a place agreed upon, each man bringing two or three extra horses. These are driven before the company, and form the nucleus of the cattle herd collected. They first drive the outer part of the circuit, within which their cattle are supposed to range, the radius of which is here about forty miles. All cattle having their marks, and all calves following their cows, are herded and driven to pens which have been prepared. They are absent from two to three weeks upon the first *drive*, usually contriving to arrive by night at a pen in which the stock are enclosed, otherwise guarding them in the open prairie. When the vicinity of a house is reached, the cattle are divided. The calves are branded, and all turned loose again. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 369.

2. The great mass of logs accumulated during the winter near a stream for the purpose of being floated down to tide-water in the following spring. Maine and Canada.

**Driver.** 1. He or that which drives; a coachman, a carman. — *Worcester*. In England, the driver of a carriage is called a "coachman."

2. A negro-driver, an overseer of slaves on a plantation.

The estates [of the planters] were managed by overseers, who directed the agricultural operations and managed the slaves through colored deputies called *drivers*. — *South Carolina Society, Atlantic Monthly* for 1877, p. 671.

3. Among lumbermen, the man who directs the floating or driving of logs and timber from the woods where cut down a river to navigable waters. Maine and Canada.

Throughout this long and painful journey, the *driver* is ever present, constantly hovering near his precious charge; now working for hours in the chilling water, where the ice runs in masses, lifting with heavy pikes, &c. — *Harper's Mag.*, Vol. XX. p. 449.

**To drive the River.** An expression used by lumbermen, meaning to direct the passage of rafts, logs, or timber down a river to tide-water. It is a hazardous business, and requires men of great experience. Maine and Canada.

How glad I am, dear Tom, that you have obtained a substitute to *drive the river*, instead of going down yourself; you will be home sooner, and escape the many dangers of the river. — *Harper's Mag.*, Vol. XX. p. 448.

**Drive-Way.** 1. A passage; as from the passage to one's stable, or into a yard.

2. An unfloored strip of ground covered with a hay-loft used in stage-coach days at hotels, &c.

3. A passage overhung with a roof to shelter church-goers alighting at the side door of a church. New England.

**Driving Park.** Euphemistic designation of a race-course; ground appropriated to horse-racing. "A five-mile race at the *Driving-Park*." — *Boston Journal*.

**To be driving at.** "What are you *driving at*?" that is, what are you about? what object have you in view? A colloquial expression, in very common use.

We confess that we are exceedingly puzzled to know exactly what our long-cherished friend is *driving at*, in his repeated discussions of the question above involved. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

People ludicrate my situation, and say they don't know what the deuce I'm *driving at*. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

"I have heard enough now," said the recorder, "to know what you and he would be *driving at*." — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 135.

**Droger or Drogher.** (Dutch, *draager*, a carrier, a porter.) Lumber droger, cotton droger, &c. A vessel built solely for burden, and for transporting cotton, lumber, and other heavy articles.

**Drop.** The top-front of pantaloons. See the name formerly used for the same part, at *Fall*.

**Drop Game.** A trick practised by the light-fingered gentry of New

York and other Eastern cities on their country cousins. One drops a pocket-book containing a large roll of bank-notes a short distance before an approaching stranger, which a confederate picks up just as the stranger is about to do so. He opens the roll, affects surprise at his discovery, manifests sympathy for the loser, and tells the stranger that, being about to leave town, he will surrender it to him for \$10 or \$20, on condition that he will advertise it and endeavor to find the owner. Greenhorn eagerly snaps at the tempting bait; but on reaching his hotel finds, of course, that he is the possessor of a package of spurious money.

**Drop-Letter.** A letter *dropped* into the post-office for a resident of the same place, and which is therefore not to be mailed.

**Drummer.** A person employed by city houses to solicit the custom of country merchants. See *Drumming*.

**Drumming**, in mercantile phrase, means the soliciting of customers. It is chiefly used in reference to country merchants, or those supposed to be such. Instead of patiently waiting for these persons to come and purchase, the merchant or his clerk goes to them and solicits their custom. In this manner, the sale of goods is often expedited; and though the practice of *drumming* is held by some to be neither very modest nor very dignified, still it must be owned to add very largely, in certain cases, to the amount of goods sold. Indeed, without *drumming*, it is suspected that sundry houses which make a remarkable show and noise would do very little business.

The expenses of *drumming* amount to no small sum. Besides employing extra clerks and paying the extra price for their board at the hotels, the merchant has to be very liberal with his money in paying for wine, oyster suppers, theatre tickets, and such other means of conciliating the favor of the country merchant as are usually resorted to by *drummers*. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, ch. 9.

**Drunk.** A drinking bout. The expression is common, "Such a one is on a big *drunk*."

**Dry up.** 1. To be or become cheerful. 2. To be silent; to "hush up."

**Dubersome.** Doubtful. A vulgarism common in the interior of New England. *Duberous* is used in England.

I have been studyin' Tattersall's considerable, to see whether it is a safe shop to trade in or no. But I'm *dubersome*; I don't like the cut of the sporting folks here. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 28.

Before noon, rain came, and then the pilot muttered that he felt *dubersome* about the appearances. — *Lieutenant Wise, Scampavia*, p. 18.

**Dubous.** A mispronunciation of *dubious*.

**Dud-Chest.** A clothes' chest. *Duls* is a Scottish word for old clothes, and is much used here in the same sense.

**Duk' o' Darby.** (Duke of Derby.) The bobolink, which see.

**Dug-out.** 1. The name, in the Western States, for a boat or canoe hewn or *dug out* of a large log. They are common in all the rivers and creeks of the United States and Canada. In the latter country, they are called *log canoes*.

A cypress suitable for a canoe, or *dug-out*, was selected, and in two days shaped, hollowed out, and launched. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 35.

After a fashion I got to my *dug-out*, with no weapon along but the paddle. Snags were plenty. I felt strong as a boss too; and the *dug-out* hadn't leaped more 'n six lengths afore — co-souse I went! — the front end jest lifted itself agin a sawyer and emptied me into the element. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

2. A house set on, and partly consisting of, a hillside. Western.

**Dull Music.** A term applied to any thing tedious.

**Dumb Betty.** A washing machine, barrel-shaped, with a rotary shank.

**Dumb Chill** or **Dumb Ague.** An expression common in malaria regions to denote that form of intermittent fever which has no well defined "chill."

**To dump.** To unload wood, coal, &c., from a cart by tilting it up. The word is used in Devonshire in the sense of to knock heavily, to stump. Hence, probably, its American application.

You would have thought it ridiculous, my fair friends, if your parents had told you that you were to love such a one, and nobody else, as though the heart's affections were a load of wood, — as easily *dumped* at one door as another. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 254.

I once got twenty dollars from an omnibus driver for running into my carriage, knocking off a wheel, and *dumping* my wife and child into the street. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 149.

**Dumpage.** 1. The privilege of dumping loads from carts, especially loads of refuse matter. — *Webster*.

2. A fee paid for such a privilege. — *Ibid*.

**Dump-Cart.** A cart that tilts up in front, and so "dumps" its load behind.

**Dumping-Ground.** A low piece of ground where earth, &c., is to be deposited for the purpose of raising its level.

There is much difficulty in getting *dumping-grounds* for the dirt from the streets; but the contractors say they can and will do the work. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Dumpy.** Sad; surly; dumpish.

The sweet, courteous, amiable, and good-natured "Saturday Review" has *dumpy* misgivings upon the same point. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 12, 1862.

**Dunfish.** Codfish cured in a particular manner, by which they acquire



a *dun* color. They command a higher price, and are much superior to those cured in the ordinary way.

**Dungaree.** A vessel used for conveying *dung*, as at New York and in along the shores of Connecticut.

**Dunning.** A peculiar operation for curing codfish. — *Webster*. Fish for *dunning* are caught early in the spring, and often in February. At the Isles of Shoals, off Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the cod are taken in deep water, split, and slack-salted; then laid in a pile for two or three months, in a dark store, covered for the greatest part of the time with salt hay or eel-grass, and pressed with some weight. In April or May, they are opened and piled as close as possible in the same dark store till July or August, when they are fit for use. — *J. Haven*.

The process of *dunning*, which made the [Isle of] Shoals fish so famous a century ago, is almost a lost art, though the chief fisherman at Star still *duns* a few yearly. — *Thaxter, Isles of Shoals*, p. 83.

**Dunnow's I know.** The nearest your true Yankee ever comes to acknowledge ignorance. — *Lowell*.

**Durham Boat.** A large, open, flat-bottomed boat, formerly used on the St. Lawrence, Mohawk, and other rivers. They were used as freight boats only, and were propelled against the current by means of poles.

**Durned.** A softened pronunciation of *damned*.

**Dust.** To dust is to depart rapidly.

**Duster.** An outside garment, generally made of brown linen, to protect railway travellers from dust. During the late Centennial Exhibition, thousands of people from the country flocked to the Eastern cities, wearing this garment, who were known to the hotel-clerks as the "*duster* community."

"They go everywhere," said a clerk of a New York hotel, "and are the busiest people you ever heard of. They don't have time to take their *dusters* off; they come in their *dusters*, they eat in their *dusters*, and to the best of my belief they sleep in their *dusters*. Why, a man told me that he counted 914 linen *dusters* the other morning on Broadway between Union Square and Wall Street. But if any one supposes that behind that expanse of linen there beats a heart unused to the ways of the world, he is very much mistaken. I have found our guests to be shrewd, well-informed, well-to-do persons, with no desire to take advantage of others, and with no intention of being cheated themselves." — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 23, 1876.

**Dutch.** *It beats the Dutch* is an expression often applied, in New York and New England, to any thing astonishing. The earliest instance

of its occurrence that I have met with is in a Revolutionary song written during the siege of Boston, in 1775:—

And besides all the mortars, bombs, cannons, and shells,  
And bullets and guns, as the newspaper tells,  
Our cargoes of meat, drink, and cloaths *beat the Dutch* ;  
Now who would not tarry and take t' other touch ?

*New Eng. Hist. Register*, April, 1857, p. 191.

**Dutch-Curse.** The white field daisy, so called from its annoyance to farmers.

**Dutchman.** A flaw in a stone or marble slab, filled up by an insertion.

**Dutch Oven.** A tin screen placed before a kitchen range, or open wood-fire, within which is the meat to be roasted.

**Dutiable.** Subject to the imposition of duties or customs. — *Webster*.

This is a very convenient word, and is in common use, both by the officers of the customs, and by merchants having transactions with them.

The *dutiable* imports this year amount to about two hundred and ten million dollars, nearly one-half of which were imported the first quarter of the year. — *Speech of Senator Wilson*, May 24, 1858.

**Dyed in the Wool.** Ingrained; thorough.

The Democrats, on the authority of Mr. Cameron's letter, are beginning to claim General Taylor as a Democrat *dyed in the wool*, as a Democrat of the Jeffersonian order of 1798. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, May 24, 1847.

## E.

**Eagle.** A gold coin of the United States, of the value of ten dollars, so called from its bearing, on the reverse, the figure of the American eagle. There are also double-eagles of twenty dollars, as well as half and quarter eagles.

**Ear-Bob.** An ear-drop.

**Early Candle-Light.** Used to denote the beginning of the evening; as, "The meeting will begin at *early candle-light*."

**Ear-Mark.** The mark made on the ear of a horse, cow, pig, or sheep by its owner; and hence the token or signal by which a thing is known. So used also in the north of England. The laws of several of the States require the ear-mark of every proprietor to be recorded with the town-clerk, as evidence for reclaiming strays, &c.

**Earnest.** Boys call it playing marbles *in earnest*, when it is understood that the winners shall keep the marbles. Sometimes they say, *Let's play for keeps*.

**Earth Almond.** (*Cyperus esculentus*.) A perennial, indigenous to Southern Europe, growing in the form of a rush, some three feet high, producing small tubers the size of a common bean, and called by the Valencians "Chufas." It was one of the plants distributed by the Patent Office in 1854. — *White, Gardening for the South*. It is the *hub al azeez* of Egypt.

**Easy.** A word in common use among merchants and bankers. "Our bank is *easy*," meaning that its loans are not extended, or that money is plentiful. "The money market is *easy*;" or "money is *easy*," i. e. loans of money may easily be procured.

**East, for yeast.** North Carolina.

**East.** *About east* is about right; in a proper manner. A common slang expression in New England.

I went into the dining-room, and sat down afore a plate that had my name writ on a card onto it; and I did walk into the beef and 'taters and things *about east*.  
*B. Bigelow's Letters in Family Comp.*

**To eat, v. a.** To supply with food. A Western use of the word. It was used in the same way along the line of the Massachusetts and Vermont railways in 1843-47 at the cheap boarding-houses.

*Hoosier.* Squire, what pay do you give?

*Contractor.* Ten bits a day.

*Hoosier.* Why, Squire, I was told you'd give us two dollars a day and *eat* us. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 47.

**To eat Dirt.** To retract; to be penitent.

• A poem in the "New York Evening Post," entitled "A Vision of January 4, 1861," in describing a procession in Broadway, says:—

Houses in the Southern trade, although their skirts were clear,  
Had, for the sake of example, come in from far and near;  
They bore a sable banner, all lettered in gold foil,  
"After eating *so much dirt*, are we asked to swallow free soil?"

**Eddoes.** See *Cocos*.

**Educational.** Pertaining to education; derived from education; as, *educational* habits. — *Webster*. The authority cited by Webster for the use of this word is "Smith," — a rather indefinite one. Mr. Pickering says the word was new to him until he saw it in the following extract:—

It is believed that there is not an individual of the college who would, if questioned, complain that he has, in any instance, felt himself pressed with opinions which interfered with his *educational* creed. — *Dr. Grant's Report to the Trustees of New Jersey College*, 1815.

**Bel-Grass.** (*Zostera marina*.) A plant thrown ashore in large quantities by the sea. It is also called *Sea-wrack*.

A large number of good-looking swine are kept, and are littered with *eel-grass*, which is converted into compost. — *Jackson, Geology of Rhode Island*, p. 153.

**Eel-Skin.** A thin, narrow slip of paper, with the name of a candidate on one side, and coated with mucilage on the other, so as to be quickly and secretly placed over the name of an opponent, on a printed ballot. (New England and New York.) "Eel-skins," judiciously distributed, are the most efficient instruments for "splitting tickets," and securing the election of some favored nominee on a ticket otherwise in the minority.

**Eel-Spear.** A sort of trident for catching eels. Called, in England, an Eel-shear.

**En a'most, for almost.** A vulgarism.

He knows the catechism, and has got the whole Bible *e'eny most* by heart. — *Margaret*, p. 113.

The village boys would raise a party of gals, and start off early in the morning for Toad Hill, where the blackberries was *e'en a'most* as plentiful as mosquitoes in these diggings. — *Lafayette Chronicle*.

Oh, 'tis a dreadful thing to be  
In such distress and misery!  
I'm *e'en a'most* a nateral fool,  
All on account o' Sally Poole. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**End, for end.** A vulgar pronunciation of the word, which is also common in various parts of England.

**To egg.** To pelt with rotten eggs.

W. S. Bailey, the abolition editor of the "Newport (Ky.) News," was *egged out* of Alexandria, Campbell County, in that State, on Monday. — *Balt. Sun*, Aug. 1, 1857.

**To egg on.** To urge on.

**Egypt** A nickname given to southern Illinois: according to some, on account of its fertility; according to others, because of the mental darkness of its inhabitants. See example at *Yankeedom*.

**To elect.** To choose, to prefer, to determine in favor of. — *Webster*. The Americanism consists in the construction of this verb with a following infinitive.

In pursuance of the joint resolution of Congress "for annexing Texas to the United States," my predecessor, on the third day of March, 1845, *elected* to submit the first and second sections of that resolution to the republic of Texas, as an overture, on the part of the United States, for her admission as a State into our Union. This election I approved. — *Message to Congress*, Dec. 1, 1845.

If it be said that all travellers will not *elect* to go by the express train, and that there should be further time and greater allowance than five days, many travellers will take other routes, &c. — *Report on Pacific Railroad*.

**Elephant.** To see the elephant is to gain experience of the world, gen-

erally at some cost to the investigator. The phrase doubtless originated from some occurrence at a menagerie.

**Elevator.** 1. A mechanical contrivance for lifting grain, &c., to an upper floor; also a building containing one or more elevators.

2. A mechanical contrivance now in use at large hotels for carrying guests to the upper stories.

Josiah Allen's wife, being on a visit to New York, stopped at the Astor House.

"My room," says she, "was on the fifth story, and I told J. Beans'es ex-wife that how I was goin' to climb up them stairs I didn't know, I was so tuckered out. . . . I guess I can weather it some way."

*Mrs. Bean.* "Here is the *elevator*, be carried up."

There was a big nigger comin' right towards us, and I thought she meant him; for they have been called such funny names ever since the war, that I thought like "*Elevator*" was one of 'em. But I jest put my foot right down to once, and says I, firmly, —

"I hain't a-goin' to be dogged upstairs by that nigger," &c.

But Beans'es ex-wife explained it [*the elevator*] to me. There was a little room about as big as our smoke-house, all fixed off as neat as a pin, and all we had to do was to get in, and then we was histed right up in front of our room. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 295.

**Empire State.** The State of New York; so called from the enterprise of its people, its wealth, population, extent of canals, railroads, &c.

The *Empire State* is your New York;

I grant it hard to mate her;

Yet still give me the Nutmeg State,

Where shall we find a greater? — *Allin, Yankee Ballads.*

**Empt.** From the participle *emptied*, a word coined by old ladies in New England; as, "Go and *empt* out the water."

**Emptyings.** (Pron. *emptins*.) The lees of beer, cider, &c.; yeast, or any thing by which bread is leavened.

'T will take more *emptins*, by a long chalk, than this new party's got,  
To give such heavy cakes as these a start, I tell ye what.

*The Biglow Papers.*

**To engage.** To promise or pledge one's self to perform certain duties. In the State of Rhode Island, all civil or military officers, instead of being *sworn* to perform the duties which appertain to their offices, and to obey the laws, are *engaged* so to do.

From the formation of this colony in 1647, no person was compelled to take an oath, for the reason, probably, that it involved an act of worship; nor has any person since, under any circumstances, been obliged to take one. An affirmation, on penalty of perjury, has been received with as full effect as an oath. Persons appointed to office were, in the technical language of Rhode Island, *engaged* to the faithful performance of their duties; and the appointing power at the same time entered into a reciprocal engagement to the officer, wherein they *engage*

themselves to the utmost of their power to support and uphold the officer in the lawful performance of his duties. — *Colonial Records of Rhode Island*.

**Engine.** (Pron. *injine*, the last syllable rhyming with *line*.) A Fire-engine. See *Machine*.

**Engineer.** The engine-driver on our railroads is thus magniloquently designated.

**To enjoy.** To *enjoy bad health* is a whimsical yet by no means uncommon expression.

My husband *enjoyed miserable health* for a number of years afore he died. — *Widow Bedott*, p. 143.

A correspondent furnishes me the following: —

On meeting a friend, he said to him, How are you to-day? On his replying, with a very sober face, "Oh, *I enjoy very poor health*, indeed," he stared a moment at my assurance: Then you have made a high attainment in respect to Christian duties. I have *enjoyed poor health* considerable in my life, but never did I enjoy so much sickness, in so short a time, as I did on that pleasure excursion to the island.

**Eupishemo.** A word used West at the Rocky Mountains, to denote the housings of a saddle, the blanket beneath it, &c. The late George Gibbs, who gave me the word, said he could not trace it to the Spanish, and thought it might be Indian.

**To ensilage.** (Fr.) The act of preparing fermented corn-fodder; process, &c. This method is known in France as the *ensilage* of fodder, because the fodder is sometimes packed in "silos" or pits. In Germany, the product is called "sour hay." — *N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1877.

**To enthuse.** 1. To show enthusiasm; to manifest great delight in any thing. A recent word which is still confined to newspapers.

He did not, if we may be allowed the expression, *enthuse* to any extent on the occasion. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

The Providence liquor-dealers sent an emissary to this city to see if they could not work up some enthusiasm for Barnaby; but the dealers here would not *enthuse* worth a cent. — *Cor. Providence Journal*.

2. In a religious sense, to infuse a divine spirit within.

You present to them an object large enough to *enthuse* an angel's soul. — *Rev. C. L. Woodworth*.

**Entry.** The fee paid to the State upon entering an action in the Supreme Court or Court of Common Pleas in Rhode Island. Some other States use the same term.

**To enweave.** To inweave.

It is true that God has given to us, and *enwoven* in our nature, a desire for perfection and completeness made manifest to our senses. — *Mrs H. B. Stowe* in *The Independent*, April 3, 1862.

**Erie.** Hennepin (ch. xix.) says, "The Havens call this Lake *Erige*, or *Erilke*, that is, the Lake of the Cat;" but the inhabitants of Canada have softened it into *Erie*. In ch. lxix. he again mentions it as "Lake *Erie*, or of the Cat."

**Esquipomgole.** Another name for Kinnickinnick, or a mixture of tobacco and cornel bark.

**Esquire.** In England, this title is given to the younger sons of noblemen, to officers of the king's courts and of the household, to counsellors at law, justices of the peace while in commission, sheriffs, and other gentlemen. In the United States, the title is given to public officers of all degrees, from governors down to justices and attorneys. Indeed, the title, in addressing letters, is bestowed on any person at pleasure, and contains no definite description. It is merely an expression of respect. — *Webster*.

In our own dear title-bearing, democratic land, the title of *esquire*, officially and by courtesy, has come to include pretty much everybody. Of course everybody in office is an *esquire*, and all who have been in office enjoy and glory in the title. And what with a standing army of legislators, an elective and ever-changing magistracy, and almost a whole population of militia officers, present and past, all named as *esquires* in their commissions, the title is nearly universal. *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

**Essence-Pedler.** A skunk.

**Euchre.** A sort of game played with cards, very much in vogue throughout the United States. See *Yuca*.

**Euchred.** To be beaten at Euchre; checkmated; used up; and figuratively applied to one who has been defeated, outwitted, or foiled in any scheme. Comp. *Looed*.

Now Jefferson D., when you come to reflect,

Don't it strike you that somehow you've failed to connect?

Don't you think you cried game just a little too fast,

That you played a lone hand and got *euchred* at last? — *Vanity Fair*.

**Evacuation Day.** The day on which the British army evacuated the city of New York, Nov. 25, 1783, the annual return of which has been celebrated in that city for nearly a century. Speaking of old times in New York, Samuel Woodworth thus alludes to the day —

The British troops had gone away;

And every patriot true

Then kept *Evacuation Day*,

When this old house was new.

*New York Post*, March 27, 1877.

**Evener** (of a carriage). The swing splinter-bar.

**Evening.** In the South and West there is no afternoon. From noon till dark is evening. It is strange to an unaccustomed ear to be

accosted with "Good evening," at two or three o'clock in the day. Where this usage prevails, immediately after sunset it is "night."

**To eventuate.** To happen; to issue; to take effect. A word not unfrequently used in the United States, but rarely used by English writers. — *Worcester*.

**Everglades.** Tracts of land covered with water and grass; peculiar to the Southern States. In Florida, the term is applied to portions of the land lower than the coast, and but little above the level of the sea, covered with fresh water. The islands elevated above this swamp are called "hummocks."

**Everlasting.** Very; exceedingly.

New York is an everlasting great concern. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

**Everlasting.** *Life Everlasting.* (*Gnaphalium*.) So called from its medicinal properties (so the books say), but much more likely from the French "Immortelle," a similar plant, so named from the endurance of its flowers when dried.

**Every Once in a While.** A singular though very common expression, signifying the same as *every now and then*. It is probably English.

**Every which Way.** Everyway: anywise. Colloquial. It sometimes mars otherwise well-written works; *e. g.*, "The Land and the Book."

**Excellency.** A title given by courtesy to governors of States and to ministers of foreign countries. In Massachusetts, the title is given by the Constitution. We sometimes see it given to the President of the United States, for which there is no authority.

**Exchangeability.** The quality or state of being exchangeable. — *Webster*.

The law ought not to be contravened by an express article admitting the *exchangeability* of such persons. — *Washington*.

**Excursionist.** A person who goes on a pleasure trip. A common newspaper term.

At a few minutes past seven o'clock, on Saturday evening, the steamer "Powhatan" was loosed from her moorings, and, with some two hundred *excursionists* on board, steamed down the Potomac River. — *Wash. Evening Star*, July 6, 1858.

**The Executive.** The officer, whether king, president, or other chief magistrate, who superintends the execution of the laws; the person who administers the government; executive power and authority in government. — *Webster*.

**The Executive City.** Washington.

**To expect.** To think; to suppose, to anticipate. As, "I expect he



is at home." In speaking of this use of the word, Webster says, "This blunder, which is far too common, even among educated persons, ought to be studiously avoided by every one."

**Experience.** To give, tell, or relate one's *experience*, are phrases in use among certain sects, and meaning, to relate before a meeting of the church the progress of one's mind in becoming an ardent believer in the doctrines of Christianity.

Now, brethren and sisters, I'm going to give my *experience*, — to tell how I got religion. — *Western Pulpit*.

At these meetings there was praying and exhorting, and telling *experiences*, and singing sentimental religious hymns. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 214.

**To experience Religion.** To become converted.

I *experienced religion* at one of brother Armstrong's protracted meetings; — and I tell ye, them special efforts is great things, — ever since I came out I've felt like a new critter. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 108.

**Express.** A rapid conveyance of packages and goods, which in the course of the last twenty years has grown up into an enormous business in the United States.

**To express.** To transmit by a special messenger in anticipation of the regular mail.

The President's message will be *expressed* through to Boston, by order of the Postmaster-General. — *Washington Republic*.

**Express-Man.** A man belonging to an express office, who calls for and brings parcels with a wagon.

**Express-Office.** An establishment from which are transmitted parcels and goods.

**Express-Wagon.** The wagon in which packages, boxes, &c., are taken to and from an express office.

**Eye-Opener.** That which causes surprise.

**Eyes skinned.** To keep one's eyes *skinned* or *eyes peeled* is to be on the alert.

Keep your *eyes skinned* and your rifles clean; and the minute you find I'm back, set off. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Keep your *eye skinned* for sign, and listen to my horn. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II.

Now, Mr. Arch, I've got you, and if you don't keep your *eye skinned*, I'll lick you till your hide won't hold shucks. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

## F.

**To face the Music.** To meet the emergency. It corresponds to the English slang phrase, "to come up to the scratch."

The "Worcester Spy," Sept. 22, 1857, in commenting upon the commercial failures, says :—

Although such reverses would seem to fall with crushing weight upon some of our most substantial citizens, a strong determination to *face the music* is everywhere manifested.

Governor Chamberlain says he stands ready at all times to *face the music*. . . . He says, "I am amenable to the laws of South Carolina for my acts, and whenever the officers of the law wish to call me to account I shall respond." — *New York paper*.

**Factory Cotton.** Unbleached cotton goods, of domestic manufacture.

**Faculate.** To arrange, put in order, prepare. Local in New England, and evidently formed from *faculty*, as if *facultate*.

**Fair and Square.** Perfectly correct, honorable ; straightforward.

As to my principles, I glory  
In hevin' nothin' o' the sort ;  
I ain't a Wig, I ain't a Tory,  
I'm jest a candidate, in short ;  
Thet's *fair an' square* an' perpendicler.

Lowell, *The Biglow Papers*.

**To fair off, to fair up.** To clear off, clear up. South-western.

He quitted the boat at Natchez, moved to the North, and, whenever he see a fog risin', took to his bed and kept it till it *fair'd off*. — *Western Tales*.

There 's going to be a nasty fog to-night, and you had best run the boat till nine, and then tie up.—have the steam kept up, and call me if it *fairs up*. — *Major Bunkum, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Fair Shake.** A fair trade; a satisfactory bargain or exchange. A New England vulgarism.

**To fall.** Often improperly used for *fell* in the United States, and in some parts of England; as "to *fall* a tree," instead of "to *fell* a tree." — *Worcester*.

**Fall.** 1. The fall of the leaf; autumn; the time when the leaves drop from the trees.

This beautifully picturesque expression, which corresponds so well to its opposite *spring*, has been said to be peculiar to the United States. Mr. Pickering notices the following remark in Rees's Cyclopædia : "In North America, the season in which the fall of

the leaf takes place derives its name from that circumstance, and instead of *autumn* is universally called the *fall*." — ART. *Deciduous Leaves*. It is used, however, in England in the same sense; although *autumn* is as generally employed there as *fall* is in the United States.

What crowds of patients the town doctor kills,  
Or how last *fall* he raised the weekly bills. — *Dryden's Juvenal*.

Hash worked the farm, burnt coal in the *fall*, made sugar in the spring, drank, smoked, &c. — *Margaret*, p. 13.

2. The apparatus used in hoisting and lowering goods in warehouses, &c. The term is borrowed from a contrivance for the same purpose used on shipboard.

3. The upper front part of a pair of pantaloons; a drop.

**Falling Weather.** A rainy or snowy time.

**Fall-Way.** The opening or well through which goods are raised and lowered by a fall. It is often merely a succession of openings through the several floors of the building, which are generally unenclosed, and the source of frequent accidents.

**Family.** This word is often used to denote a man's wife and children, especially the latter. Hence the phrases, "a man of *family*," "Have you any *family*?" "How is your father's *family*?"

The term is also used in law books and statutes, exempting property from execution for debt.

**Family Room.** This term is applied, in the West, to a room generally occupied by the mother and young children to the exclusion of visitors and strangers.

**To fan out.** To make a show at an examination, alluding probably to the peacock spreading his tail. This term originated at the United States Military Academy at West Point, where for years it was local; but it is now gradually finding its way through the country.

**Fancies.** Fancy stocks, which see below.

Yesterday was a blue day in Wall Street: the *fancies* looked down, and the bears looked up. — *Stock Report N. Y. Herald*.

Take up any annual registry of the Stock Exchange, and you can check off in a moment the temporary *fancies* of the year by such as show the widest variations. — *Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 213.

**Fancy Stocks.** A species of stocks which are bought and sold to a great extent in New York. Unlike articles of merchandise, which may be seen and examined by the dealer, and which always have an intrinsic value in every fluctuation of the market, these stocks are wholly wrapped in mystery. No one knows any thing about them, except the officers and directors of the companies, who, from

their position, are not the most likely men to tell you the truth. They serve no other purpose, therefore, than as the representative of value in stock gambling. Nearly all the fluctuations in their prices are artificial. A small fluctuation is more easily produced than a large one; and, as the calculations are made on the par value, a fluctuation of one per cent on stock worth \$20 a share is just five times as much on the amount of money invested as it would be on a par stock. Consequently, if a "Flunkie" can be drawn in, he may be fleeced five times as quick in these as in good stocks. — *A Week in Wall Street*.

**Fandango.** (Spanish.) A lively dance. In Texas, New Mexico, and California, this term is applied to a ball or dance of any sort.

**Farallon.** (Spanish, pron. *farayón*.) A small, pointed island in the sea. The meaning of this geographical term, applied to islands on the California coast, has puzzled many.

**Farina.** 1. Wheaten grits.

2. Extra superfine flour of wheat.

**Farzino or Farziner.** A vulgar contraction of *far-as-I-know*, extensively used through New England and New York, including Long Island.

*Gen.* And what kind of characters are the Count and Countess?

*Doolittle.* Why, I han't been here such a despu'd while as to have larnt myself much about the matter. But, by hearsay, they are a topping sort of people, and pretty much like the Boston folks, full of notions. At times he is obstrepulous. He may be a straight-going critter, *farzino*, manwards; but in his dealings with t' other sex, he is a little twistical. — *D. Humphreys, Yankee in England*.

**Fast.** That lives at a rapid rate; dissipated. A flash word.

Mr. Cephas Bubble is undeniably the *fastest* young man in the market; for he's not only ashamed of his parentage and birthplace, but he is actually ashamed he was ever a boy. — *Miss Wellmont, Substance and Shade*, p. 108.

*Fast* books, like *fast* men, soon exhaust their constitutions — *Norton's Literary Gazette*.

**Fat-Pork Tree.** A name of the Coco-Plum. Barbadoes.

**Favored.** A term applied to the face; the expression of countenance; as, "She is long *favored*," which means that she has a long, pointed face. This use of the word was once common in England, but is now obsolete. Thus Shakspeare: —

A good *favours* you have, but that you have a hanging look.

The porter owned that the gentleman *favoured* his master. — *The Spectator*.

**Fearful.** Much, great, strongly. Pennsylvania.

**Feast.** A corruption of the Dutch *vies*, nice, fastidious. "I'm *feast* of it," is a literal translation of the Dutch *Ik ben er vies van*, i. e. I am disgusted with, I loathe it. A New York phrase, mostly confined to the descendants of the Dutch.

**To feather.** A friend has reminded me of this colloquial word, which is used in some parts of New England to denote the appearance of curdled cream, when it rises upon the surface of a cup of tea or coffee, in the form of little flakes, somewhat resembling feathers. We say, "The cream *feathers*." — *Pickering*.

**Feaze.** The same as *feeze* and *pheeze*.

England is, we are told, about to send three regiments to Canada. Don't get into a *feaze* about it. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 28, 1861, *Lett. from Paris*.

**Federal.** 1. Founded upon or formed by a league, treaty, or compact between independent States. The government of the United States is a *federal* government, as being formed by the union of several independent States, each surrendering a portion of its power to the central authority. A *federal* is strictly distinguishable from a national government (though in the United States the terms are often used indiscriminately), the latter being properly an aggregation of individual citizens. The Constitution of the United States is pronounced by Mr. Madison to be neither a national nor a federal constitution, but a composition of both. — *Federalist*, No. 39.

2. Pertaining to the United States; often in contradistinction from any or all of the States, as functionally considered.

**Federal City.** Washington, as the seat of government.

**Federal Currency.** The legal currency of the United States. Its coins are the gold *eagle* of ten dollars; the double eagle, twenty dollars; half and quarter eagles of proportionate value. The silver *dollar* of one hundred cents, its half, quarter, tenth, and twentieth parts. The coin of ten cents value is called a *dime*; that of five cents, a *half-dime*. The lowest coin in common use was the copper, now supplanted by the nickel *cent*. Half-cent coins have been made, but few or none of late years. In the commercial cities and along the sea-board, Spanish coins of a dollar and the fractional parts of a dollar were very common, and passed currently for their original value, until the act of February 21, 1857, which, by reducing the value of the quarter, eighth, and sixteenth of a dollar by twenty per cent, caused the foreign coinage to be suddenly withdrawn from the currency.

Previous to the adoption of our federal currency, *pounds*, *shillings*, and *pence* were used. But these denominations became unstable in

value, in consequence of the great depreciation which took place in the paper-money issued by the colonies.

In the year 1702, exchange on England was  $33\frac{1}{2}$  per cent above par; and silver and gold bore the same relative value to paper-money. The depreciation in the latter continued to increase until, in the year 1749, £1,100 currency was only equal to £100 sterling, or eleven for one. In 1750, a stop was put to the further depreciation of the money of the province of Massachusetts by a remittance from England of £183,000 sterling, in Spanish dollars, to reimburse the expense the province had been at in the reduction of Cape Breton in the old French war. The depreciated money was then called in, and paid off at the rate of a Spanish dollar for forty-five shillings of the paper currency. At the same time, a law was made fixing the par of exchange between England and Massachusetts at  $\text{£}133\frac{1}{2}$  currency for £100 sterling, and six shillings to the Spanish dollar.

The difference of exchange, or depreciation of the paper-money, regulated in the same manner the currencies of the other colonies. Throughout New England, as has been before stated, it was six shillings to the dollar of 4s. 6d. sterling. In New York, eight shillings, or about seventy-five per cent depreciation. Pennsylvania, 7s. 6d., or about sixty-six per cent depreciation. In some of the Southern States, it was 4s. 6d. to the dollar, and accordingly no depreciation. In Halifax currency, including the present British provinces, it was five shillings to the dollar, or about eleven per cent, &c.

In consequence of the above-named diversity in the colonial currencies, in New England the Spanish real of one-eighth of a dollar, or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents, is called a *ninepence*; in New York, a *shilling*; in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, *elevenpence* or a *levy*; and in many of the Southern States, a *bit*. The half-real, of the value of one-sixteenth of a dollar, is called in New York a *sixpence*; in New England, *fourpence ha'penny*, or simply *fourpence*; in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, a *flip*; and in Louisiana, a *picayune*. The disappearance of the coins from circulation already caused these names to fall likewise into disuse.

**Federalists.** An appellation in America given to the friends of the Constitution of the United States, at its formation and adoption; and to the political party which favored the administration of President Washington. — *Webster*.

**To federalize.** To unite in compact, as different States; to confederate for political purposes. — *Webster*.

**Feed.** Used as a noun, for grass; as, "tall *feed*," i. e. high grass.

**Feed-Trough.** A trough in which is placed the food for animals, as in sheds, and as fastened to posts, at which horses, &c., are fed in towns.

**To feel.** To *feel* to do a thing is an expression commonly used by some clergymen, for to feel inclined, to be disposed to do it.

**Feelay**, or *Gumbo feelay*. Sassafras leaves dried and powdered. Louisiana.

**Feet.** There are people who consider it witty to use this plural instead of its singular *foot*.

When I was a *feet* high, I was my mammy's joy,  
The ladies all caressed me, and called me pretty boy,  
They said I was a beauty, my face it was complete,  
Except this tarnal ugly nose, but it stuck out a *feet*.

*Western Melodies.*

**Feeze, Feaze.** "To be in a *feeze* " is to be in a state of excitement. Provincial in England. (Comp. Fr. *fâché*, angry.)

Larcenie is the felonious taking away of another man's personal goods without his knowledge or insight, yet without making any assault upon his person or putting him into a *fease*. — *Code of Laws of Rhode Island*, 1647.

Some years ago, we remember, New York was in its annual *feeze* about mad dogs, and the public mind was somewhat exercised touching the best method of doing murder upon the unhappy canines. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*, Oct. 16, 1848.

When a man's in a *feeze*, there's no more sleep that hitch. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**Fellow** or **Feller.** Very commonly used in the United States, in the sense of *lover, sweetheart*. See *Beau*.

**Fellow** or **Black Fellow.** A black man. Southern.

**Fellow-Countryman.** One belonging to the same country, a compatriot. This has been censured as an American pleonasm, like *play-actor*, inasmuch as good English usage has conferred this meaning on the word *countryman* alone. (See Pickering, *sub voce*.) Still, the want of a more definite expression has been felt in England as well as in this country; and the term *fellow-countryman*, as distinguished from *countryman*, rustic, as the French *compatriote* and German *landsmann* are distinguished from *paysan* and *landmann*, has long been used in America, and in England has been adopted and sanctioned by such authorities as Southey and Lord Brougham.

**Fellowship.** Companionship; consort; society. — *Johnson*. With us it is often used in religious writings and discourses, instead of the word *communion*, to denote "mutual intercourse or union in religious worship, or in doctrine and discipline."

**To fellowship.** A verb formed from the preceding noun. *To fellowship with* is to hold communion with; to unite with in doctrine and discipline. This barbarism appears with disgusting frequency in the reports of ecclesiastical conventions, &c., and in the religious newspapers generally. Mr. Pickering, in the Supplement to his Vocabulary, said he had just become acquainted with the word. The following is the first example which he gives:—

We considered him heretical, essentially unsound in the faith; and on this ground refused to *fellowship* with him. — *Address to the Christian Public, Greenfield, 1813.*

If the Christian Alliance could not *fellowship* with the Southern slaveholders for gain, they ought to say so outright. — *Speech at the Christian Alliance Conference, May 8, 1847.*

It is also used actively without the preposition, as in the following examples:—

How can we expect the fellowship of the preachers of the Reformation? I do not expect it, because our fellowship was predicated upon a vain uniformity of belief. If it were, I could never have *fellowshipped* them? — *Rev. J. B. Ferguson's Discourse.*

We therefore *fellowship* him in taking a course of preparatory studies for the Christian ministry. — *Board of Madison University, New York, Jan. 1, 1840.*

**Female.** A person of the female sex, a woman or girl. There has been much said of the use and abuse of this word, and whether it is proper to designate women by it. Doctor Johnson thus defines *female*: “A she; one of the sex that brings forth young.” Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, in speaking of the word, has the following remarks (we do not indorse her grammatical criticism): “Where used to discriminate between the sexes, the word *female* is an adjective. We do not object to the term when used necessarily, as an adjective; but many writers employ the word as a noun, which, when applied to woman, is improper, and sounds unpleasantly, as referring to an animal. To illustrate: almost every newspaper we open, or book we read, will have sentences like these: ‘A man and two *females* were seen,’ &c., ‘A gentleman was walking with a *female* companion,’ ‘The *females* were much alarmed,’ ‘A *female* child,’ &c. Now why is such a style of writing tolerated? Why is the adjective, which applies to all female animals, used as the noun designating woman? It is inelegant as well as absurd. Expressed correctly, thus, ‘A man and two women,’ &c., ‘A gentleman and a lady,’ ‘The women were alarmed,’ ‘A little girl.’ Who does not see and *feel* that these last sentences are in better taste, more correct in language, and more definite in meaning? We call on



our sex, on women, to use pen and voice to correct the error of language which degrades them by the animal epithet only."

In the House of Delegates in Maryland, in a debate "on the passage of the bill to protect the reputation of unmarried *females*," the title was amended by striking out the word "*females*," and inserting "women," as the word "*female*" was an Americanism in that application. — *Baltimore Patriot*, March, 1839.

At Birmingham, England, a few years since a woman advertised to walk a rope, blindfolded and in a sack, fell to the ground and was killed. Queen Victoria, on hearing of it, sent a letter to the Mayor of Birmingham, asking him to use his influence to put a stop to such exhibitions. Her Majesty's letter does credit to her good heart; but her amanuensis, who signs his name C. B. Phipps, thus wrote: —

"Her Majesty cannot refrain from making known through you her personal feelings of horror that one of her subjects — a *female* — should have been sacrificed to the gratification of the demoralizing taste, unfortunately prevalent, for exhibitions attended with the greatest danger to the performers."

Again, we have high English authorities for the use or rather misuse of the word. The "New York Post," March 3, 1877, in an article on the Tractarian Controversy in England, quotes the following remarks by Goldwin Smith, on the subject of the education of women: —

"Many young hearts and many deep heads," says the Professor, "naturally inclined to this reaction [Tractarianism], and a change in university and *female* education would extinguish the tendency almost in its source." To which the "Post" adds, "Mark the word *female*."

In the summer time, our inns are filled to bursting. Coaches run frantically from every point of the compass. . . . The donkeys in our streets multiply a hundred-fold, tottering under the weight of enormous *females* visiting our waterfalls. — *Miss Martineau, Autobiography*, Vol. I. p. 529, Boston ed.

**Fen.** A prohibitory exclamation used by boys in their games; as, "*Fen play!*" i. e. I forbid you to play, stop! Compare the Latin *defendo*, French *défendre*.

**Fence.** 1. In politics, "to be on the *fence*" is to be neutral, or to be ready to join the strongest party, whenever it can be ascertained which is so.

When every fool knows that a man represents,  
Not the fellows that sent him, but them *on the fence*,  
Impartially ready to jump either side,  
And make the first use of a turn of the tide. — *Biglow Papers*.

2. A house where stolen goods are received.

**Fence-Man.** A politician who is "on the fence."

All the *fence-men*, all the doubters, all the seekers after majorities, will now bustle up, come out, and declare that General Taylor is the most popular man in

the country, and that he was always their first choice. — *N. Y. Herald*, Oct. 14, 1848.

**Fence-Rail.** A rail used in fences.

*His fence-rails were all burned for firewood. — N. Y. Tribune.*

**Fence-Riding.** The practice of "sitting on the fence," or remaining neutral in a political contest until it can be seen "which way the cat is going to jump."

The South will not vote for a Northern candidate who is nominated as such, nor the North for a Southern man who is nominated on exclusive Southern principles. In this matter there can be no neutral ground. The dividing line is narrow, but distinct; it admits of no *fence-riding*; the candidate must be on one side or the other; and when the time shall come, that either the North or the South adopts a candidate on sectional grounds, it will not be difficult to foretell the issue. — *N. Y. Mirror*.

**Ferry-Flat.** A flat boat used for crossing, and sometimes for descending, the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Flint says: "The *ferry-flat* is a scow-boat, and, when used as a boat of descent for families, has a roof or covering. These are sometimes in the vernacular phrase called sleds." — *Hist. and Geog. of Miss. Valley*.

**To fetch up.** To stop suddenly. This sense of the word is not noticed in the English dictionaries, nor by Webster. "He *fetches up* all standing;" that is, he made a sudden halt. The more common phrase with us is, "He *brought up* all standing." It is a nautical vulgarism, the figure being that of a ship which is suddenly brought to, while at full speed and with all her sails set.

**Fetterlock. Fetlock.** New England. See *Fetterlock-deep*.

**Fetterlock-deep.** As high as, rising to, sinking in as far as to, the fetlocks.

I determined to . . . go on horseback to the Inlet. I found, however, that the distance was forty miles through heavy sand, *fetterlock-deep*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, *Let. from Fortress Monroe*.

**Fetticus or Vettikost, vulg. Fättikows.** (*Valerianella*.) Corn-salad or Lamb's-lettuce. A word used in New York.

**Fever-Bush.** Wild allspice, so called in Massachusetts. See *Spice-Bush*.

**Few.** Used as a slang term, *a few* means a little.

"I say, stranger, tell me about the trick of the wells' blowing up; and I'll tell you the trick of the gun, which rather skeared you *a few*, as I think." — *Hoffman, Forest Scenes*.

**F. F. V.** First Families of Virginia.

The famous initials F. F. V. have had their significance changed by some of our boys in the late campaign, in consequence of their constant alacrity in running, to Fast Footed Virginians. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug. 2, 1861.

The life of a trooper is pleasure and ease,  
Just suited to sprigs of the old *F. F. V.'s*.

*The Cavalier's Song.*

Dare you dispraise my royal parts,  
And prate of Freedom, Commerce, Arts?  
What are they to my pedigree?

Why, Adam was an *F. F. V.*! — *Ballad of King Cotton.*

**Fice, Fyse.** A term applied in Kentucky to a small dog; a cur. A friend informs me he has heard the term in Washington. It is an old English word, now obsolete and not found in recent English dictionaries or glossaries. Nares alone notices it under the name of *fyst*, from which comes *foist*, as a "foisting-Hound, or Cur, a small dog of the lap-dog kind." Nares quotes Coles's Dict.: "A fysting (foisting) cur." But the word is not in the first ed. of Coles, 1708. See *Fiste*.

As for shepherds' dogs, *foisting curs*, and such whom some fond ladies make their daily, nay, nightly companions too, I shall pass over. — *Gentleman's Recreations*, p. 23.

**Fid.** A *fid* of tobacco, is a "plug" or small piece, from "*fid*," a bunch of oakum put into the touch-hole of a gun to keep the powder dry. *Coles*.

**Fiddler.** A kind of small crab, with one large claw and a very small one. It lives on the salt meadows, where it makes its burrows.

*Fidlers* are a sort of small crabs, that lie in holes in the marshes. The raccoons eat them very much. I never knew any one to try whether they were good meat or no. — *Lawson's Carolina*, 1718.

Down from the pine woods we turn on the sandy beach, where whole armies of *fiddlers* are scurrying to their holes and marvellously disappear while we are looking at them, vanishing as huge rain-drops when they strike the earth. — *Florida Cor. Forest and Stream*.

[The Fish-Crows] alight on large mud flats bordering the salt-water marshes for the purpose of catching the small crabs called *Fiddlers*. — *Audubon, Ornith. Biog.*, Vol. II. p. 269.

**Field-Driver.** A civil officer, whose duty it is to take up and impound swine, cattle, sheep, horses, &c., going at large in the public highways, or on common and unimproved lands, and not under the charge of a keeper. New England.

**Field Martin.** A name sometimes given in the South to the King-Bird.

**Field-Hand.** A person who works in a field. A common term in the Slave States for an agricultural laborer. "A prime *field-hand*."

**Fiendishment.** A fiendish act or spirit.

The Proclamation will be but little more than the indecent expression of Lincoln's rage and *fiendishments*. — *Richmond Enquirer*, Dec., 1862.

**To fight the Tiger.** To gamble.

Strange, isn't it, that so many countrymen who come to New York to "see the elephant" will go and *fight the tiger*. — *N. Y. Commercial Adv.*

**To figure.** "Figure on that" means to consider it; to think it over. Western.

**File.** A cloth used for wiping a floor after scrubbing.

**File-Pail or Filing-Pail.** A wash-pail.

**Filibuster.** (Spanish, *filibustero*.) A freebooter. A word brought into common use in consequence of the expeditions against Cuba under Lopez in the year 1851, to the members of which expedition it was applied. It is from the Spanish *filibustero*, which, like the French *filibustier*, is itself a corruption of the English *freebooter*, German *freibeuter*, a term imported into England during the Low Country wars of Queen Elizabeth's time, and pretty generally applied to the Buccaneers who ravaged Spanish America about 1680-90. An attempt has been made to deduce the etymology of the word from the Low Dutch *vlie-boot*, i. e. *fly-boat*, a sort of Dutch clipper.

Our modern *filibusters* are the scum of our society, not men whom "quick bosoms" drive upon desperate adventures; but men whom rascality has outlawed, men whom society, instead of sending forth with blessings, kicks out with contempt. Broken-down gamblers, drunken lawyers, unsuccessful publicans, dissipated shoe-makers, detested swindlers, men under whose feet every plank has broken, are those who now-a-days assume the bearing, and attempt to walk in the footsteps, of Cortez or of Clive. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

**To filibuster.** 1. To acquire by freebooting.

What was Moses but a filibuster, whose mission was to dispossess tribes retrograding (or whose civilization was corrupting before matured), and to plant in their stead another people, whose subsequent annals show them to have been at least in no wise superior to our own? What were the Normans, from whom the sovereigns of Great Britain affect to derive their descent, and a portion of their title to the crown, but filibusters? What the Pilgrim Fathers but filibusters? What State, what territory in this Union has not been *filibustered* from the Indians, or purchased from those who had *filibustered* it? Have ever five years elapsed down to the present time since the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers that some of the monarchies of Europe have not, somewhere, been *filibustering* something? *Letter of General Henningsen to Senator Toombs, 1857.*

2. To be, to act as, a filibuster.

**Filibustering, Filibusterism.** Freebooting, freebootery. The word is now (1877) much used in politics, particularly in Congress, and means the sharp manœuvring of one political party to get an advantage over an opponent.

The history of British India is but one vast scheme of *filibustering*. Alexander the Great was a filibuster; so was Cæsar, and so Napoleon. Nicholas in his day

is a filibuster, and so was Charles the XII. Cortez was a filibuster, and every foot of Spanish dominion in America was acquired by *filibustering* alone. Every foot of Mexican soil is now under the dominion, language, laws, usages, and liturgy of *filibusterism*. — *California Pioneer*, Jan., 1854.

Colonel H. P. Watkins was convicted, March 24, 1854, in the United States District Court, of setting on foot a military expedition against the republic of Mexico, — in other words, of *filibusterism*. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 525.

**Fillipeen** or **Phillipina**. (German, *Vielliebchen*.) There is a custom common in the Northern States, at dinner or evening parties, when almonds or other nuts are eaten, to reserve such as are double or contain two kernels, which are called *fillipeens*. If found by a lady, she gives one of the kernels to a gentleman, when both eat their respective kernels. When the parties again meet, each strives to be the first to exclaim *Fillipeen!* for by so doing he or she is entitled to a present from the other. Oftentimes the most ingenious methods are resorted to by both ladies and gentlemen to surprise each other with the sudden exclamation of this mysterious word, which is to bring forth a forfeit. Another way of obtaining the forfeit by this game is to get one to take something from the hand of the other.

In a book on German life and manners, entitled "A Bout with the Burschens, or Heidelberg in 1844," is an account of the existence of this custom in Germany, which at the same time furnishes us with the etymology of the word: —

Amongst the queer customs and habits of Germany, there is one which struck me as being particularly original, and which I should recommend to the consideration of turf-men in England; who might, perhaps, find it nearly as good a way of getting rid of their spare cash as backing horses that have been made safe to lose, and prize-fighters who have never intended to fight. It is a species of betting, and is accomplished thus: Each of two persons eats one of the kernels of a nut or almond which is double. The first of the two who, after so doing, takes any thing from the hand of the other, without saying *Ich denke*, "I think," has to make the other a present of a value which is sometimes previously determined, and sometimes left to the generosity of the loser. The presents are called *Vielliebchens*, and are usually trifles of a few florins' value; a pipe, riding-whip, or such like.

**To fill the Bin.** To acknowledge; to come up to the mark. Cf. to acknowledge the corn?

"Sir," said he, — and he [W. L. Yancey] is a beautiful speaker and personally a very fine-looking man, — "are you the celebrated Parson Brownlow?" "I'm the only man on earth," I replied, "that *fills the bin*." — *Speech of W. G. Brownlow of Tenn.* in *N. Y. Herald*, May 10, 1862.

**Fills.** A common mispronunciation for *thills*, the shafts of a wagon or chaise.

**Finesied.** Made fine; dandified.

If this new judge is the slicked-up, *finessed* sort of a character they pictur' him, I don't want to see him. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 78.

**Flippenny Bit**, or, contracted, **Fip**. Fivepence. In Pennsylvania, and several of the Southern States, the vulgar name for the Spanish half-real. (See *Federal Currency*.) *Fippence*, for fivepence, is provincial in England.

**To fire**. To fling with the hand, as a stone or other missile.

**To fire away**. To begin; to go on. An expression borrowed from the language of soldiers and sailors.

The chairman rose and said: "We are not ready yet, we must go on in order." Calls for Mr. H——. Mr. H—— from the midst of the audience said, "Gentlemen, I beg to be excused. I came here to listen, not to speak." Loud cries of "Go ahead!" "Out with it!" "Fire away!" Whereupon he commenced. — *N. Y. Herald, Sketch of a Political Meeting*.

**Fire-Dogs**. A support for wood in a fire-place; andirons. — *Webster*.

**Fire-Eaters**. A name given by their political opponents to the advocates of extreme Southern views. Of recent introduction.

The *fire-eaters* in the territory and the *fire-eaters* outside do not at all agree in their views of what is proper to be done in reference to voting on the constitution. — *Lecompton (Kansas) Democrat*, Nov., 1857.

The *fire-eaters* are making a very "big boo for a little goose." There is no strength whatever out of the Gulf States; and, although they keep Walker very close in his room, he is seen and known enough to make all efforts to elevate him even to the rank of a bold pirate ridiculous. — *N. Y. Evening Post*, 1857.

The "Savannah Republican," in noticing the call for a convention of the Southern States previous to the late war, said: —

"Our noble band of sisters, all embarked in one common bottom, need not be taught their duty by a set of gassy, *fire-eating* politicians, such as are likely to constitute the staple of a Southern Convention."

**Fire-Hook**. A stout hook at the end of a spar, used in pulling down buildings when on fire.

**Fire-Hunt**. A hunt for game in the night with the aid of a long-handled pan containing light wood or pitch-pine knots ignited. This is carried on the shoulder of the hunter until he sees the eyes of the animal of which he is in pursuit.

The *fire-hunt* was Sam's hobby. He had often urged me to accompany him, just to see how slick he could shine a buck's eyes, and had drawn from me a promise to go with him on some of these hunts. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 171.

**To fire into the Wrong Flock** is a metaphorical expression used at the West, denoting that one has mistaken his object, as when a sportsman fires at a different flock from what he intended. It is synonymous with "To bark up the wrong tree."

I said, when General J—— cocked his gun and began his war upon the Senate, he would find he had *fired into the wrong flock*. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 81.

I will make that goney a caution to sinners I know. He has *fired into the wrong flock* this time. I'll teach him not to do it again. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 107.

**Fire-Water.** The name given by some of the Indian tribes to ardent spirits.

Magna's Canada fathers came into the woods, and taught him to drink *fire-water*, and he became a rascal. — *Cooper, The Last of the Mohicans*, p. 146.

The Taos whiskey, a raw, fiery spirit, has a ready market among the trappers and Indian traders, who find the *fire-water* the most profitable article of trade with the aborigines. — *Ruxton's Adventures in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 200.

**Fire-Wood.** Wood designed for fuel.

**Fire Zouave.** A term popularly applied to companies of Zouaves, the members of which had been firemen in the city of New York.

A Pet Lamb astonishes the Secessionists. The Richmond papers tell of a *Fire Zouave* who was caught and taken to Fairfax, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 18, 1861.

**First.** One, single. An absurd use of the word, which has recently crept into the newspapers and public speeches from the colloquial language of the West. "I won't pay you the *first* red cent;" i. e., I will not pay you a single cent.

And here was I, who had been half tempted to fret because a stream of water leaking through the top of the coach couldn't alight anywhere else but on my knees, which I couldn't move the *first* inch, absurdly fancying that but for that I might have slept. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, May 23, 1849.

Think how many of the young mechanics of New York, who are earning their ten or twelve dollars per week, do not save the *first* cent from one year's end to the other, but squander all they ought to lay up in dissipation. — *Ibid.*, Aug. 20, 1849.

I am not aware of having committed the *first* act which should bring upon me the displeasure of the house or any of its members. — *W. A. Gilbert's Speech in House of Representatives*, Feb. 27, 1857.

**First-Class.** A man in England possesses notable capacity, and people style him capable, or able, or great. In Canada, he is designated *first-class*. To speak of a *first-class* carriage, or a *first-class* prize, or even a *first-class* prize ox, may be right enough; but why apply phrases with such poor associations to men of splendid intellect? Is it not enough that a man be *great*? Will he seem any greater when indissolubly associated with a railway van? — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**First-Rate.** Of the first class or order; superior; superexcellent. An expression now in very common use, applied, as most superlatives

are in the United States, with very little discrimination. It was formerly said of large and important things, as "a *first-rate* ship." Now we hear of "*first-rate* pigs," "*first-rate* liquors," "*first-rate* lawyers."

The *first-rate* importance of the subject, and the real merits of the work, are deserving of a portion of our space. — *Westminster Review*, July, 1847.

A young woman wants a situation as a chambermaid. She is a *first-rate* washer and ironer, and plain sewer. — *Advertisement in N. Y. Tribune*.

It is also used adverbially; thus, if we ask a person how he is, he replies, "I am *first-rate*," i. e. in excellent health, very well.

Mr. Borthwick found the California Indians had acquired this use of the phrase; for, says he: —

When you salute them with "How d'ye do," or if you really want to know the state of their health, they invariably answer *fuss-rate*. So having ascertained that they were all *fuss-rate*, I made inquiries as to my way. — *Three Years in California*, p. 211.

Well, there 's some men whose natural smartness helps them along *first-rate*. *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 31.

Mary liked all the speakers *first-rate*, except one feller who gin the galls all sorts of a shakin'. — *Ibid.*, p. 168.

The "London Illustrated News," Dec. 6, 1856, in speaking of Asheton Smith, a celebrated huntsman, says: —

In his Leicestershire days, he was *first-rate* as a horseman; . . . and in one of the worst scenting countries, he has for years shown the *first-rate* sport.

**First Rate and a Half.** Any thing somewhat better than what is considered *first-rate*; or *first-rate* intensified.

**First Swathe.** First quality; first chop. New York.

Nothing 'll serve you but a *first-swathe* mug, about twenty-three years old. — *C. Mathews, Puffer Hopkins*.

**Fish-Ball.** Salt codfish chopped fine and mixed with potatoes; it is then made into balls and fried, or, for those who don't like grease, baked upon a griddle. An amusing song called the "Lone Fish-Ball" was very popular a few years ago. At one of the cheap eating-houses, a customer who had one of these balls, having called for a piece of bread,

The waiter roared it through the hall,  
"We don't give bread with one *fish-ball*."

**Fish-Crow.** (*Corvus ossifragus*. Wilson.) A bird almost entirely confined to the maritime districts of the Southern States. During the summer, they are sometimes found as far north as Pennsylvania. They are generally seen hovering over bays and rivers as well as over salt ponds and marshes, searching for small fry or for small crabs called *Fiddlers*. — *Audubon*.



**Fisherman-Farmer.** Said of such persons as alternate farming and fishing at different periods, especially such as customarily farm in one, and fish in another part of each year. Sea-coast of Massachusetts.

**Fish-Flake.** A frame covered with fagots, for the purpose of drying fish. New England. See *Flakes*.

**Fishing-Frog.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**Fish-Pot.** A wicker basket, sunk, with a cork float attached, for catching crabs, lobsters, &c.

**Fish-Pound.** A net attached to stakes, and used for entrapping and catching fish; a wear. Connecticut.

**Fish-Story.** A story that taxes credulity; an incredible narration.

**Fishy.** Having the characteristics of a fish-story; rather incredible.

We did not lose a man. This sounds rather *fishy*; but they had no artillery. *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 25, 1861.

**Fisto** (*i* as in *mice*). A small dog; a puppy. Pennsylvania.

**Fits.** "To give one *fits*" means, by a vulgar hyperbole, to give one such a punishing as to throw him into fits, to punish him very severely.

*Mose.* Now look a-here, Liz, — I go in for Bill Sykes, 'cause he runs wid our machine; but he mustn't come foolin' round my gal, or I'll *give* him *fits*. — *A Glance at New York*.

*Ald. Voorhies.* Go on, Mr. Jones.

*Witness.* He said that the Atlas was coming out, to *give* Mayor Wood and myself "*fits*."

*Ald. Ely.* Was he to give any thing else?

*Witness.* Yes, he said he was going to "give us jessie." — *New York City Council Debates*.

Sometimes additional force is given to this epithet by threatening to "give *particular fits*," as in the following example: —

Lady Bulwer has just published a new novel, called "Very Successful," in which rumor reports that Sir Edward is to get *particular fits*. — *N. Y. Times*.

I rather guess as how the old man will give *particular fits* to our folks to-day. *Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, p. 101.

**Fix.** A condition; predicament; dilemma.

Some feller jest come and tuck my bundle and the jug of spirits, and left me in this here *fix*. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 47.

Are you drunk too? Well, I never did see you in that *fix* in all my live-long born days. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 163.

The gentleman must be stronger in the faith than ourselves, if he does not find himself in an awkward *fix*. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*, Oct. 18, 1845.

**To fix.** In popular use, to put in order; to prepare; to adjust; to set

or place in the manner desired or most suitable. Mr. Lyell, in his "Travels in North America," chap. iii., has the following remarks on this word:—

At one of the stations where the train stopped, we heard some young woman from Ohio exclaim, "Well, we are in a pretty *fix*!" and found their dilemma to be characteristic of the financial crisis of these times, for none of their dollar notes of the Ohio banks would pass here. The substantive "*fix*" is an acknowledged vulgarity; but the verb is used in New England by well-educated people, in the sense of the French "*arranger*," or the English "*do*." To *fix* the hair, the table, the fire, means to dress the hair, lay the table, and make up the fire; and this application is, I presume, of Hibernian origin, as an Irish gentleman, King Corney, in Miss Edgeworth's tale of Ormond, says, "I'll *fix* him and his wounds."

"Where they might *fix* their pieces" [muskets]. — *Bradford's Hist. of Plymouth*, 1646. In citing this passage, Palfrey says, "Bradford put the word to that use when he spoke only his native Nottinghamshire." — *Hist. of New England*, Vol. II. p. 68, note.

The word is equally common in Ontario, Canada. Boys threatening vengeance say, "I'll *fix* you!"

One of their most remarkable terms is to *fix*. Whatever work requires to be done must be *fixed*. "*Fix* the room" is to set it in order. "*Fix* the table," "*Fix* the fire," says the mistress to her servants; and the things are *fixed* accordingly. — *Backwoods of Canada*, p. 82.

**To fix it.** A vulgarity of recent origin, but now very common. It is heard in such phrases as, "I will not do so and so, *any how you can fix it*," or, still worse, "*no how you can fix it*," i. e. not in any way that you can arrange it; not by any means.

A wet day is considerable tiresome, *any way you can fix it*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

If I was an engineer, I'd clap on steam, — I'd fire up, I tell you; you wouldn't get me to stop the engine, *no way you could fix it*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

The master called them up, and axed them the hardest questions he could find in the book; but he couldn't stump 'em, *no how he could fix it*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 36.

Workin' ain't genteel nor independent, *no how you can fix it*. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 74.

"According to my notions, riches and grandeur ain't to be compared to religion, *no how you can fix it*; and I always said so," said the Widow Bedott. — *Bedott Papers*, p. 135.

**To fix one's Flint** is a phrase taken from backwoods life, and means the same as to settle, to do for, to dish.

"Take it easy, Sam," says I, "*your flint is fixed*; you are wet through;" and I settled down to a careless walk, quite desperate. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

The Bluenose hants the tools; and, if he had, he couldn't use them. That's the reason any one a'most can "*fix his flint* for him." — *Ibid*.

**To fix out.** To set out (adorn, arrange), supply, fit out, display.

**Fix-out.** Adornment, arrangement, "out-fit."

**To fix up.** As fix out; and also to mend, repair; and to contrive.

**Fix-up.** From the verb as above. It is used to denote an ornament, a supply, a contrivance, device, arrangement.

The "Albany Argus," still hoping for some sort of a compromise or *fix-up* with the rebels, says: —

**Fixed Fact.** A positive or well-established fact, what the French call *un fait accompli*. The origin of the phrase is attributed to the Hon. Caleb Cushing.

The "Boston Post," June, 1847, in speaking of the trial of Captain Stetson for piratically running away with a ship and cargo, says: —

That he did dispose of a large quantity of oil, and afterwards desert from the vessel, are *fixed facts*.

In many localities, spiritualism has become a *fixed fact*, and its *modus operandi* is well understood by those who have investigated it as a mental science on the platform of cause and effect. — *Christian Spiritualist*.

**Fixings.** A word used with absurd laxity, especially in the South and West, to signify arrangements, embellishments, trimmings, garnishings of any kind.

The theatre was better filled, and the *fixings* looked nicer, than in Philadelphia. *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 38.

All the fellows fell to getting grapes for the ladies; but they all had their Sunday *fixins* on, and were afraid to go into the brush. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 42.

A man who goes into the woods, as one of these veteran settlers observed to me, has a heap of little *fixins* to study out, and a great deal of projecting to do. — *Judge Hull, Letters from the West*, Letter 18.

When we parted, I wanted to pay him something handsome for all his trouble; but I couldn't give him to take nothing but an X, to buy some wimmin *fixins* for the old lady as a compliment from me. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

"Ah!" exclaimed the teamster [to a gentleman who had a good deal of luggage], "what anybody on earth can want with such lots of *fixins*, I'm sure 's dark to me." — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 97.

One half of the country is overflowed in the winter, and t'other half, which is a darned sight the biggest, is covered with cane, pimento, and other *fixins*. — *Porter's South-western Tales*, p. 123.

The following advice was given to the editor of a new Western paper: —

Advertise our doins in gineral, such as we got to sell, and throw yourself wide on the literary *fixins* and poetry for the galls; and, Mister, if you do this with spirit, the whole town will take your paper. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 31.

For a use of the term as applied to food, see *Chicken Fixings*.

**Fix.** To fizzle the elbow is to knock the "crazy bone."

**Fizzle.** A ridiculous failure. The figure is that of wet powder, which burns with a hissing noise and then goes out without producing any effect. It is nearly equivalent to the analogous expression, "a flash in the pan."

There is an English proverb which says, "Every pea has its *rease*, and a bean fifteen." This establishes the etymology of the word; for *rease* is simply the Italian *vescia* (*crepitus ventus*), which Baretti, in his Italian Dictionary, expressly defines by the word *fizzle*.

In many colleges of the United States, this elegant term is used to denote a blundering recitation. It has been held that to hit just one third of the meaning constitutes "a perfect *fizzle*." — *Hall's College Words*. The "Brunonian," Feb. 24, 1877, defines the word to mean "where the student thinks he knows, but can't quite express it," or "he tries to express it, and the professor thinks he doesn't quite know."

With mind and body so nearly at rest that naught interrupted my inmost repose save cloudy reminiscences of a morning *fizzle* and an afternoon flunk, my tranquillity was sufficiently enviable. — *Yale Literary Magazine*, Vol. XV. p. 114.

Here he could *fizzles* mark, without a sigh,

And see orations unregarded die. — *The Tomahawk*, Nov., 1849.

In Princeton College, the word *blue* is used with *fizzle*, to render it intensive; as, he made "a *blue fizzle*," "He *fizzled blue*."

The term is used with equally happy effect in political as in college slang.

The trick of the administration to palm off the Washington Union upon the Senate as the National Democrat organ was a *fizzle* and a shocking failure. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**To fizzle.** 1. To fail in reciting; to recite badly. A correspondent from Williams College says: "Flunk is the common word when some unfortunate man makes an utter failure in recitation. He *fizzles* when he stumbles through at last." A writer in the "Yale Literary Messenger" thus aptly defines the word: "*Fizzle*. To rise with modest reluctance, to hesitate often, to decline finally; generally, to misunderstand the question." — *Hall's College Words*.

My dignity is outraged at beholding those who *fizzle* and flunk in my presence tower above me. — *The Yale Banger*, Oct. 22, 1847.

2. To cause one to fail in reciting. Said of an instructor. — *Hall*.

*Fizzle* him tenderly,

Bore him with care;

Fitted so slenderly,

Tutor, beware. — *Yale Lit. Mag.*, Vol. XIII. p. 321.

**To fizzle out.** To be quenched, extinguished; to prove a failure. A favorite expression in Ohio.

The factious and revolutionary action of the fifteen has interrupted the regular business of the Senate, disgraced the actors, and *fizzled out*! — *Cincinnati Gazette*.

Is the new hotel [one called the Burnet House] to be given up or to go on? To go on. It cannot be possible, after all that has been said and done about a "splendid hotel," that our enterprising business men will let it *fizzle out*. — *Ibid*.

You never get tired of a good horse. He don't *fizzle out*. You like him better and better every day. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 55.

**Flakes.** (Old Eng. *fleyke* or *hyrdylle*, Du. *vlaeck*.) Fish-flakes. (Dutch, *vlaak*, a hurdle for wool.) Long poles laid upon crotched posts driven into the ground, parallel to each other, about two feet apart and covered with brush, upon which codfish are spread to dry.

Some tear downe *Flakes*, whereon men yeerely dry their fish, to the great hurt and hindrance of many other that come after them. — *Whitbourne, Disc. and Discoverie of New-Found-land* (Lond. 1622), p. 66.

The owners of vessels [in fishing districts] have a *flake-yard* in the vicinity of the landing-places, to which the fish are carried on being landed. — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman*.

Fish-*flakes* were spread upon the beach, and the women were busy in turning the cod upon them. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**Flap-Doodle.** Nonsense, vain boasting; as of a cock flapping his wings and crowing.

McMahon goes on to say, in a dreadfully low-spirited style, that the South is a Pelican; that we are her progeny; that she has drained her breasts to feed us; and to utter other *flap-doodle* for the nourishment of the Richmond mind. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 20, 1862.

**Flapjack.** A flat pancake fried upon a griddle; also called a *slapjack*. It is an old English word, and is mentioned by Shakspeare.

We'll have flesh for holidays, fish for fasting-days, and, moreover, puddings and *flapjacks*; and thou shalt be welcome. — *Pericles*, ii. 1.

Sarah Wilkerson, good cretur, she was, one of the likeliest heifers that was ever raised. She could heft a barrel of flour as easy as I can flirt a *flapjack*. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 384.

**To flash in the Pan.** To fail of success. A metaphor borrowed from the old-fashioned flint-and-steel gun, which, after being primed and ready to be discharged, sometimes *flashed in the pan*.

Mr. Lowell, in his poem on the school-house, speaks of the dame who, prim and calm,

could detect at once

Who *flashed in the pan*, and who was downright dunce.

**Flash-Board.** A board placed upon a mill-dam when a river is low, in order to obtain a greater fall of water. It is temporary, being placed and removed from the dam as circumstances require.

**Flat.** 1. In America, this word is applied to low alluvial lands. "The Mohawk flats" is a term universally applied to the valley of the Mohawk River, on either side of which are alluvial lands. See *Bottom Lands*. It is also applied to river shoals, where they are of much extent.

In New England, all the spaces between high and low water mark on the seashore, or in bays, inlets, &c., where the sea flows and ebbs.

The title of the Commonwealth, as owner thereof in fee, to all the *flats* or lands, . . . below the ordinary line of riparian ownership, from which the natural flow of the tides in Boston harbor has been cut off by dams or otherwise, and also the *flats* below said line, is hereby asserted and declared, &c. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

And now the airy *Flats* we pass, their church,  
Litigious hall, and taverns, and approach  
The gloomy shade of dark continuous wood,  
That runs high westward to the Mohawk's fount.

*McKinnon's Poems*, p. 34.

2. A broad-brimmed, low-crowned, straw hat, worn by women.

3. A species of flat-bottomed boat, used on the Mississippi and other rivers. See *Flat-Boat*.

4. A rejection, dismissal. See *To flat*.

5. A term used where money or stocks are lent without interest.

6. A dull-headed person.

**To flat.** To reject a lover; as, "Miss Deborah gave Ike the *flat*," "He's got the *flat*," "She *flatted* him." Western.

**Flat-Boat.** A rude sort of vessel used for transporting produce, &c., down the Mississippi River. It is thus described by Flint: "They are simply an oblong ark, with a roof slightly curved from the centre to shed rain. They are generally above fifteen feet wide, and from fifty to eighty and sometimes an hundred feet in length. The timbers of the bottom are massive beams, and they are intended to be of great strength, and to carry a burden of from two to four hundred barrels. Great numbers of cattle, hogs, and horses are conveyed to market in them. We have seen family boats of this description, fitted up for the descent of families to the lower country, with a stove, comfortable apartments, beds, and arrangements for commodious habitation. — *Hist. and Geogr. of Miss. Valley*. These boats are also called Kentucky Flats and Broad-horns. See *Ark*.

Finally one of 'em ses, "Don't make fun of the unfortunate; he's hardly got over bein' blowed up yet. Let 's make up a puss for him." Then they all throwed in and made up five dollars. As the spokesman handed me the change, he axed me, "Whar did you find yourself arter the 'splosion?" "In a *flat-boat*," ses I. *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

**To flat-boat.** To transport in a flat-boat.

The first enterprise of Josiah Hedges on his own account was a trading excursion to New Orleans with fruit, which he *flat-boated* from Wheeling to that point. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 29, 1858.

**Flat-Boatman.** A hand employed on a flat-boat.

**Flat-broke.** Utterly bankrupt, entirely out of money. The California correspondent of the "Boston Post," in speaking of the emigration, says: "Many emigrants, arriving in that state of collapse termed *flat-broke*, staid at Los Angeles because they couldn't go on."

**To flat out.** To collapse; to prove a failure. A Western phrase applied to a political meeting; as, "The meeting *flatted out*." President Dwight was criticising a passage in a theme, and, being hard up for a simile, said: "Why, it's as flat — it's as flat — it's as flat as a flat piece of lead, flatted out flat."

The word is also used as a noun. "It was a complete *flat-out*." "He made a *flat out*."

**Flat-footed.** Downright, resolute; firmly, resolutely. A term belonging to the Western political slang, with which the halls of Congress, as well as the newspapers, are now deluged.

Colonel M — attempted to define his position, but, being unable, exclaimed: I'm an independent, *flat-footed* man, and am neither for nor against the mill-dam. — *Tennessee Newspaper*.

At the forks of the road there lived a brawny, stalwart son of Vulcan. He was a man of strong will, and a zealous disciple of Tom Paine. His Herculean frame, and bold, *flat-footed* way of saying things, had impressed his neighbors, and he held the rod in *terrorem* over them. — *Harper's Mag.*, Sept., 1858.

Mr. Pickens, of South Carolina, has come out *flat-footed* for the administration, — a real red-hot Democrat, dyed in the wool, — denounces Mr. Calhoun, — and is ready now to take any high office. But the mission to England is beyond his reach. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 30, 1846.

**Flat Top.** See *Iron Weed*.

**To flax round.** To be energetic; to move quickly. New England.

**Flea-Bane.** (*Erigeron Canadense*.) One of the most hardy and common weeds. It propagates itself rapidly, and since the discovery of America has been introduced and spread through most countries in Europe. — *Bigelow's Flora Bost.*

This plant is sold by the Shakers for its medical properties, which are astringent and diuretic.

**Flicker.** See *Clape*.

**Flitter.** A corruption of the word *fritter*, a pancake.

**Floor.** Used in Congress, in this expression, *to get the floor; to have the floor; to obtain the floor*, — that is, to obtain an opportunity of

taking part in a debate. The English say, *to be in possession of the House*. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

**To flour.** To grind and bolt; to convert into flour. — *Webster*. A word used in those parts of the country where there are mills for grinding wheat. *Ex.* : "The mill can *flour* two hundred barrels a day;" i. e., it can make so many barrels of flour.

**Flouring-Mill.** A grist-mill, especially one in which flour is made from wheat.

**Flummux.** In colleges, applied to a poor recitation; a failure. — *Hall's College Words*.

**To flummux.** To give in, give up; to die. The word is used in England, but not in the same manner. According to Halliwell, it means "to overcome, frighten, bewilder, foil, disappoint, or mystify, also to maul or mangle." — *Dict. of Arch. and Prov. Words*.

Perhaps Parson Hyme didn't put into Pokerville for two mortal hours; and perhaps Pokerville didn't mizzle, wince, and finally *flummix* right beneath him. *Field, Drama in Pokerville*.

Be ye men of mighty stomachs,

Men that can't be made to *flummux*.

*Oyster War of Accomac, N. Y. Tribune, April, 1849.*

I thought I should a *flummuxed*! The dogs they silled back; an' Ike cussed; and I lay down an' rolled, till I was so full I thought I should a bust my biler. *Mike Hooter's Bear Story*.

**Flunk.** A backing out; a total failure in a college recitation.

The Sabbath dawns upon the poor student burdened with the thought of the lesson or *flunk* of the morrow morning. — *Yale Tomahawk*, Feb., 1851.

In moody meditation sunk,

Reflecting on my future *flunk*. — *Songs of Yale*, 1853.

**To flunk.** To fail utterly in a college examination. The "Brunonian," Feb. 24, 1877, says a *flunk* is a complete fizzle, and a *dead flunk* is where one refuses to get out of his seat.

They know that a man who has *flunked*, because too much of a genius to get his lesson, is not in a state to appreciate joking. — *Amherst Indicator*, Vol. I. p. 253.

Way down in Hoosic Valley

Minds put forth their shoots,

And many weary hours are passed

In grubbing lingual roots.

There I fizzled and there I *flunked*,

So mournful all the day;

Till the welcome pony came at last,

And bore my toil away.

*Carmina Collegensia, Songs of Williams*, p. 93.



**To flunk out.** To retire through fear; to give up, back out.

Why, little one, you must be cracked, if you *flunk out* before we begin. — *J. C. Neal*.

We must have at least as many subscribers as there are students in college, or *flunk out*. — *The Crayon, Yale Coll.*, 1823.

**Flunky.** 1. A class of people, who, unacquainted with the manner in which stocks are bought and sold, and deceived by appearances, come into Wall Street without any knowledge of the market. The consequence is, they make bad investments, or lose their money. These the brokers call *flunkies*. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 81.

A broker, who had met with heavy losses, exclaimed: "I'm in a bear-trap. — this won't do. The dogs will come over me. I shall be mulct in a loss. But I've got time; I'll turn the scale; I'll help the bulls operate for a rise, and draw in the *flunkies*." — *Ibid*, p. 90.

2. In college parlance, says Mr. Hall, in his "College Words," "one who makes a complete failure; one who *flunks*."

I bore him safe through Horace,  
Saved him from the *flunkey's* doom.

*Yale Lit. Mag.*, Vol. XX.

**Flutter-Wheel.** A water-wheel of small diameter, which from the rapidity of its motion makes a fluttering noise; hence its name. Used mostly for ordinary saw-mills.

**Fly.** (Dutch, *vly*.) In New York, a swamp, a marsh. "The Fly market" of New York is well known.

**To fly around.** To stir about; to be active. A very common expression. *Fly round and tear your shirt* is not an infrequent intensification.

Come, gals, *fly round*, and let 's get Mrs. Clavers some supper. — *A New Home*, p. 13.

Fetch on the pies and puddings. *Fly round* and change the plates. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 167.

**Flyer.** A venture. To take a *flyer* in stocks is the expression used in Wall Street when persons not stock-brokers, or dealers in stocks, occasionally make a venture. Their orders are given to the regular brokers, who execute them for a commission, without becoming personally responsible to the parties with whom they make the transaction.

The most successful bankers and merchants often employ their spare funds in taking *flyers*. — *New York Stock Report*.

When the open and close Boards [of brokers] so far coalesced as to meet in one Long Room, old notions had become so thoroughly rubbed away that members spoke frankly of their neat turns and *flyers*. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 111.

**Flying-Fish.** See *Sea Robin*.

**To fly off the Handle.** To break out, become excited; also, to break a promise.

When I used to tell minister this, as he was *flying off the handle*, he'd say, Sam, you're as correct as Euclid, but as cold and dry. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 149.

Now and then one of the girls would promise, and then *fly off at the handle*; but most all contrived some reason for giving me the bag to hold. — *McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

**Fog-Horn.** A huge horn blown by steam, chiefly used at sea to warn vessels when in a fog. It is said that the sound can be worked up to a power of being heard sixty miles away. It is also called a *Syren*.

**Folks.** This old word is much used in New England, instead of "people" or "persons." 1. For the persons in one's family, as in this common phrase, "How do your *folks* do?" that is, your family. 2. For people in general; as in expressions of this kind, "What do *folks* think of it?" &c. Dr. Johnson observes that "it is now only used in familiar or burlesque language." — *Pickering*. When English writers try to imitate Yankee talk, they make us say *folk*; on the other hand, they make us say *helps*, instead of *help*.

Old good man Dobson of the green  
Remembers he the tree has seen,  
And goes with *folks* to shew the sight. — *Swift*.

**Foo-Foo.** In New York, a term of contempt, nearly equivalent to "small potatoes," a man not worth notice.

Don't know what a *foo-foo* is? Well, as you're a greenhorn, I'll enlighten you. A *foo-foo*, or an outsider, is a chap that can't come the big figure. — *A Glance at New York*.

**Fool-Fish.** (Genus *Monocanthus*. Cuvier.) The popular name of the Long-finned File-fish. "Our fishermen apply to it the whimsical name of Fool-fish," says Dr. DeKay, "in allusion to what they consider its absurd mode of swimming with a wriggling motion, its body being sunk, and its mouth just on a level with the water." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Foot.** "To *foot* it" is familiar English; but the Western phrase, "To take his *foot* in his hand," is assuredly a bold stretch of language. "Put down one's *foot*." To be determined.

**Foot-Gin.** A cotton-gin moved by the foot; it is more used than the gin operated by steam.

**Footstool.** The earth. An irreverent familiarization of Isaiah lxvi. 1.

**Foot-Stove.** A contrivance for keeping the feet warm, formerly carried by old ladies to the meeting-houses on Sundays, and used by huckster-women in the markets. It consists of a small square tin box, perforated with holes and enclosed in a wooden frame, with a

wire handle. It has a door on one side, through which is thrust a small square iron dish of live coals, sprinkled over with a few ashes.

**Footy, Fouty.** A mistake; a simpleton; a blunderer; any one slightly valued. Local in Massachusetts.

**For**, before the infinitive particle "to," so frequent in early writers, but now deemed a vulgarism, is still retained in the West.

**Forbidden Fruit.** (*Citrus Paradisi.*) The Paradise Orange, a fruit almost as large as a shaddock. Jamaica, W. Ind. The shrub is now cultivated by our horticulturists.

**Force.** In the South, the slaves of a planter able to work in the field.

**To force Quotations** is where brokers wish to keep up the price of stock, and to prevent its falling out of sight. This is accomplished by a small sale or by "washing." — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street.*

**Forefathers' Day.** In New England, the day on which the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth (the 21st December).

**Fore God.** A negro asseveration.

A story is told of a slave, age somewhere between 90 and 100, who, at whatever time of day he met his master, always said, "'Fore God, massa, hain't had a mouthful to eat to-day."

**Fore-handed.** To be *fore-handed* is to be in good circumstances, to be comfortably off. Compare *Aforehand*. The expression is much used in the interior parts of the country.

Many of the new houses which have been built have been built by mechanics, *fore-handed* men, as we say in New England, who have accumulated small sums. *Providence Journal.*

Mrs. Ainsworth made so long a visit among her Eastern friends, who are now *fore-handed* folks, that she has come back imbued most satisfactorily with a loving appreciation of the advantages of civilization. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 50.

**Foreign-born.** Born elsewhere than in United States.

Our native mechanics and working men, in the average, receive more wages, and hold more eligible positions, than they would if no *foreign-born* laborer were now in the country. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 24, 1861.

**Fore Pay.** "There are two bad paymasters, no pay and *fore pay*." This proverbial expression is frequently heard in the West.

**Forest City.** Cleveland, in the State of Ohio; and Portland in Maine.

**For God's Sake.** Thoroughly. "They used to build for God's sake in those days." "That was nailed for God's sake."

**To fork over.** To hand over; to pay over, as money. A slang expression of frequent use.

He groaned in spirit at the thought of parting with so much money. There was, however, no help for it, so he *forked over* the five dollars. — *Knickerbocker Magazine*.

A would-be prophet down South lately said, in one of his sermons, that "he was sent to redeem the world and all things therein." Whereupon, a native pulled out two five-dollar bills of a broken bank, and asked him to *fork over* the specie for them. — *Newspaper*.

What more right has a man to say to you, "Stand and deliver your name," than to say, "Stand and *fork over* your purse"? — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 17.

**To fork up.** To pay up; as, "Jonathan, I've trusted you long enough: so *fork up*."

**Forks.** In the plural, the point where a road parts into two; and the point where a river divides, or rather where two rivers meet and unite in one stream. Each branch is called a *fork*. — *Webster*.

Finally, the Pawnees abandoned the field to their victorious enemies, leaving sixty of their warriors upon the ensanguined battle-ground. The defeated party were pursued only a short distance, and then permitted to return without further molestation to their village, at the *Forks* of the Platte. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 50.

About the same time, the village on Republican *Fork* of Kansas was also abandoned, and its inhabitants united with the Loups. — *Ibid*.

**Forlornity.** Forlorn condition. This word appeared in a Sunday School book by Mrs. —.

**To fort in.** To intrench in a fort.

A few inhabitants *forted in* on the Potomac. — *Marshall's Washington*.

**Fortiner, Fortino.** (*For-aught-I-know*.) This remarkable specimen of clipping and condensing a phrase approaches the Indian method of forming words. The word is very common through New England, Long Island, and the rest of New York. See *Farziner*.

**Forward.** Forehead; so *Forrerd* for forward.

**Forwarding Merchant.** One whose business it is to receive and forward goods for others. The internal navigation and trade of the United States, so great is the extent of our country, requires *forwarding merchants* in all the principal towns.

**Potch,** for *fetched*, is used by ignorant persons, especially the blacks at the South.

**Found.** Ignorant and careless speakers say, "The prisoner was *found* ten dollars," instead of he was *fin*ed. They want to form the past tense, and the proper word sounds too much like the present *find*. Comp. *Held*.

**To fox.** 1. To *fox* boots is to repair them by renewing the lower portion.

2. To play truant. So employed in some parts of Canada.

**Fox Grape.** (*Vitis labrusca*.) A large grape common on the borders of streams. The surface of the leaf is characterized by its foxy pubescence. The Southern *fox grape* is *Vitis vulpina*. Its fruit is larger, and its taste more agreeable, than the former.

**To fraggle.** To rob. A word used in Texas.

**Frame-House.** A house whose frame is of squared timber. Used much as "timber-house" is in England, for distinction's sake.

Opposite Farnholt's house is a quaint old windmill, which, with the surrounding *frame-houses*, seems to date from the first settlement of the country. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 23, 1862.

**Fraud.** A deceitful person; a cheat.

**Free-Fighter.** A partisan ranger; a guerilla soldier.

We publish the recent act of [the Confederate] Congress, authorizing the raising and bringing into service of partisan rangers. Now is the time for *free-fighters*, men of dash and daring. — *Petersburg (Va.) Express*, April 29, 1862.

**Free Labor.** Labor performed by freemen, in contradistinction to that of slaves, a term formerly in vogue both at the North and South.

So, wheresoe'er our destiny sends forth  
Its widening circles to the South or North,  
Where'er our banner flaunts beneath the stars  
Its mimic splendors and its cloud-like bars,  
There shall *Free Labor's* hardy children stand,  
The equal sovereigns of a slaveless land.

*J. G. Whittier, The Panorama.*

**Free Love.** Freedom of the affections; the right to consort with those with whom we have "elective affinities," regardless of the shackles of matrimony. Within the last few years, several associations have been organized in the North, for the purpose of carrying this doctrine into practical effect. See *Affinity*.

"And you believe in *Free Love*, do you not?" [said Prof. Gusher to Josiah Allen's wife].

"How free?" said she, coolly.

"Free to marry anybody you want to, and as long as you want to, from half a day up to five years or so."

"No, sir!" says she, "I believe in rights, but I don't believe in wrongs; for, of all the miserable doctrines that was ever let loose upon the world, the doctrine of *Free Love* is the miserablest. *Free Love!*" she repeated in indignant tones, "it ought to be called free deviltry." — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 195.

"Josiah Allen's wife" called on Mrs. Victoria Woodhull to discuss with her the subject of women's rights and *free love*.

"You are right, Victoria, in your views of wimmen's votin'," . . . said the former, "but you are wrong in this *free love* business; you are wrong in keepin' house with two husbands at the same time." — *Ibid.*, p. 319.

**Free Lover.** An advocate of the free-love doctrine.

A "reform convention" assembled at Rutland, Vermont, on Friday. About a

thousand persons — abolitionists, spiritualists, and *free lovers* — attended, the spiritualists predominating. — *Balt. Sun*, June 28, 1858.

Berlin Heights is a village in Ohio, in which bands of *Free Lovers* have settled, so as to be a comfort and protection to each other; also, for the convenience of hapless pairs by a large matrimonial exchange. — *Dizon, Spiritual Wives*, p. 387.

**Free Lovism.** The doctrine of free love.

**Free-Nigger.** A reproachful term in the Southern States of America, to denote an abolitionist, or a Northerner.

Thousands, sir, voted the Secession ticket just to prove that they were not abolitionists, — not Lincoln men, — and that they abhorred *free-nigger* barbarianism. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1861, *Letter from Tennessee*.

**Free Soil.** Freedom of the soil belonging to the United States, and not yet formed into States, from Negro slavery.

The people are roused! They 've slumbered too long,  
While Freedom grew weak, and Tyranny strong.  
But now they are coming from hill and glen,  
They come to the rescue, — the *Free-Soil* men.

*Mrs. Child, Free Soil Song.*

**Free-Soiler.** An advocate of the exclusion of slavery from the territories belonging to the United States. A word which first came into use in the year 1848.

I only want to see the first *free-soiler* here. I'll drop the first one that opens his mouth for abolition cusses. I'll be dog-gauned if I don't. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas*, p. 48.

**Free-Soilism.** The principles or doctrines of the advocates of freedom in the territories in opposition to those of slavery.

I tell you, mark every scoundrel among you that is the least tainted with *free-soilism* or abolitionism, and exterminate him. Neither give nor take quarter from them. — *Speech of General Stringfellow in the Kansas Legislature*.

**Free to say, Free to confess.** Common expressions equivalent to "I do not hesitate to say." To acknowledge.

We are *free to say* that an intelligent apprehension of all the facts which might here be exposed, and a candid allowance for them, ought to affect the tone towards England in which our histories are written. — *North Am. Rev.*, Oct., 1858, p. 468.

**Free States.** Those States in which Negro slavery does not exist.

Equal and exact justice to both slave and *free States* is the only ground upon which the Southern States can maintain their claim to equal rights in the Federal Union. — *Richmond Enquirer*, Aug., 1858.

**Freeze.** A Southern term for frosty weather.

The effects of the late *freeze* have been severely felt. — *Charleston paper*.

**To freeze.** 1. To have a longing desire for any thing. South-western.

This child has felt like going West for many a month, being half *froze* for buffalo meat and mountain doins. — *Ruxton's Far West*.

2. *To freeze to.* To cling to any person; to "cotton to;" to grasp.

A clergyman, coming from an inland town to a parish in Boston that was supposed to be somewhat effete and old-fogyish, received this advice: "If you can find a young man in that church, *freeze* to him;" and he literally did, but hardly in the sense intended.

**Freezer.** A refrigerator.

**To freeze out.** Nearly equivalent to "leaving out in the cold," as the South threatened to serve New England in a new confederacy. The expression is heard frequently, of late, in various applications. It has lately been employed, "the freezing out policy," with reference to the management of some life-insurance companies, to compel policy-holders to surrender their policies by unfair devices, &c. I find a game of "Freeze-out Poker" mentioned in a letter from Badwood (Black Hills), in "Harper's Monthly," October, 1877, p. 799: "They doant do nuthin' but drink whiskey and playe *frease aout poker*."

**Freight-Car.** A railway car for carrying merchandise.

**Freight-Train.** A train of cars on a railway, expressly for carrying merchandise, lumber, &c. In England, called a "goods train."

**Fresh, n.** 1. An abbreviation for Freshman.

2. Used locally in Maryland for a stream distinct from the tide-water; as, "Allen's *Fresh*," "Pile's *Fresh*." The lands in Talbot County, Md., are divided into *freshes* and salts.

**Fresh, adj.** Forward, bold; as, "Don't make yourself too *fresh* here."

**Freshet.** A flood, or overflowing of a river, by means of heavy rains or melted snow; an inundation — *Webster*.

This word is used in the Northern and Eastern States. That it is an old English word is evinced by the following extract from the "Description of New England," written and published in England, in 1658: —

"Between Salem and Charlestown is situated the town of Lynn, near to a river, whose strong *freshet* at the end of the winter filleth all her banks, and with a violent torrent vents itself into the sea." — p. 29.

It appears to be now confined to America; but the word *fresh* is still used in the north of England and in Scotland in precisely the same sense. It is also used in Louisiana. See Pickering's Vocabulary for a full discussion of the word and its uses.

**Frijoles.** (Spanish, pron. *fre-hó-les*.) Kidney beans (*Phaseolus*) in all their varieties. A common article of food upon the plains and on the Mexican frontier.

**Prisco.** The city of San Francisco, so called throughout California.

**Froe.** An iron cleaver, or splitting-knife.

The shingle-maker stands with *froe* in one hand and mallet in the other, endeavoring to rive a billet of hemlock on a block. — *Margaret*, p. 159.

"He beat his head all to smash with a *froe*," said one. "No, it was with an axe," said another. — *Ibid.*, p. 323.

**Frog.** The iron plate where two lines of railroad intersect; probably so called from its resemblance to the "frog" of a horse's foot.

**Frolic.** A favorite term in the West for a party.

**Fromety, Frumty.** Wheat boiled with milk, to which sugar and spice are added. — *Hallamshire Glossary*. Used in Maryland, where it is called *furmetty*.

**Front Name.** Christian name. "The familiar manner in which the telegraph handles my *front name*," i. e. in calling him Ben.

**Frost-Fish.** (Genus *Morrhua*.) A small fish which abounds on our coast during the winter months. It is also called Tom-cod. — *Storer*.

**Frost-Grape.** See *Chicken-Grape*.

**Frostwort.** (*Cistus Canadensis*.) A medicinal plant prepared by the Shakers, and used for its astringent and tonic properties.

**Froughy.** *Frough* is provincial in the north of England, and means any thing loose, spongy, or easily broken; often applied to wood, as "brittle" is to mineral substances. — *Brockett's Glossary*. "*Froughy butter*" is rancid butter.

This word is in common use in many parts of New England. It is doubtless a corruption of *frough*, which is sometimes used here. *Pickering*.

**Frowchey.** (Dutch, *vrouwte*.) A furbelowed old woman. Local in New York and its vicinity.

**To frump.** To mock; to insult. A very old word, occurring in the dictionaries of Cotgrave and Minshew.

I was abas'd and *frumped*, sir. — *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

This old word, though long out of use in England, still lingers among the descendants of the first settlers in New England.

The sleighs warped from side to side; the riders screamed, cross-bit, *frumped*, and hooted at each other. — *Margaret*, p. 174.

**Fry.** Judging from what travellers say, one of the most abominable dishes among the farmers of Texas is what is there called a "fry." It is thus described by a correspondent of the "Chicago Tribune:"

If you are asked both at supper and breakfast to help yourself to the *fry*, don't you do so unless you have acquired a relish for sole-leather. This *fry* is the most



abominable dish in the thirty-eight States and Territories. It consists of lean beef salted and dried, parboiled and fried in grease. Saw-dust is juicier, and sole-leather is tenderer.

**Puffy.** Light; soft; puffy. Used in Yorkshire, England, and preserved in some parts of New England.

She mounted the high, white, *puffy* plain; a dead and unbounded waste lay all about her. — *Margaret*, p. 168.

— **Full Chisel.** At full speed. A metaphor from a chisel, which, when not properly struck, starts off violently sidewise; an equivalent for the phrases "full drive" and "full split," both of which are used in England and in this country. A modern New England vulgarism.

"Oh, yes, sir, I'll get you my master's seal in a minute." And off he set *full chisel*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

The moose looked round at us, shook his head a few times, then turned round and fetched a spring right at us *full chisel*. — *John Smith's Letters*.

At that the boys took arter them *full chisel*, and the galls run as if a catamount had been arter them. — *Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 46.

And so the Yankee staves along

*Full chisel*, hitting right or wrong;

And makes the burden of his song,

By Golly! — *Anonymous*.

**Full Swing.** "He's going full swing," i. e. very fast; at full speed. Not peculiar to the United States.

**Full Team.** A powerful man; a man of consequence. See *Whole Team*.

**Fundum.** A sea-bottom. This term, used first by Governor Wise of Virginia, in a message to the Legislature, is occasionally heard derisively. "The great Virginia Fundum. Re-opening of the Oyster Trade." — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 20, 1861.

**Funeral.** "To preach a funeral." In some parts of the West, the funeral sermon is preached, not at the time of the burial, but long after, sometimes even a year after the death of the person. The custom arose, probably, from the difficulty of obtaining a competent "preacher" in a thinly settled country. After so long an interval, "preaching the funeral," which is almost always accompanied by a feast, becomes rather an occasion of merrymaking than of lamentation.

This custom is universal among the Negroes at the South, who will devote a year's wages to secure a handsome funeral to a deceased relative; and the importance of the individual seems to be rated by the time suffered to elapse between the death and the funeral.

**To funeralize.** To perform the clerical duties preparatory to a funeral. Southern.

**Funk.** 1. Fear, or sensibility to fear; cowardice.

So my friend's fault is timidity. . . . I grant, then, that the *funk* is sublime, which is a true and friendly admission. — *Letter in Literary World*, Nov. 30, 1850.

2. A coward.

**To funkify.** To frighten; to alarm. New England.

Scared! says he, serves him right then; he might have knowed how to feel for other folks, and not *funkify* them so peskily. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 8.

**To funk out.** To "back out" in a cowardly manner.

To *funk* right out o' political strife ain't thought to be the thing,  
Without you deacon off the tune you want your folks should sing.

*Biglow Papers.*

**Fur fly** (To make). See *Make the Fur fly*.

**Furrow.** To draw a straight furrow is to go straight ahead; to mind one's own business.

Governor B. is a sensible man;  
He stays to his home, and looks arter his folks;  
He draws his furrow as straight as he can,  
And into nobody's tater-patch pokes.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

**To fush out.** To come to nothing. Comp. *To fizzle out*.

**Fuste.** (Span., pron. *foos-te.*) A strong saddle tree, made of wood and covered with raw-hide, used for lassoing. California.

**Fyke.** (Dutch, *fuik*, a weel, bow-net.) The large bow-nets in New York Harbor, used for catching shad, are called *shad-fykes*.

**Fyse.** (Fyst?) A cur. Common in and about Washington and elsewhere. It is the old foisting hound, fysting cur. See *Fice*.

## G.

**Gabblement.** Gabble, prate. A Southern word.

"This court 's got as good ears as any man," said the magistrate; "but they ain't for to hear no old woman's *gabblement*, though it 's under oath." — *Chron. of Pinerille*.

**Gad.** A long stick or switch, especially one used for driving oxen. So used also in the north of England.

I looked around and saw where the three had set down on a log. I measured the length of the foot, and found where they had cut a big *gad*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*, Oct., 1848.

**Gal-Boy.** A girlish boy.

**Gale.** Among the ladies, a state of excitement; as, "Mrs. A— was in quite a *gale* on New Year's Day."

The ladies, laughing heartily, were fast getting into what, in New England, is sometimes called a *gale*. — *Brooke, Eastford*.

**Gall.** 1. A kind of low land in Florida. It consists of a matted soil of vegetable fibres, spongy and treacherous to the foot, unpleasant as well as dangerous to crop. — *Vignoles, Florida*, p. 91.

Romans speaks of two kinds of these lands, "*bay and cypress galls*." The *bay galls* are properly watercourses, covered with a spongy earth mixed with matted vegetable fibres, dangerous to cross, and so replete with vitriolic principles that the water is impregnated with acid. The *cypress galls* are a firm, sandy soil, have no vitriolic taste in the water, and are never used for purposes of planting. The cypress they produce is a dwarf kind, not fit for use. — *Nat. Hist. of Florida* (1776), p. 31.

Mr. S., living near the Oclawaha, while crossing a bay gall, or saw grass, in company with his son, last Wednesday, was seriously injured by the attack of an alligator. The water in the *gall* was about knee-deep. — *East Florida paper*.

2. (Ger. *qualle*.) A name applied by the New York children to the jelly-fishes. The medusæ, or sea-nettles (*Discophora*), they call *stinging-galls* (called also in some parts of England *stang-fishes*). The ovoidal, phosphorescent jelly-fishes (*Ctenophora*) they call *lightning-galls*.

**Gallinipper.** An insect pest at the South resembling a mosquito, but much larger.

**To gallivant.** To gallant; to "do the agreeable." Hotten calls it an old English word. — *Slang Dic.*

[Marjorie was] *gallivanting* with the cook: — just wait until papa and mamma come home, and see what they will say to such doings in the house. — *Miss Gould, Marjorie's Quest*, p. 135.

Senator Seward is *gallivanting* gayly about Europe. Now at Compiègne, saying soft things to the Empress and studying despotism, now treading the battle-field of Waterloo, then back at Paris, and so on. — *Boston Post*, Dec. 10, 1859.

What business had he to flirt and *gallivant* all summer with Sally Kittridge? *Mrs. H. B. Stowe, in The Independent*, Feb. 27, 1862.

**Galloping Consumption.** A quick consumption, or where the disease terminates after brief illness. George Doughty having died after a short illness, the question was asked, "How did it happen?"

"Why," replied the Squire, "the doctor says it's a *galloping consumption*. . . . He says it's the quickest case he ever knew. . . . The idea of a fellow being at work for me, and dying right straight along. Why, it's awful!" — *Habberton, The Barton Experiment*, p. 75.

**Gallows.** Showy; dashing. New York slang.

*Mose.* Lizzy, you're a *gallus* gal, anyhow!

*Lizzy.* I ain't nothin' else. — *A Glance at New York.*

On another occasion, Mose goes off in raptures at the personal appearance and many accomplishments of his sweetheart, and exclaims: —

Look, what a *gallus* walk she's got! I've strong suspicions I'll have to get slung to her one of these days.

**Gallowses.** Suspenders. So called in some parts of England.

His skilts [pantaloons] were supported by no braces or *gallowses*, and resting on his hips. — *Margaret*, p. 9.

**Galoot.** A worthless fellow; a rowdy.

I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank,  
Till the last *galoot's* ashore. — *John Hay, in Jim Bludsoe.*

It wasn't so when I was young,  
We used plain language then;  
We didn't speak of them *galoots*,  
When meaning boys or men. — *Grandpa's Soliloquy.*

**Galoshes.** (Fr.) Overshoes worn before the age of india-rubbers, to keep the feet dry. The term was universal in Canada.

It is an old English word, the same as *Galage*, originally meaning a wooden sole fastened by a strap to the foot. — *Wedgwood, Etym. Dic.* "*Galuche* or *Galoche* vndersolyng of mannys fote." — *Promptorium Parv.* (1440). In a note to Way's ed. (1843), he says, "The galache was a sort of patten fastened to the foot by cross-latchets, and worn by men as early as the time of Edward III." Allusion is made to it by Chaucer: —

Ne were worthy to unbocle his *galoche*. — *Squire's Tale*, 10. 869.

**Gam.** (Ang.-Sax. *gemana*.) A social visit. A sea-faring term.

When two whalers meet in any of the whaling-grounds, it is usual to have a *gam*, or mutual visit, for the purpose of interchanging the latest news, comparing reckoning, discussing the prospect of whales, and enjoying a general chit-chat. — *Brown's Whaling Cruise*, p. 76.

**Gambrel.** A hipped roof to a house; so called from its resemblance to the hind leg of a horse, which by farriers is termed a *gambrel*.

Here and there was a house in the then new style, three-cornered, with *gambrelled* roof and dormer windows. — *Margaret*, p. 33.

**Gander-Party.** A social gathering of men only.

**Gander-Pulling.** A brutal species of amusement practised in England as well as in Nova Scotia. It is also known at the South. We quote Judge Haliburton's account of it from the "Sayings and Doings of Sam Slick: " —

"But describe this *gander-pulling*."

"Well, I'll tell you how it is," says I. "First and foremost, a ring-road is formed, like a small race-course; then two great long posts is fixed into the ground, one on each side of the road, and a rope made fast by the ends to each post, leavin' the middle of the rope to hang loose in a curve. Well, then they take a gander and pick his breast as clean as a baby's, and then grease it most beautiful all the way from the breast to the head, till it becomes as slippery as a soaped eel. Then they tie both his legs together with a strong piece of cord, of the size of a balyard, and hang him by the feet to the middle of the swingin' rope, with his head downward. All the youngsters, all round the country, come to see the sport, mounted a-horseback.

"Well, the owner of the goose goes round with his hat, and gets so much a-piece in it from every one that enters for the '*Pullin*'; and when all have entered, they bring their horses in a line, one arter another, and at the words, '*Go a-head!*' off they set, as hard as they can split; and as they pass under the goose, make a grab at him, and whoever carries off the head wins.

"Well, the goose dodges his head and flaps his wings, and swings about so, it ain't no easy matter to clutch his neck; and, when you do, it's so greasy, it slips right through the fingers like nothin.' Sometimes it takes so long, that the horses are fairly beat out, and can't scarcely raise a gallop; and then a man stands by the post with a heavy-loaded whip, to lash 'em on, so that they mayn't stand under the goose, which ain't fair. The whoopin', and hollerin', and screamin', and bettin', and excitement, beats all; there ain't hardly no sport equal to it. It is great fun to all except the poor *goosey-gander*."

**To gange.** (Span. *gancho*, a hook, a crook.) To attach a hook to a line or snell.

**Gap.** 1. This pure English word is used properly of any breach of continuity, as of the line of a saw's edge, or of the line of a mountain, as projected on the horizon. Hence it is applied to such openings in a mountain as are made by a river, or even a high road. Thus the *Water-Gap*; and, in Virginia, *Brown's Gap*, *Rockfish Gap*, &c.

2. An opening in a fence, A *Slip Gap* is a place provided in a fence, where the bars may be slipped aside and let down.

**Gar**; also **Alligator Gar.** (*Belone truncata*.) A species of pike found in the Southern rivers. It grows to a large size, and has been known to fight with the alligator.

At least three species of this fish are found in our Western rivers: the *Duck's-bill Gar*, and the *Ohio*, or common *Gar*.

**Garden City.** Chicago. So called from the number of its gardens.

**Garden Spot.** A term applied to the rich Silurian limestone region in Kentucky and Tennessee.

So characteristic are the agricultural peculiarities stamped upon the surface of every county, that it has given rise to that generally recognized division of the State known as the "Blue Grass" county of Kentucky, justly celebrated for its fertility and consequent wealth. The unbroken tracts lying towards the heads

of the streams are indeed the "*Garden Spots*" of the State. We even hear the inhabitants of this part of Kentucky frequently styled "Blue-grass men" in contradistinction to the "Mountain men," residents of the adjacent hill and mountain country. — *Owen's Geology of Kentucky*.

**Garmenture.** Dress.

The "New York Tribune," Sept. 28, 1876, in criticising the statue of W. H. Seward, says : —

No man can involuntarily throw one leg over the other without a shortening of what the recent Dress Reform Convention calls the *garmenture*.

**Garnishee.** In law, one in whose hands the property of another has been attached in a suit against the latter by a third person, and who is garnished or warned of the proceedings, and has notice of what is required of him in reference to it; a trustee. — *Burrill's Law Dict.*

I hold in my hands for collection a judgment against the pastor of a large city church. Shall the execution be published for sale in his city papers? Shall his church trustees be *garnisheed*.

**Garrison.** At the West, the term is oftener applied to the post itself than to those who hold it. Thus old, empty, and deserted forts, those that have been actually abandoned and are devoted to decay, are almost universally styled the "*garrisons*," even though a soldier had not put a foot in them for a quarter of a century. — *J. Fenimore Cooper*.

**Gate or Gato.** (Dutch, *gat*, a hole, gap.) A narrow passage; a strait. A term applied to several places in the vicinity of New York, as Barnegat and Hellgate (formerly Helle-gat). As respects this latter name, Mr. Irving, in a note to his "Knickerbocker" (chap. iv.), remarks : —

Certain mealy-mouthed men of squeamish consciences, who are loath to give the devil his due, have softened the above characteristic name to *Hurl-gate*, forsooth! Let those take care how they venture into the Gate, or they may be hurled into the Pot before they are aware of it. The name of this strait, as given by our author, is supported by the map in Vander Donck's History published in 1656, — by Ogilvy's History of America, 1671, — as also by a journal still extant, written in the sixteenth century, and to be found in Hazard's State Papers. And an old MS. written in French, speaking of various alterations in names about this city, observes, "*De Helle-gat, Trou d'Enfer, ils ont fait Hell-gate, Porte d'Enfer*."

**Gate City.** Keokuk, Iowa, at the foot of the lower rapids of the Mississippi, the natural head of navigation.

**To gather.** (Pron. *gether*.) Universally used in the West for to take up; as, "I *gathered* a stick."

**To gaum.** To smear. "Put the child's apron on, and don't let her *gaum* herself all over with molasses." Local in England.

**Gavel.** 1. A small mallet used by a chairman or presiding officer to attract attention and preserve order. It is used by our legislative bodies, but originated, probably, with the Free-Masons. Mr. Paton says, "The name of *gavel* is derived from the German *gipfel*, a peak, from which also comes the same term applied to the end of a house, the *gavel* or *gable*, running up to a point at the summit, the form in the one case and in the other being somewhat similar." — *Free-Masonry, its Symbolism, &c.* (Lond., 1873).

In describing scenes at the New York Stock Exchange, Mr. Medbery says :—

The roar from the cock-pit rolls up denser and denser. The President plies his *gavel*, the Assistant Secretaries scratch across the paper, registering bids and offers. — *Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 30.

2. (Fr. *javelle*.) A quantity of grain sufficient to make a sheaf. This old word, which is in use in the east of England, is now very frequently employed in describing the operation of American reaping machines.

**Gawnicus.** A dolt. Analogous to the English *gawk* and *gawcum*, a fool, a simpleton.

**Geminy.** See *Jiminy*.

**General Assembly.** A representative body having legislative powers, and authorized to enact laws in behalf of some community, church, or State. — *Worcester*.

**General Court.** The legal name of the two legislative bodies of Massachusetts.

**General Treat.** A *general treat* is a treat of a glass of liquor given by a person in a tavern to the whole company present.

I nearly got myself into a difficulty with my new acquaintances by handing the landlord a share of the reckoning, for having presumed to pay a part of a *general treat* while laboring under the disqualification of being a stranger. — *Hoffman*, p. 211.

**Gent.** 1. For genteel.

Law you, sais she, it's right *gent*, do you take it, — 'tis dreadfull pretty. — *Mad. Knight's Journal* (1704), p. 44.

2. An abbreviation for gentleman.

**Gentiles.** The name given by the Mormons to all who are not of their faith.

**Gentleman.** Properly, this word should be applied to men of education and good-breeding of every occupation; but, like lady, is used

indiscriminately. It is applied to men of every grade and every calling. Postmasters, in advertising letters, say, "Gentlemen's List," "Ladies' List."

A stranger arriving at a hotel tells a waiter he wants his boots blacked. The waiter calls out to a negro boot-black.

"I say, Jim, here's a chap as wants a shine."

The boot-black advances to do the job.

(Waiter to the stranger.) "This is the gentleman, sir, who'll give you a shine."

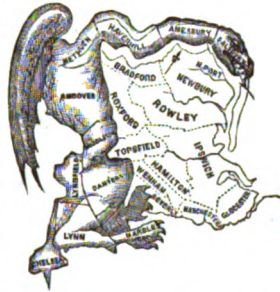
**Gentleman Turkey.** A turkey cock. The mock modesty of the Western States requires that a male turkey should be so called.

I remember, in my younger days, to have been put in a state of bodily peril by a pugnacious *gentleman turkey* who took umbrage at a flaming red and yellow silk that constituted my apparel. — *Adventures of Captain Priest*, p. 111.

"This is a tough old fellow," remarked a gentleman on board a Mississippi steamboat, who was endeavoring to carve a large turkey.

"Wall, I kind o' think you're right, stranger," said a Hoosier opposite. "But I reckon it's a *gentleman turkey*." — *Western Sketches*.

**Gerrymandering.** Arranging the political divisions of a State so that, in an election, one party may obtain an advantage over its opponent, even though the latter may possess a majority of the votes in the State. This term came into use in the year 1811 in Massachusetts, where, for several years previous, the Federal and Democratic parties stood nearly equal. In that year, the Democratic party, having a majority in the Legislature, determined so to district the State anew, that those sections which gave a large number of Federal votes might be brought into one district. To effect this plan, the Legislature divided counties in opposition to the protests and arguments of the Federalists; and those of Essex and Worcester were so divided as to form a Democratic district in each of those Federal counties, without any apparent regard to convenience or propriety. The work was sanctioned, and became law by the signature of Governor Gerry. He probably had no hand in the matter, yet he received the most severe castigation from the opposition. The result was that the Democratic party carried every thing before them at the following election, and filled every office in the State, although it appeared





by the votes returned that nearly two-thirds of the voters were Federalists. In Essex County, the arrangement of the district in its relation to the towns was singular and absurd. Russell, the veteran editor of the "Boston Centinel," who had fought the scheme valiantly, took a map of that county, and designated by particular coloring the towns thus selected, and hung it on the wall of his editorial room. One day, Gilbert Stuart, the eminent painter, looked at the map and said that the towns which Russell had thus distinguished resembled some monstrous animal. He took a pencil, and with a few touches added what might represent a head, wings, claws, and tail. "There," Stuart said, "that will do for a salamander." Russell, who was busy with his pen, looked up at the hideous figure, and exclaimed, "Salamander! Call it *Gerrymander*!" The word was immediately adopted into the political vocabulary as a term of reproach to the Democratic Legislature.

A hand-bill was subsequently issued, bearing Stuart's figure of the *Gerrymander*, followed by a natural and political history of the animal. — *Buckingham's Specimens of Newspaper Literature*. *Lossing's Field-Book of the War of 1812*, p. 210.

**To get.** To get the better of. "Got you there." See *To git*.

**To get one's Back up.** To get excited, become enraged. A figurative expression drawn from the attitude of a cat, which, when angry, raises up its back as well as its hair.

**Get out!** A New England expression, equivalent to *let me alone*. Also used as an expression of incredulity.

**To get Religion.** To become pious; to experience religion. A term in common use among certain religious sects.

Stranger, I can't bear to think of the murder of Charley Birkham now; but, when I heard it the first time, it was jest arter I *got religion*. I couldn't help it, I swore jest nigh on to half an hour right straight on eend. — *Frontier Incident*, *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Captain Underhill killed his neighbor's wife, and *got his religion* on a pipe of tobacco. — *Elliot's New England Hist.*, Vol. I. p. 460.

**To get round.** To get the better of, take advantage of one.

One from the land of cakes sought to *get round* a right smart Yankee, but couldn't shine. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 89.

**To get the Mitten.** To be a rejected suitor. See *Mitten*.

**To get the Wrong Pig by the Tail** is to make a mistake in selecting a person for any object. This is also called *getting the wrong sow by the ear*.

I did not seek the office I have now, and was not at the meeting when I was elected; but the Whigs supposed they could by some means make me a traitor to my party. But, sir, as the old saying is, they *got the wrong pig by the tail*. — *Letter of Mr. C. C. Bell*.

**G'hal.** A slang term for *girl*, corresponding to *B'hoy*, which see.

If you would see the *B'hoy* in his glory, — at the top of his career, — in the *ne plus ultra* of his mundane state, — you must see him taking a drive with his *g'hal* on the avenue. — *New York in Slices*.

**To gibe.** To go well; to be acceptable.

Mr. Douglas says some people think Mr. Lincoln's Inaugural does not *gibe* with the Chicago platform. Well, what of it? I don't say it does or it does not; but, if it does not, it shows that Mr. Lincoln has the nerve to say what is right, platform or no platform. — *N. Y. Times*.

**To giggit.** To take, as in a gig; to convey; to move rapidly; to gig it or jig it. New England.

He nearly like to have got her eat up by sharks, by *giggiting* her off in the boat out to sea, when she warn't more 'n three years old. — *Mrs. H. B. Stowe in The Independent*, Feb. 27, 1862.

**Gleed Fir.** See *Balsam Fir*.

**Gilly-Flower.** A variety of apple. New England.

**Gimbal-jawed or Jimber-jawed.** One whose lower jaw is loose and projecting.

**Gimpy.** Sprightly, active; as, "a *gimpy* horse." Forby notices the adjective *gimp*, meaning nice, spruce, as provincial in England.

**Gin and Tidy.** Neatly dressed; spruce.

What women happened to be there were very *gin and tidy* in the work of their own hands, which made them look tempting in the eyes of us foresters. — *West-over Papers*, p. 119.

**Gin Mill.** A tipping shop.

**To girdle.** In America, to make a circular incision, like a belt, through the bark and alburnum of a tree to kill it. — *Webster*. Settlers in new countries often adopt this method to clear their land; for when the trees are dead they set them on fire, and thus save themselves the trouble of chopping them down with the axe. The place so cleared is thence called a *girdling*.

The bark of a tree being cut round its whole circumference, the tree dies. This operation is called *girdling*. — *Kendall's Travels* (1807), Vol. I. p. 235.

The emigrants purchase a lot or two of government land, build a log-house, fence a dozen acres or so, plough half of them, *girdle* the trees, and then sell out to a new comer. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I.

**Girdling.** A place where the trees are girdled. See the preceding word.

**Gism.** Spirit. "I knock'd all the *gism* out of him."

**Git.** The main point of a question or action; that on which it lies or turns. — *Jamieson*. A word introduced from the language of law into very common use.

**Git.** A favorite Western vulgarism for "go" or "go ahead," "move on," leave quickly, equivalent to "go it," of which it may be a contraction. It is the invariable word by which the hero of the whip and lines starts his team, and they understand it well. "You git," says Mr. McClure, "is the most emphatic notice that can be given to any luckless chap to leave the room, or to escape a revolver."

The driver finally mounted his box with a coolness that showed him to be perfect master of his situation; and, as he yelled to them [his horses] *to git*, his keen silk cracker flashed about their flanks till all started on a run. — *Rocky Mountains*, p. 149.

In describing the musing of a teamster, in his California journeys, Ross Browne thus gives the outburst of the feelings of the man: —

"No, I can't forget her;" and, with an audible sob, he started as if in a trance, and, swinging his whip, yelled out at the mules with ungovernable fury, "You *git*, dod burn you! What d 'ye stand flopping yer ears for? *Git!* — *Adventures in the Apache Country*, p. 50.

*Git up and git* means to get out of the way as soon as possible.

Oh, white folks, your attention pray, a song I'll sing for you;

The tune I know is very old, but the words are fresh and new;

To please my friends is my delight, when together they are met;

I'll tell them in my song to-night how "*to get up and get.*"

*Comic Song.*

An infantry captain belonging to one of the Tennessee regiments, at Cumberland Gap, . . . had his men in two ranks, and wished to change them from that into four ranks. Either not knowing or forgetting the usual command, he called out, much to the amusement of the bystanders: —

Company! from two strings to four strings, — *git!* — *Harper's Mag.*, June, 1864, p. 140.

This remarkable expression has even found its way into our legislative halls, as will be seen by the following report of the Senate proceedings of the General Assembly of Rhode Island of March 14, 1877: —

Mr. Lapham, of Providence, called up his resolution to adjourn to meet according to law, March 23. Mr. V — hoped no action would be taken. The Assembly, he said, can fix no day. We must do what there is to do, and then we can *get up and get.* — *Providence Journal*.

In Kentucky and Tennessee, they say, "Git up and dust."

**To git to go.** To be permitted. Pennsylvania. "You didn't git to go." "No, I didn't git."

**Given Name.** The Christian name, or name that is *given* to a person, to distinguish it from the *surname*, which is not given, but inherited. Cobbett calls it a Scotticism. It was probably introduced by the Puritans instead of "Saint's name" or "Christian name." Its origin is plainly from the Catechism: "Q. Who *gave* you this name? A. My sponsors in baptism."

**To give out.** To desist; to give over; to become faint; to fail.

Tea, coffee, and clothing are nearly exhausted, or have, as the American phrase has it, "*given out*" because there is none to give out at all. — *London Times*, quoted in *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 10, 1861.

**Givy.** A term applied to tobacco leaves, in a certain condition of their preparation for market. Yielding, pliable.

**Gizzard-Shad.** In North Carolina, the name by which *alewives* are known. (*Chatoessus ellipticus*. Kirtland.) A fish of the Ohio, common in the Cincinnati markets. So called because "it possesses a muscular stomach which resembles the gizzard of a gallinaaceous fowl."

**Glade.** In New England, smooth ice; *glare* ice.

**Glades.** Everglades; tracts of land at the South covered with water and grass. So called in Maryland, where they are divided into wet and dry *glades*. The term is also used in Virginia.

**G'lang.** Go along. Universal among coachmen, as well as among gentlemen who hold the "ribbons."

"Git up, there! *G'lang*." The long whip swung round and cracked threateningly over the haunches of his leaders, making them start as the coach turned a corner. — *Eggleston, Mystery of Metropolisville*, p. 14.

**Glare Ice.** Smooth and transparent ice. Newly frozen ice is generally *glare*; i. e., it has a glassy surface.

**To glimpse.** To get a glimpse of; as, "I barely *glimpsed* him."

**To glorify.** To boast; to brag; to be elated.

At the same time, I must know how much I've hurt him, and how badly I'm hurt myself, before I can determine whether I'd better *glorify* over it much or not. — *Cincinnati Gazette*, April, 1861.

**Glut.** A thick wooden wedge used in splitting blocks. — *Halliwell*. So also in New England.

**Go.** "Make a go of it," i. e. make it succeed.

**To go.** To taste. "Don't that *go* good?"

**To go a Cruise.** To take a ride or walk. An expression borrowed from the sea, much used in some of the seaports of New England, and particularly in Nantucket.

**To go ahead.** To go forward, proceed. A seaman's phrase, which has got into very common use.

I was tired out and wanted a day to rest; but, my face being turned towards Washington, I thought I had better *go ahead*. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 101.

We slip on a pair of India rubber boots, genuine and impenetrable, and *go ahead* without fear. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

The specific instructions to conquer and hold California were issued to Commodore Sloat, by Mr. Bancroft, on the 12th of July, 1846. Previous to this, however, he had been officially notified that war existed, and briefly instructed to "*go ahead*." — *Ibid.*, June 13.

My dear hearers, the good work shall go on. I will preach in spite of Old Nick; the steam is up, and I will *go ahead*. Backed by sound doctrines, I will square off to opposition, — shoot folly, — take a hug with sin, — upset infidelity, — lick Satan out of the land, and kidnap hisimps. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 17.

**Go-ahead.** Rapidly advancing, progressive.

In our opinion, which we express, of course, with our wonted and characteristic diffidence, America is a dashing, *go-ahead*, and highly progressive country, giving by her institutions and enormous growth the solution of the greatest political problem in the world. — *The (Philad.) Press*, July 24, 1858.

**Go-aheadativeness.** Spirit of progress, progressiveness.

The "Merchant's Magazine" justly thinks that, in the present complication of European difficulties, a favorable opportunity opens for the natural activity and *go-aheadativeness* of our American business men. — *N. Y. Times*, May 17, 1855.

Virginia City, Montana, is but little over two years old, but it boasts of its population of seven thousand, and of more solid men, more capital, more handsome and well-filled stores, more fast boys and frail women, more substance and pretence, more virtue and vice, more preachers and groggeries, and more *go-aheadativeness* generally, than any other city in the mountain mining regions. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 285.

**To go back on one** is to abandon one, or one's cause; to turn against one; to expose, to retrace, obliterate, annul.

The newspaper belief that Vanderbilt never *goes back on* his friends is not generally assumed as truthful by brokers. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 159.

We were somewhat reassured when it was announced that our noble Chief Magistrate had telegraphed to our Minister at the Court of St. James that he was not "*going back on him*," but our apprehensions for his safety were not entirely quieted until we learned that he was safe on the "Abyssinia" on his return. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The proprietor of the "New York Herald" having reduced its price, while some of its agents failed to do so: —

A good many patrons *went back on* the paper this morning, as their silent protest against the swindle. — *New York Mail*, Oct. 21, 1876.

If a man was in trouble, Fisk helped him along,  
To drive the grim wolf from the door:  
He strove to do right, though he may have done wrong,  
But he never *went back on* the poor. — *Weston, Songs*.

You've always been fair and square with me, Muff Potter, and I won't *go back on* you. That's as fair as a man can say. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 92.

Mr. W. H. Martin, a lawyer of New York, having sued the Windsor Hotel Company of that city for \$60,000, for legal services during two years, Mr. Daly, counsel of the latter, said: —

I have received a message from the plaintiff that there was no use of contesting his claim in this action; that it would be referred by the court to a lawyer; and that lawyers would never *go back* on each other. — *N. Y. Tribune, Court Report*, Dec. 21, 1876.

Peavey asked him, "What he [Murphy, arrested on suspicion of killing Mr. Dascomb] would do if Mrs. Dascomb should *go back on him*." He answered promptly, "I can tell as much as she can." — *Report of Poisoning Case in New Hampshire*.

It seems more likely to us that within ten years Wyoming will *go back on* her woman suffrage record than that any State of the Union will follow her present example. — *Scribner's Mag.*, Vol. IX.

**Gobbler.** A male turkey; a turkey cock.

It was a nice weddin'; sich raisins and oranges and hams, flour doins and chicken fixins, and four sich uncommon big *gobblers* roasted, I never seed. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**To gobble up.** To remove as by swallowing; to rout; to scatter; to vanquish. Much used in the late civil war, and, in somewhat modified applications, is still sometimes used.

**To go by.** To call; to stop at. Used in the Southern States. — *Sherwood's Georgia*. Mr. Pickering says this singular expression is often used at the South. "Will you *go by* and dine with me?" i. e., in passing my house will you stop and dine? "Its origin," observes Mr. Pickering, "is very natural. When a gentleman is about riding a great distance through that country, where there are few great roads and the houses or plantations are often two or three miles from them, a friend living near his route asks him to *go by* his plantation and dine or lodge with him."

**Go-Cart.** A hand-cart.

**To go for.** 1. To be in favor of. Thus, "I *go for* peace with Mexico," means I am in favor of peace with Mexico, or, as an Englishman would say, I *am for* peace with Mexico. This vulgar idiom is greatly affected by political and other public speakers, who ought to be the guardians of the purity of the language, instead of its most indefatigable corrupters. In the following extract from a so-called religious paper, the reader of correct taste and feeling will hardly know which to admire most, the sentiment or the language: —

Will Mr. Greeley say that he or any other citizen has the right to oppose "the country," — that is, its laws, — whenever he or they shall choose to pronounce them "wrong"? We say, *go for* your country, — right, as she may be in some

things, — wrong, as she is, perhaps, in others; but whether right or wrong, or right and wrong (which is always nearer the truth in all her proceedings), still, *go for your country*. — *Gospel Banner*.

2. To decide in favor of is another acceptation in which this phrase is often used, especially in stating for which man or measure any particular section of the country has decided; as, "Ohio has *gone for* Clay," "Louisiana has *gone for* the annexation of Mexico." Or, still worse, "Ohio has *gone Whig*," "Louisiana has *gone Democratic*."

3. Go for (it), to fail; to die.

4. To attack. Southern.

**To go in for.** To advocate, be in favor of.

We *go in for* all the postage reduction President Taylor recommends. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1849.

**Going.** Travelling; as, "The *going* is bad, owing to the deep snow in the roads."

**To go it.** To undertake a thing; to go at it; to succeed in a thing, go through it; to be earnestly engaged in.

An anecdote is related of a card of invitation which read, "Come at seven and go at eleven," and which was altered by a wag by the insertion of the word "it" after *go*.

Hartford is getting to be quite a sensation city, *going it* over every novelty, "as crazy as a bed-bug." — *The Winsted Herald*, Oct. 25, 1861.

**To go it alone.** In euchre, one of two partners can, in various cases, play single-handed against the combined hands of his adversaries, the other partner simply standing neutral and not playing. In this, a complete success or failure scores double. This operation is called "*going it alone*," and is often used of any venture where no aid is asked or needed.

**To go it blind.** To accede to any object without due consideration.

An expression derived from the game of "Poker," where the player has the privilege, before seeing his hand, of blinding a stake, i. e. betting on the chances, so that, unless the others *see his blind* (by doubling the bet), he wins the *ante*. So, *go it blind* means to run all risks, with the chance of profiting from the risk.

I know that in Washington I am incomprehensible, because at the outset of the war I would not *go it blind*, and rush headlong into a war unprepared and with an utter ignorance of its extent and purpose. — *General Sherman's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 342.

I know what I am at, and don't *go it blind*. — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 18.

**To go it strong.** To act vigorously; to advocate energetically; to live freely.

President Polk in his message *goes it strong* for the Sub-Treasury. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The Senate has of late years refused to take any part of the book plunder, but they have *gone it strong* on the mileage. — *Letters from Washington, N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

I would have you understand, my dear hearers, that I have no objection to some of the sons and daughters of the earth going it while they are young, provided they don't *go it too strong*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 176.

A regular, irregular life,  
Ben Balmy lived along,  
And nightly did he go it *hard*,  
And weekly *went it strong*.

*Ballad, A Legend of Broadway.*

**To go it while you're young.** To enjoy one's self; to have a good time.

In speaking of the "Genteel, Fine, Old Negro," the song says:

He had a good old banjo, — so well he kept it strung;  
He used to play that good old tune of "*Go it while you're young*;"  
He played so long, an' played so loud, he scared the pigs and goats,  
Because he took a pint of yeast to raise the highest notes.

*Negro Melodies.*

**To go it with a Looseness** is to act in an unrestrained, rash, headstrong manner. See *Looseness*. So also "to go it with a *rush*."

**Golden-Rod.** (Genus *Solidago*.) A tall plant bearing yellow flowers; very common.

**Gollation.** "By gollation!" "O gollation!" "Gollation large."  
"Gollation mean." Derived from *Golly*.

**Golly!** Used euphemistically for "God!" Chiefly by Negroes in swearing.

I went down to the spring branch one morning to wash. I looked into the water, and I seen the shadow of my face. Great *Golly!* how I run back, hollerin' for mammy every jump. — *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

**Gombo or Gumbo.** 1. The Southern name for what is called, at the North, Okra, the pod of the *Hibiscus esculentus*. The term is sometimes heard in New England.

2. In the Southern States, a soup in which this plant enters largely as an ingredient.

**Gondola.** A flat-bottomed boat or scow formerly used in New England. — *Pickering*.

In Pennsylvania and Maryland, this word is spelled as well as pronounced *gundalo* or *gundelow*. A friend informs me he has also heard it in Massachusetts. Comp. *Cupalo*.



**Gone Case.** When a man is used up, it is said to be a *gone case* with him. "The Bar-tender," in his poem, describes a drunkard, who entered the bar-room, —

And sot himself down to the table  
With a terrible sorrowful face,  
And sot there a groanin' repeated,  
A calling himself a *gone case*.

**Gone Coon.** "He's a *gone coon*," is a Western phrase, meaning that a man is past recovery, that his case is hopeless.

Bill was never one minit unwatched, awake or asleep; he wasn't allowed to speak, although he was fed and not abused, and he'd pretty much made up his mind that he was a *gone coon*. — *Spirit of the Times*.

**Gone Goose.** "It's a *gone goose* with him," means that he is lost, is past recovery. The phrase is a vulgarism in New England. In New York, it is said, "He's a *gone gander*," i. e. a lost man; and in the West, "He's a *gone coon*."

If a bear comes after you, Sam, you must be up and doin', or it's a *gone goose* with you. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

It may be the doctor can do something for her, though she looks to me as though it was a *gone goose* with her. — *Major Downing*, p. 87.

I've generally noticed if a man begins to gape in church at seventhly and eighthly in the sermon, it's a *gone goose* with him before he gets through the tenthly; from that up he's as dead as a door nail. — *Seba Smith, Yankee Life*.

The poor greenhorn who falls into the clutches of the sharpers upon arriving in the metropolis may regard himself as a *gone gosling*. — *New York paper*.

**Goneness.** A peculiar sensation of weakness, or of great depression.

**Goner.** "He's a *goner*," means he is lost, is past recovery, is utterly demolished, "used up;" synonymous with *gone goose*, *gone coon*, &c. So, in the West, a bad debt is called a *goner*. A Western sportsman, in pursuit of a deer, exclaims: —

Aha! my fine boy! you are our meat! Put in your biggest licks; for you are a *goner* now, for sartin! — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

"Yes, but she ain't dead; and what 's more, she 's getting better too."

"All right, you wait and see. She's a *goner*, just as dead sure as Muff Potter's a *goner*. That 's what the niggers say, and they know all about these kind of things. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 99.

I've done my best on Frank [to reform him], but he's a *goner* if God don't put in a special hand. — *Habberton, The Burton Experiment*, p. 121.

**Gone with.** 1. For *become of*. "What is *gone with* it or him?" for "What has become of it or him?" — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

Mr. Punch, in his "Bit from the Mining Districts," thus uses the expression: —

"Martha, what's *gaen wi'* t' milk?"

"Gien it to the shild."

"Dang the shild! Thee should'st a gien it to t' bull-pup."

2. Prospered; succeeded; been.

**Goney** or **Gony**. A great goose, a stupid fellow. New England. Provincial in Gloucestershire, England.

"How the *goney* swallowed it all, didn't he?" said Mr. Slick, with great glee. *Slick in England*, ch. 21.

Some on 'em were fools enough to believe the *goney*; that's a fact. — *Ibid*.

Formerly, they poked sap-headed *goneys* into parliament, to play dummy; or into the army and navy, the church, and the colonial office. But clever fellows they kept for the law, the "Times," &c. — *Nature and Human Nature*, p. 142.

**Gong-Punch**. An instrument used by conductors and those who receive the fare in horse-railroad cars and omnibuses, by means of which a complete record is kept of the number of passengers who pay their fare; a bell-punch. See *Registering Punch*.

The royalty paid for use of *gong-punches* and the money used in maintaining spotters would be quite adequate to supply the means for rewarding the fidelity of the servant. — *Providence Press*.

The line of horse-cars running from New York to Harlaem charges three different rates of fare, according to the distance travelled. In these cars, the conductors carry slips of paper of various colors, each for the different rates charged. In order to make the system perfectly clear to passengers, Mark Twain has thus rendered it in verse: —

Conductor, when you take a fare,  
Punch in the presence of the *passenjare*:  
A blue trip-slip for an eight cents fare;  
A buff trip-slip for a six cents fare;  
A pink trip-slip for a three cents fare:  
Punch in the presence of the *passenjare*.

*Chorus.*

Punch, brothers, punch, punch with care,  
Punch in the presence of the *passenjare*.

**Gonus**. A stupid fellow. A student's modification of *goney*, used in some of our colleges, according to Mr. Hall.

One day I heard a Senior call a fellow a *gonus*. "Gonus," echoed I, "what does that mean?" "Oh," said he, "you're a Freshman, and don't understand. A stupid fellow, a dolt, a boot-jack, an ignoramus, is here called a *gonus*. All Freshmen," he continued gravely, "are *gonuses*." — *The Dartmouth*, Vol. IV. p. 116.

**Goober-Grabbers**. In Georgia and Alabama, backwoods people.

**Goobers**. Peanuts; ground-peas. See *Peanuts*.

If you are a theatre-goer when in Chicago you may have developed a fondness for peanuts. Beware of asking for them [in Texas] under that name, unless you

want to proclaim yourself a Yankee. Call boldly for *goobers*, or ground-peas. — *Texas Cor. of the Chicago Tribune*.

**Good as Wheat.** A phrase sometimes used instead of the more general one, "good as gold." It may possibly have originated in the usage of claiming rent, or payment of debts, in wheat.

**CHECK-MATED.** — It is stated that the father of a lady in this vicinity recently presented her with a check — "*good as wheat*" — for \$30,000 in view of her matrimonial alliance. Truly, such a *check*-ered life as that wouldn't be hard to lead. We wish somebody would endeavor to "check" our career in that way. — *New Bedford Standard*, Aug., 1858.

**Goodies.** Sweetmeats, cakes, &c.; as, a box of *goodies*. Provincial in Suffolk, England.

Arter a while, the kissin' an' foolin' was all over, an' we pitched into the *goodies*; an' ef ever I saw sweetnins fly, it was then. — *How Sal and Me got Married*.

**Goods.** This word is used by Western shopkeepers as a singular noun for a piece of goods; as, "that *goods*," speaking of cloth or linen.

**Goody.** 1. A well-disposed but small-minded person; sometimes said of men.

2. Interjection expressing gratification; as, "*Oh, goody!*"

3. A middle-aged woman in the service of a college, whose business it is to keep tidy the students' rooms. Probably contracted from *goodwife*. — *Webster*.

**To go off.** To expire.

"O Mr. Crane!" said the Widow Bedott, "I thought I should *go off* last night when I see that old critter squeeze up and hook on to you. Terrible impudent, — warn't it?" — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 77.

**Gool for Goal** is universal with New England boys, the same as *Loom* is used for *Loam*.

**To go one's Death** on a thing is equivalent to "lay one's life" on it.

**Goose.** "To be *sound on the goose*," or "*all right on the goose*," is a South-western phrase, meaning to be orthodox on the slavery question, *i. e.* pro-slavery. A correspondent states that he had heard the expression first in the Eastern States, whence it travelled westward. I am not able to give its origin.

The border ruffians held a secret meeting in Leavenworth, and appointed themselves a vigilance committee. All persons who could not answer, "*All right on the goose*," according to their definition of right, were searched, kept under guard, and threatened with death. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 252.

A poetical writer in the "Providence Journal," June 18, 1857, in speaking of the claims of a candidate for the office of mayor, says: —

To seek for political flaws is no use,  
His opponents will find he is "*sound on the goose*."

**To goose Boots.** To repair them by putting on a new front half-way up, and a new bottom; elsewhere called "footing boots." Derived probably, for distinction's sake, from "to fox."

**Goose-Fish.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**Gopher.** (Fr. *gaufreur*; from *gaufre*, honeycomb, wattle.) Applied to several species of burrowing animals. See Webster's Dictionary. *Goafs*, a name given by miners to cavities from which ore or coal has been removed, in the lateral walls of gullies, has the same origin. See "Athenæum," Sept. 19, 1868, p. 380.

1. In Georgia, a species of land turtle, burrowing in the ground in the low country. It is able to walk with a heavy man on its back. *Sherwood's Georgia*.

2. A little animal found in the valleys of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. A species of mole, more than twice the size of the common field mole. It burrows in the prairies, and there are immense tracts covered with the little hillocks made by the earth which these animals have dug from their burrows. — *Flint's Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

The *gopher* often burrows in the artificial tumuli, to find a dry place for its nest; and roots of trees penetrate to their lowest depths. — *Lapham's Antiq. of Wisconsin*.

Mr. Bryant, in alluding to the same fact, says:—

The *gopher* mines the ground  
Where stood the swarming cities. All is gone;  
All save the piles of earth that hold their bones.

**Gosh.** Used in the euphemistic form of oath, *By Gosh!*

**Gospelizing Pedler.** An itinerant or other preacher of the gospel.

An idler at a tavern, having vainly sought to lead a clergyman to avow his being such, said at last: "But, anyhow, ain't you one of these *gospelizing pedlers*?" This actually occurred in 1842 at Greenwich, Mass.

**Gospel Lot.** A lot set apart in new townships for a church, on the same principle as a school lot. New York.

**Gotham.** The city of New York, an appellation first given to it in "Salmagundi," a humorous work by J. K. Paulding and Washington Irving, evidently from the singular wisdom attributed to its inhabitants.

Ye dandies of *Gotham*, I've seen fools and fops in forty different cities, but none to compare with you. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**Gothamites.** The people of the city of New York; the New Yorkers.

I intended to present you with some phases of outward 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. — *Sketches of American Society, Frazer's Magazine.*

**To go the Big Figure.** To do things on a large scale.

Why, our senators *go the big figure* on fried oysters and whiskey punch. — *Burton, Waggeries.*

**To go the Whole Figure.** To go to the fullest extent in the attainment of any object.

*Go the whole figure* for religious liberty; it has no meanin' here, where all are free, but it's a cant word and sounds well. — *Sam Slick.*

"If you *go the whole figure* on temperance," said Mrs. Mudlaw, in giving her receipt for pudding sauce, "then some other flavorin' must be used instead of brandy or wine." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 377.

Suppose we keep thanksgivin' to home this year, and invite all our whole grist of cousins and aunts and things, — *go the whole figure* and do the genteel thing. — *McClintock's Tales.*

**To go the Whole Hog.** A Western vulgarism, meaning to do a thing out and out. A softened form of the phrase is *To go the entire animal.*

The expression is supposed to have been suggested by Cowper's poem "Of the Love of the World reproved," in which is discussed the eating of pork by the Turks. The question arose whether a portion might not be eaten, —

But for one piece they thought it hard  
From the *whole hog* to be debarred.

Of the congressional and State tickets we can only form a conjecture; but the probability is that the Democrats have carried the whole, for they generally *go the whole hog*, — they never scratch or split differences. — *Newspaper.*

The phrase has been caught up by some late English writers: —

The Tiger has leapt up heart and soul,  
It's clear that he means *to go the whole*  
*Hog*, in his hungry efforts to seize  
The two defianceful Bengalese. — *New Tale of a Tub.*

**To go through.** We say, Does this train "go through to Portland?"

An Englishman would simply say "go to Portland." Our expression would indicate a tunnel to him.

**To go through the Mill.** To acquire experience, and especially to meet with difficulties, losses, &c. The metaphor is derived from grain which has undergone the process of grinding.

The now common phrase, "To see the elephant," conveys the same meaning.

**Go to Grass! Be off! Get out!** "Stop your nonsense, — tell that to the marines."

**Go-to-meeting.** "Go-to-meeting clothes," one's best clothes, such as are worn on Sundays, when attending church. Common in New England.

**To go to Smash.** To be utterly ruined, or broken.  
 If some financial Solomon,  
 Before another set of sun,  
 Don't tell us what is to be done  
 To scare up cash,  
 We all perforce must cut and run,  
 Or go to smash. — *N. Y. Evening Post*.

**To go to the Bad.** To go to ruin, to destruction.  
 Now if Fred could be put at the head of [some enterprising business] they might save him from going to the bad. — *The Barton Experiment*, p. 30.

**Gouge.** A cheat, fraud, robbery.

R— and H— will probably receive from Mr. Polk's administration \$100,000 more than respectable printers would have done the work for. There is a clean, plain gouge of this sum out of the people's strong box. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845.

If the people of Mr. I—'s district see fit to indorse and justify his enormous gouge, and his more profligate defence of it, they virtually make it their own. *New York Herald*.

**To gouge.** 1. To chouse; to cheat.

Very well, gentlemen! gouge Mr. Crosby out of the seat, if you think it wholesome to do it. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1845.

2. "Gouging is performed by twisting the forefinger in a lock of hair, near the temple, and turning the eye out of the socket with the thumb-nail, which is suffered to grow long for that purpose." *Lambert's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 300.

This practice is only known by hearsay at the North and East, and appears to have existed at no time except among the lower class of people in the interior of some of the Southern States. An instance has not been heard of for years. Grose has the word in his Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue, and defines it as "a cruel custom, practised by the Bostonians in America"!

Major Beatty, Paymaster in the Western army, in his Diary 1786-1787, thus speaks of the custom as witnessed by him in Kentucky.

Saw the barbarous custom of gouging, practised between two of the lower class of people here, their unvaried way of fighting. When two men quarrel, they never have an idea of striking, but seize each other and twist each other's thumbs or fingers into the eye, and push it out of the socket till it falls on the cheek. — *Mag. of Am. History*, N. Y., Vol. I. p. 433.

Mr. Weld found this custom prevailing in Virginia in 1796. In speaking of his visit to Richmond, he says: —

Whenever these people come to blows, they fight like wild beasts, biting, kicking, and endeavoring to tear out each other's eyes with their nails. It is by no means uncommon to meet with those who have lost an eye in combat, and there are men who pride themselves upon the dexterity with which they can scoop one out. This they call *gouging*. — *Travels in North America*, p. 143.

"Gouge him, B—t! darn ye, gouge him;  
Gouge him while he's on the shore!"  
And his thumbs were straightway buried  
Where no thumbs had pierced before.

*Bon Gaultier, Ballads.*

A man who was paying his addresses to a Western belle found one day another suitor, of whom he thus speaks: —

I got a side squint into one of his pockets, and saw it was full of eyes that had been *gouged* from the people of my acquaintance. I knew my jig was up, for such a feller could out-court me, and I thought the gall brought me on purpose to have a fight. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

**To go under.** To perish. Adler, in his German Dictionary, defines *untergehen* to perish, fall, go to ruin. Common among the residents of the prairies.

Thar was old Sam Owins, — him as got rubbed out by the Spaniards at Sacramento or Chihuahua, this hoss doesn't know which, but he *went under* any how. *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 14.

Being entirely naked, there was no sign left by dripping garments to betray him; besides, the blood upon the water had proved his friend. On seeing that the hunters were under the full belief that he had "*gone under*," and therefore took but little pains to search further. — *Captain Mayne Reid, Osceola*, p. 192.

**To go up.** To be used up, worn out; applied to things as well as to men.

**To go up the Spout.** To mount the gallows; to be hung; to die.

We give such creatures timely and due notice to have a painted box [coffin] prepared, if they ever intend to apply such insulting epithets to us, for if they do they "*will go up the spout*," as surely as there is virtue in powder. — *Point Pleasant Register, Va.*, June, 1862.

**Governmental.** Relating to government. A modern word, sometimes used, and yet censured, both in England and America, and characterized by the "*Eclectic Review*" as an "*execrable barbarism*." — *Worcester*.

**Grab-Box.** A box used at ladies' fairs, filled with trifles. For the privilege of inserting the hand and making a grab, a charge is made. Whatever is taken is the property of the "*grabber*."

Young woman wanted me to invest in the "*grab-box*;" gave half a dollar, and fished in; got, in three times trying, a tin whistle, half a stick of candy, and a peanut done up in tissue-paper. — *Doesticks*, p. 135.

**Grab Game.** A mode of swindling, or rather stealing, practised by sharpers in our large cities. Bets are made in which considerable

sums of money are involved, when a dispute is purposely planned, in the midst of which one of the confederates seizes or "grabs" the money at stake and runs off. This term is also used in a more general sense to signify stealing, and making off with the booty, as in the following example: —

"The fact is," replied Bob, "this country is getting rather too hot for me, and I'll bear you company! What d'ye say to that?"

"Just as you like," responded his two companions; "that is, provided you won't attempt the *grab game* on us." — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 282.

**Grace of God.** This remarkable expression for a writ, I find used in a letter written at Philadelphia, in 1772, addressed to William Ellery, a signer of the Declaration of Independence: —

Ray Sands is truly long-winded; and, if jogging of him will not do after trying him again, thou must put the "*Grace of God*" upon his back, which I would chuse to avoid, if he would pay without.

**Gracious.** "Gracious sakes!" "My gracious!" "Gracious sakes alive!" are common expressions.

**Grade.** (French.) 1. A degree or rank in order or dignity, civil, military, or ecclesiastical.

2. A step or degree in any ascending series; as, "crimes of every *grade*." — *Webster*.

This word is of comparatively modern use. It is not in the English dictionaries previous to Todd's edition of Johnson in 1818. Mr. Todd calls it "a word brought forward in some modern pamphlets," and says, "It will hardly be adopted." Mr. Richardson says the word "has crept into frequent use." Mr. Knowles, in the ninth edition of his dictionary, introduces the word as once belonging to the language, without comment. The "*British Critic*" and other reviews have criticised the word as an unauthorized Americanism; but, as we have seen, it has been adopted at last by the English themselves.

Over grammar-schools, the clergy possessed an authority fully equal to that which they had in the universities. They also appointed and removed, at their own pleasure, teachers of every *grade*, &c. — *Buckle, History of Civilization in England*, Vol. II. ch. vi.

To talents of the highest grade he [Hamilton] united a patient industry not always the companion of genius. — *Marshall's Life of Washington*, Vol. V. p. 213.

3. The amount of inclination on a road. In England *gradient*.

**To grade.** To reduce to a certain degree of ascent or descent, as a road or way. — *Webster*.



**To graft.** 1. To "*graft boots*" is to repair them by adding new soles, and surrounding the feet with new leather. So called in Connecticut. Elsewhere called "*foxing boots*."

2. To pick pockets. A slang term.

Scotch Moll is making out good *grafting* in the 8th Avenue cars. — *National Police Gazette*.

**Graham Bread.** Bread made of unbolted wheat. It is easier to digest than common wheaten bread, and is, in consequence, much used by invalids.

**Grahamites.** People who follow the system of Graham in their regimen.

A glance at his round, ruddy face would shame a *Grahamite* or teetotaler out of his abstinence principles. — *Pickings from the Picayune*, p. 130.

**Graham System.** A system of dietetics recommended by Sylvester Graham, a lecturer of some celebrity on temperance and dietetics, which excludes the use of all animal food and stimulating drinks, including tea, coffee, &c.

**Grain.** 1. A particle; a bit; a little. Ex.: "I don't care a *grain*;" "Push the candle a *grain* further from you."

2. The universal name, in the United States, for what is called *corn* in England; that is, wheat, rye, oats, barley, &c. See *Bread-Stuff*.

**Grama Grass.** (Span. *grama*. *Chondrosium*.) Several species of this grass are found on our Western borders, where it is esteemed excellent food for cattle.

The stock-raiser who has fed his cattle upon *grama* during the winter finds them in quite as good condition in the spring as does the Eastern farmer his stall-fed animals. — *Cozzens's Marvellous Country*, p. 224.

**Grandacious.** Magnificent. A factitious word.

**Grandiferous.** Magnificent, extensive. A factitious word.

**Granite State.** The State of New Hampshire, so called from the abundance of granite found in it.

**Grannyfied.** Having the character of a granny.

That querulous and grannified manner peculiar to old people who have outlived their usefulness. — *The Constitution, Middletown, Conn.*, May 7, 1862.

**To grant,** for to vouchsafe, is used in prayer; as, "*Grant to hear us*." Southern.

**Grape-Fruit.** A variety of *Citrus racemosus*. Barbadoes.

**Grape Vine.** See *Blue-Grass*.

**Grass.** A vulgar contraction of *sparrow-grass*, i. e. asparagus. Further than this the force of corruption can hardly go.

**Grasset.** See *Chewink*.

**Grass-Widow.** A wife who has been separated from her husband; called also a "widow bewitched." In England, the term *grass-widow* signifies an unmarried woman who has had a child.

"California widow" is an analogous term, which came into use during the rush to California, 1850 to 1860, when the new-found treasures of that country separated so many husbands from their wives. During the late war such were termed *war-widows*.

**Grass-Widowhood.** "Her life properly be devoted to *grass-widowhood*." — *Congregationalist*, Jan. 6, 1870.

**Grave-Yard.** Mrs. Trollope italicizes this word as novel to her English ears, accustomed to "*church-yard*."

**Gravy.** Used in New England instead of *juice*; as, the *gravy* of an apple-pie. Often reversed, as *juice* for dish *gravy*.

**Gray Deal**, the common pronunciation for *great deal*.

**Grease-Wood.** (*Obione canescens*.) The chamizo of the Mexicans. (*Sarcobatus vermicularis*.) A scraggy, stunted shrub, very abundant in the Upper Missouri and Yellowstone Valleys, is called *Grease-Wood* by the traders. — *Hayden, Missouri Valley*, p. 292.

The soil [near the Salt Lake] was sterile, acrid, full of alkali, and refused to produce any thing but the dreary sage and *grease-wood*; but Mormon industry flooded it with artificial rains, . . . and it now produces fine wheat. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 167.

**To grease the Wheels** is a metaphorical expression used in the West to signify paying occasionally a little money to your creditor, grocer, &c.

**Greaser.** 1. A term vulgarly applied to the Mexicans and other Spanish Americans. It first became common during the war with Mexico.

The Americans call the Mexicans *greasers*, which is scarcely a complimentary soubriquet; although the term "*greaser camp*" as applied to a Mexican encampment is truthfully suggestive of filth and squalor. — *Marryat, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 236.

Tell the old coon then to quit that, and make them darned *greasers* clear out of the lodge, and pock some corn and shucks here for the animals, for they 're nigh give out. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 176.

The "Providence Press," Feb. 15, 1876, in its remarks on the proposed admission of New Mexico as a State, says : —

The Territory contains less than 100,000 inhabitants, and many of these are *greasers* and Spanish herdsmen, about as well fitted to organize and conduct a State government as the natives of Northern Alaska.

2. An assistant to the fireman of a steamboat; one who oils the machinery.

3. A produce of oil. Pennsylvania petroleum region.— *Phil. Press.*

**Grease Spot.** The slightest particle of a human being. See under *Grit*.

**Greasy.** We call this word *greecy*, the English *greezy*.

**Great.** Distinguished, excellent, admirable. Thus, "a *great* Christian" means a pious man; "a *great* horse," a horse of good qualities and bottom; "a *great* plantation," a fertile one. So, too, "He is *great* at running;" "She is *great* on the piano." "A *great* woman." 2 Kings, iv. 8.

**Great Big.** Very large; as, "I've got a *great big* watermelon." Often used by children.

**Great Spirit.** The term applied by the North American Indians to the Supreme being.

Big Mouth [the Iroquois chief] told Denonville, the Governor of Canada, that he and his people were subjects neither of the French nor of the English, that they held their country of the *Great Spirit*; and that they had never been engaged in war.— *Parkman, Count Frontenac and New France*, p. 172.

At a conference with a delegation of Indian chiefs, held at the Executive Mansion, in Washington, Sept. 28, 1877, Spotted Tail, a Sioux, made a long speech, in which, addressing President Hayes, he said :—

Your people make raids and drive away the game. The land we occupy was given us by the *Great Spirit*, who said we could live there, but the white people are trying to drive us from the country to one where we can do nothing. You live here. The *Great Spirit* gave you the land. You stay here with all your people. That's the way all nations ought to live.— *Telegram to Newspapers*.

Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, thus said to Massasoit, the chief of the Narragansetts, when buying lands from his tribe :—

Brother, I know that all these lands are thine, —

These rolling rivers and these waving trees, —

From the *Great Spirit* came the gift divine;

And who would trespass upon grants like these?

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto iii. xxi.*

**Greattle.** A great while. Long Island.

**Greek.** A sobriquet often applied to Irishmen, in jocular allusion to their *soi-disant* Milesian origin.

In some of our Atlantic cities, the men of foreign birth, especially those in vulgar style called *Greeks*, constitute so nearly a majority that it is only their ignorance that prevents the saying of Maro from being fulfilled, —

. . . Danaï dominantur in urbe.

As it is, demagogues rule through them. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 2, 1858.

**Greenback.** Legal tender notes. The national paper-money currency of the United States, first issued on the breaking out of the late civil war. The backs of notes so issued by the government, and by the National banks, are printed in green, mainly for the purpose of preventing alterations and counterfeits. The term *greenbacks* was given these bills by the Hon. S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, who devised and successfully carried out the great financial plan which produced such favorable results to the country. Mr. Chase told the writer that he claimed the honor of adding the term to our vocabulary.

Then came the war with its consequences. Large emissions of *greenback* currency took the place of gold, and by its immense volume stimulated production. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 8.

The *greenbacks* are popular; the people have had a fresh taste of a paper currency that will pay debts and buy goods alike in New York and Nebraska. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 14, 1862.

The efforts made in Congress to extend the issue of legal tenders, or *greenbacks*, rendered it necessary to convert the term into an adjective. Thus we have these examples of such use : —

Gold yesterday touched 108 7-8, a point below any scoring of the gold market for several years. Let it go down, down, down, until the *greenback* promise of a dollar shall purchase one hundred cents of value in gold coin. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct., 1876.

A direct tax and a lot of *greenbacks*,  
Not backed by financial solidity,  
Render useless, we're told, copper, silver, and gold,  
And redeem the exchequer's avidity.

*Song from Vanity Fair.*

**Greenbackers.** The supporters of greenback or paper money; also called inflationists, as they are opposed to the resumption of specie payments.

Some steps are being taken to secure after the State election a union of the *greenbackers* and the Democrats on a fusion electoral ticket. — *N. York Tribune*, Oct., 1876.

The "Albany Times" is striving to prevent the return of any *greenback* voters to the Democratic fold. It says: "The Tildenites forget that they have no claim whatever on a single *greenback* voter. . . . We don't see how any so-called *greenback* advocate can vote for anybody except Mr. Cooper for President." — *New York paper*.

The Democratic press of Ohio is trying to seduce the *Greenbackers* back to the Democratic fold, on the ground that there is every thing that the wanderer after a softer currency can desire in the Democratic platform. — *N. Y. Herald*, Aug., 1877.

**Greening.** The Rhode Island greening is a favorite apple.

**Green Mountain State.** The State of Vermont.

**Griddles.** Cakes baked on a griddle. Pennsylvania.

**Griffin, Griffe.** This word, like the French *griffone*, is constantly used in Louisiana, both in conversation and in print, for a mulatto, particularly the woman; probably in allusion to the fabulous griffin, half eagle, half lion.

**To grig.** To vex, irritate. To *grig* means to pinch, in Somerset, England.

That word "superiors" *grigged* me. Thinks I, "My boy, I'll just take that expression, roll it up in a ball, and shy it back at you." — *S. Slick, Human Nature*, p. 83.

**Grist.** A large number or quantity.

There 's an unaccountable *grist* of bees, I can tell you; and, if you mean to charge upon sich enemies, you must look out for somebody besides Whiskey Centre for your vanguard. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

I went down to the Squire's to have a talk with his daughter. There was a whole *grist* of fellows there. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I says, says I, "Hannah, s'posin' we keep thanksgiving to home this year," says I, "and invite all our hull *grist* o' cousins and aunts and things, — go the whole figure, and do the thing genteel." — *McClintock's Tales*.

**Grit.** Hard sandstone, employed for millstones, grindstones, pavement, &c. And hence the word is often vulgarly used to mean courage, spirit. See *Clear Grit*.

Mr. Whipple's subject was "*Grit*," . . . of which the lecturer said there was defiance in the very sound. *Grit* was spirit and will thrust into heart and backbone, so as to form part of the physical substance of man. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 17, 1866.

The command of a battalion was given to Mr. Jones, a pretty decided Whig in politics, and, like many other men of Zaccchean stature, all *grit* and spirit. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*, June 24.

Honor and fame from no condition rise. It's the *grit* of a fellow that makes the man. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 44.

If he hadn't a had the clear *grit* in him, and showed his teeth and claws, they'd a nullified him so you wouldn't see a grease spot of him no more. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 17.

The Hunters grew into a class in New England. They were a breed by themselves, a kind of cross between the Puritan and Indian, with all the *grit* of the one and lawless love of liberty of the other. — *Elliott, New England History*, Vol. I. p. 459.

I reckon the chaplain was the real *grit* for a parson, — always doin' as he'd be done by, and practisin' a darn'd sight more than he preached. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. I.

**Gritting.** Grating dry corn into coarse meal, a process much resorted to by Northern soldiers in the late war. For this purpose, soldiers ordinarily use tin plates. One of these is placed on a smooth stump or a flat rail, and with his bayonet the soldier soon punches holes

enough into it to make a coarse grater. Rubbing the ear of corn over this furnishes the industrious and persevering a fine parcel of good, sweet, coarse meal, which makes a good pudding, an excellent hoe cake, and a most inviting corn dodger.

Some use a piece of old stove-pipe, others a sheet of tin made convex, and others again an old tin pan. The result, however, to the diligent is the same, — good, fresh corn-meal.

It was exceedingly amusing to stand by the roadside and watch the division march by. Men were *gritting* on the caissons; convalescents in the ambulances were *gritting*; the tender-footed and exhausted in the wagons, and the black, yellow, and white faces in the ox-cart, — all, all were *gritting*. And the moment "Halt and rest" was heard, down sat many and resumed *gritting*. Some carried the *gritter* in their haversacks, others had it slung to their belts, and others took turns in bearing forward the miniature mill. — *N. Y. Paper, Extract from a Soldier's Letter.*

**Gritty.** Courageous; spirited.

My decided opinion is that there never was a *grittier* crowd congregated on that stream: and such dancin' and drinkin', and eatin' bar steaks and corn dodgers, and huggin' the gals, don't happen but once in a fellow's lifetime. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 106.

**Groan.** To give a groan in disapprobation of.

Yesterday they met, as agreed upon, and, after *groaning* the Ward Committee, went to the mayor's office. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 19, 1861.

**Grocery.** A grocer's shop. In the plural, the commodities sold by grocers.

In the South-west, a *grocery* is a bar-room, and the term *groceries* means liquors. The bar-keeper is often told to "fetch on his *groceries*."

The "*grocery*" — consisting of a whiskey barrel, six tin cups, two green glass tumblers, a lot of pipes and tobacco — was in close proximity to the inn I was in; and there the qualities of a very recent extraction of the corn, and of the fitness of the candidates to receive the votes of the corned, was discussed in the manner usual in such times and places. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Every other house in Santa Fé was a *grocery*, as they call a gin and whiskey shop, continually disgorging reeling, drunken men, and everywhere filth and dirt triumphant. — *Ruxton, Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 190.

**Groggery.** A place where spirituous liquors are sold and drank; a grog-shop. In the West, often called a Doggery or Dog-hole; and in New York, a Rum-hole; elsewhere, a Rum-mill.

**Ground Bridge.** The well-known corduroy road of the South, laid on the bed of a creek or other body of water, to render it fordable; while the hollow bridge is one that is thrown over the water.

**Ground Cherry.** (*Physalis*.) A wild fruit lately introduced into our gardens and markets. Sometimes called Winter Cherry.

**Ground-Hog.** See *Woodchuck*.

**Ground-Hog Day.** Candlemas (Feb. 2) is sometimes so designated 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 and a late spring. In European folk-lore, the *bear* is the Candlemas weather-prophet. (See *Notes and Queries*, June 2, 1855, p. 421.)

Yesterday was "*ground-hog's day*" in many parts of the United States, and Candlemas day in many other parts of the world. From time immemorial, it has been a critical day in the affairs of the weather. The character of the second of February is really of much more importance than whether the first of March comes in like a lion or a lamb. The simplest form of the adage is:—

If Candlemas day be bright and clear,  
There'll be two winters in that year.

In America, paying due deference to the creature's importance in our national mythology, it is left to the ground-hog to decide the day, and so the fate of the season. He is supposed to come out of his hole on that day, and take a look at the world. If it is a bright day, he will see his shadow on the ground, and, taking fright at it, will run back into his home and stay there. A fresh attack of winter will set in, and he will be justified in the steps he has taken. If it is cloudy, he will cast no shadow, take no fright, and gives us no further attack of winter. So far as we recollect yesterday, it was a day for the *ground-hog* to maintain his unterrified poise and assure us of an early spring. — *Hartford Courant*, Feb. 3, 1877.

**Ground-Nut.** (*Arachis hypogæa*.) The peanut. It buries its pods under ground after flowering, to ripen its nuts. It is cultivated in the West Indies and Southern States.

**Ground-Peas.** The peanut. Virginia.

**Ground-Plum.** (*Astragalus caryocarpus*.) A plant growing on dry soil on the Mississippi River at the junction of the St. Peter's, and westward and southward. The fruit, which is a pod, closely resembles a plum, whence its name.

**Ground-Sluicing.** Among gold-miners, the process of washing down banks of earth by throwing upon them a stream of water from a pipe or leathern hose. It is thus used as a substitute for shovelling, to remove heavy layers of earth from places where gold is supposed to be deposited.

During our stay at Gold Hill, one of our party bought an interest in a company of *ground-sluicers*, and, on our departure, sold out his share at an advance. — *Harper's Mag.*, Vol. XX. p. 612.

**Ground-Squirrel.** A name sometimes erroneously given to the striped and spotted prairie squirrel (*Spermophilus tredecimlineatus*). The Chipmunk.

There are notes of joy from the hang-bird and wren,  
 And the gossip of swallows through all the sky;  
 The *ground-squirrel* gaily chirps by his den,  
 And the wilding-bee hums merrily by.

*The Gladness of Nature, W. C. Bryant.*

**Grounds.** "Tobacco grounds," "low grounds," "corn grounds," are terms applied to lands in Virginia. They never use the term "bottoms" or "bottom lands," which they call "low grounds."

**Group-Meeting.** Held for a few days continuously, or under charge of persons voluntarily associated, and serving each in rotation.

About thirty conversions have resulted from prayer and effort within the church, aided by the influence of "group-meetings." — *Rep't of Conference, Religious Herald, Hartford.*

**Grouty.** Cross, ill-natured. Northern.

**Grubby.** See *Toad-Fish*. *Grubby* and *Grumpy*. Massachusetts.

**Grunter.** 1. (Genus *Pogonias*. Cuvier.) One of the popular names of the fish called by naturalists the Banded Drum. It is common to the Atlantic coast south of New York. Grunts and Young Sheepskin are other names of the same fish. — *Nat. Hist. of N. Y.*

2. A hog; a pig.

**Gruv.** Grieved. "*Gruv* herself nearly to death." — *Emma Bartlett*, p. 186.

**Guano.** (Quichua, *huanu*, the dung of birds.) A compound of the excrements of sea-birds and the remains of penguins and other water-fowls. According to Garcillasso de la Vega, it was extensively used by the ancient Peruvians to manure their lands, for which purpose it is now imported in large quantities into the United States and Europe.

The earliest mention of *guano* as a manure is found in Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, first printed in Seville in 1590. In an English translation by E. G. (supposed to have been Edward Grimestone), published in 1604, is the following at p. 311:

In some islands or phares, which are joyning to the coast of Peru, wee see the toppes of the mountaines all white, and to sight you would take it for snow, or for some white land; but they are heaps of dung of sea fowle, which go continually thither. . . . They go with boates to these ilands, onely for the dung: for there is no other profit in them. And this dung is so commodious and profitable, as it makes the earth yeelde great abundance of fruite. They call this dung *guano*, whereof the valley hath taken the name, which they call Limaguana, in the valleys of Peru, where they use this dung, and it is the most fertile of all that countrie. . . . So as these birds have not only the flesh to serve for meate, their singing for recreation, their feathers for ornament and beautie, but alsoe their dung serves to fatten the ground.

**Guardeen**, strongly accented on the last syllable, is often heard in New England for *guardian*.



**Guava.** (W. Ind. *guayaba*, *guaiva*.) Applied by the Spaniards, indifferently, to the fruit of two nearly allied species of *Psidium*, — the *P. pomiferum* and *P. pyriferum*. — *Greenwood's Fruits of Cuba* (*Bost. Jour. Nat. Hist.*), Vol. II. pp. 237, 238.

There is another fruit [in Cuba] which they call *Guayabas*, like Filberds, as bigge as figges. — *Hakluyt, Virginia Richly Valued* (1609), ch. v.

John Hardie, in speaking of the fruits of Bermuda, says: —

Pomgranates, *Guavers*, Papawes, Fig-trees too,  
Whereof a Pleasant kind of Drink they brew.

*Desc. of Last Voyage to Bermudas* (1671), p. 10.

**Gubernatorial.** Pertaining to government or to a governor. — *Webster*.

**To guess.** 1. To conjecture; to judge without any certain principles of judgment.

2. To conjecture rightly, or upon some just reason. — *Johnson*.

Yclothed was she, fresh for to devise;  
Her yellow hair was braided in a tress  
Behind her back, a yard long I *guess*. — *Chaucer's Heroine*.

There hath be no default, I *gesse*. — *Gower, Conf. Amantis* (ed. Pauli), II. 11; comp. II. 59, 368; III. 180, noted by Prof. Child.

Incapable and shallow innocents!

You cannot *guess* who caused your father's death. — *Shakspeare*.

One may *guess* by Plato's writings that his meaning as to the inferior deities was, that they who would have them might, and they who would not might let them alone; but that himself had a right opinion concerning the true God. — *Stillingfleet*.

We thus see that the legitimate, English sense of this word is to *conjecture*; but with us, and especially in New England, it is constantly used in common conversation instead of *to believe*, *to suppose*, *to think*, *to imagine*, *to fancy*. It is even used to make an emphatic assertion; as, "Jem, wouldn't you like a julep to cool you off this sultry morning?" "I *guess* I would!" From such examples as the words *to fix* and *to guess*, it will be seen that, while on the one hand we have a passion for coining new and unnecessary words and often in a manner opposed to the analogies of the language, there is on the other hand a tendency to banish from common use a number of the most useful and classical English expressions, by forcing one word to do duty for a host of others of somewhat similar meaning. This latter practice is by far the more dangerous of the two; because, if not checked and guarded against in time, it will corrode the very texture and substance of the language, and rob posterity of the power of appreciating and enjoying those masterpieces of literature

bequeathed to us by our forefathers, which form the richest inheritance of all that speak the English tongue.

But the most common vulgar use of the word is when there is no guessing, and where the statement made is known and beyond a doubt. Thus a person in taking his departure from a company will take his hat and say, "Well, I *guess* I'll go," when he knows he is going. Again, a lady in shopping, after making her choice of an article, will say, "I *guess* I'll take this." These expressions are equivalent to "think," in which sense there is English authority, both old and recent.

Mr. Richard Grant White, in a note on the passage from King Richard III. (Act III. Sc. 4), "Well! as you *guess*," has the following remarks:—

"If there be two words for the use of which, more than any others, our English cousins twit us, they are '*well*,' as an interrogative exclamation, and '*guess*.' Milton uses both, as Shakespear also frequently does, and exactly in the way in which they are used in America; and here we have them both in half a line. Like most of those words and phrases which it pleases John Bull to call Americanisms, they are English of the purest and best, which have lived here while they have died out in the mother country." — *Shakespeare's Scholar*, p. 343.

(See remarks on the use of the word *Well*.)

In fact, this word has been used in England in *every* sense, in which it is used by us, which can be established from Locke. For example:—

1. If we can find out how far the understanding can extend its view, how far it has faculties to attain certainty, in what cases it can only judge and *guess*, we may learn how to content ourselves with what is attainable by us in this state. — *Locke, Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book I. Ch. iv. Bohn's ed. Vol. I. p. 130.

2. This readiness of extension to make itself be taken notice of so constantly with other ideas has been the occasion, I *guess*, that some have made the whole essence of body to consist in that extension. — *Ibid.*, Book II. Ch. xiii. p. 25.

3. This appearance of theirs in train, though perhaps it may be sometimes faster and sometimes slower, yet, I *guess*, varies not much in a waking man, &c. *Ibid.*, Book II. Ch. xiv. Vol. I. p. 305.

**Guider.** A guidon; a small flag.

One thousand pikes or spears, each marked with a miniature rebel flag. a number of small flags for *guiders*, ammunition, shot, shell, and various other articles. — *N. Y. Herald*, March 17, 1862, *Letter from Nashville*.

**Guinea Corn.** (*Holcus sorghum*.) Egyptian millet, Durrah of the Arabs, a plant with a stalk of the size and appearance of maize. The grain grows in a single pendant bunch at the top, like the broom-corn.

**Guinea Grass.** A species of grass cultivated in the West Indies, used as fodder for horses. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**Guinea Keet** or simply **Keet**. A name given in some localities to the guinea fowl, and probably derived from its cry.

**Gulch**. A deep ravine, caused by the action of water. California.

The word *gulch*, which is in general use here, may not be familiar to your ears; though its sound somewhat expresses its meaning, without further definition. It denotes a mountain ravine, differing from ravines elsewhere, as the mountains of California differ from all others, more steep, abrupt, and inaccessible. The sound of *gulch* is like that of a sudden plunge into a deep hole, which is just the character of the thing itself. It bears the same relation to a ravine that a cañon does to a pass or gorge. — *Bayard Taylor's Letters from California*, Sept., 1849.

**Gulch-Mining**. The same as placer-mining; the simplest method of taking gold from the earth. The gold-croppings of rich leads in the mountain-cliffs are washed into the ravines or gulches, where its existence is easily ascertained by the simplest implements; a spade, a pick, and a pan of sheet-iron being all that are required. The pan is half-filled with earth, and is then shaken. The gold sinks to the bottom, while the loose earth escapes with the water.

The *gulch-miners* work their claims very imperfectly. It is deemed a safe calculation that they leave quite as much in the earth as they extract; and more systematic men with heavy capital follow, buy up the abandoned claims, and sometimes concentrate a whole gulch in one company. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 345.

**Gulf States**. The States bordering on the Gulf of Mexico; namely, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

**To gully**. To wear a hollow channel in the earth. — *Webster*. This conversion of the noun into a verb is an Americanism. "The roads are much *gullied*," is a common expression.

**Gully Plum**. The fruit of the *Spondia lutea*. So called in Barbadoes.

**Gum**. 1. The name of many Southern trees. The Sour Gum and Black Gum are species of *Nyssa*. The Sweet Gum, often called simply Gum or Gum-tree, is *Liquidambar styraciflua*. The trees of this last species resemble the Hornbeam of the North. They grow to a large size, and, in many instances, decay at the heart, leaving a shell of some few inches in thickness. Hence, they are frequently cut into convenient lengths, and, after due preparation, converted into casks, beehives, &c. From this practice, beehives, though made of boards, have come to be called *bee-gums*, and any thing like casks or firkins for domestic use is called a *gum*. Southern.

What dat? What dat dis nigger's eyes  
Displore, wid mighty big surprise,  
Upon de *gum-tree* swingin' ?  
It am de possum at his ease,  
Rocked in de cradle ob de breeze,  
And list'nin' to de singin'. — *Negro Melody*.

2. India-rubber. Hence the plural *Gums* is often applied to India-rubber shoes See *Rubbers*.

3. Large vessels or bins made from a hollow gum-tree.

**Gumbo.** See *Gombo*.

**Gum Game.** A trick; a dodge. Opossums and raccoons, when pursued, will fly for refuge to the Sweet Gum tree, in preference to any other. This tree is very tall, slim, smooth, and void of branches except a tuft at the top, which is a place of security for any animal expert enough to reach it. As they are hunted in the night, they are, of course, beyond the reach of the hunter's penetrating eye at the great height of the gum-tree. This is called "coming the *gum game*" over the hunter.

**Gum-Log.** Log of a gum-tree. Southern.

**To gum a Saw.** To punch out the teeth of a saw, by means of a machine called a *gummer*. The phrase alludes to the growth of the teeth from the gums.

**Gummer.** A machine for gumming saws. See *To gum*.

**Gummo Limbo.** (*Bursea gummifera*.) The largest of the Florida trees, abounding in gum.

**Gummy!** An exclamation, used in New England.

"*Gummy!*" retorted the woman. "He has been a talkin' about me, and a runnin' me down." — *Margaret*, p. 137.

**Gum-Sucking.** A disgusting word, applied to the tendency of lovers, young ones especially, to carry their innocent endearments to an excess that displeases a third party. A friend informs me that he first heard it at Princeton College, in 1854, and thinks it may be a Jersey word.

**Gumptions.** One who has a good opinion of himself; a "knowing one." "He's a *gumptious* fellow," i. e. he's smart, clever. See *Bumptious*.

**Gunning.** The term used in the Northern States for the act of going out with a gun, to shoot game. At the South, the word *hunting* is used.

The Americans were, however, mostly marksmen, having been accustomed to *gunning* from their youth. — *Hannah Adams, Hist. of New England*.

**Gunning a Stock** 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. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*.

**Gun-Stick.** A ramrod. Western.

**Gurry.** Among fishermen, and in commerce, the crude oil made from the livers of cod and other fish, — or, rather, the livers themselves, in a state of decomposition, with the oil that has been tried out from them by the sun's heat. It is used by tanners, and for various purposes.

The fisherman dips a bucket of fresh water from the spring, and, washing the *gurry* from his hands and face, starts for home. — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman.*

**Gush.** A great abundance. A Texan would say, "We have got a *gush* of peaches in our neck of the woods."

**Gutter-Snipes.** A Wall Street term for brokers who do business chiefly on the sidewalk or in the street, and who are not members of the Stock Exchange. They are also known as *Curb-stone Brokers*, which see.

A recent ordinance by the Board of Aldermen makes *gutter-sniping* a misdemeanor, and charges are to be made against the captains of precincts where the offence was committed for neglect of duty. — *N. Y. Herald.*

## H.

**Habitan.** (French.) A term applied to what, in English, is called a yeoman; i. e., a small country proprietor. Canada and Louisiana.

My coachman was a *habitan*, and I had a fine opportunity of studying the conflicting traits of character which distinguish the race. — *Lanman's Tour to the Saguenay.*

At Lake Megantic, General Arnold met an emissary whom he had sent in advance to ascertain the feelings of the *habitans*, or French yeomanry. — *Irring's Life of Washington*, Vol. II. p. 96.

**Hackberry.** (*Celtis occidentalis*.) A small or middle-sized tree, with sweet and edible fruits as large as bird-cherries, and which makes good firewood. It is also called Sugar Berry.

**Hackee.** A name given, in some of the Eastern States, to the Chipmunk.

**Hackmatack.** The American larch, or Tamarack (*Larix Americana*). This tree abounds in the North-eastern States and British America. It is a hard, strong, and durable wood, is frequently used in ship-building, while the houses of the settlers are almost entirely constructed of it. The name is probably of Indian origin.

**Had have.** This astonishing combination of auxiliaries is often used by speakers and writers who should know better.

*Had we have* known this. — *Nott, on Hamilton's Duel.*

**Hadn't oughter,** i. e. had not ought to, for "ought not to." A common vulgarism in New England. See *Ought*.

Indulging so in thoughts of death and slaughter,  
Of course, my friend, you know you *hadn't* orter.

*Leland, Meister Karl's Sketch-Book, p. 266.*

If anybody thinks they are happier and freer from care without bein' married, nobody compels 'em to be married; but if they are, they *hadn't* ought to want to be married and single at the same time, it's onreasonable. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 198.

**To hail from.** A phrase probably originating with seamen or boatmen, and meaning to come from, to belong to; as, "He *hails* from Kentucky;" i. e., he is a native of Kentucky, or lives in Kentucky.

**Hake.** In New England and along the Atlantic coast, the name applied to the *Phycis Americanus*, or "Codling" (Mitchell). In Massachusetts, the fishermen call this species "Old English Hake," or, as it is generally pronounced, "Hawk." The European Hake (*Merlucius vulgaris*, Flem.) is known to fishermen in New England as the *Whiting*.

**Half-baked.** A term applied to a silly or unsophisticated person. .

**Half-Cock.** "To go off at *half-cock*" is a metaphorical expression borrowed from the language of sportsmen, and is applied to a person who attempts a thing in a hurry without due preparation, and consequently fails.

Mr. Clayton of Georgia is a fine speaker; he is always ready, and never goes off *half-cock*. — *Crockett, Tour down East*.

**Half-faced Camp.** A shelter of the frontiersmen of the South of the last generation, and perhaps of the present. They are sometimes open on the south side, whence the name.

You may talk about your reunions, your soirées, and all that the world calls social refinement; but for true-hearted benevolence, void of parade, commend me to a hunting-party in a *half-faced camp*. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 95.

**Half-saved.** Half-witted. Provincial in Herefordshire, England, and in New England.

**Half-Widow.** A woman who has a shiftless husband. New England and New York.

**Hammock.** (Carib. *amaca*, Sp. *jamaca*, pron. *hammáca*.) 1. A swinging-bed. This word, now in such general use, especially among seamen, and the etymology of which has been so much disputed, is undoubtedly of West Indian origin.

Cotton for the making of *hamacas*, which are Indian beds. — *Raleigh, Disc. of Guiana*, 1596.

The Brazilians call their beds *hamacas*; they are a sheet laced at both ends, and so they sit rocking themselves in them. — *Sir R. Hawkins, Voy to South Sea*.

2. "A piece of ground thickly wooded, whether a prairie or a hill, and distinguished from the open oak and hickory land, or the

immense forests of thinly scattered pines, which with few exceptions cover the whole face of the country. The word has been confounded with *hummocks*, used by marines to designate the knolls, or small elevations, along the coast." — *North American Rev.*, April, 1828, p. 486. See *Hummock*.

Although the largest portion of the country is covered with pine barrens, and much of it extremely poor, yet there is also much upland, interval, and *hammock* land, of the most excellent quality. . . . The borders of the watercourses, as well as the *hammocks*, are covered with thick woods of hard timber, tangled with innumerable vines. — *Williams's View of E. Florida* (1827), p. 6.

The *hammock* land, so called from its appearing in tufts among lofty pines, . . . has a very romantic appearance. — *Romans's Florida*, p. 17.

**Hand.** An adept or proficient in any thing; one who is fond of any thing.

It is a wonder to me how some folks can content themselves doin' nothin'; I never could. I must be doin' something, or I should gape myself to death. I'm a great *hand* to gape; why, afore now I've gaped so much on Sundays that my mouth wouldn't stay shut for a week after. — *Yankee Hill's Stories*.

"Take a pickle, Mr. Crane," said the Widow Bedott. "I'm glad you like pickles, — they're a delightful beverage. Melissa never eats 'em, — she ain't no pickle *hand*." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 71.

**Hand-Dog.** A fire dog; an andiron. New England.

**Hand-Glasses.** Eye-glasses; spectacles. Fancy *hand-glasses* are advertised for sale in New York.

**Hand Running.** Consecutively; as, "He can hit the bull's eye at fifty paces ten times *hand running*." So too in the north of England.

**To handle.** 1. To manage; to overcome an opponent, particularly in wrestling. Ex.: "You can't *handle* him."

2. To trouble; to distress; as, "How the disease *handled* him." Connecticut.

**Hand-Shake.** The shaking of hands. "The warm hand-shake, the cordial word." — *The Congregationalist*.

**Handsome.** *To do the handsome thing* is to be generous, particularly in returning a favor; to be very polite.

When a feller has just given me a snug travellin' job onasked, and *done the handsome thing*, it ain't any great return to make to let him put in his oar sometimes. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 30.

**Handwrite**, for *handwriting*, a common barbarism at the South; as, "I can't read his *handwrite*."

**Hang.** "To get the *hang* of a thing" is to get the knack, or habitual facility, of doing it well; also, to get acquainted with. To hang a

scythe is to fasten the blade to the handle; and so to hang an axe, a hoe, or other implement. Every workman hangs his scythe to suit himself; and cannot, at once, easily use that of another mower, which is differently hung. In the exchange of tools or implements, some time is required for "getting the hang" of each, in the hands of a new possessor.

If ever you must have an indifferent teacher for your children, let it be after they have got a fair start and have acquired the *hang* of the tools for themselves. *Prime, Hist. of Long Island*, p. 82.

He had been in pursuit of the science of money-making all his life, but could never get the *hang* of it. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

Suggs lost his money and his horse, but then he hadn't got the *hang* of the game. — *Simon Suggs*, p. 44.

Well, now, I can tell you that the sheriffs are the easiest men for you to get the *hang* of, among all the public officers. — *Greene on Gambling*.

**To hang.** To stick fast, come to a stand-still; as, the jury *hung*, and "the man got a new trial." Probably borrowed from the sportsman's term "to *hang* fire," said of a gun which does not go off at once.

**To hang around.** To loiter about. The English expression is *to hang about*.

Every time I come up from Louisiana, I found Jess *hangin' round* that gal, lookin' awful sweet, and a fellow couldn't go near her without raisin' his dander. *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**To hang out.** To reside. "He hangs out at Chicago." Western.

I'm going to look out for that crowd myself; they need somebody to preach to them wherever he can catch them, and I know where they *hang out*. — *The Barton Experiment*, p. 29.

**To hang up one's Fiddle.** To desist; to give up.

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 his share of the world's spoils, he might as well *hang up his fiddle*, and be content to dig his way through life as best he may. — *Dow's Sermons*, p. 78.

**Hannahill and Black Harry.** Popular names for the Black Sea Bass (*Centropistes nigricans*). One of the most savory and delicate of fishes which appear in our markets from May to July. — *De Kay, Fishes of New York*, p. 25.

**To happen in.** To happen to call in; to go or come in accidentally.

*Happening into* the Suffolk jail on a business errand, we were somewhat startled by hearing our name familiarly called from a prisoner's cell, &c. — *Boston Bee*, Feb., 1855.

**To happify.** To make happy. This mongrel barbarism, according to Mr. Pickering, is sometimes heard in our pulpits.



**Happy as a Clam** is a common simile in New England, sometimes enlarged to "happy as a clam at high-water."

Inglorious friend! most confident I am  
Thy life is one of very little ease;  
Albeit men mock thee with their similes,  
And prate of being *happy as a clam*. — *Saxe, Sonnet to a Clam*.

The poor peasant who satisfies his hunger with submission and salt pork, penitence, and potatoes, is as sound as a live oak corporeally, and as *happy as a clam* at high-water. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**Happifying.** Making happy.

I feel myself Providence has reposed in me a high and responsible trust, in guidin', governin', advancin', and *happifyin'* this great nation. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 33.

**Harbor-Police.** Policemen whose special duty is to prevent roguery in or near the shipping. New York.

**Hard Case.** A worthless, dissipated fellow; a drunkard.

**Hard Coal.** Anthracite coal, so called to distinguish it from bituminous coal, which is called *soft coal*.

Since the introduction of *hard coal*, the infernal regions have become greatly enlarged, so that they can now uncomfortably accommodate the whole human race, whither they all appear to be bound, for a certainty. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 112.

**Hardhack.** (*Spiræa tomentosa*.) The popular name of a well-known and common plant in pastures and low grounds. It is celebrated for its astringent properties.

She made a nosegay of mountain-laurel leaves, red cedar with blueberries, and a bunch of the white *hardhack*, a cream-like flower. — *Margaret*, p. 206.

**Hard Head.** A fish of the herring species, the menhaden; so called in the State of Maine. See *Menhaden*.

**Hard Pan.** In geology, the hard stratum of earth that lies below the soil, through which water cannot penetrate; and, figuratively, a firm and solid foundation; the bottom.

[Granite soils] when underlaid by a *hard pan* of clay, bog iron, or hard gravel, cemented together water-tight, they are capable of retaining soluble manures, and may be rendered fertile. — *Jackson, Geology of Rhode Island*, p. 126.

The immense friction [caused by getting money] rubs away a vast deal of fribbling honesty, small prejudices, super-niceties of conscience. *Hard pan* is soon reached, and both Old World and New are full of *hard-pan* capitalists. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 212.

The Chamber of Commerce denounces the Naval Office as a costly annoyance, which demonstrates a fiendish persistence of endeavor on the part of the merchants of the port to reduce Custom-house methods to a *hard-pan* business basis. *N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1877.

The people begin to ask what they are to gain by voting for the partisan candidates. Politics are, like other things, coming down to *hard pan*. — *N. Y. Herald*, July 17, 1877.

**Hard-pushed.** Hard pressed, in a difficulty; and especially as a mercantile phrase, hard pressed for money, short of cash.

As I said, at the end of six months we began to be *hard-pushed*. Our credit, however, was still fair. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

**A Hard Row to hoe.** A metaphor derived from hoeing corn, meaning a difficult matter or job to accomplish.

Gentlemen, I never opposed Andrew Jackson for the sake of popularity. I knew it was a *hard row to hoe*; but I stood up to the rack, considering it a duty I owed to the country that governed me. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour down East*, p. 69.

**Hard Run.** To be hard pressed; and especially to be in want of money. The same as *hard-pushed*.

We knew the Tammany party were *hard run*; but we did not know it was reduced to the necessity of stealing the principles of Nativism. — *N. Y. Tribune* Nov. 1, 1845.

**Hardshell Baptists.** The name of a sect of Baptists in the Southern States, known as those of the straight-laced order; while those of liberal views are called "Softshell Baptists."

We had a variety of passengers in the stage to Milledgeville. There was an old gentleman in black, a dandy gambler, an old *Hardshell preacher*, as they call them in Georgia, with the biggest mouth I ever seed, a circus clown, a cross old maid, a beautiful young lady, &c. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

In a debate in the House of Representatives, in 1857, Mr. Elliott, of Kentucky, in nominating the Rev. John Morris for chaplain, said: —

Mr. Morris is a regular member of the *Hardshell Baptist Church*, a very pious man, not of very eminent ability, but just the man to pray for such a crowd as this.

A writer in the "Providence Journal," May 5, 1877, thus describes the Rev. Joseph Cook: —

He is a large man with florid countenance, brown hair, . . . a large mouth, a full, husky, explosive voice, used imperfectly, often in a sing-song tone, like a "*hardshell Baptist*" preacher, yet powerful.

**Hardshell Democrats;** also called "**Hardshells**," and again abbreviated into "**Hards**." The name of a political party, of which the following history is given by the "New York Tribune" of April 2, 1853: —

These terms date from the efforts made to reunite the Cass and Van Buren democracy of 1848, who were known as Hunkers and Barnburners. Some difficulty attended this reunion, which gave

rise to the use of the new political epithets. The difference between a *Hardshell* and a *Softshell* is this : one favors the execution of the Fugitive Slave Law and goes for a distribution of the offices among the Nationals, while the other is a loud stickler for Union and Harmony. The *Hards* embrace the Cass Hunkers of 1848, of the National school of politics; while the *Softs* are composed of the remnants of the Van Buren and Adams party of 1848, and such Hunkers as Secretary Marcy and Governor Seymour.

**Hard Tack.** Dry biscuit, in seamen's or soldiers' rations. The term is to be found in almost every letter from the army during the late war.

**Hard up.** In straits for want of money; short of funds; pressed; perplexed. Not peculiar to the United States. A correspondent of the "New York Post" desires to know the author of the following pathetic poem:—

*Hard* was he up;  
And in the hardness of his upness  
Stole a ham.  
Down on him swooped,  
And, swooping, up him scooped,  
The minions of the law.

**Hard Wood.** A term applied to woods of solid texture that soon decay, including generally beech, birch, maple, ash, &c. Used by shipwrights and farmers in Maine, in opposition to oak and pine. In the South and West, it is opposed to "light wood."

**Harm, adj.** "He never said a harm word against you." Georgia.

**Harness-Cask.** A conical cask bound with iron hoops, from which salt meat is served out at sea. The cask is usually painted green and the hoops black: the resemblance of the latter to the black leathern straps of harness, or the way by which the cask is fastened to the deck, has probably given rise to the name.

**Harsel Stuff.** The children's dictionaries of the last century gave this as a pronunciation of *Household Stuff*, to be avoided. The late Edward Everett said his mother always used the term.

**Harvest Lice.** A species of *Bidens* whose seeds (fruit) adhere to the clothes. See *Beggar-Ticks*.

**Hasty Pudding.** Indian meal stirred into boiling water until it becomes a thick batter or pudding, and eaten with milk, butter, and sugar or molasses. In Pennsylvania and some other States it is called *mush*; in New York, *suppawn*. Joel Barlow wrote a poem on the subject, in which he thus accounts for its name:—

Thy name is *Hasty Pudding*! thus our sires  
 Were wont to greet thee fuming from their fires;  
 And while they argued in thy just defence,  
 With logic clear they thus explained the sense:  
 "In *haste* the boiling caldron o'er the blaze  
 Receives and cooks the ready-powdered maize;  
 In *haste* 'tis serv'd; and then in equal *haste*,  
 With cooling milk, we make the sweet repast."  
 Such is thy name, significant and clear,  
 A name, a sound to every Yankee dear. — *Canto I.*

Father and I went down to camp,  
 Along wi' Captain Goodin,  
 And there we see the men and boys,  
 As thick as *hasty puddin*.' — *Song, Yankee Doodle.*

Hasty pudding, or "hasty puddish," has long been eaten in England, where it is made of milk and oatmeal. Mr. Greave, in his *Spiritual Quixote*, printed in London, in 1773, says: "There is a certain farinaceous composition, which, from its being frequently used by our ancestors as an extempore supplement to a scanty dinner, has obtained the appellation of a hasty pudding. It is composed of milk and flour boiled together." We find it again mentioned in the "European Magazine" for March, 1796, in an "Epitaph," sent as a hint to a water-drinker:—

Here lies Ned Rand, who on a sudden  
 Left off roast beef for *hasty pudding*;  
 Forsook old Stingo mild and stale,  
 And every drink, for Adam's ale.

**Hat.** Our Northern women have almost discarded the word *bonnet*, except in "*sun-bonnet*," and use the term *hat* instead. A like fate has befallen the word *gown*, for which both they and their Southern sisters commonly use *frock* or *dress*.

**Hatchet.** 1. A consideration or bribe received by the customs officers in New York for permitting imported dutiable goods to remain on the wharf, when they ought to go to the general storehouse. See *Bone*.

2. "*To bury the hatchet*" is to make peace. A phrase alluding to the Indian ceremony of burying the war-hatchet, or tomahawk, when making a peace. See *Tomahawk*.

They smoked the pipe of peace together, and the colonel claimed the credit of having, by his diplomacy, persuaded the sachem to *bury the hatchet*. — *Irving's Washington*, Vol. I. p. 361.

At a council of the Iroquois (1684), in reply to the speech of La Barre, the French commander-in-chief said:—

I thank you for bringing back the calumet of peace, . . . and I give you joy that you have not *dug up the hatchet* which has been so often buried with the

blood of your countrymen. — *Parkman, Count Frontenac and New France*, p. 108.

*Buried was the bloody hatchet,  
Buried was the dreadful war-club;  
Buried were all warlike weapons,  
And the war-cry was forgotten;  
There was peace among all nations.*

*Longfellow, Hiawatha, XIII.*

So "to take up the *hatchet*" is to declare war; to commence hostilities.

Shingis, sachem of the Delawares, was one of the greatest warriors of his tribe, and "*took up the hatchet*" at various times against the English. — *Irring, Life of Washington*, Vol. I. p. 78.

**Hate.** A bit; as, "I don't care a *hate*." "I didn't eat a *hate*." "I didn't get a *hate*." It is the Scotch *haet*, as in the phrase, "fient a *haet*," i. e. the devil a bit.

**To have.** To coop up; to find or put into a position that gives a strong hope of receiving, conquering, &c.

Don Piatt, in a letter from the seat of war to the "New York Tribune," of Dec. 30, 1861, says :—

We *had* Floyd. We *had* his six thousand men from Georgia, Tennessee, &c., the flower of the rebel army. We *had* his artillery, his horses, his contrabands, his every thing. . . . At the trying moment, General Benham foiled us, . . . and our fond dreams melted into thin air.

**Haw-haw.** To laugh heartily.

I sat down in front of the General, and we *haw-haw'd*, I tell you, for more than half an hour. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 189.

He burst out a larfin', and staggered over to the sophy, and laid down and *haw-hawed* like thunder. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., ch. 7.

**Hawk-Eye State.** The State of Iowa. It is said to be so named after an Indian chief who was once a terror to *royageurs* to its borders.

**Hawkins's Whetstone.** Rum; in derision of one Hawkins, a well-known temperance-lecturer.

**Hay Barrack.** (Dutch, *hooi-berg*, a hay-rick.) A straw-thatched roof, supported by four posts, capable of being raised or lowered at pleasure, under which hay is kept. A term peculiar to the State of New York.

**To haze.** 1. To riot, frolic.

W. had been drinking, and was *hazing* about the street at night, acting somewhat suspiciously or strangely [when the officer arrested him]. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec 2, 1848.

I wish to all-fired smash I was to home, doin' chores about house, or *hazin'* round with Charity Bunker and the rest o' the gals at a squantum. — *Wise, Tales for the Marines*.

2. To urge or drive, especially with work; to harass. A seaman's term.

Mack was very dull at learning any thing connected with sea-life, and made a clumsy sailor. The captain disliked him, and continually *hazed* him for his awkwardness. — *Browne's Whaling Cruise*, p. 187.

The surest way to make a man worthless and indifferent to the success of the voyage is to *haze* him, and find fault with him when he does his duty to the best of his ability. — *Ibid.*, p. 90.

This term is used to express the treatment which Freshmen sometimes receive from the higher classes, and especially from the Sophomores.

Freshmen have got quietly settled down to work, — Sophs have given up their *hazing*. — *Williams Quarterly*, Vol. II. p. 285.

We are glad to be able to read that the absurd and barbarous custom of *hazing*, which has long prevailed in the college, is, to a great degree, discontinued. — *Harvard Magazine*, Vol. I. p. 413.

**He.** Used almost exclusively by some wives in Massachusetts and Connecticut when speaking of their husbands, instead of employing his name, or his relation to themselves.

**Head-Cheese.** Scraps of the head and feet of swine cut up fine, and, after being boiled, pressed into the form of a cheese. Also called *sauce*. In Maryland, it is always called "hog'shead cheese."

**Header.** (In carpentry.) A joist. New York. In England, a trimmer or trimmer-beam.

**Head-Rights.** Grants of land made by Texas to the heads of families, under the colonization laws, in order to promote emigration.

So much of the vacant lands of the republic shall be surveyed and sectionized, in tracts of six hundred and forty, and three hundred and twenty acres each, as will be sufficient to satisfy all claims for scrip sold, soldiers' claims, and *head-rights*. — *Laws of Texas*, Nov., 1828.

**Headstall.** A knitted worsted cap, covering all the head but the face, worn by boys in winter.

**Heap.** A great many; a crowd; a great deal; much. So used at the South and West. A correspondent of the "Commercial Advertiser" thus notices the various uses of this word at the South: "*Heap* is a most prolific word in the Carolinas and Georgia among the common people, and, with children at least, in the best-regulated families. 'How did you like Mr. Smith?' I ask. 'Oh! I liked him a *heap*,' will be the answer, if affirmative, in five cases out of six. It is synonymous with a majority, or a great many; as, 'We should have plenty of peaches, but a *heap* of them were killed by the frost.' It is synonymous even with *very*: as, 'I heard him preach a *heap* often;' 'Oh!

I'm lazy a *heap*.''' A friend in Boston informs me he has heard the word intensified into *heapsight*! It is also an English vulgarism, except in the adverbial sense.

To go to church in New York in any kind of tolerable style costs a *heap* a-year. I know very well the reason why a majority of you go to Beelzebub is because you can't afford to go to heaven at the present exorbitant prices. — *Dow's Sermons*.

I was not idle, for I had a *heap* of talk with the folks in the house. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 87.

Baltimore used to be called *Mob-town*; but they are a *heap* better now, and are more orderly than some of their neighbors. — *Ibid.*, p. 13.

**Hearn**, for *heard*.

I beg leave to suggest to you that the Tinnecum people don't care much about the elements of music, of which they've *hearn* tell these two hundred years. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Vol. XVII. p. 37.

**Hear to**. To permit; to receive favorably; to give consent. Familiar in some parts of Connecticut, &c.

Mrs. Ladd told her there was not a word of truth in the story that Woodward had been endeavoring to court Hannah, but they [Mr. and Mrs. L.] would not *hear* to it. — *Powers's Hist. of the Coos Country*, p. 69.

**Hearty as a Buck**. A hunter's phrase, now in very common use.

Well, how d'ye do, any how?

So, so, middlin'. I'm *hearty as a buck*, but can't jump jest so high. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 8.

**Heater Piece**. A gore or triangular piece of land, so called, probably, from a flat-iron, the form of which it resembles. New England.

**To heave**. To throw. "I heaved a stone at him."

**Heavy**. Large, &c. "Altering a bond from a small to a *heavy* amount."

A *heavy* ice in the straits of the Western lakes yet. — *Boston Journal*.

There was a *heavy* failure in Wall Street yesterday. — *N. Y. papers*.

**Heeler**. A hanger-on, waiting, as Micawber would say, for something to turn up; as a political appointment, or a government contract.

In speaking of the appointment by President Grant of Wirt Sykes as consul to Florence, the "N. Y. Herald" says:—

Wirt Sykes as a journalist would make as good a consul as Wirt Sykes the politician, who has been a *heeler* about the capital, or Wirt Sykes the army bummer.

**Heft**. 1. Weight; ponderousness. A colloquial term common to some parts of England and the Northern States.

"Wal, now, just think on 't," said the [slave] trader; "just look at them limbs,—broad-chested, strong as a horse. Look at his head; them high forrads al'ays shows calculatin' niggers, that'll do any thing. Now, a nigger of that ar

*heft* and build is considerable, even supposin' he's stupid." — *Mrs. Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin*, p. 128.

2. Mr. Pickering says: "This noun is also used colloquially in America to signify the greater part or bulk of any thing, in expressions of this kind: 'A part of the crop was good, but the *heft* of it was bad.'"

We suppose the plan of Mr. Benton is to connect the Continental Railroad with the line of communication by the great lakes, thus throwing the *heft* of the Pacific trade across the continent into the port of New York. — *N. Y. Herald*, Feb. 5, 1849.

My grief! 'twas perfectly astonishin' to me that one mortal body could hold as much as the doctor put in. No wonder he's so fat: they say he gets the *heft* of his livin' by contrivin' to get to one patient's house jest as dinner's ready, to another at tea time, and so on. — *F. M. Whicher, Account of a Donation Party*, p. 262.

Mr. Magwire carries on the shoemaking business quite extensive, and he's to his shop the *heft* of his time. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 100.

**To heft.** To try the weight of any thing by lifting it. Local in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

I remember the great hog up in Danwich, that *hefted* nigh twenty score. — *Margaret*, p. 111.

**Hefty.** Heavy.

**Held.** Billiard players say, "I *held* the ball," instead of I *holed* it. See *Found*.

**Hell-Bender.** (*Menopoma Alleghaniensis*.) 1. An animal allied to the salamander. — *Nat. Hist. New York*.

2. Often used as a qualitative noun. "Jack has been on a perfect *hell-bender* of a spree."

**Hell-Diver.** See *Dipper*.

**Hell-Hound.** An iron-clad gunboat.

"One of our *hell-hounds*" (as the rebel prisoners call our gunboats). — *N. Y. Herald*, Feb. 25, 1862.

**Hell's Mint.** An immense quantity. Tennessee.

**Hellyum** or *Hellion*. "He's a perfect *hellyum* at billiards."

**Help.** The common name, in New England, for servants, and for the operatives in a cotton or woollen factory; a term long in use, and evidently brought from England.

It is ordered that James Penn shall have twenty shillings, to be divided among such of his servants and *helps* as have been employed about y<sup>r</sup> attendance of y<sup>r</sup> court, &c. — *Massachusetts Colonial Records*, 1645, Vol. II p. 139.

"I hain't kept no gal since Melissy was big enough to aid me," said the Widow Bedott. "I think *helps* more plague than profit." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 76.

I always want the kitchen *help* to do things as I want to have them done. — *New England Tales*.



**Hen-Hawk.** (*Falco lineatus*.) The popular name of the Red-shouldered Hawk of naturalists.

**Herb.** In America, universally pronounced *erb*; whereas in England the *h* is often aspirated. Thus in the "Quarterly Review" for July, 1857, occurs the following passage: "The peasant gathered *a* herb which was considered a specific in the district where he was born." An American would have written "*an* herb."

**Herring-Salmon.** *Congonus Artede* of Le Sueur. So called, when taken, in Lake Erie, and at Lewiston. — *Kirtland's Fishes of the Ohio*, &c.

**Hessian.** A hireling; a mercenary politician; a fighter for pay. Derived from the traditional dislike toward the *Hessian* soldiers employed by England against her American colonies in the war of the Revolution. During the late civil war, it was used at the South as a term of reproach towards the loyal United States citizens and soldiers. "The *Hessians* of the North," frequently said the "Richmond Despatch."

**Hessian Fly.** (*Cecidomyia destructor*.) An insect famous for its ravages on wheat. The popular name of it is owing to the belief that it was introduced into America by the *Hessian* troops in their straw from Germany, during the year 1776, at which time the British army, then in occupation of Staten Island, received large reinforcements of *Hessians* under General de Heister. This idea has been ridiculed by many European entomologists, who have asserted that the insect is strictly American. It appears, however, that its existence has long been known, probably for more than a century, in France, Germany, Switzerland, and some of the larger islands of the Mediterranean. — *N. Y. Hind. Insects and Diseases Injurious to Wheat*.

Mr. Bryant, in speaking of the introduction of the "Old World sparrow" into America, for the purpose of destroying insects and worms, says:—

And the army-worm and *Hessian fly*,  
And the dreadful canker-worm, shall die.

**Hickory.** A name given to several species of *Carya*. It is a handsome tree, with timber valuable for its hardness and toughness, and with edible nuts. Hence, a "*hickory* Catholic," a "*hickory* Quaker," for instance, is a flexible, yielding one. Western. It sometimes means tough, firm. Thus, Parson Brownlow was called the *hickory* Unionist. General Andrew Jackson was known as "*Old Hickory*."

Captain Smith describes a preparation of pounded walnut meats with water, "which they call *Pawcohiccora*, and keep it for their use." — *Hist. of Virginia* (1624), b. 2, p. 26.

But Popler, Plum, Crab, Oake, and Apple tree,  
Yea, Cherry, and tree called *Pohickery*.

*J. Ferrar, in Reformed Virginia Silk Worm* (1653).

"*Pekickery*," named with "Wallnut," &c., among the trees of Virginia. — *Shrigley's True Relation of Virginia and Maryland*, 1669.

It is curious that "hickory" seems both in sound and sense to be pure Greek, viz., ἡ κάρυα (*he carya*), the walnut. The resemblance is, however, casual; since the name is in fact of American aboriginal derivation.

**Hickory Nut.** See *Walnut*.

**Hickory Shirt.** A shirt made of heavy twilled cotton with a narrow blue stripe, so called from its strength. These shirts are much worn by laborers.

Swindling practisers of trade flaunt in silks, while honest virtue staves off starvation by making *hickory shirts* at eight cents a piece. — *Doesticks*, p. 68.

**Hicksites.** A sect of Quakers, so called from their leader's surname.

**To hifer.** To loiter. Used in North Pennsylvania.

**Highbinder.** A riotous fellow. See same word in *Addenda*.

**Highbelia.** See *Loubelia*.

**High Blackberry.** Generally used in the United States, as the distinctive name of the fruit of the *Rubus villosus*.

**Higher Law.** A law higher, or above that of the Constitution; the laws of God. This term was first used by the Hon. William H. Seward, in a speech in the United States Senate, in March, 1850, on "Freedom in the New Territories," and has since been frequently heard in that body and elsewhere. In this speech, the Senator said:—

I know there are laws of various kinds, which regulate the conduct of men. There are constitutions and statutes, codes mercantile and civil; but when we are legislating for States, especially when we are founding States, all these laws must be brought to the standard of the laws of God. The Constitution regulates our stewardship; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare, to liberty. But there is a *higher law* than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain. — *Speeches*, Vol. I. pp 66, 74.

**Highfaluten.** High-flown language, bombast. There can be little doubt of its derivation from "highlighting."

Mr. Hotten, in his "Dictionary of Slang," says it is now heard in Liverpool and London. He derives it from the Dutch *verlooten*, a derivation which we doubt. It originated in the Western States.

I was at the Barnburners' convention in Utica, and the first person I heard was a good-looking, fat, rosy-looking man, who got up and ground out what we term at the West a regular built fourth-of-July — star-spangled-banner — times-that-tried-men's-souls — Jefferson speech, making gestures to suit the *highfulutens*. — *Speech of Leslie Coombs, in N. York, Sept. 29, 1848.*

One of the boys, I reckon? All right on the goose, eh? No *highfuluten* airs here, you know. — *Gladstone, Englishman in Kansas, p. 43.*

**High-heeled Boots.** A proud, haughty person is said to "have on his high heeled-boots."

**High-heeled Shoes.** To say of a woman that she "has on her *high-heeled shoes*" is to intimate that she sets herself up as a person of more consequence than others allow her to be; or, in other words, that she is "stuck up." New England.

**High-Hole.** See *Clape* and *Yellow-Hammer*.

**High Jinks.** A great frolic. "To kick up high jinks" is to kick up a row; to have a roistering time. In the north of England, "to jink" is to be very gay. — *Halliwel.* To be *on the high jinks* is to assume an undue superiority. — *Hotten, Slang Dic.*

All along our route, we chaffed our pretty lover, and expected *high jinks* at Damascus, where his marriage was to be solemnized. — *T. G. Appleton, Syrian Sunshine, p. 20.*

**High-studded.** Airy. Said of one who affects great dignity.

**Hindoos.** A name given to the Know Nothing party, in consequence of their candidate for the presidency, Daniel Ullman, having been charged with being a native of Calcutta.

**To hire.** Often improperly applied to *renting* a house. In good English, a house is *rented*, while a vehicle or workman is *hired*.

**Hired Man.** A man-servant. *Hired* woman, a servant-girl. Many servants dislike to be called such, and think it more respectable to say "help" or "hired woman."

**To hire his Time.** A slave is said to "*hire his time*" who contracts with his master to pay a stipulated price for his time, and during such time regulates his own conduct in respect to labor to be performed by him, or makes contracts as to such labor.

In Russia, a certain yearly payment called *Obrock*, equivalent to a practice which prevails to a certain extent in some of our Southern States, of allowing slaves to *hire their own time*, goes a great way to extinguish all the distinctions between serfs and slaves. — *N. Y. Tribune, Aug. 20, 1858.*

**Hist, for hoist.** To lift. "*Hist* her up."

**Hitch.** An entanglement, impediment.

All the *hitches* in the case of McNulty being got over, the gentlemen of the long robe set themselves at work in earnest. — *N. Y. Com. Adv., 1845.*

This word is used in the same sense in England, but is not an elegant word, even though used by *Lord Chesterfield*, who says:—

I am credibly informed that there is still a considerable *hitch* or hobble in your enunciation.

The "London Athenæum," in its review of the *Journal of the Persian Boundary Commission*, Oct. 7, 1876, p. 457, thus speaks of the impediments met with.

Then arose *hitch* number two; . . . here *hitch* number three arose . . . Then arose *hitch* number five.

**To hitch.** It is a common expression, when persons do not agree, to say, "They don't *hitch*," or "They don't *hitch* together."

I've been teamin' on 't some for old Pendleton, and have come to drive a spell for this old fellow, but I guess we shan't *hitch* long. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 116.

**To hitch Horses.** Same as the foregoing, and quite as common. "They don't *hitch* horses," i. e. "they don't agree;" i. e., "they have quarrelled."

I never truckle to man, if he's as big as all out-doors. And after he poked his fist in my face, one election, we never *hitched* horses together. — *McClintock, Tales*.

An' so we fin'ly made it up, concluded to *hitch* hosses,

An' here I be 'n my ellermint among creation's bosses.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

You have seen a great deal, and he has read a great deal, and you are jest the boys to *hitch* your *hosses* together, I know. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 64.

**Either and Yon.** This expression is often used in the country towns of New England for *here and there*. It is provincial in the north of England. It is never heard in our seaport towns. — *Pickering*. A person born in New Hampshire in 1800 says *hether and yen*.

**Ho.** A word used by teamsters to stop their teams. It has been used as a noun, for stop, moderation, bounds. — *Webster*. See *Whoa*.

Because, forsooth, some odd poet or some such fantastic fellows make much on him, there's no *ho* with him: the vile dandiprat will overlook the proudest of his acquaintance. — *Lingua, Old Play*.

Mr. Malone says it is yet common in Ireland; as, "There's no *ho* in him," that is, he knows no bounds. This expression is common in the United States.

**Hoarse up.** "He's got a bad cold, and is all *hoarsed up*," i. e. he is hoarse.

**Hobble-Bush.** (*Viburnum lantanoides*.) A straggling shrub, also called Tangle-Legs and Wayfaring.

**To hobble.** To *hobble* a horse is to tie its feet together, to *hopple* it. *Webster*.

The horses were now *hobbled*; that is to say, their fore legs were fettered with cords and leathern straps, so as to impede their movements and prevent their wandering from camp. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Ho-Boy or Haut-Boy.** A nightman. New York.

The Thames, below London, is odorous with the sewerage matter it bears from that metropolis; and there is scarce a stream flowing through a civilized community but is degraded to the occupation of a *haut-boy*, by the adoption along the banks of itself and tributaries of more or less ingenious devices for dissolving and washing away rather than hoarding up and rendering useful the nitrogenized material which, if properly applied, will enable the earth to yield the most bountiful harvests. — *Scientific American*, Aug. 8, 1857.

**Hockey-Stick.** A stick used in playing hockey.

I guess Aunt Libby never had a *hockey-stick*. — *Fanny Fern*.

**Hod-Carrier.** A laborer that carries mortar and bricks in a hod to masons; a hodman.

**Hoe-Cake.** A cake of Indian meal, baked before the fire. In the interior parts of the country, where kitchen utensils do not abound, they are baked on a *hoe*; hence the name.

Some talk of *hoe-cake*, fair Virginia's pride;  
Rich Johnny-cake this mouth has often tried.  
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;  
Alike their fabric as allied their fame.

*J. Barlow, Hasty Pudding.*

As we've broken *hoe-cake* together, we cannot rake up the old ashes to make dust with. — *Simms, The Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 10.

They [the ancient Marylanders] were great horse-racers and cock-fighters, mighty wrestlers and jumpers, and enormous consumers of *hoe-cake* and bacon. *W. Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**Hoe-down.** Another name for *Break-down*, which see.

**To hoe one's Row.** To do one's share of a job; to attend to one's own business.

In ole Virginnny, whar I war born,  
I eat hoe-cake and hoe de corn;  
And Massa Tyler, he not slow  
To show me how to hoe my row. — *Negro Melodies*.

**Hog-Age.** The age between boyhood and manhood. Nantucket.

**Hog Backs.** "Ridges of upheaval, or '*hog backs*,' as they are sometimes called in the West, . . . occur to a greater or less extent all along the eastern flanks of the Rocky Mountains." — *Dr. Hayden's Report on the Geol. Survey of Wyoming Ter., &c.* (1870), p. 162.

**Hog and Hominy.** Pork and Indian corn, the usual fare of country people in the West. The term is used for the sake of the alliteration, even where the ground meal is much more common than the hominy.

I can give you plenty to eat; for, besides *hog and hominy*, you can have *bar* (bear) ham and bar sausages, and a matrass of bar-skins to sleep on. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

There was a member in the House [of Representatives] from some backwoods, benighted region in Ohio, by the name of Sawyer. Now, Mr. Sawyer, — the Honorable Mr. Sawyer, — having lived all his life in a plain, backwoods style, on "*hog and hominy*," or, for a special luxury in the winter, on sausages and corn-bread, found his stomach rebellious against the ways of Washington, and especially the way of dining at supper-time. — *Sargeant, Public Men and Events*, Vol. II. p. 287.

**Hog-Choke.** In North Carolina, the flounder is so called. — *Harper's Mag.*, March, 1857, p. 442.

**Hog-Fish.** (*Etheostoma caprodes*. Rafinesque.) Common in all the Western rivers, and so "called almost everywhere," say Rafinesque and Kirtland. — *Boston Jour. Nat. Hist.*, III. 346.

**Hog Guessing.** A sport peculiar to Long Island. In the fall, a fat hog is selected to be "guessed for." The chances are put at a given price, as in a raffle; and at the time appointed each holder of a chance "guesses" at the weight of the hog, which is then determined in the presence of all by the scales. The best guess, of course, takes the animal.

**Hog-Minder.** One who has charge of swine.

**Hog-Plum.** (*Ximenia Americana*.) A tall shrub of South Florida. It bears a drupe the size of a plum, which is yellow and pleasant to the taste.

**Hog-Reeve.** (Ang.-Sax. *geréfa*. Old. Eng. *reve*, an officer; a steward: whence *shrieve* and *sheriff*.) An officer whose duty it is to take up hogs running at large for the purpose of impounding them. New England. In the Statutes, he is called a *Field-Driver*, which see.

A man who can get down on his face and eat dirt after that fashion for nothing but a beggarly office is not fit for a *hog-reeve*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1858.

In an article in "*Harper's Mag.*," of Sept., 1877, p. 613, by his nephew, Mr. Benjamin, is the following saying of the late J. L. Motley, taken from the "*New World*" newspaper: —

I began [said Mr. Motley] a tremendous political career during the election of [President Polk], having made two stump speeches of an hour and a half each, — one in Dedham Town-hall, and one in Jamaica Plains, — with such eminent success that many invitations came to me from the surrounding villages. If I had continued in active political life, I might have risen to be a vote distributor, or fence-viewer, or selectman, or *hog-reeve*, or something of the kind.

**Hog-tight and Horse-high.** Always used together, of fences that are sufficient to restrain trespassing stock. Maryland.

**Hog-Wallow.** On some of the Western prairies, but particularly those in Texas, the ground has every appearance of having been rooted or torn up by hogs; hence the name.

Professor Riddell gives the following account of the *hog-wallow* prairies and of their origin: "The long droughts in summer cause the woodless surface of the prairies to crack deeply, and oftentimes symmetrically; subsequent rains wash the adjacent earth into these cracks, filling them up, converting them into little valleys, and leaving intermediate hillocks. Next year the same round of cause and effects occurs in the same places; and thus successive years contribute for a long time to produce a maximum of effect, the appearance of which is very striking. When the prairie is level, the hillocks are exactly hexagonal, and usually eight or ten feet in diameter. The depressions between them are commonly twelve to eighteen inches deep. If the surface is inclined, the hexagons become elongated at right angles to the elongation of the dip, when they frequently resemble the waves of the ocean. From difference of surface, soil, and exposure, there arises a great diversity in the size, depth, and general appearance of the *hog-wallows*. They never occur in a sandy soil, consequently they are not seen on the sandy prairies near the sea-coast." — *Silliman's Journal of Science*, Vol. XXXIX. p. 211.

The ground we were riding over, known as *hog-wallow*, being a succession of small mounds and corresponding hollows. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

**To hold on.** To wait, stop; as, "*Hold on a minute.*" Originally a sea phrase. Also, to hold fast, to keep; as, "*He held on to the money.*"

**To hold the Market,** in Wall Street parlance, is to buy and hold so large amount of a particular stock that the price cannot easily decline.

**To holloo.** (Pron. *holler*.) To give up; to quit; to yield. In vulgar use in the West, originating probably in wrestling or fighting, where the party down *halloos*, i. e. cries out, in which case he is understood to yield. I once heard a Western man say he had "*hollered on drinking*," meaning that he had quit the practice.

Tige was using me powerful rough, and had done whipped me; but pshaw! I never did *holler*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**To holloo before one is out of the Woods.** To rejoice prematurely, before one is out of a difficulty.

In a few minutes, we were back in the harbor again, and I gave Joe a piece of my mind about *hollering before we were out of the woods*. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 105.

Yet, fellows, must I warn you not to *shout*  
*Ere we have left the troublous wood behind.*

*W. Morris, The Earthly Paradise, Prologue, p. 33.*

**Help.** The old preterite and past part. of *help*. "This antiquated inflection of the verb *to help* is still used in Virginia, where it is corrupted into *holped*." — *Pickering*. A friend says he has heard the word in New England.

**Home.** 1. England, Great Britain; a term in common use among natives of Great Britain, as well as those of English descent resident in the United States and Canada. Some say "the Old Country." This term is of ancient use; and Mr. Irving, in his "Life of Washington," says he "remembers when the endearing phrase still lingered on Anglo-Saxon lips even after the Revolution;" and that its use by Washington himself "evinces the chord which still vibrated in the American bosom." In a letter to George Mason (1769), speaking of the difficulty arising from the clashing interests of merchants, Washington says:—

In the tobacco colonies where the trade is so diffused, and in a manner wholly conducted by factors for their principals at *home*, these difficulties are enhanced.

Again, in a letter to his brother Augustine, written in April, 1755, he says:—

My command was reduced, under a pretence of an order from *home*.

2. *Home* is frequently used for at home, in one's own dwelling; as, "I breakfasted *home*." "How 's all *home*?" A New England Yankee of the Sam Slick stamp would say, "How 's all *to hum*?"

**Hominy.** Food made of maize or Indian corn boiled, the maize being either coarsely ground or broken, or the kernels merely hulled. — *Flint, Mississippi Valley*. Roger Williams, in his "Key to the Indian Language," has the word *aupúminea*, parched corn, — which, with the accent on the second syllable, has much the sound of *hominy*. The word appears to have been extensively used by various Indian tribes and nations. See *Pone*.

A mat was spread without the house, . . . furnished with *Pone Homini*, oysters, and other things. — *Norwood's Voyage to Virginia*, 1649, *Force's Tracts*, III. p. 34.

The Indians sift the flour out of their meal, which they call *samp*; the remainder they call *hominy*. This is mixt with flour and made into puddings. — *Josselyn's New England Rarities*, 1672, p. 53.

The Indians live chiefly on maize, or Indian corn roasted in the ashes, sometimes beaten and boyled with water, called *homine*. — *Thomas's Pennsylvania*, London, 1698, p. 49.

*Homony* . . . is Indian Corn soaked, broken in a mortar, husked, and then boiled in water over a gentle fire for ten or more hours, to the consistency of



Furmity, — the thin of this is what my Lord Bacon calls "Cream of Maize." — *Beverly's Virginia*, Book III. (1725).

"Stranger," said old Schultz (the backwoodsman), "you have been welcome under my roof. I've given you nothing but wild meat and *hominy*, because I had no better; but I've been glad of your company." — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 271.

**Hommock, Hummock, or Hammock.** In Florida, a name given to small elevations or islands in the "everglades," or lands covered by fresh-water swamp. They are supposed to have been coral islands before the mud and sand were deposited around them.

The term *hammock*, . . . we believe, is one peculiar to the Southern States. It means a piece of ground thickly wooded, whether a plain or a hill, and distinguished from the open oak and hickory land, or immense forests of thinly scattered pines, which, with few exceptions, cover the whole face of the country. The word has been confounded with *hummock*, used by mariners to designate the knolls or small elevations along the coast. — *North Am. Review*, April, 1828, p. 486.

The Indians retired from the neighborhood of the whites, and burying themselves in the deep forests, intricate swamps and *hommocks*, and vast *savannahs*, devoted themselves to a pastoral life. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 290.

Although the larger portion of the country is covered with pine barrens, . . . yet there is also much upland, interval, and *hammock* land of the most excellent quality. — *Williams, View of Florida* (1827), p. 6.

**Hommocky.** Filled with hommocks. Used also of elevations in ice.

The Seminoles possess a vast territory in Florida; and being such a swampy, *hommocky* country, it furnishes supplies for the nourishment of varieties of animals. — *Bartram's Travels in North America*.

**Honey-fogle, Honey-fuggle.** To humbug, swindle, cheat. West and South. *Coney-fogle*, to lay plots, a Lancashire word, noticed by Mr. Halliwell in his "Dictionary of Archaic and Prov. Words," may be the origin of it.

When the Loco-focos take you round a corner, and try to *honey-fogle* you, as they say in Kentucky, ask them what are Cass's civil qualities. — *Speech of F. Smith at a Taylor Meeting, Washington*.

The Washington correspondent of "The New Orleans Delta" writes, 1858, as follows:—

I have a passion for Seward. He comes up to my idea of Rodin in the Wandering Jew, — the most delectable devil that was ever drawn by human pen, — so cool, so clear-headed, so indomitable, so relentless in the pursuit of his fiendish purposes. If he becomes our next President, and disunion does not immediately follow his election, I will wager that he will so beautifully *honey-fuggle* both South and North that the people will pronounce him one of the best Presidents we have ever had.

**Honey Locust.** (*Gleditsia triacanthus*.) A tree so called from the sweet pulp in its ripe pods. In the West and South, it is called the Thorny Locust.

**Honor.** "*His Honor*" is the title applied in Massachusetts and Rhode Island to a Lieutenant-Governor while in office. When his term of office has expired, he is, like the Governor, styled "Honorable."

**Honorable.** A title given by courtesy to members of both Houses of Congress, and of State legislatures; in some States, to Senators only; also to heads of departments of the government, as secretaries and commissioners. The title is ever afterwards retained, under the rule of "Once an honorable, always an honorable." Newspapers and posters often bestow the title on any stump-speaker.

**Hoodlum.** A ragamuffin; a "gamin;" a rough fellow; a rowdy. A California word. "You at the East," says a correspondent in San Francisco, "have but little idea of the *hoodlums* of this city. They compose a class of criminals of both sexes, far more dangerous than are to be found in the Eastern cities. They travel in gangs, and are ready at any moment for the perpetration of any crime." — *Boston Journal*, Aug., 1877.

The origin of the name is said to be this: A newspaper man in San Francisco, in attempting to coin a word to designate a gang of young street Arabs under the beck of one named "Muldoon," hit upon the idea of dubbing them *noodlums*; that is, simply reversing the leader's name. In writing the word, the strokes of the *n* did not correspond in height, and the compositor, taking the *n* for an *h*, printed it hoodlum. "Hoodlum" it is, and probably ever will be. *The Congregationalist*, Sept. 26, 1877. See same word in Addenda.

The stoning and beating of Chinamen [in California], long time a popular recreation among young *hoodlums*, have recently grown unpopular through the efforts of a Police Judge. — *San Francisco Cor. of N. Y. Evening Post*.

Three *hoodlums* in San Francisco, under age, were convicted on a charge of stealing beer. . . . The friends of the *hoodlums* came to the front, and liquidated the damage. . . . *Hoodlum* justice is an interesting study of the jurisprudence of the century. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 7, 1876.

The outrages thus far, in San Francisco, seem to have been committed by unorganized gangs of vicious *hoodlums*. — *Telegram from San Francisco*, July 25, 1877.

**Hook.** (Dutch, *hoek*, a corner, a cape.) This name is given, in New York, to several angular points in the North and East Rivers; as, Corlear's *Hook*, Powle's *Hook*, Sandy *Hook*.

**To hook.** To steal. A common vulgarism, formerly used in England.

A maid *hooked* one of her mistress's dresses the other day; but the affair was passed over, because it was done behind the lady's back. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1857.

The devil and I are sworn enemies ever since he put me up to *hooking* water-melons for the fun of the thing. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 5.

And while Aunt Polly closed with a happy Scriptural flourish, Tom *hooked* a doughnut. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 34.

**On one's own Hook.** A phrase much used in familiar language, denoting on one's own account; as, "He is doing business *on his own hook*," i. e. for himself.

I now resolved to do business entirely alone, — to go *on my own hook*. If I get rich, the money will all be mine. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 195.

Every man *on his own hook* is the system in action of the American volunteer soldier; and trusting to, and confident in, their undeniable bravery, they go ahead and overcome all obstacles. — *Ruxton's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 179.

We have every reason to believe that the time is fast approaching when we shall have our American Pope, our American Catholic Cardinals, and American Catholic every thing *on our own hook*. — *N. Y. Herald*, October, 1845.

I went to the opera in London, where I kept lookin' round; and when anybody laughed, I laughed too, and when they 'plauded, I 'plauded too; and sometimes, jest to make 'em think I was a reglar Frenchy, I'd laugh right out *on my own hook*. — *N. Y. Family Companion*.

**Hookey.** To "play hookey" is to play truant. A term used among school-boys, chiefly in the State of New York.

He moped to school gloomy and sad, and took his flogging along with Joe Harper for playing *hookey* the day before. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 100.

**Hook Jack.** To play truant. New England.

**Hoop-la.** A stage-driver's ejaculation to his horses. California.

The Stock Exchange to-day commenced its business of speculation with a grand "*hoop la*," regardless of the closing prices of yesterday. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 1, 1877.

*Hoop-la*, — Melican man he heap much nice, — fetchee me home all light, top side up on slippery walk. — *Specimen of Chinese Pigeon English, Harper's Bazar*.

**Hoople.** (Dutch, *hoepel*.) The boys in the city of New York still retain this Dutch name for a trundling hoop.

**Hoosier.** A nickname given, at the West, to natives of Indiana.

A correspondent of the Providence Journal, writing from Indiana, gives the following account of the origin of this term: "Throughout all the early Western settlements were men who rejoiced in their physical strength, and on numerous occasions, at log-rollings and house-raising, demonstrated this to their entire satisfaction. They were styled by their fellow-citizens *hushers*, from their primary capacity to still their opponents. It was a common term for a bully throughout the West. The boatmen of Indiana were formerly as rude and as primitive a set as could well belong to a civilized country, and they were often in the habit of displaying their pugilistic accomplishments upon the Levee at New Orleans. Upon a certain

occasion there, one of these rustic professors of the 'noble art' very adroitly and successfully practised the 'fancy' upon several individuals at one time. Being himself not a native of this Western world, in the exuberance of his exultation he sprang up, exclaiming, in foreign accent, 'I'm a *hoosier*, I'm a *hoosier*.' Some of the New Orleans papers reported the case, and afterwards transferred the corruption of the epithet 'husher' (*hoosier*) to all the boatmen from Indiana, and from thence to all her citizens. The Kentuckians, on the contrary, maintained that the nickname expresses the gruff exclamation of their neighbors, when one knocks at a door, &c., 'Who's yere?' "

There was a long-haired *hoosier* from Indiana, a couple of smart-looking suckers from Illinois, a keen-eyed, leather-belted badger from Wisconsin; and who could refuse to drink with such a company? — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 210.

Broad Indiana's *hoosier* sons her fame must needs keep good,  
By healthful sport of rolling logs and stumping in the wood.

*The American Congress, Am. Rejected Addresses.*

It has been in my mind since I was a *Hoosier* boy to do something toward describing life in the back-country districts of the Western States. — *Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, p. 5.

**Hoosier Cake.** A Western name for a sort of coarse gingerbread, which, say the Kentuckians, is the best bait to catch a *hoosier* with, the biped being fond of it.

**Hoosierdom.** The State of Indiana.

A young lady from the rural districts of *Hoosierdom* lately visited Chicago with her beau. — *N. Y. Observer*, Dec. 26, 1861.

**Hooter.** Probably a corruption of *iota*. Common in New York in such phrases as "I don't care a *hooter* for him," "This note ain't worth a *hooter*."

It is the truth that politicians who pretend to have such regard for the dear people don't care a *hooter*, so long as their own selfish ends are attained. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 6.

And agin to impress on the poppylar mind  
The comfort an' wisdom o' goin' it blind, —  
To say that I didn't abate not a *hooter*  
O' my faith in a happy an' glorious futur! — *J. R. Lowell*.

**Hoped.** Used among the illiterate in North Carolina as the past part. of to help. Ex.: "It can't be *hoped*." See *Holp*.

**Hopper.** 1. *Hopper-car*. A sort of car used on railroads, its form resembling the hopper of a mill.

There were one hundred and eighty-three iron *hopper-cars* recovered in a condition to be restored. Of the fifty-seven *hoppers* thrown over Opequan bridge, one-half can be put into serviceable order again. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 10, 1862.

2. A grass-hopper, especially the ravaging locust called grass-hopper at the West.

**Hopping John.** A stew of bacon and peas with red pepper. South Carolina.

**Hopping Mad.** Exceedingly angry, in a violent rage. A very common colloquial expression.

Miss Fustick said Liddy Ann was too old to wear plumes. Old Miss C— went straight and told her; which made Liddy *hoppin' mad*, and led to an awful quarrel. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 275.

**Hop-Tree.** (*Ptelia trifoliata*.) A tall shrub found in the Eastern States. The fruit, a wafer-like seed, grows in clusters, is a bitter tonic, and has been used as a substitute for hops.

**Horn.** A dram. Probably so named from the old custom of drinking out of a horn.

The chaplain gave us a pretty stiff *horn* of liquor a-piece, — and first-rate stuff it was, I swow. — *Burton, Waggeries*.

Faith, said Patrick, if you had seen me sell Father Matthews's medal, which he blessed and gave me with his own hand, to a boy, for three cents, just to get a *horn* of whiskey, you would not ask me if I loved the creatur'. — *Milne, Temperance Tale*.

He poured out a tumbler of brandy and water, that warn't half and half, but almost the whole hog. Oh, gummy, what a *horn*! It was strong enough to throw an ox over a five-bar gate. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**In a Horn.** A low phrase, now common, used to qualify a falsehood, equivalent to the English "over the left." A boy will say, "I saw a man jump over the house," and add *sotto voce*, "*In a horn*;" meaning thereby directly the reverse.

"Tie the boat up!" says Jim. "I'll tie her up, *in a horn*! Do you reckon I can't run her in such a fog as we'll have to-night?" — *Major Bunkum, in New York Spirit of the Times*.

I have mentioned before the innumerable comforts — *in a horn* — of the old White Sulphur Springs. I think it hardly necessary that I should recapitulate; for there is never any change: raw beef, tough mutton, and tolerably fine ham is the regular bill of fare, and there is no variation that I have seen or heard of. *Evening (Wash.) Star*, Aug. 26, 1858.

**Horned Grebe.** See *Dipper*.

**Horned Pout.** See *Catfish* and *Pout*.

**Horned Sucker.** See *Chub Sucker*.

**Horrors.** "To have the *horrors*" is to be in low spirits, to have a fit of the blues. It also means to have delirium tremens.

Now, when steam distilling wrenches the last possible drop of spirit out of the corn, it brings with it an unusual quantity of this poison [fusil oil], which acts with terrible results on the nerves; seeming like a diabolical inspiration, stirring

up mania, convulsions, and the horrors in an incredibly short space of time. — *Philad. Evening Bulletin*, 1857.

**Horse and Horse.** Even. Originally applied to horses which in running a race come in side by side, or, as the phrase is, "neck and neck;" and then transferred to gamesters. A story is told of a planter, who, sending his son to market with a load of cotton, received from young hopeful the following statement on his return: —

"Why, daddy, you see, I sot down to old sledge along with Jake Stebbins. It was *horse and horse*, and his deal. Says he, 'Bill, will you go the cotton?' 'Done,' says I; and don't you think if the dern fool didn't turn jack!" — *Bunham's Recollections*.

**Horse-Barn.** A stable.

**Horse-Boat.** A boat propelled by horse-power, common in the Western waters. Usually a ferry-boat.

**Horse-Cake.** Gingerbread rudely fashioned into the shape of a horse.

**Horse-Car.** A car drawn by horses on a railway, common in all American cities, and recently introduced into European cities.

**Horse-Colt.** We frequently see in advertisements these terms, *horse-colt*, *mare-colt*, &c. A *horse-colt* is simply a *colt*; a *mare-colt*, a *filly*.

**Horse-Ferry.** A ferry which is passed by a horse-boat. — *Webster*.

**Horse-Foot.** (*Limulus polyphemus*.) The common name of a crustacean found in our waters from Massachusetts to Virginia, and in some places so abundant as to be used for manure. In form it much resembles a horse's hoof. It is also called *Horse-shoe* and *King-crab*, which latter is the name by which it is known in England.

**Horse-Mackerel.** When the *Blue-fish* reappeared on the coast of New England, — some twenty-five years ago, — the fishermen, who were unacquainted with the species, sometimes called it *Horse-mackerel*. But that name was previously, and is now usually given to the *Cybrum maculatum* (Mitchell), sometimes called *Spanish mackerel*. (Ayres, in *Bost. Jour. Nat. Hist.* iv. 261 (1842), says the *C. maculatum* received both these names from the fishermen of Long Island.) Dr. Storer, in describing the *Temnodon saltator* of Cuvier, says, "This species described by Mitchell as the *Scomber plumbeus*, and called the *horse-mackerel* by the vulgar, is better known in those portions of our State where it is taken as the *blue-fish*." — *Fishes of Mass.*, p. 57. See *Blue-Fish*.

**Horse-Mint.** (*Monarda punctata*.) A large species of mint, growing from New York southward. — *Webster*.

**Horse-Nettle.** (*Solanum Carolinense*.) A plant well known for its orange-yellow berries. It is remarkable that a similar species is known in Brazil by the same name in Portuguese.

**Horse-Railroad.** A railroad running through the streets of a town or city, on which the cars are drawn by horses. — *Webster*.

In England, they are called *tramways*.

**Horse-Shoe.** See *Horse-Foot*.

**Hose.** The Western term for "stockings," which is considered extremely indelicate, although "long socks" is pardonable.

**Hoss.** (A corruption of the word *horse*.) A man remarkable for his strength, courage, &c. A vulgarism peculiar to the West. Even of a prominent lady, a Western eulogist will say, "She's a *hoss*;" that is, a sort of Pandora or nonsuch.

*Hoss* Allen is powerful popular, and the "bar" hunters admire his free-and-easy manners, and consider him one of the people, — none of your stuck up imported chaps from the dandy States, but a genuine Westerner, — in short, a *hoss*! *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 70.

I see thar was mischief in the preacher as big as a meetin' house, and I determined to give him as good as he sent; so I looked at him sorter savagerous like, and says I, "Look here, *hoss*, how can you have the face to talk to me, arter what you said?" — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

**Hostiles.** Enemies. Western.

**Hotel Disease.** A disease which broke out among the guests at the National Hotel in Washington in the year 1856, somewhat resembling cholera, attended with vomiting, diarrhœa, and rapid general prostration. Similar symptoms have since shown themselves at some other hotels, though not with the same virulence.

**Hot Slaw.** Cabbage, minced and heated with vinegar: thus called to distinguish it from *Kool Slaw* (erroneously etymologized into Cold Slaw). Litchfield Co., Conn.

**Hound.** A negro-catcher.

A recognized *Hound* or nigger hunter, named McCabe, stated that on Wednesday, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July, 1861.

**Hounds.** 1. A gang of ruffians who infested San Francisco in 1849. They also styled themselves "Regulators." Their murderous excesses were committed under the pretence of guarding the community against the encroachments of Spanish foreigners.

2. The portions of a wagon which, projecting from the forward axle, form a support for the tongue or pole. The term is borrowed from nautical language, in which it means the projecting parts of

head of the mast, serving as shoulders for the top or trestle-trees to rest on.

**To hound.** To pursue as with a hound. Used by the police and detectives of New York. A man arrested for crime in New York said:—

He had been *hounded* almost to death by policemen, detectives, and reporters.  
*N. Y. Tribune.*

**Hour.** *An hour by sun* means an hour before sunset. Southern and Western.

**Hourly.** Formerly used in and about Boston for an omnibus.

**House.** Used to form compounds, such as *meat-house*, *wash-house*, *milk-house*; where an Englishman would say, respectively, larder, laundry, dairy.

**House-Car.** A sort of close car used on railways; a box car.

**House-Hunting.** In the city of New York, most houses are let from the first day of May; and the landlords have assumed to themselves the right of requiring from their tenants a decision, as to whether they will keep their houses or not, three months before the period for which they hired them expires. On those houses which are not hired for another term (usually a year), "bills" are put up by the landlords, signifying that they are to let. Persons who intend to "move" traverse that section of the city in which they desire to establish themselves, in search of a suitable house, in which search they are guided by the landlord's "bills." This is called *house-hunting*, and is practised by thousands every year.

Polly began to grow uneasy now, because we hadn't got no house, and said I ought to go a *house-hunting* as everybody else did, or else we should be turned out of doors. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York.*

**To housekeep** is a verb, formed on the same principle as the verb to *bloodlet*, which is credited in the dictionaries to Arbuthnot. Southern and New England. English cricket-players always say to *wicket-keep*; and, in the past, he *wicket-kept*.

**Housen**, as the plural of *house*. This old form is still used by the illiterate in the interior of New England, as also in the States of New York and New Jersey. It is provincial in various parts of England.

Cornelius Nepos writeth that the *housen* in Rome were no otherwise covered overhead but with shingles [shingles] until the war with King Pyrrhus, to wit for the space of 470 years after the foundation of the city. — *Holland's Pliny*, XVI. 10.

That day at *housen* so she stopped  
She was behind for dinner. — *Essex Dialect*, p. 14.



The same word is used as a noun collective, for all that appertains to the house or homestead, its outbuildings, &c.

It is enacted by the court and authoritie thereof, that henceforth no person or persons shall permit any meetings of the Quakers to bee in his house or *housing*. *Plymouth Colony Laws*, 1661.

I testifie that about forty-two yeares from this date Richard Smith had kept possession of his *housing*, land, and meadows. — *Letter from Roger Williams, R. I. Col. Records*, 1679, Vol. III. p. 57.

Beside the house and lot, there was the *housing* upon it. — *New Haven Records* (1654).

**Housen-Stuff.** Household furniture.

On the first day of May, at 12 o'clock, if the tenant isn't out, an officer goes and puts him into the street, neck and heels, with his wife and children and all his *housen-stuff*. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 30.

A wife would make good *housen-stuff*,

If she were downright clever;

And Sall could suit me well enough,

If she would let me have her. — *Song, Yankee Doodle*.

**Hove.** (Ang.-Sax. *hof*, pret. of *heafan*, to heave.) This old preterite is much used by illiterate persons in the United States.

**How?** Used chiefly in New England, like the French *comment?* in asking for the repetition of something not understood.

Do put your accents in the proper spot;

Don't — let me beg you — don't say "*How?*" for "*What?*"

O. W. Holmes, *Poems*.

**How are you, Johnny?** A term of address used by the soldiers in the late war, and now applied to any stranger.

**How come?** (Pron. *huc-cum*.) How came it? how did it happen? Southern.

**How de?** A still further contraction of *how d'ye?* for how do you do? Southern. Used also as a noun; as, "to send *howdy*."

**Howdy.** A desideratum accomplished. "That's the *howdy*," — the very thing desired.

**How fare you?** This is a common expression, in some parts of New England, for "How do you do?" It is pronounced short; as, "*How ja' ye?*" In English prov. dialect, "*How fare 'e?*"

*Newman.* What, come back so soon? *How fare you*, Doolittle?

*Doolittle.* Cleverly. Steady, pretty steady, and quite chirk again, I thank you. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

**How is that for high?** A slang expression and quite common, equivalent to "What is your opinion as to the height of it?" "How is that for grandeur?" "What do you think of it?"

A Quaker unused to the slang phrases of the day, and quite mystified with what he has heard, thus speaks of the manner in which he was accosted by a rude fellow:—

Thou knows I cultivate the peaceful habit of our sect,  
But this man's conduct wrought on me a singular effect;  
For when he slapped my broad-brim off, and asked, "*How's that for high?*"  
It roused the Adam in me, and I smote him hip and thigh!

When Scotty Briggs, the California miner, called upon the minister to preach the funeral discourse of Buck Fanshaw, a noted character, he said:—

We are going to get it up regardless of expense. [Buck] was always nifty himself, and so you bet his funeral ain't going to be no slouch,—solid silver door-plate on his coffin, six plumes on the hearse, and a nigger on the box in a biled shirt and a plug hat, — *how's that for high?*" — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 334.

**How you talk!** Said in order to indicate surprise or other emotions. New England.

**Hub.** "*The Hub*" is a term applied to Boston. "*The Hub of the Universe*," i. e. the great centre, or chief city, like the hub of a wheel, to which the spokes are subservient. This term is applied by the special correspondent of the "*London Daily News*," Jan. 18, 1876, to the greatest commercial city of India. In describing the visit of the Prince of Wales, he says:—

Calcutta, with no trivial infusion of downright vulgarity, swaggers as if it were the *hub of the universe*, the veritable salt of the earth.

**Hubby, Hubby.** Uneven; rough. A term applied to roads, particularly when frozen. The original word, still used provincially in England, is *hobbly*.

**Huckleberry.** (*Gaylussacia*.) A small shrub, and its small, globular, black, sweet fruit, resembling the Whortleberry of England, whence it is sometimes called by that name.

As to *huckleberry* and blackberry pies, you will find them [in Connecticut] just as our mother made them fifty years ago. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 305.

A species found in wet land, of a bluish color and sweeter than the black, is known as the *Swamp-Huckleberry*.

**Huckleberry above the Persimmon.** To be a *huckleberry above one's persimmon* is a Southern phrase, meaning to excel.

The way he and his companions used to destroy the beasts of the forests was *huckleberry above the persimmon* of any native in the country. — *Thorpe, Backwoods*, p. 166.

**Huge Paws.** A nickname given to the working men of the Democratic party in New York. Said to have been first used by the late J. T. Buckingham, in the "Boston Courier."

The *Huge Paws* ought to have another meeting in Tammany Hall, before they make their nominations. — *N. Y. Herald*, Oct. 7, 1846.

**Hugger-Mugger.** 1. To hush; to smother.

If a British captain board an American ship, and make a selection of the choicest of her crew, that is a venial offence, to be *hugger-muggered* up; while all our complaints are drowned by a chorus of "Britannia rules the waves." — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 1, 1862.

2. To take secret counsels; to act clandestinely; to complot.

Listening to key-hole revelations, and *hugger-muggering* with disappointed contractors and bar-room politicians, . . . they went home to reek themselves, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 25, 1862.

**Hulking.** Exhibiting bulk; hulky; bulky.

Great, vigorous, healthy men, . . . walking rapidly back from the first touch of the foe, . . . great *hulking* poltroons. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 5, 1862.

**Hull.** A vulgar pronunciation of the word *whole*, very common in New England.

**Hulled Corn.** Indian corn scalded or boiled in lye, until the hulls come off. It is then rinsed and boiled, making a most palatable dish. See *Tortilla*.

When I was about nineteen, I ate so much *hulled corn* that it made my jaws ache. — *Kellogg, Black Rifle*, p. 19.

**Hulls.** The husks of peas, &c. At the South, applied also to the shells of oysters.

**To hull.** To free from the husks: accordingly, to *hull* peas is to shell them; to *hull* oysters, to open them. Southern.

**Huly.** A noise, uproar. "To raise *huly*." New England.

**Hum.** A vulgar pronunciation of *home*; as, "My old man ain't to *hum*," i. e. is not at home. New England.

Well, well, I know it now, — "*hum* is *hum*, be it ever so humbly." I am desperd sick of being in strange parts. I wish I was at *hum* agin, under mother's own ruff, I guess — I know I do. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

When is charity like a top? When it begins to *hum*. — *Baltimore Sun*.

**Human,** for *human being*. Western, and sometimes Eastern.

As I was lookin' down the gully, I espied a mighty big bear, that was travellin' my way. I had no idee that he was around, and am quite sartin he didn't expect to meet a *human* in such a place. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 224.

Parson Brownlow, the editor of the "Knoxville Whig," is just as fierce upon dogs when they annoy him as he is upon the *humans* who cross his path. — *Harper's Mag.*, Dec., 1857, p. 136.

What brings a duck a streaking it down stream if *humans* ain't behind her? and who's in these diggins but Indians? — *Ruxton's Far West*, p. 79.

The subject of woman, my dear hearers, is a difficult, a tender, and a delicate one. Woman, primarily, was a sort of second-hand *human*, or, I might say, the carnated superfluity of man. — *Doe's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**Humanitarian.** (Lat. *humanus*.) One who denies the divinity of Christ, and believes him a mere man.

The "N. Y. Evening Post," July 15, 1859, in a poem relating to a Chinaman, who had committed a murder in California, says:—

Wretched Barbarian, worse than a Parian  
Cradled in malice,  
What *humanitarian*  
Dare snatch from his lips till he painfully sips  
The murderer's chalice?

**Humbly.** A vulgar mispronunciation of *homely*.

**Hummock.** Knolls or small elevations along the coast, so designated by seamen. See *Hommock*.

**Hung.** In England, it occasionally happens that great offenders are *hanged*; but in the States and Canada criminals are never *hanged*, they are all *hung*. In England, beef is *hung*, gates are *hung*, and curtains are *hung*; but felons are *hanged*; in Canada, felons, beef, gates, and curtains are all treated the same way. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie*, in *Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**Hung Beef.** Dried beef, so called from being *hung up* in the air to dry; also called *chip beef*.

The hams were cut out, slightly salted, and hung up in the chimney to dry, and thus became dried or *hung beef*. — *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 66.

**Hunk.** 1. A large piece or slice; a big lump. *Ex.*: "A great *hunk* of bread and cheese." It is a variation of the word *hunch*, which is used in England in precisely the same manner. See *Grose* and *Moor's Glossaries*.

2. (Dutch, *honk*.) Place, post, home. A word descended from the Dutch children, and much used by New York boys in their play. "To be *hunk*," or "all *hunk*," is to have reached the goal or place of meeting without being intercepted by one of the opposite party, to be all safe.

This word has also made its way into political life. In a debate of the Board of Aldermen of New York (December, 1856), on the purchase of certain grounds on the East River for a market site, Alderman Ely said:—

Mr. L.— had filled in and made this ground in the waters of the East River without authority; and now he felt himself all *hunk*, and wanted to get this enormous sum out of the city. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1856.

**Hunkers.** Those who cling to the homestead or to old principles. A nickname given in the State of New York to the Conservative wing of the Democratic party as opposed to the Young Democracy, or Barnburners. They are often called *Old Hunkers*, from *Hunk*, home, as above.

Senator A—— has long coveted, and finally obtained, a leading position. He is now the leader of the *hunkers* of Missouri,—a noble band, with just seven principles, and a foresight the exact length of their noses. — *New York Evening Post*, 1849.

**Hunkerism.** The doctrines of the Conservative Democracy, or Old Hunkers.

**Hunkey.** Very fine; “tip-top;” “just the thing.” Applied more commonly to *things* than to persons. “That’s *hunkey*.”

In one of the songs of the late war called “The Men of the Day,” allusion is thus made to the Confederates and a distinguished General:—

And though they many a plan have tried,  
They cannot him inveigle;  
The “little Dutchman’s” wide awake,  
A *hunkey-boy* is Sigel.

On the trial of General Babcock for connection with the whiskey frauds at St. Louis, Feb., 1876, the following telegram, from J. H. Joyce to General McDonald, was submitted:—

Matters are *hunkey*, go it lively, and watch sharply. Every thing looks well. Send a report. Feel *hunkey*.

**Hunkidori.** Superlatively good. Said to be a word introduced by Japanese Tommy, and to be (or to be derived from) the name of a street, or a bazaar, in Yeddo.

Oh, the noble class of '68 is just old *hunkidore*;  
It's bound to cover Hamilton, likewise itself, with glory.  
*Hamilton College Songs in Carmina Collegensia*, p. 147.

At the trial of General Babcock, at St. Louis (Feb., 1876), a witness was asked if he got a receipt for a certain telegram delivered Mr. Joyce. He replied, “No.”

*Counsel.* “What did he say when you asked for it?”

*Witness.* He said, “Oh! that’s all right, *hunkidori*, or something like that. It’s only a blind.” — *Report in New York Tribune*.

**To hunt for Meat.** At the Far West, the hunter *hunts for meat*, when in search of food, in contradistinction to hunting for skins.

**Hunting-Shirt.** A blouse or shirt originally made of deerskin and highly ornamented, worn by trappers and hunters as well as by travellers on the Western frontier.

A light, figured, and fringed *hunting-shirt* of cotton covered his body, while leggings of deerskin rose to his knee. — *Cooper, Oak Openings.*

Rise up, Fremont! and go before;  
The hour must have its man;  
Put on the *hunting-shirt* once more,  
And lead in Freedom's van! — *Whittier.*

**Hurra's Nest.** A state of confusion. A woman's word.

"Now just look at you, Mr. Jones! I declare, it gives me a chill to see you go to a drawer. What do you want? Tell me, and I will get it for you."

Mrs. Jones springs to the side of her husband, who has gone to the bureau for something, and pushes him away.

"There now! Just look at the *hurra's nest* you have made! What do you want, Mr. Jones?" — *Arthur's Ladies' Magazine.*

"Hallo," says she, "here 's the devil to pay, and no pitch hot. Are you goin' to kill that boy? Here 's a pretty *hurra's nest*; let me see one of you dare to lay hands on this pickanniny." — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 59.

I lay till after daylight, and then one of my comrades shook me, to tell me that the Indian boys had found a *hurra's nest*. Out I went, and about a hundred yards from camp there was an old buffalo bull with a hundred little screeching imps about him with their bows and arrows. — *Crockett's Adventures.*

"You've got our clock all to pieces, and have been keeping up a perfect *hurrah's nest* in our kitchen for three days. Do either put that clock together or let it alone." — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, chap. iv.

**Hurricane.** (*W. Ind. urican.*) This word does not appear in any English dictionary before 1720, when Phillips notices it as a word denoting "a violent storm of wind, which often happens in Jamaica and other parts of the West Indies, making very great havoc and overthrow of trees, houses, &c." Other dictionaries of a later period describe it as a violent wind in the West Indies. It is the Carib name for a high wind, such as is described by Phillips, and was doubtless carried by seamen to Europe, whence it became introduced into various languages.

I shall next speak of *hurricanes*. These are violent storms, raging chiefly among the Caribbee Islands; though by relation Jamaica has of late years been much annoyed by them. They are expected in July, August, or September. — *Dampier, Voyages*, Vol. II. ch. 6.

To its covert glides the silent bird,  
While the *hurricane's* distant voice is heard  
Uplifted among the mountains round,  
And the forests hear and answer the sound.

*Bryant, The Hurricane.*

**Hurrygraph.** A sketch made; a letter written hurriedly.

But I must close this *hurrygraph*, which I have no time to review. — *The Independent*, July 31, 1861.

**Hurryment.** Hurry; confusion. Southern.

I always hate to kiss old women what hain't got no teeth; and I was monstrous glad old Miss Stallins had her handkerchief to her face, for in the *hurryment* I kissed it. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

**Hurry up.** A word derived from the eating-house direction to the servants below. It vexed a lover of good speech and apt, when he heard a boy at the foot of the hill call to one to come down by using *that* phrase.

**Hurry up the Cakes, i. e.** Be quick, look alive. This phrase, which has lately got in vogue, originated in the common New York eating-houses, where it is the custom for the waiters to bawl out the name of each dish as fast as ordered, that the person who serves up may get it ready without delay, and where the order, "*Hurry up them cakes,*" &c., is frequently heard.

If you have any communications to make, *hurry them up*, hot and hasty, like buckwheat cakes at a cheap eating-house. — *Doe's Sermons*, p. 51.

Of General Lee, the Rebel chief, you all perhaps do know,  
How he came North, a short time since, to spend a month or so?  
But soon he found the climate warm, although a Southern man,  
And quickly *hurried up his cakes*, and toddled home again.

*Ballad, How are you, General Lee!*

**To hush up.** To cease speaking, to be silent, to hush. *To dry up*, *give us a rest*, and *to shut up*, are other vulgar expressions with the same meaning.

We passed out, Greene following us with loud words, which brought the four sailors to the door, when I told him to *hush up*, or I would take him prisoner. — *General Sherman's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 37.

**Husking.** The act of stripping off husks from Indian corn; generally called "shucking" in the South and West. In New England, it is the custom for farmers to invite their friends to assist them in this task. The ceremonies on these occasions, called also *Husking Bees* and *Husking Frolics*, are well described by Joel Barlow, in his poem on Hasty Pudding:—

For now, the cow-house fill'd, the harvest home,  
Th' invited neighbors to the *husking* come;  
A frolic scene, where work and mirth and play  
Unite their charms to chase the hours away.

The laws of *husking* every wight can tell;  
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well:  
For each red ear a gen'ral kiss he gains,  
With each smut ear she smuts the luckless swains;  
But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,  
Red as her lips, and taper as her waist,  
She walks around, and culls one favor'd bean,  
Who leaps, the luscious tribute to bestow.

Various the sport, as are the wits and brains  
Of well-pleas'd lasses and contending swains;  
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,  
And he that gains the last ear wins the day. — *Canto 3.*

He talked of a turkey-hunt, a *husking-bee*, thanksgiving ball, racing, and a variety of things. — *Margaret*, p. 48.

He counts his cousin Phebe no better in her home upon the Avenue than when she played barefooted at the old *husking-frolics* of Newtown. — *Ike Marvel, Fudge Doings.*

My name is Jedediah Homebred, — called Jed for short, — allowed to be the smartest chap at a *huskin'* or log-rollin' in all our parts, besides knowin' something about grammar. — *The Green Mountain Boy, A Drama*, p. 9.

According to Longfellow, the good luck attending the finding of a red ear is an Indian superstition: —

And whene'er some lucky maiden  
Found a red ear in the *husking*,  
Found a maize ear red as blood is,  
Nushka! cried they all together,  
Nushka! you shall have a sweetheart,  
You shall have a handsome husband.

*Song of Hiawatha, Canto xiii.*

**Hus-Bran** in Indiana is the same as *Cob* in Virginia. A corruption of *husk*.

**Hyper.** To bustle. "I must *hyper* about an' git tea."

**Hyperion.** (*Ceanothus Americana*.) A plant, from the leaves of which was made formerly a beverage popular in New England. See *Labrador Tea*.

**Hypo.** An abbreviation of *hypochondria*.

The old man would give up to the *hypo*, and keep his bed for weeks. During this time, he wouldn't say a word, but "I'm not long for this world." — *Haliburton, The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 176.

**Hypo-y**, from *Hypo*. "She's not sick, she's only *hypo-y*."

**Hypped.** One who has hypochondria is said to be *hypped*. Used also in England.

**Hyst.** (Corruption of *hoist*.) A violent fall. **Ex.** : "His foot slipped, and he got a *hyst*." Mr. J. C. Neal thus discourses on this word : "A *fall*, for instance, is indeterminate. It may be an easy slip down, — a gentle visitation of mother earth; but a *hyst* is a rapid, forcible performance, which may be done either backward or forward, but of necessity with such violence as to knock the breath out of the body, or it is unworthy of the noble appellation of *hyst*. It is an apt but figurative mode of expression, and it is often carried still further; for people sometimes say, 'Lower him up, and *hyst* him down.' " — *Charcoal Sketches*.



I can't see the ground, and every dark night am sure to get a *hyst*, — either a forrerd *hyst* or a backerd *hyst*, or some sort of a *hyst*, but more backerds than forrerds. — *J. C. Neal, Sketches.*

One of the most unfeelin' tricks I know of is the way some folks have got of laughing out when they see a gentleman catching a regular *hyst*, with his legs in the air, and his noddle splat down on the cold bricks. A *hyst* is bad enough without being sniggered at. — *New England Tales.*

Pity, kind, gentle folks, friends of humanity,  
 Twig how the pavements are covered with ice;  
 Sprinkle the sidewalks with ashes for charity,  
 Scatter the ashes and save us a *hyst*.

(*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, Feb. 4, 1857.

## I.

**I Dad!** An exclamation used in the Western States.

"*I dad!* if I didn't snatch up Ruff and kiss him." Here the emotion of the old man made a pause. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 179.

**Ideal Brokerage.** Among stock-brokers, the ideal of brokerage is the purchase or sale of securities for outside parties, where the object is an absolute acquisition of property, or absolute sale of property. Generally speaking, there must be in such case a deposit of the stock or of the money value of the stock. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 48.

**Ilk.** In Scotland and the North of England, it signifies *the same*; as, "Mackintosh of that *ilk*" denotes a gentleman whose surname and the title of his estate are the same; as, "Mackintosh of Mackintosh." — *Worcester.*

By a curious perversion, political newspaper writers in America often use the phrase "of that *ilk*" in the sense of "of that sort, stamp, class." Thus the "*Baltimore Sun*," of the 15th of May, 1854, says :—

"The '*Journal of Commerce*' and the '*True Democrat*' both denounce in advance the meeting called in the New York Park, Saturday afternoon [to censure Senator Douglas's Nebraska Bill], as a thorough abolition demonstration; in proof of which the names of John Van Buren, Benjamin F. Butler, and others of that *ilk*, that were promised to speak, are referred to."

**Ill.** Vicious. This strange application of the word is common in Texas; as, "Is your dog *ill*?" meaning, is he vicious. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 78.

**Illy.** A word used by writers of an inferior class, who do not seem to perceive that *ill* is itself an adverb, without the termination *ly*. The late Dr. Messer, President of Brown University, on seeing

this word in a composition submitted to his critical inspection, asked of the student who presented it, "Why don't you say *welly*?"

Distressed as my mind is, and has been, by a variety of attentions, I am *illy* able by letter to give you the satisfaction I could wish on the subject of your letter. — *Letter of Richard H. Lee to his sister*, 1778.

"My good friend," said the man of gravity, "have you not undergone what they call hard times, — been set upon and persecuted, and very *illy* entreated, by some of your fellow-creatures?" — *Putnam's Monthly*, August, 1854.

**Immediately**, for *as soon as*. **Ex.** : "The deer fell dead *immediately* they shot him." This wretched word is creeping into use from England, where *directly* is used in the same way.

**Immigrant**. A person that removes into a country for the purpose of a permanent residence. — *Webster*.

**Immigration**. (Lat. *immigratio*.) The passing or removing into a country for the purpose of a permanent residence. — *Webster*.

The "London Quarterly Review," in noticing "Dwight's Travels," in a note, says, "The Americans have judiciously adopted this word from our old writers." — Vol. XXX. p. 39.

The *immigrations* of the Arabians into Europe, and the Crusades, produced numberless accounts, partly true and partly fabulous, of the wonders seen in Eastern countries. — *Warton's Hist. Eng. Poetry*, Vol. I.

*Immigration* has doubtless been a prolific source of multiplying words. — *Hamilton, Nugæ Literariæ*, p. 381.

Mr. Pickering, in his Vocabulary, observes that this word, as well as *immigrant* and the verb *to immigrate*, were first used in this country by Dr. Belknap, in History of New Hampshire, who gives his reasons for their use. *Immigrant* is original with Dr. B. ; but the others have long been used by good English authors, though of course less frequently than by American writers, who have more need of them.

**To improve**. 1. To render more valuable by additions, as houses, barns, or fences on a farm. Thus we frequently see advertisements of a piece of ground *improved* by a dwelling and out-houses.

Where lands lye in common unfenced, if one man shall *improve* his land by fencing in several, and another shall not, he who shall *improve* shall secure his lands against other men's cattle. — *Mass. Colony Laws*, 1642.

2. To occupy ; to make use of, employ. Thus, some persons speak of an "*improved*" or an "*unimproved*" house, meaning one occupied or unoccupied. "This word," says Mr. Pickering, "in the first sense, is in constant use in all parts of New England, but in

the second sense (when applied to persons, as in the following example) it is not so common."

In action of trespass against several defendants, the plaintiffs may, after issue is closed, strike out any of them for the purpose of *improving* them as witnesses. *Swift's System of the Colony Laws of Connecticut*, Vol. II. p. 238.

In a petition from a Baptist society in the town of Newport, R. I., in 1783, for relief, they say :—

Our meeting-house has been *improved* as a hospital by the English and afterwards by the French army, and so much injured as not to admit of being repaired. — *Acts of Assembly, Rhode Island*, June, 1783.

Dr. Franklin, in a letter to Dr. Webster, dated Dec. 26, 1789, has the following remarks : "When I left New England in the year 1723, this word had never been used among us, as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated* or *made better*, except once, in a very old book of Dr. Mather's entitled 'Remarkable Providences.' "

Ann Cole, a person of serious piety, living in Hartford, in 1662, was taken with very strange fits, whereon her tongue was *improved* by a demon, to express things unknown to herself. — *Cotton Mather, Magnalia*, Book VI.

3. To take an opportunity; to do as occasion requires. "He *improved* accordingly." — *Chaplin on the Sacraments*, p. 54, n. par. 1.

**Improvement.** The part of a discourse intended to enforce and apply the doctrines is called the *improvement*. — *Webster*. Mr. Pickering has shown that the word is used also by Scottish writers.

The conclusion is termed, somewhat inaccurately, *making an improvement* of the whole. The author, we presume, means deducing from the whole what may contribute to the general *improvement*. — *British Critic*, Vol. I. p. 379.

The "British Critic" is wrong in the presumption. A minister *improved* the occasion, or the subject of his sermon, by its practical application of it to his hearers. The *improvement* was the name given to such application.

**Improvements.** Valuable additions or ameliorations; as buildings, clearings, drains, fences on a farm. — *Webster*. See *Betterments*.

**In**, for *into*. Mr. Coleman, in remarking upon the prevalence of this inaccuracy in New York, says : "We get *in* the stage, and have the rheumatism *into* our knees." — *N. Y. Evening Post*, Jan. 6, 1814. An observing English friend at Philadelphia also speaks of its frequent use there in the following terms : "The preposition *into* is almost unknown here. They say, 'When did you come *in* town?' 'I met him riding *in* town.'" — *Pickering*. Also heard in Boston.

**In**, *a*. The reverse of *out*. So used in New England.

**In, n. 1.** A person having office or position; the being in office, the opposite of *out*.

2. A favorable disposition; the being "in humor."

Do you suppose *I* would bear with Moses Pennel, all his ins and outs, and ups and downs, and be always putting him before myself in every thing, as you do? *The Independent*, Feb. 6, 1861, *Tale by Mrs. Stowe*.

**In our midst.** A very common and incorrect expression among clergymen, and much used at prayer-meetings. The Newport correspondent of the "Providence Journal," in describing a fashionable wedding in that city, says:—

The whole affair was one of the most agreeable that has occurred in *our midst* for a long time.

We have in *our midst* also our tales and traditions of the *Revolution*. — *Appleton's Journal*, April, 1877, p. 367.

**Inaugural.** The address of a public officer on his inauguration into office; an inaugural address. **Ex.:** "Have you read the President's inaugural?"

**To inaugurate.** To begin. A word now coming much into use in this sense. The good English use of the word is to consecrate; to invest with new office by solemn rites, &c. Good writers never use it as we now do.

**Inca.** (Kechua.) The title of a king or prince of Peru, before its conquest by the Spaniards.

**Indebtedness.** The state of being indebted. — *Chancellor Kent*. A modern word, reputed of American origin; not often used by English writers, yet it is found in recent English dictionaries.

**Independence Day.** The fourth day of July, the day on which the Congress of the United States renounced their subjection to Great Britain, and declared their independence.

**Indian Bed.** An *Indian bed* of clams is made by setting a number of clams together on the ground with the hinge uppermost, and then kindling over them a fire of brushwood, which is kept burning till they are thoroughly roasted. This is the best way of roasting clams, and is often practised by picnic parties. See *Clambake*.

**Indian Bread.** Bread made of the meal of Indian-corn and rye also called "Boston bread," or "Rye and Indian."

If I don't make a johnny-cake every day, Kier says, "Ma, why don't you make some *Indian bread*?" — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 70.

**Indian Corn.** Maize; so called because cultivated by the aborigines.

**Indian Corn-Hills.** 1. In Essex Co., Mass., a plat of ground where hummocks look like the hillocks in which maize is grown.

2. A term given to hillocks covering broad fields near the ancient mounds and earthworks of Ohio, Wisconsin, &c. They are without order or arrangement, being scattered over the surface with the utmost irregularity. That these mammillary elevations were formed in the manner indicated by their name is inferred from the present custom of the Indians. The corn is planted in the same spot each successive year, and the soil is gradually brought up to the size of a little hill by the annual additions. — *Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin*.

These antique *corn-hills* were unusually large, and were, as the Iroquois informed me, three or four times the diameter of modern hills, a size which resulted from the want of a plough. — *Schoolcraft's Indian Tribes*, Vol. I. p. 57.

**Indian Currant.** See *Coral Berry*.

**Indian Dab.** A kind of batter-cake. Pennsylvania.

**Indian Fig.** The fruit of a gigantic plant (*Cereus giganteus*) of the Cactus family, known among the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona as the Pitahaya, the fruit of which resembles the fig in taste. — *Bartlett's Pers. Narrative*, Vol. II. p. 189. It is also applied to the common prickly pear, and so is Barbary fig.

**Indian File.** Single file; the usual way in which the Indians traverse the woods or march to battle, one following after and treading in the footsteps of the other.

Magua arose and gave the signal to proceed, marching himself in advance. They followed their leader singly, and in that well-known order which has obtained the distinguishing appellation of *Indian file*. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

**Indian Fort.** Enclosures, usually by banks of earth three or four feet in height, found in Western New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other Western States. They were found by the early settlers, and are apparently of great antiquity.

**Indian Gift.** A term proverbially applied to any thing reclaimed after being given.

**Indian Giver.** When an Indian gives any thing, he expects to receive an equivalent, or to have his gift returned. This term is applied by children to a child, who, after having given away a thing, wishes to have it back again.

**Indian Hemp.** (*Apocynum cannabinum*.) A medicinal plant.

**Indian Ladder.** A ladder made of a small tree by trimming it so as to leave only a few inches of each branch as a support for the foot. Southern.

Having provided ourselves with a long snagged sapling, called an *Indian ladder*, we descended safely to the bottom of the grotto. — *Bartram's Florida*, p. 247.

**Indian Liquor.** Whiskey adulterated for sale to the Indians.

A citizen of St. Paul furnishes some pretty hard papers on his fellow sinners who trade with the North-western Indians. He says a barrel of the "pure Cincinnati," even after it has run the gauntlet of railroad and lake travel, is a sufficient basis upon which to manufacture one hundred barrels of "good *Indian liquor*!" He says a small bucketful of the Cincinnati article is poured into a wash-tub almost full of rain water; a large quantity of "dog-leg" tobacco and red-pepper is then thrown into the tub; a bitter species of root, common in "the land of the Dakota," is then cut up and added; burnt sugar or some such article is used to restore something like the original color of the whiskey. The compound has to be kept on hand a few days before it is fit for use. It is then administered to the aborigines *ad libitum*. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 10, 1858.

**Indian Meal.** Meal made from Indian corn. A mixture of the flour of wheat and maize is called *wheat and Indian*.

**Indian Orchard.** An old orchard of ungrafted apple-trees, the time of planting being unknown. New York and Massachusetts.

**Indian Peaches.** Ungrafted peach-trees, which are considered to be more thrifty and to bear larger fruit than the others.

**Indian Physic.** See *Bowman's Root*.

**Indian Pipe.** See *Wax Plant*.

**Indian Pudding.** A pudding, the chief ingredients of which are Indian meal and molasses.

As to grandmother's *Indian puddings*. — alas! I shall never see their like again. *Goodrich's Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 371.

**Indian Reservation or Reserve.** A tract of land reserved for the use of Indians.

**Indians.** The name improperly given by early navigators to the aborigines of America, in the belief that the country they inhabited was the eastern portion of India, a name then applied to far eastern Asia. The Spaniards, until within the present century, applied the name of "India" and "Indies" to their possessions in America; and even now it is said that in Seville the department or office where the business of America is transacted, and which in England would be called the "Colonial Office," is known as the "India House."

Columbus was the first to call the natives of the New World *Indians*, believing that the lands he had discovered were on the confines of India, in Asia. In his celebrated letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, announcing his great discovery, when speaking of the names he had given to the islands, he says, "To the first island I

fell in with I gave the name of San Salvador; . . . the *Indians* call it Guanahani " (andado los *indios* guanaham).

**Indian Sign.** Signs of the recent presence of Indians in the wilderness. See *Sign*.

**Indian Summer.** A writer in the "National Intelligencer" for Nov. 26, 1857, has the following remarks on this topic: "The short season of pleasant weather usually occurring about the middle of November is called the *Indian Summer*, from the custom of the Indians to avail themselves of this delightful time for harvesting their corn; and the tradition is that they were accustomed to say 'they always had a second summer of nine days just before the winter set in.' It is a bland and genial time, in which the birds, insects, and plants feel a new creation, and sport a short-lived summer ere they shrink finally from the rigor of the winter's blast. The sky in the mean time is generally filled with a haze of orange and gold intercepting the direct rays of the sun, yet possessing enough of light and heat to prevent sensations of gloom or chill, while the nights grow sharp and frosty, and the necessary fires give cheerful forecast of the social winter evenings near at hand.

"This season is synonymous with the 'Summer of St. Martin' of Europe, which derives its name from the festival of St. Martin, held on the 11th of November. Shakspeare alludes to it in the First Part of Henry IV.:—

'Farewell thou latter spring!  
Farewell all hallow summer!'

"And more expressively in the First Part of Henry VI.:—

'This night the siege assuredly I'll raise;  
Expect St. Martin's summer, halcyon days.'"

**Indian Tobacco.** (*Lobelia inflata*.) A plant whose leaves contain a poisonous, white, viscid juice, of an acrid taste. The common Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) was formerly called "Indian Tobacco," in New Jersey. — *Kalm's Travels*, Vol. I. p. 401.

**Indian Turnip.** 1. (*Arum triphyllum*.) The root of an acrid and powerful poison when fresh. Commonly called "Wake Robin" in New England; and in Rhode Island "Jack-in-the-pulpit."

2. (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A common root in the West, much used by the Sioux Indians as food. It is also called Pomme Blanche and Pomme de Prairie.

**Indian Weed.** Tobacco.

When Charles the First, long since came hither,  
In stormy and tempestuous weather,

Leaving behind to raise up seed,  
And tend a stinking *Indian Weed*,  
Scotch, Irish, and Hybernians wild, &c.

*Sot-weed Redivivus . . . calculated for the Meridian of Maryland* (1730), p. 10.

**To indict.** To indite.

Never was letter to the "Congregationalist" *inlicted* from this locality before. — *Congregationalist*, Feb. 7, 1862, *Lett. from Hatteras Inlet*.

**Indignation Meeting.** A public meeting called by a political or other party, for the purpose of devising means to correct an alleged or real public abuse.

Instead of those *indignation meetings* set on foot in the time of William the Testy, where men met together to rail at public abuses, groan over the evils of the times, and make each other miserable, there were joyous meetings of the two sexes to dance and make merry. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

The public look chiefly to the press for advice and information as to their rights and duties, and had resolved that it should not be gagged and put down by "illegal orders, attachments, fines and imprisonments for imaginary contempts against courts which cannot be reduced much lower than they have reduced themselves." So said the resolutions of the *indignation meeting* of the 9th March, 1851; and this language was generally applauded. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 324.

**Infair.** The "reception" party or entertainment of a newly married couple. West and South.

The *infair*, or wedding supper, was all ready, we were marshalled to our seats; and a most sumptuous feast it was. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 59.

**Informatory.** Giving information. "To indite long letters *informatory* and descriptive." — *Lett. from Virginia in N. Y. Tribune*, April 9, 1862.

**Inside of.** Within; in less time than. In common use.

They [the libertine and the harlot] would pollute the society of Heaven *inside* of twenty-four hours, if they went there. — *Boston Journal*, April 27, 1877.

**Institution.** A flash word of recent introduction, as applied to any prevalent practice or thing.

The driving of vehicles is a great *institution* among us, and may be safely said to constitute almost the only out-door amusement of the majority of our male population. The ambition of every fast man, young or old, is to possess a wagon with one or two trotting horses attached. — *N. Y. Herald*.

Garroting, as an *institution*, may be said to be almost extinct in New York. It went out of fashion in a desperate hurry immediately after a sensible judge sentenced three garroters to the state prison, one for life, the others for twenty-one years each. — *Tricks and Traps of New York*, p. 47.

Whatever small thinkers and small actors may attempt, woman cannot be counted out and classified as a mere appendage. She is an *institution*, and hereafter must receive the most generous culture and recognition, if man and society are ever to be more than they have been in times past. — *H. L. Stuart, in N. Y. Tribune*, 1858.



A very unwholesome object, the carcass of a large dog, has been suffered to lie in Ninth Street, near D, since Tuesday, although most abominably offensive and unhealthy. A similar *institution* has occupied a site on the commons for some time past, filling the air with noxious odors. — (*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, July, 1858.

From the following example, it appears that this use, or rather abuse, of the word, is not confined to this country:—

The camels form an *institution* of India, — possibly a part of the traditional policy, — and they must be respected accordingly. — *London Times Cor. from India*. — April, 1858.

**To instruct out.** To remove from office, as a Member of Congress, by instructions sent from a State Legislature.

Mr. Tyler . . . opposed the removal of the U. S. deposits from the U. S. Bank by General Jackson's order, and was in 1836 *instructed out* of the Senate on that issue, having previously been very strongly sustained by the Legislature of [Virginia]. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 22, 1862.

**To insurrect.** To rise; to make an insurrection.

If there's any gratitude in free niggers, now they'll *insurrect* and take me out of prison. — *Vanity Fair*, April 5, 1862.

**Interest.** Manifestation of attention; expression of emotion; revived feeling, especially respecting religion.

The South Church in Concord has had a quiet religious *interest* for two months or more. — *Rev. Joseph Cook, in Congregationalist*.

**To interfere.** "He *interfered* with me," in the West, generally implies rough usage.

**Interior.** The Mississippi Valley. Recent and growing usage.

**Interval or Intervale.** Low or alluvial land on the margins of rivers. So called in New England. Similar land is called, in the Western States, "bottom land." — *Worcester*.

The *interval* intended in New England geography is the interval or space between a river and the mountains, which on both sides uniformly accompany its course at a greater or less distance from its margin. Hence *interval* lands include meadow and uplands, and in general the whole of the narrow valley through which, in these regions, the rivers flow. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. III. p. 183.

**Interviewer.** A person employed by some of the leading newspapers, whose business it is to obtain an interview with a particular party for the purpose of obtaining information, which is to be made known to the public. A Cincinnati paper, of Sept. 10, 1877, thus heads an article upon the policy of President Hayes, who was at the time on a visit to Ohio: "The President run down by the *Interviewers*."

Then the *interviewer* began gently to exercise those lathery arts, for skill in which his sort is renowned. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Senator Rollins, of New Hampshire, refuses to talk politics with anybody, but a vigorous application of the *interviewer's* pump has extracted from him the remark that the Civil Service order against office-holders will eventually be a dead letter. — *Boston paper*.

The Hon. Zachariah Chandler has paid a brief visit to Washington. . . . The hungry *interviewer* sounded him in vain for an opinion, and had to content himself with the general observation that the ex-Secretary looks like a man who is saying nothing, but doing an awful amount of thinking. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 18, 1877.

**To interview.** To question; to obtain information by questioning; to "pump a person for the purpose of obtaining secrets."

Mr. Beecher is *interviewed* every day or two now on the political situation, and each time he takes a more cheerful view of the outlook. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Into.** Used as denoting a number or quantity, &c., deficient; as, "I had enough [money] *into* six cents." "It was wide enough *into* an inch." Connecticut.

**In-ty.** Certainly; indeed. "Yes; in-ty." Used by aged persons at Salem, Mass., about 1820, and also in New Hampshire. The word is probably French, *entier*, *entire*, used much as the English-speaking Irish now use *entirely*. "Yes, in-ty;" "No, in-ty," were formerly used in the vicinity of Roxbury and of Newton, Massachusetts, as stated by Professor C. E. Stowe to the Rev. R. M. Chipman.

**Inwardness.** Interest; purpose. Frequently employed in this sense in the Beecher-Tilton correspondence.

The true *inwardness* of the late Southern policy of the Republican party. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1877.

**Irish.** Temper; anger. Colonel Dick Johnson, of Tecumseh reputation, used this Western substantive in one of his Eastern speeches: "My friends say that my *Irish* is getting up," meaning, I am getting angry.

**Irish Potato.** A term used throughout the country to distinguish the common (*Solanum tuberosum*) from the sweet potato (*Convolvulus batatas*).

**Iron-clad Oath.** A term applied to an oath required to be taken by Southern men engaged in war against the Union, to entitle them to the privileges of an American citizen.

**Iron Weed.** (*Vernonia noveboracensis*.) A plant, called in the Northeastern States Flat Top, almost the only tall weed found in the beautiful "wood pastures" of Kentucky and Tennessee. Western.

**Irreliability.** The quality of that which we cannot rely upon.

Surely, the *irreliability* of our war news must be demoralizing all our channels of information. — *The Congregationalist*, Jan. 31, 1862.

**Is.** Some American grammarians condemn such expressions as "He is come, arrived, returned, gone; *was* come," &c., universal in England and occurring everywhere, in the Bible and the best writers. No Englishman would say "the boat has gone," "has come:" he would say, "he has gone to London many a time;" "he has come several miles to no purpose;" "he has returned by a different road."

The difference in meaning is obvious, and contributes to enrich the language. In the former expression, *gone, arrived*, &c., are real participial adjectives, expressing a permanent state; in the latter, they are verbs.

**Isabella Grape.** A cultivated grape of *Vitis labrusca*, not much esteemed for its wine-producing qualities, but grown for table use.

**Island.** In prairie regions, the same terms are used as if the timber were land and the prairie water. A cluster of trees is called an *island*, sometimes a *mot*, — a small strip of prairie running into a wood, a *cove*, and a larger one, a *bay*.

The soil of the prairies is deep and rich; but, being of a clayey nature, retains the water after heavy rains, so as to appear flooded. In some are little clumps of trees on higher ground, which are called *islands*. — *Harris, Journal of a Tour*, &c., p. 178.

At the summit of the hill is a beautiful grove, or *island* of timber, where the heroes that fell at the battle of San Jacinto sleep their last sleep. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 252.

**Issuance.** The act of issuing.

Mr. Wilson called up the bill for the reduction of the military peace establishment.

A long discussion occurred on a portion of the bill providing for the *issuance* of arms to the State authorities for militia purposes. — *Debate in U. S. Senate*, July 20, 1868.

**Item.** Information; as, "I got *item* of his being in town." This word is used among Southern gamblers to imply information of what cards may be in a partner's or an opponent's hands: this is called "giving *item*."

Keep your eyes skinned and your rifles clean, and the minit yer get *item* that I 'm back, set off for the cross roads, &c. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Itemize.** To make, prepare, collect.

**Itemizer.** "An *itemizer* of the 'Adams Transcript.'" — *Congregationalist*, Sept. 21, 1860.

**Ivy.** In Connecticut use, for *Laurel*.

**I want to know!** Exclamation of surprise. "The Russians have gained a great battle." "I want to know!"

## J.

**To jab.** To strike or thrust; as, "He *jabbed* a knife into me."

**Jacal.** (Span., pron. *hacal*; from the Mexican *xacalli*, a straw hut.)

A house built of erect stakes, with their interstices filled with mud. They are common in Texas and in new Spanish settlements.

The modern village of Goliad is composed of about twenty *jacals*, large, and of a comparatively comfortable character, scattered over two hills. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 262.

**Jackass Rabbit.** (*Lepus callotis*.) A rabbit, found on the high plains of Texas and near the Rocky Mountains, so called from its very long ears and long and slender legs. It is known also by the names of Mule Rabbit, Texan Hare, and Black-tailed Hare. The term is also applied to the *Lepus Texianus* (Audubon and Bachman, III. 156). Both species were so called by our soldiers, in the Mexican war.

Our conversation was cut short by a *jackass-rabbit* bounding from under our horses' feet. — *Audubon's Quadrupeds of North America*, Vol. II. p. 95.

The *jackass-rabbit* crossed our path occasionally; but it sprang up so suddenly, and darted through the low bushes or chapparal so rapidly, that I could not get a shot at one. — *Bartlett's New Mexico*, Vol. I. p. 76.

**Jack-at-a-Pinch.** As a last resort. *Au pis aller*.

The fact is, Miss Coon feels wonderfully cut up, because she knows that her husband took her *Jack-at-a-pinch*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 27.

**Jackson Crackers.** Fire crackers. South-western.

**Jack-in-the-Pulpit.** (*Arisæma triphyllum*.) The Indian turnip. The recent tuber boiled in milk is a popular medicine in coughs. New England. In Connecticut, it is called *One-berry*.

*Jack-in-the-pulpit* preaches to-day,  
Under the green trees just over the way,  
Squirrel and song-sparrow, high on their perch,  
Hear the sweet lily-bells ringing to chu. ch. — *Jane Tay'or*.

**Jack-Stones.** A game played with five small stones, or with the same number of bones from the knees of a sheep. It is an old game, and is known in England as *Dibbs*. See further in Addenda.

**Jag.** A parcel or load. — *Halliwel*. And so in New England.

As there was very little money in the country, the bank bought a good *jag* on't in Europe. — *Major Doucning's Letters*, p. 168.

**Jam.** In Maine, Canada, and elsewhere, where logs are floated down streams, they have often to pass where the channel is contracted by encroaching cliffs, or where the river is otherwise obstructed. In going down, the progress of the logs is sometimes checked, other

logs are driven down until thousands are piled up in inextricable confusion, blocking up the river for hundreds of yards, and sometimes where the stream is narrow for miles. This is called a *jam*. It is sometimes very difficult, and attended with great danger, to break these *jams* of logs. In some cases, they form a dam, when the water rises until the dam gives way. The breaking of a *jam* involves the failure or success, among lumbermen, of a long winter campaign. It must be done quickly, ere the freshet subsides, or the labor of the year is lost. The same term is applied to floating ice, which, floating down a river, meets with an obstruction and forms a *jam*.

**Jam up.** A slang expression, equivalent to the English "slap up," "bang up," i. e. capital, prime.

There must have been a charming climate in Paradise. The temperature was perfect, and connubial bliss, I allot, was real *jam up*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 273.

**Jamaica Pepper.** See *Allspice*.

**Jamboree.** A frolic; a row; a jollification.

Case was arrested by a police officer, at his house, drunk clear through. He was having a good deal of a *jimboree*, and defied the police to take him. — *New York Police Report*.

G. B. went on a regular *jamboree* on Thursday night. Filling himself up with bad liquor, he raised a row and was taken up by the police. — *Providence Press*.

**Jamestown Weed.** (Pron. *Jimson weed*.) The Thorn Apple (*Datura stramonium*). Its Northern names are Stinkweed and Apple of Peru. It is said to have been introduced from tropical America, and to have been first observed about Jamestown, Virginia, where it sprang up on heaps of ballast and other rubbish discharged from vessels; whence its Southern name.

The *Jamestown weed* is one of the greatest coolers in the world. It, being an early plant, was gathered very young for a boiled salad by some of the soldiers, to pacify the troubles of bacon, and some of them eat plentifully of it, the effect of which was a very pleasant comedy; for they turned natural fools upon it for several days. — *Beverly, Hist. of Virginia*, Book II.

The *Jamestown weed* is excellent for curing burns and assuaging inflammations; but taken inwardly brings on a sort of drunken madness. — *Lawson's Carolina*, 1718, p. 78.

"George, did you ever see Sicily Burns?" "Yes, a very handsome girl." "Handsome! this wurd don't kiver the case. She shows among wimen like a sun-flower as compared to dog-fennel, an' smart weed, and *jimsen*." — *Sat Lucegood's Experience*.

**Jammed.** Mashed, when applied to potatoes. "Will you have your potatoes whole or *jammed*?" was asked of a traveller at a hotel in the interior of the State of New York.

**Japonicadom.** A word invented by N. P. Willis to denote the upper classes of society. Allusive to the flower known as the Japonica Lily.

**Jaquima.** (Span., pron. *hak-ke-ma*.) The head-stall of a halter, used in Texas and California for breaking wild horses.

**Jayhawker.** A cant name in the Western States for a lawless or other soldier not enlisted; a freebooting armed man; a guerilla. "The Leavenworth Conservative" says "the term was first applied to Colonel Jennison, of New York, and, being a jovial, festive, and lively cuss, his comrades always spoke of him as the 'Gay Yorker.' This expression was afterwards used to designate his men, and in its various travels naturally underwent many changes until at last it crystallized into *Jayhawker*." — *N. Y. World*, Jan. 8, 1862.

We are soldiers, not thieves or plunderers, or *Jayhawkers*. — *Proclamation of General James Lane*, Oct., 1861.

General Sheridan, in a despatch, having spoken of Louisiana "banditti," gave much offence to the people of New Orleans. In explanation, the General said:—

The terms *Jayhawker* and *Banditti* were employed to distinguish them from the White League, a secret military organization. The term *Jayhawker* could not be used, for the White Leagues were not plunderers and robbers.

**To jeopardize.** To expose to loss or injury. — *Webster*. This word is often seen in the debates of Congress, as they are reported in the newspapers. It is doubtless a corruption of the ancient verb *to jeopard*, as *deputize* is of *depute*. — *Pickering*. The word is much used in the United States, and less frequently in England.

The profound respect for the cause of truth which led Mr. Tooke not to *jeopardize* its interests by any hasty assumption of its name and pretensions for a discovery yet incomplete constitutes one of his surest holds upon posterity. — *London Athenæum*, March 18, 1848.

A horse, with a wagon attached, took fright yesterday afternoon in York Street, and started off at full speed, *jeopardizing* the lives and limbs of pedestrians. One female, with a child in her arms, narrowly escaped being knocked down and run over. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

**Jerked Meat.** Dried meat; a term more generally applied to beef dried in the open air. Some imagine the word to have come from the Spanish *Charqui*, the common term in all Spanish America, Mexico alone excepted, for dried beef.

**Jerks and Jerking Exercise.** The paroxysms into which certain religious enthusiasts fell at their camp-meetings in the West, though chiefly in Kentucky and Tennessee. It consisted in being jerked in all directions, and over whatever object happened to be in the way.

In these cases, the persons affected would be left to themselves, because the people said that to oppose them would be to resist the influences of the Spirit of God.

**Jessie.** "To give one *Jessie*" means to give him a flogging.

Well, hoss, you've slashed the hide off 'er that feller, touched his raw, and rumbled his feathers, — that 's the way to *give him jessy*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 33.

The preacher went in for *giving Jessie* to the Church of Rome. — *Doesticks*, p. 105.

It is represented that a great many people from Salt Lake have been met, and they all say that the Mormons are going to *give us Jessie*. — *St. Louis Republican*, 1857.

The Judge [who was a candidate for office] had to stay at a convenient distance to hear that Hoss Allen was giving him *particular Jesse*. — *Hoss Allen's Apology*.

**Jewhillikens!** A Western exclamation of surprise.

Didn't you know that feller, Arch Cooney? He was a hoss-fly. He 's a few! well he is. *Jewhilliken*, how he could whip a nigger! and swear! whew! — *Traits of American Humor*.

**To jib.** A horse in a carriage, when he stands still and refuses to go, is said to *jib*. In England, the term is applied to a horse that backs instead of going forward. — *Halliwell*. See *Baulk*.

**Jibber.** A horse in harness who stands still and refuses to go forward.

Let any person driving a strange horse, with a load that he is not sure he can start easily, proceed according to directions; and he may be certain that, if the animal be not already a *jibber*, he will not make himself so. — *Jennings on the Horse*, p. 200.

**To jibe.** To suit, agree, harmonize. A variation of *to gee*, which last is used both in England and in this country. Nautical in its origin: "to go about, with the wind aft;" to jibe well is to *work* well. One vessel *jibes*, another *tacks*, better.

I attempted to sing the words of "Old Hundred," while the lady played the Jenny Lind Polka, which didn't seem to *jibe*. — *Doesticks*, p. 113.

**Jig.** An artificial squid for trolling. New England.

"A school of blue-fish!" exclaimed the Professor, as his eye caught the movement to which I pointed. He shouted frantically to the pilot to make haste with the dory, and, throwing on an overcoat, seized from the locker where we kept our fishing tackle a long, stout line, at the end of which was a shining, spoon-shaped piece of pewter, terminated by a large hook. This apparatus he called a *jig*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 22, 1858.

Upon the river St. Lawrence, the contrivance referred to is called a *spoon-hook*, where it is used for catching bass, pike, and muskalunge.

**The Jig is up, i. e.** the game is up; it is all over with me.

The time was when I could cut pigeon-wings and perform the double-shuffle with precision and activity; but those days are over now, — *the jig is up*. — *Kendall, Santa Fe Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**Jigamaree.** A trivial or non-sensible thing. A factitious word, equivalent to "jiggumbob" and "thingumbob." It is explained in the English glossaries to mean a manœuvre, a trick.

He is also the inventor of the "housekeeper's friend," that ere *jigamaree* the wimmim scrubs with, instead of going on their hands and knees as they used to. *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I went over t'other night to see them all, as they was as busy as bees in a tar barrel sowin' and makin' up finery. Mary was sowin' something mighty fine with ruffles and *jigamarees* all around it. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Jigger.** 1. An insect. See *Chigoe*.

2. A small fishing vessel. New England.

3. A sail.

**Jiggling-Board.** A board the ends of which are placed upon frames or stools, upon which a person stands and springs up; also called a *jolly-board*.

**Jimberjawed.** Where the lower jaw projects unnaturally.

**Jim-Jams.** Delirium tremens. Kentucky.

**Jimmy.** A piece of iron, varying in length, sharp-pointed at one end, used by burglars for prying open doors and iron safes, or for forcing a lock.

**Jimson or Jimson Weed.** Jamestown Weed. (*Stramonium*.) Said to have been first introduced at Jamestown, Virginia. See *Jamestown Weed*.

She went to the open door and stood in it and looked out among the tomato vines and *jimson weeds* that constituted the garden. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 18.

**Jobber.** 1. Used only conventionally in Wall Street. In London, it is the equivalent of a stock operator. — *Medbery*.

2. One who purchases goods from importers and manufacturers by the package, and sells to retailers.

**Jobbing-House.** A mercantile establishment which purchases from importers and sells to retailers. — *Webster*.

**Joe-pye Weed.** (*Eupatorium purpureum*.) Maine.—*Thoreau's Maine Woods*, p. 317. So called from an Indian of that name, who cured typhus fever with it, by copious perspiration. — *Rafinesque, Med. Flora*, Vol. I. p. 179.

**Jog.** A projection or deviation from a straight line or plain surface, *e. g.* in the course of a fence, or in the side of a building. *Comp.*



English provincial *Jockey*, "uneven" (Kent). *Jogging*, a protuberance on the surface of sawn wood. Eastern.

The addition which Billy Jacobs had made [to the house] was oblong, running out to the south, and projecting on the front a few feet beyond the other part. This obtrusive *jog* was certainly very ugly. — *Mercy Philbrick's Choice*, p. 7.

The little clumsy, meaningless *jog* ruined the house, — gave it an uncomfortably awry look, &c. — *Ibid.*, p. 8.

**John.** A common name in California for a Chinaman.

I passed out of the Chinese theatre, with a lady and two children. We had to walk through a crowd of *Johns*. . . . Moreover, all that *John* does, he seems to do with a sluggish amount of sluggish decorum. — *Nordhoff's California*, p. 85.

**Johnnies.** During the late civil war, a term applied by the soldiers of the Union army to those of the Confederate army.

**Johnny-Cake.** A cake made of Indian meal mixed with milk or water. A New England *Johnny-Cake* is invariably spread upon the stave of a barrel-top, and baked before the fire. Sometimes stewed pumpkin is mixed with it.

Some talk of hoe-cake, fair Virginia's pride;  
Rich *Johnny-cake* this mouth has often tried.  
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;  
Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,  
Except in dear New England, where the last  
Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste.

*Joel Barlow, Poem on Hasty Pudding.*

Little Sarah she stood by her grandmother's bed,  
"And what shall I get for your breakfast?" she said.  
"You shall get me a *Johnny-cake*: quickly go make it,  
In one minute mix, and in two minutes bake it." — *L. Maria Child.*

The origin of the word is doubtful. Some imagine it to have originally been *journey-cake*.

All the greatness of our State has been nourished on *johnny-cakes* of white corn-meal. *Johnny-cake* I spell in deference to modern usage, though the old name, *journey-cake*, may well recall to us that long and toilsome journey, when our great founder fled from the odious land of yellow corn. — *Cor. of Providence Journal.*

**Johnny-jump-up-and-kiss-me, Johnny-jump-up, Johnny-Jumper.** Names given to the Heart's Ease, or Violet. This name is also given to the breast-bone of a goose, with its two ends brought together by a twisted string held by a stick passing through it and stuck fast to the end by a piece of wax.

**Jornada.** (Spanish, pron. *hornáda*.) A march or journey performed in a day. In the interior, it is only applied to a long reach of desert country without water, and not to a day's journey; as, the "*Jornada del Muerto*" in New Mexico, which is ninety miles across, and which it takes several days to traverse.

If experiments with artesian wells should prove successful, the progress of agriculture in New Mexico would be more rapid, and even many dreaded *jornadas* might be changed from waterless deserts into cultivated plains. — *Wislizenau, New Mexico*.

Until the autumn of 1849, the California desert was found to be a sandy and dreary *jornada*, without water or grass. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations, R. R. Sursey*.

**Josey.** A loose, light, upper garment, with sleeves and a short skirt, now worn by women and girls. Both the dress and the name are contractions of the old-fashioned *Joseph*.

**Josh.** A word shouted at the New York Stock Exchange to wake up a sleepy member.

A member drops asleep, worn out it may be by long nights and feverish daily wrestlings with bull or bear. "Josh," "Josh," "Josh," comes roaring from a dozen leathern lungs, and the broker lifts his head and rubs his eyes, startled from slumber by the traditional rallying cry. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 146.

**Jour or Jur.** An abbreviation of the word *journeyman*. "The boss quarrelled with the *jurs*;" i. e., the master quarrelled with his journeymen.

**Juba.** One of the classical names often given to Negroes by their masters. "Patting or Clapping *Juba*" is keeping time by striking the feet on the floor and clapping the hands on the legs to the music of the banjo. It adds much to the excitement of the rustic dances at the South.

Here we saw rare sport! Here were Virginia slaves, dancing jigs and clapping *Juber*, over a barrel of persimmon beer, to the notes of the banjo. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 98.

*Juber* up and *Juber* down,  
*Juber* all around de town,  
*Juber* dis and *Juber* dat,  
 And *Juber* round de simmon vat.

Hoe corn and hill tobacco,  
 Get over double trouble, *Juber*, boys, *Juber*! — *Ibid.*, p. 101.

In some versions, the fourth line reads, "Juba lub de 'possum fat."

**Judas Tree.** See *Red Bud*.

**Judges of the Plains.** A translation of the Spanish *Jueces del Campo*. In California, there are, by law, appointed certain persons in every county, whose duty it is to attend all the rodeos, or gatherings of cattle, whether for the purpose of marking or branding, or for separating the cattle, when called upon by any ranchero, farmer, or owner of stock. These are called *Judges of the Plains*, and have the power to decide all disputes connected with the ownership of horses, mules, or horned cattle. — *Laws of California*. See *Rodeo*.

The following is an extract from a hand-bill stuck up in San Diego:—

Ordered, That the three *Judges of the Plains* at large shall meet at San Louis Rey . . . for consultation in all matters appertaining to their duties as *Judges* of the Plains, and to adopt such rules and regulations as may be authorized by law, &c. — *Nordhoff's California*, p. 238.

**Judiciary.** The judiciary power, or the power that administers justice; judicature. — *Judge Story*. This word is often used as a substantive in the United States, but is not often so used in England. *Worcester*.

**Judy.** 1. "To make a *judy* of one's self" is what, with more vigor than politeness, is termed making an ass of one's self.

The "Boston Chronotype," in speaking of the bad management and confusion at the Water celebration, says:—

It is thought that a set of men never did make greater *Judies* of themselves.

2. A lamp formerly used in New England for burning blubber.

**Jug.** A jail. 1. To be in *jug*, or in the *stone jug*, is to be in jail.

So arter this they sentenced me, to make all tight and snug,  
Afore a reg'lar court o' law, to ten years in the *Jug*.

2. In American Thief Slang, *jug* signifies a Bank.

3. To *jug* money, &c., to hide it away.

**Jugful.** "Not by a *jugful*" is a phrase commonly used to mean, not by a great deal, by no means.

Downingville is as sweet as a rose. But 'taint so in New York, not by a *jugful* Major Downing, *May-day in New York*.

He wished to state of the pro-slavery men of Kansas, so that their friends in Missouri might see into their plans and policy, they had not abandoned the idea of making Kansas a slave State, by a *jugful*. — *P. T. Able's Speech*, July, 1857.

**Julep.** A drink, composed of brandy or whiskey with sugar, pounded ice, and some sprigs of mint. Frequently *Mint Julep*.

Hoffman brings the gods together on Mount Olympus, after their last butt of nectar had run out, to taste mint juleps:—

The draught was delicious, each god did exclaim,  
Though something yet wanting they all did bewail;  
But *juleps* the drink of immortals became,  
When Jove himself added a handful of hail.

The word *julep* supposed to be American, both in name and for a beverage, is mentioned by Beaumont and Fletcher:—

Men drown themselves for joy to draw in *juleps*,  
When they are hot with wine; in dreams we do it.

*The Mad Lover*, Act ii. Sc. 1.

**Jump.** "From the *jump*" is a phrase meaning from the start, from the beginning.

Here is a whole string of Democrats, all of whom had been going the whole hog for Cass *from the jump*, without regard to our adherence or opposition to Taylor. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 11, 1848.

**To jump a Claim**, in Western parlance, is to endeavor to obtain possession of the land or "claim" which has been taken up and occupied by a settler, or "squatter," in a new country. The first occupant is, by squatter law and custom, entitled to the first claim on the land. Sometimes dishonest men attempt to deprive the squatter of his rights, which often leads to bloodshed.

When I hunted claims, I went far and near,  
Resolved from all others to keep myself clear;  
And if, through mistake, I *jumped* a man's claim,  
As soon as I knew it I jumped off again.

*E. H. Smith, Hist. of Black Hawk, 1848.*

If a man *jumped* my claim, and encroached on my boundaries, and I didn't knock him on the head with a pickaxe, I appealed to the crowd, and, my claim being carefully measured and found correct, the *jumper* would be ordered to confine himself to his own territory. — *F. Marryat, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 217.

At Florence, Nebraska Territory, on the 26th of May, seven men were arrested by a mob, for what is called *claim-jumping*, — that is, settling down on sections of land already entered or claimed by other persons. They were tried by a club association, and condemned to death by hanging; but the urgent entreaties of their families averted the execution of the infamous sentence. — *Boston Traveller*.

**To jump Bail.** To abscond. "Boss Tweed *jumped his bail*;" i. e., he ran away.

**Jumper.** 1. One who takes a squatter's claim.

2. A couple of hickory poles so bent that the runners and shafts are of the same piece, with a crate placed on four props, complete this primitive species of sledge; and when the crate is filled with hay, and the driver well wrapped in a buffalo robe, the "turn-out" is about as comfortable a one as a man could wish. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 200.

**Junk-Bottle.** The ordinary black glass porter-bottle.

## K.

**Kamas Root.** (*Camassia esculenta*.) Breadroot. The Pomme des Prairies or Pomme Blanche of the Canadians, and Prairie Turnip of the hunters and trappers of the West. It is very extensively used as food by the Digger Indians.

**Kanacka.** A native of the Sandwich Islands. *Kanaka* is the Sandwich Island word for "man." California.

**Kanticoy.** See *Canticoy*.

**Karimption.** A squad. Western.

A whole *karimption* of Dutch emigrants were landed here yesterday. — *Cairo, Illinois, Times.*

**Katowse.** (Germ. *Getöse.*) A din, tumult, rumpus; as, "What a *katowse* you are making!" New England.

**Katydid.** (*Platyphyllum concavum.*) The popular name of a species of grasshopper; so called from its peculiar note. Two of them will chirp alternately from different trees, one saying, *Katy did!* and the other replying with equal positiveness, *Katy didn't!* At least, so their conversation is interpreted by the children.

I sit among the leaves here,  
When evening zephyrs sigh,  
And those that listen to my voice  
I love to mystify.  
I never tell them all I know,  
Altho' I'm often hid.  
I laugh at curiosity,  
And chirrup *Katy did.* — *Ethiopian Songs.*  
I love to hear thine earnest voice,  
Wherever thou art hid,  
Thou testy little dogmatist,  
Thou pretty *Katydid.* — *O. W. Holmes's Poems.*

Nature was fast asleep, and not a sound interrupted the solemn stillness, save the pitiful plaint of a lovelorn *Katydid*, or an occasional yawl from some sacrilegious cat. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**Kay, Cay, Key.** (Span. *cayo.*) A small island or rock in the sea. The term is generally applied to those on the Florida coast.

**Kechug!** or **Kerchug!** Whop! The noise made by popping into the water. See the observations on interjections of this sort under *Cachunk*. A modern poet, in speaking of the plunge of a frog, thus makes use of the word: —

You see him sitting on a log  
Above the vasty deep;  
You feel inclined to say, "Old Chap,  
Just look before you leap!"  
You raise your cane to hit him on  
His ugly-looking mug,  
But ere you get it half way up  
Adown he goes, — *kerchug!*

**Kedge.** Brisk; in good health and spirits. *Ex.*: "How do you do to-day?" "I am pretty *kedge.*" It is used only in a few of the country towns of New England. — *Pickering.* Provincial in England.

**Keel-Boat.** A description of vessel formerly used on the Mississippi and its tributaries. It is thus described by Flint: "The *keel-boat*

is of a long, slender, and elegant form, and generally carries from fifteen to thirty tons. Its advantage is in its small draft of water and the lightness of its construction. It is still used [1832] on the Ohio and Upper Mississippi in low stages of water, and on all the boatable streams where steamboats do not yet run. Its propelling power is by oars, sails, setting poles, the cordelle, and, when the waters are high and the boat runs on the margin of the bushes, 'bush-whacking,' or pulling up by the bushes." — *History and Geography of Mississippi Valley*.

**Keeler Tub.** A tub in which dishes are washed. "An greasy Joan doth *keel* the pot."

The vessel in a brewery now called a cooler was formerly called a *keeler*. — *Wright's Glossary*.

**To keel over.** A nautical phrase, meaning to capsize or upset, and metaphorically applied to a sudden prostration.

As it seems pretty evident that the sovereigns of Europe, instead of occupying or sharing thrones, are predestined to the walks of private life, it would be highly proper to cultivate in them a spirit of self-abnegation and humility. If the royal parents wish to see their offspring "let down easy" from their high estate, they will adopt this course. *Keel over* they must, and a gradual *careen* would be much better than a sudden *capsize*. Now that the people are assuming the rights and privileges of sovereignty, we trust that they will have some consideration for princes in distress. — *N. Y. Sunday Despatch*.

**Keeled up.** Laid up or worn out from sickness or old age. A seaman's phrase, like the preceding.

When we get *keeled up*, that will be the last of us. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 116.

**Keener.** A very shrewd person, one sharp at a bargain, what in England would be called "a keen hand." Western.

**Keep.** Food, subsistence, keeping. In a letter to his brother, Bishop Heber, speaking of Bishops' College costing so much, says: —

Besides, it has turned out so expensive in the monthly bills and necessary *keep* of its inmates, that my resources, &c. — Vol. II. p. 319.

The cottager either purchased hay for the *keep* [of the cow], or paid for her run in the straw-yard. — *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. LXI. p. 245.

"They tell me you puritans preach by instinct."

"I don't know how that is," answered Gershom. "I heer'n tell, across at Bois Bruly, of sich doin's, and would give you a week's *keep* at Whiskey Centre to know how 't was done." — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

Poor folks like us can't afford to keep nobody jest to look at, and so he'll have to step spry and work smart to airm his *keep*. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 98.

**To keep.** The phrase *to keep shop* is often shortened into *to keep*; as, "Where do you *keep* now?" i. e., where is your place of business?

To keep also has the sense of to live, to dwell, which use of the word is provincial in the eastern counties of England.

**Keeper.** A custodian of attached property, appointed by a constable or sheriff.

**To keep a Stiff Upper Lip** is to continue firm, keep up one's courage.

"My friend," said he, "don't cry for spilt milk; *keep a stiff upper lip*; all will come out right enough yet." — *Knickerbocker Magazine*, Vol. XXV.

"Tut, tut, Major; *keep a stiff upper lip*, and you'll bring him this time." — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 150.

**To keep Company.** To court. A common term applied to a man whose visits to a lady are frequent, with the intention of gaining her hand. "He *keeps company* with her," i. e. he is courting her; or "They are *keeping company*," i. e. are courting. Also used in England.

A young tailoress got a verdict against Mr B——, a steady farmer, who "*kept company*" with her some months, and appointed a day for the wedding [but subsequently changed his mind]. — *New York Commercial Advertiser*.

"I had no idee that Sally Smith was goin' to be married to Sam Pendergrass," said the Widow Bedott. "She'd been *keepin' company* with Mose Hewlett for better 'n a year, and everybody said that was a settled thing." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 22.

**Keeping-Room.** A common sitting-room; not the parlor, but the second-best room. New England. The term is chiefly used in the interior, although it may sometimes be heard in the seaport towns. The same expression is used in Norfolk, England, for "the general sitting-room of the family, or common parlor." — *Forby's Norf. Glossary*.

Mr. Goodrich, in speaking of the period of his boyhood in Connecticut, says: —

Carpets were then only known in a few families, and were confined to the *keeping-room* and parlor. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 74.

Within there were but the kitchen, the *keeping-room*, and a pantry, together with the sleeping apartment. — *Eastford*.

**Keet.** See *Guinea Keet*.

**Kellock.** A small anchor. See *Killock*.

**Kelumpus!** Thump! The noise produced by a fall on a hard body.

Only think, — a fellow to come here drunk at night, and to fall *kelumpus* on the fence by the apple-tree! — *Adv. of Priest*, p. 93.

**Kenption Fit.** Any state of excitement. See *Conniption*.

**Kentucky Coffee.** The fruit of the *Gymnocladus Canadensis*. A large tree, resembling the locust-tree, bearing a pod with berries which are used for coffee. Its wood is used for cabinet-work.

**Kentucky Flat.** See *Flat-Boat*.

**Kerboodle.** All; the whole. See *Boodle* and *Caboodle*.

**Kerosene.** (From Gr. *κηρός*, wax, with termination *ene*, as in *camphene*.) A liquid hydrocarbon, or oil extracted from bituminous coal, used for illumination and for other purposes. — *Webster*.

**Keshaw!** See *Cashaw!*

**Keslosh! Keswosh! Kewosh!** Plash! splash! The noise produced by a body falling flat into the water.

Cousin Peter sat down between them [the king and queen in a play]; but they riz up jest as he went to sit down, and the first thing he knowed, *kerslosh* he went into a tub of water. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

The kiver-hinge pin bein' lost, tea-leaves and tea and kiver

Would all come down *kerswosh!* as though the dam broke in a river.

*Poetical Epistle from a Volunteer.*

I have seen manhood fall from the topmost cliff of ambition *kerswosh* into the depths of nonentity, and lie for ever buried in the turbid waves of oblivion. — *Doe's Sermons*.

He shoved away the boat, and the first thing I know'd down I went *kerswosh* into the drink. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 38.

**Kesouse! Souse!** The noise made by a body falling from a small height into the water. Comp. *Touse*.

The dug-out hadn't leaped more 'n six lengths from the bank, afore — zip — chug — *ke-souse* I went; the eend lifted agin a sawyer, and emptied me into the element. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

**To kesouse.** To souse into the water.

I *kesoused* the old cock into a bucket of boilin' water, and — do you believe? Why, it took two of my young ones and a big pair of pincers a whole day to get the critter's feathers out. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Keswollop! Flop!** The noise made by a violent fall to the ground.

The horses kept pretty even till they reached the third fence, a regular snag; and then *kerswollop* went one rider clear over the horse's head. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Kettle.** A pail, as of tin-plate; a dinner-pail. N. England.

**Key.** See *Kay*.

**Keystone State.** The State of Pennsylvania. So called from its being the central State of the Union at the time of the formation of the Constitution.

**Kibblings.** Parts of small fish used by fishermen for bait on the banks of Newfoundland. See *Slivers*.

**To kick.** To jilt. Ex.: "Miss A. has *kicked* the Hon. Mr. B., and sent him off with a flea in his ear." Confined to the South.



**Kick.** To *kick up a row* is to create a disturbance; the same as to *kick up a dust*.

Mr. Polk admitted Santa Anna, because he knew him to be capable of fighting nothing but chickens, and to *kick up a row* in Mexico, and disconcert government measures. — *Mr. Bedinger, Speech in House of Representatives.*

**Kid.** 1. A large box in fishing vessels, into which fish are thrown as they are caught. New England.

2. A kidnapper.

Attempted kidnapping in Washington. The kidnappers caught and locked up. . . . The *kids* were taken before Colonel Childs, who . . . ordered them to be sent to the Provost-Marshal's office. — *Washington Republican*, April 9, 1862.

**To kill.** 1. To defeat, to neutralize. A political term. "Do you vote the Whig ticket? I'll go the Democrat, and *kill* your vote." "Ike Sap got a divorce from his old woman in the House, but it was *killed* in the Senate."

2. To do a thing to *kill* is a common vulgarism, and means to do it to the uttermost, to carry it to the fullest extent; as, "He drives to *kill*;" "She dances to *kill*."

**Kill.** (Dutch *kil*.) A channel or arm of the sea; a stream, river. This Dutch appellation is still preserved in several instances; thus, the channel that separates Staten Island from Bergen Neck is called *Kill van Kull*, or simply the *Kills*; to which we may add the names *Schuylkill* and *Catskill*, applied to streams.

**Killdeer.** (*Charadrius vociferus*.) A small bird of the plover kind; so called from its peculiar note. Speaking of the great variety and number of water-fowl in Florida, Bret Harte says: —

The sepulchral boom of the bittern, the shriek of the curlew, and the complaint of the *killdeer*-plover were beyond the power of expression. — *Sketches*, p. 90.

**Killhag.** (Indian.) A wooden trap, used by the hunters in Maine.

**Killing Time.** The season when hogs are slaughtered.

**Kill-Lamb.** Connecticut usage. See *Lamb-Kill*.

**Killock, Killick.** 1. A small anchor. A wooden anchor. — *Cartwright's Labrador*, Vol. III.

2. The flue of an anchor. — *Jamieson*. An instrument used to moor a fishing-boat at sea, instead of a grapnel or anchor. A stone enclosed between the longer pieces of wood, fastened together with two others. — *Notes and Queries*, Vol. X. p. 319.

The stone slipping out of the *killick*, and thereby they driving faster than they thought, &c. — *Gov. Dudley's Letter to the Countess of Lincoln*, 1631. [They had "let down their *killick*, that soe they might drive the more slowly," in a gale.]

They took their berths, unshipped their oars, threw over their *killicks*, and prepared for fishing. — *Peter Gott, the Fisherman.*

So I advise the num'rous friends that 's in one boat with me  
To just up *killock*, jam right down their helm hard a lea.

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

An anecdote is related in "Harper's Magazine," for April, 1876, p. 790, of a fishing-party becalmed in a fog near Newport, R. I., which during the night attempted to reach their home by vigorous rowing.

When the fog lifted at the approach of morning, they found, to their great astonishment, that they had forgotten to raise the anchor, and had been rowing round the *killeck* all night.

The "Preble" stood off the bar for an anchorage. We found a suitable place, and dropped the *kellock*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov., 1861, *Lett. from the Mississippi.*

**Killy-Fish** or **Killy**. (Genus *Fundulus*.) A small fish found in the salt water creeks and bays, from one to five inches in length. It is only used for bait for larger fish. They are so called from the "Kills" in which they abound. They so much resemble the white-bait of England that they are only to be distinguished by actual comparison.

**Kilter**. *Out of kilter*. In a bad condition; out of shape. Halliwell notices the word *keller* as provincial in England; and Barrow uses it with the prefixed "out of."

If the organs of prayer are *out of keller*, or out of tune, how can we pray? *Sermons*, Serm. vi.

Sir Charles Lyell, not knowing the word, wrote it "out of kettle"!

**Kiln**. See at *Tar-Kiln*.

**Kindlers** or **Kindlings**. Small pieces of wood for kindling a fire; kindling-wood. New England.

Put some *kindlers* under the pot, and then you may go. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

Mr. Goodrich, in describing the wood fires of olden time in New England, says:—

There was a back-log, top-log, middle-stick, and then a heap of *kindlings*, reaching from the bowels down to the bottom.

**Kind o', Kinder**. In a manner, as it were, in some respects; somewhat; as, "She made game on it *kind o'*." — *Forby*. See *Kiny*.

A *kinder* notion jist then began to get into my head. — *Major Downing*.

At that the landlord and officer looked *kinder* thunderstruck — *Downing*.

It *kinder* seemed to me that something could be done, and they let me take the colt. — *Margaret*, p. 325.

In the store that stands above us,  
As I sat beneath the counter,  
*Kind-a* doing nothing, only  
Nibbling at a box of raisins.

*Ward, Song of Higher Water.*

**Kinder Sorter.** Somehow, rather; sometimes reversed to *sorter kinder*.

I have set my heart on a gall, though, whether she will give me hern, I ain't sartin; but I rather *kinder sorter* guess so, than *kinder sorter* not so. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 90.

**King-Bird.** (*Muscicapa tyrannus*.) A bold and sprightly bird, which appears in Louisiana about the middle of March, and continues until the middle of September. Further northward, over the entire country, it comes later and disappears earlier. — *R. Kennicott*.

**King-Bolt.** An iron-bolt by which is connected the axle and the fore-wheels of a wagon to and with the other parts of the vehicle. New England. See *Body-Bolt*.

**King-Crab.** See *Horse-Foot*.

**King-Fish.** (*Umbrina alburnus*.) A sea-fish of delicious flavor, called King-fish about New York, and Hake on the Jersey coast.

**Kink.** 1. An accidental knot or sudden twist in a rope, thread, &c.

I wanted to sit by an open window in the [railway] car, and Betsey Bobbet didn't. I mistrust she thought the wind would take the *kink* out of her frizzles. *Betsey Bobbet*, p. 273.

There is another financial *kink* in the case of the bonds of St. Charles County, Missouri, which lately became in default of interest. — *N. Y. Post*, April 16, 1877.

2. Figuratively, a fanciful notion, a crotchet.

It is useless to persuade him to go, for he has taken a *kink* in his head that he will not. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*.

I went down to Macon to the examination, whar I got a heap of new *kinks*. *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 20.

Never a Yankee was born or bred  
Without that peculiar *kink* in his head  
By which he could turn the smallest amount  
Of whatever he had to the best account.  
*Cozens, California Ballad.*

**Kinkajou.** (*Cercoptes caudivolvulus*. Illiger.) "Carcajou or Quincajou, a species of cat, whose tail is so long that it is obliged to take several turns of it around his body." — *Charlevoix, Nouvelle France*, Vol. III. p. 129. See *Carcajou*. Jonathan Carver, in describing the Carcajou, mentions his long tail "with which," he says, "he encircles the body of his adversary." — *Travels*, p. 450.

**Kinky.** Queer, eccentric, crotchety.

**Kinnikinnick.** An Indian word for a preparation of tobacco, sumac-leaves, and willow twigs, two-thirds tobacco and one of the latter, gathered when the leaves commence turning red. This mixture is used by the Indians and the old settlers and hunters in the West. The preparation of kinnikinnick varies in different localities and with different tribes. Mr. J. Hammond Trumbull, the best authority on Indian words, says, "The name, which is good Algonkin, means simply a *mixture*, 'that which is mixed.' In this mixture, the bark of the red willow is the principal ingredient, when it can be procured; and is often used by itself without admixture." Mr. T. adds, "I have smoked a half-dozen varieties of kinnikinnick in the North-west, — all genuine; and have scraped and prepared the red willow-bark, which is not much worse than Suffield oak-leaf."

At this moment, the Indians were in deliberation. Seated in a large circle round a very small fire, the smoke from which ascended in a thin, straight column, they each in turn puffed a huge cloud of smoke from three or four long cherry-stemmed pipes, which went the round of the party; each warrior touching the ground with the heel of the pipe-bowl, and turning the stem upwards and away from him as "medicine" to the Great Spirit, before he himself inhaled the fragrant kinnik-kinnik. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I at this moment presented to the Duke the Indian pipe, through which he had smoked the day before, and also an Indian tobacco-pouch, filled with the *k'nick-k'neck* (or Indian tobacco) with which he had been so much pleased. — *Catlin's Travels in Europe*.

There are also certain creeks where the Indians resort to lay in a store of *kinnikinnik*, the inner bark of the red willow, which they use as a substitute for tobacco, and which has an aromatic and very pungent flavor. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 118.

While I am writing, I am smoking a pipe filled with *kinnikinnick*, the dried leaves of the red sumac, — a very good substitute for tobacco. — *Carvalho, Adventures in the Far West*, p. 36.

**Kiny.** As *kind o'*. "Kiny so." "Kiny so and kiny not so." New Hampshire.

**Kiskitomas Nut.** Indian, from *kushki* or *kôshki*, rough. A nut that may be cracked with the teeth, characterizing the tree by its bark. Rasle gives, for the Abenaki *nesekouskadânen*, "J'en casse avec les dents," I crack [walnuts] with my teeth. A writer in the "*N. Y. Historical Mag.*," 1864, says the word is still in use on Long Island. Michaux says, "Descendants of the Dutch settlers who inhabit the parts of New Jersey near the city of New York call it *Kisky Thomas* nut." The French of Illinois knew it by the name of *Noyer tendre*. — *North Am. Sylva*, Vol. I. p. 123.

The following sonnet to it is taken from the "Literary World," of Nov. 2, 1850:—

Hickory, shell-bark, *kiskitomas* nut!  
 Or whatsoever thou art called, thy praise  
 Has ne'er been sounded yet in poet's lays;  
 October's frosts now burst the husk where shut  
 In snug recluse thou'st passed the summer; but  
 Ushered at length into the world's broad blaze,  
 Lo! throngs of merry children rush to raise  
 Thy form, and give thee welcome; every hut  
 And statelier dwelling hails thy glad approach;  
 Looking, when winter's snows and sleets encroach,  
 To gather social circles round the hearth;  
 Who, while the generous cider-cask they broach,  
 And munching apples laud their various worth,  
 Call in thine aid to crown with crackling noise the mirth.

**Kiss-me.** Used as is "*Thank-you-Ma'am*" (which see) for a ridge or hollow place across a roadway; a jolting obstruction to vehicles. New England.

**Kiss-me-quick.** A home-made, quilted bonnet which does not extend beyond the face. They are chiefly used to cover the head by ladies when going to parties or to the theatre. Noted as in general use in England, by *Ducange Anglicus*, for small bonnets worn during the year 1851, and for a short time after.

She holds out with each hand a portion of her silk dress, as if she was walking a minuet, and it discloses a snow white petticoat. Her step is short and mincing, and she wears a new bonnet called a *kiss-me-quick*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 131.

**Kit.** A man's baggage.

**Kit and Boodle.** "The whole *kit and boodle*" of any thing means the whole. See *Boodle*.

Then you're jest one quarter richer 'n if you owned half, and jest three quarters richer 'n if you owned the *hull kit and boodle* of them. — *T. Winthrop, John Brent*, p. 19.

**Kitchen Cabinet.** A nickname applied to certain advisers of President Jackson. It was said that, to avoid observation, these advisers were accustomed, when they called upon the President, to go in by a back door.

In the management of the "*Washington Globe*," the organ of the President, it became necessary for him to consult often with Blair and Kendall, which was a reason, among others, for the Whig party to ridicule and condemn "*Jackson's kitchen cabinet*." — *Life and Times of Governor Reynolds*, p. 453.

**Kite.** See *Skite*.

**Kite-Flier.** A financier who practises the operation of "*kite-flying*."

**Kite-Flying.** An expression well known to mercantile men of limited means, or who are short of cash. It is a combination between two persons, neither of whom has any funds in bank, to exchange each other's checks, which may be deposited in lieu of money, taking good care to make their bank accounts good before their checks are presented for payment. *Kite-flying* is also practised by mercantile houses or persons in different cities. A house in Boston draws on a house in New York at sixty days or more, and gets its bill discounted. The New York house, in return, meets its acceptance by re-drawing on the Boston house.

*Flying the kite* is rather a perilous adventure, and subjects a man to a risk of detection. One who values his credit as a sound and fair dealer would by no means hazard it. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 82.

It appears that Yankee land cannot claim the honor of inventing either the practice or the phrase; for, at a legal dinner in Ireland, Lord Norbury said to Chancellor Milford:—

In England, you have to raise a wind to fly a kite, but in Ireland here we *fly kites* to raise the wind.

**Kiuse.** In the States of the Far West and on the plains, a native pony.

As if some devilish infection pervaded the atmosphere, one of our horses, a *kiuse*, took a fit of "bucking" soon after we left, and was particular to select the most dangerous portions of the road for the display of his skill in that line. *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 301.

**Knee high to a Mosquito.** A common hyperbolical expression to denote diminutive stature; as, "I knew him before he was *knee high to a mosquito*." In Maryland, it is "*knee high to a grasshopper*." In New England, "*knee high to a toad*." The latest expression is "*knee high to a chaw of tobacco*."

**Knicker or Nicker.** (Dutch, *knikker*.) A boy's clay marble; a common term in New York. It is also used in England, being defined by Halliwell, "a little ball of clay or earth baked hard and oiled over, for boys to play at *nickers*."

**Knickerbocker.** 1. A descendant of one of the old Dutch families of New York City.

The old church in Nassau Street (New York) was dedicated in 1732. . . . The congregation was composed of the wealthiest and most prominent people of Manhattan Island, — the veritable *Knickerbockers*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 6, 1877.

2. A boy's garment.

**Knicknackery or Nicknackery.** A knick-knack.

There is one branch of trade which has not suffered in common with other things, and that is the sale of costly *knicknackeries*, especially women's superlative gear. — *New York Tribune*.

**Knob.** In Kentucky, round hills or knolls are called *knobs*. These hills are formed by the weathering of the soft sandstones and shales composing them. The approach to this "*knob* formation" from the rich land is very characteristic, and the sudden change in soil is accompanied by a corresponding change in the inhabitants. The word, however, has extended its meaning, and in Kentucky, as well as other parts of the West, is used simply for hill. In Maryland and Virginia, the term *knob* is applied to the highest peaks of the Blue Ridge and other irregular mountains.

Approaching Galena, the country becomes still more broken and rocky, until at last a few short hills, here called *knobs*, indicate our approach to Fever River. *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 303.

**Knobby.** 1. Hilly. The prairie of south-western Missouri is characterized by what are called *knobs* or mounds; they are somewhat variable in size and form, but usually present the appearance of a truncated cone. — *Swallow's Geology of Missouri*, p. 204.

2. Fine; capital; "bully." New York. See *Nobby*.

**Knobite.** A dweller in the "knob" formation of Kentucky.

**Knob-Lick.** The base of the "knobs" contains shales, which furnish alum and other salts, forming "licks," to which wild and domestic animals resort. One of these *knob licks* in Mercer county, Kentucky, is a very remarkable spot, and was in former times a favorite resort of the buffaloes. Many acres are entirely devoid of vegetation, and clay banks in every possible shape occupy the surface.

**To knock about.** To go or saunter about. An English phrase, though not in the dictionaries.

A long course of solicitation, haunting public offices, and *knocking about town*, had taught him [General Gates], it was said, how to wheedle, and flatter, and accommodate himself to the humors of others. — *Irving, Life of Washington*, Vol. I. p. 423.

**Knock-down and Drag-out.** A fight carried to extremities.

There are good, quiet, easy people in the world who scarcely open their lips or raise their fingers, lest Dogberry So-and-so across the way might take it in high dudgeon, and forthwith demand an explanation or a *knock-down and drag-out*. *New York Spirit of the Times*, Sept. 30, 1848.

Mike professed to be considerable of a fighter, and, in a regular *knock-down and drag-out* row, was hard to beat. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 30.

**To knock down.** 1. To embezzle; to appropriate the property of another.

2. To assign to a bidder at an auction by a blow on the counter; as, "The tall copy of Shakspeare was *knocked down* to Mr. Jones."

**Knocked into a Cocked Hat.** Knocked out of shape, spoiled, ruined. The allusion or metaphor seems to be that of the hat of some unlucky wight, which, by a violent blow, has been knocked into a sort of flattened, three-cornered shape, resembling an old-fashioned, cocked hat.

A tall, slatternly-looking woman, wearing a dingy old silk bonnet, which was *knocked into a cocked hat*, appeared yesterday before the Recorder. — *New Orleans Picayune*.

One of the omnibuses here run full tilt against a cart, and *knocked* every thing into a kind of *cocked hat*. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

At a Repeal meeting in New York, Mr. Locke was proceeding to speak of the influence this party would have, when he was interrupted by a gang of rowdies, who, with the design of disturbing the meeting, cried out, "Three cheers for O'Connell — three cheers for Repeal — and three groans for Slavery!" The six cheers for O'Connell and Repeal were given; but, by the time they came to the groans for Slavery, they found themselves all *knocked into a cocked hat*. — *New York paper*.

Between three and four thousand persons were assembled at the Broadway Tabernacle the other evening to hear a temperance lecture from the talented Mr. Gough. There were "long-robed doctors" enough to have constituted a standing army. The Rev. Dr. —, who opened the meeting with prayer, got through in the very short space of three-quarters of an hour; but it was full long enough to *knock* the spirit of the meeting into a *cocked hat*. — *New York Tribune*.

**Knock-kneed.** One whose knees are so close that they "interfere" in walking. It is doubtless an English expression, though not in the dictionaries.

Risingh, who succeeded to the command of New Sweden, looms largely in ancient records as a gigantic Swede, who, had he not been *knock-kneed* and splay-footed, might have served for the model of a Samson. — *Knickerbocker, New York*.

**To knock off.** To dock off; deduct. Vulgar.

**To knock round.** To go about carelessly; to wander or saunter about, i. e. "to knock about."

I'm going to New York and Boston, and all about thar, and spend the summer until pickin' time, *knockin' round* in them big cities, 'mong them people what's so monstrous smart, and religious, and refined, and see if I can't pick up some ideas worth rememberin'. — *Major Jones's Sketches*.

The Indian will lose his hair, if he and his band *knock round* here too often. *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*.

**Know-Nothings.** A new and more proscriptive party of "Native Americans," which originated in the year 1853. The "New York Times" gives the following account of the origin of the name: "The *Know-Nothing* party, it is pretty generally known, was first formed by a person of some notoriety in New York, who called himself 'Ned Buntline.' 'Ned' was once a midshipman in the United States



Navy, but left the service and commenced the business of Americanism on a large scale, by founding a secret political order, of so exclusive a character that none were to be admitted as members whose grandfathers were not natives of the country. It is a difficult matter, in a country like the United States, where free inquiry is so common, to keep any thing secret ; and Ned instructed his proselytes and acolytes to reply to all questions in respect to the movements of the new party, 'I don't know.' So they were at first called 'Don't-knows,' and then '*Know-Nothings*,' by outsiders, who knew nothing more of them than that they invariably replied, 'I don't know,' to all questions." The following articles of their "platform" or set of principles, according to the "*American Crusader*," one of the leading newspapers of the party, contain the gist of the whole : —

1. Repeal of all naturalization laws.
2. None but native Americans for office.
3. A pure American common school system.
4. War to the hilt on Romanism.

These were the principles of the ultra men of the party. In Louisiana and other parts, they were disposed to be more liberal towards the Roman Catholics, admitting such as were born in the United States. There was also a difference of opinion regarding slavery, and upon the latter issue the party became divided into North and South Americans. See also *Sam* and *Hindoos*.

**Know-Nothingism.** The doctrines of the Know-Nothings.

The Know-Nothings have had their day, and very soon there will be nothing left of them but their name. The earth hath bubbles, and *Know-Nothingism* was one of them.—*New York Times*.

**Knuck.** 1. A name applied to Canadians by the people on the frontier of Canada. See *Connucks*. Also same in Addenda.

2. The generic slang term for a *thief*. ? English *gonnoff*.

**Koncks** or **Conks.** Wreckers are so called, familiarly, at Key West; and the place they inhabit is called Koncktown. See *Conck*.

**Koniacker.** A counterfeiter. This word is undoubtedly American, as nearly all words relating to the issue and circulation of spurious paper money.

**Kool Blaa.** (Cut cabbage.) A contraction for the Dutch *Kool-salade*, i. e. Cabbage salad. Many persons who affect accuracy, but do not know the origin of the term, pronounce the first syllable as if it were the English word *cold*. Some even write it so. See *Hot Slaw*.

**Kooyah Root, or Kooyahs.** A term applied by the Indians in Oregon to a root used by them in making a bread called *supale*. The plant yielding the root is *Valeriana officinalis* or *V. Edulis*, probably the same as that sometimes written Kous. It is frequently called Tobacco Root. It should be baked in the ground two days, to deprive it of poisonous properties. The bread has an offensive taste to those not familiarized to it.

**Kriss-Kringle.** (Germ. *Christ Kindlein*.) The infant Christ. The German for child is *kind*, of which the diminutive is *kindlein* or *kindchen*. This, in some parts of Germany and in Pennsylvania, has been formed into *kindel*, and the children are promised gifts at Christmas from "*Christ kindel*." The corruption of this last into *Kriss-Kringle*, as a name for the babe of Bethlehem, is neither English nor bad German, but a mere jargon or gibberish of the vilest kind.

**Ku-Klux, Ku-Klux-Klan.** Originally a secret political organization in some of the Southern States, but which subsequently laid aside all connection with politics, and resorted to murder to carry out their purposes.

For Seymour understands our plan,  
He'll make a speech to the *Ku-Klux-Klan*;  
Says he: "My friends, I'm just your man,  
And Blair will lead your army."  
*Ballad, General Boom of the C. S. A.*

## L.

**Labrador Tea.** (*Ledum palustre* and *L. latifolium*.) A plant used far in the North-west as a substitute for tea.

There is a certain herb lately found in this Province [Massachusetts], which begins already to take place in the room of Green and Bohea Tea, which is said to be of a very salutary Nature, as well as a more agreeable Flavour, — it is called *Labrador*. — *Com. Courant*, Nov. 16, 1767, from a Boston paper of November 2.

The Hiperion or *Labrador Tea* is much esteemed, and by great numbers vastly preferred to the poisonous Bohea. — *Newport Mercury*, Dec., 1767.

The *Labrador Tea Plant* springs up among the rich and thick moss that everywhere covers the country of Labrador. I was informed that the fishermen and Indians use it instead of tea. — *Audubon, Ornith. Biog.*, Vol. II. p. 533.

**Lacrosse.** This game was adopted as the national game of Canada, on the 1st of July, 1859. Attempts have been made to claim it as of Irish, Scotch, or other than Indian origin; but there is no question that it is a game of the North American Indians, being practised by the Sacs, Sioux, Ojibways, Dacotahs, Iroquois, Algonkins,

Choctaws, Cherokees, Creeks, &c. It consists in throwing a ball with a stick, three or four feet in length, bent on one end, to a goal. The ball is started in the centre of the field, when each party engaged in the play endeavors to carry or throw it through the goal of the opponent.

Charlevoix, Catlin, and Basil Hall, who witnessed the game among the Indians, describe it at length. Twelve players constitute a field in a match.

The origin of the name *lacrosse* is attributed to Charlevoix, who, when ascending the St. Lawrence, at some point between Quebec and Three Rivers, saw the game, which he called "*le jeu de la crosse*," played by the Algonkins with the present stick. The game is described at length in an article on Canadian sports in "*Scribner's Monthly*" for August, 1877.

**Ladies' Tresses.** (*Neottia tortillis*.) The popular name for an herb, so called from the spiral arrangement of its flowers resembling curls.

**Lafayette Fish.** (*Leiostomus obliquus*.) A delicious sea-fish, which appears in the summer in great abundance at Cape Island on the Jersey coast, and is hence called the Cape May Goody. The name *Lafayette fish*, by which it is known in New York and its vicinity, was given it on account of its appearance one summer coinciding with the last visit of General Lafayette to America. — *Professor S. F. Baird*.

**Lager-Beer.** (Germ. *Lager-Bier*, i. e. Stock-beer.) Sometimes contracted into *lager*. A kind of small beer introduced a few years ago into the American cities by the Germans, and now much in vogue among all classes.

**Lagniappe.** Something over and above. Louisiana. See *Brotus*.

**Lagoons.** The sounds or long channels between the islands and the main, along the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Lake Lawyer.** (Genus *Amia*. Linnaeus.) The Western Mud-fish. It is found in Lakes Erie and Ontario, where it is known by the name of Dog-fish. Dr. Kirtland says, it is also called the *lake lawyer* from its "ferocious looks and voracious habits."

**To lam.** (Belg. *lamen*.) To beat soundly; to drub. Colloquial in some of the Northern States. It is provincial in Yorkshire, England. — *Willan's Glossary*.

If Millwood were here, dash my wig.

Quoth he, I would beat her and *lam* her weel. — *Rejected Addresses*.

The gentleman, who fondly imagined himself a bat, stood his ground like a regular built chicken, and "went in" a number of times; but his adversary, a

stalwart butcher, was too much used to "lam" to be vanquished, and his superior prowess was soon made manifest by the commercial gentleman's face. — *New York Spirit of the Times*.

Cooney would pitch into a private dispute, when he didn't care a durn cent which walloped the other, and lam them both. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

If I had got a hold of him, I 'd a lammed him worse than the devil beatin' tan bark, I know. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 193.

**Lamantin.** See *Manatee*.

**To lambaste.** To beat, thresh, lam.

**Lambasting.** A beating.

**Lamb-Kill.** Massachusetts. See *Calf-Kill* and *Kill-Lamb*.

**Lamb's Quarter.** The popular name of an herb (*Chenopodium album*) at the South. — *Williams's Florida*.

**Lame Duck.** A stock-jobber who has failed, or one unable to meet his engagements. A *Dead Duck* is one absolutely bankrupt. If he continues to operate in stocks, it is only as a curb-stone broker. These terms are as old as the "London Stock Exchange."

On the southern corner of the Exchange stand half a score of excited faces. These are the famous Third Board of Brokers, — mostly *lame ducks*, who have been disabled for life in their passage through the more secret operations of the regular Board upstairs, and greenhorns who are very anxious to come in and be caught. — *New York in Slices, Wall Street*.

**Land-Crab.** A landsman.

We "Old Whales" [seamen] are not supposed by some *land-crabs* to have much of a taste for the feathery tribe "done up brown" [i. e. roasted fowls]. — *H. N. Palladium, Lett. from Ship Cumberland, 1861*.

**Land-Grant.** A grant of land. Such grants are usually made by the U. S. government to aid in the construction of railways.

**Land Office.** An office or place in which the sale and management of the public lands are conducted. — *Worcester*. These offices are all under the control of the *General Land Office* at Washington, which forms one of the bureaus of the Department of the Interior.

**Land of Steady Habits.** A term often applied to the State of Connecticut, on account of the staid deportment and excellent morals of the people.

**Landscapist.** A drawer of landscapes. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Land Scrip.** A certificate or certificates that the purchase-money for a certain portion of land has been paid to the officer entitled to receive it. See *Land Warrant*.

The surveyors are authorized and directed, upon the application of any holder of *land scrip*, to survey at the expense of the government a sufficient quantity of vacant land to satisfy such legal claims of all holders of *land scrip* sold by this government. — *Laws of Texas*.

**Land-Shark.** 1. One who, as boarding-house keeper, preys upon sailors.

2. A note-shaver. A man who takes advantage of one's pecuniary necessities, by charging a high rate of interest when discounting notes of hand.

**Land's Sake.** "*For the land's sake!*" An expression of surprise.

"*For the land's sake*, Melissy, you don't tell me Betsy's got a beau! I thought that feller kind o' hangin' round the old gal had a sneaking notion after her." — *Humorous Tales*.

**Land Warrant.** An instrument or writing issued by the Secretary of the General Land Office, authorizing a person to locate or take up a tract of new or uncultivated land.

**Lane.** In the Carolinas, all roads with fences on each side are called *lanes*.

**Lap-Tea.** Where the guests are too many to sit at table. — *Lowell*.

**Lariat.** (Span. *la reata*.) A rope made with thongs of raw-hide twisted or braided, and sometimes of sea-grass, used for catching and picketing wild horses or cattle. Some writers incorrectly say a *riata*. It is also called a *lasso*.

The greatest display of skill and agility of the arrieros consists in their dexterous use of the lazo or lariat. — *Gregg's Commerce of the Prairies*.

If the horse manifested the least restiveness, Beattie would worry him with the lariat so as almost to throw him on the ground. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

The lariat [of the Californian boy] darted from his hand with the force and precision of a rifle-ball, and rested on the neck of the fugitive horse. — *Emory's New Mexico and California*, p. 97.

We cooked supper, and at dark picketed the animals round the camp, their lariats, or skin-ropes, being attached to pegs driven in the ground. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 212.

**To lariat.** To secure a horse or mule with a lariat, or rope, which is fastened to a stake driven in the ground, to the extent of which rope he is permitted to graze.

Every animal should be lariatied out for grazing. The best arrangement is a very strong leather head-stall, to the lower part of which, well under the chin, is firmly secured an iron ring. — *Dodge, Plains of the Great West*, p. 70.

**Lasso.** (Span. *lazo*, noose.) A long rope or cord, often made of raw-hide, with a noose, for the purpose of catching wild horses or buffaloes on the Western prairies. It is also used by the muleteers for catching their mules. See *Lariat*.

**To lasso.** The act of throwing the lasso or rope on the head of a horse, mule, or other animal.

And ever after, on that fatal day  
That Friar Pedro rode abroad *lassoing*,  
A ghostly couple came and went away  
With savage whoop and heathenish hallooing,  
Which brought discredit on San Luis Rey.

*Bret Harte, Friar Pedro's Ride.*

**Last of Pea-Time.** To be hard up. "To look like the last of pea-time" is to have a forlorn appearance.

**Latter-Day Saints.** Mormons; so styled by themselves. See *Mormons*.

Joseph Smith and an associate were constituted apostles to preach the gospel [i. e. the Book of Mormon] and to establish among the nations the church of Jesus Christ of the *Latter-day Saints*. — *Stansbury's Salt Lake Exp.*, p. 135.

**Lathy.** Thin, slender, like a lath.

**Laurel.** See *Ivy*.

**Laurelistic.** Laureate; laurelled.

He took an active and honorable part in that fearful fight, which will long be considered as one of the most *laurelistic* feats of our gallant navy. — *The Independent*, May 1, 1862.

**Lave.** (French, *lève*.) Get up! A term in common use among the hunters and mountaineers of the Western prairies and Rocky Mountains.

"*Lave*, ho! *Lave*! Prairies on fire! Quick, — catch up! catch up!" This startling announcement instantly brought every man to his feet. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 34.

**Law Day.** The day on which a magistrate holds court at a country tavern. Common in thinly settled districts in the West.

**Lawing.** Going to law. "I got my debt of him by *lawing*." Western.

**Laws, Laws-a-me!** Lord have mercy on me!

He's full of the Old Scratch, but *laws-a-me!* he's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 19.

**Law sakes.** *Law sakes alive!* i. e. for the Lord's sake! an expression denoting surprise or astonishment.

*Law sakes alive*, man! Make a question between our nation and England about fifty deserters! — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 23.

**Law suds!** Lord save us!

**Lawyer.** 1. (*Himantopus nigricollis*.) The black-necked Stilt; a small bird which lives on our shores, known also by the names of

Tilt and Longshanks. On the New Jersey coast, it is sometimes called *lawyer*, on account of its "long bill."

2. (Genus *Lota*.) A fish found in the river St. Lawrence. Mr. Hammond, in his "Wild Northern Scenes," thus speaks of it:—

There were taken in the net pickerel, white fish, bass, and pike by the dozen; and, what was a stranger to me, a queer-looking specimen of the piscatory tribe, half bull-head and half eel, with a cross of the lizard.

"What on earth is that?" said I to the fisherman.

"That," said he, "is a species of ling; which we call in these parts a *lawyer*."

"A *lawyer*!" said I; "why, pray?"

"I don't know," he replied, "unless it's because he ain't of much use, and the slipp'riest fish that swims."—p. 45.

**Lay.** 1. Terms or conditions of a bargain; price. Ex.: "I bought the articles at a good *lay*;" "He bought his goods on the same *lay* that I did mine." A low word, used in New England.—*Pickering*. Probably a contraction for *outlay*, i. e. expenditure.

2. The word is also used colloquially in New York and New England, in relation to labor or contracts performed upon shares; as, when a man ships for a whaling voyage, he agrees for a certain *lay*, i. e. a share of the proceeds of the voyage.

He took in his fish at such a *lay* that he made a good profit on them.—*Peter Gott, the Fisherman*.

3. Situation; condition; relative aspect. "The *lay* of the land," the situation of affairs. Common use. In England, it would seem, "lie" is employed.

I have just had an opportunity of conversing with a friend . . . from Italy and from . . . opportunities of knowing the *lie* of the land there.—*Letter from European Times, London, May, 1862*.

**To lay, for to lie.** A vulgar error, equally common in England and in the United States. Thus we often hear and also see in print such phrases as, "He *laid* down," for he lay down to sleep; "That bed has been *laid* in," for has been lain in; "The land *lays* well," for lies well; it "*lays* due north," for lies, &c.

In the following extract, English and German grammar are both set at naught:—

Lager beer derives its name from the long time it is allowed to *lay* (*lager*) in vats or casks, in cool cellars, previous to consumption.—*Wells, Principles and Applications of Chemistry*, p. 436.

**To lay on thick.** To flatter.

**Lay-out.** In the Far West, a *lay-out* is any proposed enterprise, from organizing a State to digging out a prairie-dog.

One cannot succeed without getting additional claims (to mines), so as to justify shafts or tunnels; and his necessities are appreciated by the other owners,

who get up a most expensive *lay-out* for him. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 219.

**To lay out.** 1. To intend to do any thing or to go anywhere; as, "I *lay out* to go to New York to-morrow."

We was a *layin' out* to carry them half a barrel of pork; and I made a big jar of butter and sold it, and got the money for it, five dollars. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 206.

2. "To lay out" is the process to which deceased persons are subjected before burial; figuratively, it is applied to persons made politically dead.

A Detroit man who failed to get a bill through Congress, alluding to that body, says: "Well, they *laid me out*, but I'll be even with them yet. I've got a chattel mortgage on one of our country papers, and I'll go home and tell the editor he's got to bust into that crowd about four columns a week, or I'll foreclose on him in a minit."

**Leader.** A length of finely twisted hair, gut, or grass, for attaching an angler's hook to the line; a bottom. Called also a Snell.

**Lean-to.** A pent-house; an addition made to a house behind, or at the end of it, chiefly for domestic offices, of one story or more, lower than the main building, and the roof of it leaning against the wall of the house. — *Forby's Norfolk Glossary*. The word is used in New England, where it is usually pronounced *linter*. — *Pickering*.

Many of the domestic offices of the household were performed upon the stoop or *lean-to*, commonly called *linter*. — *Brooke, Eastford*.

**Leastways.** At least.

**Leather-Wood.** (*Dirca palustris*.) A small shrub with flexible branches and a tough, leathery bark, which grows in woods in the Northern States. It is also called Moose-wood; and, in New England, Wicopy.

*Wig-bi*, stringy bark. — *Abenaki Spelling-book* (1830). Bark-cord, rather Abn. *wighebimesi*, bois blanc (arbre) *wighebi*, lien de bois blanc: pl. — *biar* (cf. *kankeskighebi*, lien de cèdre. Rafinesque (Med. Flora, I., 158) gives, among vulgar names of *D. palustris*, "rope-bark, bois de plomb, in Canada." "The bark is very tough, can hardly be broken, and, torn in long strips, is used yet in many parts for ropes, a practice borrowed from the Indian tribes," p. 159. But it is plain that the wigebi of Rasles was made from the Bois Blanc, or Bass Wood. See *Charlevoix, Nouvelle France*, Vol. III. p. 162.

**To leave out in the Cold.** To shut out; to neglect.

The "Assents" continue to come in freely at the Erie Railroad office; and the appearances are that at the closing of the books . . . there will be few shares or bonds *left out in the cold*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July, 1861.



**Leggings.** (Commonly written and pronounced *leggings*.) Indian wrappers for the legs; also worn by the white hunters and trappers of the West, both on account of the mud and to save the pantaloons from the sweat of the horse. By some they are called Wrappers.

How piquantly do these trim and beaded *leggings* peep from under that simple dress of black, as its tall, nut-brown wearer moves through the graceful mazes of the dance! — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, p. 239.

The wolf springs with fearful growl towards Stemaw, who slightly wounds him with his axe, as he jumps backwards just in time to save himself from the infuriated animal, which catches in its fangs the flap of his *leggin*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Leg to stand on.** A person without a *leg to stand on* would, of course, have nothing to support him. The expression is applied, figuratively, to one without support in an argument.

Ex-Governor Clifford, . . . getting all the points involved, prepared the evidence so skilfully that the opponents had *not a leg to stand on* at the trial. — *Boston Journal*, April 25, 1877.

**Leg of the Law**, also *Limb of the Law*. A lawyer.

A prominent saloon-keeper was hauled into court by a well-known *leg of the law*, who made \$3.00 out of him. — *Bridgeport, Conn., Standard*.

**Legislative.** The Legislature. This, like the term "executive," is used in America as a noun; but it is by no means so common as that word. — *Pickering*

**Leg-Stretcher.** It is said that drams are now called "*leg-stretchers*" in Vermont. It is an every-day occurrence there for passengers in the stage-coaches, while the latter are waiting for the mails, to say, "I guess I'll get out and stretch my legs," which always ends in their having a drink somewhere in the hotel.

**Lengthy.** Having length, long, not brief; tiresomely long. Applied often to dissertations or discourses; as, "*a lengthy oration*," "*a lengthy speech*." — *Worcester*.

This word was once very common among us, both in writing and in the language of conversation; but it has been so much ridiculed by Americans as well as Englishmen that in writing it is now generally avoided. Mr. Webster has admitted it into his Dictionary; but (as need hardly be remarked) it is not in any of the English ones. It is applied by us, as Mr. Webster justly observes, chiefly to writings or discourses. Thus we say, a *lengthy* pamphlet, a *lengthy* sermon, &c. The English would say, a *long* or (in the more familiar style) a *longish* sermon. It may be here remarked, by the way, that they make much more use of the termination *ish* than we do; but this is only in the language of conversation. — *Pickering*.

Mr. Pickering has many other interesting remarks on this word, for which I refer the reader to his work. The word has been gradually forcing its way into general use since the time in which he wrote; and that, too, in England as well as in America. Thus, Mr. Rush, in relating a conversation which he had in London, observes: "Lord Harrowby spoke of words that had obtained a sanction in the United States, in the condemnation of which he could not join; as, for example, *lengthy*, which imported, he said, what was tedious as well as long, — an idea that no other English word seemed to convey as well." — *Residence in London*, p. 294.

We have given back to England the excellent adjective *lengthy*, formed honestly like *earthy*, *drouthy*, and others, thus enabling their journalists to characterize our President's messages by a word civilly compromising between long and tedious, so as not to endanger the peace of the two countries by wounding our national sensitiveness to British criticism. — *Lowell, Int. to Biglow Papers*.

A writer in the "Boston Daily Advertiser," under the signature of "W. X.," says that he has met with the word *lengthy* in the "London Times," the "Liverpool Chronicle," "Blackwood's Magazine," the "Saturday Magazine," the "British Critic," "Quarterly Review," "Monthly Review," "Eclectic Review," "Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Reviews," in the writings of Dr. Dibdin, Bishop Jebb, Lord Byron, Coleridge, &c. Granby, an English author, uses the word *lengthiness*, which is a regularly formed noun from *lengthy*. Campbell uses the adverb *lengthily*. In his "Letters from the South," he says: —

I could discourse *lengthily* on the names of Jugurtha, Juba, Syphax, &c.

And again: —

The hair of the head is bound *lengthily* behind.

Here follow a few examples from English and American writers, out of the many that present themselves: —

Murray has sent, or will send, a double copy of the "Bride" and "Giaour;" in the last one some *lengthy* additions; pray accept them according to the old custom. *Lord Byron's Letter to Dr. Clarke*, Dec. 13, 1813.

All this excitement was created by two *lengthy* paragraphs in the Times. — *London Athenæum*, July 12, 1844, p. 697.

This man had timely warning from his God  
To build a spacious ark of Gopher-wood;  
He, moved through fear and faith, the structure rears,  
Which cost the arduous task of six score years.  
While Noah thus employed this *lengthy* space, &c.

*Noah's Flood: a Poem by Jos. Vail, New London, 1796.*

Chalmers's "Political Annals," in treating of South Carolina, is by no means as *lengthy* as Mr. Hewitt's History. — *Drayton's South Carolina*.

I did not mean to have been so *lengthy* when I began. — *Jefferson's Writings*.

I forget whether Mr. Sibthorpe has mentioned, in any of his numerous and *lengthy* epistles, this circumstance. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**Lengthily.** In a *lengthy* manner. Webster credits this word to Jefferson.

In the report of a convention of "Spiritualists" at Farmington, Michigan, it is said that —

Mr. Simmons followed, addressing the convention quite *lengthily*. — *Spiritual Telegraph*.

**Let-down.** A descent; fall; diminution in price, &c.

Within the last few days, there has been a shocking *let-down* among the fancies [stocks]. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Let her rip,** "*let her went*." The expression most likely had its origin in *steamboating*.

Don't fire, says Joe, it ain't no use,  
That 's Deacon Peleg's tame wil'-goose;  
Says Isrel, "I don't care a cent.  
I've sighted, an' I'll *let her went*. — *Lowell, Biglow Papers*.

**To let on.** To mention: to disclose; to betray a knowledge or consciousness of any thing. "He never *let on*," i. e. he never told me. This expression is often heard among the illiterate, and is not confined to any particular section of the United States. It is also used in the north of England and in Scotland.

'Tis like I may, — but *let na on* what 's past  
'Tween you and me, else fear a kittle cast.

*Ramsay, The Gentle Shepherd.*

The tears were runnin' out of my eyes; but I didn't want to *let on*, for fear it would make her feel bad. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 84.

**To let out.** To begin a story or narrative. A Western expression.

Tom squared himself for a yarn, wet his lips with a little corn juice, took a small strip of Missouri weed, and *let out*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**To let slide.** To let go; as, "That fish you have hooked is not fit to eat: *let him slide*."

During a debate in Congress, General Banks said, "*Let the Union slide*," a sentiment for which he was reproached. Mr. Lowell gives many examples of the early use of the expression. He finds "*let the world slide*" in Heywood's "Edward IV.;" and in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Wit without Money" Valentine says, —

Will you go drink,  
And *let the world slide*.

We also find in Gower very early authority for the same:—

The highe creator of thinges,  
Which is the king of all kinges,  
Full many wonder worldes chaunce  
*Let slide* under his sufferance.

*Confessio Amantis* (ed. Pauli), Vol. III. p. 61.

In bad places, you may fasten a rope to the axle of the wagon, and, passing the end round a tree, you may *let her slide*. — *F. Marryat, California*.

In a debate in Congress on a bill providing for the establishment of an overland mail to California, the annual cost of which was estimated at half a million of dollars, Mr. Iverson said:—

If California was going to cost the Union so much, it would be better to *let California slide*.

Sal Stebbins married a feller blind in one eye and deaf in one ear; so I thought if she was a mind to take such a chap, I'd better *let her slide*. — *Traits of American Humor*.

"Come, Sol, let's have a game of poker."

"Oh, *let the poker slide*, Judge," replied Sol; "some other time when I want a stake, I'll make a call." — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 221.

**Let-up.** A *let-up* is a release; a relief, as when a stringency in the money-market disappears. An expression borrowed from pugilists.

There was no *let-up* in the stock market to-day, and the differences paid on the maturing contracts were very large. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Wherever the slave-traders resort, the name of our New York Marshal is heartily cursed. He has been threatened, and invited to name the terms upon which he would *let up* these people. His terms are a short shrift and a long rope. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 18, 1861.

To *let up* is to release; to let go.

**Levee.** 1. (Fr. *levée*.) An embankment on the side of a river, to confine it within its natural channel. The lower part of Louisiana, which has been formed by encroachments upon the sea, is subject to be inundated by the Mississippi and its various branches, for a distance of more than three hundred miles. In order to protect the rich lands on these rivers, mounds are thrown up, of clay, cypress-logs, and green turf, sometimes to the height of fifteen feet, with a breadth of thirty feet at the base. These, in the language of that part of the country, are called *levees*. They extend for hundreds of miles; and, when the rivers are full, cultivated fields, covered with rich crops and studded with villages, are seen lying far below the river courses. — *Encyclopædia Americana*.

The great feature of New Orleans is the *Levee*. Extending for about five miles in length, and an average of two hundred feet in width, on the west bank of this river, which here runs to the north-east, it is made the great depot, not only for the products of the vast country bordering on the Mississippi and its

navigable tributaries, but also of every foreign port, by means of about five hundred steamboats on the one hand, and every variety of sea-craft on the other which are at all times to be seen in great numbers along the entire length, discharging and receiving their cargoes. — *Cor. of N. Y. Tribune.*

2. (Fr. *lever*.) The time of rising; the concourse of persons who visit a prince or great personage in the morning. — *Johnson.*

Such as are troubled with the disease of *levee*-hunting, and are forced to seek their bread every morning at the chamber doors of great men. — *Addison, Spectator*, No. 547.

This word has been curiously perverted by us from its original signification, so as to mean an *evening* (!) party or assembly at the house of a great or wealthy person; as, "the President's *levee*."

**Leveeing.** Constructing levees on a river's bank.

If we cannot protect ourselves from overflow, these lands will be almost worthless, and the slaves on them must find a tillable soil in the West, our hill lands being now fully occupied. How are we to be protected? By *leveeing*. — *De Bow's Review*, Oct., 1858.

**Level.** "Your head's *level*;" i. e., your judgment is good.

**Level Best.** To do one's "*level best*" is to do his utmost possible, to go to the full extent of his ability.

How comes it that the friends of F. A. Marcy did their *level best* in their wards to secure the defeat of Mr. Francy? — *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 4, 1869.

**Lever Wood.** A name given to the *Ostrya Virginica* (*Carpinus ostrya*, Lam.), iron-wood or hop-hornbeam, in some parts of New England. *Michaux, N. Am. Sylva* (ed. 1859), III. p. 28.

**Levy.** Elevenpence. In the State of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, the Spanish real, or eighth part of a dollar, or twelve and a half cents. Sometimes called an *elevenpenny bit*. See *Federal Currency and Bit*.

**Liberty Cap.** A peaked cap placed on the head of the goddess of Liberty or on liberty poles. The *pileus*, a half-egg-shaped cap, became the badge of liberty, because it was given to a Roman slave at his manumission, and was not permitted to be worn except by freedmen. Livy (24. 32) has the phrase "*servos ad pileum vocare*," "to summon slaves to freedom," i. e. to call them to assume the cap. The *pileus* was borne aloft on a staff or pike, as a banner or standard, by commanders who sought the aid of the slaves by the promise of freedom. Hence the liberty *pole* and *cap*.

Yes, France is free! O glorious France, that has burst out so: into universal sound and smoke; and attained—the Phrygian *Cap of Liberty*! — *Carlyle's French Revol.*, B. viii. ch. 12.

**Liberty Pole.** A tall pole, sometimes constructed of several pieces of timber like a ship's mast, and surmounted by a "liberty cap."

Many of these poles are erected in different parts of American cities.

**Lick or Salt Lick.** A salt spring is called a *lick*, from the earth about it being furrowed out in a most curious manner by the buffalo and deer, which *lick* the earth on account of the saline particles with which it is impregnated. — *Imlay's Topogr. Description of the Western Territory*.

A *lick* does not necessarily imply the presence of a spring: the decomposition of sulphurets by atmospheric agency often makes a "*lick*" on the face of a rocky cliff.

**Licks.** Strokes; and hence efforts, exertions. "To put in big *licks*" is to make great exertions, to work hard.

Molly war the most enticin', gizzard-ticklin', heart-distressin' feline creatur that ever made a fellar get owdacious; and I seed Tom Seller cavertin' round her, and puttin' in the *biggest kind a licks* in the way of courtin'. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 276.

At length I went to mining, put in my *biggest licks*,  
Went down upon the boulders just like a thousand bricks.

*Bryant's Comic Songs.*

**Lickety Split.** Very fast, headlong; synonymous with the equally elegant phrase "full chisel." "He went *lickety split* down hill." *Lickety cut* and *lickety liner* are also used.

**Lie.** A *lie out of whole cloth* is an utter falsehood.

In the second place, we are authorized by these gentlemen to say that the statement is in itself utterly false, — "*a lie*," as one of the commissioners wished us to say, "*out of whole cloth*." — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

**To lie around Loose.** To be out of place; to lounge, as a loafer. A phrase current for many years.

Had I suddenly found myself *lying round loose* in an unexpected place, I could not have been more astonished. — *The Congregationalist*, quot. from Rev. E. P. Tenney.

**To lie down.** To go to bed. In Tennessee, when a stranger is asked if he will retire for the night, the question is, "Will you *lie down*?"

**Lish or Lieves.** A corruption of lief or lieve; as, "I'd as *lieves* be seen as not."

**Life Everlasting.** See *Everlasting*.

**Lift.** 1. Used by the farmers in some parts of New England to signify a sort of gate without hinges. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*. This word is also used in some parts of England. Mr. Forby calls it "a sort of coarse, rough gate of sawn wood, not hung, but driven into

the ground by pointed stakes, like a hurdle, used for the same purposes of subdividing lands, stopping gaps in fences, &c., and deriving its name from the necessity of lifting it up for the purpose of passing through. In Suffolk, a *lift* differs from a gate, in having the projecting ends of the back and lower bar let into mortise-holes in the posts, into and out of which it must be *lifted*." — *Norfolk Glossary*.

2. A piece added to raise a shoe-heel.

**To lift one's Hair**, in the figurative language of the Western hunters, is to scalp him. See *To raise one's Hair*.

I saw at once that the Arapahoes were not after stealing cattle, but after *lifting hair*, and told the corporal so. — *Indian Report* for 1868.

**Lig.** A central shank of lead, around which one or more fish-hooks are fastened. New England.

**Light.** Weak. Said of a drink.

**Light out.** To run off; "to clear out."

**Light Bread.** Fermented bread of wheat flour; so called to distinguish it from corn bread. South and West.

**Light Wood.** Pine wood as opposed to slower burning wood, not on account of the lightness of the wood, but of the light afforded by it in burning, a matter of some importance where candles are not to be had.

Stranger, it's quite a long history, and I'll put on a fresh handful of *light wood* before I begin. — *Sinms, The Wigwam and Cabin*.

The inhabitants pick up knots of *light wood*, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk to a market. — *Westover Papers*, p. 27.

"Cæsar, fly round and get a fire."

"Massa! de *light wood* am done gone, sah."

"Gone too, then, is all chance for fire or food. For who ever heard of a nigger that could build a fire without *light wood*?" — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

**Like.** 1. For *as*. As in the phrase, "*like I do*," for as I do; "*like I did*." Common at the West and South; but never heard in New England. Not peculiar to America.

Each Indian carried a great square piece of whale's blubber, with a hole in the middle, through which they put their heads, *like* the Guachos do through their cloaks. — *Darwin's Journal of a Naturalist*, ch. 10.

As soon as the post-office was open, I looked over the miscellany *like I always do* afore I let anybody take it. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

2. For *as if* or *as though*. Common at the South and West.

The fever nager got fastened to me, and stuck jest *like a Comanche on a mustang*: the worse it jumps, the tighter he sticks, *as if* he was glued to the saddle, or *like* he was one of them rale half-horse and half-alligator fellows. — *New York Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

The old fellow drank of the brandy *like* he was used to it — *Southern Sketches*.

**Like a Book.** To know a person or thing *like a book* means to have studied him or it, to know him or it thoroughly.

He knew the woods *like a book*, and had got a pretty cute notion whar Bill Stone would bring up. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times, Western Tale*.

**Like all Stacia, Like Sam Hill.** Indefinite intensives.

**Likely.** That may be liked; that may please; handsome. In the United States, as a colloquial term, respectable; worthy of esteem; sensible. — *Worcester*.

Mr. Webster has the following remarks on this word: "This use of *likely* [i. e. in the sense of such as may be liked, pleasing] is not obsolete, nor is it vulgar. But the English and their descendants differ in the application. The English apply the word to external appearance, and with them *likely* is equivalent to *handsome, well-formed*; as, a *likely* man, a *likely* horse. In America, the word is usually applied to the endowments of the mind, or to pleasing accomplishments. With us, a *likely* man is a man of good character and talents, or of good disposition or accomplishments, that render him pleasing or respectable."

That the word, however, is also used here in its English sense, is evident from the following quotation: —

A gang of seventeen *likely* negro men, owned in the vicinity of Northampton, Virginia, made an attempt on Monday last to escape to New York. — *Norfolk (Va.) Herald*, Oct. 1, 1849.

**Lily-Pads.** Leaves of the water-lily.

**Limb.** Leg. This is one of the mock-modest expressions of which our people are overfond.

If we know any thing of English conversation or letters, we speedily find out, even if stone blind, that British men and women have both arms and legs. But in Canada a stranger who could not see would find it difficult to discover much about our conformation. He would learn that both sexes had *limbs* of some sort; but from any information which our language would give he could not tell whether their *limbs* were used to stand on or hold by. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, 1857.

This will do for a provincial place like Canada; but the universal Yankee nation does not restrict its application of the word to "humans," as appears from the following: —

Our exchanges bring us the intelligence of the death of Dan Rice's well-known horse "Excelsior." The poor brute, it would appear, fell from the stairs which he used to ascend in the ring, and, fracturing his *limb*, his death was rendered necessary. — *Pittsburg Chronicle*, June, 1858.

**Limits.** The extent of the liberties of a prison. — *Webster*. Called also *jail liberties*.



**Limsy.** Weak; flexible. New England. — *Webster*. Limp.

**Lincoln Skins.** Fractional currency. South Carolina.

**Line.** The route of a stage-coach, railroad, packet, or steamer.

**To line.** 1. To fish with a line. So *to seine*, i. e. to fish with a seine. I have never seen these words used except by Dr. J. V. C. Smith, in his "History of the Fishes of Massachusetts;" and for so interesting a book the Doctor is well entitled to the privilege of coining a phrase or two.

The squeteague is taken both by *lining* and *seining*, and because it makes such feeble exertion and resistance in being drawn in by a hook it has received the appellation of *Weak Fish*. — *Fishes of Massachusetts*.

2. To read line by line (or a couplet or verse) of a hymn. A custom in vogue in old times in New England.

**To line Bees** is to track wild bees to their homes in the woods. One who follows this occupation is called a *bee-hunter*.

At killing every wild animal of the woods or prairies, at fishing, or at *lining bees*, the best hunters acknowledged his supremacy. — *Kendall*.

I've hear'n tell of such doin's, but never see'd a *bee lined* in all my life, and have a desp'rate fancy for larnin' of all sorts, from 'rithmetic to preachin'. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**Liner.** The ships belonging to the regular lines of London, Liverpool, or Havre packets are called *liners*, to distinguish them from transient ships sailing to the same ports.

**Lines.** The reins, or that part of the bridle which extends from the horse's head to the hands of the driver or coachman. See *Ribbons*.

**Linguister.** (Pron. *linkister*.) A seaman's term for an interpreter; a linguist. Also, in New England, applied to a talkative person.

It is a damnable thing for a youngster, up here, to talk French. If it were on the Atlantic now, where a seafaring man has occasion sometimes to converse with a pilot or a *linguister* in that language, I should not think so much of it. — *Cooper, The Pathfinder*, p. 219.

**Linter.** A place or thing for feeding cattle. Cow or ox manger. Massachusetts.

**Liquor.** Many and very singular names have been given to the various compounds or mixtures of spirituous liquors and wines served up in fashionable bar-rooms in the United States. The following list is taken from two sources, one of them an advertisement, the other a book on mixed liquors. A very few of them are English.

Agent.	Bald Face.	Brandy Flip.
'Alf and 'Alf.	Black Jack.	" Smash.
Apple Jack.	Brandy Champerele.	" Straight.
" Toddy.	" Fix.	" Toddy.

Bust Head.	JULEPS, viz. :—	Spiced.
Bug Juice.	Arrack.	Sherry.
Corn Juice.	Brandy.	Sauterne.
Ching Ching.	Capped.	Vanilla.
Chain Lightning.	Claret.	Seventh Regiment.
Citronella Jam.	Fancy.	St. Charles.
COBBLERS, viz. :—	Gin.	Whiskey.
Arrack.	Mixed.	Ropee.
Brandy.	Peach.	Santa Cruz Sour.
Claret.	Pine Apple.	Sargent.
Champagne.	Mint.	Sherry and Egg.
Catawba.	Racehorse.	" Bitters.
Hock.	Strawberry.	Shandy Gaff.
Rochella.	Whiskey.	Shambro.
Peach.	I O U.	Silver Top.
Sherry.	Jewett's Fancy.	Sling Flip.
Sauterne.	Knickerbocker.	Snap Neck.
COCKTAILS, viz. :—	Lemonade.	Snifter.
Brandy.	Mead.	Smasher.
Champagne.	Moral Suasion.	Split Ticket.
Gin.	No Plus Ultra.	Stone Wall.
Japanese.	Orgeat Lemonade.	Stagger Juice.
Jersey.	Pine Top.	Switchel Flip.
Soda.	Porteree.	Tangle Leg.
Whiskey.	Phlegm Cutter.	Tip and Ty.
Deadbeat.	Port-Wine Sangaree.	Tippee na Pecco.
Deacon.	" Negua.	Toddy.
Exchange.	Polk and Dallas.	Tog.
Egg Flip.	Pousse Café.	Tom and Jerry.
" Nog.	PUNCHES, viz. :—	Turpentine Whiskey.
" Sour.	Arrack.	Vox Populi.
Floater.	Gin.	Veto.
Fiscal Agent.	Claret.	Virginia Fancy.
Fuel Oil.	Brandy.	Whiskey Flip.
Gin Straight.	Epicure's.	" Toddy.
" Fix.	Iced.	" Julep.
" Punch.	Milk.	" Fix.
" Sling.	Pig and Whistle.	" Punch.
" Sour.	Poor Man's.	" Smaash.
" Smaash.	Roman.	" Skin.
" Flip.	Rum.	" Sour.
" Rooster-Tail.	Soda.	" Straight.

In "Harper's Magazine" for December, 1876, Mr. Charles Nordhoff gives a list of California drinks, together with a "Toddy Time-Table" showing the hours when one in the habit of drinking should take his drams. Mr. N. says he "transcribed it from a neat, gilt-edge card, for the warning and instruction of Eastern toppers."

*Toddy Time-Table.*

6 A. M.	Eye-opener.	12 M.	Ante-Lunch.
7 "	Appetizer.	1 P. M.	Settler.
8 "	Digester.	2 "	A la Smythe.
9 "	Big Reposer.	3 "	Cobbler.
10 "	Refresher.	4 "	Social Drink.
11 "	Stimulant.	5 "	Invigorator.

6 P. M.	Solid Straight.	9 P. M.	Entire Act.
7 "	Chit-Chat.	10 "	Sparkler.
8 "	Fancy Smile.	11 "	Rouser.
12 P. M. Night Cap.			

Richmond, Va., has determined to drink itself out of debt. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to tax the retail dealers, and to levy a toll upon every swig that the arid Virginian takes to drive the thirst out of his constitution and by-laws. These are numerous, and are there reduced to a system. At early morn, the typical Richmond man takes an "eye-opener," then — as it is sometimes a little malarial down there — he takes an "anti-fog-matic," then he takes his regular "bitters," and so on during the day until the "settlers" and the "nightcap" of midnight. The ruling tariff in Richmond for mixed beverages is fifteen cents. The material taken "straight" or "reverend" or "barefooted" is ten cents. — *Baltimore Gazette*.

Young Jonathan, in liquorin' tastes,  
Has long dropped beer and mocked ale,  
For julep, sherry-cobbler,  
Gin-sling and brandy-cocktail;  
Gum-tickler and chain-lightning,  
Eye-brightener and leg-tangler  
And scores of other compounds known  
To each 'cute bar-room dangler.

Until at last his liquors he  
Has grown so fond of mixin',  
He scorns the charms of alcohol  
Without some artful fixin',  
Some sugary aid to make it sweet,  
Some acid smack to sour it,  
Till each drink needs two jugs at least,  
And two smart hands to pour it.

[London] *Punch* for July 26, 1862.

**In Liquor.** Intoxicated, drunk.

**To liquor or To liquor up.** To take a dram; or, as we more frequently say, to take a drink.

He was the first to break silence, and, jumping up, asked all to liquor before going to bed. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 31.

"The child must be named Margaret." "No! Mary," replied the father, "in honor of my esteemed wife. Besides, that's a Bible name, and we can't liquor up on Margaret." — *Margaret*, p. 89.

"I'll drink with you, and you drink with me; an' then we'll call it square."

"Agreed!" says I, "an' we licked round twiste: an' Jo and I shook hands, an' squared off all old accounts." — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 75.

"Liquor up, gentlemen." We bowed. "Let me introduce you to some of the most highly esteemed of our citizens." We bowed again. "Now then, Mister," turning to the man at the bar, "drinks round and cobblers at that." — *Notes on Canada and the North-western States*, *Blackwood's Mag.*, Sept., 1855.

Come in here to the hotel and let's liquor, for I am nation dry. I have let off so much steam, that the biler wants replenishin'. — *Sam Slick, Wise Sawz*, p. 24.

**To list.** To make a bed or raised terrace. Southern.

**Lister.** One who makes a list or roll. — *Webster*. This word is used in Connecticut, and is applied to those who make out lists or returns of cattle or other property. I have never heard the word used elsewhere.

**Listing.** Making beds; interchanging beds and alleys in cotton culture.

The next step is the *listing*, done with the hoe, and making the bed where the alleys were at the previous raising of the crop, and the alleys being made where the beds were before. — *N. Y. Tribune, United States Government Report from South Carolina, Feb., 1861.*

**Little End of the Horn.** "To come out at the little end of the horn," is said when a ridiculously small effect has been produced after great effort and much boasting, and when a person or thing makes a failure.

**Live forever.** The name of a fanatical sect in Kentucky whose principal article of faith was that those who had "faith" would never die. Whenever a member died, the answer to this very striking *argumentum ad hominem* was that he had not the "faith." The number, never very large, was reduced in 1850 to two, and one of these had left the sect, leaving but one "live forever."

**Live Horse.** In printers' parlance, work done over and above that included in the week's bill. See *Dead Horse*.

**Living-Room.** The sitting or common family room. In New England called the *keeping-room*, which see.

The cabin was furnished with two entrance doors. I rapped at one, and in a moment it opened, and Joe ushered me into the *living-room*. — *Gilmore, My Southern Friends*, p. 149.

**To live out.** To be out at service; to be a servant. New England.

She came to this city, and *lived out* as a cook. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Llano.** (Spanish.) The plains or prairies of Texas, New Mexico, and other States and Territories bordering on Mexico, are so called by the people residing there.

**Lo.** A term of recent origin, applied to an Indian, from the well-known lines of Pope's "Essay on Man."

*Lo*, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind  
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind.

**To load.** To load one's self with stock is to buy heavily. A Wall Street phrase. — *Medbery*.

**Loafer.** A vagabond; an idle loungeur. This peculiarly American word came to the United States probably from Mexico or Texas,

and has been gradually growing into extensive use during the last thirty years. It is the Span. *gallofero*, *gallofo*, and was applied in the first place to the vagrants of our large towns, in which sense it is equivalent to the *lazzarone* of Naples or the *lepero* of Mexico. It is now, however, frequently applied in conversation and in the newspapers to idlers in general, and seems to have lost somewhat of its original vulgarity. The Philadelphia "Vade Mecum" has the following remarks upon it:—

"This is a new word, and, as yet, being but a colt or a chrysalis, is regarded as a slang epithet. It is, however, a good word, one much needed in the language, and will, in time, establish itself in the most refined dictionaries. It will mount into good society, and be uttered by aristocratic lips; for it is the only word designating the most important species of the genus idler, — the most important, because the most annoying branch of that family.

"The *loafer* is not exclusively, as some suppose him, a ragged step-and-corner lounge, who sleeps in the sun, and 'hooks' sugar on the wharf. On the contrary, the propensity to loaf is confined to no rank in life; all conditions are, more or less, troubled with it. Like squinting, the king and the beggar may be equally afflicted with the imperfection. There be your well-dressed, moneyed *loafer*, as well as your *loafer* who is nightly taken by the watch.

"He is that kind of a man, who, having nothing to do, or being unwilling to do any thing, cannot keep his tediousness to himself, and therefore bestows it all upon others, not when they are at leisure for conversational recreation, but when business presses, and they would look black upon the intrusion of a sweetheart or a three-day wife. He is the drag-chain upon industry, and yet so far different from the drag-chain that he hitches to the wheel when the pull is up hill. Loving the excitement of busy scenes, yet too lazy to be an actor in them, where men are busiest, there too is to be found the pure, unadulterated *loafer*, sprawling about as the hound sprawls before the fire in everybody's way, and tripping up everybody's heels. In the store, he sits upon the counter, swinging his useless legs, and gaping vacantly at the movements around him. In the office, he effectually checks necessary conversation among those who do not wish their business bruited to the world, turns over papers which he has no right to touch, and squints at contents which he has no right to know. In the counting-house, he perches on a stool, interrupts difficult calculations with chat as idle as himself, follows the bustling clerk to the storehouse, pouches the genuine Havana,

quaffs nectar from proof-glasses, and makes himself free of the good things which belong to others."

The origin of this word is altogether uncertain. Two etymologies have been suggested for it; namely, the German *laufer*, a runner (comp. the Dutch *leeglooper* and *landlooper*, a vagrant); and the Spanish *gallofero*, abbreviated *gallofo*, an idle, lazy vagabond (whence the Italian *gagloffio*), a wandering mendicant, a vagabond. The Span. *gallofa* means what was given to the *galloferos*, alms, vegetables, and what characterized this people as a lazy, wandering set. A writer in "Notes and Queries" tells the following story of its origin, which certainly, *si non è vero, è ben trovato* : —

An old Dutchman settled at New York, and acquired a considerable fortune. He had an only daughter, and a young American fell in love with her or her dollars, or both. The old father forbade him his house, but the daughter encouraged him. Whenever the old merchant saw the lover about the premises, he used to exclaim to his daughter, "There is that 'lofer' [lover] of yours, the idle good-for-nothing," &c.; and so an idle man, hanging about, came to be called a "*lofer*."

The following illustration of the use of the word is now "going the rounds" of the newspapers: —

"You 're a *lofer*, — a man without a calling," said a judge to a person arrested as a vagrant. "I beg y<sup>r</sup> pardon, your honor, I have a vocation." "What is it?" "I smoke glass for eclipses; but just now it is our dull season."

Henry W. Shaw thus describes the individual: —

The *lofer* is a thing who is willing to be despised for the privilege of abusing others. He occupies all grades in society, from the judge on the bench clear down to the ragged creature who leans against lamp-posts, and fights flies in August. He has no pride that is worthy, and no delicacy that anybody can hurt. During his boyhood, he kills cats and robs birds' nests. During middle life, he begs all the tobacco he uses, and drinks all the cheap whiskey he can at somebody else's expense. — *Josh Billings's Alminaz* for 1877.

**To loafer or loaf.** To lounge; to idle away one's time. The verb is of more recent origin than the noun.

We arrived at the town of Tincenn; the sun being exceedingly hot, we waited till evening. The Casa Real in this as in other towns of the province was the *lofering* place of the Indians. — *Norman's Yucatan*, p. 88.

The Senate has *loafed* away the week in very gentlemanly style. — *New York Commercial Advertiser*, Dec., 1845.

The street [in Hangtown, California] was crowded all day with miners *loafing* about from store to store, making their purchases and asking each other to drink. *Borthwick's California*, p. 118.

**Loaferishness.** The "New York Tribune," of Oct. 9, 1877, in noticing a new volume of Mr. Bailey, of the "Danbury News," entitled "They All Do It," thus writes: —

If "They All Do it" in Danbury as they are represented to do in these stories, that town may rejoice in a population which, for grotesque stupidity, comical or stale vulgarity, and general *loaferishness* of man, woman, and child, has never been equalled or even imagined.

**To loan.** To lend. This verb is inserted by Todd on the authority of Huloet (1552) and Langley (1664), and noted "not now in use." It is, however, much used in this country, though rarely in England. *Worcester.*

The "Westminster Review," speaking of the "Chronicles of Wulfert's Roost and other Papers," lately published by Washington Irving, says:—

"He has the finish of our best English critics; he has the equability and gentle humor of Addison and Goldsmith. It is very rarely that we come upon an Americanism; he is not, however, wholly guiltless; he makes use of the expression to "*loan* a few pounds."

In England, when one man accommodates another with the use of money for a time, he lends it. The sum is called a *loan*; but he who provides it is said to *lend* or to have *lent*. Here, however, it is becoming usual to speak of having *loaned* to another. Webster says that to *loan* is rarely used in England, and I may say that I never heard it there. What advantage, then, does it possess over the more familiar form of the verb that it should supersede it here? Surely, the phrase, "money to lend," is sufficiently intelligible. To talk of *loaning* money would suggest to an unsophisticated Englishman the idea of some unknown process at the mint. — *Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**Loan-Office.** A public office in which loans of money are negotiated for the public, or in which the accounts of loans are kept and the interest paid to the lenders. — *Webster.*

**Loan-Officer.** A public officer empowered to superintend and transact the business of a loan office. — *Webster.*

**Loaves and Fishes.** The spoils of politicians.

**Lobbered.** *Lobbered milk.* Milk that is curdled. The proper term is *luppered*, from the Teut. *lah*, Swedish *lopa*, to run together, to coagulate; and is provincial in various parts of England.

**Lobby.** The persons who frequent the lobby of a house of legislature.

The special correspondent of the "London Times," in writing from Washington, thus speaks of the Congressional "*Lobby*" and its influence:—

The *Lobby* of Washington has of late years grown to be an appreciable influence, and much indignation is expressed by political purists at its existence. But probably there never was a legislative body in the world without something of the kind. In the old Parliament of Ireland, there were regular "undertakers of the king's business," who did not necessarily have seats among the men they influenced; and the House of Commons has recognized parliamentary agents. The business of the American *Lobby* is something of the same kind, but it has not yet obtained a formal organization. It is at present an outside pressure ex-

erised by a miscellaneous crowd of persons, whose influence may be social or political or local, or a combination of any of those elements; they are often agents of other parties, simply remunerated for their exertions, or they are both agents or principals, having themselves a large joint share in the undertaking at issue. Many are ex-members of Congress, who have the privilege of admission to the lobby.

**To lobby.** To attempt to exert an influence on the members of a legislative body, by besieging them in the lobbies of the house where they meet. So necessary has this business of *lobbying* now become that, when a petition is sent to a legislature, particularly for an act of incorporation, it is very common for one or more individuals to take it in charge for the purpose of "*lobbying* it through."

There is a quarrel in Philadelphia about Mr. W——'s appointments. Some of the Loco-focos have come out to *lobby* against him. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

A committee has gone to Albany to *lobby* for a new bank charter. — *New York Courier and Enquirer*.

**Lobbyists.** Lobby members and their constituency. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Lobby Member.** A person who frequents the lobby of a house of legislation. — *Worcester*.

**Loblolly Bay.** (*Gordonia lasyanthus*.) An elegant ornamental tree of the maritime parts of the Southern States, called also Holly Bay. Its bark is useful for tanning, but its wood of but little value.

The bay-galls are properly watercourses, covered with a spongy earth mixed with matted vegetable fibres; . . . their natural produce is a stately tree called *Loblolly Bay*. — *Romans's Nat. Hist. of Florida*, 1776, p. 32.

**Loblolly Pine.** (*Pinus taeda*, Linn.) Sometimes called, in the Southern States, "Old-field Pine;" and in Southern Virginia, "White Pine." Much used for building, in lower Virginia. Common from Virginia to Florida. See *Michaux's N. A. Sylva*, Vol. III. p. 123.

The fish-crows returned to their fishing-grounds, . . . when they made for the interior, often proceeding thirty or forty miles, to roost together in the trees of the *Loblolly Pine*. — *Audubon, Ornithological Biog.*, Vol. II. p. 269.

**Lobster Cart.** "To upset one's lobster-cart" is to knock him down. The more common expression now is to *upset one's apple-cart*.

Ready up to take his part,  
I'd soon upset his lobster-cart;  
Make his bones ache, and blubber smart.

*Mack's Cut-fight* (N. Y. 1824), p. 153.

**To localize.** To prepare for publication local items.

An unfortunate scribe recently consented to do the localizing for the "Dubuque Herald" during the absence of the regular city editor. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 6, 1861.



**To locate.** 1. To place; to set in a particular spot or position. — *Pickering, Webster.* This word is comparatively modern in England, and is not found in any of the dictionaries previous to Todd's. It is used among us much more frequently and in a greater variety of senses than in England.

Under this roof, the biographer of Johnson passed many jovial, joyous hours; here he has *located* some of the liveliest scenes, and most brilliant passages, in his entertaining anecdotes of his friend Samuel Johnson. — *Cumberland, Memoir of Himself.*

The Asega-bôk, the book of the judge, contains the laws of the Rustringian Frisians *located* around the gulf of the Jade. — *Bosworth, Preface to Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, p. 61.

The archbishops and bishops of England can neither *locate* and limit dioceses in America, nor ordain bishops in any part of the dominions of Great Britain, out of the realm, by any law of the kingdom, or any law of the colonies, or by any canon law acknowledged by either. — *John Adams, Letter to Dr. Morse.*

A number of courts properly *located* will keep the business of any country in such condition as but few suits will be instituted. — *Debates on the Judiciary*, p. 51.

As we don't know exactly where our own souls reside, what harm is there to pursue such an investigation as to our black brethren? My private opinion is, if a nigger has one, it is *located* in his head. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 172.

So, too, a town, a village, and even a piece of ground, is said to be *located*, i. e. placed, situated, in a particular position.

Baber refers to villages formerly *located*, as at the present day, on the plains, &c. — *Masson's Travels in Afghanistan*, Vol. III. p. 193.

When Port Essington was *located*, all these difficulties had to be suffered over again. — *Stokes's Australia*, Vol. I. p. 401.

A lot of earth so singularly *located* as marks it out by Providence to be the emporium of plenty and the asylum of peace. — [*London*] *Observer*.

And hence arise the following American uses of the word: —

2. To select, survey, and settle the bounds of a particular tract of land, or to designate a portion of land by limits; as, *to locate* a tract of a hundred acres in a particular township. — *Webster.*

In December, 1768, Arthur Lee presented a petition to the king in council, praying: —

That your Majesty would grant to his petitioners, to be fifty in number, by the name of the Mississippi Company, 2,500,000 acres of land, in one or more surveys, to be *located* between the thirty-eighth and forty-second degree of north latitude, &c., &c. — *Plain Facts*, Phil. 1781, p. 68.

Mistakes in *locating* land were often very serious, — the purchaser finding only swamp or gravel, when he had purchased fine farming land. — *Mrs. Claver's Western Clearings.*

This is also coming into use in the old country, as will be seen by the following example: —

The banks of these rivers [the Macquarrie, &c., in New South Wales] are fast filling with settlements; those of the hunter, the nearest to the seat of government, being, we understand, entirely *located*. — *Edinburgh Review*.

3. Applied to persons, it means: —

a. To place in a permanent residence, to settle.

A lady from Maine, who has been *located* on the hill west of us for a week or two, calls to say she has concluded to leave Kansas. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 50.

b. To place in a particular position.

The mate, having *located* himself opposite to me [at the tab'e], began to expostulate upon the mode of sea travelling. — *Gilliam, Travels in Mexico*.

c. As a technical term used by the Methodists, to cease to be itinerant, and settle permanently as a preacher. The word is needed by them, because they have many itinerant preachers, who are not *located*.

Mr. Parsons, like most *located* and permanent pastors of a wooden country, received almost nothing for his services. — *Carlton, New Purchase*.

d. To take up one's residence in a place, to settle.

The most unhealthy points are in the vicinity of mill-dams and of marshes, near both of which the settlers take particular pains to *locate*. — *Hoffman's Winter in the West*, Vol. I.

From the following extract, it appears that the word is used with the same latitude of signification in Canada: —

A man in Britain buys a house or farm, and it is said to be *in*, or more precisely *situated*, in such a street, or district, or county. Here nobody or thing is situated anywhere, all are *located*. Our farms, our houses, our congregations, our constituencies, all are *located*. We admire a mansion occupying a healthy or commanding site, and we are told that "the *location* is good;" a clergyman is congratulated on his incumbency, which is styled a comfortable *location*; and so on *ad infinitum*. To *locate* is a purely technical term, belonging to land surveyors and their profession; and it is difficult to perceive any gain to the language by its application being extended beyond its original technical significance. — *Rev. A. C. Geikie, in Canadian Journal*, Sept., 1857.

**Location, n.** That which is located; a tract of land designated in place. — *Webster*. This application of the word is peculiar to the United States. In civil engineering, it is applied to railroads.

**Locative Calls.** Calls for the purpose of location. Those calls are in entries of lands, the object of which is to ascertain and identify the land for the purpose of location. References in entries and grants of land to certain particular physical objects (as trees, streams, &c.) which exactly describe the land to be located. — *Chief Justice Marshal, Wheaton's Reports*, Vol. II. p. 206, 211.

**Locator.** In American land law, one who locates land, or intends or is entitled to locate. — *Burrill's Law Dictionary*.

**Lock, Stock, and Barrel.** 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 sense.

Look at [this carriage] all through the piece; take it by and large, *lock, stock, and barrel*, and it's the dandy. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 19.

**Loco-Foco.** 1. A self-igniting cigar or match. It is remarkable that the origin of this word has never been given.

In 1834, John Marck opened a store in Park Row, New York, and drew public attention to two novelties. One was champagne wine drawn like soda water from a "fountain;" the other was a self-lighting cigar, with a match composition on the end. These he called "*Loco-foco*" cigars. The mode of getting at the name is obvious. The word "loco-motive" was then rather new as applied to an engine on a railroad, and the common notion was that it meant *self-moving*; hence, as these cigars were self-firing, this queer name was coined. So Mr. John Marck has the honor of inventing the name. His patent for "self-igniting cigars" bears date April 16, 1834. This term does not occur in the notice of his patent in the "Journal of the Franklin Institute," but was used in his advertisements, and can probably be found in the newspapers of that day.

The term as applied to a match is therefore an Americanism; but as no other kind of match is now known, as a distinct appellation, it is going out of use. The very use of these matches is of American origin, and at an early date the manufacture reached to an extent almost incredible. Not long after the date of the naming of the party, one manufacturer alone had invested \$100,000 in making these matches and boxes.

2. The name by which the Democratic party is extensively distinguished throughout the United States. This name originated in the year 1835, when a division arose in the party, in consequence of the nomination of Gideon Lee as the Democratic candidate for Congress, by the committee chosen for that purpose. This nomination, as was customary, had to be confirmed at a general meeting of Democrats held at Tammany Hall. His friends anticipated opposition, and assembled in large numbers to support him. "The first question which arose," says Mr. Hammond, "and which would test the strength of the parties, was the selection of chairman. The friends of Mr. Lee, whom we will call Tammany men, supported Mr. Varian; and the anti-monopolists, Mr. Curtis. The Tammanies entered the hall as soon as the doors were opened, by means of back stairs; while at the same time the Equal Rights

party rushed into the long room up the front stairs. Both parties were loud and boisterous; the one declaring that Mr. Varian was chosen chairman, and the other that Mr. Curtis was duly elected the presiding officer. A very tumultuous and confused scene ensued, during which the gas-lights, with which the hall was illuminated, were extinguished. The Equal Rights party, either having witnessed similar occurrences, or having received some intimations that such would be the course of their opponents, had provided themselves with *loco-foco* matches and candles, and the room was re-lighted in a moment. The 'Courier and Enquirer' newspaper dubbed the anti-monopolists, who used the matches, with the name of *Loco-foco*: which was soon after given to the Democratic party, and which they have since retained." — *Hammond's Political History of New York*, Vol. II. p. 491.

**Locust.** A name given in America to several species of *Cicada*.

**Locust-Tree.** (*Robinia pseudacacia*.) A tree much cultivated both for ornament and for its exceedingly durable timber.

**Lodge.** A term now applied to a family of Indians occupying one wigwam. See *Tepees*.

**Log Cabin.** A house such as is constructed by the early settlers with unhewn logs, roughly notched together at the corners, and the interstices filled with clay. Also called Log Hut and Log House.

**Log Canoe.** See *Dug-out*.

**Logger.** A term applied to men engaged in the forests in cutting down trees and sawing them into logs for market; a lumberman.

The *loggers* are obliged to take good care of their feet; one of them often wears three or four pair of socks, with a pair of moccasins over them, to prevent their freezing. — *Putnam's Mag.*, July, 1857.

**Loggerhead.** A long piece of iron clubbed at the end. A poker used hot for heating beer, cider, &c. New England.

**Loggerhead Terrapin.** The large fresh and salt water tortoise.

**Logging.** The business of felling trees and preparing timber for transportation.

Once more at work, he employed his leisure time in the heavy and dangerous business of logging. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

If I haven't missed my blaze, it was hereabouts that I was prospecting. . . . Dan Smith was along, and a smarter chap at logging never swung axe. — *Harper's Mag.*, March, 1860, p. 440.

**Logging-Bee.** When the neighbors of a new settler unite with their oxen and horses to aid him in gathering together the logs and fallen

trees preparatory to burning, it is called a *logging-bee*. Spirituous liquors are often served on these occasions.

I was never at a *logging-bee* where whiskey was used, where so much was done by so few hands, and in such double quick time. — *Ironthorpe*, p. 219.

**Logging Swamp.** In Maine, the place where pine timber is cut.

**Logic-Chopper.** A person who uses subtle distinctions; a keen metaphysician; a sophist.

A sharper *logic-chopper* and shrewder schoolman than ever Thomas Aquinas or Abelard. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 23, 1861.

**To logicize.** To reason.

And I give the preliminary view of the reason; because, since this is the faculty which reasons or *logicizes*, &c. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic*, Preface, p. 5.

**Logies.** In codfishing, the poor and thin fish are so called.

**Log-Rolling.** 1. In the lumber regions of Maine, it is customary for men of different logging camps to appoint days for helping each other in rolling the logs to the river, after they are felled and trimmed, — this rolling being about the hardest work incident to the business. Thus the men of three or four camps will unite, say on Monday, to roll for camp No. 1, — on Tuesday, for camp No. 2, — on Wednesday, for camp No. 3, — and so on, through the whole number of camps within convenient distance of each other.

I know how to hate an Indian or love a gill as well as any one. I fell in love with three galls at once at a *log-rolling*; and, as for tea-squalls, my heart never shut pan a minute at a time. — *Crockett's Adventures*.

We were compelled, for electioneering objects, to attend this summer several *log-rollings*. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 237.

2. The term has been adopted in legislation to signify a like system of mutual co-operation. For instance, a member from St. Lawrence has a pet bill for a plank road which he wants pushed through; he accordingly makes a bargain with a member from Onondaga, who is coaxing along a charter for a bank, by which St. Lawrence agrees to vote for Onondaga's bank, provided Onondaga will vote in turn for St. Lawrence's plank road.

This is legislative *log-rolling*; and there is abundance of it carried on at Albany every winter.

Generally speaking, the subject of the *log-rolling* is some merely local project, interesting only to the people of a certain district; but sometimes there is party *log-rolling*, where the Whigs, for instance, will come to an understanding with the Democrats, that the former shall not oppose a certain Democratic measure merely on party grounds, provided the Democrats will be equally tender to some Whig measure in return.

In the "Draft of a Penal Code for the State of New York," prepared by the commissioners (1864), in a note to section 121 (p. 37), making punishable the receiving of bribes by members of the legislature, the commissioners say:—

This section is extended to embrace what is known as "*log-rolling*," or agreements to exchange votes for or against measures pending before the Legislature.

Another evil of our banking system arises from the very foolish rule that a single director may reject any paper offered for discount, instead of making the fate of every application depend upon the decision of a majority of the board. This gives a power to individuals at variance with the interests of the community. It produces what is termed *log-rolling* in legislation, and makes good and liberal-minded men responsible for the conduct of individuals who look solely to self.—*N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

Mr. Davis has the best prospect for speaker, without the fetters of a caucus. But, with such a system of *log-rolling*, the one whose prospects are worse, or rather who has no prospects at all, has the best chance to come out successful.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

Mr. Ballou did not see the object of a postponement. If the delay was for the purpose of obtaining information for the House, he had no objections; if *log-rolling* was the motive, he opposed the postponement.—*Providence Journal*.

If the idea becomes prevalent that the legislation of Congress is controlled by a system of combinations and *log-rolling*, those who can fabricate the most unjust claims will be found coming forward to crowd the halls of Congress and speculate upon the public treasury.—*Washington Union*, Feb. 10, 1855.

**Logy.** (Dutch, *log*.) Heavy, slow, stupid. He's a *logy* man, i. e. a slow-moving, heavy man. "He is a *logy* preacher," i. e. dull. The Dutch say, *Een log verstand*, a dull wit. Mr. J. R. Lowell says it is exactly the Italian *lurgo*. Dante calls the Germans "I Tedeschi Lurghi," and the Italians love to quote the line.

**Loma.** (Spanish.) A hill, or ridge of hills, with a flat summit. A term in general use on the Mexican frontier. The diminutive *Lomita* is also sometimes employed.

**Lone Star.** The State of Texas, whose flag bears a single star in its centre.

Let us not forget the Cynosure of Independence [i. e. Massachusetts]; but bid her a kind farewell for her pilotage through the breakers of the Revolution,—blot her out from the galaxy that encircles the Eagle's crest,—put the *Lone Star* in its place, &c.—*A Voice from the South*, p. 53.

Hurrah for the *Lone Star*!

Up, up to the mast,  
With the honored old bunting,  
And nail it there fast.

The ship is in danger,  
And Texans will fight,  
'Neath the flag of the *Lone Star*.  
For God and their right.

*Mason, Southern Poems of the War*, p. 95.

**Long and Short.** 1. Broker's terms. "*Long*" means when a man has bought stock on time, which he can call for at any day he chooses. He is also said to be "*long*," when he holds a good deal.

Short means when a broker sells stocks, to be delivered at a future day. If he owns the stock he sells or agrees to deliver, he is both *long* and *short* at the same time. The effect of one contract neutralizes or blocks the other, and in reality he is neither *long* nor *short*. If he does not own the stock, — which is the case nine times in ten, — he is *short*, or, what is the same thing, a "*bear*;" and it is for his interest to get the price down, so as to be able to buy the stock to deliver at a less price than he sold. — *New York Day-book*.

2. The whole; as, "The long and short of it is."

**Long Chalk.** *Not by a long chalk, not by a great deal.*

Women commonly are critters of a mixed character, in general more good than bad about them, *by a long chalk*, but spoiled like fillets in trainin'. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*.

**Long Knives or Big Knives.** A term applied by the North American Indians to the white residents of the United States. It signifies wearers of swords.

**Long Moss.** (*Tiliandsia usneoides*.) This parasitic and singular vegetation is first seen in company with the palmetto, about latitude 33°. It hangs down in festoons, like the twiny stems of weeping-willow. It attaches itself of choice to the cypress, and, after that, to the acacia. These pendent wreaths often conceal the body of the tree, when bare of foliage, to such a degree that little is seen but a mass of moss. Waving in the wind, they attach themselves to the branches of other trees, and thus sometimes form curtains of moss, that darken the leafless forests of winter. — *Flint, Mississippi Valley*.

**Long Sauce.** Beets, carrots, and parsnips are *long sauce*. Potatoes, turnips, onions, pumpkins, &c., are *short sauce*. See *Sauce*.

The Yankee farmer takes unto himself for a wife some buxom country heiress, deeply skilled in the mystery of making apple sweetmeats, *long sauce*, and pumpkin pie. — *Irring, Knickerbocker*, p. 186.

Miss Ramsay, in her "Poetical Picture of America," in speaking of the vegetables brought to Virginia, says: —

New England boats in numbers bring  
Notions, and many a wooden thing.  
Their *long-sauce*, and their *short-sauce* too,  
About their boats are laid in view. — p. 76.

**Longshanks.** See *Lawyer*, No. 1.

**Longshoreman,** for *alongshoreman*. A man employed to load and unload vessels; a stevedore. New York.

A meeting of the *longshoremen* was held last evening to take into consideration the difficulty between themselves and the merchants. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The strike among the *longshoremen*, caulkers, laborers, &c., has become quite general, and the work of repairing, loading, and unloading of vessels is almost suspended. — *New York Express*.

Oh! I am a simple, laboring man,  
I work along the shore,  
To keep the hungry wolves away  
From the poor *longshoreman's* door.

*Song, by Harrigan.*

**Long Short.** A gown somewhat shorter than a petticoat, worn by women when doing household work.

**Long Sugar.** Molasses; so called formerly in North Carolina from the ropiness of it, and serving all the purposes of sugar both in eating and drinking. — *Byrd, Westover Papers*, p 28.

**Long Sweetening.** Molasses; so called formerly in New England.

**Long Tom.** 1. An apparatus used by the Californians for washing gold from the earth or gravel in which it is found. It consists of a wooden trough from twelve to twenty-five feet long and about a foot wide. At its lower end it widens, and its floor there is of sheet-iron pierced with holes half an inch in diameter, under which is placed a flat box a couple of inches deep. The long tom is set at a slight inclination over the place which is to be worked, and a stream of water is kept running through it by means of a hose; and, while some of the party shovel the dirt into the *tom*, one man stands at the lower end stirring up the earth as it is washed down, and separating the stones, while the earth and small gravel fall through the sieve into another box, where it undergoes another process of sifting.

When the miners extricate themselves from the temples of pleasure [in the city], they return to their camps and *long-toms*, and soothe their racking headaches by the discovery of chunks of gold. — *Marryat, Mountains and Molehills*, p. 236.

2. A cannon of large size and of special length.

Gunboats are having their armaments increased by the addition of *Long-Toms*, longer and larger than were ever heard of in days when guns of that cognomen were a terror. — *New York Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1861.

3. (From a not wholly fanciful resemblance to a cannon.) A long cigar, — usually of a quality inversely proportioned. New England.

**Loosed.** Defeated. A term borrowed from the game called *loo*; as, "Santa Anna was *loosed* at San Jacinto." South-west. Comp. *Euchred*.

**Loon.** (*Colymbus glacialis*.) The common name for the Northern Diver. As straight as a loon's leg is a common simile.



**Looney.** (Scot. *loun, lown*, a worthless fellow.) A foolish fellow. Jamieson defines the word as above, from which *looney* may be derived.

**Loosely around.** *To lay loosely around* is to lounge about with nothing to do; to "hang round."

Entering a cloud of tobacco smoke, and groping our way over groups of drunken chivalry, who *lay loosely around*, we approached the counter. — *Gilmore, My Southern Friends*, p. 59.

A district schoolmaster, who does a square job, and takes his codfish-balls reverently, is a better man to-day to have *lying round loose* than Solomon would be arrayed in all his glory. — *Josh Billings, Works*, p. 325.

[The Chicago and North-western Railroad] was flung down on the prairie at the rate of two miles a day, and while the bed remained frozen it did very well; but, when the thaw and spring floods came, it imitated the Dutchman's milk in *lying round loose* generally. — *McClure, Tour through Rocky Mountains*, p. 29.

**Looseness.** Unrestraint, freedom. A Western vulgarism, now becoming common at the East; as, "He goes it with a *looseness*," i. e. acts without restraint. Still more vigorous is the expression, *perfect looseness*.

Ah! my Christian friends, the devil is amongst us, going forward to injure and destroy. He is going it with the *looseness* of an antediluvian relax: and, as Deacon B— would say, we mustn't allow him to come the Japan flummux over us much longer. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 214.

The *perfect looseness* with which books not on the invoice were sold [at auction] was illustrated by the sale of a volume of Anthon's series, which went off in lots of a hundred, &c. — *N. Y. Express*, Sept., 1855.

Let them go it with a *perfect looseness*, till they burst their brittle strings of life's corsets, and fall to pieces in the cold embrace of death. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 198.

**Lope.** (Dutch, *loopen*, to leap, to run.) A common term for gallop, of which it may be a contraction.

An English provincialism for "to stride." — *Wright*. "To lop," used in Kent, for "to lounge." — *Id.* Bailey gives "to lope, to run or slip away," from Low Saxon, *loopen*.

A sulky ox refuses to move in the proper direction; off starts a rider, who, catching the stubborn animal by the tail, it at once becomes frightened into a *lope*; advantage is taken of the unwieldy body by the hunter, as it rests on the fore feet, to jerk it to the ground. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 15.

The mustang goes rollicking ahead, with the eternal *lope*, such as an amorous deer assumes when it moves beside its half galloping mate, a mixture of two or three gaits, as easy as the motions of a cradle. — *Ibid.*, p. 13.

**Lose-laid.** *Loose-laid*; a weaver's term, and probably English. Weak-willed. — *Lowell*.

**Lost Cause.** The late pro-slavery rebellion, with its occasion, adjuncts, results; the Southern Confederacy.

"The politicians of the South adore the heroes of the Confederacy; they glorify the *Lost Cause*."

The "N. Y. Tribune," of Sept. 8, 1877, in speaking of the attempted reunion of Federal and Confederate soldiers at Marietta, Ohio, says:—

This was such an excellent opportunity of evidencing, in a striking way, the return of national good-will, that it seems unfortunate that the distinguished representatives of the *Lost Cause*, whose presence was looked for, could not have come to shake hands with their old foes.

**Lot.** In the United States, a piece or division of land; perhaps originally assigned by drawing lots, but now any portion, piece, or division. — *Webster*. This application of the word is peculiar to this country, and is universally used of a parcel of land, whether in town or country. Thus, we have city *lots*, town *lots*, house *lots*, meadow *lots*, water *lots*, building *lots*, &c. "I have a fine *lot* of cleared land, with a wood *lot* adjoining;" meaning a portion of the forest on which the trees are left for fuel as required. "In going to town, I left the road, and went across *lots*, to shorten the distance," i. e. across the open fields or meadows. "In the first settlement of this country," says Mr. Pickering, "a certain portion or *share* of land was allotted to each inhabitant of the town; and this was called his *lot*. Both *lot* and *allotment* occur in our early laws."

**Lots.** "Lots of people;" i. e., a large number.

**To lot upon.** To allot; to anticipate; to expect, desire, regard as sure. New England. See *Allot*.

**Loud.** Any thing showy or flashy. "She wore a *loud* bonnet." Common in England. — *Hotten*.

**To love, for to like.** "Do you *love* pumpkin pie?" "I'd *love* to have that bonnet!" Used also as a noun. "A perfect *love* of a bonnet."

**Low-belia.** The quacks who use the *Lobelia inflata*, or "Indian tobacco," suppose the name to be *Loubelia*, and it is so written in the description of a patent. The other species, which towers high above its humble relative, is accordingly dubbed *High-belia*.

**Low Blackberry.** The name, in New England, for the fruit of the *Rubus trivialis*. See *Dewberry*.

**Low Grounds.** Bottom lands are so called in Virginia.

**Lower House.** A House of Representatives. See *Upper House*.

**Lucifer Match.** Matches which ignite by friction, also called Loco-foco matches. Both these expressions, however, are now being supplanted by other terms.

No rubbing will kindle your *lucifer match*,  
If the *fiz* does not follow the primitive scratch.

*O. W. Holmes's Poems*, p. 77.

**Lucivee.** The lynx, or *Loup Cervier* of the French.

"*Lucivee* is rather an odd name, isn't it?" asked Will.

"Yes, that's what the French called the animal when they first settled in Canada, and saw it there. They spell it out *Loup Cervier*, which means wolf-stag, or rather stag-wolf. They called it the stag-wolf, because they used to see it catch moose and deer. But, if you want to look it up in your natural history, you must find the word 'Lynx.' The *Lucivee* is the *Lynx Canadensis* of the books. — *C. A. Stevens, in Our Young Folks*, for Feb., 1871, p. 99.

The word *lucern* will be found in Chapman's "*Homer*," where it undoubtedly refers to the same animal.

As when a den of bloody *lucerns* cling,  
About a goodly-palméd hart, hurt with a hunter's bow.

*Iliad*, Book XI. p. 417.

We have it again in Chapman's "*Bussy D'Ambois*:" —

Let me have

My *lucerns* too, or dogs inured to hunt

Beasts of most rapine. — *Act iii. Anc. Dr. iii. 280.*

Wright describes it as a lynx; and Nares as a sort of hunting dog. Mr. Hooper, in a note on the word, in his edition of Chapman's "*Homer's Iliad*," Vol. I. p. 240, says: "The etymology seems uncertain." There can be no doubt that all refer to the old French *leucerve*, of which it is a corruption.

**Lucks.** Small portions of wool twisted on the finger of a spinner at the wheel or distaff. The same word as *lock* when applied to the hair, &c. — *Forby's Norfolk Glossary*. In New England, this word is still in use.

Miss Gisborne's flannel is promised the last of the week. There is a bunch of *lucks* down cellar; bring them up. — *Margaret*, p. 6.

**Luddy Mussy!** "*Lud-a-massy*." A corrupt pronunciation of *Lord have mercy!* An exclamation of surprise, common in the interior parts of New England.

*Luddy mussy!* can you read? Where do you live? — *Margaret*, p. 52.

**Lugs.** Ground leaves of tobacco when prepared for market.

**Lumber.** Timber sawed or split for use; as, beams, joists, boards, planks, staves, hoops, and the like. — *Webster*. The word in this sense, and the following ones derived from it, are peculiar to America.

**Lumberer, Lumberman.** A person employed in cutting timber and in getting out lumber from the forest. A *lumberman's crew*

consists of from twenty to thirty men, in charge of the "boss," of whom two are experienced choppers, two barkers and sled-tenders, eight swamper to clear the roads through the forest for the sleds, two landing sawyers to saw the trunks into logs of suitable length and mark them, teamsters, cook, &c. — *Harper's Mag.*, March, 1860.

**Lumber-Merchant.** One who deals in lumber.

**Lumbering.** 1. The business or occupation of getting out various kinds of lumber, such as beams, boards, staves, &c. "To go a *lumbering*" is the phrase used by those who embark in it.

2. Strolling, lounging, walking leisurely. A vulgarism used in New York.

As I was *lumbering* down the street, down the street,

A yaller gal I chanc'd to meet, &c.

*Negro Melodies, The Buffalo Gal.*

**Lumber-Wagon.** A wagon with a plain box upon it, used by farmers for carrying their produce to market. It is sometimes so arranged that a spring seat may be put in it, when it is very comfortable for riding in.

**Lumber-Yard.** A yard where lumber of all kinds is kept for sale. They are sometimes very extensive, covering acres. On the banks of the Hudson, near Albany, are some of the most extensive lumber-yards in the country. At Quebec, they are also extensive.

**Lummock.** A heavy, stupid fellow. Used also in the east of England.

**To lump it.** To mind one's own business; to dislike a thing; as, "You may like it, or lump it."

**Lunk-Head.** A heavy, stupid fellow.

**Lyceum.** A house or apartment appropriated to instruction by lectures or disquisitions. An association of men for literary purposes. *Webster.*

In New England, almost every town and village of importance has its *lyceum*, where a library is formed, natural and artificial curiosities collected, and before which public lectures are given. They have done a vast deal towards the dissemination of knowledge, particularly among those classes which have not had the advantages of a good education.

**To lynch.** To condemn and execute in obedience to the decree of a multitude or mob, without a legal trial; sometimes practised in the new settlements in the south-west of the United States. — *Worcester.*

Such is too often the administration of law on the frontier, *Lynch's law*, as it is technically termed, in which the plaintiff is apt to be witness, jury, judge, and executioner, and the defendant convicted and punished on mere presumption. — *Irving, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 85.

People at last [in 1850] began to talk among themselves of the urgent necessity of again adopting *Lynch law*, since the tedious and uncertain measures of the authorities did not seem to have the effect of terrifying and putting down the disturbers of the public peace. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 310.

**Lyncher.** One who *lynches*. "Georgia lynchers." — *N. Y. Independent*, Jan. 30, 1862.

**Lynch Law.** An irregular and revengeful species of justice, administered by the populace or a mob, without any legal authority or trial. — *Worcester*.

C. A. Bristed, in an essay on the English language in America, says of *Lynch law*, — for summary and informal justice, — "It is usually explained as having been derived from the emphatic practice of a certain Judge Lynch, who lived somewhere in the 'Far West.' But no authentic or consistent account of this functionary exists, no tangible grounds for supposing him to be any thing more than a mythical personage, while a very probable solution of the phrase presents itself in the parent tongue. *Linch*, in several of the northern county dialects, means to *beat* or *maltreat*. *Lynch law*, then, would be simply equivalent to *club-law*, &c."

A writer in the "*N. Y. Evening Post*" ("*Claverhouse*"), for June 2, 1864, says, *per contra* : —

"In America, the term '*Lynch law*' was first used in Piedmont, on the western frontier of Virginia. There was no court within the district, and all controversies were referred to the arbitrament of prominent citizens. Among these was a man by the name of Lynch, whose decisions were so impartial that he was known as Judge Lynch, and the system was called '*Lynch law*,' and adopted in our pioneer settlements as an inexpensive and speedy method of obtaining justice," &c. But the same writer adds: "The origin of the expression is British, and dates from the early part of the 15th century," — and cites Prince Puckler Muskau's tour in England, for an account of the "*Galway tragedy*," — when James Lynch, Mayor of Galway, condemned his son to death for murder, and to prevent a rescue by the mob executed him with his own hands.

The following extract from the *Historical Collections of Virginia*, by Henry Howe, published in 1845, seems to settle the question as to the origin of the term as used in the United States: —

Colonel Charles Lynch, a brother of the founder of Lynchburg, was an officer of the American revolution. His residence was on the Staunton, in Campbell county, now the seat of his grandson, Charles Lynch, Esq. At that time, the country was thinly settled, and infested by a lawless band of Tories and desperadoes. The necessity of the case involved desperate measures, and Colonel

Lynch, then a leading Whig, apprehended and had them punished without any superfluous legal ceremony. Hence the origin of the phrase "Lynch law." This practice of *lynching* continued years after the war, and was applied to many cases of mere suspicion of guilt which could not be regularly proved. In 1792, says Wirt's "Life of Patrick Henry," there were many suits on the south side of James River for inflicting Lynch law.

## M.

**Ma'am.** A mother. *Sir* and *Ma'am*, parents. See *Sir*.

**Ma'am School.** A school kept by a woman; called in England, and formerly in parts of Connecticut, a "dame school."

Mr. Goodrich, when he returned to his native village after many years' absence, says:—

I found a girl some eighteen years old keeping a *ma'am school* for about twenty scholars. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 39.

**Machine.** 1. The name for a fire-engine among the New York "b'hoys."

You'll like 'em [the engine men], they're perfect bricks; and, as for the *machine*, why, she's a pearl of the East, none of your old-fashioned tubs, but a real tip-top, out-and-out double-decker. Yes, sirree, there ain't many crabs what can take down No. 62 and her bully rooster crew. — *Yankee Notions*.

2. A locomotive steam-engine is so called by the railroad engineers and conductors.

**Mackerel Gull.** (*Sterna hirundo*.) The common tern, so called from its being supposed to announce the arrival of mackerel in its summer quarters. — *Storer*.

**Mackinaw Blanket**, or simply **Mackinaw**. A heavy blanket originally used in the Indian trade, the chief post for which was formerly at Mackinac (pron. *Mackinaw*), and hence the first material for overcoats in the West. See *Blanket-Coat*.

Outside of the wagons, the travellers spread their beds, which consist for the most part of buffalo-rugs and blankets. Many content themselves with a single *Mackinaw*; but a pair constitutes the most regular pallet, and he that is provided with a buffalo-rug, into the bargain, is deemed luxuriously supplied. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**Mad.** Inflamed with anger; very angry; vexed. "I was quite *mad* at him;" "he made me *mad*." In these instances, *mad* is only a metaphor for angry. This is perhaps an English vulgarism, but it is not found in any accurate writer, nor used by any good speaker, unless when poets or orators use it as a strong figure, and, to heighten the expression, say, "He was *mad* with rage." — *Wüher-spoon, Druid*, No. 5.

*Mad*, in the sense of *angry*, is considered as a low word in this country, and at the present day is never used except in very familiar conversation. — *Pickering*.

This use of the word is provincial in various parts of England. See *Halliwel*, *Grose*, &c.

Indeed, my dear, you make me *mad* sometimes, you do. — *Spectator*.

The General began to get in a passion; and says he, "Major, I'm gettin' *mad*!" "Very well," says I, "General, then I'll keep cool accordin' to agreement." — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 20.

Upstairs I went with them, as *mad* as thunder, I tell you, at being thought a humbug. — *Field*, *Western Tales*.

Jeeminy, fellows, I was so enormous *mad* that the new silk handkercher round my neck lost its color! — *Robb*, *Squatter Life*.

**Madam.** 1. In Plymouth, Massachusetts, and in some neighboring places, it has been and still is the practice to prefix to the name of a deceased female of some consideration, as the parson's, the deacon's, or the doctor's wife, the title of *Madam*. — *Kendall's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 44. "This practice," says Mr. Pickering, "like that of giving magistrates the title of 'squire, prevails in most of the country towns of New England, but is scarcely known in the sea-port towns." — *Vocabulary*.

2. Sir Chas. Lyell says: The title of *Madam* is sometimes given here [in Boston], and generally in Charleston and in the South, to a mother whose son has married, and the daughter-in-law is then called "Mrs." By this means, they avoid the inelegant phraseology of "old Mrs. A.," or the Scotch "Mrs. A., senior." — *Second Visit*, Chap. IX.

In Maryland, as well as in the States farther south, the term is applied to *dowager* ladies. It was also common among the Negroes for their master's wife, whom they almost invariably spoke of as *The Madam*. "I 'se gwine up to de house to see de *Madam*, an' git some doctor's stuff for dis misery in my chest."

3. Respectful designation of a mother. Eastern Massachusetts.

**Mad Dog.** Skullcap. (*Scutellaria lateriflora*.) A once much renowned quack remedy for hydrophobia, the utter worthlessness of which has long since been established.

**Made his Jack.** Carried his point; was fortunate in his undertaking.

**Maguey.** (*Agave Americana*.) A genus of American tropical plants commonly called Aloes or Century plants. They are found in Texas, New Mexico, and California. The different species furnish pulque, sisal, hemp, aguardiente, bagging, &c.

**Mahala.** A vulgar name for an Indian squaw; a corruption of the Spanish *muger* (pron. *muher*) a woman. California.

**Mahogany.** (*Swietenia mahogani*.) A beautiful tree found in South America, Honduras, and Southern Florida, whose compact reddish-brown wood, susceptible of a high polish, is well known as a material for elegant articles of furniture.

**To mahoganize.** To paint wood in imitation of mahogany.

**Maidenland.** Land that a man gets with his wife, and which he loses at her death. Virginia.

**Mail.** This word, which properly means the bag in which letters and papers are carried from one post-office to another, is often used by us instead of the term "post." Thus we *mail* our letters, or send them by *mail*. The English *post* them, or send them by *post*. Used also for the contents of the mail-bag.

2. What is sent to or received from the post-office.

**Mailable.** That may be mailed or carried in the mail. — *Worcester*. In a suit brought by the government against Adams & Co.'s Express for carrying letters and papers, to the injury of the post-office, Judge Betts stated in his charge to the jury that "any written communication between one individual and another comes within the term *mailable* matter; and, no matter in what shape it is put, it is liable to postage as if carried by mail."

**Mail-Rider.** One who carries the mail. In England, called a post-man or post-boy. Post-rider in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

**Mail Stage.** The stage or coach which carries the mail. In England called a "mail-coach."

**Maine Law.** A law first enacted in the State of Maine, about 1844, forbidding the sale of intoxicating drinks except by an agent specially and authoritatively empowered by the local magistrate or by municipal authority.

**Maine Lawite.** One who favors a Maine Liquor Law.

All excellent, even the whiskey, with the "prophylactic doses" therein; but what will the *Maine Lawites* say. — *N. Y. Express*, April 15, 1862.

**Maize.** (W. Ind., *maiz*, *mahiz*.) Indian corn. The name of the great staple of native American agriculture, adopted from the Carib language by the Spaniards, and thus imported into the languages of Europe. The earliest dictionary in which I find the word is Florio's *World of Wordes* (1598): the article there is "*Maiz*, a kind of grain or wheat whereof they make bread in India." Its native country is not fully determined, although it is believed to be Amer-



ica. Bernal Diaz speaks of it in Mexico in 1517; and Acosta, in 1570, when treating of the plants "peculiar to the Indies," says that "the most common grain found in the New World is *mays*, which is found in all the kingdoms of the West Indies, Peru, New Spain, Guatemala, and Chili." He adds that in Castile they call it Indian wheat; and in Italy, Turkey grain, which seems to imply that the plant was also known in those countries. The word is never used in common language in the United States. Indeed, few would understand it.

The bread which they ate in the land of Florida, is of *Maiz*, which is like coarse millet. And this *Maiz* is common in all the Islands and West Indies from the Antiles forward. — *Hakluyt, Virginia Richly Valued* (1609), p. 178.

**To make a Move.** To move; to remove; to take initiatory steps; to endeavor.

I think now that we must *make a move* to secure a lot on which to build a little house of worship. — *The Home Missionary*, April, 1877.

**To make a Raise.** See *Raise*.

**To make Fish.** To cure and prepare fish for commerce. A New England phrase.

**To make the Fur fly.** To claw, scratch, wound severely; and, figuratively, to make a great commotion; to breed a disturbance; to get angry or excited.

Senator Hannegan was greatly excited, which proved most conclusively that he had *made the fur fly* among the five thousand four hundred and forty men. [In allusion to Oregon boundary line.] — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The deliberations were conducted with moderation until the question of union with the Northern [General] Assembly came up, and then the *fur flew*. — *Tezcu Cor. Chicago Times*.

**To make Land.** To fill up a water-lot, a marsh, and the like.

**To make Meat,** on the great western prairies, consists in cutting into thin slices the boneless parts of buffalo or other meat, and drying them in the wind or sun. Meat thus prepared may be preserved for years without salt.

**To make one's Manners.** To make a bow or salute, on meeting a friend or stranger. The term is applied only to children. Formerly, in New England, the custom was universal among juveniles. Mr. Goodrich, in his "Reminiscences," says, "A child who did not *make his manners* to a stranger on the high road was deemed a low fellow." — Vol. I. p. 128.

**To make one's Mark.** To make an impression; to leave a lasting reminiscence of one's self; to distinguish one's self. It is in all probability an English expression.

The most remarkable men are usually those who have lived at some marked epoch in the world, and who, in Providence, were then called out to *make* and to leave *their mark* upon the world. — *Chalmers*.

Hugh Miller is a man of genius, and would have *made his mark* in whatever circumstances he had been placed. — *Providence Journal*.

There was a time when Jacob Barker *made his mark* upon the stock-jobbers and money-changers of Wall Street. — *Harper's Magazine*, Sept., 1854.

The following is the close of some beautiful lines relating to Miss Nightingale, taken from a newspaper : —

Among the world's great women thou hast *made thy glorious mark*;  
Men will hereafter mention make of thee with Joan of Arc;  
And fathers who relate the Maid of Saragossa's tale  
Will tell their little children, too, of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

**To make one's Pile.** To become rich. A California phrase. See *Pile*.

The Treasury is bankrupt by continual demands for refits [of soldiers' clothes, &c.]; but the jobber has *made his pile*, and what does he care? — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec., 1861.

While the carpet-baggers in the executive offices and the legislature, assisted by Federal agents, were *making enormous piles* and plotting for more, petty larceny ruled supreme in the rural parishes. — *Judge Black on the Electoral Conspiracy*, *North Am. Rev.*, July, 1877, p. 8.

**To make one's self Scarce.** To depart, decamp, be off.

**To make Tracks.** To go; to run. A figurative expression of Western origin. Comp. *To pull Foot*.

He came plaguey near not seein' of me, says I; for I had just commenced *making tracks* as you came in. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 20.

Lieutenant Gilliss, giving an account of a skirmish at Coquimbo, says: —

Some fifty were killed, a like number fell wounded or were taken prisoners, and the remainder *made tracks* for the city. — *Gilliss's Chili*, Vol. I. p. 334.

**Malaback.** To cut up hastily or awkwardly; to mangle. Also used in England. — *Wright*.

**Mamsee Apple.** (*Mammea Americana*.) A large round fruit, sometimes the size of a man's head. The skin is of a dull russet color, and rough. The flesh is yellow, and the seeds are from one to four large ones, with a rough shell. West Indies.

**Mamsee-Sapota.** (*Lucuma mammosa*.) A heart-shape-fruit, not so large as the last, with reddish flesh and one large, polished seed. See *Sapote*.

**Mammy.** The term of endearment used by white children to their negro nurses and to old family servants.

"How ith your ma, honey?" questioned the old woman, rubbing the biscuit dough from her fingers.

"Better, thank you, *mammy*. She seems quite bright to-day." — *The Hidden Path*.

**Manada.** (Span.) A herd of cattle or drove of horses. In California, it is especially applied to breeding mares.

**Mananosay.** See *Clam*, No. 2.

**Man-Eater.** See *Water-Dog*.

**Man of the Earth.** See *Mechoacan*.

**Manatee** or **Lamantin.** An herbivorous cetacean, the sea-cow. It inhabits the mouths of the rivers opening on the north and north-east of South America and the coast of Mexico; it measures six or seven feet in length; and its paddles exhibit rudiments of nails, by the aid of which the animal sometimes drags its unwieldy body on shore, and crawls up the banks, either to bask in the sun or to seek for terrestrial vegetables. — *Carpenter's Zoölogy*, I. 339. Also found on the Florida coast.

**Mango.** We apply this name to a green musk-melon stuffed with horse-radish, mustard seed, mace, nutmeg, ginger, &c., and then pickled. The true mango is also pickled.

**Mangosteen.** In Barbadoes, this name is given to the Jujube (*Ziziphus jujube*).

**Manioc, Manihoc, Manihot.** See *Tapioca*.

**Manitou.** (Algonkin *manitû* or *manitô*, a spirit, a ghost.) A spirit, god, or devil of the American Indians.

The pride of the Indians is to paint their faces strangely with red or black lead; so that they look like fiends. They are then valiant; yea, they say they are *manette*, the devil himself. — *De Vries's Voyage to America*, 1655.

Every one of the chiefs has his peculiar god, whom they call *Manitou*. It is sometimes a bird, a stone, a serpent, or any thing else they dream of in their sleep; for they think this *Manitou* will prosper their wants, as fishing, hunting, and other enterprises. — *Marquette*.

Praying for good, we to Cawtantowit bow,  
And, shunning evil, we to Chepian cry;  
To other *Manittous* we offerings owe, —  
Dwell they in mountain, flood, or lofty sky.

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Cant. 11.*

As when the evil *Manitou*, that dries  
The Ohio woods, consumes them in his ire,  
In vain the desolated panther flies,  
And howls amid his wilderness of fire.

*Campbell, Gertrude of Wyoming, xvii.*

As the Arapaho braves pass by the mysterious (boiling) springs, . . . they never fail to bestow their votive offerings upon the water sprite, in order to propitiate the *Manitou* of the fountain, and insure a fortunate issue to their path of war. — *Ruzton's Rocky Mountains*, p. 243.

When the *Manitou* made his children, he gave them buffalo to eat, and the pure water of the fountain to quench their thirst. — *Speech of an Indian Chief, Ruxton.*

**Manor.** In the United States, a tract of land occupied by tenants who pay a fee-farm rent to the proprietor, sometimes in kind, and sometimes perform certain stipulated services. — *Burrill's Law Dictionary.*

**Manufacture Oil.** To boil it, after reaching port, in the whale-ship. New Bedford, Mass.

**Maple Honey.** A name in British North America for the uncrystallizable portion of the sap of the sugar-maple, which is consumed in the form of molasses.

**Maple-Molasses.** Molasses made from the sap of the sugar-maple.

I wish you would have some griddle-cakes for supper, with some *maple-molasses* on them. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 256.

**Maple-Sugar.** A sort of domestic sugar obtained from the Sugar-Maple (which see). At the commencement of spring, in the Northern States and Canada, the sugar-maple trees are tapped near the ground by numerous apertures, and the sap is collected in wooden troughs, two hundred pounds of which afford, by evaporation, fifteen pounds of a brownish sugar, which is capable of being refined in the same manner as the sugar from the cane and the beet. *Encycl. Americana.*

**Maple-Syrup.** A syrup made from the sap of the sugar-maple.

"Wall," says he, "I guess I'll have another griddle-cake," and, as he took it, he poured the *maple-syrup* over it. — *Betsy Bobbet*.

**Marabou.** The variety of Negro which springs from a mulatto and a griffe. For other varieties, see *Negro*.

**To marble or marvel.** To move off; as, "If you do that again, you must *marble*," i. e. be off immediately. Used in Pennsylvania. — *Hurd's Gram. Corrector.*

The dandy run, and the gals snickered out, and the fellers hawhawed till they was c'enamost dead, to see him *marvell* down the road. — *Hill's Yankee Stories.*

**Marblehead Turkeys and Cape Cod Turkeys.** Codfish. So called in Massachusetts. So Taunton Turkeys, Digby Chickens (with Herrings), Albany Beef, and Welsh Rabbit, which some are absurdly trying now to spell Rarebit! Mutton stewed in a peculiar way is Welsh Venison in England.

**Margin.** Among stock-brokers, a sum of money deposited by a person speculating in stocks with a broker, to secure the latter against loss on funds advanced by him to assist his customer in his speculations.

Customers [of stocks] invariably buy or sell on *margins*. If the former, they are apt to desire to have their stock carried. Hence it is necessary to be assured that, when further *margin* is required, the money will be forthcoming. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 123.

**Market Truck.** Vegetables cultivated for market. See *Truck*.

**Marm.** A corruption of the word *mamma*, often used in the interior of New England for mother. See *Ma'am*.

Has your *marm* got that done? — *Margaret*, p. 39.

**Maroon.** The name given to revolted Negroes in the West Indies and in some parts of South America. The appellation is supposed to be derived from Marony, a river separating Dutch and French Guiana, where large numbers of these fugitives resided. In many cases, by taking to the forests and mountains, they have rendered themselves formidable to the colonies, and sustained a long and brave resistance against the whites. When Jamaica was conquered by the English in 1655, about fifteen hundred slaves retreated to the mountains, and were called *Maroons*. They continued to harass the island till the end of the last century, when they were reduced by the aid of blood-hounds. — *Encycl. Americana*.

**Marooner.** A runaway slave; a maroon.

We were told that on the South Shore [in Virginia] dwelt a *marooner*, that modestly called himself a hermit. — *Byrd, Westover Papers*, p. 13.

**Marooning.** *To go marooning* is an expression used in the Southern States. It means to go on a picnic. The difference between a *marooning* party and a picnic is that the former is a party made up to pass several days on the shore or in the country, the latter is a party for a day. The expression is of course derived from the preceding noun.

Well, now, Clayton, how considerate of them to go off on that *marooning* party. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol I. p. 20.

**Marsh-Hen.** (*Rallus Virginianus*.) The Virginia Rail; the mud-hen. The name is also applied to the Clapper Rail, a salt-water bird found on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. See *Mud-Hen*.

Jupiter [the negro slave], grinning from ear to ear, bustled about to prepare some *marsh-hens* for supper. — *Poe, The Gold Bug*.

**Marshal.** The ministerial officer of the courts of the United States, with duties similar to those of sheriff in the State courts. — *Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. I. p. 309.

**Marvel.** A mispronunciation of *marble*, common in the mouths of illiterate people.

**To marvel.** See *To marble*.

**Maryland End.** Said of the hock of the ham. The other is the Virginia end. Maryland and Virginia.

**Mash.** A vulgar corruption of the word "marsh," also heard in England.

**To mash.** In machinery, one wheel is said to *dash* into or with another, i. e. to "engage" with it. This is, apparently, a corruption from *mesh*, which is sometimes used in the same sense.

**Mashtrap.** A trap that mashes and kills the animal caught in it.

There is not the least danger that their precious carcasses will be caught under a *mashtrap*. — *Richmond Examiner*, May, 1862.

**Maskinongé or Muskelunge.** (Algonkin Ind.) An immense fish of the pike species (*Esox estor*), caught in the St. Lawrence and the great lakes. I have seen a specimen taken at Kingston upwards of four feet in length. Dr. Richardson, in his "Fauna Borealis Americana," says that he found none in the rivers which empty into Hudson's Bay or the Polar Sea.

The *maskinongé* is to all appearance a large species of pike, and possesses the ravenous propensities of that fish. — *Backwoods of Canada*, p. 161.

I was born on the sea-shore in the Bay State, and here I am up among the fresh-water lakes, as much naturalized as any *muskelunge* that was ever caught in Lake Huron. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

**Mason and Dixon's Line.** The boundary line separating the State of Pennsylvania from the States of Maryland and Virginia surveyed by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, two English surveyors between the years 1763 and 1767. During the excited debate in Congress, in 1820, on the question of excluding slavery from Missouri, John Randolph made great use of the phrase, which was echoed throughout the country. It is still referred to as the line which formerly divided the slave from the free States.

Freedom's Keystone is Slavery, thet ther's no doubt on,

It's suthin' thet's — wha' d'ye call it? — divine, —

An' the slaves thet we ollers make the most on

Air them north o' *Mason an' Dixon's Line*.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers*.

**Massa, Mass.** Master. A term formerly in use among slaves.

**Mass Meeting.** A large or general meeting called for some specific purpose. The word *mass* is prefixed with a sort of *ad captandum* intent, as O'Connell called his large meetings of Irishmen "monster meetings." *Mass meetings* were first talked of in the political campaign of 1840, when Harrison was elected president. The term is now applied to any large meeting without distinction of party

**Match.** To apply a match to; to light by applying a lighted match to. Connecticut.

**Mate or Match.** Used sometimes instead of "fellow," in such expressions as, "I can't find the *mate* (or *match*) to this shoe."

**To maul.** To prepare; to make. I always have two hundred rails *mauled* in a day. Southern States.

**Maverick.** In the great cattle-growing region of Texas, an unbranded yearling is called a "*Maverick*." In Texas, the ownership of cattle can only be proved by their being branded with the owner's name. Many years ago, a large cattle-owner named Maverick neglected to brand his yearlings, whence they were called "*Mavericks*." Other persons, the owners of cattle, put their own brands upon them, and thus became their owners. The term *Maverick* for unbranded yearlings is still preserved throughout the State.

**Max.** At the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, "to max" is to make a good recitation, i. e. the maximum.

**May-Apple.** 1. A name applied to the remarkable excrescence caused apparently by the puncture of insects, on the immature flowers of the Swamp Honeysuckle (*Azalea nudiflora*). This grows to a great size, as large as an ordinary apple, is of a very irregular form, covered with a fine bloom, and is even eaten. Its irregular form and want of seeds should indicate that it is no fruit, apart from the fact that it is found before the flowers expand. It is nevertheless considered as the fruit of the plant.

2. The term is also applied to the Swamp Honeysuckle itself, and to the fruit of the wild mandrake (*Podophyllum peltatum*).

**May-Bird.** See *Bobolink*.

**May-Blob.** Cowslips. New England.

**May-Pop.** A Southern name for the Passion Flower.

**Meadow.** 1. In the United States often applied to mowing lands which are marshy or too wet to be ploughed, and producing a coarse kind of hay, which is called "*meadow hay*," in distinction from that which grows on uplands, which is called "*English hay*."—*Worcester*.

2. In Western Connecticut, any land appropriated to grass for hay-making.

**Meadow Bird.** See *Bobolink*.

**Meadow Hay.** See *Meadow*.

**Mean, for Means.** Many American writers, following Scottish models, make use of *mean* instead of *means* in the singular. But the

established practice among English writers, from the time of Addison to the present day, has been to use *means* for both numbers.

It was the best *mean* of bringing the negotiation to a happy issue. — *Marshall's Washington*, Vol. V. p. 548.

**Mean.** Poor, bad, worthless; as, "A *mean* pair of shoes;" "A *mean* horse;" "A *mean* fellow."

He'll cut the same capers there as here. He's a monstrous *mean* horse. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 27.

**Mean Whites.** See *Poor White Folks*. Southern.

**Meat-Biscuit.** The concentrated juice of beef, mixed with flour and baked. It is chiefly used to make soup for travellers, soldiers, &c.

**Meat-Cart.** A butcher's cart, from which meat is sold in the streets in towns and villages.

**Meat-Chamber.** An apartment recently introduced between decks in the ocean steamships, with a huge tank in the middle, capable of holding thirty or forty tons of ice, for the purpose of transporting fresh meat to Europe. A gigantic floating refrigerator.

**Mebbe.** "May be." Quite common.

**Mecate.** (Mexican.) A rope of hair or of the fibre of the maguey, the American *agave*. A term in use in the States bordering on Mexico.

**Mechoacan.** (*Convolvulus panduratus*.) A plant growing in sandy fields and on dry banks from Connecticut to Illinois and southwards. The large root is also used for medical purposes. It is also called *Man of the Earth* and *Wild Potato Vine*. The name properly belongs to the *C. Mechoacan*, so named from Mechoacan in Mexico, where it was first obtained. Rafinesque gives *Mechameck* as the Indian name of the pseudo-Mechoacan or *Wild Potato*. — *Medical Flora*, Vol. I. p. 125.

**Medicine.** This word is used in translating certain terms in the languages of the American aborigines which denote not only "medicine" proper, but any thing the operation of which they do not comprehend; that is, any thing mysterious, supernatural, sacred. Hence we have the terms *medicine man*, the doctor and conjurer of the American Indians; *medicine bag*, the bag in which his remedies and charms are contained; *medicine feast*, a sort of religious festival, consisting of feasting, singing, dancing, &c., attended by males only; *medicine hut*, the hut in which these feasts are held; *medicine pipe*, the ornamented pipe smoked on these occasions.



**Medium.** A person who professes to be a medium of communication between mortals and disembodied spirits. There are rapping, tipping, healing, speaking, writing, and trance mediums.

**Meeching or Miching.** Skulking, mean. This old Shaksperian word is still occasionally heard in New York and New England.

O brethren! I warn you not to make too sure of success, for you may be disappointed. When you fall short of the object for which you jump, you go *meechin* off, like a cat that has missed her mouse. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 203.

But I ain't o' the *meechin'* kind, that sets an' thinks for weeks,  
The bottom 's out o' th' univarse coz their own gill pot leaks.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

Richardson defines to *meech*, to take small things, to pilfer; and consequently to lay in wait, to lurk.

For no man of his counsaile knoweth  
What he maie gette of his *michynge*.

*Gower, Conf. Amantis*, A. b. v.

Sure she has some *meeching* rascal in her house, some hind that she hath seep (like another Milo) quarters of malt upon his back and sing with't. — *Beaumont & Fl., The Scornful Lady*, Act iv. Sc. 1.

**Meeting.** A religious assembly, congregation. Among Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Quakers, it is usual to say, "We are going to *meeting*," when speaking of going to their church or place of worship.

**Meeting-House.** A place of worship of Methodists, Quakers, &c. The following passage in Elliott's recent "History of New England" seems to show that the term originated with the Puritans: "The religious services of the Plymouth church were held in the fort, upon the roof or deck of which were mounted the great guns; and it was in 1648 that a *meeting-house* was built. They held that a church was a body of Christians, and the place where they met was a '*meeting-house*;' and so they called it by that name." — Vol. I. p. 131.

Refined and illiterate, negro and white, the old *meeting-house* united us all on one day of the week, and its solemn services formed an insensible but strong bond of neighborhood charity. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, ch. v.

I despise the idee of folks bein' so sot on their own *meetin' housen*. . . . Somehow, Josiah seems to be more sot onto his own *meetin'-house* than I do. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 69.

**Meetin' Seed.** Caraway seed used to drive away drowsiness in church.

She munched a sprig of *meetin' seed*,  
And read her spelling-book. — *St. Nicholas*, Jan., 1877.

**To meet up with.** To catch up with; to overtake. Georgia.

**Melon Fruit.** (*Carica papaya*.) The West India Papaw; called also Tree-melon.

**Melt.** 1. The milt or roe of fishes.

2. The milt or spleen. In popular use; also given in Dungli-son's Med. Dic.

3. Of hogs, the mesentery. New England. Each of these words "melt" has its own etymon. The last is clearly from the verb "to melt."

**Memorandum Check.** A check intended not to be presented immediately for payment; such an understanding being denoted by the word "*mem.*" written on it. It has been held that the making of a check in this way does not affect its negotiability, or the right of the holder to present it to the bank and demand payment immediately.

**Memorial Day.** Particularly "Decoration Day," in memory of the soldiers and sailors who fell in the late civil war.

**Menhaden.** (*Alosa menhaden*.) A fish of the herring kind, abounding in the waters of New England, and as far south as Chesapeake Bay. It is also known by the names of Bony-fish, White-fish, Hardhead, Moss-bunker, and Pauhagen. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island, they are called Menhaden; in New York, Moss-bunkers and Skippaugs. They are caught in immense quantities, and used as manure, chiefly for Indian corn. Dr. DeKay, in his report on the fishes of New York, states that he has known of an instance when "eighty-four wagon-loads, or, in other words, 168,000 of these fish were taken at a single haul" of the seine.

These voracious fellows [the blue-fish] get into a school of *menhaden*, which are too large to swallow whole, and they bite them to pieces to suit their tastes. *Daniel Webster, Private Cor.*, Vol. II. p. 333.

**To merchandise.** In the West, they say a man is *merchandising* who is in trade, keeping a store, selling goods, &c.

**Merchant.** A term often applied in the United States to any dealer in merchandise, whether at wholesale or retail; and hence sometimes equivalent to "shopkeeper."

**Mercy sakes alive!** A common exclamation of surprise, especially with old women, who would probably find some difficulty in parsing it.

*Many sakes alive, John! where have you been all the morning? What! a lady drowned? Lord-a-massy! What! and a dear drowned baby too! Oh, dear! Brooke, Eastford, p. 60.*

**Mesa.** (Span., table.) Throughout the whole region bordering on Mexico, this Spanish word is used for a high plain or table-land.

All the so-called *mesa* formations and *jornadas* of this district belong to a distinct system of basin deposits, tertiary or post-tertiary in age. . . . The *mesa*, or table-land character, is exhibited only along the line of river valleys, as high bluffs, the result of denuding forces, subsequent to the original basin depositions. *Reports on the Pacific Railroad*, Vol. I. p. 84.

The travelling upon the *mesas* was hard and firm, whilst that in the bottom was generally heavy. — *Lieutenant Park's Report, Pacific Railroad Survey*, Vol. II.

Westward sweeps the wide valley of the river, and at a distance of a league is seen the pueblo of Zuñi. Towards the south, a lofty *mesa* with precipitous cliffs. . . . Scrub cedars and piñons upon the *mesa* slopes have furnished fuel. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations, R. R. Survey*, p. 66.

**Mesilla.** (Span. dim. of *mesa*.) A small table-land.

**Mesquit or Muskeet.** (Span. *mezquite*. *Algarobia glandulosa*.) An important tree of the Locust family, found in Texas, New Mexico, California, &c. It bears a long and narrow pod, filled with beans, which are eagerly eaten by horses and cattle. It is also valuable for fuel. On the arid plains, it is reduced to a mere shrub, when its roots greatly expand, and are much sought for firewood. The Pima Indians on the Gila grind the mesquit beans, and mix the flour with that of wheat, which adds much to its sweetness. This tree produces in large quantity a gum in almost every respect equal to gum arabic.

**Mesquit Grass.** (*Stipa spata*. Algonkin, *maskeht*, *maskit*, grass.) A fine, short grass, called also Lewis Grass, which grows with great vigor and beauty on the western prairies. It is usually found in very thick tufts and patches, interspersed with other grasses. It is very nutritious and palatable to cattle, horses, and sheep; and has the great advantage of preserving its sweetness, to a certain degree, through the winter. Sometimes called *Muskeet* and *Musketo*, which see. See same word in Addenda.

The *mesquit grass* gives the prairies of Western Texas their great superiority as a pasture ground, and mark it as for ever a pastoral country, whatever in other respects be its future. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 136.

**Mess.** A quantity of any thing, especially of milk obtained at a single milking.

**Message.** In the United States, an address or communication of a president or a governor, on public affairs, to the legislature. — *Worcester*. Thus we have the President's Inaugural *Message*, Annual *Message*, Veto *Message*, &c.

**Mestee** or **Mustee**. In the West Indies, the child of a white person and a quadroon. See *Metice*, *Metif*, *Metis*, Span. *Mestizo*.

**Metate**. (Mex. *metatl*.) A hollowed, oblong stone, in the form of an inclined plane, used by the Mexicans (both Indians and whites), for grinding Indian corn or wheat for tortillas, or cocoa for chocolate. .

For miles around the Casas Grandes [on the Gila] the plain is strewn with broken pottery and *metates*, or corn-grinders. — *Bartlett's New Mexico*.

A woman was kneeling upon the ground, under a fig-tree, rubbing the *metate*, and a pretty girl of fifteen was slapping a tortilla between her hands. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 349.

Within the last two days, we have seen but slight traces of Indians. Upon the banks of streams, we occasionally come across a *metate*. Some appear to have been recently used. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 96.

**Methy**. The Burbot (*Lota maculosa*), La Loche of the Canadians. This fish has given a name to a lake and portage in British North America (Cree). — *Sir J. Richardson, Arctic Searching Exp.*, Vol. I. p. 109.

**Metis**. (Span. *Mestizo*, Eng. *Mustee*.) The offspring of a white person and a quarteron or quadroon. See *Negro*.

**Middling Interest**. The middle class of people.

Men of the *middling interest* class are now the best off. Men who have done a safe and small business are now the richest. . . . They have felt they belonged to the *middling interest*, and have resolved to stay there, and not cope with the rich. *Connecticut Courant*.

A few years since there was a bank in Boston called the Bank of the "*Middle Interest*."

**Middlings**. 1. A coarse flour intermediate between the fine flour and the inferior quality; hardly known now, when the inferior flour is called "superfine."

2. A term used in the West for pork, meaning the portion of the animal between the hams and shoulders. Thus the "Price Current" quotes hams, shoulders, and *middlings*.

**Middling Well** is a common expression for tolerably well. "How are you to-day?" "Wall, I 'm pretty *middlin'*, jest so as to be knockin' around." According to Brockett, it is used in the same sense in the north of England.

Then it was, "Mr. Sawin, sir, you 're *middlin' well*, now, be ye? Step up an' take a nipper, sir. I 'm drefel glad to see ye." — *Biglow Papers*.

A lady told me that, on inquiring after the wife of one of her neighbors, he said, "Thank you, marm, she 's *middlin'* smart, nothin' alarmin'." In Virginia, to express the same condition of a person's health, the reply would be, "She 's barely tolerable."

**Midget.** The sand-fly; so called in Canada.

**Might,** used for "may;" "as might we," &c., in cases where not doubt, uncertainty, is implied, but where simply ability is mentally referred to, and, as to intent, is expressed. New England.

**Mighty.** Exceedingly, very. Colloquial in England and the United States, particularly at the South and West.

To the king's house; Knipp took us in, and brought us to Nelly [Gwynn], a most pretty woman. I kissed her, and so did my wife; and a *mighty* pretty soul she is. — *Pepys's Diary*, Vol. II. p. 8.

She untied her hair, then began to twirl the ringlets round her fingers and play with them in a coquettish manner, which she seemed to think *mighty* killing, for she smiled in evident self-conceit. — *London Zoist*.

The Doctor's was a *mighty* fine house, fronting the sea. — *Dickens, Dombey and Son*, ch. xi.

On my asking him the next morning how he found himself, he answered, *mighty* weak. — *Chastellux's Travels in North Am.* (1780), Vol. II. p. 14.

*Mighty* little, *mighty* few, *mighty* weak, &c., are favorite expressions in America. — *Ibid.*, note by Translator.

His face is *mighty* little for his body. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 184.

What *mighty* hard land it is on this road! The whole face of the earth is covered with stones, as thick as Kentucky land-titles. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 57.

You'll be *mighty* apt to get wet, said a thorough-bred Texan, who stood watching our movements. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 32.

A girl belonging to the hotel was shouting to the boys, who had been despatched to the barn for eggs, to "quit suckin' them thar eggs, or the candidates would stand a *mighty* small chance for thar dinner." — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 80.

**Mile.** Often in the singular with a numeral, instead of the plural *miles*. Mr. Hartshorne, in his Glossary, says its use is universal in England, where the vulgar never give it a plural. "The custom," he adds, "seems to receive countenance from some of our early English poets." — *Salopia Antiqua*.

Start the horses together for a hundred and fifty *mile*. — *Georgia Scenes*.

**Mileage** is a very large and even extravagant allowance made to members of Congress, and some others of the favored, for travelling expenses, eight dollars for every twenty miles.

*Constructive Mileage* is the same allowance for supposititious journeys from and to the seat of government. The allowance enures to members of the United States Senate once in every four years. When a new president comes into office, Congress adjourns, of course, on the 3d of March, the new president being inaugurated on the 4th. But the Senate is immediately called again into ses-

sion, to act on the nominations of the new president; and, though not a man of them leaves Washington, each is supposed to go home and come back again, in the course of the ten or twelve hours intervening between the adjournment and the reassembling. For this imaginary journey the senators are allowed their *mileage*; the sum being, in the case of senators from distant States, from \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Many of the senators, in 1845, when Mr. Polk was inaugurated, refused to pocket their *constructive mileage*, holding it to be an imposition on the public.

*Constructive mileage* is allowed when an extra session of Congress is called, whether the senators and members have actually gone to their homes or not, after the regular session.

The *mileage* is a still less excusable abomination. Texas sends hither two senators and two representatives, who receive, in addition to their pay, some \$2,500 each every session for merely coming here and going away again (I would sooner pay them twice the money to stay away), — \$10,000 in all for travelling expenses, which are not actually \$1,000. Arkansas will take \$6,000 out of the treasury, this year, merely for the travel of her senators. When we come to have senators and representatives from Oregon and California, we shall have to negotiate a loan expressly to pay the *mileage* of their members. — *Letter from H. Greeley, N. Y. Tribune*, May 2, 1848.

**Military Lands.** Lands granted to soldiers for military services.

**Milk-Sickness.** A fatal spasmodic disease, peculiar to the Western States; now said to be owing to astringent salts contained in the soil and waters of these regions (see Owen's *Geology of Kentucky*). It first attacks the cattle, and then those who eat beef or drink milk.

A few miles below Alton, on the Mississippi, I passed a deserted village, the whole population of which had been destroyed by the *milk-sickness*. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, Let. 2.

**Milking the Street.** The act of cliques or great operators, who hold stocks so well in hand that they cause any fluctuations they please. By alternately lifting and depressing shares, they take all the floating money in the market. — *Medbery*.

There is a distinction between the cliques and brokers. . . . Great operators rob the brokers by destroying their customers. To use the slang of the financial quarter, they *milk the street*. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 336.

The majority of stocks are still blocked, and the market, so far as possible, worked entirely upon the *milking* process. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept., 1876.

**Mill.** 1. An expression commonly applied to one who has experience of the world is, "He has been *through the mill*;" a phrase equivalent to "He has seen the elephant."

2. An imaginary American coin, the thousandth part of a dollar or tenth part of a cent.

**To mill.** To cockle, used of cloth.

**Mill Privilege.** A water privilege. The advantage of a water-fall, sufficient, when a dam is erected, to furnish power to operate a mill. See *Water Privilege*.

**Miller.** To *drown the miller* is to put too much water to the flour in making bread. It is, doubtless, an English expression. At all events, Wright says that *putting the miller's eye out* is a phrase used when too much liquid is put to any dry or powdery substance. The latter is also used in New England.

**Millerism.** The doctrines taught by the followers of William Miller.

When *Millerism* was makin' such a noise, the Wiggletown folks raly thought ther was something in it. Old Miss G — gave up all business, and didn't do nothin' but traipse round from house to house a takin' on about the eend of the world. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 123.

**Millerites.** The name of a religious sect, from its founder, William Miller.

The distinguishing doctrines of this sect are: a belief in the reappearance of Jesus Christ on earth, "with all his saints and angels; that he will raise the dead bodies of all his saints, and change the bodies of all that are alive on the earth that are his; and that both these living and raised saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There the saints will be judged. While this is being done in the air, the earth will be cleansed by fire; the bodies of the wicked will be burned; the devil and evil spirits will be banished from the earth, shut up in a pit, and will not be permitted to visit the earth again until a thousand years. This is the first resurrection and first judgment. Then Christ and his people will come down from the heavens, and live with his saints on the new earth." After a thousand years, a second death, resurrection, and judgment take place; when the righteous will possess the earth for ever. "The judgment day will be a thousand years in duration. The righteous will be raised and judged in the commencement, the wicked at the end of that day. The millennium is between the two resurrections and the two judgments." — *Evans's Hist. Religions*.

Believing in the literal fulfilment of the prophecies, the *Millerites* first asserted that, according to their calculations, the first judgment would take place about the year 1843. Subsequently, other periods were named; and so firm was the faith of many that the Saviour would descend from the heavens and take his followers up

into the air that they disposed of all their worldly treasures, provided themselves with "ascension robes," and waited with great anxiety for the sounding of the last trumpet, the signal for their aerial voyage. Many persons became insane in consequence of the excitement and fear attending this delusion. Others have come to their senses, owing to their repeated disappointments in not being elevated according to Father Miller's promise; and at the present time the sect has happily dwindled down to an insignificant number.

At the Franconia hotel, I first heard of the recent fanatical movement of the *Millerites*, or followers of one Miller, who taught that the millennium, or final destruction of the world, would come to pass last year, or on the 23d day of October, 1844. — *Lyell's Second Visit*, chap. v.

**Million.** A vulgar corruption of the word *melon*; as, "water-millions," water-melons; "mush-millions," musk-melons. The term seems to have been so used by the early settlers.

In orchards are all sorts of Apple-Trees; . . . with Colworts, *Musmillions*, Cucumbers, *Watermillions*, &c. — *True Relation of Virginia and Maryland* (1669), p. 5.

**Millish.** Militia. Southern.

The city "*millish*," embracing some of our very best citizens, have gone into camp at the fair-grounds. — *Charleston Mercury*, April, 1862.

**To mind.** 1. To recollect; remember. A common phrase at the South is, "*I mind me*," for "I remember." It is also used in Scotland.

I was invited to dine out in Boston; but, if I can *mind* the gentleman's name, I wish I may be shot. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 82.

I *mind* once, a good many years ago, Cross and I was over to St. Regis, on a cruise after marten and sable. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 331.

2. To watch, take care of. An English use of the word, although not in the dictionaries.

As soon as girls are old enough to be turned to any account, they are sent out to *mind* the baby. This *mind*ing the baby is, in reality, sauntering about the streets, and sitting down on door-steps, and gossiping with other baby-minders. *North British Review*, May, 1856.

Yes, said Margaret, I will keep Obed. I'll *mind* the beds when the birds are about. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

3. To remind; to notice. "*I didn't mind that*." "He *mind*ed me of my promise."

**Mingo.** (Creek Ind.) A native king among the Creeks, Choctaws, &c.

**Minister.** 1. A *catfish*.

2. A sculpin. Massachusetts.



**Ministerial.** 1. Kind, generous, appreciative, in respect to ministers of religion.

2. Furnishing, producing ministers.

There are persons in Mansfield who have listened to the preaching of the four generations of this ministerial family. — *Rev. R. C. Learned, in Cong. Quarterly*, July, 1861.

**Mink, Minx.** (*Putorius vison.*) A quadruped of the weasel kind, that burrows in the earth near water. It is generally to be found on the banks of streams, especially near farm-houses and mills. It swims and dives well, and can remain under water for a considerable time. It preys upon small fish, muscles, &c., but also commits depredations on the poultry-yard, and will devour rats, mice, &c.

**Mint-Julep.** A drink made of brandy and sugar, flavored with mint, to which pounded ice is added. See *Julep*.

Maryland, anciently written Merryland; so called because the inhabitants, not having the fear of the Lord before their eyes, were prone to make merry and get fuddled with *mint-juleps* and apple-toddy. — *W. Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**Mint-Stick.** Candy flavored with peppermint and made into sticks (pieces).

The soldiers hunger for dates, figs, *mint-stick*, ginger-cake, preserves, and other sweet stuff that the sutler keeps for sale. — *N. Y. Tribune, Letter from North Carolina*, June 13, 1862.

**Miscegenation.** The mingling of the black and white races by marriage.

**Misery.** Pain; as, "They say John Soaker never gets drunk; but he often has a *misery* in his head." The word is universal among the Negroes at the South.

**Miss.** Often used instead of "Mrs.," by uneducated people, in addressing or speaking of married women, especially in the West.

**To miss a Figure** is to commit a vital error.

**Miss-Lick.** When an axe or knife cuts out of line, it is called in the West a *miss-lick*.

**To mis-recollect.** To forget. "If I do not mis-recollect." *Huck-cock's Religion of Geology*.

The Senate, if we do not *mis-recollect*, has twice passed a bill abolishing the franking privilege. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 21, 1862.

**Misremember.** To forget. "I misremember;" i. e., if I am not mistaken. See *Disremember*.

I think you understand that beautiful figure of speech, Mr. Slick, for, if I don't *misremember*, you are a dab at paintin' in iles yourself, ain't you? — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 30.

**Misrepresentative.** A representative who misrepresents his constituents.

The Senate listened to-day to a philippic from Mr. Sumner against Mr. Bright, and to a bitter reply from that *misrepresentative* of Indiana. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 26, 1862.

**Missing.** To be *among the missing* is to be absent, to leave, to run away.

There comes old David for my militia fine. I don't want to see him, and think I will be *among the missing*. — *Sketches of New York*.

**Mission Schools.** The American term for what the English denote by ragged schools.

**Missionarying.** The doing missionary work. "The Independent," April 24, 1862, in a sketch of the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, says: —

He was always fond of *missionarying*.

**To missionate.** To act as a missionary. Not well authorized. — *Webster*. To sustain missions, as for propagandism.

Mr. Pickering notices this absurd word, which he found in the "Missionary Herald."

The Romish Church *missionated* for civil rule, for a secular and supreme sway. And so she sends for her priests as spiritual politicians of the lowest type. — *The Congregationalist*, *Serm. of J. E. Withrow, D.D.*

**Missouri Compromise.** A name popularly given to an act of Congress which was passed in 1820, and was intended to reconcile the two great sections that were struggling, the one to promote, the other to hinder, the extension of slavery. By this act, it was determined that Missouri should be admitted into the Union as a slaveholding State, but that slavery should never be established in any State, to be formed in the future, lying north of lat. 36° 30'. — *Wheeler's Dictionary*.

**Missouri-isms.** The Missourians have quite a *penchant* for curious characterization. The members of the Legislature are divided into Charcoals, Clay-banks, White-legs, and Snow-flakes. The first and last are the extremes of both parties. The "Charcoal" believes slavery a moral enormity, "the sum of all villainies," as well as an impediment to the prosperity of the State. The "Clay-bank" says nothing about its moral character, and some of them absolutely believe it free from moral taint, but a curse to the material interests of the State. The "White-leg" is the strong Union Democrat, who is not considered quite reliable by the more ultra, who are the "Snow-flakes." The "White-legs" would support gradual emancipation. Then they have two words to express the idea of underhand plotting; to wit, "skullduggery" and "chenanigan." — *Exchange Paper*.

**Mistake.** The phrase, "*and no mistake*," is used —

1. As an equivalent for certainly, positively; as, "I will soon pay you a visit, *and no mistake*." It is now being replaced by *sure*. And —

2. For decided, positively known, thorough, as: —

Let the President call on the *no-mistake* Unionists of the South, — those who have never been traitors for an instant, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1861.

**Mitten.** When a gentleman is jilted by a lady, or is discarded by one to whom he has been paying his addresses, he is said to have *got the mitten*.

Young gentlemen that have *got the mitten*, or young gentlemen who think they are going to *get the mitten*, always sigh. It makes them feel bad. — *Neal's Sketches*.

There is a young lady I have set my heart on; though whether she is a-goin' to give me hern, or *give me the mitten*, I ain't quite satisfied. But I rather kinder sorter guess so, than kinder sorter not so. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 90.

**To mitten.** To reject a lover.

Once, when I was young as you, and not so smart, perhaps,  
For me she *mittened* a lawyer, and several other chaps.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 19.

**Mixed.** Short for mixed with uncertainty, doubtful.

**Mixed up.** Confused, promiscuous.

Ses I, "Gentlemen, you hear this critter compar me, a free Amarakin, to his darned heathen dumb brute of Afriky." And with that I fetched the monkey a sling that sent him a whirlin' about sixty-five yards, over a brick wall; and the next minit the Dutchman and his boy was the most *mixed-up* pile of rags and splinters that you ever see, in one mud-hole. — *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

**Mizzy.** Pain in the bowels. Louisiana.

**Mobee.** A fermented liquor made by the Negroes in the West Indies, prepared with sugar, ginger, and snake-root. It is sold by them in the markets. — *Carmichael's West Indies*. *Mobby*. — *Bailey's Dic*.

**Mobocracy.** The sway of the mob.

**Mobtown.** A name given long ago to the city of Baltimore, and which the lawless character of a portion of the inhabitants renders a not unfitting appellation at the present day.

**Moccason or Moccasin.** (Algonkin Ind.) An Indian shoe, made of soft leather without a stiff sole, and commonly ornamented round the ankle. — *Worcester*.

**Moccasoned.** Intoxicated. South Carolina.

**Moccason Fish.** The sun-fish of Maryland.

**Moccason Snake.** A snake of bright color, reputed poisonous, of which there are several varieties.

**Mock Auction.** A pretended auction sale used to entrap people from the country. New York.

**Mock Auctioneer.** A man engaged in a mock auction establishment.

Every person who obtains any money or property from another, . . . by any of the practices known as *mock auctions*, is punishable by imprisonment, &c. — *Draft of Penal Code for the State of New York*, 1864, § 627.

**Mocker-Nut.** (*Juglans tomentosa*.) White-heart hickory.

**Mock Orange.** (*Prunus Caroliniana*.) A small evergreen tree growing southward from North Carolina. It resembles the cherry laurel of Europe, and is a beautiful tree for cultivation.

**Mocking Bird.** 1. (*Turdus polyglottus*.) This capricious little mimic is of a cinereous color, paler beneath. It inhabits America from New England to Brazil, but is rare and migratory in the Northern States, whilst it is common and resident in the Southern. This bird, although it cannot vie with most of the American species in brilliancy of plumage, is much sought for on account of its wonderful faculty of imitating the tone of every inhabitant of the woods, from the twitter of the humming-bird to the scream of the eagle. — *Encycl. Americana*.

2. See *Nine-Killer*.

**Mocuck.** (Chippeway, *makak* or *mokuk*.) A term applied to the box of birch-bark in which sugar is kept by the Chippeway Indians.

**Molasses.** Used as a plural in the West; as, "Will you give me some of those molasses?" When England condescends to use this word instead of *treacle*, she generally makes it plural.

**Molly Cotton-Tail.** A rabbit.

**Mollygasher.** A negro from Madagascar. The original corruption was *Malagasy*, from which came *Mollygasher*.

**Molly Maguires.** A society in Pennsylvania, in character similar to the Ribbon Societies of Ireland, so far as they dealt with local agrarian troubles.

"The Molly Maguires of the coal regions were composed almost entirely of Irishmen, and they kept the forms and practices of the secret societies of the old country. They combined against mine-owners and overseers as they had combined against landlords and agents, and from their combination came assassinations likewise, although with less excuse, if there can be any excuse for assassination, for they were not starved or evicted. Their crimes were worse,

as their excuse was less; and the cruelty was as ferocious as the offence that caused it petty. In committing the murders, the society took the course common in Ireland, and had it done by persons unknown in the section where the victims lived, and returns of courtesies were arranged by which murders were exchanged. They also pursued the same course in regard to terrorism of witnesses and to subornation of perjury, and consequently for a long time made trials a farce."

Murders were committed, and great quantities of coal and other property destroyed by incendiarism. In 1875, they terrorized over the whole country, threatened whole towns, and compelled the ordering out of the militia. On the withdrawal of the troops, a series of the most cruel murders was committed, until at length, by strategy, ten of the members of the society were arrested for the crime. Notwithstanding the efforts made by the members, who appeared to swear to an alibi, but who were advised by counsel to go home and not be prosecuted for perjury, all were convicted of murder, and on the 20th June, 1877, executed. — *Providence Journal*.

**Mommick.** To cut any thing awkwardly. Provincial in various parts of England. — *Hallivell, Wright*. A word used in the South and in western New York and Pennsylvania; in the latter pronounced *mommuxed*. It may be the same as the word which follows, although used in a different sense.

In the Congression Reports on the Hamburg massacre of the late war, a negro witness thus testified in relation to a man who was shockingly mangled and left to die: —

"He was so bloody I couldn't exactly see how he was shot, but I noticed a place on his hip that looked like he was chopped with an axe or hatchet. It was cut in a sort of laying over. He was the worst *mommicked* up man I 'most ever seen. — *Senate Rept. Miss. Docm.*, No. 48, 44th Cong. 1st Session.

**Mommock.** To handle. "Don't *mommock* these things," i. e. don't handle or disarrange them. A term in use at Old Plymouth, Mass. Wright notices the word *mummick*, to maul, as common in various English dialects, which may be the same word.

**Money.** Among the many names for money are Brads; Dimes; Dooterumus, shortened to Doot; Hardscales; Hardstuff; Mopusses; Rags; Rocks; Scads; Shinplasters; Spelter; Stamps; Stuff; Shot; Spoons; Sugar; Tin; and the universal one of Greenbacks.

**Monitor.** The name given by Captain Ericsson, a distinguished naval engineer, to the first iron-clad vessel constructed under his

direction, having a revolving turret. This vessel was built in New York, whence she went to Hampton Roads in Virginia, where, in her memorable action with the Confederate iron-clad, "Merrimack," she rendered important service to the Union cause. Soon after (Dec. 31, 1862), the "Monitor" foundered at sea, while on her voyage to Charleston. A number of vessels of similar construction built during the late civil war were called *Monitors*. See *Turret-Ship*.

Our *Monitor*, — she earned her title well.

Though short the race she run,  
She left a record for the world to tell

Of "victory nobly won."

Tenderly guard her in thy depths, O Sea!

For never nobler vessel sailed o'er thee.

All honor then to Ericsson, who planned the *Monitor*,  
And knew its fighting qualities, before we dreamed of war!  
And may brave Worden never know a nation's cold neglect,  
So long as we've a *Monitor* our Union to protect.

*Ballad of the Monitor and Merrimack.*

**Monk-Fish.** See *Devil-Fish*.

**Monkey.** The weight of a pile-driver.

**Monkey-Shines.** Tricks, such as those of boys at play; proceedings at once farcical and reprehensible.

**Monongahela.** A river of Pennsylvania, so called, gave its name to the rye whiskey of which large quantities were produced in its neighborhood, and indeed to American whiskey in general, as distinguished from Usquebaugh and Inishowen, the Scotch and Irish sorts.

**Monroe Doctrine.** The historical "*Monroe doctrine*" consisted of two declarations, the first of which grew out of the discussions had in 1823, and earlier, between our government and that of Russia and Great Britain in regard to the proper limits of our North-western territory. The leading powers of Europe up to that time had been accustomed to consider the unoccupied portions of the western world as still open, in point of public law, to settlement and colonization as derelict territory, upon which they might enter and which they might subsequently hold, on condition of occupying the land. For the sake of rebutting this pretension, at least so far as it might be held to restrict our territorial claims in the North-west, the administration of Mr. Monroe took the occasion to assert, "as a principle, in which the rights and interests of the United States were involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are

henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power." It is well known that Mr. John Quincy Adams was the author of this "principle;" and the motives by which he was influenced in propounding it are elaborately set forth in the correspondence he had at that period with Mr. Middleton, then our minister at the Russian court, as also with Mr. Rush, our able ambassador at the Court of St. James. His argument was, in brief, that the South American States and Mexico, by virtue of their independence, had acceded to all the proprietary rights formerly enjoyed by Spain; and since the United States claimed to extend their jurisdiction to the Pacific, and thus over the whole of the North-western territory which they had not yet actually occupied, it hence resulted that both the northern and southern continents of America had passed under the civil dominion of the several States among which they were parcelled. In other words, it was contended that the flag of some power now covered and protected all the territory of the western world, which, being thus preoccupied by civilized nations, would henceforth be accessible to Europeans and to each other only on the footing of so many independent sovereignties claiming and asserting a jurisdiction which shielded the whole continent from encroachments, under the old and long-recognized rights of discovery and settlement. The "*Monroe doctrine*," under this head, had that extent and no more.

The second branch of the declaration made by President Monroe, in his annual message of 1823, related to the apprehended attempt of the European powers, combined in the Holy Alliance, to resubjugate the Spanish-American States which had thrown off their allegiance to the mother country. These powers had solemnly declared at Verona, in 1822, their "resolution to repel the maxim of rebellion, in whatever place or under whatever form it might show itself," as before at Troppau they had publicly announced "that the European States have an undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in regard to those nations in which the overthrow of government might operate as an example." Who does not see that a blow aimed at the Spanish provinces, in pursuance of principles such as these, was equally directed at us, as the revolted provinces of Great Britain, and in which, if anywhere, the "overthrow of government" might be deemed to operate as an "example" calling for chastisement? At the same time, Great Britain, by virtue of her constitutional principles of civil liberty, was equally averse to such a policy as was espoused by the Holy Alliance, and, moreover, had already entered into favorable commercial relations with the Spanish-

American republics, which she was unwilling to renounce or to subject anew to the hazards and interruptions of war. Under these circumstances it was that Mr. Canning, then the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, proposed to Mr. Rush that "the government of the United States should go hand in hand with England" in resisting any attempt directed to the resubjugation of the revolted colonies of Spain; and it was in consequence of such a previous concert of views between the two governments, as well as in obedience to obvious considerations of public policy, that Mr. Monroe declared, in 1823, that the United States would consider any "attempt of the Allied Powers to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." — *National Intelligencer*, Sept. 18, 1858.

For eight years we have diplomatized with England on the subject, and the question is now more complicated than ever. Perhaps, after the lapse of another term of eight years, we may, by some treaty with England, be admitted to a participation in the facilities for inter-oceanic communication which the isthmus [of Panama] affords. But as to any peculiar, not to say exclusive, advantages in the isthmus, which we have claimed, they cannot be obtained. While other nations were passive, it was thought here that we could secure the isthmus by the insertion of a plank in a party platform, or some other legerdemain. If we now fall back on the *Monroe doctrine*, we shall see the difference between an abstraction and its application in practice. Our theory is yet to be defined and recognized and applied. — (*Baltimore Sun*, Oct. 30, 1858.

**Monté.** (Span.) A game of chance played with cards, of which the Spanish-Americans are excessively fond.

There are other games at cards practised among the people, depending more upon skill; but that of *el monte*, being one exclusively of chance, possesses an all-absorbing attraction difficult to be conceived of by the uninitiated spectator. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. I. p. 239.

I passed through an open door leading into a back room, where were a small party of men and women betting at *monte*. I lost a couple of dollars, "just to get the hang of the game," as the facetious Sam Slick would say, and then retired to my lodgings. — *Kendall, Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 46.

**Monumental City.** Baltimore; so called from the several fine monuments it contains.

What, under the circumstances, would not have been the fate of the *Monumental City*, of Harrisburg, of Philadelphia, of Washington, . . . each and every one of which would have lain at the mercy of the enemy. — *Edward Everett*.

**Moondown.** The setting, or time of setting, of the moon.

They landed at Santa Rosa Island, at about a quarter of an hour to *moondown*, or 11 o'clock P. M. — *Florida Corr. of N. Y. Tribune*.

**Moonglade.** A beautiful word for the track of moonlight on the water.



**Moonrise.** Rising, or time of rising, of the moon. — *N. Y. Tribune.*

**Moonshiners.** A term applied in the West to the makers of illicit whiskey, or who evade the excise on the article.

Nelson County, Kentucky, is the home of the *Moonshiner*; that is, the manufacturer of illicit whiskey. . . . The *Moonshiner* regards the revenue officer as a being to be extinguished, and favorable opportunity is the only thing he asks for putting his belief into practice. — *Corr. N. Y. Evening Post*, June 16, 1877.

A Nashville despatch says the revenue officers recently broke up fourteen illicit distilleries, capturing twelve *moonshiners*. — *N. Y. Herald.*

**Moonshower.** A shower which descends from a cloud so situated as not to obscure the moon's rays. New England.

**Moose.** (*Cervus alces*.) The Abenaki Indian name of an animal of the genus *Cervus*, and the largest of the deer kind, growing sometimes to the height of seventeen hands, and weighing twelve hundred pounds. This animal inhabits cold northern climates, being found in the forests of Canada and New England.

Lechford, in his early account of New England, entitled "Plaine Dealing," &c., printed in 1642, says: —

There are beares, wolves, and foxes, and many other wild beasts, as the *moose*, a kind of deare, as big as some oxen and lyons, as I have heard.

In a letter of the Rev. Francis Higginson, sent about July 24, 1629, from Naumkeag (Salem), Mass., he says: —

Here are several sorts of deere. Also . . . a great beast called a molke, as bigge as an ox. — *Felt's Annals of Salem*, who in a note adds, "It is likely that the molke is what is commonly called a *moose*."

**Moose-Bird.** A name of the Canada Jay. (*Ganulus Canadensis*.) Maine. Also called *Whiskey Jack*, which see.

**Moose-Fly.** A stout brown fly, resembling a horse-fly, rusty-colored beneath, with unspotted wings. They bite sharply. Common in Maine. — *Thoreau, Maine Woods*, p. 228. The Abenakis call them *Bososquasis*.

**Moose-Wood.** A species of maple-tree, upon the leaves of which the moose feeds. See *Leather-Wood*.

Some of the deer were close along shore, feeding upon the grass that grew there; others were nibbling at the leaves of the *moose-wood* upon the bank. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 145.

**Moose-Yard.** During the winter, the moose, in families of fifteen or twenty, seek the depth of the forest for shelter and food. Such a herd will range throughout an extent of about five hundred acres, subsisting upon the mosses attached to the trees, or browsing the tender branches of saplings, especially of the tree called *Moose-*

**wood.** The Indians name parts of the forest thus occupied *moose-yards*. — *Godman's American Nat. Hist.*

In the far-away northernmost wilds of Maine,  
Where the murmuring pines all the year complain,  
The stalwart wood-cutter pitches his camp;  
In his cabin of logs trims his winter lamp.  
And oft when the *moose-herd* hath formed its *yard*,  
And trampled the snows like a pavement hard,  
The woodman forsakes his sled and his team,  
And his harvest of logs by the frozen stream;  
And, armed with his axe and his rifle, he goes  
To slaughter the moose blocked in by the snows;  
And many a savory banquet doth cheer  
The fireside joys of his wintry year,  
With the haunch of the moose and the dappled deer.

*N. Y. Knickerbocker*, Oct., 1858.

**Mop-Board.** The wash-board which extends around the floor at the base of the walls in the interior of a house is so called in New England.

**More.** The comparative endings *-er* and *-est* are very commonly discarded both by speakers and writers, even from monosyllabic adjectives, and their places supplied by *more* and *most*.

The first edition of the work contained a *more full* vocabulary of English words than the dictionaries which at that time were generally used in schools. —  *Worcester, Preface to Dictionary*, 1856.

The Mexican clergy are nowhere famous for strictness of life or purity of character. They have the reputation of being *more fond* of cards than of their breviaries. — *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. XVII. p. 179.

**Morgan.** The phrase, "*He's a good enough Morgan*," originated as follows: During the "Anti-Masonic" warfare in the State of New York, a great excitement was created by the abduction of one Morgan, who was said to have been confined by the Free-masons in or near Fort Niagara, and afterwards drowned in the river. The alleged reason for the reported crime was Morgan's betrayal of Masonic secrets. The excitement was worked up to the highest pitch, by the finding of a dead body floating in the river, which was said to be that of Morgan. Even his wife swore to the identity, and a lost tooth was fitted into the jaw. It was afterwards, however, ascertained beyond a doubt that the body was not that of Morgan, whose fate still is a mystery.

It was asserted that the whole affair was got up for political effect. A current story was, that a celebrated politician concerned in the affair, upon being reminded that the dead body found would not pass for Morgan, said that it was "*a good enough Morgan*," for

his purpose. The phrase has now passed into general use, and is applied to a really or supposed bare-faced imposition, particularly in politics. — *G. C. Schaeffer.*

**Morgan Horse.** A type of horse bearing his name, and coming from Vermont, is familiar to the sporting world. This breed of horses is traced back to the beginning of the present century, and derives its name from Justin Morgan, of Randolph, Vermont, a schoolmaster, who owned the animal from which all have descended.

**Mormon.** 1. The pretended author of the "Book of Mormon."

Behold I were about to write them all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbid it, saying, I will try the faith of my people; therefore I, *Mormon*, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. — *Book of Nephi*, chap. xii.

2. One of the Mormonites, or Latter-day Saints, a religious sect which derive their name from the "Book of *Mormon*."

The Book of Mormon, first published in the year 1830, purports to be the record or history of a certain people who inhabited America previous to its discovery by Columbus. This history, containing prophecies and revelations, was engraven (according to it), by the command of God, on small brass plates, and deposited in the hill Comora, in Western New York. These plates were discovered (the Mormons say) by Joseph Smith, in the year 1825: they contain certain hieroglyphics, in the Egyptian character, which Smith, guided by inspiration, translated. They purported to give the history of America from its first settlement by a colony from the tower of Babel, to the fifth century of our era. It stated that the Saviour made his appearance upon this continent after his resurrection; that he planted the gospel here, had his apostles, prophets, teachers, &c.; that the people were cut off in consequence of their transgressions; and that the last of their prophets wrote the Book of Mormon on the brass plates above named, "which he hid in the earth until it should come forth and be united with the Bible, for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days."

Smith readily found many to believe his statements, and in 1830 organized his first church of Mormons in Manchester, Ontario County, New York. Other preachers sprang up, who "saw visions and prophesied, cast out devils and healed the sick by the laying on of hands," and performed other miracles. New churches or societies were formed in other States, until in a few years their number amounted to many thousands. They removed in a body to Missouri, where a most cruel and relentless persecution sprang up against them, which forced them to quit their homes and the State.

They then sought a refuge in Illinois, where they founded a city called Nauvoo, in which they erected an immense edifice or temple.

Persecution followed these people in Illinois. They were attacked by armed bodies of men, by order of the State authorities, driven out by force, and compelled to abandon or sacrifice their property. Such as survived the persecution, after traversing the boundless prairies, the deserts of the Far West, and the Rocky Mountains, finally found a resting-place near the Great Salt Lake, where some forty thousand of them have established themselves, and (now 1857) chiefly constitute the Territory of Utah.

**Mormondom.** The country occupied by the Mormons; the whole body of Mormons.

**Mormonism.** The doctrines of the Mormonites.

**Mormonites.** The followers of the factitious prophet Mormon, usually called Mormons.

**Morphrodite**, for *Hermaphrodite*. A common pronunciation among seamen, and in seaports, for a two-masted vessel of a particular rig.

*First Down-easter.* What sort of the way is that for a colonel to rig himself?

*Second Down-easter.* *Morphrodite* rig, I guess. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune.*

**Mortal.** Used in vulgar parlance adverbially for *mortally*, i. e. excessively.

It was a *mortal* hot day, and people actually sweated to that degree it laid the dust. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., p. 102.

**To mosey.** 1. To be off; to leave; to sneak away. A low expression. The following is said to be the origin of the word: A post-master in Ohio by the name of Moses ran away with a considerable sum of money belonging to the government. *To mosey off*, or to run away, as Mr. Moses had, then became a by-word in Ohio, and, with its meaning somewhat extended, has spread over the Union.

After I left you, or rather after you left me, when them fellows told you to *mosey off* before the boat went to sea. — *N. Y. Family Companion.*

2. *To mosey along.* To jog along; to manage to get along.

I'll get a room nicely furnished, and my wife and I will jes *mosey along* till the election trouble is over, an' den dere'll be a powerful sight of whitewashin' to be done. — *N. Y. Tribune.*

Sternberg gives *malter* and *moulter*, as provincial in Northamptonshire, with the same meaning as to "mosey." The word more properly originated from the Spanish *vamose*, very common at the South-west and in California, which has the same meaning. See *Vamose*.

**Mosey Sugar.** The name of a cake made of sugar for children. Pennsylvania.

**Moshay.** A slave who came from Florida at the beginning of the late civil war states that this is the name given there to the keeper of bloodhounds.

**Mosquito Bar, Musquito Net.** A net or curtain which, in the Southern States and in the West Indies, is placed over the bed to protect a person from mosquitoes.

**Mosquito Hawk.** Dragon-fly. Louisiana.

**Mossbunker.** (*Alosa menhaden*.) A fish of the herring kind. See *Menhaden* and *Bunker*.

This bay [New York] swarms with fish, both large and small, whales, tunnies, and porpoises, whole schools of innumerable other fish, and a sort of herring called the *marshauckers*, and other kinds. — *Dankers and Sluyter, Voyage to New York*, 1679, in *Coll. L. I. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. I. p. 100.

Under the surfaces, and inside the exterior of all these [smooth characters], there may be found as many asperities as there are bones in a *mossbunker*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**Most.** A common error in speaking and writing for *almost*.

Most of us Americans have been to see the "monster nugget." It was found about three months ago at Kingower, one hundred and thirty miles from Melbourne, by four old California miners. They have been four years in the digging, and had *most* a pile before striking the last prize. — *Letter of J. F. Thornton*, Dec. 24, 1857, in *San Francisco Bulletin*.

**Moth-Miller.** (Genus *Tinea*.) A small moth very destructive of woollen fabrics, furs, &c., the detestation of housekeepers.

**Motte or Mot.** (French.) A clump of trees in a prairie; also called "an island of timber." Texas.

It is not necessary that prairies should be entirely destitute of trees; for there are timber prairies, where trees grow in *mottes* or groves, sometimes termed islands, from their resemblance to wooded islands in the sea. — *Mayne Reid, The Boy Hunters*.

Before us lay beautiful prairies, with the smooth-grassed surface, varied here and there by herds of cattle and little belts, *mottes*, and groups of live oak. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 137.

All that was necessary was to keep a bright look-out, and not fall into an ambuscade while passing the different *mots* and ravines scattered along our trail. — *Kendall's Santa Fe Exped.*, Vol. I.

**Mought.** This obsolete preterite of *may* is still heard among old people in the interior parts of New England.

"What *mought* your name be?" said Potter.

"Well," said I, "it *mought* be Mr. Samuel. I thought I'd keep back Slick, for I knew he wouldn't talk if he knew who I was. — *Sam Slick, Wise Sarr*, p. 131.

**Mounds.** An artificial elevation made of earth of various forms for sepulchral and other purposes, of which large numbers are found, chiefly in the wider bottom lands, and at the junction of the tributaries of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. In the most fertile valleys, and those most easy of cultivation, these mounds are found in the greatest numbers. In England, they would be termed tumuli or barrows.

**Mound-Builders.** The aboriginal race which erected the ancient mounds and other earthworks found in the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and their tributaries.

If we admit the correctness of Mr. Gallatin's views [that the ancient agriculture of North America originated between the tropics], we must derive the agriculture of the *mound-builders* from the South, and assign that race chronologically a comparatively low date. This we are not prepared to do; on the contrary, there are many facts going to establish for the *mound-builders* a very high antiquity, &c. — Squier, *Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*.

We need not look to Mexico or any other country for the descendants of the *mound-builders*. We probably see them in the present red race of the same or adjacent regions. — Lapham's *Antiq. of Wisconsin*.

The red man came, . . .

The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce;

And the *mound-builders* vanished from the earth.

The solitude of centuries untold

Has settled where they dwell. — Bryant, *The Prairies*.

**Mound-City.** The city of St. Louis, so called from the number of artificial mounds that occupied the site on which the city is built.

**Mourners.** Persons on the "anxious seat" in Methodist churches, and at "revival" meetings, are technically termed "*mourners*;" that is, persons mourning for their sins.

"Crowding the *mourners*," in political slang, means adding some further embarrassment to politicians laboring under difficulties.

**Moutn't** for *mightn't* has given rise to *maytn't* for *mayn't*. In a country school, a great overgrown boy will rise on the back seat, and say very sheepishly to the schoolma'am, "Please, marm, *maytn't* I gweout?"

**To move.** 1. For *to remove*. To change one's residence. In the city of New York, it is the custom to hire houses by the year from the first day of May; and as many, especially of the poorer class, remove every year or two, an immense deal of puss-in-the-corner playing takes place on that day, producing many curious scenes to astonish the stranger. The custom is being gradually "honored in the breach" of it; but had Hogarth been a New Yorker, and lived

twenty or thirty years ago, May-day would certainly have found a place in his delineations of human eccentricities.

These are great *moring* times. The sovereigns of Europe are being *mored*, much against their will; and the sovereign people of New York are on the eve of *moring*, according to custom, which has made the May-day sports of this city a very peculiar feature. Could the sovereigns of Europe only *move* as easily as the sovereigns of New York do, from house to house, palace to palace, &c., they would be well content, and not complain, as many movers to-morrow will. *N. Y. Sunday Atlas*, April 30, 1848.

Mr. Irving gives the following humorous account of the origin of this custom of *moving* on the first of May:—

The memorable emigration [of the people of Communipaw to New Amsterdam] took place on the first of May, and was long cited in tradition as the *grund moring*. The anniversary of it was piously observed among their sons, by turning their houses topsy-turvy, and carrying all their furniture into the streets, &c. And this is the real origin of the universal agitation and *moring* by which this most restless of cities is literally turned out-of-doors on every May-day.—*Knickerbocker*, *N. Y.*

2. To go, depart. Much used in familiar language, particularly in the phrase *to be moving*. Some of our novelists are borrowing from English novelists the absurd pseudo-poetical *flitting*, only provincial in England.

As soon as the ceremony was over, "Now," says I, "we must *be a moring*." *Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*, p. 166.

**Much.** In New England, "He is very *much* of a man," means, he is a man of very good qualities; and, when a discarded suitor says of his former mistress, "She is not *much* of a girl after all," he means to imply that she is "no great shakes."

**Mud-Cracker.** A name given by boys to a fire-cracker which explodes with a dull report.

**Mud-Dabbler.** A species of small fresh-water fish, of the same appearance as the *sucker*, although much smaller.

**Mud-Devil.** See *Water-Dog* and *Salamander*.

**Muddle.** A confusion, as of those who muddle.

A respectable wing of slaveholders will be attached [to a proposed political party]; and we shall all go along beautifully in a mild *muddle* of pro-slavery Compromises. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 19, 1862.

**Mud-Fish.** (*Melanura pygmæa*.) A small fish on the Atlantic coast, which burrows in the mud.

**Mud-Head.** A nickname applied to the natives of Tennessee.

**Mud-Hen.** 1. The euphonious and rather peculiar epithet applied by the brokers' clerks to that class of women that engage in the fasci-

nating but uncertain game of stock speculations. The average "mud-hen" is middle-aged, rather stout in person, as voluble in conversation as a stump-speaker, and possessed of an inordinate desire to become a "stock-sharp." She has a wonderful amount of gossip and "dead-sure points" to communicate, and is by no means unwilling to reveal all she knows to any one who is supposed to have information relative to any stock, and in return can give her a point. — *San Francisco Post*, Nov., 1876.

2. (*Rallus Virginianus*.) The common name of the Virginia Rail of ornithologists. It inhabits small streams and marshes.

**Mud-Hook.** An anchor.

We soon let down our *mud-hook*. . . . In the morning, the sea had gone down.  
*Virginia Cur. N. Y. Tribune.*

**Mud-Poke.** (*Grus cinerea*.) A wading bird; a crane.

Squatting himself down on the edge of a pond, catching fish for hours together, and bearing no little resemblance to the notable bird of the crane family, ycleped *Mud-Poke*. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*, p. 317.

**Mud-Pout.** See *Cat-Fish* and *Pout*.

**Mud-Scoop.** A dredge; a dredging machine or boat used in taking mud from the bottom of rivers.

**Mud-Sill.** The longitudinal timber laid upon the ground to form the foundation for a railway. Hence figuratively applied to the laboring classes, as the substratum of society, in the following passage of a speech of Senator Hammond of South Carolina, which has occasioned much remark: —

In all social systems, there must be a class to perform the drudgery of life; that is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very *mud-sill* of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air as to build either the one or the other except on this *mud-sill*. — *Speech of Senator Hammond*, March 4, 1858.

It is time that Virginia was turning her attention to manufactures, mechanics, mining, and foreign commerce. No country, no State, can live upon one only of the five cardinal powers of production. She must resort to all the five combined, and she is doing it. I say that labor is not the "*mud-sill*" of society; and I thank God that the old colonial aristocracy of Virginia, which despised mechanical and manual labor, is nearly run out. — *Speech of Governor Wise of Virginia*, 1858.

Yet the haughty Creole lady's sorest sorrow lies not there;  
'Tis not that the Yankee *mud-sills* will pollute her sacred air.

*Ballad of the Crescent City.*

**Mud-Sill Clubs.** The miners and working-men of California who support Broderick in his opposition to the administration are pre-



paring for a vigorous campaign, and are already organizing themselves into associations which they style "*Mud-sill Clubs.*" — *New York Evening Post*, 1858.

**Mud-Turtle.** (*Sternotherus odorata.*) The popular name of a reptile common in all parts of the United States. Marsh Tortoise and Mud Terrapin are other names for the same.

Love tunes the shepherd's pipe, and makes him blow it out with a warmth and energy sufficient to move a *mud-turtle*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 25.

**Mulada.** (Span.) A drove of mules.

We recognized the horsemen as a band of robbers, and their object was plain; collected our *mulada* into a compact body, with our pieces cocked, ready for service. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 65.

The Indians frightened the mules, which, turning round, broke the pole of the wagon. As this accident prevented us keeping up with the *mulada* ahead, the conductor went to the assistance of the men driving the herd. — *Wood's Report on the Pacific Wagon-Road*, p. 7.

**Mulatto.** (Span. *mulato*, *mulo*, mule.) A *mulatto* is the offspring of a white and a negro; a *quadroon*, of a white and a *mulatto*, being one quarter black; a *mustee*, of a white and a *quadroon*, or one eighth black; and a *mustafina*, of a white and a *mustee*, being one sixteenth black. Terms implying a much less admixture of blood are prevalent in Cuba. — *Balt. Sun*, Sept. 3, 1858. See *Negro*; also *Sambo*.

**Mule Deer.** (*Cervus macrotis.*) The largest of the true deer found in North America. It derives its scientific name, *macrotis*, from the great length of its ears, resembling those of the mule, whence it is sometimes called the *Mule Deer*. Its more common appellation, Black-tail Deer, is owing to the black tip to its tail. — *S. F. Baird*.

**Mule Rabbit.** See *Jackass Rabbit*.

**Muley or Mooley Cow.** A name quite common in New England, and, we believe, elsewhere. *Muley*, a cow, is equally common. In Connecticut, it is distinctly a hornless cow. Provincial in England. *Halliwell*.

*Mooly cow, mooly cow, home from the wood,  
They sent me to fetch you as fast as I could.  
The sun has gone down: it is time to go home:  
Mooly cow, mooly cow, why don't you come?*

*Mrs. Anna M. Wells.*

**Muley Saw.** (Germ. *Mühlsäge*, mill-saw.) That variety of mill-saw which is not hung in the gate. It is also spelled *mulay*, *moiley*, *muhley*, the last indicating its origin.

**To mull.** To soften and dispirit. — *Johnson*. The only authority cited by Johnson is from Shakspeare:—

Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy,  
*Mull'd*, deaf, sleepy, insensible. — *Coriolanus*.

Used in New England: 1. In the sense of stirring, bustling in an underhand way, and is a metaphor derived from mulling wine.

There has been a pretty considerable *mullin'* going on among the doctors, ever sen the quack medicine came out. — *Margaret*, p. 170.

2. To think; to meditate.

At the annual dinner of the New England Society, in New York, Mr. Clemens (Mark Twain), in speaking of "Old Probabilities," and the frequent changes of weather, said: —

He doesn't know what the weather is going to be in New England. . . . Well, he *mulls* over it, and by and by he gets out something about like this, &c.

**Mumble the Peg.** A boy's game. It consists in endeavoring to draw out with the teeth a peg driven almost wholly into the ground. The successful one of course wins.

**Mummachog.** (Genus *Fundulus*.) The popular name of the Barred Killifish of naturalists. It is a small fish from two to four inches in length, and frequents the salt-water creeks and the vicinity of the wharves. This Indian name is retained on both sides of Long Island Sound.

In Virginia, there must be a larger variety of this fish, as Miss Ramsay, speaking of the fishes sold at Norfolk, says: —

Fine *mummychog* are to be had,  
 With tailors, alewives, drum, and shad.

*Picture of America*, p. 155.

**To mummock.** To handle. See *Mommock*.

**Mung News.** False, fictitious. I do not know the origin of the phrase.

As many of our citizens who intend to go to California may base their arrangements upon the *mung news* of some of the papers, we conceive it to be our duty to state that most of these letters are fictions. — *N. Y. Express*, Feb. 17, 1849.

**Murphy.** A potato. New England, New York, and Canada.

**Murth.** Plenty, abundance. A north of England word.

I think we should have had a *murth* of it this year, but the summer has been a little too cold, and Indian corn must have a hot sun. — *Brooke's Eastford*, p. 76.

**Mush.** Indian meal boiled with water, and eaten with milk or molasses. It is often called hasty-pudding, and is a favorite dish throughout the United States. In Hallamshire, England, to *mush* means to crush or pound very small. From this our word may have originated.

The earliest use of the term we have met with is in Hardie's "Description of the Last Voyage to Bermudas in the Ship Mary-gold," London, 1671, where, in speaking of Indian corn, he says:—

In thickness like a Cane, it Nature roul'd  
Close up in Leaves, to keep it from the cold;  
Which being ground and boy'd, *Mush* they make  
Their hungry Servants Hunger for to slake. — p. 11.  
E'en in thy native regions, how I blush  
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *mush*!  
On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic spawn  
Insult and eat thee by the name suppawn. — *Barlow, Hasty Pudding*.  
Our hasty pudding we can eat  
Without the Southern sweetness,  
Though true it is that *mush* without  
Molasses wants completeness. — *Anonymous*.

**Music.** Amusement, fun. "Jim is a right clever fellow; there is a great deal of *music* in him."

**Musical.** Amusing. New England.

**Musicianer.** A musician. Vulgar. Used in Norfolk and London, England.

The *musicianers* sot down right in front of the stage, and they was led by a handsome young man, whose head went from one side to the other like happy people at a camp meetin'. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Muskeet.** See *Mesquit* and *Musketo Grass*.

**Muskelunge.** See *Maskinongé*.

**Musketo Grass.** A rich native grass of Western Texas. See *Mesquit*.

Twenty acres in potatoes, and half an acre in the Texas Mosquit or *Musketo Grass*. — *Macon Telegraph*.

**Musk-Ox.** (*Ovibos moschatus*.) This animal inhabits the hilly, barren grounds between the Welcome and Copper Mountains, from the 63d or 64th parallel to the Arctic Sea. In size, it is nearly equal to the smallest Highland cattle; but it is more compactly made, and the shaggy hair of its flanks almost touches the ground. Its flesh is tainted with a strong flavor of musk, which is more particularly the case with the bull. — *S. F. Baird*.

**Musk-Rat.** (*Fiber zibethicus*.) An animal closely allied in form and habits to the beaver, inhabiting the banks of streams and ponds. It has a powerful musky odor in summer, which it loses in winter.

The beasts of the Countrey [Virginia] are for the most part wilde, . . . as Rakowns, Possowns, . . . and *Muske-Rats* which yield Muske as the Muske-Cats doe. — *Whitaker, Good Newes from Virginia* (1613), p. 41.

Over in the meadow, in the reeds on the shore,  
 Lived a mother *musk-rat* and her little ratties four.  
 "Dive!" said the mother. "We dive," said the four:  
 So they dived and they burrowed, in the reeds on the shore.

*Olive A. Wadsworth.*

**Musquash.** (Abenaki Ind., *muskwessu*, red animal.) The musk-rat among the traders in the Northern States is often called by this aboriginal name.

A *muscus* is a beast of the forme and nature of our water-rats, but many of them smell exceedingly strongly of muske. — *Smith, Hist. of Virginia*, 1632, Booke II. p. 27.

If China suppose a merit of precedency in Muske, Virginia may justly oppose them with her Musk-Rat, or *Muscassus*, which in all probability cannot but be the same. — *Hakluyt, Virginia Richly Valued* (1609).

**Musquash Root.** (*Cicuta maculata*.) An umbelliferous plant and deadly poison.

**Muss.** A corruption of *mess*, a state of confusion; a squabble; a row. This vulgarism is very common in New York.

"My head aches," said he: "they have put my mind and body both into a confounded *muss*." — *Mrs. Child, Letters from New York*, p. 129.

I saw the British flag a flyin' from the top of the mast, and my first notion was to haul it down, and up with the stars and stripes; but I concluded I hadn't better say nothin' about it, for it might get the two nations into a *muss*, and then there would have to be a war. — *Hiram Bigelow's Letter in Fam. Companion*.

Mr. Soule is trying to get up a *muss* with Spain, or with Louis Napoleon. — *Major Downing in National Intelligencer*.

*Mose.* Satisfaction, eh! Well, if he wants to make a *muss*, I'm on hand. — *Ply, A Glance at New York*.

I got into a *muss* down at the store last night, and was whipped, and deserved it too. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 153.

When near their place of debarkation, they came across a gang of b'hoys, with whom they came in collision; and, as that class of individuals are always inclined to have a bit of a "*muss*," that result was very soon accomplished. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

There is, also, an old English word *muss*, meaning a scramble; but it has apparently no connection with the above.

*Ant.* "When I cry'd, Ho!

Like boys into a *muss*, kings would start forth,

And cry, Your will?" — *Ant. and Cleopatra*, Act iii. Sc. 11.

**To muss.** 1. A corruption of *to mess*. To disarrange, disorder; to tumble, rumpie. Ex.: "I hate to ride in an omnibus, because it *musses* my clothes;" "I'm all *mussed* up." The word is much used in New York.

See that beautiful girl [the morning after a ball]; her hair *mussed* and mossy, except what lies in the bureau; and her whole contour wearing the appearance

of an angel rammed through a bush fence into a world of wretchedness and woe. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 151.

2. (Dutch, *morsen*.) To soil, besmear, befoul; as, "That child has *mussed* himself all over with molasses candy."

**Mussulmen.** There are American as well as English writers who thus form the plural of the Arabic *Mussulman*, erroneously imagining the last syllable to be the English word *man*. The correct plural is *Moslems* or *Moslemin*.

A correspondent of the "N. Y. Daily Times" (Nov. 6, 1851) has carried out the absurdity by coining the term *Mussulboy*! He says:—

The Turkish sultan has just sent me one of his sons, Master Abdel Hamid, a little *Mussulboy* of nine years, to be educated in Paris.

**Mussy.** 1. Disarranged, disordered, tumbled; as, "Although your cap has just been ironed, it looks quite *mussy*."

2. (Dutch, *morsig*.) Smeary, dirty, nasty; as, "These plates have not been wiped clean: they look *mussy*."

**Mustafina.** See *Mulatto*.

**Mustang.** (Span. *mesteño*.) The wild horse of the prairies, descended from the stock introduced into America by the first Spanish colonists. He is of various colors, a cream color and piebald being quite common. Mustangs are found in the greatest numbers on the rich prairies of South-western Texas, where I encountered numerous herds, and experienced the not unusual excitement of having a stampede caused by them. They are generally of bad disposition, and hard to subdue. Few are seen west of the Rio Grande. Young or untrained mustangs are called *cow-ponies*, which see. See also illustration to *Buck*.

The wild horse of the prairies, and the invariable companion of their inhabitants. Sparing in diet, a stranger to grain, easily satisfied whether on growing or dead grass, inured to all weathers, capable of great labor, the *mustang* pony seems as peculiarly adapted to the prairies as the camel is to the desert.—*Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 12.

**Mustangers.** Men who employ themselves in catching mustangs for market.

The business of entrapping mustangs has given rise to a class of men called *mustangers*, composed of runaway vagabonds and outlaws of all nations, the legitimate border-ruffians of Texas.—*Olmsted's Texas*, p. 443.

**Mustang Grape.** Indigenous to Texas, probably a variety of the *Vitis rotundiflora* of Michaux. The bunches are small, each grape being the size of an ounce lead ball. A wine is made from it similar to Port, or, according to some, Burgundy.

**Mustee.** (Fr. *Metis*, Span. *Mestizo*.) See *Mestee* and *Negro*.

**To muster out.** To muster troops out of service is to enter them on a muster-roll previous to their discharge. The expression attracted the attention of Dr. W. H. Russell, the correspondent of the "London Times," who, in speaking of the Union troops, said:—

They will nearly all go home to be "mustered out of the service," as it is called.

Webster, in noticing the expression, refers to *Hazlitt*.

**Muttonhead.** A stupid fellow; chowderhead; puddinghead; dunderhead. See *Chowderhead*.

Columbus taught a parcel of *mutton-heads* that an egg might be poised on its smaller end; and they thanked him, with a very *mutton-headed* sneer, that the thing was easy enough to do after they knew how to do it. — *Boston Courier*, Notice of *Hiaucutha*.

**To mux** is much used in New England for *muss*; as, "Don't *mux* my crinoline."

"Stop *murin'* that bread! one would think you were a drove of young hogs to see you at the table. You've eaten enough for twenty people. I shan't have you *murxing* and *gnuming* up the victuals." — *J. M. Bailey* (*The Danbury News Man*), *They All Do It*, p. 22.

## N.

**Nabber.** In the city of New York, a thief.

**To nail.** To arrest.

**Naked Possessor.** The occupant of land for a long period without a title, being the manifest, evident, and undisguised possessor, is called in Texas the *naked possessor*.

Ten years of peaceable possession and cultivation, use, or enjoyment thereof, without any evidence of title, shall give to such *naked possessor* full property, preclusive of all other claims, in and to six hundred and forty acres of land, including his improvement. — *Laws of Texas*.

**Namaycush.** (*Salmo namaycush*, Penn.) The great trout of the Lakes. *Richardson*.

**Nankeen.** (Chinese.) A species of light yellow or fawn-colored cloth, made from cotton of the same color (*Gossypium religiosum*), which color is permanent. This article was formerly imported in large quantities from China; but since the cultivation of the raw material in the United States, introduced by Mr. John Forsyth, formerly Secretary of State, *Nankeens* have been manufactured here, in every respect equal to and cheaper than the Chinese article.

**Narragansett Pacer.** A breed of Rhode Island horses once very famous; but, although we often hear of *Narragansett pacers*, there is now no particular breed so called. In a pamphlet entitled "America Dissected," by the Rev. Dr. Mac Sparran, published in Dublin in 1753, the writer, in speaking of Rhode Island, says: "The produce of this colony is fat cattle, wool, and fine horses, which are exported to all parts of English America. They are remarkable for their fleetness and swift pacing, and I have seen some of them pace a mile in little more than two minutes, a good deal less than three." According to that veritable historian, Diedrich Knickerbocker, *Narragansett pacers* were well known in the early days of New Amsterdam.

In olden time, the horses most valued were pacers. To this end the breed was propagated with care. The *Narragansett pacers* were in such repute that they were sent for, at much trouble and expense. — *Watson, Historical Tales of Olden Times*.

Not so easily did he [Peter Stuyvesant] escape from the crafty hands of a crafty man of Pyquag; who, with undaunted perseverance and repeated onsets, finally bargained him out of his goodly switch-tailed charger, leaving in place thereof a villanous, foundered *Narragansett pacer*. — *Knickerbocker's N. Y.*

I had an everlastin' fast *Narragansett pacer*. I was considerable proud of him, I assure you; for he took the rag off the bush in great style. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 218.

**Nary.** A common corruption of "ne'er a." So *nary one*, for "ne'er a one." See *Ne'er a*.

It's no use argufyin' the matter, — I'm the ugliest man now on top of dirt. Thar's *nary* nuther like me. — *Widow Bagly's Husband*.

"Arter I got into Mobile, I was bothered and pestered by the people stoppin' in the street to look at me, all dirty and lightwood smoked as I was, from being on the boat."

"I think I'd a cleaned up a little," interposed tidy Lucy.

"Old 'oman, ain't you got *nary* cold tater to choke that gal with?" — *Ibid*.

Among the many "highfaluten" toasts, sentiments, and mottoes produced on the occasion of the successful laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable was the following at North Conway: —

The Atlantic Cable and the White Mountains, — both monuments of God's power, but *nary* one alike. — *N. Y. Evening Post*, Sept. 1, 1858.

**Nary Red.** A contraction for "ne'er a red (cent)," alluding to the color of the copper cent. — See *Red Cent*.

In the course of a few weeks, the new coin [the nickel cent] will be plentiful enough at par; the Spanish coins will go out of the hands of the brokers, just as they already have disappeared from ordinary circulation; and, as regards the old cents, there will be "*nary red*" to be seen, except such as will be found in the cabinets of coin collectors. — *Philad. Bulletin*, May, 1857.

Our citizens last week adopted a new plan for protecting their banks from being run by the brokers. Learning that a broker had reached town from a neighboring city to run the bank for coin, they promptly placed on one side of the bank-entrance a bucket of tar and a brush, and upon the opposite a long, rough-looking fence-rail, bearing this inscription, "*Nary red to nary broker.*" As the broker approached the bank, he read the inscription, glanced at the tar-bucket, and retreated. The bank went on as usual. — *Springfield (Ohio) Nonpareil*, 1858.

From one week's end to another,  
We scratch a poor man's head;  
For our pockets are all empty,  
We haven't *nary red*. — *Comic Song*.

Birdofredom Sawin says, certain people subscribe liberally to every good cause, but never pay.

It's a good way, though, come to think, coz ye enjoy the sense  
O' lendin' lib'rally to the Lord, an' *nary red* o' xpense.

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

**Naseberry or Nisberry.** See *Sapote*.

**Nation.** A corruption of *damnation*. Immense, enormous; very, extremely. Used in both ways in Old and in New England.

There were a *nation* set a' folks at kirk. — *Carr's Craven Gloss*.

But no sense of a place, some think,  
Is this here hill so high;  
Cos there, full oft, 't is *nation* cold,  
But that don't argufy. — *Essex Dialect, Noakes and Styles*.

In a Dialogue relating to the Stamp Act, called "Moving Times and No Friends" [Boston, 1765], a countryman says: —

I believe, my friend, you 're very right:  
They 'll get a *nation* profit by 't. — p. 4.

You colony chaps are a *nation* sight too well off, so you be. — *Sam Slick*.

And every time they shoot it off,  
It takes a horn of powder,  
And makes a noise like father's gun,  
Only a *nation* louder. — *Song, Yankee Doodle*.

**National.** Relating or belonging to the nation at large, having in view the interests of the whole nation; as opposed to "sectional." Hence the term "*national sentiments*," "*national man*," &c.

If the little men of the New England States have, in a furor of false excitement, been able to sway and guide the popular prejudices to their own material and political elevation, it is satisfactory to the man of *national* impulses, to reflect that the passions and mad follies of the hour have not been sufficient to tempt our most gifted geniuses and noble men to forget the advantages and prospects which the Union confers upon and promises to the American people. — *Newark Journal*, 1858.

**National Democrats.** Democrats who profess to entertain no sectional preference.



I have been given to understand that there are two parties in the South, called "National" and "States-rights" Democrats. If a Southern "*National Democrat*" means one who is ready to welcome into our ranks with open arms, and cordially embrace and promote, according to his merits, every honest Free State man who reads the Constitution as we do, and will co-operate with us in its maintenance, then I belong to that party, call it as you may, and I should grieve to find a Southern man who does not. — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858.

**Native.** 1. At the South, among uneducated people, instead of asking, "What is your native place," or "the place of your nativity," the question is, "Where is your *native*?"

2. Place of one's early life, not his birthplace.

Died, W. H. Stone. . . . He was formerly a *native* of Lynn, and at one time Deputy Marshal of that city. — *Boston Journal*.

The "Boston Traveller," noticing the above, says: —

A morning paper, in an obituary of one who died in Boston a few days since, says: "He was formerly a *native* of Lynn." What place he was a *native* of in later years is the unsettled question.

But the "Boston Journal" is not alone in its singular use of the word, as "The Congregationalist" (May 22, 1877) uses it in the same sense.

Here [at Princeton] is Professor Aiken, who has settled down in the Theological Seminary as if he were born there; and here is Dr. Atwater, who has been here long enough to become a *native*.

(A good hit is the last, with an outlook towards another than "Princetonian" doctrine of re-generation.)

**Native Americans.** In speaking of the *Native American* party, the "New York Express" says it originated as a consequence of "a meeting held in Carroll Hall in 1843, at which Bishop Hughes made a speech relative to the school system, and advocated a distinct organization, as a party, of the Irish voters of the metropolis, in order to accomplish the end they had in view. This was the first attempt ever made in this country to organize citizens of foreign birth, for the purpose of operating at the election of any candidate." This gave rise, the year following, to the formation of a political party to advocate the rights and privileges of persons born in the United States, in opposition to those of foreigners. The principal measure advocated by it was the extension of the term of residence required by law previous to naturalization from seven to twenty-one years. The extreme lengths to which this party went insured its speedy defeat.

Ten years later (in 1854), a party sprang up with similar principles, known first as the Know-Nothing, and subsequently as the American party. See *Know-Nothings*.

**Native-born.** A Hibernicism of political origin apparently used in contradistinction from adopted, naturalized, "foreign born." *Native-born* is used emphatically thus:—

I asked some of the *native-born* Southerners if they believed the Federal Government was endeavoring, &c. — *Cor. of N. Y. Tribune.*

New York to-day stands on the rock of the Union. Her people, whether *native* or adopted, have vied with each other in defeating the schemes of traitors; and while it was natural that our *native-born* population should evince patriotic devotion to the Union, &c. — *Speech of James Gallatin, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1861.*

**Nativism.** The doctrines of the "Native Americans," as a party.

**Naturalized Citizens.** Those who go through the prescribed process for naturalization; their minor children at that time in the country; or the widows and children of those who have taken the initiatory steps for naturalization, but have died before they were actually naturalized. — *Hilliard's Real Property*, Vol. II. p. 190.

**Naval Officer.** One of the chief officers of the large U. S. custom-houses. It is the duty of the *Naval Officer* to receive copies of all manifests and entries, and, together with the collector, estimate all duties on imports, and keep a separate record thereof; countersign all permits, clearances, certificates, and other documents granted by the collector; examine the collector's abstract of duties, and other accounts of receipts, bonds, and expenditures, and, if found correct, to certify them. — *Act of March 2, 1799.*

**Neap.** Used in some parts of New England for the tongue or pole of a cart or wagon. — *Worcester.* *Nape, neap*, in "Bailey's Dictionary," is a prop for staying up the tongue or pole.

**Near, for to or at;** in these expressions: "The minister plenipotentiary *near* the Court of St. James's — *near* the United States," &c. This Gallicism was first used here in translations of the diplomatic correspondence between the French and American governments; and from the language of *translations* it has been adopted in many of our original compositions. — *Pickering.*

**Neck of the Woods.** In the wooded sections of the South-west, this term is used in speaking of any settlement, place, or plantation.

I am the only subscriber to the "Spirit of the Times" in this *neck of woods*, and consequently my paper is in great requisition. — *Letter from Arkansas, N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

It's no use talkin' about your Polar bar and your grizzly bar. They ain't no whar, for the big black customer down in our *neck o' the woods* beats 'em all hollow. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II.

**Ne'er.** No; not. A derivative correctly made from *Never*.

There is not a Virginia abstractionist on earth who does not think that *ne'er* a Negro who came over to us under such an act would ever return to Slavery. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 4, 1862.

**Negro.** The various grades of the colored people in Louisiana are designated by the French as follows, according to the greater or less predominance of negro blood:—

Mulatto,	$\frac{1}{2}$ black,	white and Negro.
Quarteron [Quadroon],	$\frac{1}{4}$ black,	white and mulatto.
Métis or métif,	$\frac{1}{8}$ black,	white and quarteron.
Meamelouc,	$\frac{1}{16}$ black,	white and métis.
Demi-meamelouc,	$\frac{1}{32}$ black,	white and meamelouc.
Sang-mêle,	$\frac{1}{64}$ black,	white and demi-meamelouc.
Griffe,	$\frac{3}{4}$ black,	Negro and mulatto.
Marabou,	$\frac{3}{8}$ black,	mulatto and griffe.
Sacatra,	$\frac{7}{8}$ black,	griffe and Negro.

All these varieties exist in New Orleans, with sub-varieties; and experts pretend to be able to distinguish them. — *Olmsted's Slave States*, p. 583. See *Mulatto*.

**Negro-Catcher.** Men engaged during the civil war in catching and stealing Negro slaves.

The object of these orders is to prevent any person in the army from acting in the capacity of a *negro-catcher* or of a negro-stealer. — *General Order of Major-General Halleck*, Jan., 1862.

Take this jail from the care of Marshal Lamont and his *negro-catching creatures*. — *Speech of General Wilson of Massachusetts*, Feb. 16, 1862.

**Negro-Cloth.** A light cloth made of cotton and wool, expressly for the clothing of Negroes.

**Negro-Corn.** The Indian millet or durra; so called in the West Indies. — *Simmonds*.

**Negro-Driver.** A person who conducts coffles of slaves; an overseer of slaves.

Once we boys went for tote some rice, and de *nigger-driver* he keep a-callin' on us; and I say, "Oh, de ole *nigger-driver*!" Den anoder said, "Fust ting my mammy told me was notin' so bad as *nigger-drivers*." — *Slave Songs*, edited by W. F. Allen.

**Negro Fellow.** A black man.

The price of Negroes has already reached that point which is beyond the means of small planters, and they cannot afford to invest their small amounts of spare capital in a species of property that may be swept away by the diseases of the climate, perhaps the very next week after its purchase; and thus, in the loss of one *Negro fellow*, a three-years saving is gone with him. — *De Bow's Review*, Nov., 1858.

**Negro Hate.** Aversion to Negroes.

Southern *negro-hate*, being based on slavery, is kept within bounds; that of the North being mainly a hypocrisy, or an imitation, is affected and exaggerated to caricature. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 21, 1862.

**Negro Head.** 1. Tobacco prepared by softening with molasses, and then pressing it into cakes; called also *Cavendish*. — *Simmonds*.

2. Tussocks or knotted masses of the roots of sedges and ferns projecting above the wet surface of a swamp. South.

**Negro Hound.** A hound formerly used in hunting fugitive slaves.

It has been found that Schenck, Piatt, and the rest, are not *negro-hounds*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 9, 1862.

**Negroism.** 1. Pro-slaveryism.

Most of the common soldiers had been reared among Negroes, had become infused with *Negroism*, and knew nothing beyond it. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, April 14, 1862.

2. A Negro peculiarity of speech; an example of Negro English.

See also various words under *Nigger*.

**Negroless.** . Not having any Negro or slave.

Go to Baltimore, and you will find the *negroless* majority hearty devotees of the Union. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 3, 1862.

**Negro Minstrel.** Negro musicians, or more frequently white men who blacken their hands and faces, and, assuming the manners of the Negroes of the Southern plantations, go about singing negro songs and playing upon the banjo and "bones." There is often much melody in their music, while their humorous parodies on popular songs, their manner of singing, and their jokes, render their entertainments popular among all classes.

**Negro Nomenclature.** A peculiarity of the colored race is their fondness for high-sounding words in their conversation, sermons, and speeches. In their religious and political organizations, the odd names they assume are often ludicrous. Among the societies of colored men who recently celebrated in Richmond, Va., the anniversary of the Fifteenth Amendment, were the following: —

First National Phoenix, Sons of Elijah, Sons of Enoch, Loving Sons of Daniel, First Star of Jacob, Rising Sons of Vineyard, Independent National Blues, Young Rising Sons of Ham, Rising Sons of Faith and Order, Lord's Delight, Rising Sons of Youth, Teamster's Benevolent Star of the East, United Sons of Love, Christian Sons of Peace, Young Sons of Zion, and Benevolent Society of the Young Shining Army, The Golden Gilt Dramatic Association of Annapolis.

**Negrophilism.** A name reproachfully given to anti-slavery.

Here is a taste of his [the editor of the "New York Times"] Journal's quality, from the editorials of its Saturday's issue: "The Mystery of *Negrophilism*. Of all topics now engaging attention, the American Negro is unquestionably the chief." — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 16, 1862.

**Negro-proscriptive.** Proscriptive of Negroes.

We hope some of those who voted these *negro-proscriptive* clauses into the [new] constitution of Illinois will live to be ashamed of them. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 19, 1862.

**Negro-Worshipper.** An opposer of slavery; an abolitionist.

The apologist for *Negro-worshipping* and *Negro-worshippers*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 30, 1862.

**Neighborhood.** The phrase, in *the neighborhood of*, is frequently used to mean bordering on, near, about.

The Catholic clergy of this city have purchased in *the neighborhood of* forty acres of land from Mr. Fenwick, for a cemetery for the use of the Catholic congregations of Washington. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, June 27, 1857.

**Netop.** "This Indian word," says Mr. Pickering, "is still used, colloquially, in some towns in the interior of Massachusetts, to signify a *friend*, or (to use a cant word) a *crony*." Roger Williams, in his *Key to the Indian Language*, says, "What cheer, *netop*? is the general salutation of all English towards the Indians." The word is Narragansett, and means literally, "my friend." See *Whatcheer*.

**Never say die.** Do not despair under any circumstances.

**New Jersey Tea.** (*Ceanothus Americanus*.) The leaves of a plant employed during the Revolution as a poor substitute for imported tea.

**Nice.** Fair; good; agreeable: "A nice day;" "nice goods," &c.

**Nicely.** In some parts of New England used, like "cleverly," in the sense of well, very well. Ex.: "How 's your wife, Mr. Peabody, this fine morning?" "She 's nicely."

**Nick.** The name already given to the new cent, from the material (nickel) of which it is composed.

The "Philadelphia Bulletin," in speaking of the first delivery of the new cents at the U. S. mint, and of the rush for them, says:—

The bags containing the *nicks* were neat little canvas arrangements, each of which held five hundred of the diminutive strangers. — May 25, 1857.

The new cent creates quite a *furor*. It is a neat, handy coin, and will soon supplant the cumbersome copper one. "Nary red" will soon be an obsolete phrase among the boys, and "nary *nickel*" will take its place. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 27, 1857.

**Nickel.** A five-cent piece coined of that metal.

**Nicotiana.** A region in which tobacco is a staple. A country growing tobacco, or where the use of tobacco prevails.

It was in June last that Dr. Russell [of the "London Times"] called upon that tobacco-ruminant, Governor Pettus of Mississippi. . . . After an interview [with him], holding high converse with other noble votaries of *Nicotiana*, put to them . . . the following interrogatories. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 13, 1862.

**Nicotian Leaf.** Tobacco.

William Boyd, in describing a model newspaper, says:—

It admitteth nothing vulgar;  
Doth not jest at sacred thoughts;  
And ignoreth outrage, swearing,  
Hazards, drink, *nicotian leaf*.

*Potter's American Monthly*, June, 1877.

**Nigger.** The vulgar pronunciation of the word *Negro*, which see for various words appertaining to *Negroes*.

**Niggerhead Stone.** The hard, heavy, black rock with which the country about Baltimore is filled, and which is so useful in making turnpike roads.

**Niggerism.** The peculiarities, real or supposed, of a Negro, in respect of language, &c.

If we did not think it a Pro-Slavery speech, the audience did, and bestowed upon it a meed of approving screams as loud as those which immediately after greeted the bald *niggerism* of Rynders. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 20, 1861.

**To nigger out.** To *nigger out* land signifies, in Southern phraseology, to exhaust land by the mode of tilling without fertilization pursued in the slave States.

**Niggery.** Pertaining to, like, a Negro.

The dialect of the entire population is essentially unmistakable *niggery*. — *Virginia Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Nigh unto.** Nearly, almost.

I *nigh unto* burst with madness! I could feel every har on my head kindlin' at the eend. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**Nigh upon.** Nearly, almost.

I got your letter and razor-strap. It 's a complete strap as you ever see; and, as soon as it was known about here that I had received it, *nigh upon* all our folks have been sendin' to borrow it. — *Major Downing, Letter 27*.

Mr. Bedott had been out of health *nigh upon* ten year; and, oh dear, how he'd altered since the first time I ever see him. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 22.

**Nimahi.** A foolish fellow, or one who habitually acts in a foolish manner. Connecticut.

**Nine-Bark.** (*Spiræa opulifolia*.) A low shrub found in Maine, Canada, Wisconsin, and west to Oregon. Its old bark is loose, and separates in thin layers.

**Nine-Killer.** The popular name of the Northern Butcher-bird (*Lanius septentrionalis*) of ornithologists. In Canada and the Eastern States, it is sometimes called Mocking-bird. "The name of *nine-killer*," says Dr. DeKay, "is derived from the popular belief that it catches and impales nine grasshoppers in a day." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Nip.** 1. A dram. From *nip*, a small quantity as of snuff, taken between the thumb and finger.

2. Nick; instant: as, "Just in the *nip* of time." Connecticut.

**Nip and Tuck.** An expression signifying an equality, or nearly so, in any strife, but particularly in a horse-race or a game, equivalent to the phrase "neck and neck." Comp. *Rub and go*.

"Nathan," said a prudent father, "now you 're goin' down to Orleans, I've just one thing to advise you on. Don't play that new game they've got, where the jack takes the ace, — 't ain't natural. I tried 'em at poker, and old sledge, and loo, but they couldn't get me down, it was *nip and tuck* between us; but by and by they fatched in that new game, and then I hollered." — *Major Bunham, Recollections*.

**Nipper.** A dram. Also "*a nip*."

Then it waz, "Mister Sawin, sir, you 're middlin' well now, be ye? Step up an' take a *nipper*, sir; I 'm drefle glad to see ye."

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

**Nippent.** Impudent; impertinent. — *Hurd's Gram. Corrector*.

**Nipping.** 1. Mincing.

Oh, deary me, it's enough to make anybody sick to see the airs Mrs. Major Coon puts on. Did you see her come *nippin'* into meetin' with a shawl on as big as a bedcover? — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 35.

2. Applied to cold weather; as, "*nipping cold*," "*a nipping frost*."

The temperature continues to develop a remarkable mildness for the season, with occasional returns of winter gusts and *nipping* frosts. — *Providence Journal*.

There are examples of the use of the verb *to nip* applied to severe cold in English writers: —

His delivery now proves  
Abortive, as the first-born bloom of spring  
*Nipt* with the lagging rear of winter's frost.

*Milton, Samson Agonistes*, 1575.

**No-account.** Of no account, worthless; as, "That's a *no-account* chap, I reckon!" "Where did you raise that *no-account* horse?" South-west.

"Miss Bella done learn how to talk," said Sarah, in the kitchen cabinet, "and she look as rosy and peart! her heart ain't broke!"

"Broke wid what?" asked Aunt Hagar. "I alwayth telled you that no young mith of mine wath given to hurt herthelf grieving after a *no-account* feller like that down yonder in Richmond." — *The Hidden Path*.

**Nobby.** Stylish; often applied to new hats. Also spelled *knobby*.

If you would dress yourself cheaply, neatly, *nobby*, and stylish, give us a call. *Hat-Seller's Advertisement*.

**Nocake.** (*Nookhic*, meal. — *Eliot's Indian Bible*.) Parched meal. An Indian word still used in some parts of New England.

*Nokchick*, parched meal, which is a readie very wholesome food, which they eat with a little water. — *R. Williams's Key* (1643), p. 11.

If their imperious occasions cause the Indians to travel, the best of their victuals for their journey is *nocake* (as they call it), which is nothing but Indian corn parched in the hot ashes; the ashes being sifted from it, it is afterwards beaten to powder, and put into a long leathern bag, trussed at their back like a knapsack, out of which they take thrice three spoonfuls a day. — *Wood's New England's Prospect* (1634), pt. 2, ch. 6.

With a pestle and mortar [the Indians] broke up [their corn] into meal, which, moistened with water into a paste, they called *nookhik*. — *Palfrey's New England*, Vol. I. p. 28.

Warm was the room and plenteous was the cheer  
Which generous Waban did our Founder bring;  
In trays the *nocake* and the joints of deer,  
And in the gourd-shell water from the spring.  
*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto I. lxxxii.*

**Noggin.** A drink of something alcoholic.

**Nohow.** Not in any way; by no means. Always with a preceding negative, and sometimes enlarged into "*nohow you can fix it.*"

Dod rot that old Mike Hooter! He pertend to be a preacher! His preachin' ain't nothin' but loud hollerin' *nohow*. — *Tales of American Humor*.

You don't cook broken-down horse-flesh very easy, *nohow*. — *G. W. Kendall*.

Miss Sikes had better not come a cavortin' round me with any of her rantankerous carryin' on; for I ain't in no humor, *nohow*. — *Story of the Fire Hunt*.

The Colonel's wife could not abide her *nohow*, and appears like dey done gone guv each udder all the trouble dey could. — *Harper's Mag. for July*, 1876, p. 195.

Them two fool niggers never did have no sense, *nohow*. — *Ibid.*, p. 197.

**No—not.** What the Portuguese say of the Brazilians, the English say of the Americans,—that they are as fond of double negatives as Homer himself. "I won't nohow," "It ain't neither," "I ain't got none," "It ain't nothing else," &c., are locutions constantly heard.

**No Mistake.** See example at *Mistake*.

**Nomological.** Relating to *nomology*.

The observations of the senses yield us only limited successions and recurrences of phenomena. These have antecedence in the order of time. But Law, eternal, absolute, and universal, has antecedence in the order of necessary existence, and is an idea of the Reason. It is the Idea of Ideas under the *nomological* conception. *Tappan's Elements of Logic*.

**Nomology.** That branch of philosophy which treats of law in general.

This at once introduces us to the Doctrine of Law or *Nomology*, which is the second grand division of philosophy. — *Tappan's Elements of Logic*.

**Non-committal.** That does not commit or pledge himself to any particular measure. A political term in frequent use.

A successful politician here [in New York] is either a hack lawyer of thirty years' standing, or an upstart demagogue, who has made his way by dint of sheer brass; either a blind partisan, who knows nothing outside the regular



ticket, or a *non-committal* man, who says every thing to everybody, and never gave an intelligent, manly, straightforward opinion in his life. — *Sketches of American Society, Frazer's Magazine.*

**Non-Committalism.** The practice or doctrine of not committing one's self.

Much of what Governor W— says in his message is made feeble by diffuseness; and on many points he either avoids the expression of opinion, or expresses his opinion with so many qualifications as to subject himself to the charge of *non-committalism*. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

He, being somewhat of a wag, handed me "Fearne on Contingent Remainders," which he remarked, with admirable *non-committalism*, was as interesting as a novel, after one got interested in it. — *My Uncle Hobson and I*, p. 20.

**None of my Funeral.** An affair with which one has nothing to do.

"It's *none of my funeral*, I know, Sin Saxon," said Miss Craydocke. "I'm only an eleventh-hour helper; but I'll come in for the holiday business. . . . that's more in my line." — *Mrs. Whitney, A Summer in Leslie Goldthwaite's Life*, p. 183.

Senators Blaine and Barnum passed down to New York, *en route* to Washington, on Wednesday last, when Barnum asked Blaine how he liked the news from Ohio. "Oh, that *isn't my funeral*, I want you to understand," replied the plucky Maine Senator. — *Hartford Times*, Oct. 17, 1877.

**Non-slaveholding.** Not holding slaves. Thus, the States north of Mason and Dixon's line were formerly designated as the "*non-slaveholding States*."

**Noodles.** (Germ. *Nudel*.) Dumplings or vermicelli. They are used in Pennsylvania, and are made by rolling into very thin sheets the dough, which differs from the Italian preparation by the addition of eggs. These sheets are then rolled up and cut across with a knife. The strips thus formed differ from vermicelli only in their section being square, instead of circular.

**Noodlejees.** (Dutch.) Wheat dough rolled thin and cut into strings like vermicelli.

**Noodle-Soup.** Soup made of the above.

**Nooning-Time.** Dinner-time in the hayfield.

**Nopal.** The prickly pear cactus that the cochineal insect feeds upon.

**North and South.** Terms commonly used to signify the Northern and Southern, or the free and slave States, of the Union.

The *North* in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. *Speech of Hon. E. Everett*, July 5, 1858.

**North Americans.** The Northern or anti-slavery section of the American or Know-Nothing Party.

**Northern Neck.** The portion of Virginia lying between the Potomac and the Rappahannock.

**Norther.** A severe north wind which blows at particular seasons along the Gulf of Mexico, as well as across the vast region lying to the north of it. These *northers* upon the open prairies are exceedingly trying, and, when accompanied by snow or a freezing rain, prove fatal to cattle and horses. Teamsters, herdsmen, and travelers have also been known, in many instances, to perish. I experienced a terrific *norther* on the high plateau of Texas in November, 1850, which was accompanied by snow, and lasted for three days.

Mr. Olmsted, in his "Journey through Texas," thus describes one of these *northers*: —

We were suffering with the heat, when one of us said, "See this before us, — what is it, fog or smoke?"

"A prairie fire, I think," said the other.

"Probably it is; but what is this on the hill close by: this is fog, surely? It must be a *norther* coming. Yes, it is a *norther*: listen to that roar! We must get our clothing on, or we shall be chilled through."

First, a chilly whiff, then a puff, the grass bends flat; and, bang, it is upon us, — a blast that would have taken a top-gallant sail out of the bolt-ropes, and cold as if blowing across a sea of ice. We galloped to the nearest ravine, and hurried on all the clothing we could muster. Fortunately, though our baggage was left behind, we had taken a supply of blankets, &c. — p. 168.

**Northerner.** A citizen of one of the Northern or non-slaveholding States.

**Nose.** "*To bite one's nose off*" is to foolishly inflict self-injury, while striving to injure another.

**No-see-ums.** The little midge. (*Simulium nocivum*.) A kind of sand-fly. One of the annoyances of travellers in the Northern and North-eastern States. They are said to get under your clothes, and produce a feverish heat by their bites. — *Thoreau, Maine Woods*, p. 228.

The name is Indian-English.

**Notch.** An opening or narrow passage through a mountain or hill. — *Webster*. The *Notch* in the White Mountains is well known.

This gap is not a *notch* or depression in the crest of a continuous ridge, but the extension of the plain narrowed down by bare, rugged peaks of almost solid rock, rising abruptly from the plain. — *Rep. on Pacific Railroad*, Vol. II.

Passing down the Chemung and Susquehanna in canoes, they landed, and struck through the wilderness to a gap or *notch* of the mountains, by which they entered the Valley of Wyoming. — *Irring's Washington*, Vol. III. p. 468.

**Note.** A happy expression; a good joke. "That's a good *note*." New York.

**Note-Shaver.** One who discounts or buys notes at a high rate of interest. See *Landshark*.

**Nothing else.** "It ain't *nothing else*," is a vulgar style of phraseology equivalent to "It's that, and no mistake."

*Mose.* "Lize, ain't you a gallows gall?"

*Lize.* "I ain't *nothing else*, Mose." — *New York in 1848*.

**Nothing to Nobody.** Nobody's business. This singular expression is common in the language of the illiterate in some parts of the South.

Mr. — minds his own business; and what he gives away is *nothing to nobody*. — *New Hampshire paper*.

"Vot I gives is *nuffin to nobody*." — *English Anecdote*.

But surely no lady drank punch? Yes, three of them did. . . . and the way these women love punch is *nothing to nobody*. — *Georgia Scenes*.

The way she would make Indian cakes, and the way I used to slick them over with molasses, was *nothing to nobody*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**To notify.** 1. To make known; to declare; to publish. "The laws of God *notify* to man his will and our duty."

2. To give information of. "The allied sovereigns have *notified* the Spanish court of their purpose of maintaining legitimate government."

3. To give notice to. "The constable has *notified* the citizens to meet at the City Hall." "The bell *notifies* us of the time of meeting."

The first of these senses, as Dr. Witherspoon long ago observed (*Druid*, No. 5), is the only one in which this word is employed by English writers. They use it simply in the sense of the Latin *notificare*, i. e. "to make known," as in the following examples from Richardson: —

His [Duke Robert's] worthie acts, valientlie and fortunately atchieved against the infidels, are *notified* to the world by many and sundrie writers. — *Holinshead*.

Such protest must also be *notified*, within fourteen days after, to the drawer. — *Blackstone's Commentaries*.

The two significations, Nos. 2 and 3, in which the direct object of the verb is the *person*, instead of the *thing*, is in accordance with the French use of the verb *notifier*. It is not improbable that they will yet be adopted in England; for the same transfer of the idea from the thing to the person took place in the Latin language itself, in which the word *notus*, known, was also used in the sense of informed of, knowing.

**Notional.** Fanciful, whimsical. Applied to persons; as, "He's a very *notional* man." New England.

**Notionate.** Fanciful, whimsical. West.

**Notions.** Small wares or trifles. — *Worcester.* A word much used by the ingenious New Englanders.

"Can I suit you to-day, ma'am?" said a peddler from New England, when offering his wares for sale in Michigan. "I've all sorts of *notions*. Here's fashionable calicoes; French work collars and capes; elegant milk-pans, and Harrison skimmers, and *ne plus ultry* dippers; patent pills, — cure any thing you like; ague bitters; Shaker yarbs; essences, wintergreen, lobely; tapes, pins, needles, hooks and eyes; broaches and bracelets; smelling-bottles; castor ile; corn-plaster; mustard; garding-seeds; silver spoons; pocket-combs; tea-pots; green tea; saleratus; tracts; song-books; thimbles; baby's whistles; slates; playin' cards; puddin' sticks; baskets; wooden bowls; powder and shot. I shan't offer you lucifers, for ladies with such eyes never buys matches; but you can't ask me for any thing I haven't got, I guess." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. II. p. 113.

He has invented several other important wooden *notions* out of his own head; and Muffins says there is enough left to invent a good many more. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**No Two Ways about it.** Certain; sure.

**Nowhere.** *To be nowhere* is to be at sea; to be utterly at a loss; to be ignorant.

This gentleman has been for some years at the head of this institution, the special business of which is to educate teachers who shall be employed in the subordinate public schools; and it has just been ascertained that he is lamentably ignorant of the rudiments of an English education; in short, that in "first principles" he is *nowhere*. — *Boston Bee*.

**No, you don't.** An expression of a non-coincidence of opinion. Northern.

**Nub.** 1. A knob. New England.

2. The *nub* of a story is the point or gist of it.

**Nubbins.** Imperfectly formed ears of Indian corn. Suffolk, Eng., *knubble* [dim. of *knob* or *nub*], "a little knob;" Leicestershire, *nubbin*, "the stump of a tree;" Worcestershire, *nubbings*, "small coal."

"Aunt Peggy brought in some of the early corn this morning, mother. Did you see it?"

"Yes, your father says it is a humbug. There are nothing but little *nubbins* with not more than a dozen grains to the ear."

Precisely such badly filled *nubbins* your children's minds are fated to become, if you adopt the forcing, hot-bed system with them. — *The Hidden Path*.

**Nullification.** Some years ago, when the system of high protective duties on foreign imports was predominant in the national councils, the politicians of South Carolina — whose main article of export is

cotton—were strongly desirous of free trade with England and France, the principal consumers of that article believing that the consumption of it in those countries would be augmented by an augmentation of the import of their fabrics. Those politicians thought themselves aggrieved therefore by the protection given in the United States to the manufacture of fabrics coming into competition with those of England and France. But, finding Congress resolute in adhering to the protective tariff, the South Carolina politicians became so exasperated that at last they proclaimed their intention to *nullify* the tariff; that is, to admit British and French goods into their ports free of duty, and not to permit the exercise of custom-house functions in their State. In other words, *nullification*, in the case of South Carolina, was simply an act, or at least a threat, of open rebellion.

Somebody must go ahead, and look after these matters, to keep down *nullification*, and take care of the General [Jackson] when he gets into his tantrums, and keep the great Democratic party from splitting in two. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 218.

**Nullifier.** One who believes in or maintains the right of a State to refuse compliance with a law enacted by the legislature of the whole Union.

This term was also applied to a sort of shoe, made like a decapitated boot, brought into fashion in the "nullification" times.

**Nurly.** A corrupt pronunciation and orthography of *gnarly*, i. e. gnarled.

Times are mopish and *nurly*. — *Margaret*, p. 314.

**Nurse-Fish.** (*Somniosus*.) Speaking of the fishes at the Isles of Shoals, N. H., Miss Thaxter says: "Sometimes is caught on a trawl a monstrous creature of horrible aspect, called the *nurse-fish*, — an immense fish, weighing twelve hundred pounds, with a skin like a nutmeg grater, and no teeth, — a kind of sucker, hence its name." — *Isles of Shoals*, p. 87. Le Sueur notices the fish, which is also called *sleepers*, from its inactive or sluggish habits.

**Nut-Cake.** A doughnut. New England. See *Cruller*.

**Nutmeg State.** A nickname given to the State of Connecticut, in allusion to a ridiculous story that wooden nutmegs are there manufactured for exportation.

**Nuts.** Enjoyment, gratification, pleasure. "He enjoyed the play greatly: it was *nuts* for him." Also used in England. — *Slang Dictionary*.

## O.

**Oak Barrens.** Straggling forests of oak-trees, where the soil is very poor, and the trees small, stunted, and gnarled. The *oak barrens* differ from the "oak openings," inasmuch as the latter are usually on good soil, and hence thrifty.

Our march to-day lay through straggling forests of the kind of low, scrubbed trees, called post-oaks and black-jacks. The soil of these *oak barrens* is loose and unsound, being little better than a mere quicksand; in which, in rainy weather, the horse's foot slips, and now and then sinks in a rotten, spongy turf, to the fetlock. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 95.

**Oak Openings.** A characteristic feature in all the North-western States are the *oak openings*. These are forests of short, thinly scattered oak-trees. The trees are so diminutive that generally but one length for rails can be cut between the ground and the limbs. See *Opening*.

The grounds about the mounds are covered with scattered oak-trees, commonly called *oak openings*, and thickly overgrown with small bushes. — *Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin*, p. 31.

Having passed the skirt of the woodlands, we ascended the hills, taking a course through the *oak openings*, where the eye stretched over wide tracts of hill and dale, diversified by forests, groves, and clumps of trees. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 77.

**Oats.** "To feel one's oats." An expression applied by college students to one who is much aware of his importance. Such a one is called *cocky*.

**Obliged to be.** Must be; as, "This is *obliged to be* a fever and ague country." Comp. the analogous vulgarism, "bound to be."

**Obligement.** This antiquated word is still used by old people in New England. — *Pickering*.

**Obscutely.** Obliquely. A factitious word used in New England.

**Obstrep.** To be obstreperous.

This sort of thing won't do. The obstreperous fair ones must cease to *obstrep*. *Vanity Fair*, 1862.

**Obstrepulous.** A vulgar corruption of *obstreperous*. New England. It is of cis-atlantic origin.

By hearsay, [the Count and Countess] are a topping sort of people, and pretty much like the Boston folks, full of notions. At times he is *obstrepulous*. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

**Obtusity.** Obtuseness. New England.

**To occasion or 'casion.** To go about asking for work; i. e., to ask if employers have any *occasion* for one's services. Maryland.

**Occupying Claimant.** One who claims land by virtue of occupation of the same under the land systems of various States.

**Occurrings.** Occurrences; incidents.

'Tis a news-collector, valued  
For its manifold accounts;  
Gath'ring in, from thousand sources,  
Numberless *occurrences*, deeds.

*Wm. Boyd, Desc. of a Model Newspaper, Potter's Am. Monthly, June, 1877.*

**Ocelot.** (Mexican, *ocelotl*.) A beautiful but savage animal, holding a middle rank between the leopard and the common cat, the *Felis pardalus* of Linnæus. The body is about three feet in length, and the tail about one; height, about eighteen inches. It is a native of various parts of South America, and is thought to extend as far north as Texas. Called also Tiger Cat.

**Octoroon.** A name recently coined for a *mustee*; the offspring of a white and a quadroon. See *Mulatto* and *Negro*.

"Oh, stay," a cullered pusson said,  
"An' on dis bosom rest your head!"  
The *Octoroon* she winked her eye,  
But still he answered with a sigh,  
Skedaddle. — *Song, Vanity Fair.*

**Odd Stick.** An eccentric person; an "odd fish." "John Randolph was an *odd stick*."

**Of.** 1. An action of the organs of sense may be either involuntary or voluntary. Accordingly we say *to see*, *to hear*, to denote an involuntary act; and *to look at*, *to hearken* or *listen to*, to denote a voluntary one. With regard to the other senses, we are not so well provided with words; but some people, prompted apparently by a feeling of this deficiency, endeavor to supply it by construing the verbs *to feel*, *to taste*, *to smell*, with the preposition *of*, to signify a voluntary act. Hence, *to feel*, *taste*, *smell of* a thing, is to do so intentionally. This corruption is rarely met with in writing.

In the course of the forenoon, a few women came around our tent, *felt of it*, and peeped through the cracks to see Mrs. Perkins. — *Perkins's Residence in Persia*, p. 103.

2. In the colloquial language of New England, this preposition, frequently corrupted into *on*, is used after a gerund or active participle; as, "Ebenezer is coming to stick our pig; but he'll want a quarter for doin' *of it* (or *on it*)."

Whereas, many Negroes and other slaves absent themselves from their masters' service, and run out into the woods and there remain, killing and destroying *of* hogs and cattle belonging unto the people of this province, &c. — *Maryland Statutes, Act of 1751.*

**Off the Handle.** To *fly off the handle* is to fly into a passion. To *go off the handle* is to give up the ghost, to die. The allusion is to the head of an axe.

A poor man in this city had a fortune left him by a distant and wealthy relative, who went *off the handle* in England, rather unexpectedly. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Offal.** This word, among pork-butchers and curers in the West, implies the liver and lights, or more technically the head and pluck, liver, &c., of the animal; whereas, in correct English, it is limited to the refuse thrown to the dogs. An English reader would be much shocked at the mention of a dish of *offal*.

**Offen.** Off from; off on. A vulgarism.

I am glad Miss Woodhull is engaged to be married, it takes a load *offen* my mind. I presume she will settle down and make a likely woman. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 311.

Say, if you give me much more of your sass, I'll take and bounce a rock *off'n* your head. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 23.

**Office-Holder.** A government official. Used frequently as a term of reproach.

**Office-Holding.** The holding of an office under government.

**Office-Hunter.** A seeker after public office.

**Office-Hunting.** A seeking after public office. That both the practice and the name for it are acquiring all the respectability that age can bestow, is evident from the date of the following extract:—

*Office-Hunting.*—The decease of Col. Freeman, late Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, the salary of which is \$3,000 a year, has caused a great stir at Washington. There are said to be about fifty applicants for the place, among whom are a dozen or two members of Congress. — *Niles's Register*, March 20, 1824.

**Offish.** Distant or unapproachable in manners.

I am naturally pretty *offish* and retirin' in my ways with strange men folks. I think it is becoming in a woman to be so, instead of bold. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 289.

**Off-Ox.** An unmanageable, cross-grained fellow. — *Lowell*.

**Offset.** 1. In accounts, a sum, account, or value *set off* against another sum or account, as an equivalent. — *Webster*.

This word is generally used in place of the English term *set-off*. Mr. Pickering says, "It is also very common in popular language, in the sense of an *equivalent*." None of the English dictionaries have the word in any sense except that of "shoot from a plant."

The expense of the frigates had been strongly urged; but the saving in insurance, in ships and cargoes, and the ransom of seamen, was more than an *offset* against this item. — *Marshall's Washington*.



Thanksgiving was an anti-Christmas festival, established as a kind of *offset* to that. — *Margaret*, p. 61.

2. The dictionaries omit to notice a use of this word, which was common thirty years ago in New England, and probably is still known outside the cities, *i. e.* a terrace. A hillside garden was laid out in *off-sets*, or a house built above the level of the travelled road had one or more *off-sets* in its "front yard." Often pronounced "*off'set*."

**To offset.** To set one account against another; to make the account of one party pay the demand of another. — *Webster*.

**Oldom.** The petroleum manufacture; the district in Pennsylvania whence petroleum is obtained.

**Ojo.** (Pron. *oho*.) This Spanish term means an eye, and figuratively a spring in a plain. In Texas, New Mexico, and California, these springs greet the thirsty traveller as the oases do in Africa. A few rushes or rank grass, rising above the sterile wastes, guide him to the spot.

**Okra.** (*Hibiscus esculentus*.) A tropical plant, the pods of which are used in the mucilaginous soup called *gumbo*. — *Worcester*.

**Old Coon.** The raccoon, or 'coon, as it is generally called in the language of slang, has the reputation of being a very knowing animal; hence, "as sly as a *coon*." "He's an old coon," is said of one who is very shrewd; often applied to a political manager. Comp. "*Sly Old Fox*."

I guess them sarcy Britishers  
Won't easy get to leeward  
Of such an all-fired smart *old coon*  
As William Henry Seward.

[*London*] *Punch*, Feb. 1, 1862.

**Old Country.** A term applied to Great Britain, originally by natives from that country, but now understood and used generally in the United States.

Mr. Goodrich, in describing the people of New England at the period of the Revolution, says: —

The Episcopalians had indeed one more tie than other men to the *old country*, and that was a powerful one. England was not only their mother in things secular, but in things sacred. — Vol. I. p. 192.

It will be remembered that a few years ago a base ball team from the United States went to the *old country*, but met with poor success. — *Scribner's Monthly* for Aug., 1877, p. 516.

**Old Countryman.** A native of England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales.

The term is never applied to persons from the continent of Europe.

**Oldermost.** Oldest. Used in the West.

Ain't that *oldermost* stranger a kinder sort a preacher? — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 70.

**Old Dominion.** The State of Virginia. Sometimes called the "*Ancient Dominion*." The name probably arose from the circumstance that Virginia was the original name for all the English colonies in America; also from the fact that in early times it was called, in all the letters from the King, "The Colony and *Dominion* of Virginia."

What means the *Old Dominion*? Hath she forgot the day,

When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel array?

*Whittier, Voices of Freedom.*

**Old Driver.** Euphemism for the devil. See *Spitfoot*.

**Old Foggy.** (Su. Goth, *fogde*.) One who is behind the times.

*Jamieson* suggests that the term originally signified the governor of a garrison; and like the Sw. word sunk into insignificance. — *Scottish Dic.*

*Latham* defines it an imbecile old man.

Old Livermore, old Soy, old Chutney, &c., that society of *old fogies* in fine, who gave each other dinners round and round, and dine for the mere purpose of guttling, — these, again, are dinner-giving snobs. — *Thackeray, Book of Snobs.*

**Old-fogyish.** "He's slow and rather *old-fogyish*." — *The Independent.*

**Old Hickory.** A nickname applied to General Jackson, President of the United States, in allusion to his tough, unyielding disposition.

The name of *Old Hickory*, says Parton, was not an instantaneous inspiration, but a growth. First of all, the remark was made by some soldier, who was struck with his commander's pedestrian powers, that the general was tough. Next, it was observed . . . that he was as tough as hickory. Then he was called *Hickory*. Lastly, the affectionate adjective "old" was prefixed, and the General thenceforth rejoiced in the completed nickname, usually the first-won honor of a great commander. — *Life of Jackson.*

**Old Hoss.** A familiar expression used in accosting a person, equivalent to "old fellow." Western.

*Old Hoss*, when analyzed, is found to be the tenderest appellation of a biped juvenile without hoofs. — *Speech of Samuel H. Cox.*

**Old Man.** 1. *The old man* is a term more common than respectful, used by "Young America" for father.

2. In the South and West, instead of saying, for instance, "Old Mr. Smith," it is customary to say, "*Old man* Smith." A friend

informs me that, in the eastern part of New England, he had heard the expression applied to women; as, "*Old Woman Abrams.*"

3. "*My old man,*" my husband. Used also in England.

**Old North State.** North Carolina.

The opposition are bringing out the most popular man in North Carolina, W. A. Graham, who will be elected governor by the largest majority ever before given . . . in the *Old North State*. — *Newbern Cor. of N. Y. Tribune*.

**Old Pod.** An old man.

**Old Probabilities.** See *Probabilities*.

**Old Rye.** Old whiskey distilled from rye.

I don't know whether Mark took a drop or not; but they generally keep a barrel of *old rye* in the lumber shanties, and my opinion is that he was invited to take a horn. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 198.

"Nary drop," said Tom; "ten minutes ago I wouldn't have given a pewter dime for my chance of sticking to [the temperance pledge], but now I wouldn't give a cent for a barrel full of ten-year-old rye. — *Hubbarton, The Burton Experiment*, p. 42.

**Old Scratch.** The devil. See *Scratch*.

**Old Sledge.** A Southern and Western name for the game at cards commonly called All Fours.

I played a pretty stiff game of *old sledge*, or, as he called it, all fours; for I played every night. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 88.

With professional flat-boatmen, their acme of felicity is a game of *old sledge* enlivened by the fiddle. — *Remembrances of the Mississippi, Harper's Magazine*.

**Old Soldiers.** Ends of cigars and quids of tobacco that have been used.

Ladies who swab our sidewalks, richly dressed,  
To rid us of the juices there expressed,  
And like drill-sergeants  
Haul off *old soldiers* lying there at rest;  
No more your silks shall be of the "vile pest"  
Brooms and abstergents. — *Newspaper*.

**Old-Wife or Old-Squaw.** (*Anas glacialis*.) The popular name of a brown duck, one of the most common throughout North America, the long-tailed Duck of Pennant.

**Old Whale.** A sailor. See at *Sardine*.

**Oleomargarine.** An article made from fat, grease, and oily substances, large quantities of which find its way to market, where it is sold for butter. Also called *Butterine*.

About \$1,000,000 pounds of "butterine," formerly known as *oleomargarine*, have been shipped from Philadelphia during the last month, the greater part of which went to France, England, and Scotland, and some to Germany and the Netherlands. — *Philadelphia Record*.

*Oleomargarine* to the front. The Governor [of New York] having signed the act for the protection of buttermakers, all imitations of butter are hereafter to be sold only under the name of *oleomargarine*, which is to be stamped on all its receptacles. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Olycook.** (Dutch, *oliekoek*, oil-cake.) A cake fried in lard. A favorite delicacy with the Dutch, and also with their descendants in New York. There are various kinds, as doughnuts, crullers, &c.

The table was always sure to boast of an enormous dish of balls of sweetened dough, fried in hog's fat, and called doughnuts or *olykzks*. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

**On.** This word is much used where the English use *in*; as, "I met him *on* the cars," or "*on* a steamer." "He lives *on* Broadway."

**Once.** As soon as; if.

*Once* the planters in the vicinity of Port Royal find that the Union troops are established there in such force as to insure their protection, their faith in secessionism will give place to a keen appreciation of their own interests. — *N. Y. Herald*, Nov. 16, 1861.

**Once and again.** Occasionally; sometimes. A Southern phrase, equivalent to "once in a while."

**On End**, *i. e.* *on end*. Excited; astonished; enraged.

**One-Berry.** The Indian turnip, so called in Connecticut; also called *Jack-in-the-Pulpit*, which see.

**One-Horse.** In the West, by an obvious agricultural figure, this term is applied to any thing small or diminutive, as a "*one-horse bank*," a "*one-horse church*," meaning a little bank or church. So the phrase "*one-horse lawyer*" is applied to a mean, pettifogging fellow. A clergyman, deprecating the use of such expressions as "confound it," called them "*one-horse oaths*."

Every State in the Union should rigidly proscribe and prohibit the establishment of the wild-cat and *one-horse* banking concerns which have produced so much mischief, and brought discredit on all banking institutions. — *New York Sun*.

On Friday last, the engineer of a fast train was arrested by the authorities of a *one-horse* town in Dauphin County, Pa., for running through the borough at a greater rate of speed than is allowed by their ordinances. Having neglected, however, to give publicity to these ordinances, they could not impose any fine; and their discomfiture was aggravated by the malicious excuse of the engineer, that "he didn't know there was a town there!" — (*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, 1858.

To see how he liked pork and pone flavored with wa'nut saplin,'

An' nary social priv'lege but a *one-hoss*, starn-wheel chaplin.

Lowell, *The Biglow Papers*.

Professor Goldwin Smith, writing of University extension in England, says: —

"There is one mode of extension against which transatlantic experience emphatically protests, — the multiplication of universities. The effects of the "one-horse university" system in the United States and Canada have been ruinous to high education and to the value of degrees.

**On Hand.** At hand, present. A colloquial expression, borrowed from the shop, in frequent use.

The anti-Sabbath meeting, so long talked of, has at length taken place in Boston. About three hundred females were *on hand*. — *N. Y. Express*.

If our numerous subscribers and the public will be *on hand* about 5 o'clock this evening, we can give them the European papers by the "America," containing doubtless the most critical intelligence ever transmitted to this country. So be ready. — *Burgess, Stringer, & Co., 222 Broadway*.

We appeal to every man who has a right to vote in New Hampshire, but especially in the 1st and 2d districts, to be *on hand* next Tuesday to cast his ballot for Peace, Prosperity, and Freedom. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 10, 1849.

A broker from Wall Street was *on hand* at the meeting, and tried to pray, but, from want of practice, could only utter disjointed sentences about the money market, &c. — *Doesticks*.

**Onhitch.** To pull trigger (cf. Spanish *disparar*).

**Onplush,** for *nonplus*. Used in the Southern States.

You know I tuck dinner at the Planters. Well, I was put a leetle to the *onplush* by that old nigger feller that waits on the table there. I did not know what to make of him. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 63.

**Onst** (Pron. *wunst*.) A common vulgar pronunciation, especially in the West. And so *twiste* for "twice." The same pronunciation is sometimes heard from Englishmen.

**On the Coast.** Near, close at hand. A nautical expression, in common use in Nantucket.

**Onto.** A preposition bearing the same relation to *on* that *into* does to *in*. Although used here much more frequently than in England, it is not peculiar to America.

When the stack rises two feet high, to be conveniently forked *onto* from the ground. — *Marshall, Rural Econ., Yorkshire*, Vol. II. p. 144.

Mr. Pickering quotes the following as the only example he has seen in an American book: —

Take all your cigars and tobacco, and in some calm evening carry them *onto* the common. — *Dr. B. Waterhouse, Lecture on Tobacco*.

In descriptions of machinery, &c., the term is in very general use.

The improvement consists in casting a boss of soft metal *onto* the metallic tube. — *Patent Office Report for 1854, Part I.* p. 480.

The nature of this invention consists in the use of a spring clamp, &c., by means of which the back of the shoe is securely held while being pulled *onto* the foot of it. — *Ibid.*, p. 533.

**On Yesterday.** A corruption in common use among editors and congressmen, who seem to have forgotten that *yesterday* is an adverb as well as a noun.

It was the intention to send in the Treasury Report, which has been so long delayed, *on yesterday*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 9, 1852.

I supposed that the house listened to the remarks of the gentleman from Texas *on yesterday*; and therefore it is not necessary for me to relate the points he made. — *Speech of Mr. Brooks*, July 7, 1852.

Mr. Speaker, when I arose *on yesterday*, it was my intention merely to explain my position, &c. — *Speech of Mr. Quitman*, Dec. 18, 1856.

**Oodles.** Abundance. "Oodles of money." Plenty of money. Tennessee.

**Opening.** In the Western States, a term applied to thinly wooded spaces without underwood, so called to distinguish them from the forests which are thickly wooded. These openings are generally covered with small oaks.

Accordin' to the Bible, God put the first man and woman together in a most beautiful garden, in which all things excellent and pleasant was to be found, — some such place as these *openings*, I reckon. — *Cooper's Oak Openings*, p. 225.

**Opinuated.** Opinionative, conceited. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**Opossum.** (Virginia, Ind.) An *opassom* hath a head like a swine, and a taile like a rat, and is of the bignesse of a cat. Under her belly she hath a bagge wherein she lodgeth, carrieth, and suckleth her young. — *Smith's Generall Historie of Virginia*, B. ii. p. 27 (1627). See *Possum*.

Here is likewise that singular animal called the *opossum*, which seems to be the wood-rat mentioned by Charlevoix, in his History of Canada. — *Guthrie's Geography*.

**Ordinary.** Euphemistic for homely, plain, not handsome. Connecticut.

A lady accidentally conversing with a gentleman, unknown to her by name, said of him as well as to him what he did not forget: "I hear Mr. B. is an extraordinary *ordinary* man."

In the West, we hear *or 'nary* used for mean; as, "He 's an *or 'nary* fellow."

**Oregon Grape.** Frequently mentioned by explorers in Oregon. The name of the plant which yields it is not given.

**Organic.** Which organizes into a political, legislative, or social body; as, the *organic* law of a Territory or State. A word which has recently come into very common use.

The powers of the corporation of Washington are only those which are conferred by the *organic* law, the charter. — *Message of Mayor of Washington*, May 26, 1857.

**Orphanage.** An institution for the care of orphans; an orphan asylum.

Measures have been adopted for the establishment of a Presbyterian orphanage in Philadelphia. — *Boston Journal*.

**Ortolan.** See *Bobolink*.

**Osage Orange.** (*Maclura aurantiaca*.) A native of Missouri and Arkansas. It has been much used of late years for farm and garden hedges; and, when grown singly, is one of the most remarkable of small trees. Its orange-like foliage is so brilliant, and its erratic luxuriance of growth so extraordinary, that it is difficult to realize that plants of the same tree can be confined within the formal limits of a narrow hedge. — *Scott, The Suburban Gardener*, 480.

This tree is better known beyond the Mississippi by its French name of *Bois d'arc*, where it was used by the Indians for their bows. See *Bois d'Arc*.

**Oswego Tea.** (*Monarda didyma*.) A medicinal plant prepared by the Shakers for its aromatic and stomachic properties.

**Ouch!** Oh! ah! An exclamation of pain. Much used at the South.

**Ought.** 1. As this verb is defective, and has no inflection to distinguish past from present time, illiterate persons often attempt to supply the deficiency by the use of auxiliaries. Hence the expressions, *don't ought*, *had ought*, *hadn't ought*. Mr. Pegge notices the two last among the vulgarisms of London.

Now, you *hadn't ought* to be so stingy with such charming daughters as you've got. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 67.

Peter Cram is an impostor and ignoramus, and you *hadn't ought* to have recommended him. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Vol. XVIII.

"The luggage must be brought in," said the elderly gentleman. "Yes, I should think it *had oughter*," observed the young man in reply. "I should bring it in, if it was mine." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 96.

They call the man unfortunate who ruins half the city, —  
In my day 'twas his creditors to whom we gave our pity.

But, then, I tell my daughter,  
Folks don't do as they 'd *ough'-ter*.

*From the Olive Branch.*

2. A vulgarism for naught, as an arithmetical word; zero.

**Out, adj.** "The wind is out" (outward, comes from the sea). Connecticut.

**Out, n. 1.** A person not having position or office. "The *outs* wish to be *ins*, and the *ins* do not wish to be *outs*." — *Newspapers* and familiar usage.

2. Unfavorable condition or feeling; the being "out of humor."

*Mrs. H. B. Stowe. See In.*

**To out.** To "out the candle" means, at the South, to put out the candle.

**Outen.** Miss Bobbet and Josiah Allen's wife call upon Horace Greeley, of whom the former was a great admirer:—

Betsy took a bottle of hartshorn *outen* her pocket, and advanced onto him, and says she, in tender, cooin' tones, "Does your intellectual head ache? Let me bathe that lofty forehead. And oh! dearest man, will you give me a lock of your noble hair." — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 393.

An' since the whole trade has grown easy, 'twould be easy enough, I've a whim, If you was agreed, to be makin' an editor *out-en* of Jim.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 85.

**Outer.** Out of. "Whar are you from *outer*?" is a common expression in Kentucky and the neighboring States, meaning, Where do you come or hail from?

**Outfit.** Allowance to a public minister of the United States, on going to a foreign country, which cannot exceed a year's salary. — *Worcester*.

In the Far West and on the Plains, every thing is an *outfit*, from a railway train to a pocket-knife. It is applied indiscriminately, — to a wife, a horse, a dog, a cat, or a row of pins. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 211.

**Out of fix.** Disarranged; in a state of disorder. *Out of kilter* is used in the same sense.

The week was the longest one ever was. It seemed to me that the axletree of the world wanted greasin', or somethin' or other was *out of fix*, for it didn't seem to turn round half so fast as it used to do. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 80.

**Out of Whack.** Out of repair, as machinery, &c. Virginia.

**Outsider.** A term applied by those in office, or in any association, to those outside of it.

A large number of *outsiders* have gone to the free-soil convention at Buffalo. — *Lowell Journal*.

**Out West, Out South,** instead of West and South.

**Over,** for *under*. In these expressions, "He wrote *over* the signature of Junius;" "He published some papers *over* his own signature." A few of our writers still countenance this unwarrantable innovation; but the principle on which it is defended would unsettle the whole language. The use of the word *under*, in phrases like those above mentioned, is as well established as any English idiom. — *Pickering*.

Had our friend U., of Philadelphia, duly meditated this matter, he never would have sent us a letter with such an unpoetical expression in it as the very common blunder of "*over* the signature," for the metaphorical phrase originally



derived from the ensign of the soldier, the device of the knight, the armorial bearing of the baron, the totem, if you please, of the Indian sachem, under which he presents himself to the world. U., as a lawyer, must at least be more or less familiar with the phrase, "given under my hand and seal," as a true English idiom, albeit the hand and seal (which in this instance constitute "the signature") are placed at the bottom of the document. We do not talk of a vessel sailing "over" the flag of the United States, when her ensigns are sent below at sunset! — *N. Y. Lit. World*.

**Over, for by.** "They left Boston for New York *over* the Providence Railroad."

**Over and above.** 1. Tolerable; middling. "How are you to-day?"  
"So so, not *over and above* well."

"How did your crop turn out?"

"Well, not *over 'n above* good," said Tappermine. — *Habberton, The Barton Experiment*, p. 125.

2. Exceedingly; very. "I don't think our friend Phineas is *over and above* scrupulous as to how he makes his money." "He's not *over and above* pious."

**Overcrop.** A planter or farmer is said to *overcrop* himself when he plants or "seeds" more ground than he can attend to.

**Overcup White Oak.** See *Burr Oak*.

**Overly.** Excessively. "Is old man Boone rich?" "Why, not *overly* so." Western.

**To overrun.** To run over.

Economy, Rupp's community near Beaver, was lately *overrun* by a delighted traveller, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 16, 1849.

**Overslaugh.** (Dutch, *overslag*.) 1. A bar, in the marine language of the Dutch. The *overslaugh* in the Hudson River, near Albany, on which steamboats and other vessels often run aground, is, I believe, the only locality to which this term is now applied among us.

2. A skipping over.

Samuel Woodworth, author of the well-known song of "The Old Oaken Bucket," in a poem upon "Old New York," thus refers to the Hudson River *overslaugh*: —

To visit Albany or Troy  
Was quite an enterprise;  
In Tappan Zee the wind was *flawy*,  
And billows oft would rise.  
And then the *overslaugh* alone  
For weeks detained a few:  
Steamboats and railroads were unknown,  
When this old house was new.

*New York Post*, March, 1877.

**To overslaugh.** (Dutch, *overslaen*, and from the verb.) To skip over, pass over, omit. A word used by New York politicians, to signify that the direct line of elevation in office is not observed, and especially when an "outsider" is appointed over the heads of those already in office.

Mr. Polk intended making General Butler commander-in-chief, and to drop General Scott. But it was found that public opinion would not be reconciled to *overslaughing* Taylor, and he [General Taylor] was nominated. — *Washington Correspondent, N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Oct 21, 1846.

The attempt to *overslaugh* officers entitled to rank in the highest grade in the service is about to be repeated in a somewhat different way in a lower grade, and we desire to call attention to the facts. — *N. Y. Courier and Enq.*, Oct., 1848.

If the conspiracy of the Calhounites with a few doughfaces of the North to *overslaugh* him [Benton] succeeds, it will render him the stronger in Missouri, and make his re-election to the Senate more certain. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 20, 1849.

The "Boston Herald," April 8, 1877, in speaking of a bill before the Legislature of Illinois, to control the operations of the "bummer element" at primary political meetings, says:—

The law is to be available . . . for giving primary meetings more dignity and importance, and encouraging the better class of voters to come out without fear of being *overslaughed* by the rowdy elements of the community.

**Over-smart.** Smart to excess; very capable. Connecticut.

**Over Street,** for across the street. New York.

**To overture.** To propose. A word in common use in the Presbyterian Church, in speaking of laying a subject before an ecclesiastical body for its consideration.

**Over the Left.** An expression used to give to the words it accompanies a meaning directly opposite to that which they would otherwise have. Common in England.

At a county court held in Hartford, Sept. 4, 1705,

Whereas James Steel did commence an action against Bevel Waters (both of Hartford), in this court, upon hearing and tryall whereoff the court gave judgment against the said Waters (as in justice they think they ought), upon the declaring the said judgment the said Waters did review to the court in March next, that being granted and entered, the said Waters, as he departed from the table, said, "God bless you *over the left shoulder*."

The court ordered a record thereof to be made forthwith.

A true copie: Test

CALEB STANLEY, Clerk.

At the next court, Waters was tried for contempt, for saying the words recited, "so cursing the court;" and, on verdict, fined £5. He asked a review at the court following, which was granted; and, pending trial, the court asked counsel of the Rev. Messrs. Woodbridge and Buckingham, the ministers of the Hartford churches, as to "the common acceptation" of the offensive phrase. Their reply constitutes a part of the record, and is as follows:—

We are of opinion that these words, said on the other side to be spoken by Bevel Waters, include [1] prophaneness, by using the name of God, that is holy, with such ill words whereto it was joyned; [2] that they carry great contempt in them, arising to the degree of an imprecation or a curse, the words of a curse being the most contemptible that can ordinarily be used. T. WOODBRIDGE.

March 7, 1705-6.

T. BUCKINGHAM.

The former judgment was affirmed on review. This, it is believed, is the earliest instance of the use of this phrase to be met with, at least in this country.

"Cette putain qui ne vous aime  
Que de gauche et pour le profit,"

are the first two lines of an epigram (of which the remainder will not bear transcription), in *Le Parnasse Satyrique* (1611).

**Owdacious**, for *audacious*. Southern and Western.

He had a daughter Molly, that was the most enticin', heart-distressin' creature that ever made a feller get *owdacious*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Why, Major, you wouldn't take such a likely gall as that to New York? The abolitionists would have her out of your hands quicker than you could say Jack Robinson. I was never so *owdiciously* put out with the abominable abolitionists before. It was enough to make a man what wasn't principled agin swearin' cuss like a trooper. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

**Own up**. To confess; to make a clean breast.

**Oyster-Fish**. See *Toad-Fish*.

**Oyster-Shucker**. An oyster-opener. Southern.

## P.

**Paas**. (Pron. *paws*, with *s* hard.) (Dutch, *Paasch*.) This Dutch name is commonly applied to the festival of Easter, in the State of New York.

**Paas Bloomachee**, i. e. Easter flower. (*Narcissus pseudo-narcissus*.) Not the Pasque Flower of botanists, but the common Yellow Daffodil. The Calla is frequently called Easter Lily.

**Paas Eggs**. Hard-boiled eggs cracked together by New York boys at the Easter season. They are often dyed of various colors in boiling.

**To pack**. To transport in packs or packages; and hence simply to carry. "Are you going to *pack* that rock all the way home?" said to a person who had secured a bit of stone containing a fine fossil. Western.

We reached Bull Creek about two o'clock, and there gave the mules some rest. Just before reaching it, Joe killed an antelope, of which we had seen several. We

*pickled* the hams and shoulders to camp. — *T. A. Culbertson, in Fifth Smithsonian Report*, p. 91.

**Paddle.** 1. A wooden instrument with which negroes are punished, shaped like the paddle of a canoe, with holes bored through the blade. See *Cobb*.

2. A paddle-wheel. "The steamer's *paddles* were torn away by the floating ice."

**To paddle.** To punish; to beat with the sticks of a paddle.

All the starving, *paddling*, and pickling in the world will not insure good crops. *N. Y. Tribune*.

His master had *paddled* to death three of his fellow-slaves. — *Newbern Cor. of The Independent*, May 15, 1862.

**To paddle one's own Canoe.** A figurative Western phrase, meaning to make one's own way in life, to be the architect of one's own fortunes. Comp. the French proverbial saying: "Il conduit bien sa barque."

Voyager upon life's sea,  
To yourself be true;  
And, where'er your lot may be,  
*Paddle your own canoe.*

Leave to Heaven, in humble trust,  
All you will to do;  
But, if you succeed, you must  
*Paddle your own canoe.*

*Harper's Magazine*, May, 1854.

**Pain-Killer.** A nostrum made at Providence, R. I., by Perry Davis & Son, which has a world-wide fame. It is as popular in India, China, Japan, and throughout Europe, as it is in the United States.

**Paint.** In some of the Southern States, a horse or other animal which is spotted is called a *paint*.

**Painter.** A corruption of *panther*. The popular name of the cougar or panther. See *Puma*.

"You don't know the way," said Obed: "snakes 'll bite ye; there 's *painters* in the woods, and wild-cats and owls." — *Margaret*, p. 27.

**Pair of Stairs.** An expression often used for a *flight* of stairs. Found in Evelyn's Diary, June 10, 1640.

**Palace Car.** An elegantly fitted car or railway carriage now introduced on most of our railways: they are also called *drawing-room cars*. They were first introduced by Mr. Pullman of Chicago, and for a time were called *Pullman cars*.

Beauty in distress may recline on the sofas of a *palace car* all the way [from Halifax to San Antonio], nor leave one palace for another, but under the shelter of a station. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. viii.

**Pale-Faces.** A term applied, or said to be applied, by the American Indians to the whites. See *Ball-Face*.

"Yes," muttered the Indian, "the *pale-faces* are prattling women! They have two words for each thing, while a red-skin will make the sound of his voice speak for him." — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

The brave Tecumseh's words are good:

"One league for terror, strife, and blood,

Must all our far-spread tribes unite;

Then shall the *pale-face* sink to night."

*Colton, Tecumseh*, xviii.

But, Yengee, hear: The *pale-faced* strangers came;

No runners told us that they trod our shores:

Near the big waters rose their council flame,

And to it ran our Eastern Sagamores.

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto IV. xxxv.*

**Palm.** (Pron. *paum*.) To smutch with the hands. New England.

**Palmateer.** See *Parmateer*.

**Palm Cabbage.** The young terminal bud or sprouting leaf of the *Areca oleracea* and of some other palms, used as a culinary vegetable when sufficiently tender.

**Palmetto.** (*Chamærops palmetto*.) A perennial plant strongly marking climate. It commences in the same regions with Long Moss; that is to say, about 33°. It throws up from a large root, so tough as to be cut with difficulty by an axe, and hard to be eradicated from the soil, large, fan-shaped palms, of the most striking and vivid verdure, and ribbed with wonderful exactness. It is used by the savages and the poorer creoles as thatch for their cabins; and from the tender shoots of the season, properly prepared, a very useful kind of summer hats, called *palmetto hats*, is manufactured. — *Flint, Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

When they came to the river which the Governour had passed, they found *Palmitos* vpon low Palmetrees like those of Andalusia. — *Hakluyt, Virginia Richly Valued* (1609), p. 30.

Of all the trees that is, or ever were,

None to the straight *Palmeta* may compare.

*Hardie, Last Voyage to Bermudas* (Lond. 1671). p. 9.

**Palmetto City.** The city of Augusta, the capital of South Carolina; so called from the arms of the State, which contain a palmetto.

In the delightful temperature of to-day, with the rich foliage of the trees in green luxuriance, and the perfumes of a thousand beds of flowers burdening the air, the *Palmetto capital* is exceedingly pleasant. — *Letter from Charleston, N. Y. Tribune*.

**Palmetto State.** The State of South Carolina. During the late civil war, the soldiers from the State were called "*Palmetto Boys*."

March, march on, brave *Palmetto Boys*,  
Sumter and Lafayette, forward in order;  
March, march, Calhoun and Rifle Boys,  
All the base Yankees are crossing the border.

*Charleston Mercury*, 1861, *War Song*.

**Palmilla.** See *Soap-Plant*. (Sp. *palmilla* is a sort of bluish cloth.)

**Pandowdy.** Food made of bread and apples baked together. — *Worcester*. New England. Halliwell gives *Pandoulde* as the Somerset name for a custard. See *Slump* and *Pan-Pie*.

**Panel-House** or **Panel-Den.** A house of prostitution and theft combined.

**Panel-Thief.** A thief who, while the victim is engaged with a girl of the town, enters the room by a secret opening, and abstracts his money, watch, &c.

**Pan-Handle.** A part of Western Virginia, so called from its shape; the Pan-handle running up like a wedge between Pennsylvania and Ohio. There is also a Pan-handle district in Texas.

So they whirled relentlessly across the *Pan-Handle*, by which domestic name that funny strip of Western Virginia is known that shoots up like an inverted icicle between Pennsylvania and Ohio. — *Hale, Adv. of a Pullman*, p. 30.

**Panier.** (French. A basket; a hoop petticoat.) A frame-work of steel or whalebone worn by ladies for the purpose of expanding their dresses; also called a tournure and a bustle.

How queer to my sight are the fair promenaders,  
When bright afternoons bring them out to my view?  
The ribbons, the flounces, the tangled-up dresses,  
The balmoral stockings, and heel-lifted shoe!  
The high-towering chignon, the pot-lid hitched to it;  
The back-hair turned up where the waterfall fell;  
The cotton device — those things I'll not mention —  
And e'en the plump *panier* that makes such a swell, —  
The wonderful *panier*, the flip-flappy *panier*,  
The ex-bustle *panier*, that makes such a swell!

*New York Mail*, *The Panier in a Windy Day*.

**Panning** or **Panning out.** A term employed by gold miners to denote the process by which grains of gold are separated from the earth with which it is mingled. The earth with water is put in a pan and then shook, when the gold sinks to the bottom.

The [Mexican] greasers went *panning* up the hill, and found what was the richest pocket that the region has yet produced. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 438.

We mingled freely with the miners, and witnessed the process of cleaning up and *panning out*, which is the last process of separating the pure gold from the fine dirt and black sand. — *Gen. Sherman's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 53.

**Pan-Pie.** Same as *Pandowdy*, which see.

**Pantaloonery.** The particular description of fabrics from which pantaloons are made. A word used by the merchant tailors in their advertisements. "Cotton *pantaloonery* very active." — *Prices Current*.

**Pants.** Pantaloons; in England, generally called trousers. A word borrowed from the language of tailors' bills.

The things named *pants* in certain documents,  
A word not made for gentlemen, but gents.

*Holmes's Poems*, p. 217.

**Papaw.** (*Asimina triloba*.) A wild, fruit-bearing shrub of the Annona family, remarkable for its beauty; also called Custard Apple. The fruit is nutritious, and a great resource to the Indians. "The popular name of Papaw," says Gray, in his "N. Amer. Genera," "was doubtless given to the fruit from a fancied resemblance in the appearance or taste of the fruit to the true Papaw of tropical America." By the French of Upper Louisiana and the Canadas called Assiminier (*Michaux, North Am. Sylva*, Vol. II. p. 33), whence the name of the genus *Assune-minnar*, stony fruit. The fruit contains several large triangular stones. The plant is also noted for the pliability and toughness of its twigs, well known as substitutes for parts of broken harness. The papaw of the tropics (*Carica papaya*) is a very different plant. See *Melon Fruit*.

Poor Jeff Davis,  
His low grave is  
Made beneath a *paw-paw* tree:  
He is laid out,  
He is played out

On the land and on the sea. — *Vanity Fair*.

**Paper City.** A town plot. Said of cities in embryo, the names of which are put in maps and plans with their streets, public places, &c., laid down and named, the work of speculators who hope, by these displays, to attract settlers. See *City*.

**Pappoose.** Among the native Indians of New England, a babe or young child. — *Roger Williams*. It is applied by the whites to Indian infants in general.

Where the Indian squaw hung her young *pappoose* upon the bough, and left it to squall at the hush-a-by of the blast, the Anglo-Saxon mother now rocks the cradle of her delicate babe. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**Pappoose-Root.** (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*.) A plant called also Blue Cohosh.

**Parbuckle.** (Marine.) A rope arranged to draw casks up cellar steps or an inclined plane.

**Pard.** Much used in California for *partner*

**Parish.** In Louisiana, a *parish* is what, in other States, is called a county.

**To parmateer or palmateer.** To electioneer; evidently a corruption of *parliamenteer*, to electioneer for a seat in parliament. This term is very common in the State of Rhode Island, beyond which I think it does not extend.

Our people talk a great deal about emancipation; but they know it's all bunkum, and it serves to *palmateer* on, and makes a pretty catchword. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, 175.

**Particular.** To express indifference, they say in Pennsylvania, "It's not *particular*," instead of "No matter;" sometimes, "It makes no matter."

**Partly.** Mr. Pickering notices the use of this word in the sense of *nearly, almost*, in some towns of the Middle States. "His house is *partly* opposite to mine," i. e. nearly opposite. "It is *partly* all gone," i. e. nearly all gone.

**Partridge-Berry.** A name applied both to *Gaultheria procumbens*, or Creeping Wintergreen, and to *Mitchella repens*. The scarlet fruit of both is similar in appearance, highly flavored in the former, but tasteless in the latter. In some parts of New England, it is known as the Pigeon-berry.

**To pass a Dividend.** When the directors of a bank, insurance company, railway, or other corporation, vote against declaring a dividend, it is called *passing* it.

We have corruption in railway management, finesse in telegraph and steamship lines, stock-watering by the hundred millions, legislative robbery, *passing* of dividends, — every artifice of capital working under high pressure. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 212.

**Passage.** Enactment; the act of carrying through all the regular forms necessary to give validity; as, the *passage* of a law, or of a bill into a law, by a legislative body. — *Webster*. Mr. Pickering says this word "is criticised by the English reviewers as an American innovation." It is not in the English dictionaries in this sense.

His agency in procuring the *passage* of the Stamp Act was more than suspected. — *Horack*.

**To pass in one's Checks** is to adjust one's accounts at the end of a game of poker, whence it has become at the West a slang term for settling the final account of life. It is with reference to the latter that John Hay sings: —

How Jim Bludsoe *passed in his checks*  
The night of the Prairie Belle.



When the California miner called upon a clergyman to perform the funeral ceremonies of Buck Fanshaw, he used the peculiar language of the region, which was quite incomprehensible to the reverend gentleman:—

"You see," said the miner, "one of the boys has *passed in his checks*, and we want to give him a good send off; and the thing I 'm now on is to roust out somebody to jerk a little chin-music for us, and waltz him through handsome."—*Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 332.

A New York paper, in alluding to the protracted illness of Commodore Vanderbilt, said the reporters and interviewers were waiting for him to "*pass in his checks*."

**Passion-Flower.** (*Passiflora*.) A genus of tendril-bearing vines, most of whose species are South American. The early missionaries fancied that they found in these flowers emblems of the implements of Christ's passion: the fringe representing the crown of thorns; the large anthers fixed by their middle, hammers; and the five styles, the nails. We have two wild species, *lutea* and *incarnata*, common in the South and West.—*Gray*. The plant bears edible fruit, called grenadillas, &c.

**Patentable.** That may be patented; for which a patent can be taken out.

**Patent Agent.** One who procures patents for inventors.

**Patent Right.** A patent. In the United States, an inventor takes out a "*patent right*;" in England, "*letters-patent*."

**Patent-Safe Game or Operation.** A system of trickery, by means of a small box made for the purpose, practised in our large cities on verdant gentlemen from the country.

General Scott, by a sort of *patent safe* or Peter Funk *operation*, diddled out of his ten thousand, or did Santa Anna try the trick merely to get a little ready money for the uses of the defensive garrisons of Mexico, or how was it?—*N. Y. Herald*, Sept. 1, 1857.

**Patent-Safe Operator.** A rogue who plays the "*patent safe game*."

Little Toddlekins arrives about this hour, escorted by his female guard of honor, with a wonderful hat, all feathers and ribbons, and his little legs cased in stockings of the most brilliant hues. The guard of honor takes possession of a bench not too far from a flashy-looking man with a black moustache, who is probably a *patent safe operator*, and with whom she presently falls into conversation—*N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 3, 1858.

**Patroon.** (Dutch, *patroon*, a patron.) A grantee of land to be settled under the old Dutch governments of New York and New Jersey.

The following articles, from the "*Freedoms and Exemptions*" granted to the Dutch West India Company, will show what were some of the privileges of the *Patroons*:—

**Art. 3.** All such shall be acknowledged *Patroons* of New Netherland, who shall, within the space of four years next after they have given notice to any of the Chambers of the Company here, or to the Commander of the Council there, undertake to plant a colonie there of fifty souls, upwards of fifteen years of age; one fourth part within one year, and within three years of the sending of the first, the remainder, to the full number of fifty persons, to be shipped from hence, on pain, in case of wilful neglect, of being deprived of the privileges obtained, &c.

**Art. 5.** The *Patroons*, by virtue of their power, shall and may be permitted, at such places as they shall settle their colonies, to extend their limits four miles along the shore, that is, on one side of a navigable river, or two miles on each side of a river, and so far into the country as the situation of the occupiers will permit, &c.

**Art. 8.** The *Patroons* may, if they think proper, make use of all lands, rivers, and woods lying contiguous to them, for and during so long a time as this company shall grant them to other *Patroons* or particulars.

For a further account of the privileges of the *Patroons*, see O'Callahan's "History of New Netherland," Vol. I. p. 112.

**Patroonship.** The office of a patroon.

The great Oloffe indulged in magnificent dreams of foreign conquests and great *patroonships* in the wilderness. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**Pauhagen or Pohagen.** See *Menhaden*.

**Pay-Dirt.** Auriferous earth sufficiently rich to pay the miner for his labor in extracting the metal.

There was *pay-dirt* back in the hills, but it didn't pay to carry it down to the river and wash it out by any ordinary process. — *Ross Browne, Adventures in the Apache Country*, p. 77.

The bubble burst, and Gila City which came up like a mushroom was deserted, and all that was left to mark the spot where *pay-dirt* had been found was mud chimneys and rubbish. — *Cozzens's Marvellous Country*, p. 203.

*Pay-rock* is the term applied to quartz or other rock that will pay for mining.

In California, and most other mines of the precious metals, shafts must be sunk hundreds of feet before *pay-rock* can be obtained. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*.

**To peach.** To reveal a secret to the injury of another; to expose one.

Hotten defines it, "to inform against or betray." — *Slang Dic.*

The "N. Y. Herald," May 4, 1876, commenting on the order of General Grant in reference to General Custer, says:—

This action is on a par with the President's course in issuing a circular to all witnesses against Babcock and Joyce and McDonald, warning them that they should not expect mercy if they *peached*.

When "Boss Tweed" was brought back to New York (Nov., 1876), it was intimated that he was in possession of some great secrets, which, if made known, would reflect upon the character of certain leading politicians. A writer in the "N. Y. Tribune" asks:—

Do you think Tweed will *peach* on his friends?

**Peach-Butter.** Stewed peaches.

**Peach-Leather.** Peaches boiled, rolled out, and dried in the sun. Apples served in the same way are called *apple-leather*.

**Pea-Coal.** The smallest-sized coal of commerce; nut coal. It is obtained from sifting the larger sizes. Its market value is below that of larger size. See *Coal*.

**Peage or Peak.** Shells, or strings of shells, formerly used by the Indians of New England and Virginia, as well as among the early settlers, as money; also called *wampum* and *seawan*, which see.

No one shall take any black *peage* of the Indians but at foure a penny; and, if any shall take black *peage* under four a penny, hee shall forfeitt sayd *peage*, one halfe to the informer and the other halfe to the State. — *Laws of Rhode Island*, 1648.

The Indians [of Virginia] had nothing which they reckoned riches before the English went among them, except *peak*, roenoke, and such like trifles, made out of the cunk shell. — *Beverly's Virginia* (1705).

The current money of all the Indians in Carolina, and, I believe, of all over the continent as far as the Bay of Mexico, is that which we call *peak* and roenok. This is that which they in New York call wampum. — *Lawson's Carolina* (1718).

On the Virginia coast is found that species of conch shell which the Indian *peak* is made of. The extremities of these shells are blue and the rest white, so that *peak* of both these colors are drilled out of the same shell, serving the natives both for ornament and money, and are esteemed by them beyond gold and silver. *Westover Papers*, p. 12.

**To peak or peke.** To peep. It is quite common in the popular language of New England to hear this word, which Dr. Webster supposes to be the same as *peep*. If it be a corruption, which is doubtful, the examples will show that its use is not modern.

Now whereof he speketh,  
He cryeth and he creketh,  
He pryeth and he peketh. — *Skelton, Colin Cloute*, Vol. I. p. 312.

That other pries and *pekes* in everie place. — *Gascoigne* (1577), p. 301.

He's a lazy, good-for-nothin' fellow. He's no better than a *peaking* mud-sucker. — *Margaret*, p. 20.

The convent committee visited the city of Worcester, and inspected the Catholic Seminary. The members of it behaved in such an undignified, ludicrous, *peaking*, bombastical manner, that they obtained the appellation of the "smelling committee." — *Worcester Transcript*, April, 1855.

As once my dazzled eyes I set  
Where Julia's neck and bodice met,  
She asked what I was seeking.  
"There — that," said I: "is that Nankeen?  
The lining of your waist, I mean."

"No, sir!" said she, "that's *Pekin*!"

*Tribune Almanac*, 1855.

**Peaked.** Thin and emaciated, as from sickness. Holloway says that in England they say of a sickly person, "He looks pale and *peaked*." The same expression is often heard in the Northern States.

But there was a lawyer a standing up by the grove, lookin' as *peaked* and as forlorn as an uninated coon. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 11.

**Peaky or Peeky.** Sickly-looking; peakish.

The species of decay to which the cypress-tree is liable shows itself in detached spots in close proximity to each other. Timber affected in this way is denominated by raftsmen *peeky*. — *Dickeson on Cypress Timber*.

Twistleton and his wife dined at Kent House last night. She is looking *peaky* from a cold, but otherwise well. — *Ticknor's Life and Letters, Letter from Sir E. Head*, Vol. II. p. 429.

**Pealer.** 1. A dashing, go-ahead person or thing; a rouser.

Miss Asphyxia's reputation in the region was perfectly established. She was spoken of with applause as a staver, a *pealer*, a roarer at work. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 117.

2. A policeman. See *Peeler*.

**Peanut.** The common name for the fruit of the *Arachis hypogæa*. It is also called Ground-nut and Earth-nut, from its growing under ground.

The Negroes of Florida call them *pinders*. In Texas and Louisiana, they are known as *goobers*, ground-peas, and *goober-peas*. See *Goobers*.

The indigenous Mexican name is *Cacahuatl*.

That man who has good *peanuts*,  
And will give his neighbors none,  
He shan't have any of my *peanuts*,  
When his *peanuts* are gone.

*College Songs, Hamilton*, p. 143.

**Pearl Tapioca.** A common factitious tapioca made from potatoes. *Dunglison's Med. Dict.*

**Peart.** See *Peert*.

**Pea-Time or Pea-Pickin'.** "She looks like the last of pea-pickin'," means that she is all run down, faded, sickly: we all know how unsatisfactory and poor the last peas are.

**Pecan-Nut.** (*Carya olivæformis*.) A tree of beautiful form and appearance, useful for building and for making rails. Its nut is long, cylindrical, and olive-shaped, with a shell comparatively soft. The meat lies in two oblong lobes, is easily taken out entire, and excels all other nuts in delicacy of flavor. — *Flint, Geogr. of the Miss. Valley*.

**Peccary.** (*Dicotyles*.) The native American hog, common in South America, but found also in Central America, and as far North as New Mexico and Texas. In its habits, it is closely allied to the common hog; its gait is the same, it roots up the earth in a similar manner, and expresses its feelings by the same disagreeable grunt. It differs from it mainly in having under the skin on the middle of the loins a gland which secretes a fluid of a very offensive smell.

**Peckerwood.** Western for Woodpecker.

**Peculiar Institution.** Negro slavery, so called as being peculiar to the Southern States.

The dangers which at present threaten the *peculiar domestic institutions* of the South make it necessary that all strangers from the North should be examined and their business ascertained. — *South Carolina Gazette*.

Urgent appeals were sent to the sympathizers of Senator Douglas in Missouri to attend and do honor to the champion of the *peculiar institution* at the meeting in Quincy, Illinois. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1854.

**Peeler.** 1. A crab just before shedding and becoming *soft*, when his shell is loose, so that it can be *peeled* off with the fingers, is called a *peeler*. It is the favorite bait for salt-water fishing, in Maryland and Virginia; being attractive to all kinds of fish, from the minute *crocus* up to rich bay perch, the high-flavored rock, the sea trout, and the gigantic *drum* fish.

2. A term sometimes given policemen. So called from Sir Robert Peel, originally applied to the Irish constabulary force, which was established by Sir Robert Peel. — *Dict. of Slang*.

The vigilant eyes of the *peelers*, placed on the turnpike for the purpose, arrested several young men for fast driving. — *Providence Press*.

**To peel it.** To run at full speed. "Come, boys, *peel it* now, or you'll be late."

**Peert or Peart.** Brisk; lively. An old word, still provincial in some parts of England, and probably a corrupt pronunciation of *pert*. The phrase, "*as peert as a lizard*," is sometimes heard. It is used in a good as well as a bad sense, and especially of one who is recovering, or "looking up," after a fit of sickness. In Virginia, they say the wind blows quite *peert*, i. e. briskly.

Be modest in yche assemble, and rather be rebuked of light felowes for maiden-lyke shamefastnes, than of yowr sad friends for *pearte* boldnes. — *Sir Philip Sidney, Letter in Life and Times of*, Boston, 1859, p. 11.

Give your play-gull a stoole, and my lady her foole,

And her usher potatoes and marrow;

But your poet, were he dead, set a pot on his head,

And he rises as *peart* as a sparrow. — *Bibl. Brit.*, II. 167.

I gave her the best bend I had in me, and raised my bran-new hat as *peert* and perlite as a minister. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

That fellow must think we were all raised in a saw-mill, he looks so *peert* whenever he comes in. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West.*

Mary 's rite *piert*, and her child is making a monstrous good beginnin' in the world. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 200.

Well, I starts off pretty considerable *peert* and brisk, considering I was weak. *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 178.

Knocking round the place, I came upon one of these fellers that grinds music out'n a mahogany box. He had a little monkey along, — the *pearrest*, least bit of a critter you ever seed. — *Widow Bagly's Husband.*

Now she 's what I call a gal, — ez pretty and plump as a quail;

Teeth ez white ez a hound's, and they 'd go through a ten-penny nail;

Eyes that can snap like a cap. So she asked to know "whar I was hid?"

She did! Oh, it's just like her sass, for she 's *peart* ez a Katy-did.

*Bret Harte, Luke.*

**Peet-Weet, Pewit.** (*Tringoides macularius*.) The spotted Sandpiper or Sandlark of ornithologists, but better known among the people by the name of *Peet-weet*, in allusion to its note; or of Teeter and Tilt-up or Tip-up, from its often repeated grotesque jerking motions.

**Peevy.** A strong lever of wood, the heavier end bound with an iron ring and armed with a pike. About eighteen inches from that end is a second ring, to which is attached a cant-hook. Used by lumbermen in "breaking jams," and to lift and roll lumber. The name comes from *Peevy*, its inventor.

**Pee-Wee.** The name given by boys to a little marble. Algonkin (*Pēwe, pēāwe*), small, little. — *Cotton's Vocab.*

**Peg.** "To take one down a peg" is to lower him in the estimation of another; or, to use another slang expression, "to take the starch out of him."

**To peg away.** To be industrious; to keep at work continuously; to make persistent efforts.

**Pegged out.** Used up; to be reduced to impotence or beggary.

**Pekan.** (*Martes Canadensis*.) The Algonkin name of the Fisher; Abenaki, *Pékané*. — *Rasles*. Called also *Woolyneag* and *Wood-shock*, q. v.

**Pelican State.** The State of Louisiana.

**Pelt.** To throw. "He *pelted* me with snow-balls." A blow. — *Grose*. Used only in familiar language, and chiefly by boys.

**Pembina.** The fruit of the *Viburnum edule*, which Michaux and Gray regard as a variety of the *V. opulus*, or Cranberry Tree of Maine and Canada. So called by the *voyageurs*, who have given its name to many rivers and lakes of the North. It is the *nipiniam*

(i. e. water-berry) of the Crees. — *Sir J. Richardson, Arctic Boat Voyage*, Vol. II. p. 298-9.

**Pemmican.** A far-famed provender of man, in the wilds of North America, formed by pounding the choice parts of the meat very small, dried over a slow fire or in the frost, and put into bags made of the skin of the slain animal, into which a portion of melted fat is then poured. The whole, being then strongly pressed and sewed up, constitutes the best and most portable food for the "*roya-geurs*," and one which, with proper care, will keep a long time. Fifty pounds of meat and forty pounds of grease make a bag of *pemmican*. *Sweet pemmican* is another kind, made chiefly of bones. — *Dunn's Oregon*, p. 59. See *Mackenzie's Voyage*, cxxi-ii. In the far-distant regions of the North-west, the Indians make a *fish pemmican*, composed of dried fish pounded and mixed with sturgeon oil. — *Hind, Canadian Red River Exp. of 1857*, Vol. I. p. 487.

While we were discussing our usual dinner of hard dried-meat and *pemmican*, a hunter burst into the room with the glad tidings that he had killed a moose. — *Back, Arctic Journal*.

If *pemmican* be the order of the day, the lean meat, after being dried, is pounded into dust, and, being put into a bag, is enriched with nearly an equal weight of fat. — *Sir G. Simpson's Journey*, Vol. I. p. 92.

A correspondent of the "New York Post," Sept. 29, 1877, says:—

The Hudson's Bay Co. send buffalo flesh in the shape of *pemmican* and dried meat to nearly every fort in the territory. It forms the food of thousands of *voyageurs* in their employ, their rations being confined to *pemmican* and tea.

**Penny.** A cent. See *Copper*.

**Pennyroyal.** 1. This very English name is given in this country to a different plant, although the color and taste of both are nearly alike. The true English *pennyroyal* is a mint; the American is *Hedeoma pulegioides*.

2. Used as an adjective to designate very common stock, as a *pennyroyal* steer or bull. Western.

**Pent-Way.** A road, not public, and generally kept closed. A few such ways remain in New England.

A *pent-way* with a turn-stile and gate at each end. — *Calkins, Hist. Norwich*.

**Peon.** (Span.) A day-laborer. These laborers are very often bond-men for debt; which, as Gregg describes, is thus brought about. "They labor for fixed wages, it is true; but all they can earn is hardly sufficient to keep them in the coarsest clothing, and pay their contingent expenses. Men's wages range from two to five dollars a month, and those of women from fifty cents to two dollars, in pay-

ment of which they rarely receive any money, but instead thereof articles of apparel and other necessities at the most exorbitant prices. The consequence is that the servant soon accumulates a debt which he is unable to pay, his wages being often engaged a year or two in advance. Now, according to the usages, if not the laws of the country, he is bound to serve his master until all arrearages are liquidated; and is only enabled to effect an exchange of masters by engaging another to pay his debt, to whom he becomes in like manner bound."

"If I was going far into Mexico," said the guide, "I would always hire a Mexican fellow to go with me, so I could dress mean and make him do all the business, so I would be thought to be his *peon*." — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 336.

The whole town was in an uproar, and no one seemed to know what it was about. At length, it was ascertained that one of the herders was a *peon*, and a man wished to seize and imprison him till he could be restored to his original state of servitude. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 62.

**Peonage.** The system of treatment pursued towards the laboring classes in Mexico.

**Pepperidge.** (*Nyssa multiflora*.) A name given in the South and West to the Black or Sour Gum, also called Tupelo. It has a very tough wood, which is difficult to split.

**Periauger.** (Span. *piragua*.) 1. A canoe formed of one large tree.

Getting into a *perioque*, I paddled off to a part of the Green River where there was sand and clay. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 269.

At night, the barges [of the British] were heard rowing up and down the river on mysterious errands; *perriaugers* also paid them furtive visits occasionally. — *Irving's Washington*, Vol. II. p. 272.

Our skipper rowed to an oyster-bank just by, and loaded his *periauga* with oysters. — *Westover Papers*, p. 13.

This word is frequently corrupted to *pettyauger*.

On the 8th, the French crossed the Missouri in a *pettyauger*, the Indians on floats of cane, and the horses were swam over. — *Du Prat, Louisiana*, Vol. I. p. 108.

2. A small schooner without a bowsprit, and with a lee-board, formerly much used in the waters of New York and New Jersey.

Steamboats, lighters, *periaugers*, scows, clam-boats, and nondescript water-witches of every sort, have arrived hourly from quarantine, loaded with almost entire villages of men, women, and children [German and Irish emigrants]. — *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

**Perk.** Lively; brisk; holding up the head. — *Webster*. This old word, still provincial in England, is used in the interior of New England, and is commonly pronounced *peak* (the *ea* as in *pear*). *Pickering*. See *Peert*.



**Pernickity.** Fastidious, over-particular. Heard in some parts of New England.

**Persimmon.** (Virginia-Indian. *Diospyros Virginiana*.) This tree is unknown in the north-eastern parts of our country; but south of latitude 42° it is found throughout the United States. It varies exceedingly in size, being sometimes sixty feet in height, with a trunk twenty inches in diameter, but more frequently does not attain half these dimensions. The fruit is about an inch in diameter, and is powerfully astringent when green; but, when fully ripe, the pulp becomes soft, palatable, and very sweet. The wood is very hard, and is used for large screws, mallets, shoe-last, wedges, &c. In clearing the forests, the *persimmon* is usually preserved; and it is probable that the quality of the fruit might be improved by cultivation. — *Encyclopædia Americana*.

"The longest pole knocks down the *persimmons*," is a proverbial saying, meaning that the strongest party gains the day.

Plums there are of three sorts. The red and white are like our hedge plums; but the other, which they call *Putchamins*, grow as high as a *Palmeta*, the fruit is like a *Medler*, it is first green, then yellow, and red when it is ripe. If it be not ripe, it will draw a man's mouth awry, with much torment; but, when it is ripe, it is delicious as an *apricot*. — *Smith's Virginia* (1632), Book II.

*Persiminas*, and other dainty fruits. — *Description of New Albion*, (1648). *Putchimon*, *Pitchumon*, or *Persimon*. — *Clayton, Flora Virginica* (1743), p. 43, 156.

My worthy friends, to make sure of happiness, you must be honest, kind to one another, and cling to the belief in a better world to come like a "possum to a *persimmon* tree." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 292.

**Persimmon Beer.** A kind of domestic beer whose principal ingredient is persimmons.

**Pert End up.** Better; more cheerful. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**Peskily.** Confoundedly; very; extremely. I know not the origin of this New England word.

Skeered, says he, sarves him right; he might have known how to feel for other folks, and not funkify them so *peskily*. — *Sam Slick in England*.

I'm *peskily* sorry about that mare. — *Ibid.*, ch. 28.

The post-office accounts were the next bother; and they puzzled all on us *peskily*. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 139.

**Pesky.** 1. Plaguy, confounded.

I found it [looking for houses] a *pesky* sight worse job than I expected. *Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 36.

Orphy should have been at home long ago, if that *pesky* wheel hadn't come off his wagon. — *Fanny Fern*.

A couple of Yankee girls put a bullfrog in the hired man's bed, to see if they couldn't get him to talk. Daniel threw the frog out of the window, and never

said a word. Soon after, he put a half a bushel of chestnut-burrs in the girls' bed; and about the time he thought they would make the least shadow, Daniel went to the door and rattled the latch furiously. Out went the candle, and in went the girls; but they didn't stick, though the burrs did. Calling on them, he begged them to be quiet, for he only wanted to know if they had seen any thing of that *pesky* bullfrog. He'd a gin five dollars to find it. — *Newspaper*.

2. Confoundedly, excessively.

Don't be so *pesky* starch. I'll be dod-fetched if I meant any harm. I only spoke of the calf, and you went a streak higher and talked of the garter. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 195.

I wonder how he's on 't for face-cards; ha! ha! So *pesky* slow, we shan't get through to-night. — *Margaret*, p. 305.

The thing of it is, people has got to be so *pesky* proud and polite. — *Ibid.*, p. 141.

**To peter.** To run up a thing at an auction sale. Petering is by-bidding.

**To peter out.** To exhaust; to run out.

The speculator recommended a gentleman, who held stock in the Consolidated Virginia, to sell out at any sacrifice, as the mines were *petered out*. — *Boston Post*, May 5, 1876.

The influence of the Hon. —, formerly a Democratic politician of some prominence, seems to have quite *petered out*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 28, 1877.

**Peter Funk.** At the petty auctions, a person is employed to bid on articles put up for sale, in order to raise their price. Such a person is called a *Peter Funk*; probably from such a fictitious name having frequently been given when articles were bought in. At the "mock-auctions," as they are called in New York, this practice of having by-bidders is carried to a great extent; and strangers, unacquainted with their tricks, are often cheated by them. Grose describes a person similarly employed in England, under the name of "puffer."

The *Peter Funk* of New York is a small-souled pickpocket; he does not exactly cut through your coat or pants, but under specious pretences he induces you to hand over your purse to him, thus virtually making a cat's paw of your own fist; he steals your cash, but does it under a flimsy show of business; he inveigles you into an offer, and then either sells you one article and delivers you another which is inferior, or multiplies the price you have offered and the quantity you engaged to take. — *Tricks and Traps of New York City*.

**Pet Lamb.** A cant term for a Zouave, which see.

A *Pet Lamb* astonishes the Secessionists. The Richmond papers tell of a Fire Zouave who was caught and taken to Fairfax. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1861.

**Petticoat-Trowsers.** Trowsers very short, but of great width, worn by fishermen. Massachusetts.

*Petticoat-trowsers* of striped linsey-woolsey, the leg short and loose, were a customary article of every-day dress among the common people. — *Connecticut Records*.

**To pettifog.** Some newspaper writers use this verb transitively, in the sense of to advocate in the manner of a pettifogger; as, "He *pettifogs* his client's cause."

That was the work of the traitors whose case "The Express" thus skulkingly *pettifogs*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Pewit or Pewee.** See *Phæbe-Bird* and *Peet-Weet*.

**Pheasant.** The popular name in some of the States for the "ruffed grouse."

**Pheese.** A fit of fretfulness. A colloquial, vulgar word in the United States. — *Worcester*. The adjective *pheesy*, fretful, querulous, irritable, sore, is provincial in England. — *Forby*. Also written *feeze*, which see.

**Philadelphia Lawyer.** "That beats a Philadelphia lawyer." "He knows as much as a Philadelphia lawyer." These are common sayings, whence it is to be inferred that the bar of the Quaker city are distinguished for their learning and shrewdness.

**Phillipena.** See *Fillipeen*.

**Philosophy.** Purpose, method, and means of attaining a desired end; mode of operation; intent. "The philosophy of it is," &c.

**Phæbe-Bird.** (*Sayornis fuscus*.) The Pewit or Pewee, so called from a fanciful resemblance in the name to the sound made by this bird.

Another of the feathered visitors who follow close upon the steps of winter is the Pewit, Peewee, or *Phæbe-bird*. — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 31.

**Pi and Pe.** A weight (a *poise*) as of steelyards. New London, Connecticut.

**Picacho.** (Span., augmentation of *pico*, peak.) A prominent peak or elevation rising abruptly above a mountain or chain of mountains. They are common landmarks in New Mexico and Arizona.

Almost due north of the Sierra Verde lies the *picacho* of the Sierra del Babuquibari, one of the orographical phenomena of the country, its peculiarity being such as to attract especially the attention of the red men. — *Schott's Geological Obs. Mexican Boundary*, p. 70.

The march before us must be made, and the sooner the *picacho* was reached the better. — *Bartlett, Personal Narrative*, 1852, Vol. II. p. 287.

**Picayune.** The name for the Spanish half-real in Florida, Louisiana, &c. See *Federal Currency*.

**Picayune or Picayunish.** Sixpenny; and hence small, mean.

There is nothing *picayune* about the members of St. George's [Cricket] Club; for the love of sport, they will almost invariably enter upon matches that other clubs would not accept. — *N. Y. Herald*.

"Wall, mister," he said, "it's your business, not mine; but I know something of that boat. She belongs to that darn *pickayunish* old coon, Jim Mason, and he'll run her till she sinks or busts up, and then God help the crowd." — *Notes on Canada, &c., Blackwood's Mag.*

**Pick.** In mercantile usage and among manufacturers, a *pick* is a thread. The relative quality of cotton cloth is denoted by the number of *picks* it has to the inch.

**To pick.** In the South, to *pick* the banjo or guitar means to play upon these instruments. Comp. the French *pincer*.

**Pickaninny.** (Span. *pequeño niño*, little child.) Generally applied to a negro or mulatto infant in the Southern States. Negroes apply the same term to white children.

I jest sauntered in as he was puttin' up the *pickaninny* yaller gal, about five years old. — *Robb, Squatter Life.*

You can't be too warm, nor too guarded your head,  
To 'scape the mosquito's whim;  
And a nice *pickaninny* that's been well fed  
Is a capital meal for him. — *Ethiopian Melodies.*

**Pickeral Weed.** (*Pontideria cordata*.) An aquatic plant bearing a spike of blue flowers, common on the roadsides and in ditches in the Middle States.

**Pickery.** "Cotton presses and *pickeries*." Alabama.

**Pickings and Stealings.** The perquisites of office, not always honestly obtained; alike common in England and in the United States.

There is an Irish M. P. here, — a certain O'Shea, — who tells me there are a variety of things [appointments] to give in the West Indies, with what he calls *pickings*, — meaning, I suppose, *stealings*. Why not look for one of these? — *C. Lever, One of Them*, ch. xv.

**Pickle.** 1. To apply brine to sores made by whipping. See *Paddle*.

2. To tear, or cut and cook, small pieces, as to pick up salted codfish. New England. To have a rod in *pickle* is to have ready or in preparation the means of checking or punishing one who has done an injury.

**Pick-up.** A *pick-up dinner*, called also simply a *pick up*, is a dinner made up of such fragments of cold meats as remain from former meals. The word is common in the Northern States.

The Queen regretted that she could not invite me to stay to dinner, cause 't was washin' day in the palace, and they only had a *pick-up* dinner. — *Major Downing in London.*

You tell Miss Astor from me that she needn't make no fuss about dinner at all. I will eat a *picked-up dinner*. I had just as lives as not. I didn't come down here to put her out or make any trouble. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 302.

**To pick up a Room** is to put it in order. New England.

**To piece.** To eat pieces of bread and butter, to eat between meals.

"He hasn't eaten much dinner, because he 's been a *piecin'* on't all the mornin'." Pennsylvania.

**Pie-Plant.** Rhubarb. (*Rheum rhaponticum.*)

**Piert.** Brisk, lively. See *Peert*.

**Pig-Fish.** See *Sea-Robin*.

**Pig-Nut.** (*Carya porcina.*) A small species of hickory nut. The nuts bitter and unpalatable.

**Pig-Plum.** See *Hog-Plum*.

**Pig-Weed.** A rank weed often found about pig-sties.

**Pig's Whistle.** "I'll do so in less than a *pig's whistle*," that is, in less than no time. *Pig's whisper* occurs in "*Pickwick*" in the same sense.

**Pigwick.** A small species of duck, very numerous in the coves and rivers of the eastern shore of Maryland. It has remarkably red eyes, feeds on fish, keeps near the shore, and is a great diver.

**Pig-Yoke.** Among seamen, the name for a quadrant, from its resemblance to a pig-yoke.

**Pigeon-Berry.** See *Partridge-Berry*.

**Pigeon-Roost.** 1. The social and gregarious habits of pigeons incline them to roost together, and their places of resort are called "*pigeon-roosts*." In these places, they settle on all the trees for a considerable distance round, in such numbers as to break off the branches. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley*.

We've more to do than fright a *Pigeon-Roost*,  
Or start a timorous Flock of Running Deer.

*Major R. Rogers, Ponteach (Lond., 1766), p. 60.*

The *pigeon-roost* in Decatur County, Indiana, extends over a distance of twenty-eight miles; it is about fourteen miles wide. The birds have not nested at this roost for thirty years until this spring. Over this vast extent of country every tree has from ten to fifteen nests, and every nest at least one bird. The young are now hardly able to fly, and the shooting is mere slaughter. The old birds leave early in the morning in search of food, and return in the evening. — (*Washington*) *States*, May 15, 1858.

2. A multitude. "A whole *pigeon-roost* of undreamed-of fancies."

*Mrs. H. B. Stowe in The Independent.*

**Pigeon Woodpecker.** See *Clape*.

**Pike.** The name given in California to the migratory Southern poor whites, said to have originated from the supposition that the first of the class came from Pike County, Missouri. Next the name was

applied to all emigrants from Missouri, and finally to all poor people from the Southern States.

The true "*Pike*, however," writes Mr. Nordhoff, "in the California sense of the word, is the wandering, gypsy-like, Southern poor white. This person often lives with his family in a wagon; he rarely follows any steady industry; he is frequently a squatter on other people's lands; 'he owns a rifle, a lot of children and dogs, a wife, and, if he can read, a law-book,' said a lawyer, describing this character to me; he moves from place to place, as the humor seizes him, and is generally an injury to his neighbors. He will not work regularly; but he has a great tenacity of life, and is always ready for a law-suit. . . . When it was proposed to build a school-house in a village where there was none, the Pikes objected, on the ground that the ringing of the school-house bell would scare the deer away. 'As soon as he hears a piano,' said an old resident, 'the Pike sells out and moves away. . . . Well, the Pike is the Chinaman's enemy. He does little work himself, and naturally hates the patient industry of the Chinese. Of course, if you ask him, he tells you that he is 'ruined by Chinese cheap labor.' " — *California*, p. 137.

**Pile.** 1. (Dutch, *pyl*.) An arrow. This word is still retained by the boys of New York.

2. A term first used at the gaming-table, and next by our California adventurers, signifying a quantity of money: Hence, "to make one's *pile*" is to make one's fortune. 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 mortals, ere you take a wife,  
Contrive your *pile* to last for life.

Alanthus Bug was planted in the world as a pedler of peanuts, then gradually grew into a grocery man, then budded into a broker, and next into the full blossom of a banker; and now, by the closest economy, he has amassed a million, and can point to his *pile* with proud satisfaction, and say, "Alone I did it!" — *Cairo, City Times*.

Since writing to you last, I have returned from Fraser River to San Francisco, having been gone about four months. During this time, with my own hands I dug \$25 worth of gold dust, and my expenses were about \$300; however, I have clung to the "*pile*," and intend to keep it as a memorial of my trip. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 25, 1858.

See *Make one's Pile*.

**Pill.** 1. A conceited man; a bore. Cant. At Yale College, it means a silly, disagreeable fellow.

2. A bullet or cannon-ball. Cant.

**Pill-Bottle.** A bottle for holding pills. In cant, a fire-arm.

We almost vowed that the champagne made as much noise as the reports of Uncle Sam's "pill-bottles."

**Pillow-Slip.** A pillow-case. New England.

**Pimping.** Little, petty; as, "A *pimping* thing." — *Skinner*. Used in the interior of New England.

"Was I little?" asked Margaret. "Yes, and *pimpin'* enough. And I feel your marm with rue and comfrey-root, or ye never 'd come to this." — *Margaret*, p. 19.

**Pimplo, i. e. Pin-Pillow.** The name given in Barbadoes to the Prickly Pear.

**Pinch.** To be in a *pinch* is to be in a tight place; to be hard up for money. Western.

**Pinders.** Peanuts. South Carolina.

**Pindling.** Unthrifty; becoming gradually weaker.

**Pine-Barrens.** A term applied to level, sandy tracts, covered with pine-trees in the Southern States. — *Worcester*.

The road which I had to travel lay through a dreary and extensive forest of pine-trees, or, as it is termed by the Carolinians, a *pine-barren*, where a habitation is seldom seen, except at intervals of ten or twelve miles. — *Lambert's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 226.

**Pine-Knot.** A knot of the pitch-pine tree (*Pinus rigida*), which, when burned, gives a bright light. These knots were much used by the early settlers of New England, and are still used by the Negroes and poorer classes in the South.

'Twas on the inner bark stripped from the pine,  
Our Father pencilled this epistle rare;  
Two blazing *pine-knots* did his torches shine,  
Two braided pallets formed his desk and chair.

*Durfee, Whutcheer, Canto II. lxi.*

The pilot stopped the engines. Flash! from the depths appeared two great *pine-knot* torches, which, with the pine-fire on shore, made the whole as light as day. — *E. E. Hale, Adv. of a Pullman*, p. 111.

**Pine-Nut.** The edible nut contained in the cones of pine. See *Pinion*.

**Pine-Top.** A name given in Maryland to common whiskey.

**Pine-Tree Money.** Money coined in Massachusetts in the seventeenth century, and so called from its bearing a figure resembling a pine-tree. — *Webster*.

**Pine-Tree State.** The State of Maine.

**Pinery.** In the Western States, a place where pine-trees grow, or a forest of pines. A Wisconsin paper, in speaking of emigration, says: —

We have noticed squads of hardy suckers from Illinois, with their baggage along upon their backs, making their way due north for the *pineries*.

One cannot well imagine what that forest of timbers cost from the time they were felled in the *pineries* beyond Washoe Lake. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 379.

The early thaw has stopped logging business throughout the Wisconsin *pineries*, and no more work will be done this winter. — *Philadelphia Ledger*.

Ever since the first settlement of the West, many have followed the business of running rafts from the *pineries* down the Mississippi. — *Sketches of the West*.

**Piney Woods.** The name given at the South to a large track covered with pines, especially in the low country.

**Pinon.** (Span. *piñon*.) A species of pine-tree (*Pinus edulis*), growing on the head-waters of the Arkansas; common to that region as well as to New Mexico, the Rocky Mountains, &c. Wild turkeys frequent groves of these trees for the sake of their nuts, which are sweet and palatable. Bears and other animals also feed on them. The Indians, too, make much of them. See *Pine-Nut*.

Two species of pine grow on the mountains [of New Mexico], one, the so-called *piñon*, contains the cone's seed of small nuts, that are roasted and eaten. — *Witzlénus, Memoir on Northern Mexico*, 1847, p. 26.

Upon each side of the Zuñi River are extensive forests of small cedars and *piñons*. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations to the Pacific*, p. 72.

**Pink-Root.** (*Spigelia Marilandica*.) A well-known vermifuge, the plant being remarkable for its beautiful flowers. It is also known as the Carolina Pink.

**Pink-Stern.** (French, *pinque*.) A vessel with a narrow stern; hence all vessels so formed are called *pink-sterned*. — *Chambers*. This species of craft is very common in the waters of New England. See *Chebacco Boat*.

**Pinky.** (Dutch, *pink*.) 1. The little finger. A very 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 doggerel: —

*Pinky, pinky, bow-bell,  
Whoever tells a lie  
Will sink down to the bad place,  
And never rise up again.*

2. A New England vessel with bow and stern equally sharp; a pink-stern. A story is told of a stranger accosting a fisherman on a wharf, and pointing to a pinky, said, "Does it make any difference which way that boat sails?" The man replied, "It don't make any difference to me."



**Pinole.** (Span.) Parched corn, ground and mixed with sugar and spices. This, mixed with water, is a palatable food, and is much used in Texas and by parties crossing the plains.

"Give me a pack-mule," says Ross Brown, "a shot-gun, and a sack of *pinole*, with such a climate [as that of the desert of Colorado], and take your brick deserts on Fifth Avenue and be happy with them. — *Adventures in the Apache Country*, p. 49.

**Pinxter.** (Dutch, *pinkster*.) Whitsunday. On *Pinxter* Monday, the Dutch Negroes of New York, New Jersey, and elsewhere, consider themselves especially privileged to get as drunk as they can.

*Pinkster* fields and *pinkster* frolics are no novelties to us, sir, as they occur at every season; and I am just old enough not to have missed one of them all for the last twelve years. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 90.

**Pinxter Blumachies**, i. e. Whitsuntide flowers. (Dutch.) A familiar name in the State of New York for the Swamp Honeysuckle and other early flowers.

**To pipe.** To follow; to waylay.

It is the business of all policemen to make themselves familiar with the haunts of burglars, thieves, and gamblers, to *pipe* or follow them, and be ready at any moment to nab them in the act of crime. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Pipe of Peace.** Among the North American Indians, "to smoke the pipe of peace" is to cease fighting; to make peace; or, in the language of the aborigines, "to bury the hatchet." See *Smoke the Pipe of Peace*.

To *plant the tree of peace* is another poetical expression of the Indians, conveying the same idea.

**Pipe-Layer.** 1. One who lays a pipe, as a gas-pipe.

2. A trickster. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Pipe-Laying.** This term in political parlance, means any arrangement by which a party makes sure of a certain addition to its legitimate strength in the hour of trial, — that is, the election. In other words, to *lay pipe* means to bring up voters not legally qualified.

It were too long a story to tell the origin of the term at length. In brief, it arose from an accusation brought against the Whig party of this city (New York) some years ago, of a gigantic scheme to bring on voters from Philadelphia. The accusation was made by a notorious Democrat, of not very pure political character, who professed to have derived his information from the agent employed by the Whigs for the service. This agent had actually been employed by certain leaders of the Whig party, but on a service deemed legitimate and proper in the art of electioneering. He, however, turned

traitor, and, as was alleged by the Whigs, concocted a plot with the notorious Democrat to throw odium upon the Whigs. A mass of correspondence was brought forward in proof, consisting mainly of letters written by the agent to various parties in New York, apparently describing the progress and success of his operations. In these letters, as if for the purpose of concealment, the form of a mere business correspondence was adopted, — the number of men hired to visit New York and vote being spoken of as so many yards of pipe, — the work of laying down pipe for the Croton water being at that time in full activity.

The Whig leaders were indicted on the strength of these pseudo revelations, and the letters were read in court; but the jury believed neither in them nor in the writer of them, and the accused were acquitted.

The term "*pipe-laying*," however, was at once adopted as a synonyme for negotiations to procure fraudulent votes. — [*J. Inman*.]

The result of the Pennsylvania election would not be in the least doubtful, if we could be assured of fair play and no *pipe-laying*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 30, 1848

There is a magnificent scheme of *pipe-laying* and log-rolling going on in Pennsylvania. — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept., 1856.

**Pipsissewa.** (*Chimaphila umbellata*.) A popular domestic remedy, much used by the Indians, and now of the U. S. Pharmacopœia. Also called Prince's Pride and Wintergreen.

**Pirogue.** See *Periauger*.

**Pistareen.** 1. The Spanish *peseta Sevillana*, or one-fifth of a dollar. A silver coin, formerly common in the United States, of the value of twenty cents. They have now gone entirely out of use.

2. While coming into disuse, they, worn out and defaced, depreciated rapidly, and thence became a symbol of small-minded, penurious men; hence, mean, little. See *Picayune*.

Breeders of the best imported stock will not and ought not to sell at the prices offered by our *pistareen* farmers. — *N. Y. Observer*, June 10, 1862.

**Pit.** (Dutch, *pit*, a kernel.) The stone of a fruit, as of a cherry or peach. Mostly confined to New York State.

You put an apple-seed or a peach-*pit* into the ground, and it springs up into the form of a miniature tree. — *Professor Bush on the Resurrection*.

**Pita.** (Pron. *peeta*.) The name given to the fine fibres produced by the agaves and kindred plants, used for sewing and other delicate purposes. The name is also applied to the plants which furnish the fibre. The coarse fibres (like Sisal hemp) from the same family of plants is called *cabuya*.

**Pitahaya.** (*Cereus giganteus*.) A gigantic cactus found in New Mexico, and which appears in the greatest perfection in the sterile deserts bordering on the river Gila, where it reaches the height of fifty and sixty feet. It bears a delicious fruit, resembling the fig in taste, whence it is sometimes called the Indian Fig, which see.

**Pitch and Toss.** A game of pitching cents.

As soon as the affray was over, the belligerents went quietly back to old-kedge, seven-up, *pitch-and-toss*, chuck-a-luck, and the turkey match. — *Gilmore, My Southern Friends*, p. 69.

**To pitch in.** To attack; to abuse.

Utah and the "Latter Day Saints" are like Joseph, the youngest son of Israel: all the elder brothers are *pitching into him*; and the general government says, "Go ahead, hit him again," and poor Utah, like Joseph, takes it quietly. — *Newspaper*.

**Pitching Track.** A term applied in the Far North-west to an Indian trail from one part of the country to another.

This ridge resembled the Big Ridge of the Assiniboine, . . . our Indian guide told us it extended for many days' journey. It forms the *pitching track* at the foot of the Riding Mountain. . . . West of Manitoba, the *pitching track* follows the ridge above described. . . . This *pitching track* is connected with the Ridge *pitching track*. — *Hind's Canadian and Red River Exp. of 1858*, Vol. I. p. 51.

**Pitpan.** In the West Indies and Central America, a very long, narrow, flat-bottomed, trough-like canoe, with thin and flat projecting edges.

**Pity.** *To think a pity of a person is to take pity on him. It is a pity of one means he is to be pitied.*

"'Tis *pity of him*, too," he cried;

"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,

I warrant him a warrior tried." — *Scott, Marmion*, Canto VI.

**To place.** To *place* a person is to remember the place where he belongs or was born.

**Placer.** (Span.) A locality where gold is found to exist in the "dust" or scaly form. The Hispano-Americans apply the term to deposits of sand formed by the action of water, the currents of rivers, &c., or what geologists would call diluvium or drift. Our people use the word to signify a rich mine of minerals or of any thing else that is valuable.

The Homer of Chapman is so precious a gift that we are ready to forgive Mr. Smith's [the publisher's] shortcomings, in consideration of it. It is a vast *placer*, full of nuggets for the philologist and lover of poetry. — *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1858.

The Washington Market question, involving a contest between the State and the city, furnishes a perfect *placer* in the shape of fees for some of our leading lawyers. — *N. Y. Herald*, May 18, 1858.

**To placer.** To live together as husband and wife without marriage. Louisiana (New Orleans). — *Olmsted*.

**Placer-Diggings.** Localities where gold is found scattered all through the surface dirt.

**Placer-Mining.** See *Gulch-Mining*.

**Plaguy Sight.** This is a very common expression in the colloquial language of New England, and means, a great deal.

"Squire," said Slick, "I'd a *plaguy sight* sooner see Ascot than any thing else in England." — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 19.

**Plane-Tree.** Another name for the Sycamore or Button-wood tree. See *Button-Wood*.

**Planing-Machine.** A machine operated by steam or water-power for smoothing boards.

**Plank.** A platform in a political sense is a constitution; and as platforms are literally composed of planks, so, in the same figurative sense, planks are the several political principles which appertain to a party. See *Platform*, No. 2.

The Free-Soil party regard every *plank* and splinter of the Buffalo platform as a relic of untold value. — *Providence Journal*.

**To plank.** To lay, to put; generally applied to money: as, "He *planked down* (or *planked up*) the cash."

I've had to *plank down* handsome, and do the thing genteel; but Mr. Landlord found he had no fool to deal with, neither. — *Sam Slick in England*.

Why, says he, shell out, and *plank down* a pile of dollars. — *Ibid*.

During the last war, he *planked up* more gold and silver to lend the government than Benton ever counted. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 59.

Come, *plank up* the tin. I'll show you that Jim Borland ain't a goin' to be backed out by mere bragging. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 163.

**Planked Shad.** A shad nailed to a plank and roasted.

Did you ever eat a *planked shad*? Then you have something yet to live for, — your dish of enjoyment is not yet full, until you have a shad caught fresh from the water, cleaned, and crucified to an oak plank, which is held to the fire, and seasoned properly with salt, pepper, and butter, and served up hot. It is, of all fish dishes, the daintiest, richest, and most satisfactory in an appetitical point of view. — *Baltimore Sun*, April 30, 1855.

**Plank Road.** A road made with a flooring of planks laid across the track, a substitute for turnpikes, where timber is cheap.

**Plantain.** (Span. *platano*.) The fruit of the *Musa paradisiaca*, imported from the West Indies.

**Plantation.** An estate appropriated to the production of staple crops, as the sugar-cane, cotton, rice, tobacco, coffee, &c., by slave labor.

**Planter.** 1. A proprietor of land in the Southern States who cultivates staple crops by slave labor.

2. In Newfoundland, a person engaged in the fishery.

3. A term applied to a piece of timber or the naked trunk of a tree, one end of which is firmly planted in the bed of a river, while the other rises near the surface of the water. This is the most dangerous among the "snag and sawyer" family to which vessels navigating the Western rivers are exposed. See *Snag* and *Sawyer*.

4. A first settler; as, "the *planters* of Guilford and New Haven." Connecticut.

5. A first settler of Massachusetts Colony, as contradistinguished from the "Pilgrim Fathers" of Plymouth Colony.

**To plat.** To divide into plats; to make a plat.

When every man shall be at liberty to make a quarter-section of the public lands his own, upon paying merely the cost of surveying, *platting*, and making out the necessary papers. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Platform.** 1. In some parts of the New England States, an ecclesiastical constitution, or a plan for the government of churches; as, the Cambridge or Saybrook *platform*. — *Webster*. The same use of this word is made by old English divines, and will be found in Tomson's revision of the Geneva Bible, printed in 1576, as well as in later editions of the same, where in the head-note to 1 Corinthians, chap. ii., we read, "He setteth down a *platform* of his preaching."

Their minds and affections were universally bent, even against all the orders and laws wherein the church is founded, conformable to the *platform* of Geneva. *Hooker*.

A *Platform* of Church Discipline, gathered out of the word of God, and agreed upon by the elders and messengers of the churches assembled at the synod in Cambridge in New England. — *Title of Book printed in London*, 1653.

2. Of late years, the word has got into very common use throughout the country, to denote the collection of principles avowed by a political party.

The people should distrust a bad man, even if put upon the best *platform* that ever was constructed, and every plank of which could be stood upon by every American citizen. In like manner, they will trust and confide in a man whom they believe to be pure and honest and patriotic and capable, without regard to the *platform* he stands upon, and without caring, in truth, whether he stands upon one at all. — *Lynchburg Virginian*, Aug., 1858.

**Playa.** (Span.) A beach; a strand; a shore. In the plains and deserts of the interior, a broad, level spot, where water accumulates after rains, and which afterwards becomes dry by evaporation. These *playas* are prominent features in the topography of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. They are also called "salt lakes,"

from the nitrous efflorescence with which they are often covered when dry ; and which, at a distance, leads the traveller to believe they are basins of water.

We had a perfectly smooth road to the *playa*, which at present is a hard, smooth, and apparently level area of about fifteen miles in length, by nearly ten in width, without a particle of vegetation. These *playas*, in my opinion, have no outlet, and are so nearly level that the rain and drain waters are spread over a large surface ; and there being but little absorption, and very rapid evaporation, it is left smooth and baked. — *Lieutenant Parke's Report of Survey for Pacific R. R., Official Reports, Vol. II.*

Emerging from the pass into the plain, our eyes were greeted with the sight of a long, white streak, which we would have taken for a lake, had it not been called the *Playas*. This *playa* seemed to have an extent of twenty-five or thirty miles. The surface was an indurated clay, so hard that the wheels of our wagons scarce made an impression. After rain, this basin receives a large amount of water, which seems to evaporate before vegetation gets a foothold. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative, Vol. I. p. 246.*

**Play-Actor.** A pleonastic expression for the English term *player* or *actor*. It is objectionable, because the term *actor* is itself a technical word which expresses the full meaning conveyed by the compound.

That which was Shakspeare's specialty, we mean his wonderful dramatic faculty, was not discovered by himself till it became useful to him in his business. For Shakspeare's avocation was that of a *play-actor*, and subsequently, as a successful one, a play-house owner. — (*Balt. Sun*, Nov. 12, 1858.

**Play-Acterin'.** The profession of performing at theatres.

**Played out.** Exhausted; ended; of no farther use; good for nothing; used up. Equivalent to the Fr. *passé*.

If you happen to owe a man a bill,  
And dodge it with new excuses still,  
And tell him you 'll pay next week, no doubt,  
He 'll quickly reply, "Come, that's *played out*!"

*Comic Song, Played out.*

The "New York Tribune" of Feb. 18, 1876, in an article entitled "Talent taking Crime by the Hand and sharing the Spoils," is very severe upon Mr. David D. Field for his defence of Tweed, who plundered the city of New York of millions, and in the course of its remarks says:—

There is not a criminal at large, or awaiting trial, who does not feel safer in his deeds when he thinks that, if he can secure Mr. Field, or a man like him, justice is practically "*played out*."

**Player-Men.** A player; an actor.

Accordingly, the actors are come; and the Brooklyn people, for the first time in their lives, are seeing the *player-men*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1861.

**To play 'Possum.** "He 's *playing 'possum* with you," is a common expression at the South and West, and means that he is deceiving you. The opossum, when attacked by a dog, pretends to be dead, and thus often deceives his pursuers; hence the expression.

Thinks I, that girl is jest trying of me: 't aint no use of *playing possum*. If I don't fetch her out of that high grass, use me for sausage meat. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I will *play possum* with these folks, and take a rise out of them that will astonish their weak nerves. — *S. Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 14.

That are stranger 's only *playin' possum*, but he can't pull the wool over this child's eyes: he 's got 'em both skinned. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 96.

**Play-Spell.** A time for play; amusement.

"If he has a *play-spell*, how he can enjoy it! — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Plaza.** (Span.) A public square. A term used in California and other countries, recently acquired from the Mexicans.

**Plead or pled,** for *pleaded*. It has been correctly remarked that there is no such word as *pled* in the English language. It is true that the preterite and past participle of the verb *to read* is pronounced *red*; but there is no analogy between the two verbs, except their accidental similarity of sound. The former is the Anglo-Saxon verb *rædan*, and is conjugated accordingly; whereas the latter is the old French *plaidier*, and therefore cannot admit of what philologists call the "strong inflexion." This vulgar mistake is often met with in our reports of legal proceedings and elsewhere. But it is not of recent origin, nor is it exclusively American, as is shown by the following example from Spenser, furnished by Richardson: —

With him . . . . . came  
Many grave persons that against her *pled*.

*Spenser, Fairy Queen.*

An old offender was caught last night in a warehouse, with a dark lantern and all the other implements of his profession, and next morning innocently *plead* "somniaambulism," when brought before the magistrate; having no recollection of the doings of the night since he went to bed, early in the evening, and found himself in the watch-house in the morning. — *New York paper*.

**Pleasant-spoken.** "He 's a *pleasant-spoken* man," i. e. he 's agreeable in conversation.

**To pleasure.** To please. North Carolina.

**Pleurisy Root.** (*Asclepias tuberosa*.) A root which is expectorant and diaphoretic, as well as a mild tonic and stimulant.

**Plug.** 1. Applied by dentists to a filling of gold or other material inserted in a tooth.

2. A stick of tobacco.

3. *Fire plug*; the hydrants placed at the corners of the streets, &c., to which hose is attached in case of fire.

4. A tall hat, a beaver hat. Sometimes applied to a horse and a man.

**Plug-Ugly.** A term assumed by a gang of rowdies in Baltimore. It originally belonged to certain fire companies.

The Democrats are getting up a soldiers' convention at Indianapolis. As Union soldiers are scarce in the Democratic ranks, many are recruited from the *plug-uglies* of Baltimore. — *Providence Journal*, Sept. 30, 1876.

The disguise of *Plug-uglies* and blood-tubs in the garments of reform reminds us of the answer made by one of the crew of the "Alabama," when an English officer visited her. — *New York paper*.

**Plum-Muss.** Plums boiled, mashed together, and dried in the form of a sheet.

**Plumb**, often written **Plum**. Directly, exactly. South-western. In English colloquial language, both *plump* and *plumb* (or *plum*) are used in this sense.

I tole the boys, if they 'd come with me, I 'd show them one of the most owda-cious big rattlesnakes they 'd ever seen, what I 'd jest kilt. Abel said he was the man what could pack him *plum* home without taking a long breath. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

I levelled my rifle at the bear, and shot him *plumb* through the heart. — *Western Sketches*.

He came up and looked me right *plum* in the face, as savage as a meat-axe, and says he, "Give us your paw." — *Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

The ninth day come, and we struck a streak of good luck, — a horse give out, and broke down *plumb* in the centre of an open prairie. — *G. W. Kendall, Story of Bill Dean*.

The original signification of this word is, as the plummet hangs, perpendicular to the horizon, straight down; and hence its secondary meaning of straightforward, directly. Both uses are well illustrated in the following examples. This term, which many suppose an original Westernism, is found in several English writers. Thus Milton says: —

He meets

A vast vacuity, all unawares,  
Fluttering his pennons vain, *plumb* down he falls.

*Paradise Lost.*

Never was there a more sensible blunder than the following. We recommend it as a motto to gentlemen in the army. "The best way," said Sir Boyle, "to avoid danger is to meet it *plumb*." — *Burrington, Sketches*.

**Plumb-Centre.** Directly at the centre, in shooting at a mark. Western.

We 'd been a watchin' 'em all day, for we knowd thar war somethin' ugly afoot. We seed 'em both fire acrost the gleeed, an' right *plum-centre* at young Randolph. — *Captain Mayne Reid, Osceola*, p. 415.



**Plunder.** Personal luggage, baggage of travellers, goods, furniture, effects. A very common word throughout the Southern and Western States, corresponding to the Norman French *butin* (booty, goods), which is used in Canada for baggage. Cf. Ger. *Plunder*.

When we got loaded up, I was afraid old Bosen was going to have more 'n his match to pull us, they 'd put in so much *plunder*. Two trunks, band-boxes, &c. *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 165.

"Help yourself, stranger," added the landlord, "while I tote your *plunder* into the other room." — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*, Let. 33.

The steamboat gun, you know, is the signal to tell us when to look after our *plunder*. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*.

**To ply.** To sail; to go and come from. A vessel *plies* between two places.

**To poach.** To tread soft ground, or snow and water, as cattle, whose feet penetrate the soil or soft substance and leave deep tracks. New England. From *Podge, Posh* (which see).

**Pocket.** 1. *Pocket diggings.* A term used by gold-miners to denote hollow places where gold is concentrated as in a pocket.

One of my comrades [at the mines], a victim of eighteen years of unrequited toil and blighted hopes, was one of the gentlest spirits that ever bore its patient cross in a weary exile, — grave and simple Dick Baker, *pocket-miner* of Dead-House Gulch. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 439.

They went panning up the hill, and found what was probably the richest *pocket* yet produced. It yielded \$120,000. — *Ibid.*, p. 438.

Mr. Johnson (counsel in the case of the Emma mine swindle) said that in his opinion it was simply a *pocket-mine*, not a true fissure, and that it had already been worked out. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 2, 1876.

2. A designation applied to a part of the State of Indiana, from the form and position of said part.

The General Association of Indiana met at Francisco, Gibson Co., in the "*Pocket*," — that part of the State lying south of the Ohio and Mississippi Railway. — *The Congregationalist*.

**Pocket-Book Dropper.** A mode of deception practised by city sharpers on country flats, at steamboat landings and other places where there is a bustle, is for one of the rogues to drop a pocket-book well filled with worthless bank-notes. This his confederate picks up, and opens directly in sight of the victim. He regrets that he has not time to search out the owner, who will be sure to give a handsome reward, and offers to surrender the prize to his rural friend for say ten dollars. All ends as in the "*Patent Safe Game*," which see.

No man, boy, or greenhorn was ever yet victimized by the *Pocket-book Droppers*, the Thimble Riggers, or the Patent Safe men, who didn't have so strong a spice of the scamp in his own composition as to think he was coming a sure and

profitable swindle upon some one not up to his own level of sharpness and treachery. — *Tricks and Traps of New York City*, p. 24.

**Pocket-Book Dropping.** The species of knavery described in the preceding article.

*Pocket-book dropping* may almost be considered as one of the by-gones; it being very seldom attempted except in cases of very aggravated verandancy on the part of the victim. — *Tricks and Traps of New York City*, p. 24.

**Pocoson or Poquoson.** Low wooded grounds or swamps in Eastern Maryland and Virginia, mostly dry in summer and covered with water in winter. They are covered with white oak and other timber. They are sometimes distinguished as white oak or cypress *pocosons*. Comp. *Pokeloken*. *Percoarson* (and *Perkoson*), a sort of low land, . . . affording vast cypress-trees. — *Lawson's Voyage to Carolina* (1709), p. 9, 57.

We rowed up an arm of the sound, where we were stopped by a miry *pocason*, through which we were obliged to draggle on foot, up to our knees in mud. — *Byrd, History of the Dividing Line*, p. 15.

**Podge.** See *Poach*.

**Pohagen or Pauhagen.** 1. A species of sea-fish. See *Menhaden*.

2. The term is also applied to a kind of paste-bait for mackerel, &c., made of damaged and frequently putrid fish, chopped or ground in a cutting-mill.

**Point.** A fact or a theory based on reliable information connected with stocks, upon which one bases a speculation, or upon which a purchase of a particular stock is made.

"The first element in speculation is the *point*. If the operator has a good *point*, he has a sure thing. . . . In other words, the *point* is a bit of secret information concerning a stock, whether it be that an extra dividend is to be declared, a bull movement is organizing, an emission of new shares is to take place, or some other cause is at work, or likely to be at work, which will seriously affect prices." — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 83.

There are brokers, according to rumor, who from time to time fee half the clerks in Wall Street, in order to hold every *point* which a knowledge of office books would afford, who favor club men with choice opportunities of speculation. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

**Poke.** 1. A bag. I have heard this old word used by some persons here in the compound term *cream-poke*; that is, a small bag through which cream is strained. — *Pickering*.

2. In New England, a machine to prevent unruly beasts from leaping fences, consisting of a yoke with a pole inserted pointing forward. — *Webster*.

3. A lazy person, a dawdle; as, "What a slow *poke* you are!" A Woman's word.

4. **Poke-weed.** (*Phytolacca decandra*.) A common plant, known also by the names of Garget, Cocum, Jalap, &c. It is a violent emetic. The young shoots are commonly eaten like asparagus.

**To poke.** To put a poke on; as, to *poke* an ox. — *Webster*.

**Poke-Berry.** The berry of the *Phytolacca*, from which a rich purple juice is extracted, and used as a dye. Also called Pigeon-berry and *Pocan*. — *Rafinesque*, Vol. II. p. 251. See *Puccoon*. It is a favorite food for tame mocking-birds.

**Poke-Bonnet.** A long, straight bonnet, much worn by Quakers and Methodists.

**To poke Fun.** To joke; to make fun. *To poke fun at* is to ridicule, make a butt of one. Colloquial in England and America.

O fie! Mister Noakes. — for shame, Mr. Noakes!  
To be *poking* your *fun* at us plain-dealing folks.  
Sir, this isn't a time to be cracking your jokes,  
And such jesting your malice but scurvily cloaks,  
And we know very well your story 's a hoax!

*Ingoldsby Legends*, Vol. I. p. 280.

I thought you was *pokin' fun* at me; for I am a poor ignorant farmer, and these people are always making game of me. — *Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*, p. 124.

The widow admonished Nimrod, and said, "You had better not be *pokin' your fun* about." — *Margaret*, p. 49

Jeames, if you don't be quit *poking fun* at me, I'll break your mouth, as sure as you sit there. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

How streaked a captain feels when he sees a steamboat a clippin' it by him like mad, and the folks on board *pokin' fun* at him, and askin' him if he has any word to send home! — *Sam Slick*.

**Pokeloken.** An Indian word, used by hunters and lumbermen in Maine and New Brunswick, to denote a marshy place or stagnant pool, extending into the land from a stream or lake. The equivalent of Chippewa *pokenogun*, and related to *pokegoma* and *-gomig*, a recess or one-side lake, connected with the principal lake or with a river by a short outlet. See *Owen's Geol. Survey of Wisconsin*, p. 280.

The wild fowl are amazing fond of *pokelokens*. — *Sam Slick*.

Crocodiles can cry when they are hungry; but, when they do, it's time to vamoze the *pokelokens*. — *Ibid.*, *Human Nature*, p. 331.

Now and then we passed what McCauslin called a *pokelogan*, an Indian term for what the drivers might have reason to call a poke-logs-in, an inlet that leads nowhere. If you get in, you have got to get out again the same way. — *Thoreau's Maine Woods*, p. 51.

I had unawares pushed the canoe into a *pokeloken* and was aground, remembering too late the half-breed's admonitions, who warned me against these mysterious *pokelokens*. — *Murray's Letters*.

**Poke-Nose.** Offensively intrusive; unpleasantly inquisitive.

Among the articles which the [U. S.] Senate refused to tax are watches, plate, and dogs. The main reason for this refusal is the large expense of collecting, and the *poke-nose* scrutiny involved in levying such taxes. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 7, 1862.

**Poker.** 1. (Dan. *pokker*; Welsh, *pucca*, a hobgoblin.) Any frightful object, especially in the dark; a bugbear. A word in common use in America. — *Webster*.

2. A favorite game of cards among Western gamblers.

At a court in —, Kentucky, the case of Smith *vs.* Brown was called up. "Who's for the plaintiff?" inquired the judge, impatiently.

"May it please the court," said a rising member of the legal fraternity, "Pilkins is for the plaintiff; but I left him just now over in the tavern playing a game of *poker*. He's got a 'sucker' there, and he is sure to skin him, if he only has time. He's got the thing all set to ring a 'cold deck,' in which case he'll deal for himself four aces and his opponent four queens; so that your honor will perceive he must 'rake the persimmons.'"

"Dear me!" said the judge, with a sigh, "that's too bad! It happens at a very unfortunate time. I am very anxious to get on with these cases."

A brown study followed, and at length a happy idea struck the judge.

"Bill," said he, addressing the friend of the absent Pilkins, who had spoken, "you understand *poker* about as well as Pilkins. Suppose you go over and play his hand" — *Western paper*.

**Pokerish.** Frightful; causing fear, especially to children. A childish or colloquial word. — *Worcester*.

A curious old convent [in Naples], with chapels above and below, — a *pokerish*-looking place, fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. — *N. Y. Literary World*.

**Pokey.** Dull, stupid.

That's the way we girls studied at school, except a few *pokey* ones, who wanted to be learned. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 138.

A *pokey* old house like ours. — *Miss Fullerton, Grantley Manor*.

**Policy.** Combined with the sale of lottery tickets, there is carried on an extensive game known by the name of *Policy*. To *policy* is to bet on certain numbers coming out in lottery drawings. A person can take any of the numbers in the scheme and *policy* them. Three numbers are called a "gig," two numbers a "saddle," four numbers a "horse," either of which pays its own rate, which is from \$2 to \$600 for \$1 staked; a saddle, however, is only paying a small advance.

**Political Capital.** Political stock in trade means of political advancement.

All who feel an interest in the peace of the country, and who are not disposed to turn every thing into *political capital*, must feel rejoiced over the result in Kansas. — *N. Y. Times*, Oct. 14, 1857.

**To politicate.** To make a trade of politics.

He [Senator Hunter] proposes to put all new clerks into the lower offices, and to promote them for services rendered and for efficiency. Nobody can doubt that this is a most admirable plan. It would stop the quadrennial rush to Washington, and make many a citizen quit *politicking* and turn to hard work. — *Richmond Whig*, July, 1858.

**Pollack.** A name applied by fishermen in New England to the *Merlangus purpureus* and the *M. carbonarius*. Immense numbers of these fish are taken annually in the waters of Massachusetts and Connecticut. — *Storer's Fishes of Massachusetts*.

**Polt.** A blow; a thump. "Give him a *polt*." New England.

**To polt.** To knock; to beat; to give blows to. Ibid.

**Polygamatical.** Polygamous; allowing the practice of polygamy.

Why not insert [in the platform of a proposed political party] a *polygamatical* plank, and rope in Brigham Young? — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 19, 1862.

**Pomme Blanche.** (*Psoralea esculenta*.) A native of the prairies and mountains, oval-shaped and about three and a half inches in circumference. It is encased in a thin, fibrous tegument, which, when removed, exposes a white, pulpy substance, and in taste resembles a turnip. Called also Pomme de Prairie and Indian Turnip.

**Pompion.** A pumpkin. The name by which the plant was formerly known.

He found in that towne [Apalache, in Florida] great store of maiz, french beans, and *pompions*, which is their fooode, and that wherewith the Christians there sustained themselves. — *Hakluyt, Virginia Richly Valued* (1609), p. 36.

**Pompion Berry.** Another name for the fruit of *Celtis occidentalis*. See *Hackberry*.

**Pond.** We give this name to collections of water in the interior country, which are fed by springs, and from which issues a small stream. These *ponds* are often a mile or two or even more in length, and the current issuing from them is used to drive the wheels of mills and furnaces. — *Webster*.

There were streams meandering among hills and valleys; little lakes or *ponds*, as they were erroneously called in the language of the country, dotted the surface — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 144.

**To pond.** To accumulate water in the form of a pond.

**Pone.** Bread made of the meal of Indian corn, with the addition of eggs and milk. Southern. William Penn, in his account of Penn-

sylvania, published in 1683, says *pone* was the Indian name for bread.

Captain J. Smith describes the process of bread-making from pounded and sifted corn, baked in the ashes: this "bread they call *ponap*." Of the grouts and pieces of corn remaining, by boiling in water, they make "an ordinary food, [which] they call *vstatah-amen*." — *Hist. of Virginia* (1624), B. ii. p. 29.

This word is a corrupt form of the pass. participle of the verb *to bake*, or, more exactly, to bake by placing in hot cinders: *apicou* or *appoo* (Eliot), "he bakes;" *appooun*, "baked;" Abn. *abarin*, he bakes, and *abarin*, bread (Rasles); modern Abenaki, *abon*, a cake. *J. H. Trumbull*.

In a poetical work, called the "Sot-weed Factor, or a Voyage to Maryland, London, 1708," the author thus describes the tables of the planters:—

While *pone* and milk, with mush well stored,  
In wooden dishes graced the board;  
With homine and cyder pap,  
Which scarce a hungry dog would lap.

We all clustered around the fire, the landlady alone passing through our semi-circle, as she prepared the *pone* and fry and coffee for supper. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

**Pony.** 1. A college word. A translation of a classical text-book. So called, it may be, from the fleetness and ease with which a skilful rider is enabled to pass over places which to a common plodder may present obstacles. — *Hall's College Words*.

Their lexicons, *ponies*, and text-books were strewed around their lamps on the table. — *A Tour through College*, 1832, p. 30.

In the way of *pony* or translation to the Greek of Father Griesbach, the New Testament was wonderfully convenient. — *New England Mag.*, Vol. III. p. 208.

We gladly bid a last adieu  
To scenes through which we've past,  
And thank our stars, and *ponies* too,  
That we are through at last.

*Songs of Bowdoin, Carmina Collegensia.*

Then long live *ponies*, great and small!  
Who rides them well will never fall.

*Songs Coll. of New York, Ibid.*, p. 227.

2. A small glass.

**To pony.** To use a translation. — *Hall's College Words*.

We learn that they do not *pony* their lessons. — *Yale Tomahawk*, May, 1852.

**Pony-Purse.** A subscription collected upon the spot, or from a few persons.

**To pony up.** A vulgar phrase, meaning to pay over money. **Ex.:** "Come, Mr. Brown, *pony up* that account;" that is, pay over the money. Grose gives a phrase similar to it, "post the *pony*," i. e. lay down the money.

It was my job to pay all the bills. "Salix, *pony up* at the bar, and lend us a levy." — J. C. Neal, *Sketches*.

The Washington correspondent of the "N. Y. Herald," March 16, 1876, in speaking of the sale of post-traderships by men in high official position, accuses General Rice, of Iowa, of receiving large sums therefrom, adding that —

General Rice is a bachelor of expensive habits. He must have his codfishing in summer, and his trip to Florida in winter, and you must *pony up* and keep him going, for he can't live on less than \$10,000 a year.

We're coming, Ancient Abram, *several* hundred strong;  
We hadn't no \$300, and so we come along;  
We hadn't no rich parients to *pony up* the tin,  
So we went unto the Provost, and there were mustered in.

*Hymn by a Portland Conscript.*

**To pool.** To aggregate; to join per average, as funds, risks, &c. In Wall Street slang, a combination of speculators formed for the purpose of buying up any particular stock, and thereby advancing the price, or to carry through a corner.

The plan is for the railroads centring at St. Louis, the elevator companies, . . . to *pool* the risks by combination, and send cargoes to Liverpool and other European ports.

**Poquaw.** (Narragansett Ind., *poquawhock*, or perhaps from the Delaware *poc-que-u*. Zeisberger.) The round or hard clam, so called in Nantucket. In other parts of New England, it is shortened to *Quahaug*.

The *Poquawhock* is a little, thick shell-fish which the Indians wade deepe and dive for; and, after they have eaten the meat there (in those which are good), they breake out of the shell about halfe an inch of a blacke part of it, of which they make their Suckaûhock, or black money, which is to them pretious. — Roger Williams, in *R. I. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. I. pp. 104, 130.

**Poor Doe.** Among the Texan hunters, the term *poor doe* is applied, regardless of gender, to any deer that may happen to be lean. — G. W. Kendall.

In less time than it takes us to record it, the veteran hunter had cut a shoulder and some of the more delicate and eatable portions from the deer; and then, rolling the remainder and larger portion out of the way with his foot, remarked that it was but "*poor doe*." I told him that it was no doe at all, but a young buck, — I could not say much as to its fatness. He gave another half-laugh, &c. *Kendall's Santa Fé Exped.*, Vol. I. p. 35.

**Poor Folksy.** Like or after the fashion of poor people. Southern.

**Poorly.** Badly; ill.

**Poorly off.** Not well off; not rich.

**Poor White Folks.** A term applied by the blacks to the poor white population of the South, also called the Mean Whites. A common and still more contemptuous appellation is Poor White Trash. See *White Trash*.

**Poor White Folksy.** Like or after the fashion of the Poor White Folks. Southern.

As for making up my mind to like my new master, you may preach till your hair turns gray, and I won't do it. For all his shiny boots and spick-span broad-cloth, he looks dreadful *poor-white-folksy* to me. — *The Hidden Path*.

**Pop.** A pistol.

**To pop Corn.** To parch or roast Indian corn until it "pops" open. The corn is laid over the fire on a shovel or wire gauze made for the purpose, until it bursts, when it curls up, swells to treble its size, and exposes its white interior.

One autumn night when the wind was high,  
And the rain fell in heavy plashes,  
A little boy sat by the kitchen fire,  
A *poping corn* in the ashes.  
And his sister, a curly-haired child of three,  
Sat looking on, just close to his knee.

Pop, pop! and the kernels one by one  
Came out of the embers flying;  
The boy held a long pine stick in his hand,  
And kept it busily plying.  
He stirred the corn, and it snapped the more,  
And faster jumped to the clean white floor. — *Anonymous*.

**Pop-Corn.** A kind of Indian corn which easily "pops" or bursts open, when roasted in the manner above described. It is of a dark color, and has small grains. In many railway cars, *pop-corn*, put up in paper, is sold by boys, usually at five cents a package. It is stated that the managers of the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia gave the exclusive privilege of selling pop-corn on the grounds for \$7,000.

**Pop-eyed.** Having prominent eyes. Southern.

**Poplar.** See *Tulip-Tree*.

**Poppycock.** Pretences made for mere effect; false representation.  
A term of contempt for a statement made.



**Pop-Squirt.** An insignificant, but pretentious fellow.

**Popular.** Conceited; aristocratic. Pop'lar as a hen with one chicken. — *Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

**Popular Sovereignty.** The rule of the people, the right of the people to form the constitution under which they are to live.

He [Senator Douglas] has only vindicated the South's doctrine against the impending success of a dishonest attempt to secure for the South the supposed benefit of the doctrine of *popular sovereignty*. — *Richmond Examiner*, July, 1858.

**Porgy or Paugie.** (Narrag. Indian, *scup*; pl. *scuppaug*, R. Williams's Key, 1643.) A fish of the Sparus family, common in the waters of New England and New York. It is singular that one-half the aboriginal name, *scup*, should be retained for this fish in Rhode Island and Eastern Connecticut, and the other half, *paug*, changed into *paugie* or *porgy*, in New York. The entire Indian name, however, is still common in many parts of New England. See *Scuppaug*.

Daniel Webster, who, it is well known, was a zealous disciple of Walton's, in writing to his friend Mr. Blatchford, from Wood's Hole, says: —

In the afternoon, I went out in the boat and caught some fish, namely, tautog and scuppog, the same, I suppose, as are called *porgy* in New York. — *Private Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 33.

John Hardie, in his "Description of the last Voyage to Bermudas in the Ship Marygold," London, 1671, thus alludes to a fish of the same name in the waters near that island: —

Plenty of Fish is, which the people store,  
As Pilchards, Sinnetts, Gruats, and Salmon Peal,  
With Rock-fish, *Porgoes*, and the slippery Eel.

**Porkopolis.** A cant name for Cincinnati, as having eminence in the *pork-packing* business.

**Pork-Scraps.** Same as cracklings. New England.

**Portaal.** (Dutch.) A portal, lobby. Used by people of Dutch descent, in New Jersey and New York, for a small passage or entry of a house. The principal entrance they call the *gang*; also Dutch.

**Portage.** A carrying-place over land between navigable waters, or along the banks of rivers, round water-falls or rapids, &c. — *Pickering*. This word has been adopted by geographers, and is universal throughout North America. The *Portage* Railroad in Pennsylvania is a line over the Alleghany Mountains connecting two lines of canal.

**Posey-Yard.** A garden; a court near a dwelling.

The sweet bells jingled all night in the *posey-yard*, 'mid altheas, honeysuckles, and roses, — soldiers with bayonets keeping them from mischief. — *Virginia Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Posh, Podge.** A wet place; sludge. New England. See *Splosh*.

**Position.** "*Defining one's position*" is a political practice of modern days, generally resorted to either by gentlemen who have no other good chance or prospect of bringing themselves to the special notice of the public, as a sort of advertisement that they are in the market, or by other gentlemen who contemplate making a dodge from one side in politics to the other. It is done either orally or in writing; by a speech in Congress or at some public meeting; or by a long letter, published in some newspaper, the editor of which is always glad of something to fill his columns. The highest art in "*defining one's position*" is to leave it more indefinite than it was before, so that any future contingency may be taken advantage of.

The Barnburners' Mass Meeting, to *non*-respond to the nominations of Cass and Butler, will take place in the Park at five this afternoon, and be addressed by John Van Buren, B. F. Butler, Sedgwick, Field, General N.Y., &c. We regret that unavoidable absence at Philadelphia will deprive us of the pleasure of hearing these gentlemen "*define their position*," especially Prince John, who has the reputation of being the most straightforward, plain-spoken, flat-footed 'Burner in the country. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 6, 1848.

**Possum.** A common contraction of *Opossum*, as in the Negro's eloquent appeal to his mistress: —

*Possum* up a gum-tree, cooney in de holler;  
Come along wid me, my dear, I'll gib you quarter dollar.  
When the hickory nuts begin to drop,  
Then the *possum* fills his winter shop;  
He lives beneath a blown-up tree,  
But he don't love too much company.  
Hunt the *possum* up the tree, &c. — *Comic Song*.

**To possum.** To feign, dissemble. An expression alluding to the habit of the opossum, which throws itself on its back and feigns death on the approach of an enemy. This is also and more commonly called *playing possum*; sometimes *possuming*.

In the common parlance of the country, any one who counterfeits sickness, or dissembles strongly for a particular purpose, is said to be *possuming*. — *Flint's Geogr. of Mississippi Valley*, p. 67.

**To post.** To *post* or *post up* a person is to bring his knowledge up to date, to make him acquainted with recent occurrences; so that a person *well posted* is one who is well informed. The phrase is borrowed from the counting-house.

Mrs. Fudge has kept a close eye upon equipages, hats, cloaks, habits, churches, different schemes of faith, and of summer recreation. She is *well posted up* in all these matters. — *Ik Marvel, Fudge Doings*.

**Posted.** Well-informed. "He's well *posted* on the state of the money market," i. e. thoroughly conversant with it.

**Postal Card, Postal.** In England and Canada, they are called Post-cards.

**Postal Currency.** Postage-stamps in circulation as currency during the early part of the late civil war. See *Stamps*.

**Post-Note.** In commerce, a bank-note intended to be transmitted to a distant place by mail, payable to order. In this it differs from a common bank-note, which is payable to bearer. — *Webster*.

*Post-notes* differ in other respects from bank-notes. The latter are payable on demand; the former are often drawn on time, with or without interest, sometimes six or twelve months after date. This species of currency was resorted to by many banks during the great commercial revulsions in 1836-37, and contributed greatly to the expansion of credits which proved so disastrous to the country.

**Potato Grant.** A patch of land for growing vegetables, formerly granted by the owner to each of his slaves. West Indies.

**Potash.** Place and arrangements for making potash. New England early settlements. The practice was continued until about 1830, or as long as the manufacture was continued.

**Potash Kettles.** A term applied in the West to roundish elevations and depressions in the earth near the great lakes. They are attributed to the decay and washing away of the soft and easily decomposed limestone by which the ridges where they are found are probably underlaid.

**Pot-Hole.** In many parts of the country are found circular holes of various diameters and depths, formed by the action of water in rolling a small boulder in what was at first a natural depression of the rock. It is a common notion in the West that these were made by the Indians to pound corn in, whence they are often called "Indian mortars."

Every little torrent has its furrowed channel, and often its deep *pot-holes*, as a result of the action of the water; and it would be most strange if the great flood of Niagara should rush on its course for ages, and produce no appreciable effect. *R. Bakewell, in Sill. Journ., Vol. XXIII. p. 86.*

**Pot-Pie.** A pie made by spreading the crust over the bottom and sides of a pot, and filling up the inside with meat, *i. e.* beef, veal, mutton, or fowls.

An enormous *pot-pie*, and piping hot, graced our centre, overpowering, with its fragrance and steam, the odors and vapors of all other meats; and *pot-pie* was the wedding dish of the country, par excellence! The pie to-day was the doughy sepulchre of at least six hens, two chanticleers, and four pullets! What pot could have contained the pie is inconceivable. Why, among other unknown contributions, it must have received one half peck of onions! And yet it is to be feared that many would be *pot-pieless*. — *Carlton, The New Purchase.*

**To potter.** 1. *To potter round.* To busy one's self with trifles; to move about work in a purposeless way, instead of taking hold energetically. We also hear "*to putter round.*"

2. To tread upon floating ice, or to leap from one piece to another.

**Potty-Baker.** (Dutch, *pottebakker.*) A potter. This Dutch word is still common in New York. Potter's clay is there called *potty-baker's clay.*

**Pot-Walloper.** A scullion. The English word denotes a householder, literally a pot-boiler. — *Wright, Prov. Dic.*

**Pot-Wrestler.** A scullion. Pennsylvania.

**Pound-Party.** An assemblage, usually the parishioners of a country clergyman whose salary is inadequate to his support, which on an evening agreed upon meets at his house, carrying tea, coffee, and other articles of necessity put up in pound packages, as contributions to him.

Sometimes these *Pound-Parties* are for the benefit of public charities. See *Donation-Party.*

**Pout.** A New England name for Catfish (*Pimelodus*) *Eel-pout*, the common name of the *Lota maculosa* of the lakes. See *Catfish.*

These 'ere *pouts* ain't to blame for bein' fish, and ye ought to put them out of their misery. Fish has their rights as well as any on us. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, ch. iv.

**Powder-Post.** "The hoops are all *powder-post*," i. e. eaten by a worm which leaves its holes full of powder. It is generally found in sapwood and hickory.

**Power and Certificate.** During the time the books of a company are closed for the payment of a dividend, for an election, or for any purpose, there can be no transfer of stock, or the issue of a new certificate. Most of the sales of stock made during the closing of the books are deliverable on the opening; all contracts, whether buyer's or seller's option, that mature during the same time, are carried forward to the opening; but occasionally a sale is made, where the buyer requires immediate delivery. In that case, the old certificate is delivered, with a power of attorney attached, for the transfer on or after the opening of the books. These transactions are reported in the stock-list, with the letters *p* and *c*, which means power and certificate. Sales for cash, made during the closing of the books, not marked *p* and *c*, are for the opening of the books, and are marked *opg.* — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

**Powerful.** Great; very, exceedingly. A vulgar use of the word in some parts of the country.

This piano was sort o' fiddle like, — only bigger, — and with a *powerful* heap of wire strings. It is called a forty piano, because it plays forty tunes. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 8.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd a *powerful* sight sooner go into retracy among the red, wild aborigines of our wooden country, nor consent to that bill. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 74.

It may be said generally of husbands, as the old woman said of hers, who had abused her, to an old maid, who reproached her for being such a fool as to marry him: "To be sure, he's not so good a husband as he should be, but he's a *powerful* sight better than none." — *N. Y. Sunday Dispatch*.

*Mrs. S.* Hoarhound and sugar's amazin' good.

*Mrs. B.* Mighty good, mighty good.

*Mrs. R.* *Powerful* good. I take mightily to a sweat of sugar tea in desperate bad colds. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 193.

I hated *powerful* bad to part with the horse. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

"John," says father, when I was leavin', "you've been out in the world, seen the sights, and have got to be considdeble smart; now, John, look out for your brother, he's so *powerful* green, 'tain't safe for him to come near the cows, for fear they might eat him." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

You can work when you're a mind, Tom. . . . But it's *powerful* seldom you're a mind to, I'm bound to say. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 34.

**Pow-Wow.** This is the name given by the early chronicles to the feasts, dances, and other public doings of the red men, preliminary to a grand hunt, a council, a war expedition, or the like. It has been adopted in political talk, to signify any uproarious meeting for a political purpose, at which there is more noise than deliberation, more clamor than counsel.

A murder was recently committed upon a Sioux by two Chippewas. The body of the murdered Indian was taken to the fort, where a most terrific *pow-wow* was held over it by the friends of the deceased, three hundred in number. — *Western newspaper*.

As I live, the savages scent the whiskey! There is a rush towards, and a *pow-wow* in and about, the shed. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*.

I was in Philadelphia when the Know-Nothings were holding their grand national *pow-wow* there, and laying it on thick that "Americans shall rule America." — *Letter in N. Y. Herald*, June 22, 1855.

The students are forbidden to occupy the State House steps on the evening of presentation day; since the Faculty design hereafter to have a *pow-wow* there, as on the last. — *Burlesque Catalogue, Yale College*, 1852-53.

**To pow-wow.** To perform a ceremony with conjurations for the cure of diseases and other purposes, with noise and confusion.

At a distance, with my Bible in my hand, I was resolved, if possible, to spoil their [the Indians'] spirit of *pow-woeing*, and prevent their receiving an answer from the infernal world. — *Brainerd, Indian Narrative*, 1745.

The Angekok of the Esquimaux — the prophet, as he is called among our Indians — is the general counsellor. He prescribes or *pow-ows* in sickness and

over wounds, directs the policy of the little State, and is really the power behind the throne. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. II. p. 118.

**Pozo.** (Span.) A spring or well. A word in use on the frontier of Mexico.

**Prairie.** (French.) An extensive tract of land, mostly level, destitute of trees, and covered with tall, coarse grass. These prairies are numerous in the United States, west of the Alleghany Mountains, especially between the Ohio, Mississippi, and the great lakes. — *Webster*. See also *Rolling Prairie*, *Salt Prairie*, and *Soda Prairie*. In the North-west, universally called *perairy*.

These are the gardens of the desert, these  
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,  
For which the speech of England has no name, —  
The *Prairies*. *Bryant, The Prairies.*

**Prairie Bitters.** A beverage common among the hunters and mountaineers. It is made with a pint of water and a quarter of a gill of buffalo gall, and is considered an excellent medicine. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 133.

**Prairie-Dog.** (*Cynomys Ludovicianus*.) A variety of the marmot. It has received the name of Prairie-dog from a supposed similarity between its warning cry and the barking of a small dog. These animals live in large communities; their villages, as they are termed by the hunters, sometimes being many miles in extent. The entrance to each burrow is at the summit of the mound of earth thrown up during the progress of the excavation below. This marmot, like the rest of the species, becomes torpid during the winter, and, to protect itself against the rigor of the season, stops the mouth of its hole, and constructs a cell at the bottom of it, where it remains without injury.

**Prairie-Hen.** (*Tetrao pratensis*.) A bird seen in great numbers in the prairies of Missouri and Illinois, in the autumn. It is rather smaller than the domestic fowl. In flight, it appears like the pheasant and partridge, and is a beautiful bird. — *Flint's Mississippi Valley*. It is also called Heath-hen and Pinnated Grouse.

We saw great flights of *prairie hens* or grouse, that hovered from tree to tree, or sat in rows on naked branches. — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

**Prairie-Itch.** A cutaneous eruption caused by the friction of the fine red dust of prairie countries in summer.

**Prairie-Squirrels.** (Genus *Spermophilus*.) These are with great propriety called "*Prairie-squirrels*;" for their true home is on the prairie, where they replace the "arboreal" squirrels, from which

they differ in organization, to suit their necessarily different mode of life. While the true squirrels are designed to live in trees, and to subsist upon their fruits, the spermophiles are fitted to inhabit the grassy plains which cover much of the Western part of our Union, their food being the prairie plants with their roots and seeds. The form of these squirrels is adapted only to locomotion on the ground. The body is thick and heavy, with short legs; and in place of the long toes and sharp, hooked nails by which the arboreal squirrels cling to the trees so readily, they have shorter toes, with longer and straighter nails, for digging burrows in the earth. The long, flexible, and bushy tails, which aid the squirrels in their bold leaps, and keep them warm in their holes in winter, would here be useless, and soon worn ragged by dragging through their burrows. The spermophiles, therefore, have smaller tails, that are carried straight behind them. They have cheek-pouches in which to carry food; and two species, at least, convey roots, seeds, &c., to their burrows to be eaten. — *R. Kennicott.*

**Prairie-State.** The State of Illinois.

**Prairie-Wolf.** (*Canis latrans.*) The small wolf of the prairies, the Coyote of the Mexicans. Its range extends from Fort Riley, Kansas, to the Pacific, and from the Upper Missouri to the Rio Grande of Texas.

the *prairie-wolf*  
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den  
Yawns by my path. — *Bryant.*

**Prairillon.** A small prairie.

Interspersed among the hills are frequent openings and *prairillons* of rich soil and luxuriant vegetation. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 172.

**Prawchey.** (Dutch, *praatje.*) A talk, gossip. New York.

**Prayerfully.** Devoutly. *Ex.*: "We may be *prayerfully* disposed."  
Used by some of the clergy. — *Pickering.*

**Prayerfulness.** The use of much prayer. — *Webster.*

**Prayerlessness.** Total or habitual neglect of prayer. — *Webster.*

**To preach a Funeral.** To preach a funeral sermon. Western.

This and the two preceding words are not in the English dictionaries.

**Preacher's Stand.** A pulpit in a church; a platform for a preacher at "Camp Meetings." The latter use occasioned the former, among certain people. Southern and Western usage, but occasional in New England.

**Precinct.** 1. A subdivision of a county or city, within which a single poll is held at elections; a territorial district or division.

In case of non-acceptance [of the collector], the parish or *precinct* shall proceed to a new choice. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

In Franklin Co., Kansas, they had no county commissioner whose duty it is to appoint voting *precincts* besides the county seat. — *N. Y. Times*, Oct. 9, 1857.

2. A town whose corporate rights did not include sending deputies to the colonial Legislature. Massachusetts before 1776.

**To predicate.** Is constantly confounded with predict.

**To predicate on or upon.** To found a proposition, argument, &c., on some basis or data. This sense of the word, said to be purely American, is not noticed by Dr. Webster or the English lexicographers. "Its use," as Mr. Pickering observes, "is very common with American writers, and in the debates of our legislative assemblies."

It ought surely to be *predicated upon* a full and impartial consideration of the whole subject. — *Letter of John Quincy Adams*.

The great State papers of American liberty were all *predicated on* the abuse of chartered, not of absolute, rights. — *Gibbs, Adminis. of Washington and J. Adams*, Vol. I. p. 3.

Among these [projects for pecuniary relief, in 1740] was an institution known as the Land Bank, with a capital of £150,000, *predicated on* real estate. — *Stone's History of Beverly, Mass.*

**To pre-empt.** To secure land, by being the first settler or occupant of it, in conformity with the pre-emption law.

The following account of the process of *pre-empting* lands is from the "National Intelligencer," Washington, July 1, 1857: —

The laws of the United States give the right to any citizen who does not own three hundred and twenty acres of land in any State of the Union (and to this he is required to make oath) to *pre-empt* one hundred and sixty acres, by fulfilling the detailed requirements of the act. These requirements are that he shall file his intention in the land-office to enter upon and improve the land, either by cultivating it or erecting thereon a home, and residing upon the land long enough to make it his residence; which time is variously estimated to mean one or five days, just as the Receiver at any land-office may decide. To the fact that he has so resided and made said improvements, he must produce a witness, who testifies that such and such things have been done, and that the pre-emptor has resided the required time in the house on the land. Upon fulfilling all these requirements and paying one dollar and a quarter per acre, either in gold or a land-warrant, and the fees, he receives a certificate of title. A duplicate of this is sent to the Secretary of the Interior at Washington, who, after having searched the records, and finding that the individual has not *pre-empted* before, issues a patent direct to him, and he becomes the owner of his farm by title direct from the government.

Isaac Lawrence, of New York, a Negro, addressed Governor Marcy a note, inquiring if he could *pre-empt* government land in Minne-



sota, the same as white persons could. The letter was referred to Secretary McClelland, who in reply said: —

I have to state that there is nothing in the laws of the United States which would prevent you, as a free man of African descent, from settling upon public land in the territory of Minnesota, and acquiring a right of *pre-emption*.

The term is used figuratively to denote a previously occupied field of study. Thus, speaking of the lectures of the Rev. Joseph Cook, the "Providence Journal" says: —

He takes old, philosophic ground, that has, as it were, been *pre-empted* by skeptics and materialists, and standing there claims it for God and evangelical truth.

Walter F. Brown, in his amusing "Historical and Comical Centennial" (Providence, 1876), thus begins his poem: —

Mr. Christopher Columbus  
In Palos raised a rumpus,  
Then went bobbing out at sea, to see what he could do.  
By accident he landed,  
And on kissing the sand did  
*Pre-empt* this mighty continent in fourteen ninety-two.

**Pre-emption Right.** The right or title which an original settler or squatter has to become the first purchaser of unsurveyed government land, of which he has taken possession. To maintain this right, he must have erected a habitation, or taken some steps towards the cultivation of the land. This term has long been in use, as Imlay, in his work on the Western Territory, published in 1797, says: —

The settlement began to form in 1780, and was encouraged by settlements and *pre-emption rights*. — p. 14.

Among the public acts of Congress is one entitled, —

"An act to appropriate the proceeds of the public lands and to grant *pre-emption rights*."

**Pre-emptor.** One who has a pre-emption right.

**Preferential.** Entitled to preference.

No party has any such *preferential* rights over the lines of the American Telegraph Company. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Perhaps**, for *perhaps*, is much used at the West in familiar language, when additional force is to be given to the word. It originated in a jocose mispronunciation, which appears to be becoming a fixed corruption.

*Perhaps* Parson Hyme didn't put it into Pokerville for two mortal hours; and *perhaps* Pokerville didn't mizzle, wince, and finally flummix right beneath him! *Field, Drama in Pokerville*.

**Prekel.** A small, flat cake, sugared outside. Pennsylvania.

**Present.** This word is put on the back of letters to persons residing in the place where they are written, and which are not to be sent through the mail. Peculiar to the United States. An abbreviation of the old English form, "these present." An earlier form (as in the "Paston Letters," 15th century) was, "To A. B. be this delivered," or "be this given." Such letters were sent by special messengers, or intrusted to some friend or traveller, to be delivered in person. "These deliver" and "these present" were common forms in New England in the 17th century. The Spanish equivalent, *presente*, is also used in Central America.

**Presidency.** 1. The office of President. "Washington was elected to the *presidency* of the United States by a unanimous vote of the electors."

2. The term during which a president holds his office. "President John Adams died during the *presidency* of his son."—*Webster*.

**President.** 1. The chief magistrate of the United States.

The executive power shall be vested in a *President* of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, &c. — *Constitution of the United States*.

2. The chief officer of a college or university.

**Presidential.** Pertaining to a president. — *Webster*. In this sense, the word is an Americanism. It is of course very common and indispensable with us, and is sometimes used by English writers in treating of American affairs.

The friends of Washington had determined to support Mr. Adams as candidate for the *presidential* chair. — *Quarterly Review*, Vol. X. p. 497.

**Presidio.** (Span.) A military post on the Mexican frontier. Many of these places are now within the United States, and still retain the old Spanish name. Sometimes the term is applied to a fortress, at others to the entire village that surrounds it.

The viceroy of Mexico sent the gallant Oñate to New Mexico, to take formal possession of the country, and to establish colonies, missions, and *presidios*. — *Wislizenus, Northern Mexico*, 1848.

**To prestidigitate.** To handle; to trick with.

So long as a question of finance is but a question of here or there, we may *prestidigitate* it harmlessly enough, making the burden disappear under any pleasant name we choose. — *The Congregationalist*, Jan. 24, 1862.

**Pretzel.** (Dutch.) A kind of brittle cake; a cracknel.

My father used to tell of a woman who sold crullers, *pretzels*, and apples on a table on the south side of the track, who was so beautiful that all the passengers clustered on that side to see her. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. 18.

**Pretty.** 1. Any thing pretty; an ornament, toy, picture. Western.

Thinks I, this is all talk and no cider; and I asked if any lady or gentleman wanted a picture. A dead silence ensued, then a titter. At length one of the chaps said to his sweetheart:—

"Betty, suppose you have your *pretty* taken." — *Daguerreotyping*, *Ev.* (*Wash.*) *Star*.

2. Well-disposed; kind; affable. Northern New England.

**Pretty Considerable.** 1. Of some consequence; tolerable, passable, middling. Used in this sense in England as well as America.

To the faculty of law was joined a *pretty considerable* proportion of the faculty of medicine. — *Burke, Reflections on the French Revolution*.

But you seem to have something *pretty considerable* in the right pocket of your trowsers; what may it be? Why, that's a wee bit pewter whiskey-flask, yer honor. — *Scrope's Deer Stalking*, p. 74.

I went to the theatre in Boston, where the acting was *pretty considerable*, considering. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 87.

2. Tolerably, passably, middlingly.

Dear Col. Crockett, — I have heard of you a great deal lately, and read considerable of your writings; and I feel *pretty considerable* well acquainted with you. — *Major Downing, Letter to Crockett, Tour*, p. 217.

There are some folks who think a good deal, and say but little, and they are wise folks; and there are others again who blurt out whatever comes uppermost, and I guess they are *pretty considerable* supertine fools. — *Sam Slick*.

I went into the business of pepper-pot smoking, and went ahead *pretty considerable* for a time; but a parcel of fellows came into it, said my cats wasn't as good as their'n, when I know'd they was as fresh as any cats in the market, and pepper-pot was no go. — *J. C. Neal, Sketches*.

**Pretty Middling.** Tolerably well.

When we came to the steep, sandy side of the mountain [Hecla], it would be safe to believe that we went down *pretty middling*. — *P. Miles, Rambles in Iceland*, p. 78.

"Ah, Mr. Weller," says the gentleman, "glad to see you, sir; how are you?" "Wery well, thank 'ee, sir," says my father; "I hope you're *pretty middlin'*." — *Dickens, Pickwick*, ch. xiii.

**Pretty Weather.** Pleasant weather. North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

**Preventative.** A corruption sometimes met with for *preventive*, both in England and America.

A cry was raised for the establishment of a *preventative* armed police; but the madness of such a proposal could not long escape observation. — *Edinb. Annual Reg*, Vol. V. p. 99.

Confidence in the press, and a belief in its statements concerning this cholera, are the most powerful *preventatives* of panic. — *N. Y. Express*, Aug. 6, 1849.

The most effectual physical *preventative* against sleeping in church is to take a short nap just before going to church. — *Hall's Journal of Health*, July, 1859.

The telegrams from London of the 19 Sept., 1877, thus give the opinion of the correspondent of the "London Times," on President MacMahon's manifesto to the French people. Commenting on the passage beginning, "I could not obey the mandates of the demagogues," he says: —

This sentence seems to be a kind of *preventative* aimed at spreading irritation and discouragement throughout the nation.

**Prickly Heat.** A cutaneous eruption or rash which appears during the excessive heat of summer.

**Prickly Pear.** (*Opuntia vulgaris*.) A sort of flat, jointed cactus, which is found in sandy fields and about dry rocks, from Massachusetts southward, usually near the coast.

**Prime.** In a first-rate manner; primely. This is one of the many English adjectives which, in our vulgar language, are transformed into adverbs.

After a little practice with my gun, she came up to the eye *prime*, and I determined to try her at the first shooting-match. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 175.

**Priming.** As the *priming* bears but a small proportion to the charge of a gun, so this word is used in the West to denote any thing trivial, like the word *circumstance*; as, "Your corn crop ain't a *priming* to mine," i. e. is very small in comparison with it.

Stranger, you may say what you please about your anacondy serpent of Ceylon, in South America; and your rael Bengall tiger from Africa: both on 'em, heated to a white heat and welded into one, would be no part of a *priming* to a grizzly bear of the Rocky Mountains. — *Crockett's Adventures with a Grizzly Bear*.

**Priminary.** A predicament; difficulty. Used in the Southern States. *Sherwood's Georgia*. I am told that this word is also used by old people living on Long Island. It is provincial in the North of England.

**To primp or primp up.** To dress up in a finical manner; to linger over one's toilet. A woman's expression.

Arter supper I washed, then I put on the cleanest sort of a shirt that Aunt Jane had fixed up mity nice an' smooth, then I drawed on about as nice a set uv Sunday harness as you ever seed; and, arter marin and Aunt Jane had *primped up* an' fixed my har an' creevat, I was redly. — *How Sal and Me Got Married*.

**Primpy.** Fastidious in the duties of the toilet; finical. A woman's word.

**Prince's Pride.** See *Pipsissewa*.

**Printery.** An establishment for printing cottons, &c.; print-works. Rare. — *Worcester*.

**Probabilities.** *Old Probabilities*, a term applied to the superintendent of the bureau at Washington, from which the weather reports are issued. "What says *Old Probabilities* about the weather to-day?" Sometimes called "clerk of the weather."

There are men who build arks straight through their natural lives, ready for the first sprinkle; and there are others who do not watch *Old Probabilities* or even own an umbrella. — *Clarence King, Address at Yale Coll.*, June 26, 1877.

**Processioner.** An officer in Kentucky, and possibly in other States, whose duty it is to determine and mark out the bounds of lands.

**Profanity.** This word is in common use here, more particularly with our clergy. It is not in the dictionaries, and I do not recollect ever meeting with it in English authors. The Scottish writers employ it; but English writers use the word *profaneness*. — *Pickering*.

In a revel of debauchery, amid the brisk interchange of *profanity* and folly, religion might appear a dumb, unsocial intruder. — *Buckminster*.

**Professor.** 1. One who makes a profession of any thing. — *Worcester*. The application of the word to dancing-masters, conjurers, banjo-players, &c., has been called an Americanism. It is thought, however, that, even in Yankee land, the following, copied by the "Nat. Intelligencer" of Nov. 11, 1853, from an English paper, would be "hard to beat:" —

A great shaving match against time was performed recently at Keighley, near Leeds. A "*Professor Carrodus*," attended by three latherers and five stropers, engaged to shave seventy men in sixty minutes, and succeeded in performing the task four minutes within the specified time.

2. One visibly or professedly religious. — *Worcester*. One who makes a public profession of religion in those churches where such a rite prevails instead of confirmation. A very odd use of the word to those not accustomed to it.

"Ah!" said Miss Rayby, "and I can remember the time — of course I was very young then, but still I can remember — when Caleb Edmonds swept out his own shop!"

"Dear me! And now he has the upstart impudence to send his girl to such a school as that!" exclaimed Miss Sophia Milwood, the spinster who had not yet spoken. "Oh, the pride of human nature!"

"And he a *professor* too!"

"*Professor!*" said Miss Rayby. "Religion does not teach a man such absurd pride as that!"

Miss Phillip shook her head, and began to lament the increase of false *professors* — *The Dream of Caleb Edmonds*.

**To progress.** To move forward; to pass. — *Johnson*. This is not a pure Americanism, as some suppose, but an old English word which had been suffered to become obsolete. It was revived here after

the Revolution (see Pickering), and has lately been taken into favor again in England.

The Penny Cyclopaedia (art. *Americanism*) says, "The old verb *progress*, which the Americans use very often and pronounce *progrêss*, is now beginning to be again adopted in its native country, though we think we could do very well without it."

Let me wipe off this honorable dew,  
That silverly doth *progress* on thy cheeks. — *Shakspeare*.

— Although the popular blast  
Hath reared thy name up to bestride a cloud,  
Or *progress* in the chariot of the sun. — *Ford, Broken Heart*.

Such are the inconsistencies of a flatterer, *progressing* from his butterfly state into the vermicular slime of a libeller. — *London Quarterly Review*.

Her first teacher was but himself, at that time a pupil; but she *progressed* under his tuition. — *Mary Howitt, People's Journal*.

The launch of the "Leviathan" will be by no means a slapdash affair into the "native element," but a tedious operation, which will very probably occupy two or three days. On these points, and some others of equal interest, we shall give our readers fuller information as the great ship *progresses* towards completion. — *London Times*, April 30, 1857.

They *progress* in that style in proportion as their plans are treated with contempt. — *Washington's Writings*.

After the war had *progressed* for some time. — *Marshall's Washington*.

Whether this word was used in the time of Bacon or not, I cannot say, yet it seems he employs it in the spirit world; for, in the asserted revelations made by Judge Edmonds, the philosopher says: —

I trust that your own hearts will respond to mine, and the many, very many spirits who are present, till all our souls, like one spirit, shall unite in the harmonies of truth, love, and the earnest desire to *progress*. — *Spiritualism*, p. 333.

**Progressive Friends.** A name recommended at a convention of Spiritualists held in Illinois, Sept. 7, 1857, to be adopted by them, "as being a cognomen most indicative of that broad liberality of sentiment which they desire to foster and maintain."

**Prohibition and Prohibitionist.** The prohibition by law of the sale of alcoholic beverages, and one in favor of such prohibition.

**Prong.** A branch or arm of a creek or inlet. Southern.

**Prong-Horn Antelope.** (*Antilocapra Americana*.) The *Prong-horn Antelope* is familiar to every hunter on the plains west of the Missouri River. From this line it extends to the Pacific Ocean, and ranges from Northern Mexico to the latitude of 53° on the Saskatchewan. It is also abundant in Minnesota. The antelope is highly prized as an article of food. It runs with great swiftness, and

all its motions are characterized by ease and grace. — *S. F. Baird*.

**To pronounce.** In Nantucket, they say, "How does your horse *pronounce*?" i. e. how does he prove or perform?

**Pronouncement.** An emphatic declaration; a pronunciamiento. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Proper.** Very, exceedingly. Colloquial in England and the United States.

The day was gone afore I got out of the woods, and I got *proper* frightened. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

**Properly.** Very much. Common in New England.

Father jest up with the flat of his hand, and gave me a wipe with it on the side of my face, that knocked me over and hurt me *properly*. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 26.

**Proprios.** (Span.) In Spanish-American law, certain portions of ground laid off and reserved, on the foundation of a town, as the unalienable property of the town, for the purpose of erecting public buildings, markets, &c., or to be used in any other way, under the direction of the municipality, for the advancement of the revenues or the prosperity of the place. — *Peters's Reports*, Vol. XII. p. 442, note.

**Pro-Slavery.** In favor of slavery. An expression much used by political speakers and writers, and but recently inserted in the dictionaries.

It takes a despot, a craven, and a slave, compounded together, to make a *Pro-slavery* legislator in a free State. — *Anti-Slavery Almanac*.

*Pro-slavery* men, strike for your altars! strike for your rights! Sound the bugle of war over your land, and leave not an abolitionist in the country. — *Kickapoo Pioneer*, Jan. 18, 1856.

The intense *Pro-slaveryism* of the city of Baltimore . . . is simply the sign of a caste. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 15, 1861.

**To prospect.** To search for mines of gold and silver.

**Prospect.** Among gold-miners, what one finds in examining the first painful of earth. Upon its result, the miner determines whether it is a good or bad *prospect*, and governs himself accordingly. If the show of gold is good, he perseveres; if not, the place is abandoned, perhaps to be more closely scrutinized and worked by the Chinese, who are content with less for their labor.

We got many good *prospects*; but, when the gold gave out in the pan and we dug down, we found only emptiness. We then shouldered our pans and shovels, and struck out over the hills, to try new localities. — *Mark Twain, Roughing It*, p. 443.

**Prospecting.** Hunting or searching for lead, gold, or other metals. The process is thus described in a sketch of Life on the Upper Mississippi: —

The chief mart of the lead trade is in the town of Galena, built upon a small, sluggish stream. In travelling through the upland prairie of this neighborhood, you will see many hillocks of earth, as far as the eye can reach, as if some huge animal had been burrowing beneath, and had thrown up the dirt in that manner; but you may, by chance, meet two or three men with a bucket, a rope, a pick-axe, and a portable windlass, and the difficulty is explained. This, in the language of the country, is a *prospecting party*; which, being interpreted, means that they are on the look-out for ore, if it is to be found within ten or fifteen feet of the ground. — *N. Y. Literary World*, June 3, 1848.

Our claim [near Hangtown, Cal.] did not prove rich enough to satisfy us; so we abandoned it, and went *prospecting*. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 124.

I've gin up diggin' and *prospectin'*. It don't pay; and I can make more by tellin' new comers whar to sink their shaft. If they find gold, I get half; and, if they don't, I charge nothin'. — *Lett. from California*, *N. Y. Times*.

**Prospector.** A searcher for spots where minerals exist, applied alike to the precious metals, copper, or coal.

A *prospector* goes out with a pick and shovel and a washpan; and, to test the richness of a place, he digs down till he reaches the dirt in which it may be expected gold will be found. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 124.

**Protracted Meeting.** A name given to a religious meeting, protracted or continued for several days, chiefly among the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Baptists. Notice is sometimes given that a *protracted meeting* will be held at a certain time and place, where large numbers of people assemble. In the West, they are called "big meetings."

A religious sensation is raging terribly in my neighborhood, induced by the influence of the expected comet, — there is a *protracted meeting* round the corner, and high-pressure prayer-meetings on every side. — *Doesticks*.

I'm a gentleman that calculates to hold a *protracted meeting* here to-night. — *Sam Slick, Nature and Human Nature*.

You don't suppose a pedlar that had experienced religion at a *protracted meetin'* would cheat a clergyman? What an idee! — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 219.

**Proud.** Glad; as, "I should be *proud* to see you."

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow, the facetious editor of the "Jonesboro' Whig," in an article on his own obituary, says: —

He desires it stated to the world that, if he had his life to live over again, he could improve it in many respects. He leaves no apologies to be made to men in this life, and asks no favors of anybody "on the other side of Jordan," but his God! His friends, if he have any left behind, can be of no service to him; his enemies, he is *proud* to know, "can't reach him!"



**Pro-Union.** Favorable to the United States.

Jackson's force is said to be in part composed of *Pro-Union* men who have been impressed into the rebel service. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 7, 1862.

**Prox or Proxy.** The use of these words is confined to the State of Rhode Island. *Prox* means the ticket or list of candidates at elections presented to the people for their votes. By a law of the colony of Providence Plantations, passed in the year 1647, the General Assembly was appointed to be holden annually, "if wind and weather hinder not, at which the general officers of the colony were to be chosen." This clause made it convenient for many to remain at home, particularly as they had the right to send their votes for the officers by some other persons; hence the origin of these terms *prox* and *proxy votes*, as applied to the present mode of voting for State officers in Rhode Island. — *Staples's Annals of Providence*, p. 64.

Mr. Pickering observes that this word is also used in Connecticut, as equivalent to *election* or *election-day*. He quotes the following instances from a Connecticut newspaper: —

Republicans of Connecticut, previous to every *proxies*, you have been assaulted on every side.

On the approaching *proxies*, we ask you to attend universally.

Dr. Webster, with whom New England, or rather Connecticut, seems to have been a synonyme for "all creation," says the word means, "in popular use, an election or day of voting for officers of government."

When the qualification of a freeman, as formerly, was low, the *proxies* or voters never exceeded 1,300; at present, the qualification is better, and the *proxies* are only 888. — *Douglass's Summary*, 1755, Vol. II. p. 89.

**Pry.** A large lever employed to raise or move heavy substances. Used also in some parts of England. — *Worcester*.

**To pry.** To move or raise by means of a large lever. — *Worcester*.

**Publishment.** A publishing of the bans of marriage, which is required by law in some parts of New England. "Mr. Doe and Miss Roe's *publishment* took place to-day."

Any persons desiring to be joined in marriage shall have such their intentions published . . . or posted up by the clerk of each town; and a certificate of such *publishment* . . . shall be produced as aforesaid previous to their marriage. — *Statutes of Massachusetts*, 1786.

**Puccoon.** An Indian name for various plants affording coloring matter; hence, probably, the name of Poke-berry. The primary meaning of the name appears to be "of the color of blood," or "bloody."

1. The *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, or Blood-root. The juice was much used by the Indians as a dye or stain, as on the old basket ware now no longer to be seen.

*Pocones* is a small root that groweth in the mountains, which, being dried and beaten in powder, turneth red, &c. — *Smith's Virginia*, 1632, p. 27.

They have the *puccoon*, with which the Indians used to paint themselves red; and the shumach and sassafras, which make a deep yellow. — *Beverly's Virginia*, Book III. (1705).

2. Yellow puccoon. *Hydrastis Canadensis*, or Yellow Root.

*Puccoon* is an Indian name for all roots dyeing red, orange, or yellow. — *Rafinesque, Med. Flor.*, Vol. I. p. 253.

**Pucker.** 1. A snarl or tangle (from v. to pucker).

*Damply.* Troth, I am one of those that labor with the same longing [to hear the right], for it is almost *pucker'd* and pulled into that knot, by your poet, which I cannot easily . . . untie

*Boy.* Like enough, nor is it your office to be troubled or perplexed with it, but to sit still and expect. — *Ben Jonson, The Magnetic Lady*, Act iv. Sc. 3.

2. A state of perplexity or trouble; agitation. Provincial in England.

It was natural enough that the Squire's wife should be in a *pucker* to see the Ladies' Book [which contained an article ridiculing her]. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 326.

**To pucker up.** To dry up; i. e., stop talking. A vulgarism equivalent to *shut up*.

**Pudjiky or Pujiky.** Fussy.

She's dreadful *pudjicky*, Sarah Jane is. She won't have any thing, without it's exactly right. — *A Summer in Leslie Goldthwaite's Life*, p. 37.

**Pueblo.** (Span., a village.) A village of the semi-civilized Catholic Indians of New Mexico.

The villages of the christianized Indians in New Mexico were called *pueblos*, in opposition to the wild roving tribes that refused such favors. — *Wislizenus, New Mexico*.

**Pueblo Indian.** A Catholic Indian villager of New Mexico.

The most interesting class of the inhabitants of New Mexico are those known as the *Pueblo Indians*. They are the descendants of the ancient rulers of the country, and are so called because they dwell in villages and subsist by agriculture, instead of living in lodges and depending upon the chase, as the wild Indians of the mountains and plains. — *Davis, El Gringo*, p. 114.

**Puke.** 1. A mean, contemptible fellow.

2. A nickname for a native of Missouri.

**Pull-back Dress.** The name of a lady's dress now (1877) universally worn.

I met my girl on Fulton Street  
 The other afternoon,  
 With her dress pulled back in a great big bunch, —  
 As big as a balloon!  
 When I asked her what the trouble was,  
 She seemed in such distress,  
 Says she, — "O Sam! don't be a fool,  
 That 's my new *pull-back dress*."

Says she, "There 's not a style, you know,  
 I ever let escape!  
 I like to pin my *pull-back* tight, —  
 It shows my handsome shape."

*Song of the Pull-back Dress.*

**Pull Dick, pull Devil.** An expression used in low language, synonymous with "neck and neck," denoting an equal contest in a race.

**Pull-Doo.** A small black duck found in the bays and inlets of the Gulf of Mexico. It seldom flies, but relies upon swimming and diving to evade pursuit. The word is probably a corruption of *poule d'eau*, i. e. water-hen.

**Pull down your Vest.** A curious flash expression of recent origin, without meaning. It is heard on all occasions, coming alike from the lips of the street-boy, who would "shine your boots," and the fashionable attendant of the clubs; yet no man can tell whence it came. It is without parentage, and its origin is "involved in the deepest obscurity."

Flash sayings, you know, now-a-days are the rage, —  
 They're heard in the parlor, the street, on the stage, —  
 "You're too fresh," and "Swim out, you are over your head;"  
 But a new one 's been coined, and the old ones are dead.  
 "A Centennial crank" is one that is new,  
 And "Crawl out of that hat" is quite recent too;  
 But the latest flash saying with which we are blest  
 Is to tell a man quietly, "*Pull down your vest*."

*H. G. Richmond in Burton's Events of 1875-76.*

**To pull Foot.** To walk fast; to run. Comp. *To make Tracks*.

I look'd up; it was another shower, by Gosh. I *pulls foot* for dear life. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

I thought I'd run round two or three streets. So I *pulled foot*, and hunted and sweat till I got so tired I couldn't but just stand. — *Major Downing's May-day in New York*.

**Pulling-Bone.** The common name in Maryland, Virginia, &c., for the yoke-like breast-bone of chickens, by pulling which till it breaks children and young ladies settle which will be the first married.

The shorter piece, which decides, is placed over the door; and the first unmarried man who goes under is supposed will be the future husband. It is also called the *merry-thought* and *wish-bone*.

**To pull it.** To run.

And how a man one dismal night  
Shot her with silver bullet,  
And then she flew straight out of sight  
As fast as she could *pull it*.

*T. G. Fessenden, Yankee Doodle.*

**Pullman Car.** A drawing-room car; so called from the name of the first constructor of these luxurious railway carriages, otherwise known as Palace and Drawing-room Cars.

I got safely off in a big arm-chair in the *Pullman car*, with my parcels all put up, and my novel in my lap waiting till I was tired of other things. — *Mrs. Whitney, Sights and Insights*, p. 2.

**To pull up,** among travellers, means to stop. Alluding to the act of pulling the reins of a horse, in order to stop him.

**To pull up Stakes.** To pack up one's furniture or baggage, preparatory to a removal; to remove. The allusion is to pulling up the stakes of a tent.

The expression was introduced from England. Thomas Lechford, an English lawyer who was in Boston in 1638-40, in a letter to a friend in England, July 28, 1640, thus writes: —

I am loath to hear of a stay [in New England], but am *plucking up stakes*, with as much speed as I may, if so be I may be so happy as to arrive in Ireland, &c. *MS.*

If this stranger is to receive countenance, then I'll *pull up stakes* and depart from Tinnecum for ever. — *Knickerbocker Magazine*.

Which often a han'som pictur to a hungry person makes,  
But it don't interest a feller much that 's goin' to *pull up stakes*.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 23.

**To pull Wool over the Eyes.**

The Tariff project for reducing the revenue is a humbug, — a trick for *pulling wool over the eyes* of innocent people. — *N. Y. Herald*.

That 'ere stranger's only playin' possum, but he can't *pull the wool over* this child's eyes; he's got 'em both skinned. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

**Pult,** for *pulse*. Some country doctors think *pulse* is plural, and say, "A very good pult," "Your *pulse* are strong."

In the report of a medical case at Hilton Head, South Carolina, communicated to the "N. Y. Tribune," July 29, 1862, the writer says: —

Next morning, *pult* quicker and weaker; . . . the disease was very obstinate, *pult* increasing in quickness and symptoms more aggravating.

**Puma.** (*Felis concolor*.) An animal known also under the name of Cougar, Panther, and American Lion, the largest of the cat kind found in America. Flint describes it, under the name panther, as of the size of the largest dogs, of a dark-grayish color, marked with black spots. It is in shape much like the domestic cat, with short legs, large paws, and long talons. It conceals itself among the branches of the trees, and thence darts upon its prey.

**Puncheons.** A term which, in Georgia and the adjoining States, means split logs, with their faces a little smoothed with an axe or hatchet. These, being laid upon sleepers, make a *puncheon-floor*.

The Squire's dwelling consisted of but one room. The house was constructed of logs, and the floor was of *puncheons* — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 12.

Bill knew him; and, if the old serpent himself had popped up his head through the *puncheons* and claimed him for his brand, he couldn't have been more scared. *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Pung.** A rude sort of sleigh, or oblong box made of boards and placed on runners, used for drawing loads on snow by horses. — *Worcester*. Also called a *Jumper*, which see.

This name of a cutter was formerly written *Tom Pung*, as in Dennie's "Spirit of the Farmer's Museum," p. 243.

In that fam'd town [Roxbury] which sends to Boston Mart  
The gliding *Tom Pung* and the rattling cart.

So in a rhymed letter in the "New Haven Gazette," June 15, 1786.

These were sledges or *pungs*, coarsely framed of split saplings, and surmounted with a large crockery-crate. — *Margaret*, p. 174.

**Punk.** 1. Rotten wood; touchwood; spunk. A word in common use in New England, as well as in the other Northern States and Canada. Ash defines it "a kind of *fungus*, often used for tinder." *Pickering*.

Punk is the Indian ? name for all perennial fungi growing on trees and of a spongy nature, useful to make spunk or touchwood to light fire easily with. — *Rafinesque, Med. Flora*, Vol. II. p. 187.

2. A punch or blow with the fist. New York.

**To punk.** To push or strike with the fist; to punch. New York.

**Punkin-Seed.** (*Pomotis vulgaris*.) A small fresh-water fish, the Sun-Fish and Bream of our fresh-water ponds and lakes. Its shape is that of a pumpkin-seed, whence its name.

An I've ben sence a-visitin' the Judge,  
Whose garding whispers with the river's edge,  
Where I've sot mornin's lazy as the bream,  
Whose on'y business is to head up stream  
(We call 'em *punkin-seed*), &c. — *Lowell, Biglow Papers*.

**Punt.** In Maryland and Virginia, a small boat made of the body of a large tree. In England, a *punt* is a flat-bottomed boat.

**Pupelo.** A name for cider-brandy, formerly manufactured in New England to a great extent.

"Han't they got any of the religion at your house?" "No, marm, they drink *pupelo* and rum." — *Margaret*, p. 52.

**Pussy-Willow.** (*Salix discolor*.) The swamp-willow, the blossoms of which are as soft as a cat's fur; hence their name.

Speaking of the approaching spring, the "Providence Journal" says:—

Cherry-trees have put forth their blossoms, *pussy-willows* have donned their silvery catkins, and whole armies of weeds have started from their sheltered nooks.

**Put.** To stay put is to keep still, remain where placed. A vulgar expression.

The levees and wharves of the First Municipality won't "*stay put*." Last evening that part of the levee opposite Custom-House Street, which had caved in and was since filled, sunk suddenly ten feet. — *N. O. Picayune*.

**To put.** To start, go, decamp, be off. "I see I'm not wanted here; so I'll *put*." See *To get*.

B — found himself by mistake in the ladies' saloon; a fact he was politely informed of by one of the occupants, who said, "Guess you *put* for the wrong pew, mister." — *Notes on Canada, &c., Blackwood's Mag.*

**To put a Head on.** To bruise and batter one's head, causing it to swell; and, figuratively, to silence him; to shut him up; to thrash him.

The "Providence Journal" (of Oct. 22, 1877), in an article on the quarrels in the Democratic party, quotes the following passage, which he recommends their reading, taken from a poem with which we are not familiar:—

'Tis not a proper plan  
For any scientific gent to whale his fellow-man,  
Or, if a member don't agree with his peculiar whim,  
To lay for that same member for to *put a head on him*.

**To put into Line.** To arrange orderly; to bring into line; to make accordant.

Governor Hicks has called a special session of the Legislature [of Maryland] to meet Nov. 27, to *put* the State in line with the Union. — *The Congregationalist*, Nov., 1861.

**To put it in Strong.** To express one's self strongly or emphatically.

The missionaries in the South are pretty careful; they *put it in strong* in the catechism about the rights of the master. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 193.

**To put off.** To start, set out. Originally a nautical term.

It is an astonishing fact that over fifteen thousand persons have deserted their homes in California, and *put off* by every means of conveyance for Fraser's River. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, July 22, 1838.

**To put out.** To set out; to be off. A Western expression. *To put* is used in the same sense.

As my wife's father had considerable land on Blue Fox River, and as we wanted a little more elbow-room, I says one day to Nancy, "Nancy," says I, "I dad, s'pose we *put out* and live there." — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 172.

Well, I *put out* for the Planters as fast as I could, where you know I found you at last. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 63.

There was goin' to be a raisin' or log-rollin' a good piece off, and the old man reckoned he 'd better *put out* in the evening, and stay at some of the neighbor's houses and be allowed to take an early start in mornin'. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

La Bonté picked up three mules for a mere song, and the next day *put out* for the Platte. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 66.

"The more you give the slaves," said Jekyl, "the more dissatisfied they grow, till finally they *put* for the free States."

"Very well," said Clayton; "if that's to be the result, they may *put* as soon as they can get ready." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 195.

**Puts.** When a speculator thinks that stocks are going down, and wishes to make a small operation without incurring much risk, he gives a small sum for the privilege of delivering a small amount of stock at a certain price. For instance, if the cash price of Erie was fifty-seven per cent, a speculator would give say fifty dollars, to "put" or deliver one hundred shares at fifty-six and a half per cent, say next week, ten days, or any short time. He can only lose his fifty dollars, if the market should go up; but, if it goes down to fifty-six, he gets his money back, and all below that is so much profit. Operations of this kind are carried on principally among the curb-stone brokers, men who have strong speculative propensities and very little capital. See *Call Contract*.

**To put the Licks in.** To exert one's self.

You had better *put the licks in* and make haste, or there will be more fiddling and dancing and serving the devil this morning. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 164.

**To put through.** 1. To carry through, effect, accomplish, a piece of business. A term much used in speaking of legislative business; thus, to carry a bill or resolution is "*to put it through*"

He wiped the sweat from off his brow:

"These drivin' wheels will do;

A better engine never ran;

She 's bound to *put us through*." — *Railroad Ballad*.

The expression is much used at colleges: a teacher *puts* his pupils *through* a course of studies.

First Thacher, then Hadley, then Larned and Prex,  
Each *put* our class *through* in succession.

*Presentation Songs*, June 14, 1854.

2. To carry through the entire length of a route, &c. Of stage-coachman's vocabulary.

**To putter.** To be engaged in fussy work which does no special good, when you are not called upon to do any at all. "She's *puttering* round." The English word, to potter, means to busy or perplex one's self about trifles; to trifle.

**Putto.** (Fr. *poteau*, a post.) A stake firmly set in the ground, to which wild cattle and horses are secured. A term in general use in the grazing regions of the South-west.

**Putty-Root.** (*Aplectrum hymenale*.) Also called "Adam and Eve," from the bulb of the preceding year being always connected with the new one.

**To puzzle a Philadelphia Lawyer** is considered a very difficult undertaking, the Philadelphia gentlemen of the profession being regarded as remarkably keen-witted. See *Philadelphia Lawyer*.

Had General Taylor not confessed himself a Whig, it would have *puzzled* a *Philadelphia lawyer* to have detected it. — *Southern Patriot*.

## Q.

**To quackle.** To interrupt in breathing; to almost choke; to suffocate. Provincial in England, and colloquial in America. — *Worcester*.

**Quadroon.** (Fr. *Quateron*, Span. *Cuarteron*.) The offspring of a mulatto woman by a white man. See *Negro*.

All their desperate prowess vanished like a mist before the moon, —  
Left the Creole maid and matron, even left the dear *Quadroon*.

*Ballad of the Crescent City.*

The influence of the *quadroon* girls is a most powerful factor in Louisiana affairs, which has been altogether neglected. — *New York Post*, Feb., 1877.

**Quahaug.** (Genus *Venus mercenaria*.) In New England, the popular name of a species of clams having a round and very hard shell. See *Pooquaw*.

The laws of Rhode Island provide that any person who shall take any *quahaugs* or clams from certain beds in Providence River between May and September shall forfeit twenty dollars for each offence.



If in your account of the Squantum Club you had said that *quahaugs* were better than clams, or that Massachusetts clam-bakes were better than Rhode Island clam-bakes, I could not have been more astonished. — *Cor. of Providence Journal*.

**Quaker, Quaker Gun.** An imitation of a gun made of wood or other material, and placed in the port-hole of a vessel, or the embrasure of a fort, in order to deceive the enemy; so called from its inoffensive character. — *Webster*.

We fancy our vessels of war which suffered the filibuster Walker to escape were armed with *Quaker guns*. — *Providence Journal*.

The fancied impregnability of the position turns out to be a sham. . . . some of the forts have maple logs painted to resemble guns. . . . Some of our soldiers cried when they found that *Quakers* were mounted on the breastworks. — *Letter from Manassas, N. Y. Tribune*, March, 1862.

**Quaker City.** The city of Philadelphia; so called from its founders having been Friends or Quakers.

**To qualify.** To swear to discharge the duties of an office, and hence to make oath of any fact; as, "I am ready to *qualify* to what I have asserted."

Dr. Tate, of Virginia, the new Auditor of the Treasury for the Post-Office Department, this morning *qualified* and entered upon the duties of his office. — *The (Balt.) Sun*, Oct. 1, 1857.

**Quamish, or Camus Plant.** (*Phalangium esculentum*.) The adopted name of a plant common on wet prairies, along rivers and lakes of the West, whose root (resembling a small onion) is eaten by the Indians.

**Quarter.** A twenty-five cent piece, which is a quarter of a dollar, is often called simply a *quarter*.

**Quarterage.** Entertainment or allowance; charge for keeping.

For *quarterage* of a soldier, 5s. per week. Pasturage for a horse, 4d. per day. *Connecticut Records*, Vol. II. p. 386.

**Quarters.** The negro huts of a plantation are termed the *negro quarters*, or simply the *quarters*.

**Queen City.** Queen of the West. Cincinnati.

And this song of the vine,  
This greeting of mine,  
The winds and the birds shall deliver  
To the *Queen of the West*,  
In her garlands dressed,  
On the banks of the beautiful river. — *Longfellow*.

**Queer.** Counterfeit paper money; the English *flimsies*, — the Gipsy *shoful pitcher*. To "shove the *queer*" is to put counterfeit bills in

circulation. Mr. Hotten calls it an old cant word, meaning any thing base or worthless. — *Slang Dictionary*. The "Providence Journal," in speaking of the examination of three men for passing counterfeit money, heads its article, "Bound over for *Shoving the Queer*."

**Quid.** A corruption of *cud*: as, in vulgar language, a *quid* of tobacco. In Kent (England), a cow is said to chew her *quid*; so that *cud* and *quid* are the same. — *Pegge's Anonymia*.

**Quiddling.** Unsteady; uncertain; mincing, as a "*quiddling gait*."

**Quilling.** A piece of reed, on which weavers wind the thread which forms the woof of cloth, is called a *quill*; an old English word. In New England, a certain process of winding thread is called *quilling*.

The child, Margaret, sits in the door of her house, on a low stool, with a small wheel, winding spools; in our vernacular, *quilling*. — *Margaret*, p. 8.

**Quilting-Bee or Quilting Frolic.** An assemblage of women who unite their labor to make a bed-quilt. They meet by invitation, seat themselves around the frame upon which the quilt is placed, and in a few hours complete it. Tea follows, and the evening is sometimes closed with dancing or other amusements. See *Bee*.

Now [in the days of Governor Stuyvesant] were instituted *quilting-bees* and husking-bees, and other rural assemblages, where, under the inspiring influence of the fiddle, toil was enlivened by gayety and followed up by the dance. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*.

**To quit.** To stop. "Now you *quit* teasing me."

**Quite a While.** "He stayed *quite a while*," i. e. a considerable time, a period, perhaps, between a short time and a long while. It is a bad expression. The expression "*quite a house*," "*quite a party*," "*quite a town*," are also bad. We have heard a lady say, in reply to the question, "How long did Mr. A— stop, when he called?" "Oh! *quite a little while*."

## R.

**Raccoon.** (*Procyon lotor*.) A well-known carnivorous animal found in most parts of North America, valuable for its fur. Vulgarly called *Coon*, which see.

There are *Arocouns* and *Apossouns* in shape like to pigges, shrowded in hollow roots of trees. — *True Declaration of Virginia* (1610), p. 29.

There is a beast they call *Aroughcun*, much like a badger, but useth to live on trees as squirrels doe. — *Smith's Virginia* (1624), B. ii. p. 27.

*Rahaughcums*. — *Smith's News from Virginia* (1608), p. 14.

**To race.** To cause to run; to chase. A vulgar use of the word.

Between five and six o'clock on Thursday afternoon, a well-known character named Michael Clark, while passing the corner of Cathedral and Franklin Streets, espied an old enemy named Edward Gettier, perched on a scaffold swinging against the side of a new house, busy applying a painter's brush to the structure, and regardless of all things below. Both had been previously concerned, on opposite sides, in several street affrays; and Clark, thinking it a good time to let him know he was about again, slipped up, and commenced shooting at Gettier with a revolver. After several shots had been wasted, one of the balls took effect in Gettier's side, wounding him slightly. Clark then ran; and Gettier, jumping down, *raced* him for some distance, &c. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Aug. 7, 1858.

Another party was *raced* as far as the house adjoining the bank. — *Baltimore American*.

**Race-Track.** The track upon a race-ground.

We do not think that Tennessee is likely to be much of a battle-ground hereafter. There's more probability of her being a race-track. — *Louisville Journal*.

**Rack,** for *wreck*. As in the expression, "He's gone to rack and ruin."

**Rackabones.** A lean horse; an emaciated creature

He is afraid that this mettlesome charger [upon which he was leading another horse] cannot be trusted going down hill, otherwise he would let go of the old *rackabones*.

**Raddle.** In New England, an instrument consisting of a wooden bar, with a row of upright pegs set in it, which is employed by domestic weavers to keep the warp of a proper width, and prevent it from becoming entangled when it is wound upon the beam of a loom. — *Webster*. It is an English term.

**Raft.** 1. A frame or float, made by laying pieces of timber across each other. — *Johnson*. In North America, *rafts* are constructed of immense size, and comprise timber, boards, staves, &c. They are floated down from the interior to the tide-waters, being propelled by the force of the current, assisted by large oars and sails, to their place of destination. The men employed on these rafts construct rude huts upon them, in which they often dwell for several weeks before arriving at the places where they are taken to pieces for shipping to foreign parts.

2. This term is also applied to a large collection of timber and fallen trees, which, floating down the great rivers of the West, are arrested in their downward course by flats or shallow places. Here they accumulate, and sometimes block up the river for miles. The great *raft* on Red River extended twenty miles, and required an immense outlay of money to remove it in order to make the river navigable.

It was over this *raft* that poor Will Harrod fared when he was escaping from the Camanches. And what is left of the *raft*, and what the pilot explained to them, did not disappoint them. The history of the *raft* can be made out clearly enough by any traveller who passes up the river. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. 134.

3. A large number, a host. Vulgar.

We have killed Calhoun and Biddle; but there is a *raft* of fellows to put down yet. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 93.

We've shoals of shad, whole *rafts* of canvas-back ducks, and no end of terrapins. — *Burton, Waggeries*.

Among its notices to correspondents, an exchange paper says: "A *raft* of original articles are on file for next week." We hope none of them will prove mere lumber. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The Elder's wife was a sick-lookin' woman, with a whole *raft* o' young ones squalling round her. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 210.

**To raft.** To transport on a raft. — *Webster*.

**Rafting.** The business of constructing and floating rafts.

**Raftsmen.** A man who follows the business of rafting.

**Rag.** To take the rag off the bush, or simply to take the rag off, is to bear away the palm.

I had an everlastin' fast Narragansett pacer. I was considerable proud of him, I assure you; for he took the rag off the bush in great style. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 218.

"Don't be skeered," says I, "Gineral, don't be skeered. I ain't a goin' for to hurt you, but jist to salute you as my senior officer, for it tante often two such old heroes like you and me meet, I can tell you You fit at Waterloo, and I fit at Bunker's Hill; you whipt the French, and we whipt the English. P'raps history can't show jist two such battles as them; they take the rag off quite." — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 38.

**Rag Carpet.** A carpet made of rags, formerly made by families, but now woven by hand, the rags being first cut into strips.

**Rag Money.** Paper money.

**Raid.** A hostile or predatory incursion, especially an inroad or incursion of mounted men. A Scottish word, which within a few years has come to be much used in the United States. — *Webster*. A hostile incursion. — *Wright, Prov. Dic.*

The word is not found in Johnson or Richardson, but appears in Latham's edition of the former, with examples of its use from living authors.

There are permanent conquests, temporary occupations, and occasional *raids*. — *Herbert Spencer, Principles of Biology*.

Jamieson has *Rade, Raid*. An invasion properly of the equestrian kind, which he derives from the Ang.-Sax. *ridan*, to ride. He also gives early examples of its use. — *Scottish Dic.*

Schyr Andrew syne wyth stalwort hand  
Made syndry *radis* in Ingland. — *Wyntoun*, viii. 34, 34.

**Rail.** A piece of timber, cleft, hewed, or sawed, inserted in upright posts for fencing. The common *rails* among farmers are rough, being used as they are split from the chestnut or other trees. — *Webster*.

**Rail-Car.** A car for transporting passengers on railroads.

**To rail it.** To travel by railroad.

From Petersburg, I *railed it* through the North Carolina pitch, tar, turpentine, and lumber country, to the great American pitch, tar, turpentine, and lumber depot, — Wilmington. The prospect is, from the car-windows, continuously an immensity of pine, pine, nothing but pine-trees, broken here and there with openings of pine under-brush. — *Letter in N. Y. Tribune*, May 22, 1848.

**Railroad Nomenclature.** In all that appertains to railroads, locomotives, and travelling by rail, we use quite different terms from the corresponding ones used in England, as will be seen by the following: —

In the U. S. we say	Railroad;	In England, Railway.
" " "	Railroad Depot;	" Railway Station.
" " "	Cow-catcher or Pilot;	" Plough.
" " "	Engineer;	" Engine-driver.
" " "	Fireman;	" Stoker.
" " "	Conductor;	" Guard.
" " "	Ticket Office;	" Booking Office.
" " "	Baggage;	" Luggage.
" " "	Baggage Car;	" Luggage Van.
" " "	Passenger Car;	" Carriage.
" " "	Track;	" Line.
" " "	Turn-out;	" Siding.
" " "	Frog;	" Crossing Plate.
" " "	Switches;	" Points.
" " "	Check Rails;	" Guard Rails.
" " "	Trucks (under the Cars);	" Bogies.
" " "	Switching off;	" Shunting.
" " "	Freight Train;	" Goods Train.

**To railroad.** To be a conductor on a railroad. Pennsylvania.

**Raise.** To make a *raise* is a vulgar American phrase, meaning to make a haul, to raise the wind.

The chances were altogether favorable for *making a raise*, without fear of detection. — *Simon Suggs*, p. 48.

I *made a raise* of a horse and saw, after being a wood-piler's apprentice for a while. — *Neal, Sketches*.

**To raise.** 1. To cause to grow; to procure to be produced, bred, or propagated; as, to *raise* wheat, barley, hops, &c.; to *raise* horses, oxen, or sheep. — *Webster*.

*To raise* is applied in the Southern States to the breeding of Negroes. It is also sometimes heard at the North among the illiterate; as, "I was *raised* in Connecticut," meaning brought up there. See more in Pickering's Vocabulary.

You know I was *raised*, as they say in Virginia, among the mountains of the North. — *Paulding, Letters from the South*, Vol. I. p. 85.

Old Negro Bill, belonging to Mr. Sampson, Hunt Co., Virginia, was *raised* there, and served in the American Revolution, a portion of the time as a servant to Washington. — (*Wash.*) *Ev. Star*, Jan. 7, 1857.

Miss Asphyxia had talked of takin' a child from the poor-house, and so *raisin'* her own help. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 98.

2. To obtain with difficulty or in a discreditable manner.

3. To make up, fabricate, invent; as, "That's a tale they've *raised* on me," meaning some ludicrous or disgraceful anecdote invented against a person. Western.

**To raise a Bead.** This expression is used at the West, and means to bring to a head, to make succeed. The figure is taken from brandy, rum, or other liquors, which will not "raise a bead," unless of the proper strength.

The result was, if the convention had been then held, the party wouldn't have been able to *raise a bead*. — *Letter from Ohio, N. Y. Tribune*, 1846.

**To raise a Racket.** To make a racket or noise.

I see it warn't no use *raisin' a racket*; so I concluded I'd have satisfaction out of him, and began shakin' my fist at him. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 36.

**To raise Cain.** To cause a disturbance; to make a row.

Now bring Mexico into the Union, and I'd like to know which of the great powers would undertake to dictate to her, or tell her what she must do. . . . There wouldn't be any struttin' about, and talkin' big, and threatenin' to *raise Cain*." — *Hammond, Lakes and Forest Scenes*.

"I'll tell you what, Solomon Peters," said Miss Asphyxia, "I'd jest as soon have the red dragon in the Revelation a comin' down on my house as a boy! If I don't work hard enough now, I'd like to know, without havin' a boy around *raisin'* general Cain." — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 116.

A man who had been beating his wife, and was *raising Cain* with a white woman, both being drunk, was arrested and locked up. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**To raise one's Dander.** To get into a passion. See *Dander*.

If John Bull had *riz our dander*  
Settin' foot on yonder shore,  
Then we should have holler'd grander  
Than the broad Atlantic's roar.

[*London*] *Punch*, Feb. 7, 1863.

Every time I come up from Louisiana, I found Jess hangin' round that gal, lookin' awful sweet, and a fellow couldn't go near her without *raisin' his dander*. *Robb, Squatter Life.*

**To raise one's Hair.** In the semi-barbarous dialect used by the hunters, trappers, and others who traverse the great plains and prairies of the West, scalping a man is "*raising (or lifting) his hair.*"

Kit Carson is the paragon of mountaineers: to look at him, no one would think that the mild-looking being before him was an incarnate devil in an Indian fight, and had *raised more hair* from the red-skins than any two men in the Western country. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 194.

**To raise the Hatchet** means, among the American Indians, to prepare for war; "to dig up the hatchet." See *Hatchet*.

In Major Robert Rogers's "Tragedy of Pontecac, or the Savages of America," (Lond., 1766), the great chief, addressing Governor Sharp, said:—

We 'd love you, treat you as our friends and brothers,  
And *raise the hatchet* only in your cause.

To which the Governor replied:—

Our King is very anxious for your welfare,  
And greatly wishes for your Love and Friendship;  
He would not have the *Hatchet* ever *raised*,  
But buried deep, stamp'd down, and cover'd o'er. — p. 21.

Thus do I *raise the Hatchet* from the ground,  
Sharpen'd and bright may it be stained with Blood. — *Ibid.*, p. 65.

**Raising-Bee or Raising.** In New England and the Northern States, the operation or work of setting up the frame of a building. — *Webster*.

On such occasions, the neighboring farmers are accustomed to assemble and lend their assistance. In this way, the framework of the largest house or barn is set up in a few hours.

*Raising-bees* were frequent, where houses sprang up at the wagging of the fiddle-stick, as the walls of Thebes sprang up of yore to the sound of the lyre of Amphion — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

This spectacle of a *raising*, though so common-place an affair elsewhere, is something worth seeing in the woods. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**Rake.** A comb. Western German population.

**Rake down.** A taking down, a scolding. Borrowed from the gaming-table, and the rake of the *croupier*. "That rakes down my pile," a Californian says when he has lost his venture or the contents of his purse.

I have expected to be "blown up" in print by "S—l" before now, but have so far escaped, much to the disappointment of the b'hoys about here. I

would submit with a good grace to a "rake down," if I could only succeed in starting again his "gray goose quill." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Rambunctious.** Quarrelsome.

**Rampage.** To be riotous; to prance about in a riotous manner. He's on the *rampage*," i. e. he's on a spree; he is rioting. Provincial in England.

**Rancher.** See *Ranchman*.

**Rancheria.** (Span.) The place, site, or house in the country where a number of rancheros collect together. The collection of few or many huts or ranchos into a small village.

**Ranchero.** (Span.) A person who lives in a rancho; and hence any peasant or countryman.

**Ranchman.** A word made from the Spanish *Ranchero*. An owner, occupant, or manager of a ranch.

'T is a record prized of *ranchmen*,  
Shepherds, tillers of the soil;  
And, amongst the social topics,  
Giveth all the farm-hints new.

*Wm. Boyd, Desc. of a Model Newspaper, Potter's Am. Monthly, June, 1877.*

**Rancho or Ranch.** (Span. *rancho*.) A rude hut of posts, covered with branches or thatch, where herdsmen or farm-laborers live or only lodge at night.

**Range.** 1. The public lands of the United States are surveyed or divided into *ranges*, which designate the order of their arrangement into townships. — *Bouvier's Law Dict.*

2. In Texas, the prairies on which the large herds of cattle graze and range are called cattle or stock *ranges*.

When any person may hunt estrays in another stock *range*, he shall notify the owner of said stock of his intention. — *Laws of Texas*.

The herdsman agrees to deliver a certain number of beeves, in marketable order. . . . The *range* is then scoured, and the requisite number obtained. — *Olinsted's Texas*, p. 371.

**Rapid.** The part of a river where the current moves with more celerity than is common; a sudden descent of the surface of a stream without actual waterfall or cascade, as the *Lachine rapids* of the St. Lawrence. — *Webster*. The word is not in the latest English dictionary of Dr. Latham.

**Rastra.** (Span.) A sled; a drag. An instrument used by the California gold-miners, consisting of two heavy stones attached by a strap to a horizontal bar. These are dragged by mule power slowly round a circular trough, through which a small stream of water is



constantly running. The gold-bearing quartz is here ground into a paste, and the gold afterwards separated by means of quicksilver.

**Rat.** A contemptuous term used among printers, to denote a man who works under price.

**To rat.** Among printers, to work under price.

**Rat Office.** A printing-office in which full prices are not paid.

**Ratoons.** 1. (Span. *retoño*.) Sugar-cane of the second and third year's growth, of which cuttings are made for planting the succeeding year.

2. The heart-leaves in a tobacco-plant. — *Webster*.

**Rattlesnake.** (*Crotalus horridus*.) A genus of serpents, celebrated for the danger which accompanies their bite, and for the peculiar appendages to their tail. This venomous reptile, of which there are many species, is exclusively confined to America.

**Real Glad.** "I'm *real glad* to see you," i. e. very glad.

**Rear Horse.** (Pron. *rare*.) The vulgar name, at the South, for the orthopterous insect called the Mantis, Camel Cricket, or Johnny Cock-horse.

**Reáta.** (Span.) A rope made of raw-hide used for lassoing horses and mules; a rope which ties one horse or mule to another.

**Rebellionist.** One who favors rebellion.

A very large vote was polled. In this city, it reached 1,434, which is only 80 votes less than the *rebellionists* polled in the whole county a week ago.—*Wilmington, Del., Journal*, 1862.

**Reboso.** (Span.) A scarf or long shawl universally worn over the head and shoulders by the women of the Spanish-American States and Territories.

**Receptor.** A person to whom goods levied on by the sheriff are delivered, on his undertaking to deliver the same to the sheriff on demand, or to pay the amount on execution. — *Burrill's Law Dict.*

**Recollember.** A negroism for *recollect* or *remember*.

**To reckon.** To think; to imagine; to believe; to conjecture; to conclude; to guess. Used in some parts of the United States as *calculate* is in New England and elsewhere. It is provincial in England in the same sense, and is noticed in the glossaries of Pegge and Brockett. Mr. Hamilton, in his remarks on the Yorkshire dialect, says: "'I *reckon*' comes out on every occasion, as perhaps aliens would expect from this country of 'ready reckoners.'" — *Nugæ Lûerariæ*, p. 317.

"General, I guess we best say nothin' more about bribin'," says I. "Well," says he, "Major, I reckon you're right."—*Major Downing's Letters*, p. 208.

I say! what do you guess about lending me your axe for a spell? Do you reckon you can spare it?—*Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 84.

I reckon you hardly ever was at a shooting-match, stranger, from the cut of your coat.—*Georgia Scenes*, p. 198.

**Recommend.** A commendatory notice; a recommendation. New England.

**To recoupe.** (Fr. *recouper*.) To diminish a claim for damages by cutting off or keeping back a part; to make up a loss in general.

This old word has been revived to a considerable extent in modern law. "Where a man brings an action for breach of a contract between him and the defendant, and the latter can show that some stipulation in the same contract was made by the plaintiff, which he has violated, the defendant may, if he choose, instead of suing in his term, *recoupe* his damages, arising from the breach committed by the plaintiff, whether they be liquidated or not. The law will cut off so much of the plaintiff's claim as the cross-damages may come to."—*Coven in Wendell's Reports*, Vol. XXII. p. 156.

**Recoupment.** Defalcation or discounting from a demand. A keeping back something which is due, because there is an equitable reason to withhold it. The principle of *recoupment* has been established in the State of New York in several cases of recent occurrence.—*Burrill's Law Dict.*

**Red.** See *Nary Red*.

**Red.** To red up. (Old Eng. *red*, Ang.-Sax. *hreddan*.) To clear away, to set in order.—*Wedgwood*. This is nearer the Saxon origin than the more common term "*to rid*." *Jamieson*, however, gives it precisely the same meaning as we do. He says "*to red up a house* is to put it in order, to remove any thing that might be an incumbrance."

To tell that these things be redd up and braw.

*Ross's Helenore*, p. 125.

**Red Adder.** See *Copperhead*.

**Red-Bud.** (*Cercis Canadensis*.) A small ornamental tree, noted for its pink flowers, which at a distance resemble those of the peach-tree. It grows on rich soil from New York to Ohio, Kentucky, and southwards. Also called Judas-tree.

**Red Cent.** A common term for the copper cent.

When General Washington had got through with his fightin', . . . government owed him hundreds of millions of dollars, and hadn't the first red cent to pay with.—*Hammond's Lake and Forest Scenes*.

Every thing in New Orleans sells by dimes, bits, and picayunes; and as for copper money I have not seen the first *red cent*. — *Bayard Taylor in N. Y. Tribune*.

H—— must have a million of dollars, and a man with that is not poor in any country; certainly it was a great catch for Miss L——, without a *red cent* of her own. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 147.

**Red-Dog Money.** A term applied, in the State of New York, to certain bank-notes which have on their back a large red stamp.

The late General Banking-law of the State of New York, which was applied to all new banks, as well as to those the charters of which were renewed, obliged the parties or individuals associated to deposit securities with the comptroller, and receive from him blank notes of various denominations, signed or bearing the certificate of the comptroller or officer authorized by him. These notes bore a *red stamp* on their backs.

The free admission under this law of securities of a very questionable character induced many persons, both individually and collectively, to organize banks of issue; and, as a natural consequence, a considerable portion of the circulating medium soon consisted of the notes of the free banks, bearing the red stamp. The community, generally, did not consider these notes as safe as those issued by the old banks, and stigmatized them as *red dogs*, and the currency as *red-dog money*. The character of the securities, however, has since been improved by an act which demands that only certain stocks of well-established reputation shall be admitted; and consequently the odium which existed against the first banks created under the law is now done away with. In Michigan, they apply the term *blue-pup money* to bank-notes having a blue stamp on their backs.

Much bogus coin and wild-cat, *red-dog bills*, are in circulation; but, as a general principle, shinplasters are regarded cautiously, and nothing is given for nothing. *North, Slave of the Lamp*, p. 38.

Shakspeare makes one of his characters say:—

“How sweet the moonshine sleeps upon this bank.”

But, in this “*red-dog*” and “*wild-cat*” era, the reading about banks and moonshine should be modernized thus:—

“How sweet these banks do sleep upon this moonshine.”

*La Salle Press.*

**To redeem.** To pay the value in specie of any promissory note, bill, or other evidence of debt given by the State, by a company or corporation, or by an individual. The credit of a State, a banking company, or individual, is good when they can *redeem* all their stock, notes, or bills at par. — *Webster*. This sense of the word is peculiar to us, and is not noticed by any English lexicographer. In England, they *cash* notes, bank-bills, &c.

**Redemptioner.** This name is given in the Southern States to those Germans, Irish, and other Europeans who emigrate from their own country to the United States, and sell their services for a term of time to pay their passage-money and other expenses. — *Pickering*.

**Red-Eye.** 1. Fiery new whiskey; the same as *Bald-Face*.

I promised the overseer a new covering and a demijohn of *red-eye*, if all went straight, got my little fixins together, and off I set. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

2. One of the names for the Copperhead Snake, which see.

**Red-Head.** (*Fuligula ferina*.) A red-headed duck found throughout the United States. Its flesh is greatly esteemed.

Dr. Sharpless, of Philadelphia, says he could never distinguish much difference in flavor between canvas-backs and *red-heads*, and that many of the latter are sold as canvas-backs and eaten as such by those who profess to know all about the divine flavor. — *Bogardus, Field, Cover, and Trap Shooting*, p. 171.

**Red Horses.** A nickname applied to the natives of Kentucky.

**Red-hot.** "We had a *red-hot* time," i. e. a "jolly" time.

**Reding.** A compound used to redden the jambs and hearth of an open wood fire-place; perhaps Venetian red.

**Red-Men.** The American Indians, so called from their color.

Since the *red-men* have become known to us, numerous tribes have been extinguished, with all their peculiar customs and institutions; yet, as a whole, the Indian remains. — *Lapham's Antiqs. of Wisconsin*, p. 30.

Children, you ask why the *red-men* keep moving towards the setting sun, and why the *pale-faces* follow? You ask if the place where the sun sets will ever be reached, and if *pale men* will go there to plough and build. — *Cooper, The Red Skins*, p. 321.

The *red-man*, too,  
Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,  
And nearer to the Rocky Mountains sought  
A wilder hunting-ground. — *Bryant, The Prairies*.

The *red-man* smoked his pipe, or trimmed the fire,  
And many a tale he to our father told  
Of barbarous battle and of slaughter dire,  
That on Pawtucket's marge there chanced of old.

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto III.*

**Red Race.** The American Indians.

We need not look to Mexico or any other country for the descendants of the mound-builders. We probably see them in the present *red race* of the same or adjacent regions. — *Lapham's Antiqs. of Wisconsin*, p. 29.

**Red-Root.** (*Ceanothus Americanus*.) A shrub found upon the prairies near the Rocky Mountains, highly esteemed as a substitute for tea. It resembles the tea of commerce, and affords an excellent

beverage. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 26. Also known as New Jersey tea, which see.

**Red-Skin.** An American Indian.

What may be right and proper in a *red-skin* may be sinful in a man who has not even a cross in blood to plead for his ignorance. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

**To red up.** To put in order; as, to *red up* a room. Pennsylvania.

**Red Viper.** See *Copperhead*.

**Reed-Bird.** See *Bobolink*.

**To reek.** To wreak; to avenge; to revenge.

The simple fact was, they did not receive from General Fremont that consideration to which they thought their importance entitled them; and so . . . they one after another "went home to *reek* themselves upon expression" in the three volumes [of the "Chicago Tribune," as] aforesaid. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 25, 1862.

**Reform School.** A school for the confinement, instruction, and reformation of juvenile offenders, and of young persons of idle, vicious, and vagrant habits.

**Regalia.** The banners, aprons, badges, and other decorations used by the Society of Odd Fellows. It is singular that this term, which signifies the trappings of royalty, should have been chosen by this large and respectable body for their simple decorations.

**Regent.** In the State of New York, the member of a corporate body which is invested with the superintendence of all the colleges, academies, and schools in the State. This board consists of twenty-one members, who are called "the *regents* of the University of the State of New York." They are appointed and removable by the Legislature. They have power to grant acts of incorporation for colleges; to visit and inspect all colleges, academies, and schools, and to make regulations for governing the same. — *Statutes of New York*.

**Registering Punch.** An instrument used by railroad conductors, with which they are required to cut from a card the amount of fares they receive. See *Gong Punch*.

**Regret.** A note declining an invitation, and containing an expression of regret for the same; as, "I can't go to Mrs. Jones's ball next Wednesday, but must send a *regret*." A new lady's term.

**Regular Nominee.** A candidate chosen by a convention or a caucus for a political office.

When the average Democrat refuses to support the *regular nominees*, regardless of their personal characters, discipline is destroyed and disaster assured. — *N. Y. Evening Mail*, Oct. 21, 1876.

**Regular Way.** Very often in the report of stock sales the letters *R. W.* are attached to certain operations. This "regular way" means the delivery of the stock sold the next day. All sales for cash are for immediate delivery. — *Hunt's Merch. Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

**Rehash.** A cooking over again; a renewal or repetition in another form. Doubtless of English origin, though not in the dictionaries.

Governor Tallmadge, in speaking of Senator Shields's promise to present the memorial of the "Spiritualists" to the Senate, and his treatment of it afterwards, says: —

I confess my surprise that, instead of moving for an investigation by a select committee, he should have given in advance a *rehash* of what has been so often said before by the opponents of spiritualism. — *Healing of Nations, Appendix*, p. 468.

I understand that Dr. Gwin's speech here, the other evening, was principally a *rehash* of his Yreka effort. — *Senator Broderick's Speech in California*, Aug., 1859.

**To reinsure.** To insure the same property a second time by other underwriters. — *Webster*.

It is common with underwriters or insurance companies, when they find they have too large a sum insured on one ship, or in a particular district, to *reinsure* a part elsewhere.

The insurer may cause the property insured to be *reinsured* by other persons. *Walsh, French Com. Code*.

**To reland.** To go on shore after having embarked. — *Webster*.

**Reliable.** Suitable or fit to be relied on; worthy of dependence; trustworthy.

To the use of this word, which is of recent introduction into the language, many take exception, maintaining that it is unnecessary, and irregular in its formation. It is, however, a most convenient substitute for the phrase *to be relied upon*. — *Webster*.

In noticing this word, Mr. Latham, in his new edition of Johnson's "Dictionary," says that, although it is more common in America than in Great Britain, there is no proof that it originated in the former country; and adds that it is "more useful than correct," for which assertion he gives his reasons.

According to General Livingston's humorous account, his own village of Elizabethtown was not much more *reliable*, being peopled in those agitated times by unknown, unrecommended strangers, guilty-looking Tories, and very knavish Whigs. *W. Irving*.

**Religion.** *To get religion* is a technical term among certain sects, meaning to be converted.

**To remind,** for *remember*; as, "The company will please *remind*." A New York vulgarism.

**Removability.** The capacity of being removed from an office or station; capacity of being displaced. — *Webster*.

**Rench and Rense.** Vulgar pronunciation of the word *rinse*.

**Rendition**, for *rendering*. A new use of the word.

The "Baltimore Sun," of Aug. 17. 1858, after recording the acquittal of a man tried for murder, says: —

On the *rendition* of the verdict, the large audience present manifested enthusiastic approbation.

At half past seven o'clock this evening, two gentlemen are announced to deliver addresses to the public on behalf of the "Bible Union" organization, which has for its purpose the closest possible *rendition* of the meaning of the original text of the Scriptures into English and other modern tongues. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Nov. 11, 1858.

**Renewedly.** Anew; again; once more. A word often used by American preachers, but not supported by good English use. — *Worcester*.

**To reopen.** To open again. — *Webster*. This word is much used. The theatre *reopens* for the season; the schools *reopen* after their vacations.

**Repeater.** A person who votes more than once at an election, a custom extensively practised in the cities of New York and Philadelphia.

In his examination, Sept. 18, 1877, before the Aldermanic Investigation Committee of New York, Mr. W. M. Tweed said: —

As an organizer of *repeaters*, Mr. Morrissey had no superior; and, when the ring was in power, such capacity was always fully recognized.

**Repetitious.** Repeating; containing repetition. — *Webster*.

Mr. Pickering notices this word, which he thinks is peculiar to the writer from whom the following extract is taken: —

The observation which you have quoted from the Abbé Raynal, which has been written off in a succession not much less *repetitious* or protracted than that in which school-boys of former times wrote. — *Remarks on the Review of Inchi-quin's Letters*, Boston, 1815.

Mr. Worcester, however, cites the North American Review and R. Anderson as authorities for its use. It is now becoming more common.

**Reportorial.** Of a reporter, as "its editorial and *reportorial* departments." — *The Independent*. It is noticed by Webster, who calls it an ill-formed word.

**Reprobacy.** Reprobateness.

We are astonished that such *reprobacy* could be awakened even by the thunders of Whitefield. — *Harper's Mag.*, Dec., 1860.

**Republicans.** A party name which has been several times adopted in the history of American politics. It is now (1860) held by a party formally organized in the year 1856, the main "plank" of whose "platform" is opposition to the extension of slavery to new territories. On account of their supposed fondness for the Negroes, they have been commonly styled by their opponents *Black Republicans*.

The *Republican* party, as our readers are well aware, was called into being solely to resist the encroachments of slavery upon the free territory of the Union, and upon the free States. It was a combination of men of varying political antecedents: some had been Whigs, some Democrats, some Americans, some Abolitionists, some had always kept aloof from politics. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 9, 1858.

**Repudiationist.** One who favors repudiation of debts.

Jeff Davis was first known in public life as a *repudiationist*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 21, 1862.

Vallandigham the *repudiationist*. — *San Francisco Bulletin*, Oct., 1869.

**Requisition.** A demand of the executive of one county or State upon another for a fugitive from justice.

Under the old confederation of the American States, Congress often made *requisitions* on the States for money to supply the treasury; but they had no power to enforce the *requisitions*, and the States neglected or partially complied with them. — *Alex. Hamilton*.

**Reservation.** A tract of public land reserved or set aside for some public use, as for schools, the Indians, &c.

*Reservations* of land thirty miles square shall be surveyed on the frontier for the friendly Indians. — *Laws of Texas*.

**Reserve.** A reservation of land, set aside for a particular purpose, as "the Western Reserve," formerly the "Connecticut Reserve," originally set apart for the School fund of Connecticut; the "Clergy Reserve," in Canada for the support of the clergy.

**Resident Graduate.** Graduates of colleges and of Theological Seminaries, who are desirous of pursuing their studies at a college, without joining any of its departments. They may attend the public lectures given in the institution, and enjoy the use of its library.

**Resolve.** Legal or official determination; legislative act concerning a private person or corporation, or concerning some private business. Public acts of a legislature respect the State; and to give them validity, the bills for such acts must pass through all the legislative forms. *Resolves* are usually private acts, and are often passed with less formality. — *Webster*.



**Restitutionists.** A religious sect which has recently sprung up in Worcester and some other places. The following account is given of it by the "Worcester Transcript:" —

The *Restitutionists* believe that what man lost in the fall is now beginning to be restored; and that the germ, now confined to their own small number, is yet to bud and flourish till it covers the earth. They are all *Restitutionists* in one sense, — they believe that everything is to come back to its original form and purity. Their Sabbath, therefore, occurs on Saturday, as the original day of worship; and their meetings are held Friday evening, because it is Sunday eve. They only use the Lord's prayer, as that alone can have efficacy with the Father. To them — or three of them at least — is committed the apostolic gift of tongues. This gift appears to be rather useless, as the words spoken are not only unintelligible to bystanders, but to the others who have a like gift, till the inward manifestation of the Spirit makes it known. They are God's chosen and willing instruments, in whom the Holy Spirit now develops himself partially, but through whose instrumentality the world is soon to be entirely restored.

This sect, small in numbers, is strong in the faith and working activity of its members. There are others of a like faith in Athol, New Braintree, Springfield, and other places.

**Result.** The decision or determination of a council or deliberative assembly; as, "the *result* of an ecclesiastical council." Peculiar to New England. — *Webster*.

**To resurrect.** 1. To take a body from the grave. Originally said of body-snatchers. 2. To reanimate, to restore to life, to bring to public view that which was forgotten or lost.

In a note at the end of the 6th volume of Mr. Benton's "Abridgment of the Debates of Congress," in speaking of the founders of the government, "who are all gone, — their bodies buried in the earth, their works buried under rubbish, and their names beginning to fade away," — the author adds: —

I *resurrect* the whole! put them in scene again on the living stage, every one with the best of his works in his hand.

To fill up the cup, be it claret or beer;

*Resurrect* the war hatchet, and sharpen the spear.

*Song of the War Democracy.*

She was bending down and punching under the bed with the broom, . . . but she *resurrected* nothing but the cat. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 18.

Yankee enterprise is just what is wanted. I fought for the conspiracy, but that issue is dead. It will never be *resurrected*, at least in my day. — *N. Orleans Corr. Boston Herald*, Sept. 23, 1877.

**Retraced.** Retired.

The new-comer who lands in certain towns in New England, expecting to find himself among the most verdant country Yankees, is compelled to admit that there are no places in the world similarly *retraced* which are less provincial or more agreeable. — *Mace Sloper in Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**Retracy.** 1. Retirement. This absurd word is often applied to the condition of politicians who have retired, willingly or unwillingly, to private life.

Here I shall stay and amuse myself in what one of our great men used to call dignified *retracy*. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 286.

2. Sufficiency; competency. It is said, in New England, of a person who left off business with a fortune, that he has a *retracy*; i. e., a sufficient fortune to retire upon.

**To retire.** (Fr. *retirer*.) To withdraw; to take away; to make to retire. — *Johnson*. This transitive use of the verb, which had become obsolete, is now reviving in this country and in England. Of the many examples from good old writers given by *Johnson*, we will quote only one from *Shakspeare*: —

He, our hope, might have *retired* his power,  
And driven into despair an enemy's hate. — *Richard II.*

With us, it is used by military men of withdrawing troops.

General Rosas insisted on the blockade being removed before he *retired* his troops from the Banda Oriental. — *Newspaper*.

By merchants of paying their notes; and by banks, to withdraw them from circulation.

The French houses are *retiring* their notes, due next month, in advance, anticipating commercial difficulties. — *Newspaper*.

Expecting that, before it [a forged note] became due, he should be able to *retire* it. — *Lord Brougham in Edinb. Rev.*, April, 1855.

Finally, to retire is to go to bed. "I am sleepy, and shall *retire*."

**Retirement.** Withdrawal, removing. "Retirement of the resolutions from the Senate." — *Newspapers*.

**Retortive.** Containing retort. — *Webster*.

**To retrospect.** To look back.

To give a correct idea of the circumstances which have gradually produced this conviction, it may be useful to *retrospect* to an early period. — *Letter from Alex. Hamilton to John Adams*.

The word is rare in American writings; and, from Mr. Pickering's observations, it appears that, although it has been used in England, it has not found favor there.

**Returning Board.** In some of the Southern States, a board of officers who receive and count the votes cast at an election, and declare the result of the same.

**To revamp.** To patch up, renew. Originally a shoemaker's term.

**Revenue Cutter.** A small and swift armed vessel stationed at a seaport, to protect the revenue by overhauling smugglers.

**Reverent.** Strong; as, "reverent whiskey," i. e. not diluted. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**Revocal.** A revocation.

The President's *revocal* of General Hunter's proclamation was well received at Port Royal. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 9, 1862.

**Revolver.** It is time that this word, applied to a revolving pistol, should have a place in the dictionary. In the first invention, the barrel, which contained several tubes, was made to revolve. In the present and most approved form, the breech, which contains the charge, alone revolves. On the Western frontier of the United States and in California, where they are most used, these arms are universally called "five-shooters" or "six-shooters," according to the number of charges they can receive.

**Rhino.** Money. Old English slang.

**Rhody.** A diminutive often applied to the State of Rhode Island, from its limited territory. Sometimes it is called "Little *Rhody*."

Old Newport, billow-cradled, see  
On *Rhody's* verdant shore;  
'Tis there old Ocean shakes his mane,  
Resounding evermore. — *Anonymous*.

**Ribbons.** Carriage reins. Provincial in England. — *Wright*.

The stage-driver had an itching palm, which could be satisfied with nothing but the *ribbons* drawn over the backs of a four-in-hand. — *Eggleston, Mystery of Metropolisville*, p. 14.

The "London Athenæum," in its review of "The Reminiscences of a Gentleman Coachman," Lond., 1875, says:—

The review of the whole turn-out [by gentlemen coachmen] was rigidly critical: they would lend a hand to alter a bit, talking the whole time to the holder of the *ribbons*.

**Rice-Bird.** 1. (*Icterus agripennis*.) A pretty little bird, well known as the *Bobolink*, which see.

2. A rice plantation owner.

The surrounding country [Beaufort, S. C.] embraces the best rice-fields of the South. — so proverbially so, indeed, that the irreverent "up country" are accustomed to call the aristocratic inhabitants of the region *rice-birds*; perhaps, also, in allusion to their worldly fatness. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Rich.** Luscious; i. e., entertaining, highly amusing.

Mr. Richardson is *rich* on rabbits, and divides them into four races. — *London Athenaeum*, Dec., 1847.

Thar we was, settin' on our horses, rollin' with laughin' and liquor, and thought the thing was *rich* [alluding to a dog-fight]. — *Porter's South-western Tales*, p. 57.

About as *rich* an instance of official idleness, self-conceit, and incivility as we have seen, fell under our notice yesterday. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

**Richwood.** (*Pilea pumila*.) A stingless nettle, so called from its succulent and semi-transparent stem. It is also called Clearweed.

**To ride.** To carry, transport. In the city of New York, this word is used of carting or carrying merchandise on a cart. Thus, to *ride* a box or bale of goods is to carry it. I heard a witness in a court-room testify that he had "*rode* some hogs from the wharf to the store," by which he meant that he had carried a load of dead hogs on his cart.

**To ride and tie.** Said of two persons travelling on the same horse, one of whom rides ahead, and at a suitable place ties the horse for his companion; he walks on, and his companion rides and ties; and so they continue to do by turns. Maryland and Virginia.

Mr. Curtis, in his "*Life of Daniel Webster*" (Vol. I. p. 37), alluding to his brother Ezekiel, says:—

Mr. Webster once humorously expressed their frequent interchange of study and of labor for their joint support, as they had but one horse between them, they *rode in tie*.

**To ride upon a Rail.** To travel or ride on a railroad.

**Riding Rock.** A conspicuous rock at a ford, used to show the depth of the water and the safety of crossings. A stream is said to be "out of ride" when it is past fording; "out of bank" is a still higher stage of the water, i. e. over its banks. Maryland and Virginia.

**Riding Way.** A ford.

There were two fords or *riding ways* over the Shetucket. In 1780, one is called the upper *riding way* in Dr. Perkins's intervals. — *Caulkins, Hist. Norwich, Conn.*

**Right.** Very. The word in this sense is rarely heard at the North, but is in constant use at the South; as, "It rains *right* hard." A New Yorker would say "very" or "quite" hard.

**Right Along.** Uninterruptedly, continuously.

There are some women in Chicago that have had a daily prayer-meeting every afternoon at three o'clock *right along* for two years. — *Address of D. L. Moody.*

**Right Away.** Directly; immediately; right off.

Mr. Dickens, in his "American Notes," relates the following anecdote, which occurred at the Tremont House, Boston:—

"Dinner as quick as possible," said I to the waiter.

"*Right away!*" said the waiter.

After a moment's hesitation, I answered, "No," at hazard.

"*Not right away!*" cried the waiter, with surprise.

I thought the waiter must have gone out of his mind, until another whispered to him, "Directly."

"Well! and that's a fact!" said the waiter, "*Right away.*"

I now saw that "*right away*" and "directly" meant the same thing.

"Uncle John," said Nina, "I want you to get the carriage out for me *right away*. I want to take a ride over the cross-run" — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 89.

Lord Macaulay having been written to by an American who, about to publish an edition of his Lordship's works to which he proposed to prefix his Life, desired certain particulars for it, Lord M. says:—

I guess I must answer him *right slick away*. — *Life and Letters*, Vol. I. p. 235.

**Right here.** Just now; here and at this instant.

"If we wanted money," said Mr. Moody, "we would say so, *right here*; but we are after your souls." — *Sermon in Boston*.

**Right off.** Directly; immediately; used the same as the previous expression. Sometimes we hear *right out*.

Mr. Webster thus writes to Mr. Edw. Curtis, appointing a meeting:—

On the first of October, mutton and chickens would be good in New Hampshire. Let us first meet in Boston, and then take a fair start together. If the Governor prefers Marshfield we will go to that place and shut ourselves up in the office and do the work *right off*. — *Private Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 339.

I feel wonderfully concerned about that pain in your chest, said the Widow to Mr. Crane. It ought to be attended to *right off*, Mr. Crane, *right off*. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

The Californians are eminently practical: what they mean to do, they do *right off* with all their might, as if they really meant to do it. — *Borthwick, California*, p. 226.

**To Rights.** 1. Directly; soon. — *Webster*.

If folks will do what I tell 'em, things will go straight enough *to rights*. — *Major Doening's Letters*, p. 5.

So *to rights* the express got back, and brought a letter. — *Ibid.*, p. 129.

*Aunt.* You see where she lives, — five doors down the street; deliver this letter, and bring back an answer, — quick.

*Doodittle.* In a jiffing; I'll be back *to rights*. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

"Well, Mr. Nathaniel, I suppose you never heard me tell of the curious way of my first seeing the squire?"

I said I had never heard it. So she began *to rights*, and told the whole thing. *Story of the Sleigh-Ride*.

The expression in the same sense is used by Swift: —

Then they knocked off some of the boards for the use of the ship, and when they had got all they had a mind for, let the hull drop into the sea, which, by reason of the many breaches made in the bottom and sides, sunk *to rights*. — *Voyage to Brobdingnag*, ch. viii. par. 8.

In a late edition of "Gulliver's Travels," edited by J. F. Walker, published by Cassell, London, the expression *to rights* is changed to "*outright*," which is not correct. If the vessel sunk, no farther qualification was required. The word *outright* does not strengthen the word. But "*to rights*" means that the vessel soon sunk.

2. *To set to rights* is to put in good order; to regulate. — *Webster*.

**Right Smart.** 1. Good-sized. Large.

The provisions were divided and served out, each man's ration consisting of a pint of mouldy corn and a *right smart* chunk of bacon. — *Olmed's Texas*, p. 301.

2. A good deal. "Ma," says a child, "shall I toast *right smart* of this bread?" The mother replies, "I reckon." Southern.

I sold *right smart* of eggs this summer, and sweet potatoes always fetch a good price. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 157.

She had *right smart* of life in her, and was always right busy 'tending to something or other. — *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 209.

It's a heap warmer to-day, and I'm sure we'll make *right smart* of corn. — *Southern Tales*.

3. Very able; clever. "A right smart man." Connecticut.

**Right Smart Chance.** See *Smart Chance*.

**Right Straight.** Directly; immediately. "*Right straight off*" is a common expression. A loving wife thus says to her sick husband: —

Bathe in hot water, love, your feet,  
Crushed ice put to your head;  
And then a mild cathartic take, —  
And go *right straight* to bed.

The expression is synonymous with the old English *straight* and *straightway*: —

I know thy generous temper well:  
Fling but the appearance of dishonor on it,  
It *straight* takes fire, and mounts into a blaze. — *Addison, Cato*.  
Like to a ship, that, having 'scaped a tempest,  
Is *straightway* claimed and boarded with a prize.  
*Shakspeare, Henry VI., Part II.*

**To right up.** To put to rights, set in order.

**To rile.** This word, says Mr. Worcester, is provincial in England and colloquial in the United States. The original spelling and pronunciation, *roil*, is almost, if not entirely, obsolete in this country.

1. To render turbid by stirring up the sediment.

No doubt existed in the minds of Mr. Dobb's fellow-boarders that the well of his good spirits had been *riled*. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

2. To make angry. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*. In both countries, it is now commonly pronounced and written *rile*.

John was a-dry, and soon cried out, —  
Goon git some beer we 'ool!  
He 'd so to wait, it made him *riled*,  
The booths were all shock full.

*J. Noakes and Mary Styles.*

I won't say your country or my country, and then it won't *rile* nobody. — *Sam Slick in England*.

I tell you what, I was monstrous *riled* t' other day, when I got a letter from Crockett, calling me hard names and abusin' me. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

It *riled* me so that I just steps up to him, as savage as a meat-axe, intending to throw him downstairs. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 241.

We begin to think it 's natur  
To take sarse and not be *riled*:  
Who 'd expect to see a tater  
All on eend at bein' biled. — *The Biglow Papers*.

**Rily.** 1. Turbid. 2. Excited to resentment; vexed.

The boys and gals were laughin' at my scrape and the pickle I was in, that I gin to get *riley*. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 64.

**Ring.** A clique; a faction; a combination of brokers, speculators, politicians, and gamblers, for the purpose of operating in, or controlling the market in stocks, gold, exchange, agricultural products, merchandise, &c.

Is it any wonder that Washington should be such a hot-bed of *Rings* and secret speculations, or that half the men you meet there in society should be suspected of complicity in real estate pools, and paving swindles, and street-improvement frauds, and a score of other scandalous adventures? — *N. Y. Tribune*, March, 1876.

The scoundrels, headed by W. M. Tweed, who plundered the treasury of the city of New York of many millions of dollars, were long known as "the Ring."

Tweed may arrive at any hour, and the friends of the old *Ring* are in a twitter. They believe that the great Boss will keep still, out of the respect he has for Mr. T. — *N. Y. Mail*, Oct. 21, 1876.

Mr. W. D. R — is nowhere accounted other than as a natural product of the Philadelphia *Ring* in politics, in all that *Ring* implies. John A. K — is a smirched member of the Indian *Ring*. — *Brooklyn Eagle*, Nov. 11, 1876.

The people of Chicago have recently had brought home to them more strikingly than ever the low condition of public morals. . . . The trial of the Whiskey-Ring has been a startling exhibition of a monstrous moral deformity. — *N. Y. Times*, May, 1876.

**To ring one's own Bell** is the same as "to be one's own trumpeter."

**Ring-Snake.** A species of black snake that once infested Southern New England; so called from a yellow ring around its neck. Also called a racer.

**Ring-Tailed Roarer.** See *Roarer*.

**Rink.** An artificial body of water, within a covered wooden building, prepared for skating when frozen. Such enclosures may now be found in London, New York, and the principal cities in Canada. The word is of Scottish origin. Jamieson has *Rink*, *Renk*, a course, a race. A man is said to get out his *rink*, when he is sowing his wild oats. — *Etymological Dic.* Halliwell and Wright define it as a ring or circle, provincial in Derbyshire. The word has only been given a place in Webster's Dic. since the introduction of rinks in this country.

**To rip.** To tear; to drive. A common slang expression is, "*Let her rip!*" i. e. let her drive, let her go.

Great Odin, thou storm-god!

Crack on with our ship:

We are off on a batter;

Hurrah, *let her rip*. — *Leland, Knickerbocker Gallery*.

Another phrase, which often glides in music from the lip,

Is one of fine significance and beauty, "*Let her rip*."

In the late panic, we have kept this mandate o'er and o'er,

And "*let her rip*" so frequently, that some can *rip* no more.

*Park Benjamin, Poem on Hard Times.*

Some boats are fast and others slow,

Stern-wheel boats on the Ohio,

With five feet scant on all the *bars*,

This boat can beat the railroad *cars*.

Now is the time for a bully trip.

So shake her up, and *let her rip*. — *Comic Song*.

**To rip out.** To utter with vehemence; to swear; as, "*to rip out an oath*."

I suppose the clergy wouldn't give me a chance for heaven, because I *rip out* with an oath every now and then. But I can't help swearing, if I should die for it. They say it's dreadfully wicked; but I feel more Christian when I let out than when I keep in! — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 272.

Here I *ripped out* something, perhaps rather rash,

Quite innocent, though: but, to use an expression

More striking than classic, it settled my hash,

And proved very soon the last of our session.

*Butler, Nothing to Wear*



Mr. Alger, in his "Life of Edwin Forrest," says that actor "used much profane language," . . . that "he was abundantly capable of a profanity that was vulgar." But Forrest himself said: —

When swearing is necessary, either for proper emphasis or as a vent for passion too hot and strong, why I let it rip as it will.

**Ripper.** A tearer, driver. — *Webster*.

**To rip-rap.** (From *riff-raff*.) To make a foundation of stones thrown together without order in deep water; called also *random-work* and *pierre-perdu*.

If, in constructing a bulkhead, it should be determined to *rip-rap* to low-water mark, there would be but a slight difference in favor of the bulkhead; the cost for *rip-rapping*, estimating at three cents a foot, would be about eighty thousand dollars. — *Doc. of N. Y. Aldermen*, Nov. 9, 1848.

**Rip-Snorter, Rip-Staver.** A tearer, driver; a dashing fellow.

The following is the "Louisville Courier Journal's" report of a speech made at a recent Indian jollification, near Cheyenne, by one of the *rip-snorters* of the Far West: —

I'm your howling hyena of the hills, and your patent old he-hair-lifter of the per-rairies; I'm your rip-roaring raccoon of the mountains, your Sitting-Bully boy with a glass eye, and your goul-darned and double-fisted son of an ingine; I'm the high-pressure, iron-jawed sausage machine to chaw up your Crooks and Terrys, — you heerd *my* horn.

**Rise.** The phrase "*and the rise*" is used in some parts of the South to mean "and more;" as, "I should think there were a thousand *and the rise*," i. e. a thousand and more, over a thousand.

**Rising or rising of.** More than; upwards of; as, "James Smithson bequeathed to the United States *rising* half a million of dollars." "There were *rising of* a thousand men killed at the battle of Buena Vista."

**Risky.** Dangerous; hazardous.

My friends has wondered at me, said the Widow Bedott, for continuing single so long; but I always told them 't was a very *resky* business to take a second partner. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 144.

**River.** Mr. Pickering observes that the Americans, in speaking of rivers, commonly put the name before the word *river*; thus, Connecticut *River*, Charles *River*, Merrimack *River*, Hudson *River*, Susquehanna *River*, to which custom *River St.* Lawrence is a remarkable exception. The English place the name after it, and say, the *river* Thames, the *river* Danube, &c.

**River-Bottoms.** The bottom or alluvial land along the margin of rivers. See *Bottom* and *Bottom-Lands*.

The alluvial terraces or *river-bottoms*, as they are popularly termed, were the favorite sites of these builders [of the ancient works in Ohio]. The principal mounds are found where these *bottoms* are most extended. — *Squier and Davis's Monuments Mississippi Valley*, p. 6.

**River-Driver.** A term applied by lumbermen in Maine to a man whose business it is to conduct logs down running streams, to prevent them from lodging upon shoals or remaining in eddies.

**River-Thief.** One of a class of thieves in New York city, who in boats prowl about vessels at night, and plunder them.

**Riz**, for raised; as "riz bread."

**Roach.** A cockroach.

**Roanoke.** Indian shell money; so called in Virginia. See *Peage*.

**Roarer.** One who roars; a noisy man. — *Worcester*.

Ben was an old Mississippi *roarer*, — none of your half and half, but just as native to the element as if he had been born in a broad-horn. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 64.

This is sometimes intensified into *ring-tailed roarer*.

And when he got a arguing strong,  
He was a *ring-tailed roarer*. — *Western Song*.

**Roasting-Ears.** Indian corn in the green state fit for roasting. This term is much used in the South and West for green corn in general, either raw or cooked. It is borrowed from the Indian custom of roasting the ears before a fire or in the hot ashes, which however is now practised only out of doors, as on picnic occasions. The common mode of cooking is by boiling.

The Indians delight much to feed on *roasting-ears*, gathered green and milky before it is grown to its full bigness, and roasted before the fire in the ear. And, indeed, this is a very sweet and pleasing food. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705. Book III.

**Robe.** (French.) A dressed skin; applied only to that of the buffalo. A *pack of robes* is ten skins, tied in a pack, which is the manner in which they are brought from the Far West to market. For the skins of other wild animals, we use the term *skin*, as *deer-skin*, *beaver-skin*, *muskrat-skin*, &c., but never *buffalo-skin*. The term is sometimes corrupted into *buffalo-rug*. See *Buffalo*.

The *robes* of the buffaloes are worn by the Indians instead of blankets; their skins, when tanned, are used as coverings for their lodges, &c. — *Cutlin's Indians*, Vol. I. p. 262.

The large and roomy sleigh decked with buffalo, black bear, and lynx *robes*, red bound and furnished with sham eyes and ears. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 4.

Chased for his beef, for his robe, for the very pastime of his death, the buffalo is rapidly vanishing from the land. — *New York Post, Letter from Manitoba*, Sept. 29, 1877.

**Robert of Lincoln.** (See *Bobolink*.) A pretty poem by W. C. Bryant entitled that bird.

**Robin.** A flannel undershirt.

**Rock.** 1. A stone. In the Southern and Western States, and also in some parts of New England, stones of any size are absurdly called *rocks*.

Brother S — came home in a mighty bad way, with a cold and cough; so I put a hot *rock* to his feet, and gave him a bowl of catnip tea, which put him in a mighty fine sweat, &c. — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 193.

Mr. M — was almost dead with the consumption, and had to carry *rocks* in his pocket to keep the wind from blowin' him away. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

I see Arch. Cooney walk down to the creek bottom, and then he begin pickin' up *rocks* an' slingin' them at the dogs. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

2. A piece of money. A slang term peculiar to the South.

Spare my feelings, Squire, and don't ask me to tell any more. Here I am in town without a *rock* in my pocket, without a skirt to my coat, or crown to my hat. — *Pickings from the New Orleans Picayune*.

**To rock.** To throw stones at; to stone; to pelt. This ridiculous expression is derived from the preceding; yet we have an analogous word in the old Fr. *rocher*.

They commenced *rocking* the Clay Club House in June, on more occasions than one, and on one occasion threw a rock in at the window, hitting Mr. Clem on the shoulder, &c. — *Jonesborough (Tenn.) Whig*.

**Rockaway.** A light carriage, open at the sides, drawn by one horse, and capable of holding from six to nine persons. Perhaps originally a *Rockaway wagon*, from the seaside place on Long Island, near New York.

**Rock-Bed.** Foundation.

His attention had been directed to certain superstitions that prevail in every branch of the Church, and almost reach the "*rock bed* of absolute Christianity." *Rev. John Miller, Questions awakened by the Bible*.

**Rock-Cod.** A red-colored codfish. Massachusetts.

**Rocker.** A machine resembling a child's cradle, used by California miners for separating gold dust from the earth, or what they there call *pay-dirt*. A mining cradle would be a better term for it.

**Rock-Fish.** See *Striped Bass*.

**Rodeo.** (Span.) To give or make a *rodeo* is to collect in an enclosure the large herds of cattle on stock farms, for the purpose of

separating and counting and marking them. California. See *Judges of the Plains*.

Every owner of a stock farm shall be obliged to give yearly one general *rodeo*; . . . and the person giving such general *rodeo* shall give notice thereof to all owners of the adjoining farms, at least four days before said *rodeos* are made, for the purpose of separating, marking, and branding their respective cattle, &c. — *Laws of California*, ch. xcii.

**Rokeage or Yokeage.** Indian corn parched, pulverized, and mixed with sugar. The same word as *nocake* (which see), with a different pronunciation, *r* and *n* being convertible and equivalent.

**Rolling Country or Rolling Prairie.** The vast plains or prairies of the West, although preserving a general level in respect to the whole country, are yet in themselves not flat, but exhibit a gracefully waving surface, swelling and subsiding with an easy slope and a full rounded outline, equally avoiding the unmeaning horizontal surface and the interruption of abrupt or angular elevations. It is that surface which, in the expressive language of the country, is called rolling, and which has been said to resemble the long, heavy swell of the ocean, when its waves are subsiding to rest after the agitation of a storm. Such are *rolling prairies*. — *Judge Hall, Notes on the Western States*.

The country was what was termed *rolling*, from some fancied resemblance to the surface of the ocean when it is just undulating with a long ground swell. — *Cooper, The Oak Openings*.

Here one of the characteristic scenes of the Far West broke upon us. An immense extent of grassy, undulating, or, as it is termed, *rolling country*, with here and there a clump of trees, dimly seen in the distance like a ship at sea; the landscape deriving sublimity from its vastness and simplicity. — *Irring's Tour on the Prairies*, p. 100.

The cabin was on the edge of a bluff; but the door opened on a fine *rolling prairie*, dotted all over with flowers, which in variety of color vied with the rainbow. — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 41.

**Rolling-Roads.** So called in Maryland and Virginia, from the old custom of rolling tobacco to market in hogsheads, just as if one would drag a barrel or churn on the ground, by attaching thills to axles or pivots fastened to it.

**Roncher.** A thing enormous of its kind; a blow of great force, synonymous with "sockdolager."

**To room.** To occupy a room; to lodge; as, "In order to save expense and have company, I *room* with my friend Brown," i. e. occupy the same room with him.

**Roorback.** A falsehood; a misstatement; a sensational article without truth, published in the newspapers.

In Maverick's book entitled "Henry J. Raymond and the New York Press for Thirty Years," we find the following account of the origin of the word.

In September, 1844, a Whig newspaper, "The Ithaca (N. Y.) Chronicle," received and printed what purported to be an "extract from *Roorback's* 'Tour through the Western and Southern States, in 1836;'" containing a description of a camp of slave-drivers on *Duck River*, and a statement that forty-three of the unfortunate slaves "had been purchased of the Honorable J. K. Polk, the present Speaker of the House of Representatives [and in 1844 a candidate for the Presidency], the mark of the branding iron, with the initials of his name, on their shoulders, distinguishing them from the rest." The pretended "extract" was copied into the "Albany Evening Journal," and by the Whig press throughout the country. A few days after its first appearance, the Democrats discovered that it was, in part, taken from G. W. Featherstonhaugh's "Tour," published in 1834, but that the name of "Duck River," and the italicised statement respecting Mr. Polk, had been interpolated by the correspondent of the "Chronicle." Thereafter, it was easy to reply to every charge preferred against the Democratic candidate, by pronouncing it "another *roorback*."

The manufacture of *roorbacks* against Mr. Blaine, though active, is not very successful in producing a merchantable article. — *N. Y. Tribune*, April 14, 1876.

The Washington correspondent of the "Providence Journal," May 9, 1876, in speaking of a sensational despatch, claiming to involve the Secretary of the Treasury in a disreputable transaction, calls it another infamous Democratic *roorback* against that officer.

It was a poor day for *roorbacks* yesterday. First, Professor Lowell was going to vote for Tilden, and then he — wasn't. Second, President Grant had declared that the vote of Louisiana ought to be thrown out, and then he — hadn't. Third, Governor Hayes promised all sorts of strange things, and then he — didn't. These were short-legged lies, all of them; and they soon got out of breath. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec., 1876.

**Rooster.** The male of the domestic fowl; the cock. *Roost-cock*. Devonshire, Eng.

As if the flourish of the quill were the crowing of a *rooster*. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

A huge turkey gobbling in the road, a *rooster* crowing on the fence, and ducks quacking in the ditches. — *Margaret*, p. 187.

The Skinners and Cow Boys of the Revolution, when they wrung the neck of a *rooster*, did not trouble their heads whether they crowed for Congress or King George. — *Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 17.

Sister Sall she climbs right well,  
 But can't climb as she uster;  
 There she sits a pitching corn  
 At our old bob-tail rooster. — *Comic Song.*

**Root, Hog, or die.**

I saw South Carolina, the first in the cause,  
 Shake the dirty Yankees till she broke all their jaws;  
 Oh! it don't make a niff-a-stifference to neither you or I,  
 South Carolina give 'em —, boys; *root, hog, or die.*  
*Confederate Song, Fight of Doodles.*

I'll tell you of a story that happened in its day:  
 Davis tried to whip his Uncle, but found it wouldn't pay;  
 He tried to whip his Uncle, and I'll tell you the reason why, —  
 He hadn't the courage for to *Root, Hog, or die.*

*Song, Jeff Davis and his Uncle.*

**To rope.** To catch an animal, as a buffalo, a horse, &c., by throwing the lasso or lariat over its head.

Yep, old gal! (said he to his mule) keep your nose open; thar's brown skin about, and maybe you'll get roped by a Rapaho afore mornin'. — *Ruaton, Life in the Far West.*

**To rope in.** 1. To take or sweep in collectively. An expression much used in colloquial language at the West. It originated in a common practice of drawing in hay with a rope. The hay is at first heaped in wind-rows. A rope, with a horse attached to each end, is swept like a net around the end of the row, which is thus brought together, and dragged to any part of the field.

2. To decoy, viz., into a mock-auction establishment, a gambling-house, &c.

**Roper-in.** One who acts as a decoy for a gambling-house, in the patent-safe game, &c.

Mr. A — complained to the police that a young man at his hotel, who turned out to be a *roper-in* of a gambling-house, had enticed him away, and by whose means he had lost all his money. — *Police Report, N. Y. Tribune.*

**Rose-Apple.** A West India fruit, possessing a decided odor of roses. (*Jambosa vulgaris.*) The tree is common in Cuba.

**Rosin-Weed.** (*Silphium laciniatum.*) A plant, called also the Compass Plant, because its leaves are supposed by the *voyageurs* to point north and south, and thus to serve as a guide to the traveller over the prairies.

**Ross.** The rough, scaly matter on the surface of the bark of certain trees. — *Webster.* A term much used in New England, as well as in the Middle States. It is provincial in England.

**Roster.** 1. In Massachusetts and Connecticut, a list of the officers of a division, brigade, regiment, &c., containing, under several heads, their names, rank, corps, place of abode, &c. These are called *division rosters*, *brigade rosters*, *regimental* or *battalion rosters*.

2. The word is frequently used instead of Register, which comprehends a general list of all the officers of the State, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest in the commission, under the same appropriate heads, with an additional column for noting the alterations which take place. — *W. H. Sumner*.

Prayers, — hurried toilet, — limited lavations, —  
The rush of tardy saints to *paternoster*,  
Where worship mingles with the contemplations  
Of doubtful record on the morning's *roster*. — *Holmes*.

**Rote.** The sound of surf before a storm. Probably from a musical instrument of that name, the strings of which produce a moaning sound like that of the sea.

**Rot-Gut.** Cheap or adulterated whiskey. The same term is applied in England to bad beer or wine.

They overwhelm their paunch daily with a kind of flat *rot-gut*; we, with a bitter, dreggish small liquor. — *Harvey*.

Also used by Addison for a poor kind of drink.

**Rough-and-tumble.** A *rough-and-tumble* fight is said to be one in which all the laws of the ring are discarded, and biting, kicking, gouging, &c., are perfectly admissible.

**Roughness.** In Louisiana and other Southern States, the most ordinary kinds of fodder for horses and cattle.

**Roughs.** Rowdies; low fellows.

Just then one of the *roughs*, who had perched himself in a tree just over the Mayor's head, leaned down and said.

**Rough-Scuff.** The lowest people; the rabble.

**Round.** "To come or get *round* one," in popular language, is to gain advantage over one by flattery or deception. — *Webster*.

**Round of the Papers.** To say that an article is "going the *rounds of the papers*," meaning that it is being copied into many newspapers, is called an Americanism in England.

**Round-Rimmers.** Hats with a round rim; hence, those who wear them. In the city of New York, a name applied to a large class of dissipated young men, by others called Bowery Boys and Soap-locks.

All over the region of East Bowery is spread — holding it in close subjection — the powerful class of *round-rimmers*, a fraternity of gentlemen who, in round

crape-bound hats, metal-mounted blue coats, tallow-smoothed locks, &c., carry dismay and terror wherever they move. — *C. Mathews, Puffer Hopkins*, p. 261.

**Round-Wood.** The mountain ash. Maine. — *Thoreau's Maine Woods*, p. 59.

**Rouser.** Something very exciting or very great. Thus an eloquent speech or sermon, a large mass-meeting, or a big prize-ox, is a *rouser*.

**Roustabout.** A rover ready for something worse. A laboring man on board the Mississippi steamboats, termed in slang a "rooster."

The vagabonds, the *roustabouts*, the criminals, and all the dregs of society. — *Harper's Weekly*, March, 1877.

The average *roustabout* or "rooster" is a strong black fellow, who leaves the plantation for that supposed freedom and rollicking life which this class take enjoyment in, while their wages last. — *Lett. in N. Y. Herald*.

As Tom meditated, he heard one *roustabout* say to another, "I say, Bill, you know that fellow that used to sell such bully whiskey in Barton?" — *Halberton, The Barton Experiment*, p. 109.

**Rowdy.** A riotous, turbulent fellow.

All around the oyster and liquor stands was a throng of low, shabby, dirty men, some horse-dealers, some gamblers, and some loafers in general, but alike in their slang and rowdy aspect. — *Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 239.

The rowdy nomenclature of the principal cities may now be classified as follows : —

NEW YORK. — "Dead Rabbits," "Bowery Boys," "Forty Thieves," "Skinners," "Robin Hood Club," "Huge Paws," "Short Boys," "Swill Boys," "Shoulder-hitters," "Killers."

PHILADELPHIA. — "Killers," "Schuylkill Annihilators," "Moyamensing Hounds," "Northern Liberty Skivers," and "Peep of Day Boys."

BALTIMORE. — "Plug-Uglies," "Rough Skins," "Double Pumps," "Tigers," "Black Snakes," "Stay Lates," "Hard Times," "Little Fellows," "Blood Tubs," "Dips," "Ranters," "Rip-Raps," and "Gladiators."

A convention of the Baltimore rowdies above mentioned, under the name of the "American Clubs," was held in that city in Sept., 1857, under the plea of rallying for some political campaign; in commenting on which, the "Baltimore Clipper," of Sept. 8, says: "Should not every true-hearted American blush to acknowledge that any portion of his countrymen glory in such barbaric and degrading-names?"

**Row to hoe.** To have a *long* (or *hard*) *row to hoe* is a common figurative expression, meaning that one has a long or difficult task to perform. The allusion is to hoeing corn or potatoes.

Hosea Biglow has a ballad on the Mexican War, in which he portrays the efforts of the recruiting officer to entice a young man to enlist, who declines on account of his wife. He says: —



She wants me for home consumption,  
 Let alone the hay 's to mow, —  
 If you 're arter folks o' gumption,  
 You 've a darned *long row to hoe*. — *Biglow Papers*.

Step-mothers have a pretty hard *row to hoe*, though I don't complain. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 1.

**To row up.** To punish with words; to rebuke. It is an essential Westernism, and derived from the practice of making refractory slaves or servants *row up* the heavy keel-boats of early navigation on the Western rivers, against the current, without being frequently relieved. It was thus regarded as a punishment.

We should really like, of all things, to *row up* the majority of Congress as it deserves in regard to the practice. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 10, 1845.

The most spicy part of the proceedings in the Senate was the *rowing up* which Mr. Hannegan gave Mr. Ritchie of the Union newspaper. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 30, 1846.

**To row up Salt River** is a common phrase, used generally to signify political defeat. The distance to which a party is *rowed up Salt River* depends entirely upon the magnitude of the majority against its candidates. If the defeat is particularly overwhelming, the unsuccessful party is *rowed up to the very head-waters of Salt River*. See *Salt River*.

It is occasionally used as nearly synonymous with *to row up*, as in the following example, but this example is rare: —

Judge Clayton made a speech that fairly made the tumblers hop. He *rowed* the Tories *up and over Salt River*. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 46.

**Rubber.** India rubber, caoutchouc, of which the indigenous name in Span. America is *Cáucho*, but in play *Jevea*. The Spanish *j* pronounced as our *h*, from which the botanist has *hevea*. In Central America, the name is *hule*. The India-rubber gatherers in Columbia are called Caucheros; in Central America, Huleros.

**Rubbers.** Overshoes made of India rubber; also called *Gums*.

**To rub out.** To obliterate; and, figuratively, to destroy, to kill. Western. Compare *To wipe out*.

However quickly the buffalo disappears, the red-man goes under more quickly still. and the Great Spirit has ordained that both shall be *rubbed out* from the face of nature at the same time. — *Ruxton, Life in the Far West*, p. 117.

That nation [the Camanche] is mad — a heap mad — with the whites, and has dug up the hatchet to *rub out* all who enter his country. — *Ibid.*, p. 191.

The swift current [of the Jordan] would seize us and send us off at a salient angle from our course, as if it had been lurking behind the point like an evil thing, . . . as if for the purpose of *rubbing us out*. — *Lynch, Dead Sea Exp.*, p. 216.

**Rudder-Fish.** (*Palinurus perciformis*.) A very beautiful fish, abounding along the coast of the Southern States. Thaxter says it is sometimes taken in nets off the Isles of Shoals, N. H. Storer considers this fish to be the *Trachinotus argenteus*. It follows vessels, or keeps near old casks or plank that are floating. — *Fishes of Mass.*, p. 56.

**Ruffed Grouse.** (*Tetrao umbellus*.) A bird which extends over the whole breadth of the continent, northward as far as the fifty-sixth parallel, and southward to Texas, and probably still further. It is called Partridge in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and Pheasant at the South and West.

**Rugged.** Hardy, robust, healthy. Colloquial in the United States. *Worcester*.

Why, it's an unaccountable fact that Mr. Bedott hadn't seen a well day in fifteen year, though, when he was married, I shouldn't desire to see a *rugged*er man than he was. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 22.

**Ruination.** Subversion, overthrow, demolition. — *Webster*.

**Ruinatious.** A vulgar substitute for *ruinous*.

The war was very *ruinatious* to our profession (said the barber). — *Margaret*, p. 210.

**Ruling Elder.** Presbyterians so call one whom they call in Scotland an Elder or a Presbyter. The office is filled by a layman. Congregationalists in New England had, 1820–1830, an officer thus called, who was a clergyman, though he ordinarily did not preach, his function being to “rule” by counsel, &c. The custom never became general.

**Rullichies.** (Dutch, *rolletje*, little roll.) Chopped meat stuffed into small bags of tripe, which are then cut into slices and fried. An old and favorite dish among the descendants of the Dutch in New York.

**Rum.** A term applied by total abstainers to every liquid containing alcohol.

**Rum-Bud.** A grog-blossom; the popular name of a redness occasioned by the detestable practice of excessive drinking. *Rum-buds* usually appear first on the nose, and gradually extend over the face. This term seems to have reference to the disease technically defined to be unsuppurative papule, stationary, confluent, red mottled with purple, chiefly affecting the face, sometimes produced and always aggravated by the use of alcoholic liquors, by exposure to heat, &c. *Rush*.

**Rum-Hole.** See *Groggery*.

**Rum-Mill.** A low tavern or groggery.

**Rum-Sucker.** An habitual drinker, a toper.

One of the best things that can be applied to a rocky pasture infested with bushes, briars, or weeds, is salt. Salt them every week while wet with rain or dew, and let the stock look to that source alone for a supply of this luxury, which they run after with an acquired appetite as strong as that of a *rum-sucker*. — *N. Y. Tribune*, July 9, 1858.

**Run.** A small stream or rivulet. A word common in the Southern and Western States, and sometimes heard at the North.

There is no house in the main road between this and the *run*; and the *run* is so high, from the freshes, that you will not be able to find it. — *Davis's Travels in the United States* in 1797.

The hills bordering the Ohio, at the mouth of the Yellow Creek, contain six workable beds of coal, while there are at least two others which lie beneath the bed of the river. Of those exposed, the fourth in the ascending series contains the fishes and reptiles; it is known on Yellow Creek as the "big *run*," being nearly eight feet in thickness. — *Silliman's Journal*, March, 1858.

**To run.** To cause to run, in the various senses of the word: to *run* a stage; to *run* a factory or a machine; to *run* a candidate. — *Webster*.

The term is used in a more extended sense: as, to "*run* a hotel;" to "*run* a church."

**To run or run upon.** To quiz; to make a butt of.

He is a quiet, good-natured, inoffensive sort of a chap, and will stand *running upon* as long as most men, but who is a perfect tiger when his passions are roused. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 137.

**To run a Church.** To have the charge of a church, as its pastor; as, "Mr. Beecher *runs* the Plymouth Church." Vulgar, yet sometimes heard from the lips of the clergy themselves.

They [the carpet-baggers] took whatever came within their reach, intruded themselves into all private corporations, assumed the functions of all offices, including the courts of justice, and in many places they even *run* the churches. *Judge Black on the Electoral Conspiracy*, *North Am. Rev.*, for July, 1877, p. 5.

**Run away.** Cease troubling; be off.

**Runner.** A person whose business it is to solicit passengers for steamboats and railroads. Numbers of these men are always found about the wharves, shipping, railroad stations, and hotels of our principal cities, trying to induce travellers or emigrants to travel by the routes they recommend, and for which they often have tickets for sale.

**To run into the Ground.** To carry to excess; to overdo a thing, and thereby mar it. Probably a hunter's phrase, to express the earthing of a fox or other game.

The proposition to prohibit the enlistment of foreigners in the army is *running* Know-Nothingism into the ground. — *Providence Journal*.

The advocates of temperance have *run it into the ground* by their extreme measures connected with the Maine Law. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Run of Stones.** A pair of mill-stones is called a *run of stones* when in operation or placed in a mill. The Rochester flouring-mills have each ten or twenty *run of stones*.

**To run one's Face.** To make use of one's credit. *To run one's face* for a thing is to get it on tick.

Any man who can *run his face* for a card of pens, a quire of paper, and a pair of scissors, may set up for an editor; and by loud, incessant bragging, may secure a considerable patronage. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Rush.** 1. Spirit, energy. "To go it *with a rush*, or *with a perfect rush*," is to do a thing energetically, with spirit.

2. A term used by students to denote a perfect recitation.

It was purchased by the man, who "really did not look" at the lesson on which he *rushed*. — *Yale Lit. Mag.*, Vol. XIV. p. 411.

A *rush* is a glib recitation, but to be a *dead rush* it must be flawless, polished, and sparkling like a Koh-i-noor. — *Brunonian*, Vol. X. p. 102.

**To rush it.** To do a thing with spirit; as, "The old negro is *rushing* it with his fiddle."

**Rust.** Discoloration in mackerel, sometimes caused by leakage of the brine in which they are packed.

**Rusty Dab.** (Genus *Platessa*. Cuvier.) The popular name of the Rusty Flat-fish, a fish found on the coast of Massachusetts and New York in deep water.

**Rye.** Short for *Rye Whiskey*. See *Bourbon* and *Old Rye*.

**Rye and Indian.** Brown bread, mixed from Indian and rye meal. New England. In New York, it is called Boston brown bread. Vulgarly pronounced *Rhine-Indian*.

The table was still standing, with ample preparations for an evening meal, — a hot smoking loaf of *rye-and-indian* bread, and a great platter of cold corn beef and pork, garnished with cold potatoes, the sight of which was most appetizing. *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 199.

## S.

**Sabbaday.** Sabbath day, Sunday. So called in the interior of New England.

*Neuman.* You look better; I hope you feel better, and are better?

*Doolittle.* Why, I expect I do, and I guess I be, all three. I know I be, as to the first particular, changing my old shabby duds for these new *Sabbaday*

clothes, for a go-to-meeting day, anywheres. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*, p. 23.

My hearers, there is nothing irregular in nature; because it is round, as I told you last *Sabbday*: it rolls evenly round, and is bound to come regularly around. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 194.

**Sabbaday-Houses.** Cottages near a church, had for warmth, &c., at recess of public worship. Old New England use.

**Sabbath-ridden.** Overworked on the Sabbath.

Some attention should be given to one of the most oppressed and *Sabbath-ridden* of all classes, — ministers of the Gospel. It seems like a perpetual sarcasm to hear these overworked men thanking God for this [day as being, in respect to themselves, a] day of rest. — *The Independent*, June 23, 1862.

**Sacatra.** The offspring of a Negro and a griffe, which latter is the offspring of a Negro and mulatto. See *Negro*.

**Sachem.** (Indian.) An American Indian chief or prince.

The *Sachems*, although they have an absolute monarchy over the people, yet they will not conclude of aught that concerns all, either laws, or subsidies, or wars, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasion cannot be brought. — *R. Williams, Key to the Indian Language* (1644).

In speaking of the Indians of Virginia, Captain John Smith says: —

For their government, every *Sachem* is not a king, but their great *Sachems* have divers *Sachems* under their protection, paying no tribute, and dare make no warres without his knowledge, but every *Sachem* cares for the widowes, orphans, the aged and maimed. — *History of Virginia*, 1624, Vol. II. p. 238.

**Sachemdom or Sachemship.** The government or jurisdiction of a sachem.

King Philip's war was attended with exciting an universal rising of the Indian tribes, not only of Narragansett and the *Sachemdom* of Philip, but of the Indians through New England, except the *Sachemdom* of Uncas, at Mohegan. — *Stiles's History of the Judges of Charles I.*, p. 109.

**Sad.** Heavy, applied to bread; as, "The bread is very *sad*," i. e. heavy, or not well raised. — *Jamieson, Scottish Dic.* In Pennsylvania, the term is applied to cake or bread when heavy.

**Saddling the Market,** in Wall Street slang, is to foist any particular stock on the market.

**To saddy.** To bob up and down; to curtsy like a child. Probably a child's corruption of *Thank ye*, applied to the curtsy which accompanies the phrase.

I am told that this word is in common use by children, servants, and people of the uneducated class, in and about Philadelphia, to express *thanks* or the acknowledgment of a favor. A child,

receiving a new toy, will say, "*Saddie*," or *Saddy*, for "I thank you."

It would do you good to see our boys and girls dancing. None of your straddling, mincing, *sullying*; but a regular sifter, cut-the-buckle, chicken-flutter set-to. — *Crockett, Tour.*

**Safe.** 1. Sure, certain; as, "He's *safe* to be hanged." — *Brockett.* In this sense, the word is common in the South-west.

2. An iron box, frequently built into the wall, and used by merchants as a place of deposit for their books and papers. They are now generally made fire-proof, and some of these are called "salamander *safes*."

**Safety Barge.** A passenger boat towed by a steamboat at such a distance from it as to avoid all apprehension of danger to the passengers. These barges were first introduced on the Hudson River, and, being fitted up with taste and luxury, became great favorites with travellers. They have long ceased to be used.

**Sagaban.** The root of the *Apios tuberoso*, used as food by the Indians of the North-west and elsewhere. It gives a name to *Sagaponock* and Sagg Pond, Southampton, L. I., and to *Shubenacadie* River, Nova Scotia.

**Sagackhoml.** (Chip. *sagákómin*, "berry growing on the weed used for smoking." — *Baraga*.) The leaves of the Bear-berry (*Arctostaphylos Uva-ursi*), used to mix with tobacco, for smoking. — *Kalm, Travels*, and *Rafinesque (Medical Flora, Vol. I. p. 59)*, both give this an *Indian* name. Sir J. Richardson explains it as a corruption of *sac-a-commis*, an appellation given by the Canadian voyagers, "on account of the Hudson's Bay officers carrying it in bags" for smoking. — *Arctic Searching Exp.*, Vol. II. p. 303.

Rafinesque, in his second volume, says: "Sacacomi, article of trade in Canada, made by drying [sumack] berries in ovens; fine substitute for tobacco." — p. 257.

Carver says; "A weed that grows near the great lakes, . . . that 'creeps like a vine on the ground,' is used by the Indians to mix with their tobacco, and is called by them *Segockimac*." — *Travels*, p. 30.

**Sagamore.** (Abenaki Ind.) The title of a chief or a ruler among some of the American tribes of Indians; a sachem. — *Worcester.*

The Indians of every noted place, so combined, make a kind of petty lordship and are commonly united under one chief person, who hath the rule over all those lesser fraternities or companies. In the places more eastward, they called the chief rulers that commanded the rest *Bashabeas*; as in the more westward plantations they called them *Sagamores* and sachems. — *Hubbard's Gen. Hist. of New England.*

But will not Waban pass Namasket, near  
Where oft that wise and good old *Sagamore*,  
Brave Massasoit, spends the season drear?

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto II.*

If the young *Sagamore* is to be led to the stake, the Indians shall see how a man without a cross can die! — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 394.

**Sage-Brush.** (*Artemisia Ludoviciana*.) The shrubs known as grease-wood and *sage-brush* cover the plain. The hills are naked as Sinai; no animals but a rabbit and a few sage hens are found. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

Poetry! — just look round you, — alkali, rock, and sage;

*Sage-brush*, rock, and alkali; ain't it a pretty page!

*Bret Harte, Poems, Alkali Station.*

**Sage-Cheese.** Cheese flavored with sage. It is sometimes colored green with the juice of spinach-leaves.

**Sage-Hen.** (*Centrocercus urophasianus*.) A species of the *Prairie-fowl*, but much larger. Audubon calls it the "*Cock of the Plains*," to signify his appreciation of the size and beauty of the bird. Colonel Dodge proposes the name of *Sage-grouse* as the most appropriate. — *Plains of the Great West*, p. 224.

**Sag-Nichts.** The German rendering of the political term *Know-Nothing*, it being made on the principle that those who *know* nothing had better *say* nothing.

**To sail in.** To embark in any thing boldly and confidently.

**Saints.** "The *Saints*" is a title which the Mormons often apply to themselves on ordinary occasions, their full designation being "the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints." Whence they are also often called Latter-day Saints.

But the most fruitful element of internal commotion, and that which more immediately led to the prophet's death, was the institution of polygamy as one of the numerous privileges of the *Saints*. — *Ferris, Utah and the Mormons*, p. 113.

**Sakes.** "*La sakes!*" "*Massy sakes!*" "*Sakes alive!*" are very common exclamations among the venerable matrons of the interior parts of the country. The first two expressions are evidently corruptions of "For the Lord's sake!" "For mercy's sake!" But the last must be left for the old ladies themselves to parse: qu. "save us alive."

*La sakes!* how poor she is! you can a'most see her bones come through her skin; just see her shoulder-blades; well, if that ain't a sight! — *Cousin Cicely, Silver Lake Sketches*.

Why, *sakes alive!* do tell me if Enos is as mean as all that comes to. — *Nutmegville Revisited, N. Y. Com. Adv.*

**Salamander.** In Florida and Georgia, a name applied to a species of pouched rat (*Geomys pinetis*), and also to the *Menopoma Alleghanien-*

*sis*, an animal of disgusting appearance, with a broad, flattened head, allied to the salamander proper. It is found in the Ohio and some of the Southern rivers.

**Salamander Safe.** A patent fire-proof iron safe. See *Safe*.

**Saleratus.** A bi-carbonate of potash, not always pure, containing a greater quantity of carbonic acid than pearlash. It is used to an injurious extent in the United States by bakers and housekeepers for mixing with flour, to evolve the carbonic acid gas on the addition of cream of tartar or sour milk, in order to expand the dough and render the bread light.

**Salt-Bottom.** A plain or flat piece of land covered with saline efflorescences. These places abound in Western Texas and New Mexico.

**To salt down Stock** is to buy some particular stock, and hold it for a rise; to make a permanent investment.

**Salt Grass and Salt Hay.** The grass growing in salt marshes.

**Salt Horse.** Mess beef, so known in the U. S. Army.

**Salt-Lick.** See *Lick*.

**Salt Prairie.** In Texas and New Mexico, the tracts of salt efflorescence which often cover a wide space. Captain Reid speaks of some fifty miles in length and breadth. — *The Boy Hunters*.

**Salt River.** An imaginary river, up which defeated politicians and political parties are supposed to be sent to oblivion. The phrase "to row up Salt River" has its origin in the fact that there is a small stream of that name in Kentucky, the passage of which is made difficult and laborious as well by its tortuous course as by the abundance of shallows and bars. The real application of the phrase is to the unhappy wight who has the task of propelling the boat up the stream; but, in political or slang usage, it is to those who are rowed up. — *J. Inman*. See *Row up Salt River*.

One of the ballads of the late civil war thus alludes to the party in rebellion: —

They dread the name of Liberty,  
And Justice makes them shiver;  
But soon we'll yank them on a plank,  
And float them up *Salt River*.

Put away his empty barrel;  
Fold his Presidential clothes;  
He has started up *Salt River*,  
Led and lit by Cronin's nose.

*N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 28, 1877.



**Salt Water Vegetables.** In New York, a cant term for oysters and clams.

**Salutatorian.** The student of a college who pronounces the salutatory oration at the annual Commencement. — *Webster*.

**Salutatory.** An epithet applied to the oration which introduces the exercises of the Commencements in American colleges. — *Webster*.

**Sam.** A nickname given, as referring to their cant about *Uncle Sam*, to the Know-Nothing or Native American party. See the articles *Hindoos*, *Know-Nothings*, and *Native Americans*.

The following capital parody is from the Washington "Evening Star" of Nov. 3, 1856:—

#### BURIAL OF SAM.

Not a State had he got, nor Electoral vote,  
And he looked confoundedly flurried;  
Then wilted — dried up — and kinder gin eout,  
As we Hindoos around him hurried.

We buried him darkly that Tuesday night  
(For we fear'd he 'd not keep until morning),  
By the struggling moonbeams' misty light  
And dark-lanterns dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,  
In a sheet of the "Organ" we wound him;  
Everlasting, we guess, will be his rest,  
With so sleepy a print around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,  
But we cussed some, in bitter sorrow,  
As we thought how through Ellis & Co. we'd been bled,  
And the bets that were due on the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his oozy bed  
In a culvert that runs by "The Willows,"  
That Sag-Nichts and strangers would tread o'er his head,  
And we up the Salt River billows.

Lightly they 'll talk of the spirit that 's gone,  
And o'er his spilt ash-cart upbraid him  
With the bloodshed he caused and the churches he burned  
Before the Democracy laid him.

Sadly but promptly we dropped him down  
In the peculiar field of his glory.  
We carved not a line, we raised not a stone;  
For we knew 't was a mighty dark story.

**Sambo.** A term often applied to Negroes. It is used more specifically to mean the offspring of a Negro and mulatto. See *Mulatto* and *Negro*.

Now, *Sambo*, darn it! — Brother! there,  
 I guess that oughter please you;  
 You know how we in airnest air,  
 From slavery to ease you.

*Jonathan's Appeal to Sambo, Punch, Aug., 1862.*

No race has ever shown such capabilities of adaptation to varying soil and circumstances as the Negro. Alike to them the snows of Canada, the rocky land of New England, or the gorgeous profusion of the Southern States. *Sambo* and *Cuffey* expand under them all. — *H. Beecher Stowe.*

**Sam Hill.** "Like *Sam Hill*." An expression much used in New England a few years since.

**Samp.** (Abenaki Ind., *seaump, nasaump.*) Roger Williams describes *nasaump* as "a kind of meale pottage unparched; from this the English call their *samp*, which is Indian corn, beaten and boiled, and eaten hot or cold with milke or butter, which are mercies beyond the natives' plaine water, and which is a dish exceedingly wholesome for the English bodies." — *Key to the Indian Language*, p. 33. *Samp* is still much used wherever Indian corn is raised.

Blue corn is light of digestion, and the English make a kind of loblolly of it to eat with milk, which they call *sampe*; they beat it in a mortar, and sifte the flower out of it. — *Josselyn's New England Rarities*, 1672.

It is ordered that the treasurer doe forthwith provide tenn barrells of cranburys, two hogsheds of speciall good *sampe*, and three thousand of codfish, — to be presented to his Majesty, as a present from this court. — *Massachusetts Col. Records*, 1677, Vol. V. p. 156.

He slept until the morning light was seen  
 Down through the dome to dance upon his brow;  
 Then Waban woke him to his simple cheer  
 Of the pure fount, *nausamp*, and savory deer.

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto I. lxxxvi.*

**Sample-Room.** A place where liquor is sold by the glass; another name for a "grog-shop."

The following is a verse from a comic song by H. Paul, entitled "The World turned upside down:" —

Brigham Young was a bachelor, who wished a wife to win;  
 John Gough opened a *Sample-room*, and served out beer and gin;  
 Old Tweed was at his island home, dressed in a suit of brown;  
 Ben Butler had joined the Shakers, — when the world turned upside down.

**Sanctimoniouslyfied.** This queer word explains itself.

I recollect an old *sanctimoniouslyfied* fellow who made his Negroes whistle while they were picking cherries, for fear they should eat some. — *Crockett, Tour down East.*

**Sand-Box.** A primitive sort of spittoon, consisting of a wooden box filled with sand.

**Sand-Cherry.** (*Cerasus pumila*.) A prostrate or reclining shrub which grows on the sand-hills in the West and North. It bears a profusion of fruit, which is black when ripe, with an astringent taste, about as large as the common cultivated red cherry.

The name was given by the French.

As they grow only on the sand, the warmth of which probably contributes to bring them to such perfection, they are called by the French *Cerises de Sable*, or *Sand Cherries*." — *Carver's Travels*, p. 30.

**Sand-Flea or Beach-Flea.** (Genus *Orchestra*. Leach.) A small crustacean, common along the shores of Long Island and other sandy places, which digs holes wherein it conceals itself, and lives upon dead animal substances.

**Sand-Hillers.** A class of people in Georgia and South Carolina. They are said to be the descendants of the poor whites, who, being deprived of work by the introduction of slave labor, took refuge in the pine woods that cover the sandy hills of those States, where they have since lived in a miserable condition. A friend suggests that the name comes from the *Sand-hill Crane* (*Grus Canadensis*), just as "Cracker" (for a North Carolinian) and "Corn-cracker" (for a Kentuckian) comes from the *Corn-crake*, another long-legged species.

The *sand-hillers* are small, gaunt, and cadaverous, and their skin is just the color of the sand-hills they live on. They are incapable of applying themselves steadily to any labor, and their habits are very much like those of the old Indians. — *Olmsted's Slave States*, p. 507.

The old divisions of Southern society still exist. The aristocracy is discriminated from the respectable people, the respectable people from the working-class, and all from the *sand-hillers*. — *South Carolina Society*, in *Atlantic Monthly* for 1877, p. 673.

**Sand-Plum.** (*Prunus maritima*.) A *Beach-plum*. A plum growing on plum-trees whose habitat is sandy beaches, &c., as at Plum Island, Massachusetts.

**Sang.** An abbreviation of *ginseng*. It is also used in Maryland and Virginia as a verb. *To go a singing* is to be engaged in gathering ginseng. In Alleghany Co., Maryland, is *Sang Run*, near which is a well-known "*singing* ground."

**Sang-Hoe.** The implement used in gathering ginseng.

**Santa Fé Tea.** An infusion of the leaves of the *Alstonia theaeformis*, used in New Mexico.

**Sapote or Sapodilla.** A West India fruit, of a conical form, and with a dark orange-colored pulp, tasting not unlike the muskmelon. — *Greenwood's Fruits of Cuba*. If round, of the size of a peach, and with several small black seeds, it is the *Achras Sapota*,

or *Nisberry*. If larger and pointed, with one large polished seed, it is the *Lucuma mammosa* or *Mammee-sapota*, also called *Bully-berry*. The *Mammee-Apple* is still larger and round, with one or more large and very rough seeds, and is the *Mammea Americana*. Such is the confusion of these various names that it is almost impossible to know which fruit is spoken of unless described. — *A. I. Cotheal*.

**Sapodilla.** The fruit of the *Achias sapota*. West Indies. Called by the Spaniards *Nispero*.

The sweetest *sapodillas* oft he brought;  
From him, more sweet ripe *sapodillas* seem'd.

*Granger, The Sugar Cane* (Lond., 1764).

**Sappy.** A silly, effeminate man; a saphead; which see.

**Sapsago.** (Germ. *Schabzieger*.) A kind of Swiss cheese of a greenish color.

**Sapsucker.** A small woodpecker (the *dentrocopus* of ornithologists), so called from a common belief that it sucks the sap of trees.

**Saratoga.** The enormous trunks carried by fashionable ladies to Saratoga Springs has obtained for them the specific name of *Saratoga trunks* or *Saratogas*. See the illustration to *Baggage-Smasher*.

The Spanish explorators  
To the land of alligators

Came with their *Saratogas*, and stopped at the hotels;

With gay young belles coquetted,  
For "sours" and "coolers" betted,

And chased the fierce mosquito through orange groves and dells.

*W. F. Brown, The Spaniards in Florida, in Centennial Poem.*

**Sardines.** 1. A sailor, sportively so termed, antithetically, for his proverbial toughness.

We "Old Whalers," or, as we are sometimes termed, "*Sardines*," are not supposed by some "land-crabs" to have much of a taste for the feathery tribe "done up brown" [roasted fowls]. — *Cor. New Haven Palladium*.

2. Menhaden prepared in resemblance to the sardines prepared in Europe.

**Sarsaparilla.** The name is applied to a species of *Aralia* and other plants used as substitutes for foreign sarsaparilla.

**Sarves**, for *preserves*. So pronounced in some parts of the West.

We had also [for dinner] custard-pies and maple molasses (usually called "them 'are molasses'"), and preserved apples, preserved water-melon rinds, and preserved red peppers and tomatoes, — all termed, for brevity's sake (like words in Webster's Dictionary), *sarves*. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 183.

**Sass.** Impudence. See *Sauce*.

**Sass-Tea.** A decoction of sassafras; sassafras-tea. •

In the morning, Hoss Allen became dreadful poorly. The matron of the house boiled him *sass-tea*, which the old man said revived him mightily. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 72.

**Sauce.** (Vulgarly pronounced *sass*.) 1. Culinary vegetables and roots eaten with flesh. — *Webster*. This word is provincial in various parts of England in the same sense. Forby defines it as "any sort of vegetable eaten with flesh-meat." — *Norfolk Glossary*. *Garden-stuff* and *garden-ware* are the usual terms in England. See *Long Sauce*.

Roots, herbs, vine fruits, and salad-flowers — they dish up in various ways, and find them very delicious *sauce* to their meats, both roasted and boiled, fresh and salt. — *Beverly's Hist. of Virginia* (Lond., 1705).

"If I should stay away to tea," said the Widow Bedott to her children, "don't be a lettin' into the plum *sass* and cake as you did the other day." — *Bedott Papers*, p. 88. •

2. Preserved fruits, particularly apples and cranberries, which are generally stewed, as *apple-sauce*, *cranberry-sauce*.

3. (Pron. *sass*.) Impudence, sauciness.

We begin to think it 's nater  
To take *sarse*, an' not be riled:  
Who'd expect to see a tater  
All an' eend at bein' biled?

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

Minerva, if you have over any of your *sass*, I'll give you what you can't buy at the stores, though you be a grown-up girl. — *Ironthorpe*, p. 51.

"I expected this, Miss Badger," said Miss Asphyxia, "but I'd have you to know that I ain't a person that's goin' to take *sa'uce* from no one." — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 237.

**To sauce.** (Pron. *sarce* and *sass*.) To be impudent. "Don't *sass* me," i. e. don't be impudent.

The boy who was to take part in a dramatic entertainment in Detroit *sassed* his mother this forenoon, and got such a whaling for it that he couldn't rescue a stuffed dog. — *Detroit paper*.

**Sault**, pronounced *soo*. (Old French.) The rapids of the St. Lawrence and those connecting the Upper Lakes retain the French name; as, the *Sault St. Mary*, &c.

**Savage as a Meat-Axe.** 1. Exceedingly savage; ferocious. This vulgar simile is often used in the Northern and Western States.

He came up and looked at me right plum in the face, as *savage as a meat-axe*; and says he, "Give us your paw." — *Southern Sketches*, p. 32.

2. Exceedingly hungry, ravenous.

"Why, you don't eat nothing!" he exclaimed; "ridin' don't agree with you, I guess! Now, for my part, it makes me as *savage as a meat-axe*." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 103.

It would be a charity to give the pious brother some such feed as chicken fixins and doins, for he looks half-starved and as *savage as a meat axe*. — *Carlton's New Purchase*.

**Savagerous.** Savage, ferocious. A low word. Southern.

Well, Capting, they were mighty *savagerous* after liquor; they'd been fightin' the whiskey barrel. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*.

I see there was hell in him, so I looked at him sort o' *savagerous*, and says I, "Look here, old hoss, how can you have the face to talk so?" — *Southern Sketches*.

The captain felt sorter wolfish, and, lookin' at the stranger darned *savagerous*, said, "Who in creation are you?" — *Traits of American Humor*.

**Savanna.** (W. Ind. *savana*.) An open plain or meadow, without wood.

The *savanna* is not a prairie. It is a level tract of land, often approaching the circular in shape, averaging one or two feet lower than the level land about it. It is supposed to be the basin of a former lake or collection of water, which has been filled up by the accumulation of soil and vegetable matter. The *savanna* is perfectly level, clothed in perpetual verdure, — except in winter, when it is covered with water, — and abounds in a great variety of flowers. The prairie differs not from other land, except in the absence of timber, which is supposed to have been destroyed in a former era by fires or by the aboriginal inhabitants. — *W. Flagg, in the Mag. of Horticulture*, Sept., 1854.

In some places lie plats of low and very rich ground, well timbered; in others, large spots of meadows and *sarannas*, wherein are hundreds of acres without any tree at all, but yield reeds and grass of incredible height. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book 2.

The island of San Pio is curiously diversified with alternate patches of *savannah*, bush, and marsh, and offers numerous coverts for wild animals. — *Squier's Waikna*, p. 236.

The fresh *savannas* of the Sangamon  
Here rise in gentle swells, and the long grass  
Is mixed with rustling hazels. — *Bryant, The Painted Cup*.

**To save.** To make sure, i. e. to kill game or an enemy, whether man or beast. *To get* conveys the same meaning, both terms being used by the backwoodsmen of the West and by hunters generally. The notorious Judge W——, of Texas, known through that State as "three-legged Willie," once said in a speech at a barbacue (after his political opponent had been apologizing for having taken a man's life in a duel): —

The gentleman need not make such a fuss about *getting* such a rascal: everybody knows that I have shot three, and two of them I *saved*.

**Savey or Babby.** (Corrupted from the Span. *sabe*, knows.) To know; to comprehend. A word of very extensive use wherever a Lingua Franca has been formed of the Spanish or Portuguese language in Asia, Africa, and America. It is used by the Negroes in the West Indies, and in some of the Southern States.

When I read these stories, the Negroes looked delighted, and said: "We *sarey* dat well, misses." — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**To saw.** To hoax; to play a joke upon one. A Western term. In the State of Maine, *to saw* means to scold.

**Saw-Buck.** A frame or stand of peculiar construction, on which wood is sawn for fuel. See *Buck*.

**Saw-Gummer.** See *Gummer*.

**Saw-Log.** Logs cut from trees into the proper length for boards, before being carried to the mill to be sawed.

**Saw-Whet.** The popular name, in some of the Northern States, for the Little Owl, or Acadian Owl of Audubon (*U. Acadica*). "It has a sharp note like the filing of a saw, and another like the tinkling of a bell." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Sawyer.** This may be truly called an American word; for no country without a Mississippi and Missouri could produce a *sawyer*.

*Sawyers* are formed by trees, which, growing on the banks of the river, become undermined by the current, and fall into the stream. They are swept along with the branches partly above water, rising and falling with the waves; whence their name. They are extremely dangerous to steamboats, which sometimes run foul of them, and are either disabled or sunk. See *Snag*.

A little above our location, thar war a bend in the stream, which kind a turned the drift t' other eend up, and planted them about the spot between our cabins, — snags and *sawyers* just thar wur dredful plenty. — *A Night on the Missouri*.

Thar I war, said Dan, perched upon a *sawyer*, bobbin' up and down in the water. — *The Americans at Home*.

**Scab.** An excrescence; a workman who does not belong to a trade-union.

**Scace, Scase.** A common pronunciation for *scarce*, in the interior parts of New England.

**Scads.** Money. Western.

**To scale.** 1. To go, or make go, sideling.

2. To ship, ricochet, or cause to do so. New England.

**Scalawag.** A scamp; a scapegrace. A *scalawag* has been defined to be, "like many other wags, a compound of loafer, blackguard, and scamp "

Dr. Collier has been showing his model artists here, and the mean *scalawag* left without paying the printer. — *Buffalo Courier*.

You good-for-nothin' young *scalawag*, is that the way you take care of that poor dear boy, to let him fall into the pond. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

That *scalawag* of a fellow ought to be kicked out of all decent society. — *Western Sketches*.

The carpet-baggers [in South Carolina] have been severely ostracised by the whites. The *scalawags* also, as the native white Republicans are styled, have incurred the same treatment. — *Atlantic Monthly*, for June, 1877, p. 675.

[The carpet-baggers] combining with a few *scalawags* and some leading Negroes to serve as decoys for the rest, and backed by the power of the general government, became the strongest body of thieves that ever pillaged a people. — *Judge Black on the Electoral Conspiracy, North Am. Rev.*, for July, 1877, p. 5.

**Scalper.** In the Western cities, one who speculates in railway tickets.

**Scalp-Lock.** A long tuft of hair left on the crown of the head by the warriors of some Indian tribes.

The Arapahoes do not shave their heads as the Pawnees and Osages do, merely braiding the centre or *scalp-lock*, and decorating it with a gay ribbon or feather of the war-eagle. — *Ruxton's Adventures in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 237.

The leggins of some of these Indians were ornamented with *scalp-locks* along the outer seam, exhibiting a dark history of the wearer's prowess. — *Mayne Reid, The Scalp-Hunters*, p. 102.

**Scaly.** Mean, shabby. "He's a *scaly* fellow." Provincial in England.

What, don't you remember old mother Todgers's? . . . A regular *scaly* old shop, warn't it? — *Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xxviii.

**Scare or Skeer.** A fright; among animals, a stampede. A "*big scare*" is not an uncommon expression at the West. See *Stampede*.

In the course of an hour, Major Howard rode into camp with his prisoner, who was really half-frightened to death. In fact, the man afterwards died on the road; and those who knew him best said that he never got over the *scare*. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 130.

Nothing can exceed the grandeur of the scene when a large cavallada, or drove of horses, takes a *scare*. Old, weather-beaten, time-worn, and broken-down steeds—horses that have nearly given out from hard work and old age—will at once be transformed into wild and prancing colts. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 97.

**To scare up.** To pick up; to find. A word adopted from the fowler's vocabulary.

A great man; a man clearly discerning his position, resolved to control events, and not allow the winds and tides of circumstance to shape his course, — sur-



rounds himself with men of the same clear, energetic, decided character. He does not make the noodles and nobodies that he may *scare up* anywhere his chief agents. — *Putnam's Magazine*, Sept., 1853.

Next came the bag, which Signor Blitz turned inside out, patted it in his hands, showed it to the audience, held it by every corner, slapped it against the floor, and then astonished the assembly by taking out of it a dozen eggs, which he allowed would be a very useful bag in a family, in *scaring up* eggs for breakfast. — *The States (Washington)*, 1857.

**Scaresome or Skeersome.** Frightful.

It's cruel *skeersome* about there. — *Margaret*, p. 275.

**Scary or Skeery.** Easily scared; timorous.

I got a little *scary* and a good deal mad. There was I perched up on a *sawyer*, bobbin' up and down in the water. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Ay, for a town-bred boy or a *skeary* woman. There's old Esther; she has no more fear of a red-skin than of a suckling cub. — *Cooper, The Prairie*.

**Scattertationist.** Scattertationists is the expressive, but not very euphonious word, which somebody has coined to designate those political quibblers who neutralize their force by pursuing their crotchety views upon every minor point and by co-operating with nobody. — *Providence Journal*.

**Schedule.** In the State of Rhode Island, the printed "Acts and Resolves" of the General Assembly.

**Schnapps.** (Germ.) Strong liquor, especially gin.

**School.** (Angl.-Sax. *sceol*; Dutch, *school*.) A *school* of fish is a multitude of fishes. The Dutch say "een *school* visch." In England, it is more common to say "a *shoal* of fish," yet *school* is also used there.

A grave and quiet man was he,  
Who loved his hook and rod;  
So even ran his line of life,  
His neighbors thought it odd.

For science and for books he said  
He never had a wish;  
No school to him was worth a fig,

Except a *school* of fish. — *Saxe, The Cold Water Man*.

**School-Commissioner.** The officer whose duty it is to have the administration and superintendence of public instruction in a State.

**School-Committee.** A committee appointed by a town or city to have the entire management of its public schools.

**School-District.** A division of a city or State for establishing schools. The State of New York is divided into more than ten thousand such partitions or school districts.

**School-Fund.** A fund set apart, the income of which is by State law expressly appropriated to the support of public instruction.

**School-Library.** The library of a common school. In the State of New York, a portion of the income of the school-fund is appropriated for common school libraries, and the remainder by the districts where the schools are established.

**School-Ma'am.** A school-mistress. This term is peculiar to New England. See *Ma'am School*.

A correspondent of a New York paper, writing from Washington, thus complains of some of the common practices in the House of Representatives: —

Here tobacco-chewing is national, not sectional. Everybody but the President chews. I went over to the ladies' gallery; but I found it still worse, as the girls kept up a continual chatter, and that on so high a key that I wonder the Speaker did not clear the gallery. The particular set I now refer to were probably country *schoolmarms*, who know a little of every thing, and meant to show it.

We can make a new application of an old story, as the *schoolmarm* said when she spanked the little boy with "Robinson Crusoe." — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Feb., 1857.

I would I were a *schoolmarm*,  
And among the *schoolmarm's* band,  
With a small boy stretched across my knee,  
And a ruler in my hand. — *Buffalo Express*.

**School-Money.** The money received from towns or the State for the support of common schools.

**School Section.** A section of land set apart for the support of public schools.

**School-Tax.** A tax usually levied upon towns or districts for the support of its public or common schools. This tax is usually in addition to the appropriation by the State for the same object.

**Schooner.** A tall glass from which lager beer is drunk, containing double the quantity of an ordinary tumbler.

A Bowery merchant affirms that the resemblance of the Brooklyn bridge to a German's nose lies in the fact that *schooners* move under it.

**Schute** is much used, 1. in the West and South for *Chute* and *Shoot*, which see.

Therefore he took the *schute*, as our raftsmen would say, and slid down into the Tennessee to confer with his allies. — *Kentucky Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

2. (Fr. *chute*.) A lift-lock, a lift.

It is generally supposed among boatmen that their business is done for this season, the canals, locks, *schutes*, &c., being completely wrecked and destroyed. *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Scientist.** One devoted to science.

It is a favorite dream with the social-scientists of a time when not only light and water, but heat also, shall be supplied to every house at a cost far less than is incurred by householders singly for these necessities. — *Providence Press*, Jan., 1877.

Not being a *scientist*, and not having much time at my disposal, I shall not pretend to explain General Pleasanton's ideas [on the theory of light through blue glass]. — *Lett. from N. Y. in Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 12, 1877.

**Scoldenore.** A water-fowl. So called on the coast of Maine.

Some quiet day, on the edge of a southerly wind, boats go out after sea-fowl, [among which are] old wives, called by the natives *scoldenores*, with clean white caps, or clumsy eider-ducks. — *Thaxter, Isles of Shoals*, p. 109.

**To scoot.** To walk fast; to run. The word is also used as a noun and as an adjective. "He made a scoot," went "on a run." "Scoot train" is one that omits stopping at a particular station; an express train. New England.

The fellow sat down on a hornet's nest; and if he didn't run and holler, and *scoot* through the briar bushes, and tear his trowsers. — *Hill's Yankee Stories*.

We were bound to the South Seas after sperm whales, but we were eight months gettin' there. The captain he *scooted* round into one port an' another, — down to Caraccas, into Rio, &c. — *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1858.

A Southern or Western man, when he goes *skewtin* about, buying goods in business hours, keeps his eye-teeth skinned. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

An' the Cunnles, too, could kiver up their shappoes with bandanners,

An' send the Ensines *skootin'* to the bar-room with their banners.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

**Soow.** (Dutch, *schouw*.) A large, flat-bottomed boat, generally used as a ferry-boat, or as a lighter for loading and unloading vessels when they cannot approach the wharf. On Lake Ontario, they are sometimes rigged like a schooner or sloop, with a lee-board or sliding keel, when they make tolerably fast sailers. The word is used in Scotland. A *mud-scow* (Dutch, *modder-schouw*) is a vessel of this description, used in New York for cleaning out the docks; a dredging machine.

**Scrape.** The turpentine gathered from the face of the pine. On old trees, the yearly incision is made high above the boxes, and the sap, in flowing down, passes over and adheres to the previously scarified surface. It is thus exposed to the sun, which evaporates the more volatile and valuable portion, and leaves only the hard, which, when manufactured, is mostly rosin. *Scrape* turpentine is only about half as valuable as dip. — *J. R. Gilmore, Southern Friends*.

Corn and cotton had made a handsome profit, but turpentine had been a loss. That is because your trees are old, and now yield little or any thing but *scrape*. *My Southern Friends*, p. 131.

**To scrape.** "To *scrape* cotton" means to hoe cotton. Southern.

**Scrapple.** Equal parts of buckwheat flour and wheat flour boiled in the liquid produced in making "Head-cheese," and used as "Hasty Pudding" after cooling.

**Scraps.** See *Cracklings*.

**Scratch.** 1. *No great scratch.* A vulgar though common phrase, implying not worth much, "no great shakes."

There are a good many Joneses in Georgia, and I know some myself that ain't *no great scratches*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 136.

2. An unintentional lucky stroke at billiards.

3. The "*Old Scratch*." The devil. Perhaps from the Norse *Scrattle*, a satyr or faun.

I'm astonished at your shakin' hands with that critter. If he was a slave, you might make free with him, but you can't with these free niggers; it turns their heads, and makes them as forred and sassy as *old Scratch* himself. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 63.

4. *To come up to the scratch.* To come up to the mark; to "toe the mark;" to begin the contest, &c. From the vocabulary of pugilists.

We shall be there to-morrow: then, if all our fleet *come up to the scratch*, and we go to work with our full force, we shall see what we shall see. — *War Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**To scratch.** To *scratch* a man's name, in political parlance, is to strike it from the printed ticket of the "regular nomination."

We remember, many years ago, at one of our charter elections, a candidate for the office of alderman had the tickets bearing his name printed with a peculiar mark. When the poll was closed, that particular ticket was known to be full one hundred ahead. The would-be alderman, in the gladness of his heart, invited his friends to his house, where he had spread refreshments. Just as he was returning thanks for his election, the official returns were brought in, from which it appeared that, though all the other candidates upon the ticket were successful, so many had *scratched* the name of the alderman that he was defeated by more than fifty votes. — *N. Y. Com. Advertiser*.

**Scratches.** A disease of horses' heels, called in England *grease*.

**Scratch Gravel.** "Now *scratch gravel*," i. e. be off, "clear out."

**Scratch Ticket,** properly *scratched ticket*. An election ticket with one or more names of candidates erased. See *Split Ticket*.

**Scrawl.** In New England, a ragged, broken branch of a tree, or other brushwood; brush. — *Webster*.

**Scrawny.** Bony, bare-boned, low in flesh, scraggy. A corrupt pronunciation of the word *scranny*, which is used in the same sense in England. Southern. In Somerset, England, is the word *scrawv'lin*, poor and mean. — *Wright*.

If my memory serves me, Elder Sniffles is rather a tall, *scrawny* man, with eyes that look like a couple of peeled onions, and kind o' squintin' too. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 103.

All the spare curses I accumulate I dedicate to these white-livered, hatchet-faced, thin-blooded, *scrawny* reformers, who prescribe saw-dust puddings and plank beds, and brief sleep, and early walks, and short commons for the rising generation. — *Timothy Titcomb's Letters*.

**Screamer.** A bouncing fellow or girl. This, like the word *roarer*, is one of the many terms transferred from animals to men by the hunters of the West.

If he's a specimen of the Choctaws that live in these parts, they are *screamers*. *Thorpe's Backwoods*.

Mary is a *screamer* of a girl; I'd rather have her than all the rest. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

"Have you got my cabin chalked down?" he inquired.

"Yes," answered the artist, "and you too."

"Good, by thunder!" said the squatter. "When you show me to them English fellers, just tell 'em I'm a Mississippi *screamer*. I can hoe more corn in a day than any Yankee machine ever invented; and when I hit any thing, from bullock down to human natur', they generallly think lightnin' is comin'." — *St. Louis Revueille*.

The folks are all waiting to see the fast steamer

That 's coming from Albany down to this pier;

Ah, here she is now; you, sir, ain't she a *screamer*?

In New York, the swiftest boats always land here.

*A Glance at New York.*

**Screw.** 1. One who squeezes all he can out of those with whom he has any dealings; an extortioner; miser. Colloquial here as in England.

2. In some American colleges, an excessive, unnecessarily minute, and annoying examination of a student by an instructor is called a *screw*. The instructor is often designated by the same name. — *Hall's College Words*.

One must experience the stammering and stuttering, the unending doubtings and guessings, to understand fully the power of a mathematical *screw*. — *Harvard Register*, p. 378.

The consequence was, a patient submission to the *screw*, and a loss of college honors and patronage. — *A Tour through College*, Boston, 1832.

**To screw.** To press with excessive and unnecessarily minute examination. — *Hall's College Words*.

Who would let a tutor knave

Screw him like a Guinea slave! — *Rebelliad*, p. 53.

He was a wise man, and a good man too,

And robbed himself in green when'er he came to *screw*.

*Our Chronicle* of '36.

**Screw-Bean.** (*Strombocarpus pubescens*.) A tree of the locust family, found in Texas and westward. Its pods are twisted like a screw. It is eaten by the Indians, being first ground to a coarse meal and made into bread.

**Screw Loose.** Something ill-adjusted; out of place; working ill; disorder; as, "There's a screw loose somewhere." Also used in England. — *Hotten, Dict. of Slang*.

**Screws.** *To put the screws on; to turn the screws.* To press, and figuratively to extort, to enforce payment in money transactions; to force a debtor, by any compulsory means, to pay. The allusion is to the ancient mode of torture by thumb-screws.

As soon as the banks have put out a pretty good line of call loans, and the brokers have involved themselves deeply in fancy-stock transactions on time, the screws will be suddenly *turned*, and we shall find a general desire to realize among those who are now so anxious to buy. — *N. Y. Herald*.

The "New York Times," Sept. 15, 1857, in speaking of a contraction by the banks, says:—

Such *turns of the screws* as we have had for the last three weeks, if continued, would bring almost every mercantile house in New York to wreck.

Love strains the heart-strings of the human race, and not unfrequently *puts the screws on* so hard as to snap them asunder, and leave every moral and physical instrument as completely out of tune as a corn-stalk fiddle in the hands of a plough-boy. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 302.

**Screwsman.** In the thieves' vocabulary, a screwsman is a man who obtains the impression of a lock, makes a key to fit it, and enters the place without committing violence.

We have read an article in a New Orleans contemporary, which describes a procession of *screwsmen*, which are called "jewels," without which she [New Orleans] could never attain to a leading position. . . . We had hardly expected to see a paper of any respectability speak in such laudatory terms of *screwsmen*. — *N. Y. Evening Post*.

**Scrimp or Skrimp.** 1. Short; scanty. — *Webster*.

2. A pinching miser; a niggard; a close-fisted person. — *Webster*.

The word, in both senses, is colloquial in the north of England and in the United States.

**Scrimping.** Scanty; close; parsimonious. Also used adverbially.

Bethier Nobles knows how every lady in town carries on her kitchen concerns, —how *scrimping* they live, and all that. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 333.

**Scrods, Schrode.** (Dutch) Pieces of fish, or small fish, for broiling; small codfish split open and salted. Germ. *Schrot*, a shred. At the Isles of Shoals, the term is applied to partially cured codfish.

*Escrod.* A small cod broiled; a scrod. — *Webster*.

That morsel from Monica, an *escrod*. — *D. Webster*.

Peter Gott, in addition to the money he had saved, had a pile of nice *scrods*, and as many salted fish for winter as the family needed. — *The Cape Ann Fisherman*.

**To scrouge.** To crowd; to squeeze. A word provincial in England and in this country. It is used in the Southern States, and among children at the North.

The ladies were obliged to stand up and be *scrouged* until chairs could be brought. — *Drama in Pokerville*.

After hard *scrouging* each way some hundred yards, we came together and held a council. — *Carlton, New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 59.

Them boys that's a *scrouging* each other will find plenty of room this way. — *Peter Cram, Knickerbocker Mag.*

And as the North has took to brustlin',  
At being *scrouged* from off the roost,  
I'll tell ye what 'll save all tusslin',  
And give our side a handsome boost.

*Biglow Papers*, p. 92.

**Scrouger.** A bouncing fellow or girl. A Western vulgarism.

Tom, the engineer, was a roaring, tearing, bar State *scrouger*, — could chaw up any specimen of the human race, any quantity of tobacco, and drink steam without flinching. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

Some of the families in them diggins had about twenty in number; and the gals among them warn't any of your pigeon critters, that a fellow dassent tech for fear of spilin' 'em, but real *scrougers*; any of 'em could lick a bar easy. — *Ibid*

Congo is a *scrouger*; he's up a gum, and no bug-eater, I tell you; he carries a broad row, weeds out every thing, — hoes de corn and digs de taters. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 99.

**Scrub Oak.** The popular name of several dwarfish species of oak.

We left the buffalo camp, and had a toilsome and harassing march of two hours over ridges of hills covered with a ragged, meagre forest of *scrub-oaks*, and broken by deep gullies. — *Irving, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 135.

[Hosea Biglow said] that he had never seen a sweet-water on a trellis growing so fairly, or in forms so pleasing to his eye, as a fox-grape over a *scrub-oak* in a swamp. — *Lowell, Biglow Papers*.

**Scrumptious.** 1. Particular; fastidious. Probably a corruption of *scrupulous*. A vulgarism.

I don't want to be *scrumptious*, judge; but I do want to be a man. — *Margaret*, p. 304.

2. Very nice; excellent.

**Scud-Grass**, vulgarly called *Scot's Grass*, is described by Romans as a "noble grass on poor land, growing to the height of thirty inches and upwards." Found in Florida. — *Nat. Hist. of Florida*, p. 129.

**Scuff.** A light shoe; a slipper; a shoe with no heel; a shoe made without quarters, turned down. New England.

**Sculp.** A sculpin.

**Scup.** 1. (Abenaki Ind., *scuppauog*.) A small fish abounding in the waters of New York and New England. In Rhode Island, they are called *scup*; in New York, paugies or porgies. See *Porgy*.

2. (Dutch, *schop*.) A swing. A New York word.

**To scup.** (Dutch, *schoppen*.) To swing. Common in New York.

**Scuppernong Grape.** By most authors this is believed to be a variety of the *Vitis vulpina* of Linnæus, or Southern Fox Grape. It has characters of its own, however, and is held to be distinct by Michaux and Elliot, as *Vitis rotundifolia*, and by Rafinesque, as *Vitis muscadina*. It is indigenous on the Scuppernong River and Lake in North Carolina, and yields a very poor wine.

**To scurry.** To scour; to scud; to run in haste. This word is colloquial in England and America, and is a variation of the verb *skirr* of the dictionaries.

Our friend Kendall, of the "Picayune," was, when last heard from, *scurrying* over the German portions of the European continent. — *New York Com. Adv.*

**Scuss, for scarce.** So pronounced by the backwoodsmen of the West.

The unfortunate traveller urged in vain [for food for his horse]. Hay was *scuss*, and potatoes were *scusser*. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*.

**Scutum.** A water-proof sacque or cloak worn by ladies as a protection from rain.

Speaking of the opening of the Centennial Exhibition, the "New York Herald," May 11, 1876, says:—

The morning of the great day broke dubiously, and the visitors from every part of the world began to fear that the opening ceremonies would be performed under a *scutum* of umbrellas.

**Scythe-Whet.** The Wilson's thrush.

My walk under the pines would lose half its summer charm, were I to miss that shy anchorite, the Wilson's thrush, nor hear in haying-time the metallic ring of his song, that justifies his rustic name of *scythe-whet*. — *Lowell, My Study Windows*, p. 22.

**Sea-Bass.** (*Centropistes nigricans*.) A fish that abounds in the Atlantic on banks and off steep bars near the channels, rarely near the shore. As an article of food, it is reckoned among the best of the fishes of the coast.

**Sea-Devil.** See *Devil-Fish*



**Sea-Fencibles.** A name adopted, in 1812-15, by volunteer troops, coast-guards composed of men past the age legally required for military service. Massachusetts.

**Sea-Island Cotton.** A kind of black seed cotton celebrated for the fineness and length of its fibre, and raised only on the sea coast and islands of Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida, the saline ingredients of the soil and atmosphere being indispensable elements of its growth. Comp. *Upland Cotton*.

**Sea-Pike.** See *Bill-Fish*.

**Sea-Robin.** (*Prionotus lineatus*.) A small salt-water fish, which keeps near or upon the bottom, using its pectoral processes as organs of progression. In swimming or resting, the broad pectoral fins are generally spread out horizontally to their fullest extent, presenting a very beautiful and striking appearance, and closely resembling the wings of a butterfly. It hence receives its name of Flying-Fish. From the croaking or grunting noise it makes when caught, it is sometimes called Pig-Fish.

**Sea-Side Grape.** The *Coccoloba uvifera*, so called in the West Indies.

**To seal.** In Mormon phraseology, all wives taken after the first are called spiritual wives, and are said to be *sealed* to the husband.

If a man once married desires a second helpmate, . . . she is *sealed* to him under the solemn sanction of the church, and in all respects, in the same relation to the man as the wife that was first married. — *Stansbury's Salt Lake Exp.*, p. 136.

The extra wives of the Mormons are called by some of them "spirituals," by others *sealed* ones, while our landlady calls them "fixins." — *Ferris, The Mormons at Home*, p. 114.

People, according to Mormon technology, are married for time, but *sealed* for eternity. — *Hyde's Mormonism*, p. 84.

But crowds on crowds, as was revealed  
To Brigham, were to Brigham *sealed*;  
Until, for want of room, 't is said,  
A bevy held each harem bed!  
The beautiful he *sealed* to be  
Partakers of his temporal rest;  
While suppliants "for eternity,"  
Content to be hereafter blest,  
Were *sealed* to be his "spirit spouses,"  
And who — the unbelieving say —  
Lived happier far with him than they  
Who dwelt in his terrestrial houses. — *The Mormoniad*.

**Sealer.** In New England, an officer appointed by the town or other proper authority, to examine and try weights and measures, and set

a stamp on such as are according to the standards established by the State; also an officer who inspects leather, and stamps such as is good. These are called *sealers* of weights and measures and *sealers* of leather. — *Webster*.

**Sealing.** The ceremony, among the Mormons, of taking a "spiritual" wife.

These left-hand marriages are called *sealings*; the woman is said to be "sealed" to the man. — *Ferris, The Mormons at Home*, p. 114.

**Searcher.** An instrument resembling an auger, used in the inspection of butter, to ascertain the quality of that contained in firkins. New England.

**Season.** A common term at the South for a shower of rain or period of damp weather suitable for setting out tobacco and other plants.

This *season* has come up mighty sudden. I shouldn't wonder if it rained all night. — *Ida May*.

The Carolinian never has a thunder shower, at least he knows nothing by that name. He will tell you his crop is "sorry," because it has had but few *seasons*, . . . and you soon learn that by *season* he means a shower. But he has no thunder *seasons*. When rain is accompanied with thunder and lightning, it is a *season* still. But he has no thunder *seasons*, they are "thunder gusts." — *Cor. of Providence Journal*.

**Seawan or Sewant.** An Algonkin Indian word. The beads used by the Indians for money. The word signifies "loose" or "unstrung." These beads passed by count, the white (*wampum*) at half the value of the black or purple (*suckanhock*); six of the former and three of the latter passing for an English penny. Seawan therefore is not the same as *wampum*, although many writers use the two terms indiscriminately. See *Sewan*. In a note on the word, Mr. Irving says: —

The *seawant* depreciates from time to time. The New England people make use of it as a means of barter. . . . The commissioners remain overstocked with *seawant*, a sort of currency of no value except with the New Netherland savages. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*, p. 233.

The speaking now ceased, and they gave each of us ten fathoms of *seewan*, which is their money, each fathom being worth four guilders. — *De Vries, New Netherlands*, 1656.

A quantity of Dutch commodities was purchased on this occasion by the New Plymouth people; especially *seawan* or *wampum*, which the English found to be afterwards very beneficial in their trade with the natives. — *O'Callaghan, Hist. of New Netherlands*, p. 108.

**Secesh, Secesher.** A common term applied to secessionists. The following verse is from a fugitive poem on the Union, after the manner of Emerson's "Brahma:" —

Infissiparous symbol of politic etern,  
 Securing Uncle Sam what 's his 'n and every State what 's her 'n,  
 Of strength redintegrative, of pulchritude e'er fresh,  
*Secesh* were not without thee, and without thee no *secesh*!

Schoolin's what they can't seem to stan', they 're too consarned high-pressure,  
 An' knowin' t' much might spile a boy for bein' a *Secesher*.

*Lowell, The Biglow Papers.*

**To secesh, secession.** To secede; to revolt; to rebel.

A correspondent of the "N. Y. Tribune," June 7, 1862, writing from near Fort Pillow, said:—

The people [of Arkansas,] have no confidence in their leaders; and the message of Governor Rector, advising them to *secesh* from Secessia, has distracted and bewildered them.

A *secesh* soldier took my hand,  
 "Come fight wid us," says he;  
 Says I, "I'm but a contraband,  
 But you don't *secession* we."

*Song, The Intelligent Contraband.*

**Seceshdom.** The Confederate States; the States which attempted to secede from the United States in 1861.

Private advices from *Seceshdom* speak of the election which succeeded the first excitement. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune.*

**Secessia.** The Confederate States.

If you 'll let us go to our Yankee home,  
 We 'll swear no more in *Secessia* to roam.

*Song, The Marylander at Manassas.*

**Secessiondom.** Like the foregoing, the Confederate States.

**Secessionists.** The party in the South in favor of seceding from the Union.

**Secessionizer.** One who favors secession or *secessionists*.

. . . The disgraceful extinguishing of the noisy secessionist Gregory in the [English] House of Commons. Gregory's motion that the English ministry be requested to lay before Parliament the correspondence was negatived . . . without a division; i. e., the votes were not counted to save the feelings of the *secessionizers*. — *The Independent*, March 27, 1862.

**Second-Day Wedding.** A reception or evening party given by the parents of the bridegroom, or by the new-married couple in their own house, soon after their marriage. The festivities of the "second-day wedding" often surpassed the first. Miss Caulkins (*Hist. of New London*, p. 408) notices two entertainments of this kind (though she does not give them their name), in 1732 and 1735. Judd, *Hist. of Hadley*, p. 246, mistook the meaning of the name. He mentions "second-day weddings, or wedding festivities kept up

*the second day.*" The entertainment was never given until the new couple had taken possession of their home.

**Section.** 1. A distinct part of a city, town, country, or people; a part of a territory separated by geographical lines or of a people considered as distinct. Thus we say, the Northern and Eastern *section* of the United States, the Middle *section*, the Southern or Western *section*. — *Webster*.

2. The newly surveyed government lands at the West are laid out or divided into squares of six hundred and forty acres, which are called *sections*. These are again divided into four parts of one hundred and sixty acres each, called *quarter-sections*.

**Sectional.** Relating to a section, having regard to the interests of a section; i. e., a division or part of the country, as the North, South, East, or West. The word is often thus used by political speakers and writers in contradistinction to *national*, which see.

All *sectional* interests, or party feelings, it is hoped, will hereafter yield to schemes of ambition. — *Judge Story*.

To that central attraction I have been delighted to find the thoughts, the affections, the memories of the people, in whatever part of the country — from the ocean to the prairies of the West, from the land of granite and ice to the land of the palmetto and the magnolia — instinctively turn. They have their *sectional* loves and hatreds, but before the dear name of Washington they are absorbed and forgotten. — *Speech of Hon. E. Everett*, July 5, 1858

Mr. Miles, of South Carolina, said he was that bugbear, a *sectional* man. He represented in part the South, which, being the weaker party, had to unite in order to protect herself, and was therefore *sectional*. — *Debate in H. of Reps.*, Jan. 26, 1859.

**Sectionalism.** The having regard to the interests of a section of the country rather than of the nation at large.

On the 5th of July, 1858, the patriotism and intellect of Massachusetts were represented in a striking contrast with the littleness and *sectionalism* which now rule the old Bay State. — *Newark Journal*, July, 1858.

**To sectionize.** To divide or lay off into sections, especially the public lands, which is done before they are offered for sale. Western.

So much of the vacant lands of the republic shall be surveyed and *sectionized*, as will be sufficient to satisfy all claims. — *Laws of Texas*, Nov., 1828.

**Seed,** for *saw*.

**Seeding.** A common term in New England for sowing; seed applied by sowing, as of grass.

**Seed-Tick.** A minute species of *Acarus*, which burrows in the skin and produces an intolerable itching. Some consider it to be the young of the dog or sheep tick.

**Seem.** “*Seem to think.*” “I can’t *seem* to be suited.” “I couldn’t *seem* to know him.” Peculiar expressions, often heard from the lips of educated men.

**Seen, for saw.** **Ex.:** “I *seen* him do it.” This corruption is common in various parts of the country.

Peter Cram’s fits is awful, and go ahead of any thing we ever *seen*. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Vol. XVII.

She is more moral than a preacher,  
More dignified than a queen;  
No mockin’-bird can ever reach her,  
In singin’, that I ever *seen*. — *Evening Post*.

**To seep.** To run through fine pores or interstices, as the juice of fruits strained through a sieve or cloth.

**Seepy.** *Seepy* land is land under cultivation that is not well drained. Maryland and Virginia.

**To see the Elephant** is a South-western phrase, and means, generally, to undergo any disappointment of high-raised expectations. It is in fact nearly or quite synonymous with the ancient phrase, “go out for wool, and come back shorn.” For instance, men who volunteered for the Mexican war, expecting to reap lots of glory and enjoyment, but who instead found only sickness, fatigue, privations, and suffering, were said to have “*seen the elephant*.” Afterwards, those who went to California with golden expectations, and returned disappointed, were said to have “*seen the elephant*.” The poor creatures who were induced to share the fortunes of the filibuster Walker had an opportunity of viewing a quadruped of the largest stature.

Mr. Kendall, in his “Narrative of the Texan Santa Fé Expedition,” tells some amusing anecdotes of “*seeing the elephant*,” and is the earliest writer who mentions the expression, which he adds is very common in Texas, and which he had never heard until he entered the Cross Timbers. This was in the year 1841.

The meaning of the expression I will explain. When a man is disappointed in any thing he undertakes, when he has seen enough, when he gets tired and sick of any job he may have set himself about, he has “*seen the elephant*.” We had been buffeting about during the day, cutting away trees, crossing deep ravines and gullies, and turning and twisting some fifteen or twenty miles to gain five, — we had finally to encamp by a mud-hole of miserable water, and the spies had been unable to find any beyond. This combination of ills induced the old hunter to remark, “I’ve *seen the elephant* ;” and upon the same principle I will here state that by this time I had obtained something more than a glimpse of the animal myself. — Vol. I. p. 109.

A man brought before the Recorder of New Orleans, charged with having been found drunk the previous night, after appealing to the court, closed with the following remarks:—

"Spare my feelings, Squire, and don't ask me to tell any more. Here I am in town without a rock in my pocket, without a skirt to my coat or crown to my hat; but, Squire, I'll say no more, *I've seen the elephant*." The Recorder let him off on condition that he would leave town. — *Pickings from the Picayune*.

Although the merchants from the South and West may buy goods in Philadelphia, all find their way to New York to spend their pocket-money, buy brass watches at the mock-auctions, and see the elephant generally. — *Phil. Cor. of N. Y. Tribune*.

**Sego.** A bulbous root (of *Calochortees luteus*, Nuttall) much esteemed by the Indians of Utah as food. It varies in size from that of a pea to that of a filbert. — *Torrey*.

*Segos* are here very abundant, and of a large size, and are found in every tuft of bunch-grass. — *Stansbury, Exp. to Salt Lake*, p. 169.

**Seigneurs.** Owners of the domain in the feudal or French townships of the Province of Quebec. (Always given as a French word.)

**Seigniories.** The feudal or French townships of the Province of Quebec. See *Township*.

**Selectman.** A magistrate annually elected by the freemen of a town or township in New England, to superintend and manage the affairs and government of the town. The number is commonly from three to five. — *Worcester*. The term was originally select-townsmen, — whence both selectman and townsman, as purporting town-officer, seem to have come. Dec. 16, 1645. — *Drake's Hist. of Boston*, p. 291.

**Sell.** A practical joke. See *Sold*.

It was a wicked Freshman,  
With hairless lip and chin,  
Who ever took delight in *sells*  
And taking people in. — *Harvard Lampoon*.

**Seller's Option.** This gives the seller the option to deliver any time within the time of his contract, or at its maturity, and the buyer is required to take it when offered. The buyer pays interest up to delivery. Sales at *seller's option* are generally a fraction below the current cash price. The speculator who sells stocks on his own or the buyer's option draws interest on his contract for the date until it closed.

**To sell out a Man,** in Wall Street parlance, is to sell down a stock, which another is carrying, so low that he is compelled to quit his

hold and perhaps to fail. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street.*

**Semi-occasionally.** A cant phrase, meaning once in a while.

I went to the American Legation, and got my friend Kane, the attaché, to call with me upon Jack Cathcart, who was supposed to be diligently employed in making himself a scientific physician, but, in point of fact, walking the hospital but *semi-occasionally*, and seeing life in Paris very constantly, especially that part of it which is to be seen by gas or lamp-light. — *Putnam's Monthly*, May, 1854.

Chewing tobacco not only infuses a deadly poison into your blood, but leads you on to an inclination for occasional dissipation, and from that to *semi-occasional* intoxication. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 90.

A writer in "Scribner's Magazine," Feb., 1876, in speaking of book-cases, says: —

The shelves being a foot deep, books or pamphlets that are only wanted *semi-occasionally* can be arranged behind other books. — p. 488.

**Senate.** In the United States, *senate* denotes the higher branch or house of a legislature. Such is the *Senate* of the United States, or upper house of the Congress; and, in most of the States, the higher and least numerous branch of the legislature is called the *Senate*. In the United States, the *Senate* is an elective body. — *Webster*.

**Sence**, for *since*. Common among the uneducated.

Ere Adam's fall,  
He built stone wall;  
But ever *sence*  
He make brush fence. — *Old Virginia Song*.

**Sensationism.** The art, practice, means, and results of sensationists.

How vastly it ["true Wisdom"] looms up over the nervous excitability and cheap *sensationism* of the day! — *The Independent*, Sept. 6, 1860.

**Sensationist.** One who makes "sensations;" a sensation preacher, orator, &c.

**Sensatious.** Sensational; having design to produce sensation.

I desire to caution the Northern public against being misled by reports concerning the movements and purposes of the enemy, put forth on insufficient authority, but fortunately of a character so purely *sensatious* as to be readily detected. — *Fort Monroe, Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**To sense.** To comprehend; as, "Do you *sense* that?" New England.

**Serapé.** (Span.) A Mexican blanket, with an opening in the middle for the head. They are woven by hand, of gay colors, and are only worn by the men in cool weather, instead of an overcoat.

The Indians were mounted on mules, wrapped in *serapés*, or Mexican blankets, and wore head-dresses, beads, and other Indian ornaments. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations*, p. 34.

We wrapped ourselves in blankets or overcoats, while our escort, who put on their gaudy *serapés*, made a very picturesque appearance. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*, Vol. II. p. 500.

I now turned my back on the last settlement, . . . and knew that I had seen the last of civilized man under the garb of a Mexican *serapé*. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 207.

**Serious.** Particularly attentive to religious concerns or one's own religious state. — *Webster*.

*Serious* has [in New England] the cant acceptance of religious. — *Kendall's Travels*.

**Servant.** A term often used synonymously with "slave" at the South, as it is in the English Bible.

Still I confess (for I will put down nothing that history will not confirm) that cruelties are sometimes exercised by the master upon the slave. Considering the number of masters and *servants* in this latitude, I cannot say that is often the case, — in truth, it is very seldom the case. — *A Voice from the South*, p. 32.

**To serve up.** To expose to ridicule; to expose.

**Service-Berry.** (*Amelanchier Canadensis*.) A wild fruit common to the British provinces in America and the Northern States, described by Sir George Simpson as "a sort of cross between the cranberry and the black currant." It is a good article of food, and is sometimes mixed with pemmican. The plant is also called Shad-bush.

Among the usual fruit-bearing shrubs and bushes, I here notice the *service-berry*. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 114.

Near the Del Norte grows plentifully a shrub which produces a fruit called by the mountaineers *service-berry*, of a dark blue, the size of a small grape, and of pleasant flavor. — *Ruxton's Mexico*, p. 204.

**Sessions**, in some of the States, is particularly used for a court of justices, held for granting licenses to innkeepers or taverners, for laying out new highways or altering old ones, and the like. — *Webster*.

**Set.** Fixed in opinion; determined; firm; obstinate; as, "a man set in his opinions or way." — *Webster*.

**To set.** To fix; to cause to stop; to obstruct; as, "to set a coach in the mire," "The wagon or team was set at the hill." In some of the States, *stall* is used in a like sense. — *Webster*.

**To set . . . by, To set store by.** To value or hold in estimation; to account worth. Provincial in England.



**To set a Great Deal by.** To value highly. "He sets his eyes by it," prizes it above all things. New England.

Rhody, passing in and out of the room, . . . thought as she had thought a hundred times, at similar scenes:—

"Well, if they don't *set their eyes* by that child more 'n more every day!" — *Laura and her Hero, Harper's Mag.*, July, 1864, p. 172.

**Set-back.** The reflux of water made by a counter-current, by the tide from the sea meeting the flow of a river, by a dam, &c.; a reverse; a discomfiture.

We have all found the Yankees will fight; . . . and I shouldn't wonder if they thought we wouldn't, we had so many cursed *set-backs*. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, May, 1862.

**Set-in.** A beginning; an approach; an onset.

The early and almost immediate *set-in* of the drift. — *Virginia Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Setting-Pole.** A pole shod with iron, used for propelling vessels or boats up rivers, in shoal water.

**To settle.** 1. To be ordained or installed over a parish, church, or congregation. "A. B. was invited to *settle* in the first society of New Haven." "N. D. *settled* in the ministry very young." — *Webster*.

2. To procure to be established; as, "The parish will *settle* a minister," &c.

3. To pay; to liquidate an account. This use of the word is common, especially on board steamboats. A waiter rings a bell, and cries out, "Those who haven't paid their fare will please walk up to the captain's office, and *settle*." We are never asked to "pay our fare," but always to *settle it*.

4. To give a final stroke to; to end; to kill. New England.

**Settle down.** Keep quiet; go to work steadily.

**Settlement.** 1. A sum in addition to a pastor's annual salary, formerly granted by a parish to its pastor.

2. A homestead of a pastor, as furnished sometimes by donation of land with or without buildings, sometimes by the pastor's applying funds granted for the purpose.

I had just purchased a *settlement*, and involved myself in debt. . . . Before the war began, my people punctually paid my salary, and advanced one hundred pounds of my *settlement* a year before it was due by contract. — *Autobiog. of Rev. Nath. Emmons*.

**To settle one's Hash.** To give the quietus to any one; to threaten. In Kentucky, "to cook his goose" means the same.

To use an expression  
More striking than classic, it *settled my hash*.

*Butler, Nothing to Wear.*

**Settler.** 1. An unanswerable proposition; a final stroke; any thing decisive.

2. The founder of a town; one who makes or gains a settlement.

**Set up.** *To be set up* (among the vulgar of the lower strata, "to be sot up"), to be made vain or conceited; to be elevated in one's opinion of one's self; to be proud, or the like. Comp. *Stuck up*.

To think that our Laura should a' married one o' them high-headed city lawyers! and she ain't a bit *sot up*, neither. — *Harper's Mag.*, July, 1864, p. 179.

**Seven-up.** The Western name for a game of cards commonly called All Fours.

Seated, Indian fashion, round the fires, with a blanket spread before them, groups are seen with their cards, playing at euker, poker, and *seven-up*, the regular mountain games. — *Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 236.

We found the storekeeper sitting on an empty keg at a rickety table, playing *seven-up* for the liquor for one of his customers. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 115.

Simon and Bill were in a fence corner, very earnestly engaged at *seven-up*. — *Simon Suggs*.

**Severals**, for *several*, is used in Pennsylvania. "How many hats have you?" "I used to have *severals*, but now have got only one."

**Sewan.** Wampum or Seawant. Beads used by the Indians for money. Mr. Palfrey says this is the Dutch name for wampum (*Hist. of New England*, Vol. I. p. 238, n.). There is no question that it is an Indian word. See *Seawan*.

The Dutch have built a shallop, in order to go and look after the trade in *sewan* in Narragansett Bay, . . . which I have prevented . . . by selling them fifty fathoms of *sewan*, because the seeking after *sewan* by them is prejudicial to us. *Lett. of De Rusières, cited in Palfrey's Hist. New England*, Vol. I. p. 238, n.

**Shack.** A vagabond. Ex.: "He's a poor *shack* of a fellow." It is used in some parts of England and in New England.

All creation knows Nab Hincken ain't nobody. Why, her father was a poor drunken *shack*, and her mother took in washin'. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 34.

I don't believe Bill would have turned out such a miserable *shack*, if he'd a decent woman for a wife. — *New England Tales*.

**Shakly.** Shaky; rickety; as, "What a *shakly* old carriage!"

The words of the poet might answer for me on a pinch, always excepting the general fly-offs and moral unhitches incident to poor *shakly* mortality. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**Shad-Bush.** A plant so called from its flowering about the time that shad ascend the rivers in early spring. Its delicate sprays, covered with white blossoms before the trees are yet in leaf, have a singularly beautiful appearance in the woods. See *Service-Berry*.

Within the woods . . . . .  
 . . . . . the *shad-bush*, white with flowers.  
 Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butternut  
 And quivering poplar to the roving breeze  
 Gave a balsamic fragrance. — *Bryant, The Old Man's Council.*

**Shad-Belly Coat.** One which slopes gradually from the front to the tails, and has no angle. Drab coats of this shape are worn by Quakers, who are hence sometimes called *shad-bellies*.

**Shade-Tree.** A tree planted for the sake of the shade which it affords.

**Shadow.** A detective, so called because he silently and persistently follows his victim.

**To shadow.** To follow. A term generally used by the police and detectives when in pursuit of a fugitive from justice.

In speaking of the arrest of certain counterfeiters, the "New York Herald," March 23, 1876, says: —

Barr was decoyed here from Iowa by a member of the secret service, who *shadowed* him out there from Washington, and made his acquaintance.

The attention of the detectives was called to the case of a young girl. . . . She was *shadowed*, and her ways of life ascertained. — *Providence Journal.*

The detectives followed two men whom they had been *shadowing* from Prince Street to the office of the American Express Co. (who were afterwards found to have stolen certain mail-bags). — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 4, 1877.

**Shady.** To keep *shady* is to remain in the back-ground; to remain in the dark.

**Shag-Bark.** (*Carya alba*.) A tall and handsome species of hickory, the old trunks of which are very rough-barked. The wood is very valuable as timber and for fuel; and the fruit furnishes the principal hickory-nuts of the market. It is also called *Shell-bark*. — *Gray*.

**Shake.** To throw dice; and among printers in their work-shops to throw "quads." See *Jeff*, in *Addenda*.

**To shake a Stick at.** A ridiculous phrase, very often heard in low language. When a man is puzzled to give one an idea of a very great number, he calls it "more than you can *shake a stick at*." A fuller force of the expression is "to shake a stick at till your arm aches."

New York is an everlastin' great concern, and, as you may well suppose, there's about as many people in it as you could *shake a stick at* — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*.

I've been licked fifty times, and got more black eyes and bloody noses than you could *shake a stick at*, for the purity of our illegal rights. — *J. C. Neal, Peter Brush*.

We got a little dry or so, and wanted a horn; but this was a temperance house, and there was nothing to treat a friend to that was worth *shaking a stick at*. — *Crockett's Tour*, p. 87.

**Shake down.** A riotous, boisterous dance, so called in the West. In the Eastern States, the Virginia reel, which generally closes a social ball or dancing party, is called a *break-down*.

An innocent countryman, on going to church in New York, heard, for the first time, before entering, the organ, from which he concluded that some sort of a "*shake down*" was about to commence. Just at that moment, a gentleman invited him to walk in and take a seat. "Not 'zactly, Mister, — I ain't used to no such doin's on Sunday; and, besides, I don't dance!"

**Shakes.** 1. Fever and ague; intermittent fever is sometimes called "the *shakes*."

2. An earthquake.

The springs fail once in a while since the *shakes* of 1812. — *Western Gazetteer*.

3. *No great shakes.* No great things; no great worth. Common in England.

**Shakiness.** Hesitancy; timidity.

At a meeting of Baptist ministers in New York, Jan. 17, 1876, Dr. Thomas made a forcible speech. He said: —

The resolutions offered imputed weakness and *shakiness* to members of the conference.

**Shaky.** Wavering; uncertain.

A recent estimate is wrong as to the New York and Pennsylvania delegations. At least, four of the latter are adverse, and several others *shaky*, with a leaning in the same direction. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 21, 1858.

The Emperor Napoleon, poor man, is very *shaky* in health. The fatigue and excitement of that bloody campaign have told deeply on his bodily and mental conditions. — *Cor. of Boston Transcript*.

Mr. Robeson transmitted to Jay Cooke, McCulloch & Co., in London, for the purpose of saving them from bankruptcy, \$1,500,000, having official knowledge of the *shaky* condition of the house. — *Washington Telegram to the New York Press*, March 28, 1876.

**Shall.** See *Should*.

**Shamocrat.** A fellow of great pretension to wealth and influence, with little of the latter and still less of the former. One who apes high rank without any real basis.

**Shanghai.** A tall dandy. So called in allusion to the long-legged fowls from Shanghai, in China, which were all the rage a few years ago.

The name was originally applied to dandies who wore the fashionable *plaid shawl*, wrapped about the upper part of the person, leaving the legs unprotected. A tall man well bundled up in a Scotch plaid, or "Bay State," suggested the "*Shanghai*" to the

least imaginative observer. The name was a common one about 1845.

I became wildly extravagant, indulged in broadcloth and fine linen, in kid gloves and a stove-pipe hat, a cane and French calf boots; used cologne, hair oil, and scented my handkerchief with "jockey-club;" wore a ring, was a connoisseur in cigars, and cultivated the acquaintance of the fair sex. In fact, I degenerated into a fop, and became a *shanghai* of the most exotic breed. — *The Great Republic Magazine*, Jan., 1859, p. 70.

**Shank's Mare.** To take *shank's mare* is to walk. In England, they use the term "shank's nag."

**Shanty.** (Fr. *chantier*, the hut put up in a French dock-yard.) A mean cabin or shed; a hut. A settler, or backwoodsman, first constructs his *shanty* of unhewn logs. Near railways in the course of construction are the *shanties* of the laborers. In France, *chantier* was originally applied to a dock-yard itself; and, earlier still, to the wooden horse on which carpenters' work is done. The latter is derived from *cantherius*, a pack-horse.

**To shanty.** To dwell in a shanty or temporary hut.

Mark Shuff and a friend of his, who were trapping, *shantied* on the outlet, just at the foot of Tupper's Lake. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 197.

We came down the Alleghany in two canoes, and *shantied* on the Ohio. We hid our canoes, struck across the country, and travelled about exploring for six weeks. — *Ibid.*, p. 212.

These mountain breezes are very inspiriting, and with expanded chests the sportsmen look towards the blue ridges with emulation, and brace themselves to meet the rude exigencies of a "tramp," and "*shantreing out*" for a few days amidst storms or sunshine, as the covering heavens may send! — *N. Y. Courier*.

**Shantying-Ground.** The place where shanties or rude huts are erected.

When we got back to our *shantying-ground*, we were tuckered out, as you may believe. — *Hammond, Northern Scenes*, p. 212.

**Shape.** "He travelled on his shape," i. e. he went around swindling those he met with through a plausible address and gentlemanly appearance.

**Shark.** A lean, hungry hog. Western.

**Sharking.** Fishing for sharks. A favorite sport in the waters of Narragansett Bay, where huge hooks, stout cords, a heavy club to knock the fish on the head, long knives to disengage the hook, and other appliances, are used.

**Sharp.** A bright fellow; a sharper.

**Sharp.** Punctual. "The meeting will take place at eight o'clock sharp," i. e. precisely at eight.

**Sharpenin' Rock.** A grindstone. South-western.

**Sharp Practice.** A shrewd business operation, so keen that it falls little short of fraud; an unfair or dishonorable advantage taken by a lawyer to the injury of an opponent.

**Sharp Stick.** To be after one with a *sharp stick* is to pursue him keenly for the purpose of revenge, or to get something from him.

**To shave.** 1. To discount promissory notes, claims, or bills at a high rate of interest.

Make your money by *sharing* notes or stock-jobbing, and every door in New York is thrown open; make the same amount by selling Indian candy, and the cold shoulder of the Fifth Avenue is turned upon you. — *Life in New York*.

If the stock broker thinks he *shaves*,  
Or if the victim thinks he's *shaved*,  
Let both the rascals have their say,  
And he that 's cheated let him pay.

*Parody on Emerson's Brahma.*

2. To defraud or be otherwise unfair in bargains, &c.

**Shave.** A close shave is a near approach to an accident.

"A bad cut," said Roddy. "She's saved herself by a narrow shave." — *Miss Gould, Marjorie's Quest*, p. 131.

**Shaver.** 1. This word, in the United States, is applied to money brokers, who purchase notes at more than legal interest. Banks, when they resort to any means to obtain a large discount, are also called *shavers* or *shaving banks*. Many such are known; but they evade the penalty of the usury laws by discounting at legal interest, and giving the proceeds of the note so discounted in a draft on some distant place, or in uncurrent money, which is again purchased by the bank or its agents at a discount.

To sell our notes at a great loss to brokers, or, in other words, to get them unmercifully *shaved*, was what we wished to avoid. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

This Wall-Street *note-shaving* life is a new field, a very peculiar field. — *North Am. Rev.*, July, 1862, p. 113.

2. One who is close or fraudulent in bargaining; a sharp dealer. *Webster*.

This Lewis is a cunning *shaver*. — *Swift*.

3. A little boy. Provincial in England. Latham derives it from the Gipsev *charo*, a boy.

As I have mentioned at the door, to this young *shaver*, I am on a chase in the name of the king. — *Dickens*.

**Shaving-Shop.** A banking company; a money-broker's office.

Mr. Wall said [in Congress] that, in the matter of inflating the currency, the only question was whether it should be done by banks and *shaving-shops*, or by the government. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Shebang.** A strange word that had its origin during the late civil war. It is applied alike to a room, a shop, or a hut, a tent, a cabin; an engine-house.

"Many a poor fellow," says an old soldier, "who enlisted to do hard fighting, lost the number of his mess, and was carried out from his *shebang* to his long home." — *Overland Monthly*, for March, 1871.

**Shecoonery.** A whimsical corruption of the word *chicanery*, used at the South.

This town's got a monstrous bad name for meanery and *shecoonery* of all sorts. — *Chronicles of Pinerille*, p. 47.

Among other topics, he dwelt upon the verdancy of his neighbors, and the *shecoonery* which had been practised upon them. — *Ibid.*, p. 48.

**Shedder-Crab.** A crab which has recently cast its shell, also called a Soft Crab. It is a delicacy much esteemed by epicures, and a "killing" bait for striped bass.

**Shell-Bark Hickory.** (*Carya alba*.) This tree, which attains the height of eighty feet, is one of the most valuable hickories for timber and fuel. It furnishes the hickory-nuts of commerce, which are also known as shag-barks.

**Sheeny.** A sharp fellow looking out for some one whom he can cheat, or with whom he may make a sharp bargain.

**Shell.** A light boat, used especially by amateur oarsmen.

**To shell Corn.** To remove the grains of Indian corn from the cob. In the South, the phrase "to hull corn" is used in the same sense.

**Shell-Road.** A road, the upper stratum of which is a layer of broken shells. These roads are found in Louisiana, Florida, and near the shores of New England.

Fine *shell-roads* run out beyond the town limits [of Jacksonville, Florida] in either direction. — *Scribner's Mag.*, Vol. IX. p. 5.

**Sheep-Laurel.** See *Calf-Kill*.

**Sheep-Meat.** Mutton is often so called in the West.

**Sheepshead.** (*Sargus ovis*.) A fine, large, salt-water fish, so called from the resemblance of its head to that of a sheep. It is esteemed a great delicacy.

**Sheep-Ranch.** A plantation or farm where sheep are raised on a large scale, as in New Mexico and Colorado.

**Sheepskin.** 1. The parchment diploma received by students on taking their degree at college.

This apostle of ourn never rubbed his back agin a college, nor toted about no *sheepskins*, — no, never! . . . How you'd a perished in your sins, if the first preachers had stayed till they got *sheepskins*! — *Carlton's New Purchase*.

When first I saw a *sheepskin*,  
In Prex's hand I spied it;  
I'd given my hat and boots, I would,  
If I could have been beside it.

But now that last Biennial's past;  
I skinned and fizzled through;  
And so, in spite of scrapes and flunks,  
I'll have a *sheepskin* too.

Chas. E. Trumbull's (Yale, 1855) *Song of the Sheepskin*.

If we came to college fresh and green,  
We go back home with a huge *sheepskin*.

*Songs of Yale College*, 1853.

2. A person who has received a diploma, who has had a college education.

I can say as well as the best o' them *sheepskins*, if you don't get religion and be saved, you'll be lost teetotally and forever. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**Sheer.** A term applied in the United States to fabrics of cotton or silk; "as, *sheer* muslin;" meaning very thin, clear, or transparent.

**Shell-Bark.** See *Shag-Bark*.

**Shenanigan.** 1. A trick in which there is cheating. California.

2. Chaff; foolery; nonsense, especially when advanced to cover some scheme or little game. Yale College.

**Sherryvallies.** Overalls; trowsers made of thick velvet or leather, buttoned on the outside of each leg, and generally worn over other trowsers. They are now chiefly worn by teamsters. Many years ago, when the facilities for travelling were not as great as now, and when journeys were made on horseback, *sherryvallies* were indispensable to the traveller.

A word of very ancient derivation, the garment in question being probably the same as that mentioned in the Book of Daniel, ch. iii. v. 21, alluding to Shadrach and others who were cast into the fiery furnace: "Then these men were burned in their coats, their *hosen*," &c. The word corresponding to *hosen* is, in the Chaldee, *sarbalin*, defined, in Robinson's trans. of Gesenius's Hebrew Lexicon, to mean "a kind of garment; long and *wide trowsers*, such as are still worn by the Orientalists." This meaning is supported by the Arabic, Persian, and Greek, as well as by the Latin *sarabara*, *saraballa*.

**Shet, Shut.** To get *shet off*. To get rid of; to make a final disposition of a person or thing. The expression was formerly very common in New England, and is still heard throughout the Southern States. It is provincial in England.



We must not pray in one breath to find a thief, and in the next to *get shut of* him. *Sir R. L' Estrange.*

Hey, mister! said a shop-boy at last, I want to *get shut of* you, 'cause we 're goin' to shet up. — *Neal's Sketches.*

**Show**, for *showed*. **Ex.**: "I *shew* him the difference between black and white." This corruption is so common among all classes in the "American Athens" as to form a sort of shibboleth for distinguishing a Bostonian. Mr. Lowell says this preterite is used by Hector Boece, Giles Fletcher, Drummound of Hawthornden, and in the Paston Letters.

**Shillagalee**. A low fellow; a scalawag. New York. See *Scalawag*.

**Shilling**. The name given, in the State of New York, to the Spanish *real*; in the neighboring States, it is frequently called a *York shilling*. See *Federal Currency*.

**Shimmy**. (Fr. *chemise*.) A woman's under-garment.

The ghost was nothing but Aunt Katy's *shimmies* pinned on the line to *dry*, and I was a darned fool to be scared by it. — *A Tale of Sleepy Hollow*.

I love to see two hearts approximate and adhere, — two souls meet and mingle into one. It is as interesting a sight to me as a *shimmy* in a wash-tub; and whispers of purity, love, harmony, happiness, and perpetual peace. — *Dove's Sermons*.

**To shin**. By *shinning*, in mercantile phrase, is meant running about to one's acquaintance, to borrow money to meet the emergency of a note at bank. It is doubtless so called because, in the great hurry of picking up cash to meet the hour of three, which perchance is just at hand, the borrower, not having the fear of wheelbarrows, boxes, barrels, piles of brick, &c., before his eyes, is very apt to run furiously against them with his *shins*, the bark whereof is apt to be grievously battered off by the contact. . . . So fares it with the poor merchant, while he is looking out for an acquaintance of whom he may ask, "Any thing over?" This is an expression used by shiners, on applying to their acquaintances for the needful; and means, Have you any money over and above the sum requisite for discharging your own notes? If so, it is of course expected that, in the way of mercantile courtesy or of a friendly reciprocity, you will oblige the *shinner* so far as to hand it over to him. It is a common way, amongst those who have business in banks, of obliging one another. If they have any thing over, they do not withhold it from their neighbor, lest in turn he should do the same towards them. — *Perils of Pearl Street*, p. 123.

The Senator was *shinning* around, to get gold for the rascally bank-rags which he was obliged to take. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 13, 1845.

**To shin round.** To move briskly; the same as *to fly around*.

Mrs. Stowe relates the following affectionate conversation between Cripps and Polly Skinflint soon after their marriage:—

"Didn't you tell me, if I married you, I should have a nigger to order round, just as I pleased?"

"Well, well," said Cripps, "I didn't think you'd want to go walloping him, the first thing."

"I will, if he don't *shin round*," said the virago, "and you too." — *Dred*, Vol. II. p. 159.

**To shin up.** To *shin up* a tree or pole is to climb it by the aid of the hands and legs only.

I am going to *shin up* the slippery rope leading [to the Goddess of Fame] for the purpose of taking a hand in the game of literary renown. — *Doesticks*, p. 15.

**Shin-Dig.** 1. A blow on the shins. Southern.

2. At the West, any kind of dance. Perhaps the same as *shindy*. See next word.

**Shindy.** 1. A row; a spree.

If this ere isn't that 'are singing chapagin. He 's on a *shindy* somewhere or other every night. — *J. C. Neal, P. Ploddy*, p. 18.

It appears there was a *shindy* on Monday night, for the benefit of a poor widow; and it ended, as too many of such sprees do, in a regular fight, with guns, bayonets, decanters, tumblers, &c. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

*Mose.* What say you Lize for Vauxhall to-night?

*Lize.* What's goin' on? Is the Vaudeville plays there?

*Mose.* No, there's goin' to be a first-rate *shindy*, and some of our boys will be there. — *A Glance at New York*.

You, my democratic hearers, are for the most part poor, and therefore ought to be careful how you cut *shindies* under the broadsword of justice. — *Dow's Sermons*.

2. A game of ball, played with a stick crooked at the end. Also the name of the stick itself. The proper and more usual name is Bandy.

3. A liking, a fancy. Comp. *Shine*, No. 2.

Father took a wonderful *shindy* to Jessie; for even old men can't help liking beauty. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 70.

Paddy had taken such a *shindy* to me, that nobody could get him to budge an inch further. — *Ibid.*, p. 159.

**Shine.** 1. Show, display, fine appearance. Hence, *to cut* or *make a shine* is to make a great display.

All the boys and gals were going to camp-meetin'; so, to *make a shine* with Sally I took her a new parasol. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

I tell you, stranger, in the settlements men pass for what they look to be, but in the backwoods for what they are: you'll find heaps of bogus money here, but bogus men can't *shine*. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

So, *to take the shine off* is to surpass in beauty or excellence.

Next Sabbath day I slicked myself up; and I do say, when I got my fixins on, I *took the shine clean off* any specimen of human natur' in these parts. — *Quincy, Massachusetts Whig*.

I'm sorry he didn't bring his pitch-pipe with him, *jest to take the shine off* them 'are singers. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 37.

I've seen some evening twilights that *take the shine off* every thing below, and clap on a few extra touches of their own. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

2. *To take a shine*, to take a fancy to, or liking to, a person. Comp. *Shindy*, No. 3.

I took a great *shine* to the school-marm, Huldah Hornbeam; though she was ten years older than I, and taller by half a yard of neck. — *McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

Stranger, I've *tuk a middlin' shine* to you from the way you got off that Chinaman them Pikes was goin' to bang for stealin' the mule what he hadn't stoled. I've *tuk a middlin' shine* to you, and don't want to see yer neck broke. *T. Winthrop, John Brent*, p. 17.

3. *To have a shine*. To polish boots or shoes; to black boots. An expression used almost universally by the street boot-blacks.

"*Have a shine*, boss?" said the owner of a stand, giving his chair a parting slap with his brush. "*Shine 'em up* in half a minute, sah. You'll jest have time to glance ober de mornin' papers." — *Newspaper*.

**To shine.** 1. To get along, succeed, or rather to distinguish one's self.

2. In the Southern States, the deer is often hunted by torchlight. To *shine* its eyes is to make them visible by a light thrown upon them, as described in the following extract:—

You see the way we does *to shine* the deer's eyes is this. We holds the pan of fire so, on the left shoulder, and carries the gun at a trail in the right hand. Well, when I wants to look for eyes, I turns round slow, and looks right at the edge of my shadder, what's made by the light behind me in the pan, and, if there's a deer in gun-shot of me, his eyes 'll *shine* 'zactly like two balls of fire. — *Chronicles of Pineville*, p. 169.

He often urged me to accompany him, to see how slick he could *shine* a buck's eyes. — *Ibid.*, p. 162.

*Bound to shine*, i. e. a man is determined (or is certain) to distinguish himself.

When the public have an opportunity of examining this beautiful steamer, they will pronounce her the finest and most comfortable boat they have ever visited, and be satisfied that she is *bound to shine*. — *Hartford Post*, July 14, 1864.

**Shiner.** (Genus *Leuciscus*.) The popular name of the fish known to naturalists as the Dace. In different parts of the country, however, other small fish are called *shiners*, from their glittering or shining

appearance. In New York, a small fish of the genus *Stilbe* is known to naturalists as the New York Shiner. It is also found in the adjoining States. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Shiners.** A mob of raftsmen, so called, who illegally ruled for a while the village or settlement of Bytown, in Upper Canada. (Bytown is now the city of Ottawa, Ontario.)

**Shingle.** 1. A jocose term for a sign-board placed over a shop-door or office. To hang out a shingle "is to put up one's sign." The use of this term is said to have originated in the lumbering districts of Maine, where shingles, being the handiest plane surface, are used to write directions, &c., on, and stuck up against trees.

Doctors and dentists from the United States have stuck up their *shingles* in Mexico. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 24, 1848.

Several made bold to peep inside, in spite of the "No admittance!" which frowned from a *shingle* over the door. — *Drama at Pokerville*.

2. To cut the hair of the occiput close at bottom; to grade in cutting.

**To shingle.** To chastise. A shingle applied *a posteriori* is a favorite New England mode of correcting a child.

**Shingle Oak.** (*Quercus unbricaria*.) A native of the Middle States near the Alleghanies, growing to the height of forty or fifty feet. — *Scott's Suburban Home*, p. 314.

**Shingle-Weaver.** A workman who dresses shingles.

**Shinner.** One who borrows money by the practice of shinning.  
See *To shin*.

Four weeks ago the precious stuff  
Was rife and plenteous enough,  
And no "short *shinner*" feared rebuff,  
Who sued for pelf;  
Sure to hear "flush," or "*quantum suff.*" —  
Friend, help yourself!"

*New York Evening Post.*

**Shinny.** Drunk; intoxicated.

**Shinny, n.** A boy's game with sticks and a ball.

**Shinplaster.** A cant term for a bank-note or any paper money, and especially such as has depreciated in value. This term is said to have arisen during the Revolutionary war. After the continental currency had become almost worthless, an old soldier who possessed a quantity of it, which he could not get rid of, very philosophically made use of it as plasters to a wounded leg. The term is now (1877) more generally used to designate notes for less than a dollar.

The people may whistle for protection, and put up with what *shinplaster* rags they can get. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec. 3, 1845.

What 's become of all the specie, —  
Where are all the dollars gone?  
Nothing but *shinplasters* greasy  
Do our meagre pockets own. — *Comic Song*.

Hope's brightest visions absquatulate with their golden promises before the least cloud of disappointment, and leave not a *shinplaster* behind. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 309.

So here we sits, and spits sublime,  
On auguries of disaster:  
King Dollar 'gainst us he may turn,  
But we have King *Shinplaster*.  
For all King Cotton's works and ways,  
We don't conclude to funk 'em:  
Our trust is in our righteous cause,  
Our prayer, "So help us Bunkum!"

*Yankee Stories, Punch*, July 19, 1862.

**Shiny.** Drunk.

**Shirt.** *Bloody Shirt.* The Honorable A. S. Black, in an article entitled the "Electoral Conspiracy," in the "North American Rev.," for July, 1877 (p. 11), says: "To parade acts of violence and murder perpetrated within the jurisdiction of a carpet-bag government was called, in the flash language of the politicians, waving the *bloody shirt*, and considered a most effective mode of electioneering." The term is much used by the newspapers.

If President Hayes is wrong in all this, they [the Republicans] were, when recommending him to the American people as a *bloody-shirt* candidate, either guilty of gross fraud or the victims of a very sorry bit of imposture. — *The Nation*, Sept. 27, 1877.

**Shitepoke.** (*Butorides virescens*.) A widely distributed bird of the heron species, also called Green Heron and Fly-up-a-Creek.

**Shoddiness.** Meanness.

The infinite *shoddiness* of this cry against carpet-baggers. — *Illinois paper*.

**Shoddy.** Originally the name of an inferior kind of felt. Mixed with wool, in the proportion of one part wool to six parts of shoddy, it is woven into blankets and inferior cloths. Cloths thus made, although they look well, soon come in pieces; in other words, they are not what they appear to be. Hence, the term has been applied to people whose appearance and manner would give them a respectable standing in society, but to which they are not entitled.

Old *Shoddy* sits in his easy-chair,  
And cracks his jokes and drinks his ale.

During the late civil war, many woollen goods, of which *shoddy* formed a considerable portion, were furnished to the government

for the soldiers by dishonest contractors. A stanza from a poem entitled "*Shoddy*" thus describes the goods and the suffering soldiers whose blankets were made of them:—

A soldier lies on the frozen ground,  
While crack his joints with aches and ails;  
A *shoddy* blanket wraps him round,  
His *shoddy* garments the wind assails.  
His coat is *shoddy*, well stuffed with flocks;  
He dreams of the flocks on his native hill;  
His feverish sense the demon mocks,—  
The demon that drives the *shoddy*-mill.

See also illustration to *sou-marquée*.

**Shoemake.** A very common corruption of *sumach*.

It is curious to note the changes in taste and sentiment, as marked in the disappearance of various sorts of trees. Gone are the Lombardy poplars. . . . The gude wife no longer points to her "*shoemake*" (as the sumach was formerly called), with its crimson clusters, the pride of her trim front garden. — *North Am. Rev.*, July, 1857, p. 181.

**Shoeman.** A man who makes or sells shoes.

**Shoot, n.** A match at shooting tame pigeons or firing at a target is called a pigeon-shoot; a "target-shoot."

**Shoot or Shute.** (Also written *chute*.) 1. A passage-way on the side of a steep hill or mountain down which wood and timber are thrown or slid. There are many such on the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers.

2. In the West, the term is applied to places where a river is artificially contracted, in order to increase the depth of water. In Lower Canada, a *shoot* is a place where the stream, being confined by rocks which appear above water, is shot through the aperture with great force. See *Chute*, No. 2.

3. In the West, a fancy, liking, for a person.

That gal was the prettiest creatur I ever took a *shute* after; her eyes jest floated about in her head like a star's shadow on a Mississippi wave. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**To shoot.** 1. To *shoot* a fall or rapid is to float down it in a vessel.

We entered the lake, from whence we are forced to transport our canoes overland to another river, which has six or seven water-falls that we commonly *shoot*. *La Hontan's Travels in North Am.*, 1703.

2. A slang term of recent origin. To say, "*Shoot* that dress," is meant to convey the idea that the dress is inferior; that it is not worth much; or, to use another slang expression, "it is no great shakes," after all.

A lady in Baltimore, having applied the offensive term to the fashionable hat of another lady, gave so great offence, that it resulted in a law-suit. The "New York Herald" thus speaks of the affair:—

The Baltimore slang suit has resulted in the passage of a little money between the contestants. It will be remembered that one lady in society gazed with derisive scorn upon the new spring head-gear of another lady in society, and observed in the language of the day, "Oh, *shoot* that hat!" The hurler of this offensive remark was arrested by the hurlee for insult, but discharged, when she came back on her prosecutor with a suit for perjury. This likewise came to naught, and was followed by the return suit for false arrest, with damages placed at \$20,000. After alternate top and bottom fortunes, like wrestlers in an arena, the last suit brought fructified, not in \$20,000, but in a little over \$400, and the demands of feminine honor are doubtless satisfied by this termination of their legal duello. The moral is, "Do not use slang." It is apt to be misunderstood. To a mettlesome lady of fashion, talk of *shooting* her spring hat, in which her æsthetic and religious nature has been concentrated, is no better than blasphemy. She has a right to feel insulted; and the lady who has received such summary discipline at her hands will doubtless in future follow the advice of the Honorable Bardwell Slote, and w with a v.

The slang the gang is using now,  
You'll hear from every lip;  
It's *shoot the hat!* and get it boiled;  
And don't you lose your grip.

*Ed. Burton's Songs, 1876.*

*Mother.* Stand still, Tommy, or I won't get your hair combed in time for school.

*Tommy* (superciliously). Oh, *shoot* the school. — *Danbury News.*

**Shooter.** A revolver. In the Western States, on the frontier as well as in California, this murderous weapon is universally called a "five," "six," or "seven shooter," according to its capacity.

**Shooting-Iron.** A common Western term for a rifle or fowling-piece.

Drop your *shooting-iron*, or ye'll get more than ye'll send. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas.*

A hoosier was called upon the stand, away out West, to testify to the character of a brother hoosier. It was as follows:—

"How long have you known Bill Bushwhack?"

"Ever since he war born."

"What is his general character?"

"Letter A. No. 1, — 'bove par a very great way."

"Would you believe him on oath?"

"Yes, sir-ee, on or off, or any other way."

"What, in your opinion, are his qualifications to good character?"

"He's the best shot on the prairies or in the woods; he can shave the eye-winkers off of a wolf as far as a *shootin'-iron* 'll carry a ball; he can drink a quart of grog any day; and he chaws tobacco like a hoss."

So Bill Bushwhack passed muster. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

**To shoot one's Grandmother** is a common though vulgar phrase in New England and means to be mistaken or to be disappointed; to imagine one's self the discoverer of something in which he is deceived. The common phrase is, "You've shot your granny." It is, in fact, synonymous with, "You've found a mare's nest."

**Short.** *To sell short.* In the sale of stocks, cotton, &c., to sell short is to agree to deliver the article sold, at a future day.

Short transactions are a stumbling-block to beginners. To sell what you have not got, and yet make money by it, is a species of metaphysics that comes only by education.

Jacob Little has the reputation of having invented *short sales*, using options, however, as the medium of his manipulations. — *Medbery*, p. 312.

**Short-Boys.** A gang of New York rowdies.

**Short-Gown.** A short gown with hardly any skirt, worn by women when doing household work, as washing, &c.

**Short Metre.** 1. In a short period; soon. To make short metre of a thing or piece of work is to do it quickly.

Risin' to leave, "President," says I, for he seemed determined to stand in the market, "I thought I might as well make *short metre* of it, and sell him at once." *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 41.

2. A short course of study.

**Shorts.** Small-clothes; breeches.

**Shot-Gun.** A term for a smooth-bored fowling-piece, as distinguished from a rifle.

**Shote or Shoat.** An idle, worthless fellow; as, "A poor *shote*." It is also provincial in England in this sense.

Seth Slope was what we call Down East a poor *shote*, his principal business being to pick up chips, feed the hogs, &c. — *G. H. Hill, Stories*.

If you, my dear hearers, will make a proper use of your time, happiness, peace, and contentment are yours; if not, you will always be miserable *shoats*, though you live till you are as gray as woodchucks. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**Shot in the Neck.** Drunk.

Mr. Shumacher informed the court that he was instructed to remonstrate against admitting the prisoners to bail in \$500, as they had made an outrageous onslaught upon officers in the discharge of their duty, and had shot Under-Sheriff Hegeman in the head.

Counsellor McCue replied, in a somewhat facetious strain, that Mr. Hegeman is often "shot in the head;" and his manner produced much laughter after the remark.

Mr. Schumacher defended his client by observing that some of the prisoners' attorneys got as often "*shot in the neck*" as the Under-Sheriff did in the head. The aptness of this remark convulsed the bar, and even disturbed the gravity of the judge. — *Brooklyn Journal*, April 18, 1855.



**Should.** “Shall” and “should” are very generally employed instead of “will” and “would.”

**Shoulder-Hitter.** A ruffian, bully. A recent accession to blackguard nomenclature, in which we are now so rich.

Just such conduct as that exhibited by Judge R—— compelled seven thousand citizens to leave their offices, stores, shops, and factories, to rid the city of San Francisco of the pestilential presence of a band of *shoulder-hitters* and ballot-box stuffers, such as never before infested an American city. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 30, 1858.

So long as substantial citizens choose to leave politics to *shoulder-hitters*, rum-sellers, and bunners of every degree, so long will they be robbed at every turn. *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 9, 1874.

**Shouting Methodist.** The prefix, not only by others, but also by some Methodists themselves, has formerly been often employed, with reference to their shouts.

The “*N. Y. Commercial Adv.*,” in noticing the death of the Rev. W. G. Brownlow, calls him “a shouting Methodist preacher.”

**Shove.** A hemp-stalk.

**Shove.** When, with violent commotion, the ice in the St. Lawrence at Montreal in winter piles up, it is said to *shove*; and the glacial bridge is never permanently formed or safe until after the ice has shoved. Also used as a noun; as, “The *shove* took place last night.”

**Shoveller.** (*Anas clypeata*.) A beautiful duck, chiefly found in Texas and in the streams of the Rocky Mountains; though it is sometimes seen in our Northern waters.

**Show.** A good *show* means good prospects; a bad one, the opposite.

**Show!** An interjection of surprise; pshaw!

**To show off.** To make a display.

**Shucks.** The outer husk or shell of the walnut, chestnut, &c., or the husk of Indian corn. In England, the word is applied to pods as well as husks; as, *pea-shucks*. In the South, where the word is most in use, it is also applied to the shells of oysters. *Not worth shucks* is a Southern expression, meaning good for nothing. In the late civil war, when the paper money of the Confederacy depreciated, it was called *shucks*.

If them thar is all he 's got to offer, he ain't worth *shucks*; and, if you don't lick him, you ain't worth *shucks* neither. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

They had three or four hounds, and one great big yellow cow, what wasn't worth *shucks* to trail. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 48.

The bear didn't seem to care *shucks* for him; for he sot the old rifle agin the saplin', and walked off on his hind legs jest like any human. — *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian.*

**To shuck.** To *shuck* corn is to strip off the husks, called in the South "shucks," from Indian corn.

Hence, to *shuck off* one's coat is to strip or peel it off, as for a fight.

He'd get as mad as all wrath, and charge like a ram at a gate-post; and, the first thing you knowed, he'd *shuck off* his coat to fight. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**Shucking or Corn-Shucking.** See *Husking*.

And when the lamp is lighted  
In the long November days,  
And lads and lasses mingle  
At *shucking* of the maize;  
When pies of smoking pumpkin  
Upon the table stand,  
And bowls of black molasses  
Go round from hand to hand;  
When slap-jacks, maple-sugared,  
Are hissing in the pan,  
And cider, with a dash of gin,  
Foams in the social can;  
With laughter and with weeping  
Then shall they tell the tale,  
How Colt his foeman quartered,  
And died within the jail.

*Bon Gaultier, Lay of Mr. Coll.*

**Shut.** To get shut off. See *Shet*.

**To shut up.** 1. To stop talking; to hold one's tongue. A vulgar expression, for which *to dry up* is now sometimes substituted. Used also in England.

Jones was singing, "'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner;" but was soon made to *shut up*, and Leviller's name was called. — *Pickings from the Picayune.*

Did you ever see a marmaid? Well, then, I reckon you'd best *shut up*; 'cause I have, — and marmen too, and marmisses. — *Burton, Waggeries.*

The musician suddenly "*shut up*," and, after many suspicious sights at Charley, jumped over to the side of the lady, and spoke a few words in his own language with more than customary rapidity. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times.*

"Look here, boys," said the preacher to a crowd which had gathered round, laughing and betting, with slang oaths and imprecations, "None of this at the camp-meeting! This is the Lord's ground here; so *shut up* your swearing, and don't fight." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 312.

This odd expression appears in a recent work of one of England's most distinguished authors, no less than Professor Jowett, of Oxford:—

The Chalcedonian giant, **Thrasymachus**, . . . is vain and blustering, refusing to discourse unless he is paid, fond of making an oration, and hoping in that way to escape the inevitable Socrates; but a mere child in argument, and unable to foresee that the next "move" (to use a Platonic expression) will "**shut him up**," *Dialogues of Plato*, Vol. III. p. 6.

When a man speaks, he spouts; when he holds his peace, he **shuts up**. — *Rev. A. Mursell, of Carlisle, Eng.* (1858), in *Lecture on Slung*.

In New England, we sometimes hear aged women say, "We 've a **shut-up winter**," meaning that the weather has been severe, so that they have been shut up, confined to their houses.

2. To cause to stop talking; reduce to silence.

"I order you again to shut up," said the watchman. "There ain't no two ways about it: you must either shut up yourself, or I'll **shut you up** in a wink." — *N. O. Picayune*.

**Shut up your Clam-Shells.** Close your lips together; be silent. Common along the shores of Connecticut and Rhode Island, where clams abound. Same as **shut up your head**.

**Shute.** See *Shoot*.

**To shy.** To throw a light substance, as a flat stone or a shell, with a careless jerk. And so in England.

Just to make matters lively, I headed up alongside of Molly, and **shied** a few soft things at her, such as asking how she liked bar steaks cooked, and if Jim warn't equal in the elbow to a mad panter's tail, and such amusin' conversation. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**To shy around.** To hang about.

I was kind of *shying round*, and looking at the everlastin' sight of books, when he came in. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 1.

**Shyster.** A term applied to a set of men who hang about the Police Courts of New York and other large cities, and practise in them as lawyers, but who, in many cases, have never been admitted to the bar. They are men who have served as policemen, turnkeys, sheriff's officers, or in any capacity by which they have become familiar with criminals and criminal courts.

The miserable creature who has fallen into the watchman's clutches may make his escape, if he has money; but, if not, he must go to quod, and wait next day for the visits of the *shyster* lawyers, — a set of turkey-buzzards, whose touch is pollution and whose breath is pestilence. — *New York in Slices, The Tombs*.

When a man or woman 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. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The appearance of a large number of abandoned women in the Police Court drew together a large concourse of people. The *shysters*, or Tombs lawyers, were on hand, and sought to intercede for their clients; but the magistrates would listen to no appeals. — *Ibid.*, March 13, 1857.

The Prison Association held its monthly meeting last night. The report was rich in incidents and developments about the skimmers, sharks, and *shysters* of the Tombs. — *New York Express*.

**Sick.** Afflicted with disease. — *Johnson*. Ill in health.

In England, and in the genteel society of our Eastern cities, the word *ill* is invariably used for a person afflicted with disease. The good old English word *sick* is going out of use, and is seldom heard except when applied to one who is sick at the stomach or afflicted with nausea. In both the Bible and New Testament, the word “*sick*” is always used for one out of health, disordered, or afflicted with disease, while *ill* is not used in a single instance. Shakspeare uses *ill* in a few instances, but generally the term *sick*, thus:—

In poison there is physick; and this news  
That would, had I been well, have made me *sick*,  
Being *sick*, hath in some measure made me well. — *Henry IV.*, Part II. l. 1.

*Pro.* When I was *sick*, you gave me bitter pills,  
And I must minister the like to you. — *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act ii. Sc. 4.

*P.* Shut, shut the doors, good John! fatigued I said,  
Tie up the knocker, say I'm *sick*, I'm dead. — *Pope*, *Prologue to Satires*.

Chaucer, Gower, Milton, Dryden, Cowper, and the best English writers, use the word precisely in the sense given by Johnson.

2. Very indifferent, contemptible. The word is expressive, but vulgar.

**Sick Market.** When brokers very generally hesitate to buy stocks, there is said to be a *sick market*. Such a state of things is generally the consequent of a previous over-speculation. When the reverse is the condition of things, and every thing is buoyant, it is called a *swimming market*. — *Medbery*.

**Side-Hill**, for *hill-side*. The side or slope of a hill; sloping ground. — *Webster*.

Above the creek on the *side-hill*, they have dug rifle-pits, and keep up a regular system of pickets of considerable strength. — *Cor. New Hampshire Palladium*.

**Side-Lines.** In Canada, the secondary roads, the main ones being called *concession* roads, to which the *side-lines* run at right angles.

**Sideling.** Inclined to one side; directed towards one side; as, “The ground was *sideling*.”

There are no rebel picket stations. . . . On the *sideling*, they have dug rifle-pits, . . . and still occupy the fort in view of Edwards's Ferry. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

A fellow nailed up maps in a gentleman's closet, some *sideling*, and others upside down, the better to adjust them to the panels. — *Swift*.

To *sidle up* is also heard, meaning to approach sidewise; to make indirect motions.

**Side-Walk.** The walk for foot-passengers on each side of the carriage-way in a street or road. In England, it is called the "pavement."

As there is but very little mud at any time in Copiapo, and few suitable pebble stones, only a street or two has been paved; nor has the municipal council given much thought to the necessity of *side-walks*. — *Gilliss's Chili*, Vol. I. p. 252.

**Side-Winder.** A heavy blow with the fist. New York.

Mayor Wood is just the man to seize and improve in an inaugural address the opportunity of dealing Recorder Smith what the boys call a *side-winder*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Side-Wipe.** A heavy blow with the fist. Southern.

Arch would fetch him a *side-wipe* on the head, and knock him into the middle of next week. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**Sidings.** Wedge-shaped boards used for the sides and roofs of houses.

**To sidle out.** To get out sideways; to back out. Southern.

If he tried to *sidle out* of the quarrel, Arch would get as mad as wrath, an' swar, an' curse, an' run. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 31.

**Sidling.** A place at which to turn off on a railroad to wait for a passing engine. The English term is *siding*.

**Sierra.** (Span.) A ridge of mountains. The term is universally applied to mountain ridges in New Mexico and California.

At night, above their rocky bed  
They saw the stars march slow;  
The wild *Sierra* overhead,  
The desert's death below. — *Whittier*.

The *sierras*, which surround the plain, teem with the precious metals; . . . one person, without capital or machinery, derives a considerable income from a mine which produces gold, silver, lead, and sulphur from the same *sierra*. — *Ruxton's Mexico*, p. 131.

**Sight.** 1. A great many; a great deal. An old meaning of the word, still colloquial in England, and of ancient use. "A *sight* of people" is a great multitude; "my husband is a *sight* handsomer than yours," i. e. much handsomer.

A wonder *sight* of flowers. — *Gower, Conf. Amantis* (ed. Pauli.), Vol. I. p. 121.

*Sight* is used in most of the Northern and Eastern, and *heap* in the Southern and Western States.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd a powerful *sight* sooner go into retiracy among the red, wild aborigines of our wooden country, nor consent to that bill. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 74.

2. In North Carolina, the distance that can be seen on a road is called a *sight*.

3. The pupil or interior of the eye, as distinguished from the whole of the eye; as, "He was hurt in the *sight* of his eye." New England.

**Sign.** In the unsettled parts of the far West, the traces of the recent presence of men or animals are called *signs*, or, more technically, *sign*. One hears of Indian *sign*, cow *sign*, bear *sign*, hog *sign*, &c.

"What 's the *sign* out on the plains?"

"War-party of Rapahoes passed Squirrel at sundown yesterday, and nearly raised my animals. *Sign*, too, of more on the left fork of Boiling Spring." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

It is a mistake to suppose that the negro brain is incapable of that acute reasoning which constitutes a cunning hunter. I have known black men who could read "*sign*" or lift a trail with as much intuitive quickness as either red or white. — *Captain Mayne Reid, Osceola*, p. 113.

Several deer jumped out of the bottom when we entered, and on the banks of the river I saw some fresh beaver *sign*. — *Ruxton's Mexico and Rocky Mountains*, p. 173.

The men scoured the country around in search for the missing mules; and, having seen Indian *sign* keeping near us for miles, they believed the animals had been taken. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*.

Our Delawares report that they have seen numerous fresh buffalo *signs*, and that we shall soon come upon the herds. — *Captain Marcy, Report on the Red River*.

**To signalize.** To communicate information by means of signals or telegraph; to signal. An absurd use of the word.

The ship was *signalized* about eight o'clock this morning, and came up the harbor in fine style. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Jan. 17, 1848.

**To sign off.** To release a debtor by agreeing to accept whatever he offers to pay; to give a receipt in full of all demands. An expression common among merchants.

In Connecticut, the law provided that dissentients resident in a parish might become free from taxation there, as for maintenance of pastor and support of schools, on presentation of a certificate appropriately signed, stating that they conscientiously dissented, &c., and that they were members, &c., of another "approved ecclesiastical organization. Hence arose the expression *sign off*, as well as that of *certificate off*, which see.

**Silk-Grass.** See *Bear-Grass*.

**Silk-Plant.** "A plant resembling sumac, growing near springs on the great plains of the West. The bark is tough and resembles flax. The Ottos and Omahaws make lariats of the bark, which are said to be stronger and better than those made of hide. The French call it *vache à lait*; the Mexicans, *capote des acarte*; the Pueblo

Indians, *noche*. The latter make fishing-lines and fine thread of it, while the root is used for medicinal purposes." — *Stansbury's Salt Lake Expedition*, p. 175.

**Silver Fox.** (*Canis argentatus*.) A black fox, with white hairs interspersed on the back. Like the Cross-fox, this variety is rare. It is found in the United States and Canada. Its skin is used for ladies' muffs, and brings a high price.

**Silver Gar.** See *Bill-Fish*.

**Silver Grays.** This term originated in the State of New York, and was applied to the conservative portion of the Whig party. At a political convention in that State, certain measures proposed not being agreeable to many, they at once withdrew. As they left the meeting, it was observed that many were men whose locks were silvered by age, which drew forth the remark from some one present, "There go the *silver grays*!" The term remains, and is the only one now (1859) used to distinguish one branch of the Whig party.

**To simulate.** To be like another thing.

And this holds true both of actions which *simulate* the intellect, and those which *simulate* the moral sense, such as gratitude and shame in a dog. — *Tappan's Psychology*.

**'Simmon.** A contraction for *persimmon*; as in the Southern adage, "The longest pole knocks down the '*simmons*.'"

A possum on a '*simmon* tree  
With one eye looked right down on me,  
Fast by his tail the creature hung,  
And in the chorus sweetly sung. — *Comic Song*.

**Simolin.** *Simlin* and *Symlin*. See *Cimlin*.

**Sin.** Used occasionally by the illiterate for *since*: as, "Sin yesterday;" "Sin I went." Connecticut.

**Sinews.** Money; funds.

**Sing, n.** A meeting for practice in singing.

**Singed Cat.** An epithet applied to a person whose appearance does him injustice.

Who would have thought that milksop of a lawyer would have done so well? Howsomer, you can't judge a fellow from his looks. After all, that's a fact; for that critter is like a *singed cat*, better nor he seems. — *Sam Slick, The Old Judge*, Vol. I. p. 44.

Parson Brownlow has found an antagonist in the Rev. Mr. Pryne, of Cincinnati. So when the Tennessee parson visits Philadelphia, they are to have it! We reckon there 'll be fun, as a Cincinnati paper says Pryne is a perfect *singed cat*! *New Orleans Bulletin*, May, 1858.

I'd made sure you'd played hookey. But I forgive you, Tom. I reckon you're a kind of a *singed cat*, as the saying is, — better 'n you look. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 20.

**Singing.** In Pennsylvania, a singing-school.

**Sink-Hole or Sink.** A hole or depression in limestone lands where the waters sink and are lost. These places are common in the Middle and Western States. See *Cavern Limestone*.

A hunter, while in the pursuit of a deer, fell into one of those deep, funnel-shaped pits, formed on the prairies by the settling of waters after heavy rains, and known by the name of *sink-holes*. — *Irving, Tour on the Prairies*, p. 147.

Leaving the Pecos, we stopped to look at some limestone *sinks* near the road. The earth and stones had caved in, or sunk, in spots varying from ten to thirty feet in diameter. — *Bartlett's Personal Narrative*, Vol. I. p. 110.

The limestone of Jones County [Virginia] is not far off, and *sinks* are frequent in limestone beds; in Georgia, they are called *limestone sinks*. — *Silliman's Journal*, Oct., 1831.

**Sir, to You.** Said by a man returning another's salutation *viva voce* received; as, "Good morning, Sir," — "Sir, to you." Low, though intended to be extra-respectful and polite.

**Sirree.** "Yes, *sirree*," and "No, *sirree*," for "Yes, sir," and "No, sir." This vulgar slang, which originated in New York, is now heard throughout the Union. Sometimes, as if not already puerile enough, the word "*bob*" is added; as, "Yes, *sirree, bob*."

While hearing a case, the attorney stated in his plea that he believed one of the jurors was intoxicated. The judge, addressing the man alluded to, said: —

"Sir, are you drunk?"

The juror, straightening himself up, in a bold, half-defiant tone, replied, "No, *sirree, bob!*"

"Well," said the judge, "I fine you five dollars for the '*ree*' and ten for the '*bob*.'" — *Baltimore Sun*, March 30, 1857.

**Sirs.** This plural is adopted by many persons in commercial correspondence, in beginning their letters. Instead of the word *Gentlemen*, addressed to a firm, they write, *Dear Sirs*.

*Sirs*, said the umpire, cease your pother. — *Chamelion*.

**Siss and Sissy.** Contractions for *sister*, often used in addressing girls, even by their parents.

**Sistern**, for *sisters*. A vulgar pronunciation, sometimes heard from uneducated preachers at the West.

Brethurn and *sisturn*, it's a powerful great work, this here preaching of the gospel, as the great apostle hisself allows in them words of hissin what's jest come into my mind; for I never knowed what to preach till I ris up. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 203.

**Sit.** (Pron. *set*.) To sit up with is to court a young woman



**Sithe.** A sigh. Used also in England. — *Halliwel.*

**Sitio.** (Span.) A Spanish superficial measure, used in the States and Territories of Spanish origin. The *sitio* is a league of land of 5,000 varas, and is equal to 4,428 English acres.

**Six-Shooter.** A revolver with six chambers. See *Shooter.*

**To sizz.** To sizzle; to make a hissing sound; used in the same sense as *sizzle*. See below. He sat under a sun whose rays fairly made the flesh to *sizz*. — *N. Y. Tribune.*

**To sizzle.** To hiss from the action of fire. — *Forby.*

From the ends of the wood, the sap fries and drips on the *sizzling* coals below, and flies off in angry steam. — *Margaret*, p. 159.

**Skale.** See *Squale*.

**Skanes.** Iron plates to keep an axle-tree from wearing. In England, called *clouts*.

**Skearsome or Skeersome.** See *Scaresome*.

**Skeary or Skeery.** Easily frightened, timid. See *Scary*.

Give her the house and homestead, — a man can thrive and roam, —  
But women are *skeery* critters, unless they have a home.

*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 18.

**To skedaddle.** To run away; a hurried and confused retreat; a slang term which originated with our soldiers during the late civil war. It is synonymous with "to cut stick," "to vamose the ranch," "to slope," "to cut your lucky," "to clear out," "to absquatulate." The term came into general use in the contending armies, and is now as common in England as in this country.

Various have been the attempts to trace the origin of the word, one of the most remarkable of which is to trace it to Greece. First, a writer thinks he has discovered its etymology in the word *skedannumi* (σκηδάννυμι), of which the root is *skeda*, used by Thucydides (IV. 56, 112) and Herodotus (V. 102) to describe the dispersion of a routed army. Another writer, who appears in the "Louisville Journal," also claims a Grecian birth for the word. "The primitive of *skedaddle*," he says, "is a pure Greek word of great antiquity. It occurs in Homer, Hesiod, Æschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon; and it was used to express in Greek the very idea that we undertake, in using it, to express in English. Homer, in the *Iliad*, uses only the aorist *eskedasa* or *skedasa*. Thus in *Iliad*, 19-171, we have *skedason laon* for scattering, dispersing.

In Prometheus, Æschylus thus uses it (*skeda*) in making "the sun disperse the hoar frost of the morn." And again Prometheus

uses this word in predicting woes upon Jupiter, when he says that "a flame more potent than the lightning" shall be "invented, which shall (*skeda*) *shiver* the ocean trident, the spear of Neptune."

In the *Odyssey*, we find Homer using *skedasis* in describing the *scattering* of the suitors of Penelope when Ulysses should come, and in the twentieth book of the *Odyssey* we have the same word used for "the *dispersing* of the suitors to their houses," as the result of the return of Ulysses.

Another writer, in the "Albany Evening Journal," scoffs at the claims of the Hellenists for a Grecian origin of the word, and finds no difficulty in tracing it alike to the Gaelic, the Welsh, and the Irish, in each of which languages he discovers analogous words. His Welsh word is *ysgudaw*, to scud about. With this example, it is unnecessary to follow this etymologist farther. A fourth writer says it is a common Scottish word; that it means to "spill milk," and that we have wholly misapplied the word. A fifth says in the "Boston Journal" that it is a word which has long been in use among the lumbermen of Wisconsin in the same sense in which our soldiers used it.

Recently (Sept. 15, 1877) appeared in the "Philadelphia Times" a claimant for an Irish origin of the word. The writer says it occurs in the Irish version of the New Testament quotation from the prophets, thus: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," which last word is said to be *sgedadol*. In the same newspaper is a communication, the writer of which says he first heard the word on the 4th of March, 1861, the day of Mr. Lincoln's first inauguration, and made this statement in the New York "Hearth and Home" several years ago. This led to a communication from Kansas, in which the writer said he had heard the word in Kansas several years before, during the struggle between the anti-slavery and pro-slavery parties in that (then) Territory.

A writer in the "Atlantic Monthly," for August, 1877, discusses the etymology of the word, and mentions its presumed Greek origin, "from *skedannumi*, which means to scatter, and also to be scattered, to disperse, to put or take flight." The same writer says that some English friends from Lancashire told him they "had heard *skedaddle* there every day of their lives;" that it means "to scatter, or drop in a scattering way." Regarding this statement, we will only observe that we have examined the English Provincial Dictionaries of Halliwell and Wright, which profess to give all the English provincial words, as well as a large number of separate glossaries, in none of which do we find the word in question.

Congress-men may plan and twaddle  
 How the fighting should be done;  
 Bull Run taught them to *skedaddle*,  
 Ely took too slow a run. — *Song*.

With the South-east clear and General Price retiring into Arkansas in the South-west, we may expect to witness such a grand *skedaddle* of Secesh and its colored property as was never seen before. — *Missouri Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, 1861.

No sooner did the traitors discover their approach than they *skedaddled*, a phrase the Union boys up here apply to the good use the seceshers make of their legs in time of danger. — *Cor. Missouri Democrat*, Aug., 1861.

Their noisy drums had ceased, and suddenly I perceived a general *skedaddle*, as those upon our right flank started off in full speed. — *Sir Samuel Baker, Ismailia*, p. 211.

**Skeezicks.** A mean, contemptible fellow. Western.

At a Republican meeting in Indiana, the other day, a speaker named Long responded to a loud call and took the stand. But a big, strapping fellow persisted in crying out in a stentorian voice, "Long, Long!" This caused a little confusion; but, after some difficulty in making himself heard, the president succeeded in stating that Mr. Long, the gentleman honored by the call, was now addressing them. "Oh, he be d—d!" replied the fellow: "he's the little *skeezicks* that told me to call for Long!" This brought down the house. — (*Wash.*) *Evening Star*, Nov., 1858.

**Skid.** A piece of light timber, from ten to twenty feet in length, upon which heavier timber is rolled or slid from place to place.

**Skilts.** A sort of brown tow trowsers formerly worn in New England, very large, and reaching just below the knees. In Dorsetshire, England, half-boots are called *skilty-boots*.

Her father . . . wore a sort of trowsers known at the time as *skilts*; they were short, reaching just below the knee, and very large, being full a half-yard broad at the bottom, and, without braces, were kept up by the hips, sailor-fashion. — *Judd's Margaret*, p. 8.

The lad's *skilts*, through which were thrust his lean, dry shanks, gave him a semblance to a peasant of Gascony on stilts. — *Ibid.*, p. 22.

**Skimping.** Scanty, as the pattern of a dress. Used also in the south of England.

**To skin.** To get a lesson by the help of a "pony" (translation) or by cramming from a fellow-student.

Barefaced copying from books and reviews in their compositions is familiar to our students, as much so as *skinning* their mathematical examples. — *Bristed's Five Years in an Engl. Univ.*, p. 394.

But now that last Biennial's past;  
 I *skinned* and fizzled through.

C. E. Trumbull, *Song of the Sheepskin*.

Among the cadets at the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, "to be skinned" is to be demerited.

**Skink.** "Skin your own skunk," i. e. do your own dirty work.

**Skinner.** See *Shyster*.

**Skipjack.** The *skipjack* of the Boston market is the *Bonito* (*Sarda pelamys*, Linn.); but the fish more generally known by the name is the *Scomberosx scutellatus* of Lesueur, also called "saury" and "skipper." See *Blue-Fish*.

**Skipper.** The cheese-mite. Also called in England the Cheese-hopper.

**Skippery.** Abounding in cheese-mites.

With the opening of spring, insects, caterpillars, and reptiles will start from their hiding-places, and the earth appear as animated as a plate of *skippery* cheese or the carcass of a dead horse in dog-days. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 258.

**To skite.** To *skite about* is to go running about.

**To skive.** To pare; to cut thin, especially a piece of leather so as to leave a bevelled edge, as also of an inner shoe-sole, so as to leave the central part thicker or rounded up. In general use in New England.

**Skivings.** Scraps of leather; leather waste.

**Skulduggery.** Underhand plotting. Missouri.

**Skunk.** 1. (*Mephitis mephitica*.) A small, carnivorous American quadruped, allied to the weasel and badger, and which, on being irritated, emits a very fetid secretion. The name is from the Abenaki *Seganku*.

Old men, you can't conceal the sad changes time has wrought upon you. You may scent your persons with the sweetest perfume; but they will no more compare with the rich fragrance that youth and beauty emit, than the atmosphere which surrounds a wounded *skunk* can equal the odor of an orange grove. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 244.

2. A vile or good-for-nothing fellow.

Now, Tom, you *skunk*, this is the third time you've forgot to set on that switch. — *Notes on Canada, &c., Blackwood*.

**To skunk.** 1. To utterly defeat In games of chance, if one of the players fails to make a point, he is said to be *skunked*. To defeat an adversary at draughts or checkers, without having permitted him to reach the king-row, is to *skunk* him. A Presidential candidate who fails to secure one electoral vote is said to be *skunked*.

2. A student who leaves college without settling up is said to *skunk* his bills.

**Skunk-Bear.** (*Gulo luscus*.) The wolverine; so called in the Far West. Also known as the Carcajou. — *Captain Ludlow's Report on the Yellowstone*, p. 65.

**Skunk-Blackbird.** The common marsh blackbird, so called in the rural districts of New England, New York, and Canada. See *Bobolink*.

We followed that old Polyglot, the *skunk-blackbird*, and heard him describe the way they talked at the winding up of the Tower of Babel. — *H. W. Beecher, Star Papers*, p. 192.

**Skunk-Cabbage.** (*Symplocarpus fetidus*.) A strong-scented, repulsive plant, exceedingly deserving of the name it bears. The odor depends on a volatile principle, not separable by distillation. This plant has been found useful in asthma and some other diseases. — *Bigelow's Plants of Boston*.

The green, tender blades of youth, the ripened stems of manhood, and the blooming flowers of beauty, all fall indiscriminately before the fell stroke of time, and wither together like *skunk-cabbage*, clover-heads, and lilies. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 183.

To think you have got to believe every thing your party does seems just as unreasonable as it would be, when you go out to pick greens, to pick *skunk-cabbage* because cow cabbage is good and wholesome. Why, *skunk-cabbage* is pison, just as pison as ratsbane. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 250.

**Skunkhead.** The popular name, on the sea-coast, of the Pied Duck (*Anas Labrador*) of ornithologists. — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**To skylark.** To play in a rude style.

Others, alike indifferent to heat, fatigue, or hunger, were romping and *skylarking* with each other. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Skylarking.** A term used by seamen for games or tricks with each other in the rigging, tops, &c., of ships, and hence transferred to any kind of rough play.

The "New York Courier and Enquirer," May 19, 1858, in speaking of an election for officers of the Mercantile Library, says: —

There was a considerable amount of *skylarking* carried on from sunset until midnight in the halls and passages of the building, hats were smashed, and members tumbled on the floor; but everybody preserved good humor, and even the defeated candidates yielded to the contagious influence of merriment and hilarity.

**Sky-Parlor.** A cockloft; a chamber in a garret, or the garret itself.

**Sky-Pilot.** A minister of the gospel; particularly applied to chaplains in the navy.

**Sky-Racket.** The vulgar pronunciation of *sky-rocket*.

**Skyugle, Scyugle.** A queer word that originated with the Union soldiers during the late war. An army officer, writing from head-

quarters in Virginia, says : " The word *scyugle*, it will be perceived, has any meaning one chooses to attach to it: it has not only a variety, but a contrariety of meanings. It is synonymous with 'gobble' and with 'skedaddle,' is used for any other word, and for want of any other word."

A corps staff officer dismounted near me a moment ago. I inquired *who* had been riding. He informed me that he had been out on a general *scyugle* that he had *scyugled* along the front, when the Rebels *scyugled* a bullet thro' his clothes; that he should *scyugle* his servant, who, by the way, had *scyugled* three fat chickens, for a supply of ice; that after he had *scyugled* his dinner, he proposed to *scyugle* a nap. — *Army and Navy Journal*, July 11, 1864.

**Slabbing.** Among the White Mountains, a mountain is said to be *slabbed* when a road is made around its sides.

**Slab-bridged.** Whoever has driven over a stream by a bridge made of slabs will feel the force of this epithet applied to a fellow of shaky character. — *Lowell*.

**To slab off.** To throw aside as useless, like the outside piece of a log when sawn up into planks, which is called a *slab*.

You must take notice that I am *slabb'd off* from the election, and am nothing but a "voter;" and this gives me a right to dictate to the rest. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 212.

**Slab-sided.** Having perpendicular sides, wall-sided.

To get any thing to eat was only to be accomplished by taking a stand some one or two hours before meal-time, and this was invariably done by a *slab-sided* genius from the hungry side of the Granite State Hills. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

"My dear girls," said the preacher, "I like to see a small waist as well as anybody; and females with hour-glass shapes suit my fancy better than your Dutch-churn, soap-barrel, *slab-sided* sort of figures; but I don't want to give the credit to corsets." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 200.

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 indigenous to Vermont and New Hampshire. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**Slack-baked.** Applied to character; wanting in native good sense; deficient in sagacity.

**Slang.** A narrow valley. The place settled by the French Huguenots in Rhode Island has ever been called the "*slang* orchard." The word is provincial in England, where it means a long slip of land. *Wright*.

**Slang-Whanger.** This curious word is defined by Mr. Pickering as signifying "a writer or noisy talker, who makes use of that sort of political or other cant which amuses the rabble, and is called by the

vulgar name of *slang*." The word frequently occurs in Paulding's *Salmagundi*, but it is now seldom heard.

"Mere availability," and the "available candidate," are not the phrases with which the *slang-whangers* of all sides assail the Philadelphia Convention. — *New York Battery*.

Parson Brownlow is a local preacher and editor in Knoxville, Tennessee, and one of the *slang-whangers* of the South-west. — *Harper's Magazine*, Dec., 1857.

**Slang-Whanging.** Political cant. In Hotten's "Slang Dictionary" is *Slang-whanger*, "a long-winded speaker." Parliamentary.

Part of the customary *slang-whanging* against all other nations which is habitual to the English press. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Oct. 10, 1845.

If the word is, as has been supposed, of American origin, it has been adopted in the mother country: —

What else? No part I take in party fray,  
With tropes from Billingsgate's *slang-whanging* Tartars;  
I fear no pope, — and let Ernest play  
At Fox and Goose with Fox's Martyrs!

*Hood, Ode to Ray Wilson.*

**Slant.** A side blow. A slang word.

**Slantendicular.** Aslant; oblique. A factitious vulgarism.

**Slantendicularly** or **Slantwise.** Obliquely.

Pony got mad, and sent the Elder right slap over his head *slantendicularly*, on the broad of his back, into the river. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 28.

**Slap-Jack.** A pancake. A country girl formerly was not considered eligible for marriage until she could make a shirt and toss a slap-jack fairly right into the middle of the pan. In England, they are called *flap-jacks*.

To the Van Nests of Kinderhook, if report may be believed, are we indebted for the invention of *slap-jacks* or buckwheat cakes. — *Knickerbocker's New York*, p. 352.

**Slashes.** Swampy or wet lands overgrown with bushes. Southern and Western. Also heard in the State of New York.

In the Adirondacks, the term is applied to a *swath* cut by a whirlwind through the woods.

Although the inner lands want the benefit of game (which, however, no pond or *slash* is without), yet even they have the advantage of wild-turkeys, &c. — *Beverly's Virginia*, 1705, Book II.

Between this and Edenton there are many whortleberry-*slashes*, which afford a convenient harbor for wolves and foxes. — *Westover Papers*, p. 28.

**Slash-Ground.** Land on which the brush has been cut and left lying. New York.

**Slat.** A narrow piece of board or timber, used to fasten together large pieces; as, the *slats* of a cart or chair. — *Webster*. Mr. Wright says

the word is used in Northamptonshire to denote "the flat step of a ladder."

**To slat.** A word of uncertain derivation, signifying to throw down with violence. — *Toone's Glossary*.

*Slatted* his brains out, then soused him in the briny sea. — *Old Play, The Malcontents*.

With that, I handed him my axe, and he *slatted* about the chamber a spell. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 200.

Suz alive! but warn't my dander up to hear myself called a flat? down I *slat* the basket, and upsought all the berries. — *Lafayette Chronicle*.

Aunt Nancy would retire to the kitchen, and, taking up the dipper, would *slat* round the hot water from a kettle. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, May 15, 1846.

**Slate.** A programme; a list; a nomination. "To make a slate." "The party has got up a new *slate* for Members of Congress," i. e. they have prepared a new programme or a new ticket. A "portfolio."

The facts about the latest Cabinet *slate* . . . are interesting, as showing what is thought by many persons of political prominence as to the course of President Hayes in choosing his advisers. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March 1, 1877.

**Slathers.** A great quantity.

I am going to be a clown at a circus. They get *sluthers* of money, — most a dollar a day. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 75.

**Slave-Breeder.** A breeder of slaves. Formerly slaves were raised in Virginia and North Carolina, to be sold to planters farther South, where they were in demand, and hence commanded a higher price.

The *slave-breeders*, *slave-drivers*, and *slave-traffickers* of the South. — *Lett. of Count Garowski*.

**Slave-Code.** A body or digest of laws relating to slaves and slavery.

There being no *slave-code* of the government [of the United States], nor any power by which that government can hold a slave. — *Dr. Cheever in N. Y. Independent*.

**Slave-Dealer.** A slave-trader.

Well known to have been the *slave-dealers*, men who wield a large amount of money, and are very numerous in Richmond. — *Baltimore Patriot*, Nov., 1861.

**Slave-Driver.** A negro-driver, a subordinate overseer of slaves on a plantation. See *Driver*.

**Slave-Hunt.** During slavery times, a hunt after run-away slaves, often with the aid of blood-hounds.

Have ye heard of our hunting, o'er mountain and glen,  
Through cane-brake and forest, — the *hunting of men*?  
*Whittier, The Hunters of Men.*



**Slave-Labor.** The labor of slaves.

But, when I hear you avowing that *slave-labor* shall not come in competition with free labor, . . . I am led to infer that when the throat-cutting tragedy comes off, you hope to see the whites the victors. — *A Voice from the South*, p. 19.

**Slave-Liberator.** A person who liberates a slave.

By the refusal of Mr. Lincoln to act, Gordon, the slave-dealer, was hung; by his direct interference, Gordon, the *slave-liberator*, was taken from the dungeon where the cruel, slave-catching law put him. — *Washington Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, April, 1862.

**Slave-Lord.** A man made arrogant and imperious by slave-holding. *N. Y. Times*, Dec. 16, 1861.

**Slaveocracy.** The owners of slaves, as a class; slaveholders. The persons or interest representing slavery politically.

Arnold Buffum was the next talker [at the meeting of the National Reformers]. The burden of his song was the Constitution — Slavery — Free Soil — an anecdote or two — and an exhortation to curb the *slaveocracy*. — *N. Y. Express*, Sept. 4, 1848.

To this end, the entire influence and patronage of the government, its civil, military, and moral power, are all directed; and alongside of these, prominent and threatening, stands the bullying of the *slaveocracy*, boasting pointing to the bowie-knife, the pistol, and the bludgeon, and impudently taunting the entire North with cowardice. — *N. Y. Courier and Enq.*, May 27, 1856.

**Slaveocrat.** A slaveholder.

**Slave-Owner.** A slaveholder.

It has raised the price of slaves, thus diminishing the profit to *slave-owners*. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Slaveownia.** What were formerly the slaveholding States.

Their [the Confederate] officers besought them to stand firm, . . . to recall the valorous deeds of their ancestors on other fields, the honor of Secessia, the reputation of *Slaveownia* for valor and chivalry, and a great many other things. — *Letter from Kansas, N. Y. Tribune*, 1862.

**Slave-Pen.** A place for confining slaves.

The *slave-pens* which have so long disgraced the capital and the nation, and enriched their keepers, are at last to be swept away. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1862.

**Slave Power.** The political power of slaveholders; the body of slaveholders.

**Slaver.** 1. A vessel engaged in the slave-trade.

2. A person engaged in the purchase and sale of slaves; a slave-merchant or trader. — *Webster*.

The *slaver's* hand was on the latch,  
He seemed in haste to go. — *Longfellow*.

**Slave-Ship.** A ship employed in the slave-trade; a slaver. — *Webster*.

Up from the *slave-ship's* prison,  
Fierce, bearded heads were thrust;  
Now let the sharks look to it,  
Toss up the dead ones first.

*Whittier, The Slave Ships.*

**Slave State.** A State in which negro slavery exists.

Either the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye-fields and wheat-fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men. It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at final compromise between the *slave* and free *States*, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises, when made, vain and ephemeral." — *Speech of Hon. W. H. Seward, Oct., 1858.*

**Slavist.** A pro-slavery person.

The "N. Y. Independent," of May 29, 1862, in speaking of a letter of G. Gratz Brown, of Missouri, says:—

It is a brief and bold avowal, and proof of the financial necessity of emancipation in Missouri. Mr. Brown's figures are unanswerable, though 'doubtless some *slavist* will babble against them.

**Sled.** See *Ferry Flat*.

**To sleep.** Sometimes used as an active verb; as, "This steamboat can *sleep* three hundred passengers," i. e. can furnish sleeping accommodations for them. We have heard of a landlady who said "she could *eat* fifty people in her house, although she could not *sleep* half the number."

**Sleeper.** A sleeping-car.

**Sleeping-Car.** A railway car or carriage, arranged with apartments and berths for sleeping.

A *sleeping-car* always makes a jolly, family-like company, and there is nothing that destroys the conventionality of society so speedily and so thoroughly, in the matter of getting acquainted, as turning in on board one of these wandering lodging-houses. . . . Occasionally, a coy damsel or a veteran spinster seems to rebel against the free-and-easy manners of the *sleeping-cars*; but they make themselves uncomfortable, and are sure to provoke just that notice and comment they least want. — *McClure, Three Thousand Miles through the Rocky Mountains, p. 24.*

**Sleigh.** A vehicle moved on runners, and greatly used in America for transporting persons or goods on snow or ice. — *Webster*. In England, it is called a *sledge*. During the winter of 1844, after a fall of snow in London, an English newspaper observed that "the

Queen was making preparations for *sledge-driving*," which in America few would understand to mean that her Majesty was about taking a *sleigh-ride*.

Bards may sing with a musical ring  
To their love for a summer's day,  
But better for me the crystal sea,  
With a ride in a bouncing *sleigh*.

*Songs of Amherst Coll.*

**Sleigh-Bell.** A small hollow ball, made of bell-metal, having a slit in it that passes half round its circumference, and containing a small, solid ball of a size not to escape. These bells are fastened to leathern straps, which pass round the necks or bodies of the horses. They produce a musical and lively sound, which is useful to give warning of the approaching vehicle, and is pleasing to the ear.

**Sleighting.** 1. The state of the snow which admits of running sleighs. — *Webster*. As, "good *sleighting*," "bad *sleighting*;" and, in the winter when there is no snow, we say there is "no *sleighting*."

2. The act of riding in a sleigh. — *Webster*.

**Sleigh-Ride.** Used both as a noun and as a verb.

Men do not derive the right to do good from the Thirty-nine Articles, nor need they go to the Westminster Confession for liberty to recover the intemperate, set free the bond, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, educate the ignorant, and give *sleigh-rides* to beggars' children that never before laughed and cuddled in a buffalo-robe. — *Rev. H. W. Beecher*.

In winter, we *sleigh-ride*, coast, skate, and snow-ball. — *Margaret*.

**Slewed.** Topsy; drunk. A common expression in the United States, and also used in Yorkshire, England.

"Never go to bed," said a father to his son, "without knowing something you did not know in the morning." "Yes, sir," replied the youth, "I went to bed *slewed* last night, — didn't dream of such a thing in the morning." — *Whig Almanac*, 1855.

**Slice.** A common term in New England, New York, and Canada, for a large fire-shovel. Provincial in England. See *Hallivell and Wright*.

**Slick.** 1. The popular pronunciation of *sleek*, and so written by some authors. — *Webster*. It is also used adverbially in vulgar language, like many other adjectives.

"This word," says Todd, "was formerly written *slick*; and *slick* or *slicken* is still our northern word." It is also provincial in Kent; while, in other parts of England, the verb *to slick*, to comb or make sleek the hair, is provincial. — *Holloway's Prov. Dict.*

Her flesh tender as is a chicke,  
With bent browes, smooth and *slike*.

*Chaucer, Rom. of the Rose.*

That the bodie thereof is not all over smoothe and *slicke* (as we see in birds' eggs) is shewed by good arguments. — *Holland, Trans. of Pliny.*

The railroad company, out of sheer parsimony, have neglected to fence in their line, which goes *slick* through the centre of your garden. — *Blackwood's Mag.*, July, 1847.

But you 've all read in *Æsop*, or *Phædrus*, or *Gay*,  
How a tortoise and hare ran together one day;

How the hare, making play,  
"Progress'd right *slick* away,"

As them tarnation chaps, the Americans, say.

*Ingoldsby Legends*, Vol. I. p. 241.

Well! one comfort is, that there ain't many folks to see how bad you look here in the woods! We ain't used to seein' folks look so dreadful *slick*, — so it don't matter. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 114

Then here 's to women, then to liquor;  
There's nothing swimmin' can be *slicker*.

*Boatman's Song.*

Singin' is a science which comes pretty tough at first: but it goes *slick* afterwards. — *Peter Cram of Tinnecum, Knickerbocker Mag.*, 1841.

The Senate could not pass Mr. Stevenson through for England. The reason was, he was a-going through right *slick*, till he came to his coat-pockets, and they were so full of papers written by Ritchie that he stuck fast, and hung by the flaps. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 120.

I've hearn tell that courtin' is the hardest thing in the world to begin, though it goes on so *slick* arterwards. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II. p. 18.

Nobody can waltz real *slick*, unless they have the spring-halt in one leg, as horses sometimes have. — *Dow's Sermons*.

2. A smooth place in the water where fish abound. New England.

You have seen on the surface of the sea those smooth places which fishermen and sailors call *slicks*. Our boatman said they were caused by the blue-fish chopping up their prey [the menhaden], and that the oil from this butchery, rising to the surface, makes the *slick*. Whatever the cause may be, we always found fish plenty whenever we came to a *slick*. — *Daniel Webster, Private Cor.*, Vol. II. p. 332.

3. A long-handled, thin, and broad paving-chisel.

**Slick as a Whistle.** A proverbial simile, in common use throughout the United States. To do any thing as *slick as a whistle* is to do it very smoothly, perfectly, adroitly.

You know I told you in my last letter I was going to bring Miss Mary up to the chalk at Christmas. Well, I done it as *slick as a whistle*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 94.

**Slick as Grease.** Another classical expression, conveying the same idea as the foregoing; sometimes varied into *slick as ile* (oil).

**To slick up.** To make sleek; to make fine.

Mrs. Flyer was *slicked up* for the occasion, in the snuff-colored silk she was married in. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Home*, p. 211.

The house was all *slicked up* as neat as a pin, and the things in every room all sot to rights. — *Major Downing, May-day*, p. 43.

The caps most in vogue then were made of dark, coarse, knotted twine, like a cabbage-net, worn, as the wives said, to save *slicking up*, and to hide dirt. *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 72.

**To slide.** To go, be gone, be off. See also *To let slide*.

We have fought the field together,  
We have struggled side by side;  
Broken is the band that held us, —  
We must cut our sticks and *slide*.

*R. S. Willis, Student's Song.*

**To slide out.** To leave by stealth; to avoid by artifice one's share of labor or responsibility.

**Slim.** "He's looking rather *slim*," i. e. in poor health.

**Slimsy.** Flimsy; frail. Most frequently applied to cotton or other cloth.

The building is old and *slimsy*. — *Margaret*, p. 329.

**Sling.** A drink composed of equal parts of rum and water sweetened.

*Rush.* *Gin-slings* are more commonly drunk now.

**To sling.** 1. Sometimes used vulgarly instead of *to swing*.

2. To do with ease or rapidity. "I just *slung* that article."  
"To *sling* a leg," to dance.

We swung round the wharf; and, when the captain told the people who I was, they *slung* their hats, and gave three cheers. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 37.

**Slink.** A sneaking fellow.

I despise a *slink*. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 139.

**Slinky.** Thin; lank.

**Slip.** 1. The opening between wharves or in a dock. — *Webster*.

This word is peculiar to New York, where we have *Peck Slip*, *Burling Slip*, *Old Slip*, *Coenties Slip*, &c.

2. In New England, a long seat or narrow pew in a church with or without doors, in contradistinction to the old-fashioned "*square*" or "*body pew*." In some churches, when there is a door, they are called pews; when without doors, and free to all, *slips*.

3. A loose garment worn by women.

4. Milk turned with rennet, &c., before the whey separates from the curd.

**To slip.** To furnish a church with slips.

**Slife.** A distance.

Well, I've got a long *slife* off from my steamboat, the "Hunter;" and I had better look up the captain. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 145.

**Slip-Gap.** See *Gap*.

**Slipper-down.** A vulgar name in some parts of Connecticut for hasty-pudding. The etymology is obvious.

**Slippy-Noose.** A running knot; a slip knot. Connecticut.

**Slip-Slops.** Old shoes turned down at the heel. Southern.

The term is probably English; at all events, a loose shoe or slipper is called a *slip-shoe* in Norfolk.

**To slip up.** To make a mistake.

**Sliver.** A piece of any substance, as wood torn or split off. This word is, in this country, commonly pronounced *sliver*; but the English orthoepists all pronounce it *sliver*. — *Worcester*.

In New England, this word is used as a verb as well as a noun.

As there was nothin' else to get hold of, I just *slivered* a great big bit off the leg of the chair, and made a tooth-pick of it. — *Sam Slick in England*.

2. A term in constant use among the Gloucester fishermen, meaning a bait made from small fishes. *Slivers* for fishermen's use are now bought and sold, and charged in account books, as a part of the expenses of a vessel's outfit. In Newfoundland, they are called *kibblings*.

**To let sliver.** To let slip, let fly, i. e. to fire.

Old Yelp smelled the bar; and, as soon as I clapped peeper on him, I *let sliver*, when the varmint dropped. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**Bloo.** A slough. See *Slue*.

The excessively high-water divided us as a congregation. The water in the *sloo*, as every run or wet place is called at the West, . . . overflowed our causeway.

**Bloonly.** Ill or slovenly dressed.

**Slope.** A running away, elopement, escape.

Now Sol Wheelwright, I regret to say, was a rowdy,  
Who played all-fours, and kept late hours at the grog-shop,  
And, forgetting his debts and the girl he had just got engaged to,  
He left Mudfog, made a *slope*, and went off to Texas.

*Ballad of Blouzelinda.*

**To slope.** To run away. A common vulgarism.

As the officers approached, some hid themselves in their ovens, some under their beds; but a majority *sloped* without hats, shoes, or coats. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Nov. 3, 1845.

The editor of the "Eagle" cannot pay his board bill, and fears are entertained that he will *slope* without liquidating the debt. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

The constables appeared with attachments; each person interested seized his own goods, while the master and clerk *sloped* to parts unknown. — *Baltimore Patriot*, July 10, 1846.

The instant an English mob sees two dragoons coming, they jist run like a flock of sheep afore a couple of bull-dogs, and *slope* off, properly skeered. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 27.

*Ducange Anglicanus* defines "to slope," not to be forthcoming. He *sloped*; i. e., he went off. — *Glossary of the Vulgar Tongue*.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,  
Did I look on great Orion *sloping* slowly to the West.

*Tennyson, Locksley Hall.*

**To *slop over*.** To be too demonstrative; to make a mistake (particularly from excess of emotion). "B—— completely *slopped over* in his late speech in Congress." "George Washington never *slopped over*." — *Artemas Ward*.

***Slosh*.** Sludge. See *Slush*.

***Sloshing about*.** Slashing. A Western term, which is said to have been thus explained by a witness who was testifying in court relative to a row: —

"Come, witness, what had Mr. Saltonstall to do with the affair?"

"Well, I've told you, they clinched and paired off, but Saltonstall he jest kept *sloshin' about*."

"That isn't legal evidence, my good fellow, in the shape you put it. Tell us what you mean by *sloshin' about*."

"I'll try," answered the witness. "You see Brewer and Sykes clinched and fout. That 's in a legal form, ain't it?"

"Oh, yes!" said the judge: "go on."

"Abney and Blackman then pitched into one another, and Blackman bit off a piece of Abney's lip, — that 's legal too, ain't it?"

"Proceed!"

"Simpson, and Bill Stones, and Murry was all together on the ground, a bitin', goug'in', and kickin' one another, — that 's legal too, is it?"

"Very! but go on."

"And Saltonstall made it his business to walk backward and forward through the crowd, with a big stick in his hand, and knock down every loose man in the crowd. That 's what I call *sloshin' about*." — *Cairo (Illinois) Times*, Nov., 1854.

***Sloshing around*.** Like the foregoing. A Western term, conveying the same meaning.

Why, how you talk! How could their [the witches'] charms work till midnight? — and then it's Sunday. Devils don't *slosh around* much of a Sunday. *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 67.

The "New York Tribune," Feb. 21, 1877, in discussing the proceedings in the House of Representatives on the electoral votes, says: —

Speaker Randall hammered too much on the Democratic side, tore through too many rules to get a decision favorable to his party, paid too little deference to the minority. . . . Washington despatches report his almost certain defeat for Speaker of the next Congress. Let the epitaph be, — “Died of *slushing* around.”

**Slouch.** *No slouch.* “He’s *no slouch* at a picture;” i. e., he’s an excellent artist.

**Slough-Grass.** A coarse grass growing in sloughs or wet places.

The old gentleman waddled the long *slough-grass*, their only fuel, into small bundles for the stove. — *Home Missionary, Lett. from Nebraska.*

**Slue.** A slough. See *Sloo*.

The Ohio has seldom been so high here as now. All the creeks and *slues* above and below are full. — *Lett. from Illinois, N. Y. Tribune.*

**Sluice.** In California, Colorado, and other mining districts, a wooden trough about fifteen inches wide, and ten or twelve deep, of various lengths, used for washing out “pay-dirt.” A *ground-sluice* is a trough in the ground. A *tail-sluice* is a sluice below other sluices through which the earth and water passes. A *sluice-box* is a box placed at the lower end of the sluice to catch the gold.

**To sluice.** A term used by gold-miners. *Sluicing* is the process of separating gold from earth, through a wooden trough, into which a stream of water is turned. See *Ground-Sluicing*.

**To sluice off.** To divert; to lay aside.

Something of present earning must thus be *sluiced off*, to repair the poverty of the past. — *The Congregationalist*, June 3, 1862.

**Slump.** A favorite dish in New England, called an *apple-slump*, is made by placing raised bread or dough around the sides of an iron pot, which is then filled with apples and sweetened with molasses. It is also called Apple Jonathan, Apple Pot-pie, or Pandowdy; and, in Pennsylvania, an Apple Cobbler.

**To slump.** To sink in mire. — *Jamieson*. To sink in the snow or break through ice. Provincial in the former sense in England.

By the side of yon river he sleeps and he *slumps*,  
His boots filled with water as if there were pumps.

O. W. Holmes.

**Slumpy.** Marshy, swampy. — *Jamieson, Scottish Dic.* In New England and Canada, applied to wet, loose snow. The word is not in the English dictionaries in any sense.

The softening of the great body of snow renders the roads *slumpy* and full of “Thank-ye-ma’ams,” so that sleighing is not altogether a blissful experience just now. — *Providence Journal, Lett. from Maine.*

**Slung-Shot.** An offensive weapon formed of two leaden or iron bullets fastened together by a piece of rope five or six inches long.



One bullet is held in the hand, while the other hangs outside by the rope, which passes between the second and third fingers. A blow from it on the head will fell the strongest man. It is also called a Billy.

About eight o'clock in the evening, two men entered the store of C. J. Jansen & Co., and, professing to be purchasers, asked to see some blankets. Mr. Jansen, who was alone in the store, was in the act of producing the articles, when he was violently struck with a *slung-shot*, and fell insensible on the floor. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 314.

**Slunk.** Produced immaturely, as the young of a beast; slink. This form of the word is also used in the eastern counties of England.

A butcher in Cincinnati was arrested for killing a dog, dressing it like mutton, and offering it for sale. Two witnesses testified before the court that they had known the prisoner to purchase a *slunk* calf, three days old, and offer its meat for sale. — *Newspaper*.

**Slut.** (Du. *slet*, an old clout or rag.) A substitute for a lamp or candle, which is thus described: "The kerosene was all gone, and, bein' out of candles, I made what they call a *slut*, which is a button tied up in a rag, and put into a saucer of lard; you set fire to the rag, and it makes a light that is better than no light at all, jest as a *slut* is better than no woman at all." — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 50.

**To smack.** To slap the face. South-western.

**Small Potatoes.** An epithet applied to persons or things, and signifying petty, mean, contemptible; as, "He is very *small potatoes*." *Small potatoes*, except for the feeding of hogs and cattle, are worthless; hence the expression as applied to men. It is sometimes put into the more emphatic form of *small potatoes*, and *few in a hill*. Farther intensified by adding, "*The hills a good way apart, — and a great way to go to dig them.*"

It's *small potatoes* for a man-of-war to be hunting poor game like us little fore-and-aft vessels. — *Sam Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 38.

I took to attendin' Baptist meetin'; because the Presbyterian minister here is such *small potatoes* that 't wan't edifying to sit under his preachin'. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 188.

Give me an honest old soldier for the Presidency, — whether a Whig or Democrat, — and I will leave your *small potato* politicians and pettifogging lawyers to those who are willing to submit the destiny of this great nation to such hands. — *N. Y. Herald*, Dec. 13, 1846.

**Smart.** 1. Quick, active; keen, shrewd, intelligent. Ex.: "That's a *smart* lively lad of yours;" "He is a *smart* business man." These are the senses in which the word is most commonly used in this country; while in England it now usually has the meaning of showy or witty.

I say, stranger, that 's a powerful *smart*-looking chunk of a pony you 've got atwixt your legs thar; but ponies is mighty onsartin. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

New Haven, with its shady elms,  
And Hartford, with its charter, —  
Connecticut, my native State! —

Say, can you find a *smarter*? — *Allin, Home Ballads*.

I expect we free-born Americans is the *smartest* people under the sun; we do know a heap, — that is, some on us, — but we might know a cord more, ef we warn't too powerful *smart* to learn. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

2. In the South and West, the word is frequently used (as it also is in the east of England) in the sense of considerable; and especially in such phrases as "right *smart*," "*smart* chance," "*smart* sprinkle," &c.

The invariable answer of a Negro to the questions, "How much?" "How many?" &c., is, "Right *smart*," and it is difficult at times to get a more definite reply.

**Smart Chance.** 1. A good opportunity; a fair chance. A vulgar expression.

He has a *smart chance* of getting a better character. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 9.

Says I, "Friend Wolfe," for I seed there was a *smart chance* of a row, "play I won't." — *S. Slick*, 3d Ser., p. 117.

2. A good deal; a large quantity. A *smart chance* of any thing means a considerable quantity; *quite a smart chance*, or a *right smart chance*, means more; and a *mighty smart chance* is the superlative, and means a very large quantity. These singular expressions, used in the Southern and Western States, are never heard in the Eastern. *Right smart* is often used alone; as, "We have had fine weather this season, and I've *right smart* of peaches," or "*right smart* peaches."

"There 's a *smart chance* of cigars there in the bar, stranger, if you 'll try some of them," said one of the hoosiers. — *Hoffman, Winter in the West*.

We had a "*smart chance*" of snow on Thursday: it fell during the day to the depth of two inches, which makes a considerable snow-storm in this part of the world. — *Wilmington, N. C., Commercial*, Dec. 10.

I thought of the new wagon that we wanted, and such a *smart chance* of other things about the farm. — *Simms, The Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

How is the old woman and the boys?

Considerable sassy, only thar 's been a *smart chance* of ague down in our neck of the woods. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

I don't pretend to say, stranger, what sort of cattle you have in your country; but I reckon there 's a *right smart chance* of self-conceit among you Yankees. — *Letter from the South, N. Y. Journ. of Com.*

A correspondent of the "New York Evening Post," in giving the peculiarities of diction prevalent near Galena, in Illinois, says: —

If you should go into the house where the ladies are making a fine quilt, and say to them, "Ladies, you are making a fine quilt," they would reply, "Yes, but it takes a heap of truck and *right smart* thread."

**Smart Ellicks.** Stupid fellows who think themselves smart. South-western.

**Smartness.** Shrewdness; keenness in a trade.

It is a great error to suppose that the New England States continue to deserve their character for "*smartness*." Their day is past. Wooden nutmegs and bass-wood hams were well enough some years ago; but that sort of business at best was beneath the dignity of rascals who "go in" for their hundreds of thousands, and whose operations ruin households instead of merely giving them indigestion. The keen fellows now live in the West. — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept. 11, 1857.

**Smart Piece.** A good bit; a considerable time.

The first time, stranger, that I ever see Charley Birkham was a *smart piece* ago, — nigh on to a year or so arter I left up thar in Tennessee, whar I was raised. *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Smart Sprinkle.** A good deal; a good many. Used in the interior of the Western States.

In answer to some query about snakes, our landlord said there was a *smart sprinkle* of rattlesnakes on Red Run, and a powerful nice day to sun themselves. *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 85.

I hadn't sot more 'n a minit when I heerd a snort, and a roar, and a growl, and a right *smart sprinklin'* of fast travellin', all mixed up together. — *Western Tale, Smoking a Grizzly Bear*.

It is too late for me to commence plainin' my language, though I once had a pretty *smart sprinklin'* of larnin'; but I have always thought when I was young I collapsed a flue, and a right smart chance of it leaked out. — *Tale of the Berkshire Pig*.

**Smasher.** A low word denoting any thing very large or grand of the kind. It is of English origin.

Put up your benefit for that night; and if you don't have a *smasher*, with at least six wreaths, say I don't understand managing the theatres. — *Field, Drama at Pokerville*.

Them 's the right kind o' parties, where there are married folks and young folks together. Mrs. Knight is going to give such a one a regular *smasher*, and she 's able to do it. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**Smear.** Food; hash; grub, especially a society spread or supper.

**Smear Case.** (Dutch, *smeer-kaas*.) A preparation of milk made to be spread on bread, whence its name; otherwise called Cottage-cheese. In New York, it is called Pot-cheese.

**Smellage.** The plant lovage. (*Ligusticum levisticum*.) Connecticut.

**Smelling-Committee.** Persons appointed to conduct an unpopular investigation. The phrase originated in the examination of a convent in Massachusetts by legislative order.

**Smile.** A drink, dram. A cant word.

A sturdy young German, with a buxom lass of recent importation, called upon an alderman to be married. . . . When the ceremony had been performed, the alderman smiled upon the twain; and thereupon the "crowd" was invited into the Fifth Ward Hotel, and one general *smile* entirely absorbed the fee. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan. 31, 1855.

**Smiling.** Drinking, tippling.

A writer from the White Sulphur Springs says: —

Last night, a young man here was borne to another world on the wings of spirits, — that is died of *mania-à-potu*. Another impetuous youth is said to have dosed himself with too much morphine, through the effects of too much love or folly. They say, too, he is dead. There are many more fast boys about, — some devoted to the sex, some to horses, some to "*smiling*," and some to "the tiger." (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Aug. 23, 1858.

**Smoke-Stack.** The iron chimney or smoke-pipe of a steamboat. Thus John Hay, after describing an explosion and the escape of the passengers, says: —

Sure as you 're born, they all got off,  
Afore the *smoke-stacks* fell.

*Jim Bludsoe of the Prairie Belle.*

**Smoke the Pipe of Peace.** An expression of the Indians, indicating friendly relations; a ceremony preparatory to making a treaty of peace.

To our great King your gifts we will convey,  
And let him know the Talk we 've had with you;  
We 're griev'd we cannot *smoke the Pipe of Peace*,  
And part with stronger proofs of Love and Friendship.

*Robert Rogers, Pontec, A Tragedy* (1766), p. 25.

He says he came to *smoke the pipe of peace* with the Onondagas; but I see he came to knock them in the head, if his Frenchmen were not too weak to fight. *Speech of an Iroquois Chief to La Barre, Parkman's Count Frontenac*, p. 108.

Let him sport his hound and hickory,  
Let him *whiff the weed of peace*.

Olden Oakwood, live for ever!

May thy fame with years increase!

*Wm. Boyd, Oakwood Old, a Colored Quillograph, Cambridge (Mass.) Chronicle*, 1857.

**Smooth.** A meadow, or grass field.

Get some plantain and dandelion on the *smooth* for greens. — *Margaret*.

**To smouch.** To gouge; to take unfair advantage. Colloquial in New York.

**To smouze.** To demolish, as with a blow. Used in Ohio.

**Smudge.** A heap of damp combustibles placed on the windward side of the house and partially ignited, that the inky steam may smother or drive away mosquitoes. It is a north of England word.

We had taken about ten pounds of trout; and the first procedure, after reaching the camp, was to build a *smudge* or smoke-fire, to drive away these abominable gnats, who fortunately take flight with the first whiff of smoke. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*.

I have had a *smudge* made in a chafing dish at my bedside, after a serious deliberation between choking and being devoured at small mouthfuls; and I conscientiously recommend choking. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

**Snabby, or Snab.** Stylish; tasteful; good-looking. A college word.

**Snag.** A tree having its roots fastened in the bottom of a river; or a branch of a tree thus fastened. These are common in the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and frequently destroy steamboats which come in contact with them, by piercing their bows or sides. The word itself is not a new one, and is defined by Johnson as "a jag or sharp protuberance."

That war jest light enough as we floated down the Missouri to tell that *snags* war plenty, and jest enough corn-juice inside to make a fellar not care a cuss for them. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I. p. 278.

**To snag.** To run against a snag or projecting branch of a sunken tree.

Drove a pretty fair business last year; only sunk one broad-horn, and that war *snagged* in the Mississippi. — *Ben Wilson's Jug Race*.

**Snag-Boat.** A steamboat fitted with apparatus for removing snags or other obstructions to navigation, in rivers. — *Simmonds*.

**To snake.** 1. To crawl like a snake. A common expression at the West. The following illustration of the use of this term is from a Western newspaper :—

In Iowa, as in other new countries, the duties of a judge often begin before a court-house or place of shelter has been provided. Not long since, Judge Williams was obliged to hold his first court beneath the shade of a large tree, where logs were rolled up for seats, a larger one being provided for the Judge. The clerk used a shingle on his knee for a desk; and the jury, after being charged by the judge, were sent in care of a sheriff to a hollow or ravine, where they could sit in conclave beyond the view of the court or spectators.

The grass grew very tall in the neighborhood, and the jurymen lay down in a ring in the grass, where they could more perfectly exclude themselves from observation. The jury had not been long in their quarters, when a tall, raw-boned fellow rose up and addressed the Judge as follows :—

"May it please your honor, I wish to speak to you." "Order, sir; what is it?" "Judge," continued he, with the utmost gravity, "is it right for fellows to *snake* in the grass?" "How? what is that, sir?" "Why, you see," said the Yankee, "ther's some fellows who 's tarnal 'fraid the Grand Jury will find something agin 'em, which they deserve; and they are *snaking* up to the Grand Jury on their bellies in the grass, kind of trying to hear what the jury are talking about." "No," responded the judge, with as much gravity as he could command, "I do not allow of *snaking*. Here, Mr. Sheriff, go station a guard around each jury's hollow; and if, a man is found '*snaking*,' have him brought before me, and I will cause him to be punished."

But while I drink'd the peaceful cup of a pure heart and mind  
(Mixed with some whiskey, now and then), Pomp he *snaked* up behind,  
And, creepin' gradually close to, as sly as any mink,  
Jest grabbed my leg, and then pulled foot quicker than you could wink.

*J. R. Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

2. To beat; to thrash. Southern.

Any gal like me, what can take a bag of meal on her shoulder and tote it to mill, ought to be able to *snake* any man of her heft. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 120.

**Snake-Doctors.** Dragon flies. South-western.

**Snake-Fence.** A zig-zag fence built up of split rails; common in all newly settled districts where wood abounds. Also called a *Virginian fence*.

**Snake-Head.** An object of dread to travellers on the early railways. It consisted of the end of a flat iron rail, which was sometimes thrown up in front of the car-wheels, and passed through the cars. Serious accidents have been caused by them. This species of rail, however, is no longer used, except for temporary purposes.

The road to Petersburg consists of an iron strap laid upon pine timbers, and is beautifully diversified with that peculiar, half-horizontal, vibrating rail, known as "*snake's head*." Frequently, during our short ride, an iron *snake* would strike his heavy *head* against the iron fenders of our car; and then, as we rolled on unharmed, he would shake himself as if in *wrath*, awaiting another opportunity for vengeance. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To snake in.** To take in; to draw in.

They had a tough subject in the inquiry-room [in Boston] this week. Moody wrestled with him, and Sankey sang with him, but the man seemed to despair of forgiveness. Finally, Moody asked him what heavy sin burdened his mind, and he confessed to having beat a newspaper publisher out of three years' subscription. The evangelist informed him that they did not profess to perform miracles; but if he would settle up his dues, with compound interest, and pay for three years more in advance, although they could not open the doors of the church to him, perhaps he might be *snaked in* under the canvas. — *Boston Bulletin*, Feb., 1877.

**To snake out.** To drag out; to haul out, as a snake from its hole. A farmer, in clearing land, attaches a chain to a stump or log, whereby to draw it out; this he calls *snaking* it out. Major Downing says, in speaking of a person who fell into the river: —

We *snaked* him out of that scrape as slick as a whistle. — *Letters*, p. 14.

I went down again, and found the cow as dead as a herrin'. We skinned her, and *snaked* her out of the barn upon the snow. — *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March, 1848.

**Snake-Rail.** A rail occasioning *snake-heads*; a train-rail.

The Winchester Railroad was built many years ago with the *snake-rail*, the ends of a large number of which, having become unfastened, spring up and down whenever a train passes. — *Winchester Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Snake-Root.** Many plants have obtained a reputation as cures for the poison of the rattlesnake; and, while none of them have retained their character in this respect, the really active properties which brought them into notice have obtained for some of them a place in our *Materia Medica*. Among the best known and most important are *Black snake-root* (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), *Virginia snake-root* (*Aristolochia serpentaria*), and *Seneca snake-root* (*Polygala senega*). Other species of these genera are sometimes known as *snake-roots*.

**Snap.** 1. Applied to the weather; as, "A cold *snap*," i. e. a period of sudden cold weather. A common expression.

Even the cold *snap*s as well as the threatened storms have turned into genial breezes and bright sunshine. — *Providence Journal*.

2. Energy; smartness. "There's no *snap* in him;" i. e., he has no energy, no spirit.

**Snap, adj.** Rapid, quick, off-hand. "A *snap* judgment," "*snap* bargain."

**Snap-Beans or Snaps.** See *Bush-Bean*.

**Snapneck.** A New Jersey name for Apple-brandy.

**Snapped.** Drunk. Used at the South.

I like to forgot to tell you 'bout Cousin Pete. He got *snap*t on egg-nog when he heard of my engagement. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 102.

**Snapping Turtle.** (Genus *Chelonura*.) A reptile common to all parts of the United States, so named from its propensity to snap at every thing within its reach.

A member observed, who in speeches was fertile,  
They handled the knight like a vile *snapping* turtle.

*House of Wisdom in a Bustle* (1798), p. 21.

**Snarl.** 1. A quarrel; an angry contest. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

This gallant officer and estimable man [Sir John Harvey] has been transferred from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland, where Lord Falkland had got into a *snarl*. *Com. Adv.*, April 1, 1846.

The members of the House of Representatives got themselves into a most admirable *snarl* on Saturday afternoon, by their proceedings in reference to the recent case of resistance to the serving of a habeas corpus writ. — *Boston Traveller*, Feb. 12.

2. A brood; a tribe.

The Rev. Mr. Scrantum, having expressed a wish to withdraw from his parish in consequence of the insufficiency of his salary, which was four hundred dollars a year with a "donation party," one of his miserly parishioners said: —

He hoped Mr. Scrantum's request would be granted; that for his part he'd long been of opinion they'd ought to have a cheaper minister, and one that hadn't such a *marl* of young ones. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 270.

**Snatched.** "Don't be *snatched*;" i. e., do not be in too great a hurry. South-western.

**Sneaking Notion.** 1. To have a *sneaking notion* for a lady is to have a timid or concealed affection for her.

Well, I always used to have a sort of a *sneakin' notion* for Mary Stallins. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 11.

I e'en a'most made up my mind to break the ice to Hannah Downer, and tell her I shouldn't wonder if I had a *sneakin' notion* arter her, — then I should ha' been reglar courtin' in less than a month. — *Traits of American Humor*, Vol. II.

2. An idea; an indefinite opinion, rough guess; a half conception.

An army such as me would fright the devil, —

What are ye giggling at? Can't ye be civil?

There, — that's well done; now I've a *sneaking notion* —

When I get hum — I'll git some grand promotion.

*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*, p. 102.

**To be sneezed at.** Used with reference to magnitude. A thing that is *not to be sneezed at* is not to be despised

My knowledge of horse-flesh ain't *to be sneezed at*. I buy a horse for fifty dollars, and sell him for two hundred; that's skill, — it ain't cheat. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 173.

**Sneezer.** A dashing, thorough-going fellow. Allusive to a horse's snorting.

It's awful to hear a minister swear; and the only match I know for it is to hear a regular *sneezer* of a sinner quote Scripture. — *Sam Slick*.

**Snell.** See *Leader*.

**Snifter.** A dram of alcoholic liquor.

A young man at the dinner of a distinguished statesman, having refused a glass of wine, was complimented on the picture of moral grandeur he had shown in so doing: —

"Not a single glass?" asked the host.

"No," said the excellent young man, "I never drink wine; but, if you have got a little good old rye whiskey, I don't mind taking a *snifter*."

**Snipe.** In Wall Street slang, a curbstone broker.

Solid brokers are wont to scoffingly declare that [the Open Board] represents some hundred millions of defunct capital, its members being mainly street bankrupts who have lost credit by unfortunate speculations. They are simply *snipes* and lame ducks. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 131.

**Snipe-Bill.** (Pron. *snibill*.) The iron bolt which connects the body of a cart or other two-wheeled vehicle with the axle. Rhode Island.



**Snippy.** Finical; and, substantively, a finical person. A woman's word. In the South, they use the word *snipitious*. See *Nipping*.

**To snoop.** (Dutch, *snoepen*.) To clandestinely eat dainties or other victuals which have been put aside. A servant who goes slyly into a dairy-room and drinks milk from a pan, or a child who makes free with the preserves in the cupboard, is said to be *snooping*. The term is peculiar to New York.

**Snooser.** A thief who follows the business of robbing the boarders at hotels. He takes board and lodgings, and endeavors to share a room and become familiar with some country merchant; after which, by various tricks, he succeeds in robbing him. The police reports of New York exhibit frequent cases of this system of depredation.

**Snore.** (Dutch, *snoer*, a string.) A string with a button on one end to spin a top with. This term is retained by the boys of New York.

**To snore.** *I snore!* is one of the many euphemistic oaths used in New England.

A countryman, discussing the "Stamp Act" of which he had just heard, says:—

I vow, I swamp, I swear, I snore,  
I never heard the like before.

*Moving Times and No Friends* (1750), p. 4.

I hain't lived in the woods to be skeered at owls, *I snore*. — *Margaret*.

**To snort.** To laugh outright. — *Brockett's Glossary*. Used in low language in New England.

We all *snorted* and snickered. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 15.

**Snorter.** 1. A dashing, riotous fellow. A vulgar Western term.

"I'm a roaring earthquake in a fight," sung out one of the half-horse, half-alligator sort of fellows, "a real *snorter* of the universe. I can strike as hard as fourth-proof lightning, and keep it up, rough and tumble, as long as a wild-cat." *Thorpe's Buckwoods*, p. 183.

2. A gale of wind.

The skipper said, after we have had our grub, we must make all snug, for we're going to have a *snorter*. — *The Cape Ann Fisherman*.

3. The edge pieces of tortoise-shell, called also toe-nails or nails.

**Snowball.** A jeering appellation for a Negro.

**Snow-bound.** Obstructed, hindered, delayed by snow.

**Snub up.** An expression used by canal-boatmen, meaning "to tie up" their boats.

A man came rushing from a house,  
Saying, " *Snub up* your boat, I pray,  
*Snub up* your boat, *snub up*, alas,  
*Snub up* while yet you may."

*Mark Twain, Roughing It, p. 369.*

**Snucks.** *To go snucks*, to share equally.

**Snuff-Dipper.** One who makes a practice of chewing snuff. See *To dip Snuff*.

**Snuff-Taker.** (*Melanetta velvetina*.) The coot or white wing. So called, perhaps, from the bright red of the bill near the nostril. Connecticut.

**Snug.** A projection or shoulder against which a piece fits, in machinery.

**To snug.** To conceal from the owner; to purloin. English boys use the word *smug* in a similar sense.

I'd rather starve than make money in any low way. I'd stuff watches, drop pocket-books, or do any thing in the genteel way, but I'd never condescend to *smug* dogs. — *A Glance at New York*.

**I anum!** A New England euphemism for *I swear!*

The Yankee boy, with staring eyes,  
When first the elephant he espies,  
With wonder *snums*, and swons, and cries,  
"By golly!" — *Home Journal*.

**So** is often used for *such*. An old form of speech, which may now be considered antiquated.

Professor W——, who has acquired *so* high distinction in teaching the elements of music and singing. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Soak.** A carousal; thorough drunkenness. In England, as well as in the United States, a "soaker" is an habitual drunkard.

When reciprocating a treat with comrades, they take a less quantity at a time than is taken at the North. . . . When a Southron intends to have a *soak*, he takes the bottle to his bedside, goes to bed, and lies there till he gets drunk, and becomes sober, when he gets up. — *Parsons's Tour among the Planters*.

**Soak, Soaker.** An old soak or soaker is an habitual drunkard.

**To soak.** To bake thoroughly. It is particularly applied to bread, which, to be good, must be macerated, as it were, in the caloric of the oven. If it be dough-baked, the complaint is that it has not been sufficiently *soaked*. — *Holloway*. This word is used in the same sense in New England.

**Soap-Berry.** (*Sapindus marginatus*.) A tree growing along the coast of Georgia, Florida, and Texas, bearing hard black nuts, which are strung for beads and crosses.

**Soap-Lock.** A lock of hair made to lie smooth by soaping it. Hence, also, a name given to a low set of fellows who lounge about the markets, engine-houses, and wharves of New York, and are always ready to engage in midnight broils. It is, in fact, but another name for a Rowdy or Loafer. The name comes from their wearing long side-locks, which they are said to smear with soap, in order to give them a sleek appearance.

The way my last letter has cradled off the *soap-locks*, and imperials, and goat-knots, and musty shows, is truly alarming. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Soap-Plant.** (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*.) A plant common in California and New Mexico, where it is called *amole*, and which, when pounded and broken, answers the purposes of soap. Besides its detergent quality, the leaves are used for making mats for saddle-cloths.

After leaving the creek, we passed a barren rolling prairie with scanty herbage, and covered with the palmilla or *soap-plant*. — *Ruxton's Adv. in Mexico*, p. 217.

**Soary.** Inclined to soar; taking high views; imaginative.

The newspaper correspondents from Western Virginia are a very *soary* or a very hoaxy set of fellows. — *Pittsburg Democrat*.

**Sobbed.** Soaked; wet. Applied to lands. An English word, though little used.

The high lands are *sobbed* and boggy. — *Lett. from Charleston, N. Y. Herald*.

**Soodolager.** This strange word is probably a perversion in spelling and pronunciation of *doxology*, a stanza sung at the close of religious services, and as a signal of dismissal. Hence, a *socdolager* is a conclusive argument; the winding up of a debate; a settler; and figuratively, in a contest, a heavy blow, which shall bring it to a close. The term is also applied to a patent fish-hook, having two hooks which close upon each other by means of a spring as soon as the fish bites, thereby securing its victim.

In his remarks on an excellent move at a game of chess, the editor of the "N. Y. Spirit of the Times" observes: —

This is a *socdolager*; there is not even temporary relief to be obtained; the manner in which the game is now brought to a conclusion is certainly neat.

I gave the fellow a *socdolager* over his head with the barrel of my gun, when he sot off as if the devil had kick'd him on eend. — *Crockett's Bear-Hunt*.

Oh! I forgot to tell you that in the fight, as I aimed a *socdolager* at the fellow, he ducked his head, and, hitting him awkwardly, I sprained my wrist. — *Colonel Jones's Fight, A Kentucky Story*.

This word has been adopted in England, and, not understanding it in the least, it is written *slogdollager*, from the vulgar *slog*, to hit out hard

Up, niggers! slash, smash, sack, and smite,

*Slogdologize*, and slay 'em:

Them Southern skunks ain't much to fight,

So at 'em, darn 'em! flay 'em!

[*London*] *Punch*, *Jonathan's Appeal to Sambo*, Aug., 1862.

**Sociable.** 1. A name sometimes applied to a sofa.

2. A gathering of people for sociable purposes. New England.

Notice.—A *Sociable* will be given at Camp's Hall, on Monday evening.—*Winsted* (Conn.) *Herald*.

One of the *sociables* of the Soldiers' Aid Society was held in Camp's Hall, on Monday evening.—*Litchfield Enquirer*.

**Socialistic.** Appertaining to the principles of socialism.

And now let us briefly assure the "Courier" that it is greatly, grievously wrong in supposing that we shrink, or falter, or despond with regard to the future of France, in view of the prominence and imminence given to social theories and ideas by the new Revolution. On the contrary, our columns will bear witness that we have, from the hour that the fall of Louis Philippe was known here, to this moment, profoundly rejoiced in the Revolution itself, and more especially in its *socialistic* aspects and tendencies.—*N. Y. Tribune*, April 25, 1848.

**Society.** 1. In Connecticut, a number of families united and incorporated for the purpose of supporting public worship is called an *ecclesiastical society*. This is a parish, except that it often, in recent usage, has not territorial limits. In Massachusetts, such an incorporated society is usually called a "parish," though consisting of persons only, without regard to territory.—*Webster*.

2. A small assembly for worship. New Jersey; formerly in New England.

3. The communicants and catechumens, or "members received on trial" (probationers) by a preacher, &c. Methodist Episc. Ch. Both these applications of the word came from England.—See *Hist. of Methodism*.

**To sock.** To press by a hard blow a man's hat over his head and face. Used in Rhode Island. I have never heard it elsewhere. The New York term is *to crown*. In Berkshire, England, *to sock* is to strike a hard blow.—*Wright, Prov. Dic.*

In this sense, we sometimes hear the word. Two loafers are fighting; one of the crowd cries out, "*Sock it to him.*"

**Soda.** Generally said instead of "soda-water;" as, "Take a glass of soda." See *Alkali Desert*.

**Soda-Prairie.** A plain covered with an efflorescence of soda, elsewhere called natron. These plains, of great extent, are found in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona.

**Soft-Corn.** Flattery. The more common terms are "soft sawder" and "soft soap," which see.

I allowed that the old man was pretty green, or he'd never swallowed all the soft corn I fed him on. — *Major Bunkum, Spirit of the Times.*

**Softliness.** Manner of one who moves or works softly; quality of moving, or of that which is done softly.

The inefficiency and decline of . . . are the natural results of the softliness and pliancy which have characterized it. — *Reflections of a Visitor upon the Character of Dr. Emmons, by Rev. E. A. Park.*

**Soft Money.** Paper money; greenbacks. In the contest for and against the resumption of specie payment (in 1876), the term *soft money* was applied to the issues of paper, and *hard money* to those of gold and silver. So, those who would flood the country with paper money were called the *soft money* party; and the advocates of a resumption of specie payments, the *hard money* party.

Hendricks, after being defeated by Tilden's organization, was persuaded to take the second place on the [Presidential] ticket: it was from this that Tilden surrendered to his *soft money* associate. — *Providence Journal*, Oct. 10, 1876.

**Soft Sawder, i. e. Soft Solder.** Flattery; blarney.

Sam Slick said he trusted to *soft sawder* to get his wooden clocks into a house, and to human nature that they should never come out again. — *Nature and Human Nature*, p. 311.

There's all sorts of ways of *soft sawderin'*. He's a politician; and, if he don't know how to lay it on thick, it's a pity. He intends his whitewash shall stick. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 32.

**To soft sawder.** To flatter; to blarney.

I don't like to be left alone with a gall: it's plaguy apt to set me a *soft sawder-in'* and a courtin'. — *Sam Slick in England*, p. 19.

**Soft-Shell Crab or Soft Crab.** See *Shedder Crab*.

**Soft-Shell Democrats, Soft-Shells, or Softs.** The less conservative division of the New York Democrats. See *Hardshell Democrats*.

At a Democratic meeting in the County of Orleans, N. Y., in September, 1858, it was: —

*Resolved*, — That the terms Hunker, Barnburner, *Soft-shell*, and *Hardshell*, have become obsolete, and hereafter we will be known only by the term Democrat; and that we will regard all as such who are sound upon national politics, and adhere to the usages of the party.

**Soft Soap.** Flattery; blarney. A vulgar phrase, though much used. See *Soft Sawder*.

**To soft soap.** To flatter; to blarney.

I am tired of this system of placemen *soft soaping* the people, — telling them just before an election what fine, honest, noble, generous fellows they are, and

then, just after election, turning their backs on them. — *Mike Walsh, Speech*, Sept., 1843.

My popularity with the ladies was amazin'. To see them flattering and *soft soaping* me all at once, you would have sworn I had nothing to do but pick and choose. — *McClintock's Tales*.

You don't catch me a slanderin' folks behind their backs, and then *soft soapin'* them to their faces. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 308.

**Soft Thing.** Any piece of luck or success.

**Soft Woodlands.** A term applied, in the British Provinces, to the districts or intervals covered with various species of pine-trees.

**Sog.** A lethargy.

**Sold.** Cheated; deceived; taken in. See *Sell*.

An advertiser of American watches says:—

The foreign watch is made by women and boys by hand, and are irregular in their movement. They are only designed to sell, and the buyer is most thoroughly *sold*. — *Newspaper*.

**So Long.** Used in taking leave, like "Good-by." Louisiana.

**Some.** 1. Somewhat; something. Ex.: "He is *some* better than he was;" "It rains *some*," &c. Used chiefly by the illiterate. — *Pickering's Vocabulary*.

2. Of some account; considerable; notable; famous. A modern slang use of the word.

A mere glance would tell the gazer that this gentleman was no ordinary man, either in a physical or mental point of view: as an ancient Roman poet used elegantly to express it, it at once became evident that he was "*some*." — *N. Orleans Delta*.

I do not know whether you have any canebrakes at the North; but our Georgia canebrakes are *some*, I can tell you. — *Lett. from Georgia, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

When a boy, our trapper was "*some*," he said, with the rifle, and always had a hankering for the West. — *Ruzton, Far West*, p. 54.

We don't remember a closer or severer winter since that in which the old Tribune office burnt down, which was admitted by the oldest inhabitant to be "*some*" in the way of cold winters. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 15, 1849.

Hiram Twine was a good specimen of a go-ahead Yankee. He was *some* on horses, numerous at billiards, immense at ten-pins, and upwards of considerable among the politicians. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

The following upon the Carpet-bagger is from a newspaper:—

I'm *some* on "Constitutions"  
For a late rebellious State;  
And I'm *some* on persecutions  
Of disloyal men I hate;  
I'm *some* at nigger meetings,  
When white folks ain't about,

And *some* among the nigger gals,  
When their marins don't know they 're out.

I'm *some* on a convention,  
When I draw an "X" per day,  
And opposed to all adjournments,  
If I only draw my pay.  
I drew it down at Jackson,  
Where for months I kept my seat,  
And I laid a heavy tax on  
All you wear and drink and eat.

But now my day is over,  
My Constitution's killed,  
Again I am a rover,  
And my pockets are not filled.  
All my money has been spent on  
An electioneering "bum," —  
Farewell to Mississippi,  
"Oh, I wish I was ter hum!"

**Some Pumpkins.** A term in use at the South and West, in opposition to the equally elegant phrase "small potatoes." The former is applied to any thing large or noble; the latter to any thing small or mean.

A writer in the "Pennsylvanian," under date of Nov. 15, 1849, thus explains its origin:—

"I am not aware of the saying being incorporated into any play extant, although it can claim an existence of nearly sixty years. It originated with James Fennell, the celebrated tragedian, who came to this country in the year '92. As the circumstance which gave rise to it is somewhat singular, I take the extract from his life, published in the year 1814, which gave birth to an expression that has now become a part and portion of our *polite*, and I may say *new*, style of conversation. When quite a lad, Fennell, in company with Dr. Mosely, and the celebrated philosopher Mr. Walker, and son, made the tour of France. Speaking of this portion of the journey, the author says:—

"I recollect nothing of consequence that took place, till we arrived at the celebrated city of Rouen. Physic and philosophy had, from their situation in front, a wide share of vision; but young Walker and myself could only look down. Wishing, however, to see all we could, we kept peeping through our little windows. As we were passing, without our [the young ones] knowing it, the famous Cathedral of Rouen, young Walker, peeping through his little square, exclaimed, "Look, Fennell, what *immense pumpkins*." His father, who had been attentively gazing at the building, turned round, exclaiming, "God! can you be looking at pumpkins, while you are passing such a cathedral as this?" Young Walker observed that he did not know what he was passing, for he could see nothing above the ground."

"Young Fennell could not resist the temptation of plaguing Walker about the pumpkins; so, whenever they approached a stately building or towering spire, he would invariably exclaim, 'Look, Walter, there are "*some pumpkins!*"' It is almost needless to say it became a favorite, if not a common saying, as it is to this day."

This story is sufficiently circumstantial, and the origin it assigns may be the true one; yet the stress which is always laid on the "*some*" in this phrase shows that it has the purely adjectival sense which we have ascribed to the word under number two, whereas the anecdote gives it its usual pronominal meaning.

Although the Mexican women are not distinguished for beauty, I never remember once to have seen an ugly woman. Their brilliant eyes make up for any deficiency of feature, and their figures are full and voluptuous. Now and then, moreover, one does meet with a perfectly beautiful creature; and, when a Mexican woman does combine such perfection, she is "*some pumpkins*," as the Missourians say when they wish to express something superlative in the female line. — *Ruxton's Adventures in Mexico*, p. 57.

General Cass is *some pumpkins*, and will do the needful in the office line, if he is elected, which I hope and trust will be his fate. I am no Democrat, as embraced on their whole platform; but I am, what I conceive to be, a "least evil" man. — *N. Y. Herald*, June 21, 1848.

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'm out of my cradle, I'm safe through my teens,  
I guess I'm "*some pumpkins*," and think I know beans;  
Henceforth I'm to battle, with banner unfurled,  
And carve my way through a thundering rough world — *Doesticks*.

From a poem that appeared in the "London Times," on American affairs, during the late civil war: —

And these vos the tidins this news it did tell,  
That great Yankee Doodle vos going to — vell,  
That he vos a-volloped by Jefferson D.,  
And no longer *some punkins* vos likely to be.

**Somewheres**, like *anywheres* and *nowheres*, is a common vulgarity; as, "A hundred dollars, or *somewheres* there along," i. e. thereabouts.

**Soon**. At the South, this word is frequently used by all classes as a substitute for *early*. Thus one says, if about to depart on a journey, "I shall put out (i. e. start) *soon* in the morning." "I shall be there *soon* in the evening."

**Soot-Tea**. A decoction of soot taken from a chimney, believed by some old grannies to be a sovereign remedy for the colic or cholera.



"Is any thing the matter?" said she.

Said I, not to be impolite, "A sudden pain, ma'am. It's over."

And then, — oh! Thomas, — and then she scraped the chimney, — the kitchen chimney, — and made *soot-ten*, which she said was the only remedy for symptoms of cholera. — *Grinder Papers*, p. 198.

**Soph.** In the American colleges, an abbreviation of Sophomore. — *Hall's College Words*.

*Sophs* wha ha' in commons fed!

*Sophs* wha ha' in commons bled!

*Sophs* wha ne'er from commons fled!

Puddings, steaks, or wines! — *Rebelliad*, p. 52.

**Sophomore.** This word has generally been considered an American barbarism, but was probably introduced into our country at a very early period from the University of Cambridge, England. Among the cant terms at that University, as given in the "Gradus ad Cantabrigiam," we find *Soph-Mor* as the next distinctive appellation to Freshman. It is added that a writer in the "Gentleman's Magazine" thinks *Mor* an abbreviation of the Greek *μωρία*, introduced at a time when the "Encomium *Moriæ*," the "Praise of Folly," by Erasmus, was so generally used. The ordinary derivation of the word, from *σοφός* and *μωρός*, would seem, therefore, to be incorrect. The young *Sophs* at Cambridge appear formerly to have received the adjunct *mor*, *μωρός*, to their names, either as one they courted for the reason mentioned above, or as one given them in sport for the supposed exhibition of inflated feeling in entering upon their new honors. The term thus applied seems to have passed at a very early period from Cambridge in England to Cambridge in America, as the next distinctive appellation to Freshmen, and thus to have been attached to the second of the four classes in our American colleges, while it has now almost ceased to be known, even as a cant word, at the parent institution in England from whence it came. — *Prof. Goodrich*, in *Webster's Dictionary*.

When first we enter Freshman year,

*Soph'more* malice oft we fear;

But soon the trying hour is past,

And free from care we sing at last.

*Songs of Hamilton, Carm. Collegensia*, p. 144.

Another meaning, derived, it would appear, from the characteristics of the *Sophomore*, yet not very creditable to him, is bombastic, inflated in style and manner. — *J. C. Calhoun*.

**Sophomorical.** Pertaining to or like a Sophomore. — *Hall's College Words*. A term also applied to speeches and writings containing high-sounding words and but little sense.

Better to face the prowling panther's path  
Than meet the storm of *Sophomoric* wrath.  
*Harvardiana.*

**Sopsyvine.** A variety of apple much prized for its delicate flavor. Connecticut. The name is clearly made from *Sapsonvine* or *Sops-in-wine*, a gilly-flower. Gilly-flower is also a name designating a kind of apple.

**Sora or Soree.** (*Rallus Carolinus.*) The Carolina rail, a bird which assembles in large numbers on the reedy shores of the larger rivers in the Middle and adjoining warmer States, at the approach of autumn, and affords abundant employment to the sportsman at that season. — *Nuttall.*

**Sorrel-Tree.** See *Sour-Wood.*

**Sorter**, for *sort o'*. Sort of, kind of.

They had with them a long-legged chap, a *sorter* lawyer; and he advised them to try and get the time of punishment put off, and that would give 'em a chance to run them off. — *Spirit of the Times.*

**Sossle or Sozzle.** A lazy or sluttish woman. Connecticut. In the south of England, *sozz-brangle* is used in the same sense.

**To sossle or sozzle.** To splash. Connecticut. In Sussex, England, as well as in Connecticut, it means to make a slop.

A sand-piper glided along the shore; she ran after it, but could not catch it; she sat down, and *sozzled* her feet in the foam. — *Margaret*, p. 8.

**Sot.** 1. A corrupt pronunciation of the past tense or past participle of *to set*.

I wish Seth would talk with you some time, Doctor. Along in the spring, he was down helpin' me to lay stone fence, — it was when we was fencin' off the south pastur' lot, — and we talked pretty nigh all day, and it re'lly did seem to me that the longer we talked, the *sotter* Seth grew. — *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan., 1859.

2. A vulgar pronunciation for *sat*.

A story is told of a Bostonian's first appearance in polite society in Arkansas. The company were engaged in dancing, but the loveliest female present occupied a chair at the window without a partner. Stepping up to the lady with a palpitating heart, his mind greatly excited for fear of a refusal, he exclaimed: —

"Will you do me the honor to grace me with your company for the next set?"

Her lustrous eyes shone with unwonted brilliancy, her white pearly teeth fairly glistened in the flickering candle-light, her heaving, snowy bosom rose and fell with joyful rapture, as she replied: —

"Yes, sir-ee! for I have *sot*, and *sot*, and *sot*, till I have about tuk root!" — *Washington Evening Star*, Sept. 2, 1858.

**Sots.** Yeast. Virginia.

**Sot-Weed.** Tobacco, formerly so called in Maryland. A *Sot-weed* Factor was a dealer in tobacco. One who cultivated it was called a "Sot-weed Planter."

These *sot-weed* planters crowd the shoar,  
In hue as tawny as a Moor.

*Cook, Sot-weed Factor* (1708), p. 2.

When aged Roan, not us'd to falter,  
If you remember, slip't his Halter;  
As Presbyterians leave the Church,  
Left *Sot-weed* Factor in the Lurch.

*Cook, Sot-weed Redivivus* (1730), p. 9.

**Sou-marquée.** An old copper coin known as the *sou*, crossed or marked, thereby rendering it of little or no value as currency. "I would not give a *sou-marquée* for a thing," means that the article in question is not worth a *marked sou*; that is, good for nothing, worthless.

But what cares shoddy for all these things?  
Shoddy, the richest of paper kings;  
Shoddy, who dances, fiddles, and sings  
On the crater of wild inflation?

What does he care? Not a *sou-marquée*;  
He fattens and battens in luxury,  
As if his reign were a thing to be  
Of eternal perpetuation. — *Song, Shoddy.*

**Sound on the Goose.** A phrase originating in the Kansas troubles, and signifying true to the cause of slavery.

**Sour-Gum.** A species of *Nyssa*. See *Gum*.

**Sour Krout.** (Germ. *sauer Kraut*.) Sour cabbage; that is, cabbage cut fine, pressed into a cask, and suffered to ferment until it becomes sour.

The Dutch burghers were ordered not to buy [of the Yankees] any of their Weathersfield onions, wooden bowls, &c., and to furnish them with no supplies of gin, gingerbread, or *sour krout*. — *Knickerbocker's New York*.

**Sour Sop.** A West India fruit. The *Anona muricata*, called by the Spaniards *Guanábana*; by the French, *Corossol*, said to be a corruption of the Indian name, *Suirsaak*. — *Bost. Jour. Nat. Hist.*, II. 211. See *Sweet Sop* and *Custard Apple*.

**Sour-Wood.** (*Andromeda arborea*.) A beautiful tree, which, from the large quantity of acid present in all parts of it, is sometimes called Sorrel-tree.

**South.** The term *Southern States*, or the *South*, is very commonly used to denote all the States south of Mason and Dixon's line, in which slavery exists. See *North*.

**South Americans.** That branch of the American or Know-Nothing party which belongs to the South, and favors slavery.

**Southernism.** Sentiment, principle, or characteristic peculiar to the Southern States.

*Southernism* has raised the standard and gauge of social condition absolutely; and those who are so unfortunate as not to be high-born, i. e. born at the South, . . . must eke out their shortcomings with Southern ardor and pro-slavery faith. *N. Y. Tribune*, July 15, 1861.

**Southernwise.** Toward, in favor of, the South.

I found them *Southernwise* inclined in sentiment and feeling. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Southron or Southerner.** A native of the Southern States.

*Southrons*, hear your country call you!  
Up, lest worse than death befall you!  
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!  
Lo! all the beacon-fires are lighted,  
Let all hearts be now united!

*Albert Pike, Southrons, hear your Country call you.*

Great Seward shall gull the *Southrons*, like a wily diplomat,  
With promises and flummery, with 't other, this, and that.

*Charleston Mercury*, 1861, *Song, Fort Sumter*.

Of all the mighty nations, in the East or in the West,  
Our glorious Southern nation is the greatest and the best;  
We have room for all true *Southrons*, with our stars and bars unfurled,  
And a general invitation to the people of the world.

*Rebellion Record, Song for the South.*

**Sovereign.** 1. One of the people of the United States; a voter.

2. One who favors the (so called) "doctrine of State Sovereignty."

Nisson said that he could not be forced to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. . . . Instantly the "*sovereigns*" in attendance pitched into the audacious recusant, and beat him till he could not stand. — *New Orleans Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, 1862.

**Sovereigns of Industry.** A name assumed by artisans in the United States, who, by co-operative measures, endeavor to secure labor's products at cost, dispensing with middlemen.

**Sozodont.** A certain or uncertain dentifrice, extensively made known by placards on fences and rocks by the roadside.

**To sozzle.** To splash. See *Sossle*.

**Space.** Floor. Second space, first floor. Massachusetts.

**Spake.** The preterite of *speak*. This antiquated word is still heard occasionally from the pulpit, as well as in conversation. — *Pickering*.

**Spalt.** (Germ. *spalten*.) A split. New England. Provincial in England as a verb, *to split*. Holinshed (1577) used it as an adjective.

**Span.** (Dutch.) A *span* of horses consists of two of nearly the same color, and otherwise nearly alike, which are usually harnessed side

by side. The word signifies properly the same as "yoke" when applied to horned cattle, from buckling or fastening together. But in America, *span* always implies resemblance in color at least; it being an object of ambition with gentlemen and with teamsters to unite two horses abreast that are alike. — *Webster*. This use of the word is not mentioned in any of the English dictionaries or glossaries.

**To span.** To agree in color or in color and size; as, "The horses *span* well." New England. — *Webster*.

**To spancel.** 1. To tie the hind legs of an animal, particularly a cow when milking. Provincial in England.

2. To prevent a crab from biting, by sticking the point of a leg into the base of each movable claw.

**Span Clean or Spandy Clean.** Very clean, perfectly clean.

**Spanish Bayonet.** (*Yucca treculiana*.) A name commonly given to the very sharp-pointed, rigid leaves of a species of *Yucca* growing in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The fruit is edible and resembles the papaw.

The cactus growing rank, tortuous, and grotesquely, and the *yucca*, or *Spanish bayonet*, here a low clump of sharp-pointed, stiff, tusk-like leaves, indicated our approach to Mexico. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 138.

**Spare Room.** Usually a furnished chamber for a guest; also called a *Spare Chamber*.

**To spark it.** To court. Used chiefly in New England.

You were a nation sight wiser than Brother Jonathan, Sister Keziah, poor little Aminadab, and all the rest; and, above all, my own towny Lydia, the Deacon's darlin' darter, with whom I've *sparked* it, pretty oftentimes, so late. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

Miss Sal, I's going to say as how  
We 'll *spark* it here to night;  
I kind of love you, Sal, I vow,  
And mother said I might.

*J. G. Fessenden, Song, Yankee Doodle.*

Some think I ought to get married, and two or three have tried to *spark* it with me; but I never listen to none of their flattery. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 120.

**Sparking.** "To go a *sparking*" is to go a courting. A common expression in the Northern States.

Mr. Justice Crow was soon overtaken; Lieutenant-colonel Simcoe accosted him roughly, called him "Tory," nor seemed to believe his excuses, when, in the American idiom for courtship, he said "he had only been *sparking*." — *Simcoe, Military Journal*, p. 73.

He rolled his eyes horribly, and said that that was the way the young men cast sheep's eyes when they went a *sparking*. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 16.

She's courted been, by many a lad,  
 And knows how *sparkin'* 's done, sir;  
 With Jonathan she was right glad  
 To have a little fun, sir. — *Song, Yankee Doodle.*

Finally I swore that if I ever meddled, or had any dealings with the feminine gender again in the *sparkin'* line, I wish I might be hanged. — *McClintock, Beedle's Courtship.*

**Sparse.** (Lat. *sparsus*.) Scattered; thinly spread; not dense. — *P. Mag.* This word has been regarded as of American origin; but it is found in Jamieson's Dictionary of the Scottish Language. It is in common use in America, though little used in England. — *Worcester.*

**Sparsely.** In a scattered or sparse manner; thinly. — *Worcester.*

The country between Trinity River and the Mississippi is *sparsely* settled, containing less than one inhabitant to the square mile, one in four being a slave. — *Olmsted's Texas*, p. 365.

**Sparrow-Grass.** A vulgar pronunciation of *asparagus* both in England and America, sometimes in the New York market contracted to "*grass*." Hence the celebrated charade by a certain alderman: —

My first is a little thing vot hops — (*sparrow*);  
 My second brings us good hay crops — (*grass*);  
 My whole I eats with mutton-chops — (*sparrow-grass*).  
*Pegge, Anecdotes of the English Language*, p. 54.

**Spat.** 1. A slap. "He gave me a *spat* on the side of the head."

2. A petty combat; a little quarrel or dissension. A vulgar use of the word in New England. — *Webster.*

The National Bank and the Mechanic's Banking Association have had a standing *spat* for some time. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

We do not believe that Messrs. B—— and W—— have resigned their seats in the cabinet. There has been a *spat* of course; but there may be many more before either of the Secretaries will resign \$6,000 a year. — *N. Y. Tribune*

**To spat.** 1. To slap.

The little Isabel leaped up and down, *spatting* her hands. — *Margaret.*

2. To dispute; to quarrel. A low word. New England.

**Speaker.** A book of declamatory pieces.

**Spec.** A contraction of *speculation*; as, "He made a good *spec* in flour."

**Special Deposit.** A deposit made in a bank subject to the control of the depositor, and which is not made a part of the funds of the bank to be used by it in its business.

**Special Partner.** A member of a limited partnership, who furnishes certain funds to the common stock, and whose liability extends no further than the funds furnished. — *Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. III. p. 35.

**Special Partnership.** A partnership limited to a particular branch of business, or to one particular subject. — *Judge Story*.

**Specie**, for a *species*. A grammatical blunder occasionally heard in speaking, but not often met with in writing. The "New York Tribune," however, of May 19, 1858, in describing a new game-trap, says:—

The size of the trap, the height at which it ought to be suspended, and the nature of the bait, depends upon the *specie* of the animal hunted for.

**Speck or Spec.** A bit; in the least; a specule.

I doubled up my fist, for I did not like the treatment a *spec*. — *S. Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**Speck and Applejees.** (Dutch, *spek en appeltjes*.) Pork fat and apples cut up and cooked together. An old-fashioned Dutch dish still made in New York.

**Specs**, for *spectacles*.

My ma' was used to put on her *specs*, and say, —. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

**Spell.** A turn of work; a vicissitude of labor. Often used in a secondary sense, to denote a short turn, a little time, a bout, a fit; and is applied particularly to work, to sickness, or to the weather. Common in England.

Their toil is so extreme as they cannot endure it above four hours in a day, but are succeeded by *spells*; the residue of their time they wear out at coytes and kayles. — *Carew*.

Come, thou's had thy *spell*, it's now my time to put in a word. — *Carr's Craven Glossary*.

This *spell* of bad weather, though in summer, well-nigh outlasted their provisions; and, when at length they were able to make the signal that a landing would be practicable, scarcely a twenty-four hours stock remained on the rock. *Lond. Quarterly Rev.*, No. 168, p. 379.

Nothing new has happened in this quarter since my last, except the setting in of a severe *spell* of cold weather and a considerable fall of snow. — *Letter of George Washington*, Dec. 25, 1775.

A gentle, misty air from the S. E. makes me hope that we are going to have a warm *spell*. — *Kane, Arctic Explorations*, Vol. I. p. 182.

Josiah Norton said he had come home from the South, where he had been peddling a *spell*. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 90.

Spain has obtained a breathing *spell* of some duration from the internal convulsions which have, through so many years, marred her prosperity. — *President Tyler's Message to Congress*, 1844.

I and the General have got things now pretty considerable snug: public affairs go on easier than they did a *spell* ago, when Mr. Adams was President. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 35.

The Havana "Prensa" notices a remarkable incident as one of the results of the shock from the recent terrible explosion. No less than the restoration to reason of a lady of that city, who had entirely lost her mind some six months ago, from a severe and protracted *spell* of sickness. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1858.

**To spell.** To relieve by taking a turn at a piece of work. — *Worcester.*

I was sometimes permitted, as an indulgence, to *spell* my father in the favorite employment of shelling corn. — *Goodrich's Recollections*, Vol. I. p. 62.

**Spelling-Bee.** An assemblage of young people for competition in spelling. *Spelling-Bees* had their origin in the Western States, and such was their popularity there that they soon extended eastward to Boston. At first, the competition was among school-children for prizes; next, among persons of more mature years. In Providence there was a close contest between the girls of the High School and the Freshmen of Brown University, in which the latter came off triumphant. *Spelling-Bees* are now common in England, detailed accounts of which are often found in the daily newspapers of London. See *Bee*.

**Spending-Money.** Small sums of money given by parents or others to children, which they generally invest in sugar-plums, fruit, &c.

**Sperichil.** Among the Negroes, particularly of South Carolina and Georgia, spiritual, or spiritual shouting when at prayer, when all unite.

Shouting may be to any tune: our cook's classification into "*sperichila*" and "running *sperichila*" (shouts), or the designation of certain ones as sung "just sittin'" round, will hardly hold, in strictness. — *Slave Songs*, edited by W. F. Allen.

**Spice-Bush.** (*Benzoin odoriferum*.) A plant, called also Wild Allspice and Fever-bush, formerly used as a substitute for allspice, and also valued for its medicinal properties.

This tangled thicket on the bank above  
Thy basin, how thy waters keep it green !  
. . . . . there the *spice-bush* lifts  
Her leafy lances. — *Bryant, The Fountain.*

**Spider.** A cast-iron frying-pan with three legs.

**Spike Team.** A wagon drawn by three horses, or by two oxen and a horse, the latter leading the oxen or span of horses.

**To spill Stock** is to throw great quantities of a particular stock upon the market, sometimes from necessity, but often in order to "break" the price. — *Medbery.*



**Spilt-Milk.** That which cannot be restored; gone beyond recovery.

The Democrats here are in a state of utter collapse. They are crying and cursing too, over *spilled milk*. Each faction is calling the other hard names. — *Lett. from Washington in N. Y. Tribune*, March 10, 1877.

**Spindle City.** Lowell, Massachusetts; so called from its many cotton factories.

A letter from Lowell says the "*spindle city*" is gradually resuming its steady hum of industry and wonted business-like appearance. — *Scientific American*, Jan. 23, 1858.

**To spin Street-Yarn.** To go gadding about the streets.

They say when Sally Hagle ain't a *spinnin' street-yarn*, she don't do nothin' but write poetry, and the whole heft o' the house-keepin' is on her mother's shoulders. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 149.

**Spiritist.** See *Spiritualist*.

**Spirit-Land.** An expression which, in the cant of the rappers, means the abode of departed spirits, the other world.

The fragrance we fain would have treasured up here,  
In the bright *spirit-land* will find its true sphere.

*N. Haven Palladium.*

**Spirit-Rapper.** A person who, professing to act as a "medium" between embodied and disembodied spirits, interprets raps produced by an unseen agency on tables, floors, &c., as messages from the other world.

**Spirit-Rappings.** Rappings supposed to be produced by disembodied spirits.

From what I learned in my observation of mesmerism, I am so far aware of the existence of rarely used and undeveloped powers and capacities in the brain as to disapprove very strongly the gratuitous supposition, in the *spirit-rapping* case, of pure imposture on the one hand, and of the presence of departed spirits on the other. — *Harriet Martineau's Letter, Autobiography*, Vol. II. p. 331.

**Spiritual.** A Mormon concubine. See *Spiritual Wife*.

**Spiritual Funeral.** A funeral conducted after the fashion of the believers in spiritualism.

A *spiritual funeral* was held at Lowell lately, over the remains of J. B. Smith. Miss Emma Houston prayed, and the dead Smith spoke through her. The wife and family of the deceased, instead of putting on black, dressed in white, with white shawls, and bonnets trimmed with white. — (*Baltimore*) *Sun*, July 12, 1858.

**Spiritualism.** The old doctrine, revived of late years in this country, and which has gained numerous converts, that the spirits of the departed can and do communicate with the living through the so called "spiritual mediums."

**Spiritualist.** A believer in the doctrine of spiritualism.

**Spiritual Medium.** See *Medium*.

**Spiritual Wife**, or simply **Spiritual**. A Mormon extra wife or concubine. So, as among the Millerites in 1843, at Athol, Mass., except that they claimed such a companion as *only* a spiritual partner.

These extra wives are known by sundry designations; some call them "*spiritu-als*," others "sealed ones;" our landlady is fond of calling them "fixins," and the tone in which she brings it out is in the last degree contemptuous. — *Life among the Mormons*, Putnam's Mag., Vol. VI. p. 147.

**Spit-Ball.** Paper partly masticated and then ejected from the mouth. A Chicago newspaper thus speaks of the closing of a session of the Illinois General Assembly: —

A Balaklava of *spit-balls*. . . . Members present indulged in the wildest tomfoolery, flung paper-balls, &c.

**Spit-Curl.** A detached lock of hair curled upon the temple; probably from having been at first plastered into shape by the saliva. It is now understood that the mucilage of quince-seed is used by the ladies for this purpose.

You may prate of your lips and your teeth of pearl,  
And your eyes so brightly flashing;  
My song shall be of that *salica* curl  
Which threatens my heart to smash in.

*Boston Transcript*, Oct. 30, 1858.

**Splendiferous.** Splendid; fine. A factitious word used only in jest.

To my mind, a *splendiferous* woman and a first-chop horse are the noblest works of creation. — *Sam Slick*, *Human Nature*, p. 280.

There's something so fascinating in the first blush of evening that it's enough to make a man strip off his jacket of mortality, and swim the gulf of death, for the sake of reaching the *splendiferous* splendors that decorate the opposite shore. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 69.

An itinerant gospeller was holding forth to a Kentuckian audience, on the kingdom of heaven: —

"Heaven, my beloved hearers," said he, "is a glorious, a beautiful, a *splendiferous*, an angeliferous place. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, it has not entered into the imagination of any Cracker in these here diggings what carryings on the just made perfect have up thar."

It is singular that Drayton, the poet of Queen Elizabeth's time, should have coined a similar word, *splendidious*, as well as the word *splend'rous*: —

Celestial brightness seized on his face,  
That did the wond'ring Israelites amaze,  
When he returned from that sovereign place,  
His brows encircled with *splendidious* rays.

*Moses, his Birth and Miracles*, B. III.

**Split.** 1. A division; dissension. A word in current use, both in England and in this country, although not yet in the dictionaries.

The fiery spirit which has occasioned a *split* among the British Archaeologists would appear not yet to have burned itself out, &c. — *London Athenæum*, 850.

The *split* in the Whig organization, if it come to any thing serious, will extend beyond the Presidential election. — *Letter from Boston, New York Herald*, June 21, 1848.

2. A rapid pace or rate of going. "He went full *split*" i. e. as hard as he could drive. "To go like *split*" is a common expression in New England.

There was no ox-teams [in New York] such as we have in Downingville; but there was no end to the one-hoss teams, going' like *split* all over the city. — *Major Downing, May-day in New York*, p. 64.

**To split.** To go at a rapid pace; to drive or dash along.

The thing tuk first-rate, and I set the niggers a-drummin' and fifin' as hard as they could *split* right afore the cabin door. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Split-Foot.** *Old Split Foot*, a term for the devil. Mr. Lowell, in speaking of the preachers on the Southern plantations, says:—

They go it like an Ericsson's ten-hoss power coleric engine,  
An' make *de Split Foot* winch and squirm, for all he's used to singin'.

Lowell, *The Biglow Papers*.

**Split-Ticket.** When two or more important offices are to be filled at the same time, the "wire-pullers" of each party select the men they wish their party to support, and print their names on a ticket to be deposited in the ballot-box. It sometimes happens, however, that individuals choose to think for themselves, and consequently erase one or more of the names and substitute others more to their liking. This is called a *split ticket*, also a *scratch ticket*.

**Splorum.** A splurging; great noise or fuss on slight occasion and with little effect.

**Splosh.** The same as *Sposh*, &c. New England. It is Plash, Splash, Lat. *Palus* = *Posh*, which see.

**Splurge.** Emphatic for *large*. A blustering demonstration; a swagger, dash.

Members of Congress should not forget when Senator Benton was shinning around, making what they call in Missouri a great *splurge*, to get gold. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Dec. 13, 1845.

President Polk and the Loco-Foco party have been for some time past ardously engaged upon a work known as "Mexico in Slices." The first slice, "Texas," caused quite a sensation; the second, California and New Mexico, is now making a *splurge*; and the third, "The Sierra Madre," is under way. — *Philadelphia North American*.

Did you see Major Coon's wife when she came in? Didn't she cut a *splurge*? I never did see such an affected critter as she in all my born days. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 67.

**To splurge.** To make a blustering demonstration in order to produce an effect; to swagger, cut a dash. A term in common use in the South and West, and recently in New England.

The Rev. Dr. S. H. Cox thus defines the word as we use it:—

"The word '*splurge*' is indeed an instance of our own cis-atlantic coinage, a provincialism probably not yet in any dictionary; yet meaning as if a great rock of the mountain, disintegrated from its summit, should rush and bound, portentous and avalanched, into a silver lake at its foot, there making an uproarious splash, boring its momentous way through the parted and the frightened waves, and after dashing the spray in all directions burying itself, in forgotten repose, under congenial mud at the bottom; so gone for ever from sight, from thought, from upper air, and all the ways of men; thus meaning, — the low aim of making a considerable sensation at least once in society."

Cousin Pete was thar *splurgin'* about in the biggest, with his dandy-cut trowsers and big whiskers. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 101.

Well, them was great times, but now the settlements is got too thick for them to *splurge*. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 54.

**Spoils**, i. e. *the spoils of office*. The pay and emoluments of official station, specifically referred to as the leading inducements to partisan activity, and as distinct from political zeal generally.

It has been asserted that to the victors belong the *spoils*. Let us determine that we will be the victors, and that if we must have the *spoils* they shall be appropriated to the good of the country. — *Speech of Hon. Mr. Morehead*, June, 1848.

Men looking to the *spoils* care not for principles, whether they be of the North or of the South. — *Washington Cor. of N. Y. Com. Adv.*

It is estimated that there are at least sixty thousand office-holders under the general administration, and that the amount of plunder annually distributed by government is equal to forty millions of dollars, which is expended in a thousand and one ways. The party which has the command of these office-holders, and the scattering of this vast amount of *spoils*, is possessed of a potent weapon — *N. Y. Herald*, June, 1848.

Politics is nothing more nor less than a race for a purse, a game for the stakes, a battle for the *spoils*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 216.

*Spoils*, and *spoils* alone, is what animates the Democratic party. A solid South is organizing for a grand raid on the national treasury, — proposing to make the government pay all the expenses of the war, . . . while the same party at the North is squabbling over the *spoils of office*. — *New York Times*.

**Spoilsman.** One who has obtained or is seeking spoils.

Men now the favorites of spoilsmen, plotting for the succession [to the Presidency], may sink into oblivion or obscurity, and men from the shadows of obscurity may rise. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Spondoolics.** Money.

THE SPONDOOLICS. — We understand that the amount deposited in the Newport Savings Bank is rising \$800,000, — by about five hundred and thirty depositors. — *Newport News*.

During the late war, the pay of the soldiers was sometimes in arrears. Great joy was therefore manifested when it was known that the money was coming, as in the following stanza: —

But cheer up, boys, it's coming,  
Sure as rats it's on the way.  
Won't we have a time though, soldiers,  
When we get hold of that back pay?  
The *spondulicks* must come down, boys, —  
That is all I have to say.

*Song, Where is that Back Pay?*

A lumber-dealer in Indiana, with a view of stirring into financial activity his dilatory creditors, appended to his bill-heads a circular letter urging payment of his accounts, closing as follows: —

Now let's have the *spondulicks*, and see how sweet and pretty I can smile upon you. — *Harper's Mag.*, for April, 1876. p. 790.

The man who has *spondulacs*,  
And will give his neighbor none,  
He shan't have any of my *spondulacs*,  
When his *spondulacs* are gone.

*College Songs, Hamilton, p. 143.*

**Spook.** (Dutch.) A ghost; hobgoblin. A term much used in New York. This word has been adopted by the English at the Cape of Good Hope.

At one time, I met the *spook* in the form of a very tall black man, accompanied by a large dog. — *Anderssen's South Africa*.

Jealous fellows don't believ in *spooks*, and they are about the only folks who ever see any. — *Josh Billings, Works, p. 357.*

**Spoon.** "To do business with a big *spoon*" is the same as to "cut a big swath."

**Spoon Victuals.** Food eaten with a spoon. In England, called *spoon-meat*.

Yet feed them and cram them, till purse do lack chink,  
No *spoon-meat*, no belly-full, laborers think.

*Tusser, Good Husbandry (1573), ch. xxxvii. V. 27.*

**Spoon-Wood.** (*Kalmia latifolia*.) So called "because the Indians used to make their spoons and trowels of this tree." — *Kalm, Travels in N. America, Vol. I. p. 263.*

**Spoons.** A silly fellow; a noodle. "He's a spoops," i. e. weak-minded. New England.

**Spoonsie.** A silly fellow; the same as "*spoops*."

**Sports.** A sporting character; a gambler.

One of the fraternity of gamblers, finding it hard to get a living, thus wrote to the "New York Tribune," April, 1877, for advice:—

The question which I want answered is, How are we to live? I know two to three thousand *sports* floating now on the sea of adversity. Having never been trained to hard work, we can't do it.

**Sportsman.** A term often applied to a gambler.

**Sposen.** A corrupt pronunciation of *supposing*.

**Sposh.** A mixture of snow and water; also water partially frozen. See *Slush*. The "New York Tribune," Nov. 25, 1845, in speaking of the falling of rain and snow at the same time, adds:—

The morning was blue and streaked, and the streets were one shining level of black *sposh*.

**Spot.** 1. A boatman on the Mississippi, being asked how he managed to secure sleeping time, answered, "I sleep in *spots*;" that is, at intervals, by snatches.

2. Merchandise and cotton on the *spot*, ready for delivery. Cotton is often sold, which the seller has not in store, but which he agrees to deliver at a future time, as may be agreed on.

Prices ruled steady at 13 cts. for middlings, upland, and Gulf, but with a sustained advance on *spots* and futures. — *N. Y. Tribune, Prices Current*.

The New York market opened yesterday with *spot* middlings quiet and steady at 11½ cts. — *Providence Journal*.

**To spot.** 1. To mark a tree by cutting a chip from its side. Maine. See *Blaze*.

2. A term used by policemen for marking or identifying a thief or other suspected person. It is of recent origin, and is also used in England. See *Shadow*.

It is the business of all policemen, but more especially of detectives, to "*spot*" burglars, thieves, gamblers, and all violators of the law. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

The five pickpockets whose names are given were detained in the cells all night, and were yesterday taken to the Deputy's office, where they were "shown up," so that they might be again "*spotted*." They were then told to go, and they went in a great state of indignation. — *N. Y. Times*.

**Spotter.** A detective.

An immense amount of ingenuity has been expended in hiring *spotters* and detectives to watch the men. — *Providence Press*.

**Spout, to go up the.** See *Go up the Spout*.

**Spouty.** Wet clay land is called in the West "*spouty land*," possibly because, when trodden upon, the water *spouts* up through any holes or depressions in the surface.

**Spread.** 1. A bed-spread; a sort of day covering over the quilt. New England.

2. A grand dinner or other entertainment. In Pennsylvania, a "second spread" is some kind of preserved fruit put on bread after the butter.

3. A *spread contract* is a broker's phrase. It means a contract giving the holders the privilege of either buying or selling any particular stock, at a stipulated price, within a definite time. From this fact it is sometimes called a double privilege. See *Straddle*.

**Spread-Eagle.** 1. The national emblem of the United States, an eagle with out-spread wings.

2. This term is frequently used among stock speculators. A broker, satisfied with small profits, and not disposed to involve himself in large transactions, sells, say one hundred shares Erie Railroad stock at fifty-eight, buyer sixty days, and at the same time buys the same quantity at fifty-seven, seller sixty days. The difference in this case in the price is one per cent, which would be so much profit, without any outlay of capital, provided both contracts run their full time. Having sold buyer's option sixty days, and bought seller's option sixty days, the time is equal; but it will be seen that he does not control the option in either case. The buyer can call when he pleases, which will compel the "*spread eagle*" operator to deliver; and the seller may deliver any time, which would compel the broker to receive. If he has capital to carry, the result would not differ from that anticipated; but, if not, he may be caught in a tight place, and suffer serious losses. It is, on the whole, rather dangerous business, but not to the same extent as buying or selling on time for a rise or fall in market value. — *Hunt's Merchant's Mag.*, Vol. XXXVII.

3. Used adjectively, as "spread eagle rhetoric."

In a notice of a book on the "Mission of the North American People," by William Gilpin, Philadelphia, 1873, in the "*Historical Mag.*," for Sept., 1873, we read:—

This beautiful volume is certainly a very singular one, combining in its contents much information . . . with very much more of that slam-bang, *spread-eagle* literature which has made George Francis Train so notorious the world over.

**Spread-Eagleism.** The peculiarities of spread-eagle persons.

*Spread-eagleism*, coupled with violent abuses of England and her institutions. *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Spread-Eagle Style.** A compound of exaggeration, effrontery, bombast, and extravagance, mixed metaphors, platitudes, defiant threats thrown at the world, and irreverent appeals flung at the Supreme Being. — *North American Review*, Oct., 1858.

**To spread one's self.** To exert one's self ostentatiously; perhaps from the peacock, like the Italian *paroneggiarsi*.

We despatched Cullen to prepare a dinner. He had promised, to use his own expression, to *spread himself* in the preparation of this meal. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 266.

Hoss Allen [the judge] mounted the balcony of the hotel, and, rolling up his sleeves, *spread himself* for an unusually brilliant effort. — *Southern Sketches*.

At school, on great occasions, before company, the Superintendent (as Tom expressed it) had always made this boy come out and *spread himself*. — *Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer*, p. 46.

**To spree it.** To get intoxicated.

If a young man creates his own ruination by going it loose and *spreeing it* tight, it is surely a disgrace. — *Dow's Sermons*.

**To spring-bag.** To exhibit the udder as filling. Said of cows, &c., as soon to bear young. New England.

**Spring Fever.** The listless feeling caused by the first sudden increase of temperature in spring. It is often said of a lazy fellow, "He has got the *spring fever*."

**Spring-Keeper.** A salamander or small, lizard-shaped animal, found in springs and fresh water rivulets, whence the name. See *Water-dogs*.

**Sprouts.** A bunch of twigs. Hence, "to *put one through a course of sprouts*" is to give him a good drubbing.

Shepard, Morrissey's trainer, has taken up his quarters at the house of his very particular old friend, Australian Kelly, where he will doubtless be happy to see any gentlemen who want to be *put through* the necessary *course of preliminary sprouts* before they can win the laurels of the P. R. [prize ring]. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1858.

**Spruce.** (Various species of *Abies*.) 1. *A. nigra*, or black spruce, an evergreen tree abounding in the northern parts of the United States and in the Dominion of Canada. 2. (*Abies Canadensis*.) Hemlock spruce. 3. (*Abies excelsa*.) Norway spruce. The wood of the latter is known in commerce under the name of *white deal* or *Christiana deal*. 4. (*Abies alba*.) Single or white spruce, a slender, tapering tree growing in swamps in the northern parts of the United States and closely resembling the black spruce, but having leaves of a lighter green, whence it derives its name. — *Gray*.



**Spruce-Beer.** A fermented beverage tintured with the leaves and small branches of spruce, or with the essence of spruce.

**Spruced up.** Made neat or fine. "She's quite *spruced up* to-day," i. e. well-dressed.

**Sprung.** Tipsy, intoxicated.

He reckoned they were a little bit *sprung*. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 87.

**Spry.** Lively; active; nimble; quick in action. — *Worcester*.

This word is much used in familiar language in New England. It is not in the English dictionaries, but Jennings notices it among the provincialisms of Somersetshire.

She is as *spry* as a cricket. — *Margaret*, p. 58.

"How are you, Jeremiah?" "Why, I 'm kinder sorter middlin', Mr. Slick, what you call considerable nimble and *spry*." — *Sam Slick*.

Know ye the land where the sinking sun  
Sees the last of earth when the day is done?  
Where yellow Asia, withered and dry,  
Hears Young America, sharp and *spry*,  
With thumb in his vest, and a quizzical leer,  
Sing out, "Old Fogie, come over here!"

*Cozzens, Californian Ballad.*

**Spunk.** 1. Mettle; spirit; vivacity. — *Brockett's Glossary*. A colloquial word, considered in England extremely vulgar. See *Punk*.

I admire your independent spirit, Doolittle. I like to have people think well of themselves. You have convinced me of your *spunk*. I am your friend. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

2. Anger. Connecticut.

**To spunk up.** To show pluck; to manifest a disposition to fight.

**Spunky.** 1. Mettlesome; spirited; vivacious. A colloquial word, which Forby mentions as provincial in Norfolk, England.

2. Angry. Connecticut.

**Squaddy.** Short and fat. A vulgar word formed from *squat*, or perhaps a corruption of *squabby*.

I had hardly got seated, when in came a great, stout, fat, *squaddy* woman. — *Major Downing, May-day*.

**To squale.** To throw a stick or other thing with violence, and in such a manner that it skims along near the ground. New England. — *Pickering's Vocab*. *Scaling stones* (upon the water) was a common New England expression for what English boys call "making ducks and drakes." See *Skale*.

In England, *squailing* is used for throwing some material not easily managed. Jennings properly says, "to fling with a stick;" and he might have added, with a stick made unequally heavy by being

loaded at one end. — *Halliwell*. To throw a stick, as at a cock. West of England. — *Grose*.

**Squalmish.** Used in the same sense as *qualmish*, and perhaps more used among the illiterate. A sickness of the stomach; a desire to vomit. "Are you sea-sick?" "Not exactly; but I feel a little *squalmish*."

**Squantum.** 1. Among the Naumkeag Indians of Massachusetts, their evil spirit.

For their religion, they do worship two Gods. The good God they call Tantum; and their evil God, whom they fear, they call *Squantum*. — *Annals of Salem*, 2d ed., Vol. I. p. 26.

2. The name of a species of fun known to the Nantucket folks, which is thus described by the "New York Mirror:" A party of ladies and gentlemen go to one of the famous watering-places of resort, where they fish, dig clams, talk, laugh, sing, dance, play, bathe, sail, eat, and have a general "good time." The food generally consists of chowder, baked clams, and fun. No one is admitted to the sacred circle who will take offence at a joke, and every one is expected to do his and her part towards creating a general laugh. Any man who speaks of business affairs (excepting matrimony) is immediately reprov'd, and on a second offence publicly chastised. Care is thrown to the wind, politics discarded, war ignored, pride humbled, stations levelled, wealth scorned, virtue exalted, and — this is "*squantum*." Probably from Indian place-names, as one in or near Quincy, Mass.

I wish to all-fired smash I was to home, doin' chores about house, or hazin' round with Charity Baker and the rest of the gals at a *squantum*. — *Wise, Tales for the Marines*.

In Rhode Island is a "Squantum Club," consisting of several hundred members, which has several buildings on a small island in Narragansett Bay, two miles from Providence, where an excellent table is served. The shell-fish for which these waters are justly celebrated are here served in every variety. Large parties from New York, Boston, and other New England cities, are frequently entertained here during the summer.

**Square.** 1. Unqualified.

The Republicans and a portion of the Democrats are in favor of a *square* vote whether Jefferson Davis shall be exempted from the benefits of the amnesty bill. *Providence Journal*.

2. In the city of New York, this term is applied to the open spaces caused by the junction of several streets. "Chatham *Square*" and

"Franklin Square" are triangles! The same term is used to denote an area of four sides with houses on each side.

*On the square.* To be on the square is to tell the truth, not to prevaricate.

And I asks, "Is this Nation a White Man's,  
And is generally things *on the square*?"

*Bret Harte, Poems, Truthful James, p. 79.*

Mr. J. Ross Browne, while riding with the stage-driver in California, who was relating some marvellous story, said:—

"Is that true, driver?"

"True!" said the man, indignantly.

"Is it *on the square*, I mean?"

"Stranger," said he, solemnly, "I don't make a habit o' lyin': when I lie, I kin lie as good as anybody; but, generally speakin', I'm *on the square*."—*Adventures in the Apache Country*, p. 326.

**Square Meal.** A full meal; as much and of as great a variety as one can eat.

The transition from the luxurious tables of the East to the *square meals* of the West is fortunately gradual; and by the time the traveller reaches Omaha he is prepared for *hog and hominy*, or whatever else may be presented. — *McClure, Through the Rocky Mountains*, p. 30.

Elsewhere Mr. McClure describes the *square meal*, of which he partook at Alkali Station, to consist of the following: excellent warm rolls, canned tomatoes, peas, blackberries, peach pie, fried ham, stewed veal, and fried potatoes, with tolerable butter and coffee and tea. — p. 58.

My stomach has had nothing in it,—

Next to nothing at least for three days;

And I've no idea, this minute,

When next a *square meal* I can raise.

*N. Y. Clipper, Song of the Tramp.*

**Square Room.** Best apartment. Used formerly in the interior of Massachusetts.

**Squash.** 1. A culinary vegetable. (Genus *Cucurbita*.) It is not necessary to resort to the Greek *σίκυος* for the etymology of this word: it is Algonkin, and is often mentioned by the early writers.

In summer, when their [the Indians'] corn is spent, *squonter squashes* is their best bread, a fruit like a young pumpkin. — *Wood's New England* (1634), p. 37.

*Askutasquash*, the vine-apple [of the Indians], which the English from them call *squashes*, about the bignesse of apples, of severall colours, sweete, light, wholesome, and refreshing. — *Roger Williams, Key to the Indian Lang.* (1643).

When the summer of your lives, my female friends, is drawing to a close, — when your rosy charms begin to fade like the sprigs upon your calices, — and when, like vineless *squashes*, you have grown withered and yellow, Cupid will disdain to frequent your autumnal bowers. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 127.

2. A skunk; stinkard. Formerly so called.

Skunk . . . found in all the States. Another stinkard called the *Squash* is said by Buffon to be found in some of the Southern States. He is of a chestnut color, climbs trees, and kills poultry.—*Morse's Geography*.

Webster, on the authority of Goldsmith, says it is an animal allied to the weasel.

**Squash-Bug.** (*Coreus tristis*.) A small yellow bug, injurious to the vines of squashes, melons, and cucumbers. The odor, which is peculiar, has been identified by Dr. Harris with that of an over-ripe pear. In Connecticut, called a *stink-bug*.

**To squat.** 1. To squeeze; to press. Ex.: "The boy has *squat* his finger." Used by the vulgar in New England.—*Pickering's Vocabulary*. Mr. Todd has this word in his dictionary from Barret (1580): "To bruise or make flat by letting fall." Provincial in the south of England.

2. In the United States, to settle on another's lands, or on public lands, without having a title.—*Worcester*.

On either side of the bank, the colonists had been allowed to *squat* on allotted portions, until the survey of the town should be completed.—*Wakefield's Adventures in New Zealand* in 1844.

The Yankees of Connecticut, those swapping, bargaining, *squatting* enemies of the Manhattoes, made a daring inroad into their neighborhood, and founded a colony called Westchester.—*Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 13.

The word has recently been introduced into the vocabulary of the New York Stock Exchange, where it is applied to a broker when he dishonors his contracts.

D—D— was a large dealer in gold during the war. . . . On two separate occasions, he extricated himself from serious difficulties by resorting to what is known in the street as *squatting*. In other words, he dishonored his own contracts, and entered upon a lawsuit to cover his duplicity.—*Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 168.

**Squatter.** In the United States, one that settles on new land without a title.—*Webster*.

When I was at Prairie du Chien, there were several of the officers who had been cited to appear in court for having, pursuant to order, removed *squatters* from the Indian lands on the Mississippi.—*Hoffman, Winter in the West*, Let. 29.

The Western *squatter* is a free and jovial character, inclined to mirth rather than evil; and when he encounters his fellow-man at a barbacue, election, log-rolling, or frolic, he is more disposed to join in a feeling of hilarity than to participate in wrong or outrage.—*Robb, Squatter Life*.

The "London Spectator" has the following remarks on this word, occasioned by the removal of a number of the occupants of Glen-

culvie, in Scotland, who had *squatted* there as under-tenants: "The term '*squatter*' is very ambiguous. In America, it denotes a ragged rascal without a cent in his pockets, and with a rifle or woodman's axe in his hand. In Australia, it designates a young Oxonian or retired officer of the army or navy, possessed of stock to the value of some thousands. In Scotland, it seems to designate a person very differently circumstanced from either of the preceding. . . . The Scotchmen who '*squat under tenants*,' are men who have followed their fathers and grandfathers for unknown generations in the occupancy of their huts and kail-yards. Their families are of older standing in the district than those of the tacksmen or the lairds. The Scotch *squatter* is no clandestine intruder upon the soil: he stands in the place of his forefathers, and the act which ejects him is a violent innovation on the customs of the country, — a forcible change in a mode of tenancy sanctioned by the 'use and wont' of all ages." — June 7, 1845.

**Squatter-Butter.** To go "*squatter-butter*" is to slide down hill "sitting on one's heels," as more inoffensively the thing is expressed. Eastern Massachusetts.

**Squatter-Huts.** The rude habitations or huts built by squatters.

O'er the land are aquatintan  
Etchings of these sketches seen,  
Gracing drawing-rooms in cities,  
*Squatter-huts* in wildwoods green.

Wm. Boyd, *Oakwood Old, Cambridge (Mass.) Chronicle*, 1857.

**Squatter Sovereignty.** The right of the squatters or actual residents in a Territory of the United States to make their own laws and shape their own institutions.

One of the great merits of the Dred Scott decision is the total extinguishment it gives to the dogma of *squatter sovereignty* in the Territories. It utterly negatives the idea that there is any original jurisdiction or legislative authority in the Territory, and asserts that all authority therein is derivative, coming from without, and not inherent in its inhabitants or tribunals. — *The (Washington) Union*, Nov. 8, 1858.

We must live and learn. . . . I refer to "pre-empting," known in former times as squatting, from which arose that new term in political parlance, *squatter sovereignty*. — *National Int., Letter from Nebraska*, July 1, 1857.

**Squaw.** (Algonkin Ind.) An Indian woman. Mr. Duponceau, after giving a list of the languages and forms in which this word occurs, observes: "On voit que la famille de ce mot s'étend depuis les Knisténaux en Canada, et les Skoffies et Montagnards d'Acadie, jusqu'aux Nanticokes sur les confins de la Virginie." — *Mém. sur les Langues d'Amérique du Nord*, p. 333.

**To squawk.** To squeak, but with a deeper note. This word is colloquial in various parts of England and in New England.

"Good gracious!" said Mrs. Bedott, "if you 'd heard Miss C—— sing, you 'd a gin up. The way she *squawked* it out was a caution to old gates on a windy day!" — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 208.

**Squaw-Root.** (*Conapholis Americana*.) Also, *Leontice thalictroides* (*Caulophyllum*, Michaux), by others called Pappoose-root. A medicinal plant put up by the Shakers, also called Cancer-root. It is recommended for correcting the secretions, and possesses narcotic properties.

**Squaw-Weed.** (*Senecio aureus*.) A medicinal plant used for diseases of the skin.

**To squeal.** To give information that will lead to an exposure. A term well known to the police. See *Peach*.

The wife of a St. Louis merchant, who had been reading in the morning papers about the whiskey frauds, turned to her husband with a puzzled expression of countenance, and inquired:—

"My dear, what do the papers mean by saying that a man has '*squealed*'?"

"Why," replied the man, loftily, "they mean that some member of the ring has *peached* on the rest."

"Peached, what is that?" exclaimed the wife; "now, what does that mean?"

"Why, it means that he 's—he 's blown on 'em!"

"Blown on them?"

"Yes, you see, he 's given them away."

"Given them away?"

"Why, of course! Can't you understand any thing? Do you think I'm an unabridged dictionary?" continued the husband. "It means he 's—he 's 'let out on 'em,'—'gone back' on his pals,—*squealed*, you know."

"Ah, yes, I see."

Three men being arrested at Harrisburg on suspicion of aiding and abetting in the abduction of Charlie Ross, a letter was introduced in evidence addressed to one of them, in which the writer said:—

Go home; burn the clothes of the boy; R—— is caught, and may *squeal* on us. *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 27, 1876.

The Northampton Bank having been robbed of a large sum of money, a "lock expert," who had used his skill to effect the robbery, claimed his share of the plunder, which was withheld from him:—

Refusing to divide with the expert according to the principles of equity among their class, he "*squealed*," and not only brought his co-partners into the meshes of the law, but also deprived himself of an occupation. — *Providence Journal*.

**Squeteague or Squettee.** (*Labrus squeteague*.) A very common fish in the waters of Long Island Sound and adjacent bays. It never

visits rivers, and is similar in habits to the Tautog. In New York, it is called Weak-fish, owing to the feeble resistance it makes when caught with a hook, because it is *weak* (Dutch). The name is Narragansett Indian.

*Weekvis*, en Schol, en Carper, Bot en Snoek.

*Steendam's Poems* (1650), p. 54.

**To squib.** To throw squibs; to utter sarcastic or severe reflections; to contend in petty dispute; as, "Two members of a society *squib* a little in debate." Colloquial. — *Webster*. This word is not in the English dictionaries.

**To squid.** To fish by trolling with a squid, either natural or artificial.

The blue-fish is taken by *squidding* in swift tideways from a boat under sail in a stiffish breeze. — *Frank Forester*.

**To squiggle.** To move about like an eel. New England. Often figuratively used in speaking of a man who evades a bargain as an eel eludes the grasp. — *Pickering*.

Forby's Glossary of Norfolk contains the word in the sense of "to shake a fluid about the mouth."

**Squinky.** To make a broad laugh. New England.

**Squire.** The title of magistrates and lawyers. In New England, it is given particularly to justices of the peace and judges; in Pennsylvania, to justices of the peace only. — *Webster*.

**To squirm.** To wriggle or twist about, as an eel. Provincial in England, and colloquial in the United States. — *Worcester*.

On the 7th January, 1859, the Hon. Mr. Pitt, of the Missouri Legislature, is reported to have said in debate: —

Mr. Speaker, this House passed resolutions, sir, to celebrate, in an appropriate manner, the 8th of January. We have declared an intention, and now, when we come to publish it, some gentleman is suddenly seized with the "re-trenchment gripes," and *squirms* around like a long red worm on a pin-hook.

**Squirmy.** Having a squirming shape; crooked.

It coils loosely and waveringly about the ground, as a huge snake might unfold it; in every respect, a *squirmy* piece of work. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Squirt.** A foppish young fellow; a "whipper-snapper;" a contemptible puppy. A vulgar word.

If they won't keep company with *squirts* and dandies, who's going to make a monkey of himself? — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 160.

He's a galvanized *squirt*, and, as the parson said, "the truth ain't in him." — *North's Slave of the Lamp*, p. 25.

**Squirtish.** Dandified.

It's my opinion that these slicked-up, *squirtish* kind a fellars ain't particular hard baked, and they always goes in for aristocracy notions. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 73.

**Squitters.** The diarrhœa. Also used in England. See Wright's Provincial Dic.**Squush.** To crush. A vulgarism.

The next time I meet the critter, I'll take my stick and kill it, — I'll *squush* it with my foot. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

The following stanza is from a "Tender Lay" on a new-laid egg: —

Ay, touch it with a tender touch,  
For, till the egg is biled,  
Who knows but that unwittingly  
It may be smashed and spiled.  
The summer breeze that 'ginst it blows  
Ought to be stilled and hushed;  
For eggs, like youthful purity,  
Are "orful" when they 're *squashed*.

When I went to school and we played leap-frog, if there was a frog to be *squashed* down under all the rest, I was that frog. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 183.

**Stag.** 1. In the New York courts, a *stag* is the technical name for a man who is always ready to aid in proving an *alibi*, of course "for a consideration."

2. In New England and elsewhere, a bullock. And so, too, in some parts of England.

**Stag-Dance.** A dance performed by males only, in bar-rooms, &c. Also called a *bull-dance*.

The prisoners in the jail at Lafayette, Indiana, have been provided with a violin; and, one of the number being a good player, they have frequent cotillions or *stag-dances*, which have the advantage of being select, without the formality peculiar to entertainments in higher circles. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Nov. 13, 1854.

**Stage-Driver.** A stage-coachman.**Staging.** Scaffolding. Used in New England, and, I believe, in other parts of the United States. — *Pickering*.**Stag-Party.** A party consisting of males only.

I lose myself in a party of old bricks, who, under pretence of looking at the picture, are keeping up a small *stag-party* at the end of the room. — *Mace Sloper*, in *Knickerbocker Mag.*, April, 1856.

**Stake and Rider.** A species of fence higher and stronger than a "worm-fence."**Stake-Driver.** The bittern, so called from its booming. Adirondacks. The same bird is also called *punk-pudding*.



**To stake out.** To picket, as a horse, mule, &c.

He got all his fixins for camping, — his little wallet and tin cup, and a big lariat to stake out his mule. — *Frontier Incident*, *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*

**Staky.** A *staky* horse is one that *jibbs*, or stands still when in harness.

**To stall.** To stick fast in the mire, as a horse or carriage. Provincial in England. — *Halliwell*. In New England, “to set” is used in the same sense.

Now and then we halted to mend a broken tongue or axle, or help a *stalled* wagon from its miry bed. — *Captain Reid, The Scalp-Hunter*, p. 18.

**Stampede.** (Span. *estampado*, a stamping of feet.) A general scamper of animals on the Western prairies, usually caused by a fright. Mr. Kendall gives the following interesting account of one: —

“A *stampede*!” shouted some of the old campaigners, jumping from the ground and running towards their frightened animals; “a *stampede*! look out for your horses, or you’ll never see them again!” was heard on every side.

It is singular the effect that sudden fright has not only upon horses, but oxen, on the prairies. The latter will, perhaps, run longer and farther than the former; and although not as difficult to “head,” because they cannot run so fast, their onward course it is impossible to stay. Oxen have been known to run forty miles without once stopping to look back. Not one in fifty of them has seen the least cause of fear, but each simply ran because his neighbor did. Frequent instances have occurred where some worthless but skittish horse has caused the loss of hundreds of valuable animals.

Nothing can exceed the grandeur of the scene when a large cavallada, or drove of horses, take a “scare.” Old, weather-beaten, time-worn, and broken-down steeds — horses that have nearly given out from hard work or old age — will at once be transformed into wild and prancing colts. When first seized with that indescribable terror which induces them to fly, they seem to have been suddenly endowed with all the attributes of their original wild nature. With heads erect, tails and manes streaming in the air, eyes lit up and darting beams of fright, old and jaded hacks will be seen prancing and careering about with all the buoyancy of action which characterizes the antics of young colts. The throng will sweep along the plain with a noise which may be likened to something between a tornado and an earthquake, and as well might feeble man attempt to arrest either of the latter.

Were the earth rending and cleaving beneath their feet, horses, when under the terrifying influence of a *stampede*, could not bound away with greater velocity or more majestic beauty of movement. — *Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 96.

About two hours before day there was a sudden *stampede*, or rush of horses, along the purlieu of the camp, with a snorting and a neighing and clattering of hoofs that started the rangers from their sleep. — *Irving’s Tour to the Prairies*, p. 141.

Last night there occurred that dreaded calamity of the prairies, a *stampede* of the mules. The herd was quietly grazing, when suddenly a pony took fright, and, creating a panic among the animals, all fled. Their heavy tramping awoke

us; and, seizing arms, we rushed out, thinking that Indians were the cause of the disturbance. . . . For thirty-two miles, they continued the pursuit, and then, overtaking the frightened horses that led the herd, turned them back. — *Captain Whipple's Explorations for a Railroad to the Pacific*, p. 77.

From animals, the term is transferred to men: —

The boys leaped and whooped, flung their hats in the air, chased one another in a sort of *stampede*, &c. — *Judd's Margaret*, p. 120.

After him I went, and after me they came, and perhaps there wasn't the awfulest *stampede* down three pair of stairs that ever occurred in Michigan! — *Field, Western Tales*.

The cause that led to the recent alarm [in Paris] was the *stampede* among the directors of that wonderful institution, the Credit Mobilier. — *N. Y. Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 12, 1857.

From information which has reached us, there would seem to have been a considerable *stampede* of slaves from the border valley counties of Virginia during the late Easter holidays. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, April 9, 1858.

#### To stampede. 1. To cause to scamper off in a fright.

Colonel Snively was on the point of marching in pursuit of the Mexicans, when an incident occurred which frustrated the purposes of the expedition. This was effected by a war-party of Indians, who succeeded in *stampeding* a large band of the army horses. — *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 268.

Orders were issued by Daniel H. Wells, styling himself "Lieutenant-general, Nauvoo Legion," to *stampede* the animals of the United States troops on their march, to set fire to their trains, to burn the grass, &c. — *President's Message*, Dec. 6, 1858.

#### 2. To scamper off in a fright.

The Virginia Legislature, becoming frightened at the approach of the cholera, have finally *stampeded* toward the White Sulphur Springs, there to legislate in the ball-room of the "principal hotel." — *N. Y. Tribune*, June 12, 1849.

#### 3. To run off from; to leave; to rush from hurriedly.

The wounded are doing well. The court-house and prominent stores are being used as hospitals, . . . the owners of the latter having *stampeded* the town. — *Missouri Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

#### Stamping-Ground. The scene of one's exploits, or favorite place of resort. South and West.

The little village of Hampton, Virginia, is a favorite *stamping-ground* for politicians. President Pierce spent a few days here early in the season. — *Cor. of the Baltimore Argus*.

At the dinner given to the Knight Templars of Virginia by their brethren in Providence, R. I., on the occasion of their visit, June 22, 1858, Sir Knight M. Kimball, one of the Committee from Boston, in response to the toast of "The City of Boston," said: —

For the present, we won't brag much. We say as little as possible until we get the Virginia Knight Templars on our own *stamping-ground*. We don't propose to astonish them till we get them out of your [the R. I. Templars'] hands.

I went up to Mobile, and then to my old *stampin'-ground*, up again to the old State; and, arter spending a week or so among my kin, made a bee-line for Washington. — *Piney Woods Tavern*, p. 41.

**Stamp-Mill.** A mill used in California for crushing all kinds of free-gold quartz. It is the simplest and most wasteful machinery used in the reduction of ores.

**Stamps.** Bank-notes, greenbacks, or any other paper money. Perhaps from postage-stamps, which were used as money in 1861-62. See *Postal Currency*.

The till I keep here in my pocket so safe,  
I light up my kerosene lamps;  
At daylight I put up my shutters so tight,  
Then go in to count up my *stamps*.

*Song, E. Harrigan.*

The "Providence Journal," Feb. 5, 1877, in speaking of a certain lecturer who failed to obtain a large audience, says: —

The patience with which he waited in the box-office to rake in all the *stamps* led his audience to form a fair estimate of his appreciation of the almighty dollar.

**Stanchel.** A stanchion; a post. "Tie up the cow to the stanchel." Massachusetts.

**Stancheous.** Strong; durable. Western.

I tell you what, it's a mighty *stancheous*-looking building, and looks far off at a distance when you 're going up to it. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 33.

**Stand.** 1. The situation of a store or place of business is called a *stand*; as, "The Astor House is a good *stand* for a hotel."

2. A platform; a pulpit for orators and preachers.

**Standee.** A standing bed-place in a steamer. A place to stand at a theatre or concert, without the privilege of a seat.

**To stand to it.** To adhere to one's engagement; to abide by a compact; to be resolute.

**To stand Treat.** To consent to treat, or to be at the expense of treating a party to liquor.

I was never sold before, I vow; I cave in, and will *stand treat*. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**To stand up to the Rack.** A metaphorical expression of the same meaning as the like choice phrases, "to come to the scratch," "to toe the mark."

I begun a new campaign at Washington. I had hard work, but I *stood up to the rack*, fodder or no fodder. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 137.

It was the hottest night's work ever old Wolf undertook; and it tuck a mighty chance of hollerin' to make him *stand up to his rack* as well as he did. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 64.

**To star.** Said of a popular actor, who goes about and acts in different towns in the theatrical season. Such actor is also called "a star."

**Star-Apple.** (*Chrysophyllum Cainito.*) A round, smooth-skinned fruit, the size of a peach, with a soft pulp, and a number of glossy, brown seeds. The more common kinds of *star-apple* are the green skinned ones with white pulps, and the purple ones. West Indies.

**Stare-Cat.** A woman or girl who amuses herself with gazing at her neighbors. A woman's word.

**Star-Plum.** (*Chrysophyllum monopyrenum.*) A kind of star-apple, also called a Barbadoes Damson plum. Barbadoes.

**Stars.** 1. The officers of the police in the city of New York are so called from their badge, a brass *star*, which is required by law to be worn on the breast.

The present system clothes with authority not only vicious men, but even convicts, because they have been of service to their party. Then it is that the "*star*," instead of being a terror to evil-doers, becomes the fear of good citizens. *Report of Com. of Philad. Council on Police*, 1857.

2. A Southern pronunciation of the word *stairs*, like *bar* for *bear*; also heard in New England.

**Stars and Bars.** The flag of the late Southern Confederacy.

Our Southern boys are brave and true, and are joining heart and hand,  
And are flocking to the *Stars and Bars*, as they are floating o'er our land;  
And all are standing ready, with their rifles in their hand,  
And invite the North to open graves down South in Dixie's land.

*Confederate Song.*

**Stars and Stripes.** The flag of the United States.

This flag was adopted by act of Congress on the 14th June, 1777, in the following words:—

"*Resolved*, That the flag of the thirteen United Colonies be thirteen stripes alternately red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

It has been thought that the arms of Washington may have suggested the idea for the American flag. These arms contain three stars in the upper portion, and three bars running across the escutcheon. Other flags were used at different times during the Revolution, which are described by Mr. T. Westcott, of Philadelphia, in a communication with the London "*Notes and Queries*," for 1852, p. 10.

In March, 1775, a union flag with a red field was hoisted at New York, bearing the inscription, "George Rex and the Liberties of

America," and upon the reverse, "No Popery." On the 18th July, 1778, General Putnam raised at Prospect Hill a flag, bearing on one side the Connecticut motto, "*Qui transtulit sustinet*," on the other, "An Appeal to Heaven." In October of the same year, the floating batteries at Boston had a flag with the latter motto, the field white with a pine-tree upon it. This was the Massachusetts emblem. Another flag, used during 1775 in some of the Colonies, had upon it a rattlesnake coiled as if about to strike, with the motto, "Don't tread on me." The grand union flag of thirteen stripes was raised on the heights near Boston, Jan. 2, 1776. The "British Annual Register" of 1776 says: "They burnt the King's speech, and changed their colors from a red ground, which they had hitherto used, to a flag with thirteen stripes, as a symbol of the number and union of the colonies." The idea of making a stripe for each State was adopted from the first; and the fact goes far to negative the supposition that the private arms of General Washington had any thing to do with it. The pine-tree, the rattlesnake, and the striped flag were used indiscriminately until July, 1777, when the blue union with the stars was added to the stripes, and the flag established by law. Formerly, a new stripe was added for each new State admitted to the union, until the flag became too large, when, by act of Congress, the stripes were reduced to the old thirteen; and now another star is added at the accession of each new State.

**Star-spangled Banner.** The flag of the United States. The term was first given to the American flag by Francis S. Key, in his beautiful song, now become a national one, which bears that title. The circumstances connected with the composition of this song are given by Chief Justice Taney, the brother-in-law of Mr. Key, in a letter which accompanied a late edition of the poems of that writer. The following is condensed from it:—

"In the campaign of the British, during the war of 1812, when they destroyed the Capitol at Washington and the battle of Bladensburg took place, Dr. Beanes, a leading physician of Upper Marlboro', was taken from his bed at midnight, by a detachment of soldiers sent for the purpose, and without even allowing him to put his clothes on, was hurried off to the British camp.

"Measures were immediately taken to procure the release of Dr. Beanes, who had been sent down to the fleet which lay in the Chesapeake. Mr. Key, who was an intimate friend of the Doctor, volunteered to accompany Mr. Skinner, an agent for the government for flags of truce and exchange of prisoners.

"After much solicitation, Mr. Key succeeded in getting an order to release the Doctor; but they were told that they must remain with the fleet until after the attack on Baltimore, then about to be made. They were then transferred to their own vessels, accompanied by a guard of marines to prevent them from landing, and fortunately anchored in a position which enabled them to see the flag of Fort McHenry. The party remained on deck during the whole night, watching every shell, from the moment it was fired until it fell, listening with breathless interest to hear if an explosion followed.

"While the bombardment continued, it was sufficient proof that the fort had not surrendered. But it suddenly ceased, when they became alarmed and paced the deck the remainder of the night in painful suspense, watching with intense anxiety for the return of day. At length the light came; they saw that 'our flag was still there,' and soon after learned that the attack had failed. Mr. Key, Mr. Skinner, and Dr. Beanes were then permitted to land where they pleased.

"Under the excitement of the time, Mr. Key, as he stated to Judge Taney, commenced the song of '*The Star-spangled Banner*' on the deck of their vessel, in the fervor of the moment, when he saw the enemy retreating to their ships, and looked at the flag he had watched for so anxiously, as the morning opened. A few lines he had scratched on the back of a letter which he had in his pocket, some he preserved in his mind, and finished it in the boat on his way to the shore. Arriving at the hotel, he wrote it out as it now stands. The next morning, he showed the lines to Judge Nicholson, who was much pleased with them, and immediately sent them to a printer, where the poem was struck off in hand-bills, and most favorably received by the people of Baltimore:—

"Oh! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
 What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming;  
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,  
 O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?  
 And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;  
 Oh! say, does that *star-spangled banner* yet wave  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

**Starvation.** The act of starving, or the state of being starved. —  
*Webster and Worcester.*

The word *starvation* was first introduced into the English language by Mr. Dundas [the first Lord Melville], in a speech in 1775,

on an American debate, and hence applied to him, as a nickname, — *Starvation Dundas*. — *Horace Walpole*.

I shall not wait for the advent of *starvation* from Edinburgh to settle my judgment. — *Henry Dundas*, 1775.

After months of *starvation* and despair. — *Macaulay*.

The word has erroneously been called an Americanism by Dr. French and others. "Strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless quite true that this word [starvation], now unhappily so common in every tongue, is not to be found in our own English Dictionaries; neither in Todd's Johnson, nor in Richardson's, nor in Smart's Walker remodelled 1836." — *Notes and Queries*. In the new edition of Todd's Johnson by Dr. Latham, the word appears, with a simple definition, without comment.

**State.** A large district of country having a separate government, but confederated with other States, as one of the members or *States* of the American Union. — *Worcester*.

**Stated Supply.** A minister who, not as an occasional but constant preacher to a congregation, officiates apart from any formal induction: one actually, though not in technical form, a Christian pastor. Chiefly used by Presbyterians, occasionally by Congregationalists, though now almost supplanted by the term *Acting Pastor*; viz., a pastor who officiates without a formal installation.

**State-House.** (Dutch, *Stadhuis*.) The building in which the legislature of a State holds its sessions; a State capitol. — *Webster*.

**The States.** The United States. "The States" is universally employed in the British Provinces of North America. In England, they are always spoken of as "America."

**States' Rights.** The rights of the several independent States, as opposed to the authority of the Federal government.

Having been all my life, and being still, an ardent "*States-rights*" man, — believing *States' rights* to be an essential, nay, the essential, element of the Constitution, and that no one who thinks otherwise can stand on the same constitutional platform that I do, — it seems to me that I am, and all those with whom I act habitually are, if Democrats at all, true "*States-rights* Democrats." — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858.

Then rise in your might, and repel each invader,  
Nor let our loved land be disgraced by their tread;  
Let the watchword be, "*Freedom and States' Rights* for ever!"  
Nor cease till each foe shall lie low with the dead.

*Rebellion Record, Confederate Song*, Vol. III. p. 7.

My Southern boys for years have held  
The Presidential reins, sir, —  
Until to-day they 've held a sway  
They never can regain, sir.

And when they cannot rule, they kick  
 And hate with all their might, sir;  
 For love of Union's second to  
 Their fondness for *States' rights*, sir.

*Ibid.*, *W. H. S.*, Vol. III. p. 28.

**Station-House.** A temporary jail; also a place to keep petty criminals before trial.

**To stave.** 1. To break a hole in; to break; to burst; as, "to *stave* a cask." — *Webster*. This is the legitimate use of the verb; but sometimes we make it govern the instrument directly, as in the following example: —

I'll *stave* my fist right through you, and carry you on my elbow as easily as if you were an empty market-basket. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

2. To hurry; to press forward.

A president of one of our colleges once said to a graduate at parting, "My son, I want to advise you. Never oppose public opinion. The great world will *stave* right on!" — *Am. Review*, June, 1848.

Hilloa, Steve! where are you *staving* to? If you're for Wellington, scale up here, and I'll give you a ride. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*.

And so the Yankee *staves* along  
 Full-chisel, hitting right or wrong,  
 And makes the burden of his song

"By golly!" — *Home Journal*.

**Staver.** A dashing, active person or thing; a rouser.

Miss Asphyxia's reputation in the region was perfectly established. She was spoken of with applause, under such titles as a *staver*, a pealer, a roarer at work. *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, p. 117.

**Staving.** Great; strong.

A *staring* dram put him in better humor. Strange what arguments some people require. — *Cor. Cincinnati Times*.

**Stay-at-home.** Domestic; not habituated to travel. "She's a *stay-at-home* woman;" "A *stay-at-home* body."

The great mass of the Southern people are stationary and *stay-at-home* in their habits. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Stayed with.** To be stayed with is to be courted by a man.

**Stay put.** To let a thing remain as it is.

On a projection we piled our bags and baskets, and ranged a few essentials in some order.

"If they will only *stay put*," said Emery Ann. "But I suppose they will all be upside down." — *Mrs. Whitney, Sights and Insights*, p. 37.

**Steal.** (Pronounced *stail*.) The handle of various implements, as a *rake-steal*, a *fork-steal*. Used by the farmers in some parts of New England. Provincial in various parts of England. — *Pickering*. Cf. Ger. *Stiel*, handle.



**To steam, To steam it.** To indulge in spirituous liquors to excess.

**Steamboat.** A term used at the West to denote a dashing, "go-a-head" character.

Mrs. Stowe, while in England, met Archbishop Whately, of whom she thus speaks:—

There is a kind of brusque humor in his address, a downright heartiness, which reminds one of Western character. If he had been born in our latitude, in Kentucky or Wisconsin, the natives would have called him Whately, and said he was a real *steamboat* on an argument. — *Sunny Memories*.

The renowned Colonel Crockett, while asleep on a stump, got caught in the crotch of a tree and held fast, where he was attacked by eagles, which attempted to pull out his long hair to build their nests with:—

"In a few minutes I heered a voice," says the Colonel, "and then a gal come running up, and axed what was the matter. . . . I telled her that, if she would drive off the eagles, I would make her a present of an iron comb."

"That I will," says she, "for I am a she *steamboat*, and have doubled up a crocodile in my day."

**Steamboating.** The business of working on board a steamboat; a term generally confined to the hands employed on board river-boats.

*Steamboating* looks like something big to Fred, you know: it shows off better than country stores and saw-mills. — *Habberton, The Barton Experiment*, p. 29.

**Steam Doctor.** See *Thompsonian Doctor*.

**Steam Paddy.** A steam earth-excavator, much used in making excavations in sand or loose soil for railways. So called from its taking the place of a number of Irish laborers.

The soil was so sandy that the hills were easily cut down, and for this purpose a contrivance was used called a *steam Paddy*, which did immense execution. — *Borthwick's California*, p. 80.

**Steboy, Seboy.** A word used to set dogs upon pigs or other animals.

"There it is — that black and white thing — on that log," says Tom. "*Steboy*, catch him!" says he [to the dog]. Ben run up with his light, and the first thing I heard him say was, "Peugh! oh, my Lord! look out, fellers, it's a pole-cat." *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 55.

**Steep.** Great, magnificent, extravagant. A newly coined slang term, equivalent to *tall*.

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*, Oct. 17, 1857.

The verdict by twelve of seventeen of a jury giving \$150,000 as damages to a Land and Water-Power Company, at the Great Falls of the Potomac, through the diversion to the Washington Aqueduct of one eighteenth of the water at lowest stage, is regarded as decidedly *steep*. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, Aug. 23, 1858.

**Steeple-Bush.** One of the popular names of the *Spiræa tomentosa* (hardhack).

**Steers.** In Texas, the universal name for cattle. Ox and oxen are almost unknown terms there. There are "wheel-steers," "swing-steers," and "lead-steers."

**Stemmery.** A large building in which tobacco is stemmed; that is, in which the thin part of the leaf is stripped from the fibrous veins that run through it. Kentucky and Missouri.

**Stem-Winder.** A watch wound by a key affixed to the stem.

**Stent.** (Old Eng.) An allotted task. New England.

**Step-Ladder.** A portable frame-work of stairs, much used in-doors in reaching to a high position; also called steps. — *Webster*.

**Stepped out.** "He stepped out," i. e. he died.

**Stepper.** "She's a regular stepper," — said of an active, high-spirited woman.

**Stern-Wheel.** The shallow rivers of the West are navigated by small steamboats with a wheel at the stern instead of side-wheels, which are used only in the larger steamers. Hence the term is applied to any thing small, petty; as, a "stern-wheel church." Comp. *One-Horse*.

So, when ended, the girls were kindly and tenderly put on the "St. Mary," — a funny, little, *stern-wheel* boat, which was to go up the Red River. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. 125.

**Stern-Wheeler.** A steamboat fitted up with a stern-wheel. Western.

Squire Blaze served for a long time as first mate on a raft, but grew ambitious for higher distinction. Next, he got possession of a *starn-wheeler*, and entered the pine-knot business, the pursuit of which took him so high up Red River that he got clean out of the way of taxes. — *Remembrances of the Mississippi, Harper's Mag.*

A Southern editor wishes to say that the Mississippi is very low. How does he say it? "The cat-fish are rigging up *stern-wheelers*." — *Speech of the Hon. S. H. Cox*, Sept., 1857.

**Stew.** "Give us a *stew*," i. e. stewed oysters.

**To stick.** To take in; to impose upon; to cheat in trade. "I'm *stuck* with a counterfeit note;" "He went to a horse sale, and got *stuck* with a spavined jade."

As soon as the whole class of small speculators perceived they had been *stuck*, they all shut their mouths; no one confessing the ownership of a share. — *A Week in Wall Street*, p. 47.

Very often is a client *stuck* for a heavy bill of costs, which he would have saved but for the ignorance of his attorney. — *Newspaper*.

**Stick-Chimney.** In newly settled parts of the country, where log-houses form the first habitations of the settlers, the chimneys are made with sticks from one to two inches square, and about two feet in length, which are laid crosswise and cemented with clay or mud. The fire-places are built of rough stone, and the *stick-chimneys* are merely the conductors of the smoke. Formerly called "catted chimney," in Massachusetts.

The *stick-chimney* was, like its owner's hat, open at the top, and jammed in at the sides. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 7.

We came to a queer little cabin built of round logs. . . . The *stick-chimney* daubed with clay, and topped with a barrel open at both ends, made this a typical cabin. — *Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, p. 94.

**Sticker.** 1. An article of merchandise which sticks by the dealer, and does not meet with a ready sale, is technically called a *sticker*.

2. A puzzler. See *Stumper*.

**Stick-in-the-Mud.** (Pron. *stickneymud*.) Very common for a slow, inert man; also used for "Thingumbob," "what d' ye call 'em," or a name you can't remember. "Come, old *Stick-in-the-mud*, and give us a lift."

"Well, arter all this palaver," said old *Stick-in-the-mud*, "what are you arter?"

"I'm arter another coal of fire," said I, "to light a cigar with." — *Sam Stick, Wise Saws*, p. 132.

**Stick it out.** Endure to the end. To "hold on." "He does not succeed in Florida, nevertheless he says that he means to *stick it out* till spring."

**Stiff.** Strong. Said of a drink. "Give it to me *stiff*."

**Stiffy.** A well-dressed, conceited boy. Used among boys.

**Still-Baiting.** Fishing with a deep line in one spot, as distinguished from trolling.

**Still-Hunter.** A stalker of game. Western.

The *still-hunter* must needs be upon his guard; for the wounded buffalo is prone to make battle upon the too near approach of his enemy. — *Gregg, Com. of Prairies*, Vol. II. p. 219.

**Still-Hunting.** Walking noiselessly through the woods, keeping a bright look-out, and searching for game in the haunts where they are wont to browse in the day-time.

*Still-hunting* buffalo is approaching or stalking, by taking advantage of the wind and any cover the ground affords, and crawling within shooting distance of the feeding herd. — *Ruxton, Adventures in New Mexico*, p. 285.

What is called *still-hunting* among our frontiersmen is not practised among the Indians. — *Sibley's Western Prairies*.

**Stingaree.** A corruption of *sting-ray*, the name of a fish. (*Cephalop-tera vampyrus*.) On the Southern coast, where chiefly found, it is also known as the *Devil-Fish*.

This fish is thus described by Captain John Smith:—

Our Captaine taking a fish from his sword, being much the fashion of a Thorn-back, but a long tayle like a riding-roddle, whereon in the middist is a poysoned sting of two or three inches long, bearded like a saw on each side, which she struck into the wrist neare an inch and a halfe. . . . The torment was instantly so extreame that in four houres we all with much sorrow concluded his funerall, and prepared his grave in an island by. The man recovered, and the place where the event occurred was called *Stingrai Isle*, after the name of the fish. — *Historie of Virginia* (1632).

**Stinkard.** A skunk, formerly so called in New England. See *Squash*.

**Stinkstone.** Swine-stone, a variety of carbonate of lime, which emits a fetid odor on being struck. — *Dana*.

**Stinkweed.** See *Jamestown Weed*.

**Stinted.** Often substituted for *stunted*.

**To stitoh.** To form land into ridges. New England.—*Webster*.

**To stive up.** To make hot, sultry, close. An English expression, but now more used, it is believed, in this than in the old country.

"Oh, marcy on us," said a fat lady, who was looking for a house, "this 'll never do for my family at all. There's no convenience about it, only one little *stived-up* closet. . . . And the bed-rooms,—she would as soon sleep in a pig-pen, and done with it, as to get into such little, mean, *stived-up* places as them." *Downing, May-day in New York*.

**To stiver.** To run; to move off. A low word used in the Northern States.

**To stock.** To *stock* land means, with us, to supply land, not only with animals, but also with seed; as, "My farm is *stocked* with clover."

**Stock and Fluke.** Probably of nautical origin, to denote a whole anchor; thence, the whole of any thing. It is employed for wholly, completely.

In other words, Tammany Hall is sold out *stock and fluke* to Fernando Wood. *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct., 1861.

**Stock-Dealer.** A trader in farm stock; a cattle-dealer.

**To take Stock in any Thing** is to have full faith in it.

**Stocking Feet.** To be in one's *stocking feet* is to have only one's stockings on, to have one's shoes off.

The mistress and chambermaid visited the house once a week for the purpose of putting things to rights, — leaving their shoes at the door, and entering devotedly in their *stocking feet*. — *Irving, Knickerbocker*, p. 168.

**Stock-Minder.** One who takes care of cattle on the great prairies; a herder; a vaquero, which see.

**Stock-Range.** The prairie or plain where cattle range or graze.

When any person or persons may hunt estrays in another *stock-range*, he or they shall notify the owner or stock-minder of said stock his or their intention or object.

**Stocks.** *Buying and selling stocks.* The machinery connected with the purchase and sale of stocks is thus described by Mr. Medbery: —

The first point necessary to know is when the customer wishes to receive or deliver the *stock*. He may prefer to-day, to-morrow, or a more distant date. Each of these methods of settlement has a special name: —

*Cash*, in broker's language, means that the contract entered upon shall be fulfilled by payment and delivery of stock, at or before 2.15 P. M. of the day of sale.

*Regular* or *Regular Way* is the term for sale when the delivery is to be made at or before 2.15 P. M. of the day succeeding that of contract.

*Buyer's Option* is where the purchaser has the right to require the delivery of the stock upon any day within the time covered by the option.

*Seller's Option* is where the day of delivery is at the convenience or pleasure of the person making the sale, within the time stipulated at the moment of sale.

In all cases, notice must be given by the holder of the option to the other party in the contract, on or before two o'clock of the day previous to that when delivery of stock is called for; but the *stock* is deliverable at the termination of the contract without notice. — *Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 49.

For other terms appertaining to stocks, see *Buy or sell Flat*; *Bulls and Bears*; *Carrying Stocks*; *Corner*; *Call Contract*; *Delivery*; *Flyer*; *Force Quotations*; *Josh*; *Margin*; *Pool*; *Puts*; *Long and Short*; *Spread*; *Straddle*; *Swimming Market*; *Ten up*; *Twist*; *Unload Stock*; *Washing*; and *Watering*.

We pay particular attention to purchasing Stock Privileges, and can always secure *Puts*, *Culls*, *Spreads*, or *Straddles*, on all active stocks at the best market rates. — *Circular of a Wall Street Broker*.

**Stock-Train.** A train of railroad cars loaded with cattle; a cattle train.

**Stock-Watering.** A system recently adopted of increasing the capital stock of a railroad company by issuing new stock, on the pretence that accumulated profits warrant such increase. The late Cornelius Vanderbilt was famous for the extent to which he carried out this system in the railway companies, the stock of which he controlled. This increase of stock has also been adopted for the purpose of raising money. See *Watering Stock*.

The "N. Y. Times," in speaking of a new railroad, says: —

The road should be constructed under the authority of a commission, to be composed of Presidents of our principal commercial organizations and leading

representatives of our real estate interests, to the end that the work should be honestly and economically done, without the stealing and *stock-watering* which often accompany such undertakings.

Such occasional diversions as corners, money lock-ups, wholesale *stock-waterings*, and kindred devices, are the indications of forces with large reserves of strength. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 158.

**Stocky.** Short and thick. A west of England expression, used in New England.

He's rather a *stocky* man; and I'm nothing but a shadow, as it were. — *Brooke's Eastford*.

**To stomp.** To stamp with the feet. The pronunciation *stomp* is almost universal in the United States.

**Stone-Bee.** An assemblage of farmers or villagers for the purpose of clearing stones from a neighbor's piece of land. See *Bee*.

At Ridgefield, we used to have *stone-bees*, when all the men of a village or hamlet came together with their draft cattle, and united to clear some patch of earth which was covered with an undue quantity of stones and rocks. — *Goodrich, Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 75.

**Stone-Bluish.** A hurt or sore on the sole of the foot among those who go without shoes, such as children and Negroes. The same term is used in Ireland.

**Stone-Root.** (*Collinsonia Canadensis*.) A plant used in medicine. Its properties are diuretic and stomachic. It is also called *Richweed*.

**Stone-Toter.** A name often given to the Mullet (*Catostomus nigricans*) of the Middle States, and to other species of *Cyprinidæ*.

The most singular fish in this part of the world is called the *Stone-toter*, whose brow is surmounted with several little sharp horns, by the aid of which he *totes* small flat stones from one part of the brook to another more quiet, in order to make a snug little enclosure for his lady to lie in in safety. — *Paulling, Letters from the South*.

**Stool.** An artificial duck or other water-fowl used as a decoy. They are much used on Long Island and elsewhere in duck-shooting.

**Stooling.** Decoying ducks or other fowl by the means of "stools."

**Stool-Pigeon.** A decoy robber, in the pay of the police, who brings his associates into a trap laid for them.

**Stool-Pigeoning.** The practice of employing decoys to catch robbers.

**Stoop.** (Dutch, *stoep*.) The steps at the entrance of a house; door-steps. It is also applied to a porch with seats, a piazza, or balustrade. This, unlike most of the words received from the Dutch, has extended, in consequence of the uniform style of building that prevails throughout the country, beyond the bounds of New York State, as far as the backwoods of Canada.

*Stoulpe* before a doore, *souche*. — *Palsgrave*. "The same as *Stoop*, which is still used in the north of England." "A short, stout post, put down to mark a boundary," &c. — *Halliwell*.

Carts or waines are debarred and letted [by coaches]: the milk-maid's ware is often spilt in the dirt, and people's guts like to be crushed out, being crowded and shrowded up against stalls and *stoopes*. — *Taylor, the Water Poet's Works*, Pt. 2, p. 242.

In portly gabardine and bulbous multiplicity of breeches, the Dutch burgher sat on his *stoep*, and smoked his pipe in lordly silence. — *Knickerbocker's New York*, p. 385.

About nine o'clock, all three of us passed up Wall Street, on the *stoops* of which no small portion of its tenants were already seated. — *Cooper, Satanstoe*, Vol. I. p. 69.

Nearly all the houses [in Albany] were built with their gables to the street and each had heavy wooden Dutch *stoops*, with seats at the door. — *Ibid.*, p. 161.

There was a large two story-house, having a long *stoop* in front. — *Margaret*, p. 63.

The roses fall, the daisies droop,  
And all about the ancient *stoop*  
The eager sparrows soar and swoop.

*Nora Perry, The Legend of Moorland Hall.*

I shall step back to my party within the *stoop*. — *Backwoods of Canada*.

The *stoop* is up, and I have just planted hops at the base of the pillars. — *Ibid.*, p. 309.

**To stop.** To stay; to abide temporarily; as, "When you come to New York, *stop* with me instead of going to a hotel."

Those who remain at home know little of the newer portions of our country, and of the primeval style of living. I recently *stopped* with a friend on court-day. The court-house was of logs, without a floor, &c. — *Corresp. of Newark Daily Adv.*

**Store.** In the United States and Canada, shops of every kind for the sale of goods, whether at wholesale or retail, are commonly called *stores*. Thus, we have dry-goods *stores*, shoe *stores*, book *stores*, hardware *stores*, &c. This use of the word, whose proper meaning is a magazine or storehouse where merchandise or movable property is kept, seems to arise from that tendency to the magniloquent with which Americans have been charged. The word *shop* is thus almost wholly discarded, except in the sense of workshop.

**Store Clothes, Store Goods.** Clothing or other articles purchased at a store, as opposed to those which are home-made. These phrases are used only in out of the way parts of the country. Comp. *Boughten*.

**Storekeeper.** In America, a man who has the care of a store or warehouse; a shopkeeper. The officer who has charge of the govern-

ment warehouse, where property to the value of millions is deposited for inspection or for safe-keeping, is a *storekeeper*; so, too, is the man who stands behind the counter of a paltry shop, and deals out yards of tape and papers of pins.

**Store Pay.** Payment made for produce or other articles purchased by goods from a store, instead of cash. This is a common way of buying produce in the country. Sometimes, a dealer agrees to pay half in cash and half out of his store, i. e., in *store pay*.

See, a girl has just arrived with a pot of butter to trade off for *store pay*. She wants in exchange a yard of calico, a quarter of tea, a quart of molasses, some radish seed, a plug of tobacco, two pipes, a fine-tooth comb, a salt mackerel, a dose of rhubarb, two sticks of candy, and a bottle of rum. — *Captain Priest's Adventures*, p. 54.

**Store Tea.** A term applied to the tea of China bought at the stores, to distinguish it from herb tea. See *Boughten*.

**To storm.** To blow with violence; impersonally, as it *storms*. — *Webster*. We use it improperly in the sense of to rain or to snow.

**Story.** A floor; a flight of rooms. — *Johnson*. In the United States, the floor next the ground is the first *story*. In England, what we call the "second *story*" is called the "first floor."

**Stove-Pipe.** 1. A funnel. 2. A tall hat.

**Stove-Pipe Hat.** A tall hat, from its resemblance to a joint of a stove-pipe.

Stoga boots an' stove-pipe hat,  
Standin' collar, an' plenty o' dat;  
Sweet potatoes an' possum fat,  
Oh, fight for the Union!

*Songs of the Centennial.*

Pickpockets rejoice in neatly fitting suits, spotless linen, sparkling pins and ornaments, and *stove-pipe hats*, tall and glossy, . . . worn jauntily on one side. *The Galaxy* for 1867, p. 632.

**Stowaway.** One who secretes himself on board a ship or other public conveyance, in order to get a free passage.

**Straddle.** A stock-broker's term, and means a contract which gives the holder the privilege of calling for the stock at a fixed price, or of delivering it at the same price to the party who signs the contract. A straddle is desirable when a party wishes to buy and sell stocks, without being obliged to deposit a cash margin.

**Straddle-Bug.** The popular name for a "dung-beetle" or "tumble-bug." In the Isle of Wight, the cockroach is called a *straddle-bob*. Sometimes applied to other species of beetles. A specimen of the



dialect of the Isle of Wight, in "Halliwell's Introduction," gives "straddle-bob" as another name of the "dumbledore."

Shew me the man who does not delight in the departure of winter, and I will exhibit to you one who, as Sheepsphear says, is "fit for treacle, *straddle-bugs*, and spooks." — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 194.

**Straight.** 1. Even or uniform in quality. A term used in commerce, and particularly among flour-dealers; as, "A thousand barrels of Rochester flour, *straight*, brought \$5," meaning that the thousand barrels were all alike, or that the same brand ran *straight* through.

2. Pure, genuine, uncontaminated.

In the Presidential contest of 1844, no man was more fierce in his hostility to Henry Clay than the present candidate of the *straight* Whigs for the Vice-Presidency. — *N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*, Sept., 1856.

The *straight* Republican Convention is to meet to-morrow. Mr. Sumner's anti-slavery opinions are very strong, and this would seem to lead to the conclusion that he is with the *straights*. — *N. Y. Times*, Oct. 14, 1857.

3. Pure, undiluted, applied to liquors.

My glass of brandy, which should have been *straight*, was surreptitiously diluted with Croton water. — *Doesticks* (1854).

But I takes mine *straight* without sugar, and that's what's the matter with me. — *Bret Harte, Cicely*.

For additional illustrations, see *Whiskey Straight*.

*Straight*, in the game of poker, is five cards in sequence; as, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

**Straight as a Loon's Leg** is a common simile in New England.

They were puzzled with the accounts; but I saw through it in a minit, and made it all as *straight as a loon's leg*. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 42.

**Straight-out.** Pure; genuine; unsophisticated.

Anne was indignant with that *straight-out* and generous indignation which belongs to women, who are ready to follow their principles to any result with more inconsiderate fearlessness than men. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 319.

We feel what a blessed thing it is just now to be a *straight-out* Whig, sitting calm on tumult's wheel. — *N. Y. Commercial Adv.*, May, 1856.

**Straight-spoken.** Plain-spoken; downright; candid.

I'm not a-going to spoil the appearance of heaven by foolishly attempting to garnish it with artificial flowers, nor to blacken hell till it shines like a new polished boot. Not I. I'm a *straight-spoken* preacher. — *Dow's Sermons*.

I'm a *straight-spoken* kind o' creetur,  
That blurts right out what's in his head;

And, if I've one peculiar feature,

It is a nose that won't be led. — *Biglow Papers*, p. 88.

**Straight up and down.** Plain; candid; honest.

If there was any thing wanting to prove that lawyers were *not straight up and down* in their dealings, that would do it. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*.

**Strain**, instead of *sprain*, is frequently heard. "I have *strained* my ankle."

**Strain**. To stride. New England.

**Strand**. 1. The Dutch on the Hudson River apply the term to a landing-place; as, the *strand* at Kingston. — *Webster*.

2. In the South, the word *strand* denotes a fibre, as a hair of the head, beard, &c.

**Stranger**. It is the common practice in the Western States to accost a person whose name is not known by this title. In England, for example, a person would say, "Can you tell me, sir, if this is the road to B?" At the West, he would say, "*Stranger*, is this the road?" &c.

Under the benign influence of the Christian religion, a civilization was growing up in the world which had carried modern nations far beyond the boasted refinement of ancient Greece and Rome. With them, the word "*stranger*" was synonymous with "enemy;" but, among us, "*stranger*" was but another name for "friend." — *Speech of R. H. Coxe, Washington*.

**Strapped**. Tight; hard up for money.

John Scroggins, at 2 P. M., is on the hunt for the wherewithal to pay a note in bank. He meets Jere. Lowndes, who looks cheerful, as though he may have a few hundred. Scroggins tries him. No go. Lowndes is *strapped*; had to pay his wife's cousin's last quarter's rent, which consumed what he had reserved for current expenses, when he made his last purchase of stocks. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Oct., 1857.

**Straw**. Foliage of the pine-tree.

Straw as its [pine-tree's] foliage is called here in [North Carolina.] — *Olmsted, Seaboard States*.

**Straw Bail**. Worthless bail; bail given by "men of straw," i. e. persons who pretend to the possession of property, but have none.

There is a class of pettifoggers about the N. Y. Tombs who are in league with the police justices to get all the money they can out of their victims; and, having divided the spoils, the culprits are sent forth unwhipped of justice. Taking *straw bail* is the favorite dodge. The "shyster" is permitted to visit him or her; and, with a tongue practised in the art, he dwells upon the chances the prisoner runs of Sing Sing prison, adding that for a consideration he (the shyster) might effect a liberation. If the prisoner has money, it is paid at once. The magistrate having received his share, a "man of straw" is taken as bail, and the prisoner is discharged. — *Washington Evening Star*.

**Straw Bid**. A bid for a contract which the bidder is unable or unwilling to fulfil.

The House post-office committee has agreed to report Luttrell's bill to prevent *straw-bidding* for mail contracts, and to punish *straw-bidders* when caught. — *Telegram from Washington*, March 13, 1878.

**Streak.** 1. A vein; a turn. Applied to mental peculiarities.

Just act, now, as if you had got a *streak* of something in you, such as a man ought for to have who is married to one of the very first families in old Virginia. *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 120.

"I hope you don't mean to insinuate that I'm queer, do you, Melissa?"

"Oh, no, Priscille, I dident mean to insinuate that, but then you know almost everybody has their queer *streaks*." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 121.

2. A layer; as, in meat, fat and lean.

*Bill*. Well, landlord, what have you got for dinner?

*Landlord*. Pork and beans, and chicken fixins.

*Bill*. Then give us some pork, and let it be a *streak* of fat and a *streak* of lean. — *Squatter Life*.

The "Philadelphia Times," of Oct. 20, 1877, in speaking of the appointment of a suitable person as minister at the Court of St. James, says: —

If President Hayes is disposed to take things in *streaks*, he might tender it [the office] to Governor Curtin; or, if that *streak* is a little too fat, there's ex-Speaker Grow, who is a Hayes man with Liberal variations, and would readily adapt himself to English 'alf-and-'alf.

**To streak or To streak it** is to run as fast as possible.

O'er hill and dale with fury she did dreel,  
A' roads to her were good and bad alike;  
Nane o't she wyl'd, but forward on did *streak*.

*Ross's Helenore*.

I was certain it wasn't no fox or wolf, but a dog; and if I didn't *streak* off like greased lightnin'. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 78.

I *streaked* it for Washington, and it was well-nigh upon midnight when I reached the White House. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 91.

When I did get near, he'd stop and look, cock his ears, and give a snuff, as if he'd never seen a man afore, and then *streak* it off as if I had been an Indian. *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 165.

As soon as I touched land, I *streaked* it for home, as hard as I could lay legs to the ground. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 59.

'Twas a satisfaction to have such a horse, and 'twas a pleasure to crop him, and *streak* it away, at a brushing canter, for a good five miles at a stretch. — *Simms, Wigwam and Cabin*, p. 85.

What brings a duck *streaking* it down stream, if humans ain't behind her? and who's in these diggings but Indians? — *Ruxton, Far West*, p. 79.

How many do I see around me that willingly permit the worm of corruption to gnaw at their already moth-eaten morals! Ah! their name is Legion; and the way they are *streaking* it down the dark road to ruin is sorrowful to steam locomotives. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 108.

**Streaked or Streaky.** "To feel *streaked*" is to feel confused, alarmed.

I begun to feel *streaked* enough for our folks, when I see what was done on Boston Common. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 18.

Oh, what a beautiful sight the ocean is when there ain't no land in sight! There we was in a little shell at the mercy of them big waves, higher than father's barn. I never did feel so *streaky* and mean afore; talk of a grain of sand, why I felt like a starved speck of dust cut up into homœopathic doses for a child two minits old. — *Hiram Bigelow, Letter in Family Companion.*

*Gen.* Tell the truth; keep back nothing; I promised no harm shall happen you.

*Doolittle.* Oh, I'll tell all now; I won't stay to be hanged first! Oh, the good gracious suzz! how *streaked* I feel all over! — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

But when it comes to bein' killed, I tell ye I felt *streaked*,  
The fust time 'tever I found out why bayonets wuz peaked.

*Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

Daniel Webster was a great man, I tell you; he'd talk King William out of sight in half an hour. If he was in your house of Commons, he'd make some of your great folks look pretty *streaked*. — *Sam Slick, 1st Series.*

**Streaked Bass.** Striped bass. New England.

**Stretch.** *On a stretch* is continuously, without cessation.

Chunky used to whistle three days and nights *on a stretch*. — *Traits of American Humor.*

**Stretcher.** 1. A well-burnt and smooth brick used in walls of buildings. Under-burnt bricks are called *salmon* bricks from their light color; and over-burnt and partially vitrified bricks are called *arch* and *pillar* bricks, from their position in the kiln.

2. A falsehood. Colloquial in England and with us.

Whenever Mrs. Oscar Dust told a *stretcher*, old Waters was expected to swear to it. — *Field, Drama at Pokerville.*

**Stricken.** "This ancient participle," says Mr. Pickering, "is much used in Congress and our other legislative assemblies. A member moves that certain parts of a bill should be *stricken* out," &c. — *Vocabulary.*

The use of the word referred to by Mr. Pickering is peculiar to us, though there are examples of its occasional use in England applied in other ways.

Many of the foreigners were much *stricken* with the splendor of the scene. — *London Statesman, June 10, 1814.*

**Strike.** An instrument with a straight edge for levelling a measure; a strickle. — *Worcester.* To sell *by the strike* is not to heap up the article, as is usually done with potatoes, apples, &c., but to scrape off what is above the level of the top, as in selling grain, salt, or the like. In Massachusetts, it is provided that —

Cranberries and all other berries shall be sold *by the strike* or level measure, the same as flax-seed and other similar articles are measured. — *Laws of Massachusetts.*

1. From the game of ninepins. "To make a *strike*" is to knock down all the pins with one ball; hence, it has come to mean fortunate, successful. — *Lowell*.

2. A discovery; achievement; success. "That speculation in cotton was a great *strike*."

**To strike Oil.** (Usually pron. *ile*.) To meet with success: a fortunate adventure, as, when boring for petroleum, oil is met with, or struck.

**Striker.** 1. A bruiser; a ruffian.

2. An apprentice engineer on a Mississippi steamboat.

**String.** 1. A row; number; lot.

Here's a whole *string* of Whig Congressmen elected by the State of New York. *N. Y. Tribune*.

2. A common name among teamsters for a whip.

With some judicious touches of the *string*, the horses are induced to struggle as for their lives. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Home*, p. 9.

**String-Beans.** The common name for French beans; so called from the string-like fibre stripped from the side of the pod in preparing it for the table. See *Bush-Bean*.

**String of Apples.** Apples cut in pieces, strung upon a string and dried, a common custom where the fruit is raised. In this form, they are festooned from ceilings and walls. Where there are large orchards, the apples are dried in the sun upon boards, and packed in barrels, in which form they are sent to the large markets under the name of dried apples.

In an old New England kitchen, where a warm wood-fire burned bright,  
Sat good old Farmer Ketchum and his wife, one winter night.

Over the old-time fireplace, a rusty musket hung,  
And a score of *strings of apples* from the smoky ceiling swung.

*Eugene A. Hall, Poems on the Farm and Fireside.*

**Stripe.** Pattern, kind, sort.

Den, if he was of de right *stripe*, he went straight to glory, and is now a shoutin' halleluyah wid de great congregation in de New Jerusalem. — *Emma Bartlett*.

The call of the Soft-shell Convention was signed by twelve men of the Free-Soil Buffalo *stripe*. — *N. Y. Herald*, July 7, 1856.

The Yankee, though cosmopolite in general and personally polite in particular, cherishes at heart a great sympathy for his own *stripe*, even when he hides it, like the groundwork of a rising speculation, from the world. — *Mace Sloper, in Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

**Striped Bass.** (*Labrax lineatus*.) One of the most highly esteemed fishes of the Atlantic coast, called also Streaked Bass and Rock-fish.

**Striped Ground Squirrel.** See *Chipmunk*.

**Strong.** *To go it strong* means to do a thing with energy or perseverance. See *Go it Strong*.

The pilot on duty above; another was calling out the Captain, who *went it strong* at cards. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 107.

You should go it, remarked Spifflekins, *go it strong*, — that 's the way to scatter the blue devils, — *go it strong*. — *Neal's Peter Ploddy*, p. 46.

**Strong-minded.** A term applied to women clamorous for the modern form of "woman's rights;" those who make themselves repulsively conspicuous.

**Strowd.** A breech-cloth. The Pennsylvania commissioners sent to the Miami Indians in 1752, in addressing the tribe, said: —

Brethren, — We desire you will send these two *strowds* to the young king as an acknowledgment of an affectionate remembrance of his father's love to us. . . . Be pleased to give to the son of the Piankasha king these two *strowds* to clothe him. — *Journal of Captain Trent* (1752), p. 52.

**Struck under Conviction.** Impressed with a sense of personal sinfulness.

**Struck up.** Disagreeably astonished; disconcerted by an unexpected occurrence.

**To stub or stump.** "To *stub* one's toe" is to strike it against any thing in walking or running. Germ. *stüßen* (*stieben*); comp. *Nasenstüber*, "a filip or rap on the nose;" *nasenstüßern*, "to filip or rap the nose." An expression often used by boys and others who go barefoot.

Lives there a Yankee  
Who, if he *stubs his toe* and fall,  
Don't want to swear, but, great or small,  
Will vent his ire with, "Darn it all!"  
By golly!" — *Yankee Philosophy*.

**Stuck.** 1. *To be stuck* is to be stuck fast, unable to proceed.

My dear hearers, I'm *stuck*, to begin with. When I want ideas, they never come, they are off playing truant. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

2. To be taken in; to be taken advantage of in a trade. To be *stuck with* a thing is to have an unsalable article foisted upon one.

We're the only Eastern folks in the Yonkville Stock, unless Mr. Sloper will take a few shares, and of course anybody else may be *stuck* and be darned. — *Mace Sloper*, in *Knickerbocker Mag.*, March, 1856.

We got *stuck* with a bad lot of paper, and were obliged to stick it on to our readers. — *Providence Journal*.

**Stuck-up.** "Stuck-up people" is a term applied to the proud and haughty.

She was dressed up like a doll, but she didn't act *stuck-up* a mite; my opinion is, she knew what belonged to good manners, and I offered her some caraway. *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 272.

Good-by! It's the first house from the corner; and I'd dress up, if I were you, in my best, because they're awful *stuck-up* at Sary's. — *Grinder Papers*, p. 30.

**To stuff.** To quiz.

**Stuffening.** Stuffing; seasoning for meat or poultry, usually made of bread and herbs to give it a higher relish. Western.

By way of amends [for the dried-up turkey], quarts of gravy were judiciously emptied on our plates from the wash-basin bowls. That also moistened the *stuffenin'*, composed of Indian meal and sausages. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 182.

**Stuffy.** Angry or sulky; obstinate. Colloquial in the United States. *Worcester*.

**Stump.** 1. The part of a tree remaining in the earth after the tree is cut down. This, in the Western countries, was made use of as the most convenient stand from which to address the people. Hence, *to take the stump* is to go on an electioneering campaign.

2. Something difficult to do. Boys give each other stumps.

**To stump.** 1. To challenge. Also to puzzle, confound.

Dabbs turns up his nose at betting. Instead of *stumping* his antagonist by launching out his cash, he shakes a portentous fist under his nose, and the affair is settled. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

When you see Lord Sydenham, *stump* him; and ask him, when a log is hewed and squared, if he can tell the tenth side of it. — *Sam Slick*.

Heavens and earth! thinks I, what does all this mean? I knowed I hadn't done any thing to be put in prison for, and I never was so *stumped*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 135.

I put a conundrum to them. They were all *stumpt*, and gave it up. — *Crockett's Tour*.

2. *To stump* it is a cant phrase signifying to make electioneering speeches in favor of one's self. — *Worcester*. This is a term borrowed from the backwoods, where the stump of a tree often supplies the place of the English hustings.

While I was at Peoria, Illinois, I heard a political speech from General Shields, who was at that time *stumping* it through the State, as a candidate for the Senate in place of Mr. Breese. — *Lett. from Illinois, N. Y. Com. Adv.*

It is understood that Colonel Benton intends *to stump* the State [of Missouri] as a candidate for the gubernatorial chair. — *N. Y. Courier*.

Sometimes we hear the expression "to take the *stump*."

Though not clear which *stump* I'll take,

That stump shall be colossal;

Whether I'm Slavery's advocate,

Or Liberty's apostle. — *London Punch*, April 5, 1862.

**Stumpage.** The sum paid to owners of land for the privilege of cutting the timber growing thereon. State of Maine.

The locality being determined upon, the timber tract is either purchased at a rate of *stumpage* agreed upon, which is generally three dollars per thousand feet for all timber cut. — *Harper's Mag.*, March 1860.

**Stumper.** 1. A puzzler.

My note was a *stumper* to Sally; so she got Jess to explain it, and the way he did it was enormous. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

2. A stump orator.

An Ohio *stumper*, while making a speech, paused in the middle of it, and exclaimed: Now . . . — *The Constitution, Middletown*.

**Stump Orator.** A man who harangues the people from the stump of a tree or other elevation.

**Stump Oratory.** The sort of popular speaking used by stump orators.

**Stump Prayer.** An extemporaneous prayer.

At a Millerite Jubilee, when the elect were to start for Paradise: —

A Methodist man took off his coat, and made a *stump-prayer*, while all his congregation yelled Glory. — *Doesticks*, p. 143.

**Stump Speaker.** A popular political speaker.

The Hon. W. R. Thompson of Indiana, one of the most popular *stump speakers* of the day, addressed a large meeting of Whigs from the stoop of Barnum's Hotel, Baltimore, in support of the nominations of the late Whig Convention. — *Letter from Washington, N. Y. Herald*, June 21, 1848.

**Stump Speech.** A speech made from a stump or other elevation; i. e., an electioneering speech in favor of one's self or some other political candidate.

We had of course a passion for stump speaking. But, recollect, we often mount the stump only figuratively; and very good *stump speeches* are delivered from a table, a chair, a whiskey-barrel, and the like. Sometimes we make the best *stump speeches* on horseback. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 211.

When you see a politician extra full of patriotism, and stuffed with *stump speeches*, you may take it for granted he wants office either for himself or for some particular friend. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 132.

**Stump-Tail Currency.** A term applied at the West, previous to the late war, to the currency issued by certain banks of doubtful credit.

**Stun**, for *stone*. So pronounced in the back parts of New England.

Captain Stone, I've been clean away amongst the Yankees, where they call your name *Stunn*. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 145.

**Stunner.** 1. Any thing grand or astounding; any thing got up in great style. I have heard a gentleman, when speaking of an elegant and well-dressed woman, say, "She's a *stunner*."

The "Boston Journal," in speaking of the new financial and business policy set forth by President Hayes and his cabinet, says: —



This is a *stunner*, — a sockdolager, so to speak. If we get at it, it means that the President must ignore the existence of a body called Congress, and proceed to govern the country by issuing decrees relative to the finances and business. — May 19, 1877.

2. A tough story.

**Stunning.** Astounding.

**Sturction.** A common pronunciation for *nasturtium*.

**To stutter.** To saunter lazily, with a slipshod movement. This is not a common word. I have never met with it except in the example quoted: —

I *stuttered* up to No. 4 yesterday arter the funeral; but they are so grown over with rum there, you can hardly tell what is nater and what is not. — *Judd, Margaret*, p. 327.

**Suant or Suent.** Even; uniform; spread equally over the surface. Provincial in England. — *Holloway*. Used by farmers in some parts of New England, and applied thus: "The grain is sowed *suant*," i. e. evenly, regularly. — *Pickering*.

Sometimes used by house-painters in New England: "Lay the paint *suant*," or evenly.

The Middlesex Cattle-Show goes off here with *éclat*, annually, as if all the joints of the agricultural machine were *suent*. — *Thoreau*, quoted in *Atlantic Mag.*, July, 1864, p. 22, 3.

**Sub-Base.** A mop or wash-board. Philadelphia.

**Sub-Treasurer.** Keeper of a Sub-Treasury; an officer of the United States government.

The *Sub-Treasurer* Cisco continues to receive a large number of applications for the new Treasury notes. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Sub-Treasury.** One of the several places of deposit and issue of the United States coin, bullion, notes, or other securities.

**Succession Sale.** A sale of property to enable the heirs to divide the same.

At the *succession sale* of the slaves belonging to the minor heirs of S. A. and A. X. Baillie, at the court-house [of Rapides], on Saturday, 17th inst., long sums were bid. — *Louisiana Democrat*, July 20, 1858.

**Suokataash or Succotash.** (Narragansett Ind., *m'sickquatash*, corn boiled whole.) Green Indian corn and beans boiled together. It is a favorite dish wherever these plants are cultivated.

Joel Barlow, in his poem on Hasty Pudding, thus compares *succotash* with it: —

Let the green *succotash* with thee contend,  
Let beans and corn their sweetest juices lend;  
Not all the plate, how fam'd soe'er it be,  
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee. — *Canto I. p. 8.*

At the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Rhode Island, held in Providence, 1836, an Indian banquet in the style of those of the olden time was given.

An Indian mat being spread out, a large wooden platter well-filled with boiled bass graced the centre, supported on one side by a wooden dish of parched corn, and on the other by a similar one of *succotash*. — *Stone's Life of Howland*, p. 262.

The wise Huron is welcome; he is come to eat his *succotash* with his brothers of the lakes! — *Cooper, The Last of the Mohicans*, p. 426.

**Sucker.** 1. A tube used for sucking sherry cobbler. They are made of silver, glass, straw, or sticks of macaroni.

2. A very common fish of the genus *Labeo*, and of which there are many varieties, including the Chub, Mullet, Barbel, Horned Dace, &c. They are found in most of the lakes and rivers of North America.

3. A greenhorn; an ignorant clown; a dupe; an easy victim. Western.

I hadn't time to load my gun before the bear gathered upon him like a Virginny blood-mare, and the nigger give himself up for a gone *sucker*, and fainted away. — *Crockett's Bear Adventure*.

4. A hard drinker; a drunkard.

5. A mean, low fellow; a sponger.

Of the scaly tribe, I may mention those *suckers* belonging to the body loaferish, that never rise to the surface of respectability, whose sole study appears to be to see how much they can get without the least physical exertion. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

6. A nickname applied throughout the West to a native of Illinois. The origin of this term is as follows: —

The Western prairies are, in many places, full of the holes made by the crawfish, which descends to the water beneath. In early times, when travellers wended their way over these immense plains, they very prudently provided themselves with a long hollow weed, and, when thirsty, thrust it into these natural artesian, and thus easily supplied their longings. The crawfish-well generally contains pure water, and the manner in which the traveller drew forth the refreshing element gave him the name of "*Sucker*." — *Letter from Illinois, in Providence Journal*.

A band of music was sent thirty miles to wake up the sleepy *suckers*, and draw them, by the magic of their music, to the Douglas gathering at Quincy, Illinois. *N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 19, 1854.

**Suckerdom.** Suckers, hard drinkers, collectively regarded.

In resisting the tax on whiskey, it has been shown that one distiller in Ohio, who makes 8,000 gallons a day, would pay into the treasury \$375,600 a year, if *Suckerdom* continued thirsty. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1862.

**Suck in or Suck.** A cheat, deception.

Heaven forbid that I should utter a syllable of complaint; but I can't help saying it confidentially, and before man alone, that life is all moonshine, — a monstrous humbug, — a grand *suck in*. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 316.

**To suck in.** To take in; to cheat; to deceive. A figurative expression, probably drawn from a sponge, which sucks up water. *To be sucked in* is to be "sponged" out of one's money, or to be cheated in a bargain. It is a low expression, though often heard, and is understood by all.

"I ain't bound to drive nobody in the middle of the night," said the driver; "so you don't try to *suck me in* there." — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 109.

Who was the first unfortunate speculator? Jonah. Ah! why? Because he got *sucked in*! — *Newspaper*.

**Sugar-Apple.** See *Sweet Sop*.

**Sugar-Berry.** See *Hackberry*.

**Sugar-Bush.** A collection of trees of the sugar-maple, generally in the midst of a primitive forest, where maple-sugar is made by boiling the sap of the tree. These are sometimes called *sugar-orchards*; and, in the West, *sugar-camps*.

Going into the *sugar-bush* has something of the excitement which the forester loves so well to mingle with all his work. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. I.

**Sugar-Camp.** The place where the sap is collected from a sugar-bush and boiled.

After Ralph got over the fence to go through the *sugar-camp* (or sugar-orchard, as they say at the East), he stopped and turned back. — *Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, p. 32.

**Sugaring-Time.** The season of the year (March or April) when maple-sugar is made. See *Maple-Sugar*.

Mr. Gansey, the editor [of "The Gimlet"], seein' he was obleeged to stop readin', told me he would come down to our house a-visitin' in *sugarin' time*, and finish readin' the poetry to me. — *Marietta Holley, Betsy Bobbet*, p. 45.

**Sugar-Maple.** (*Acer saccharinum*.) A handsome forest tree, from fifty to eighty feet high, from the sap of which is made the well-known *maple-sugar*. The wood is valuable for fuel; and accidental varieties of it are the *bird's-eye maple* and *curled maple* of cabinet-makers.

Some verses on the Corn-plant and Sugar-Maple, in "Putnam's Magazine," end thus: —

But if our brothers break the chain,  
We'll hang by our own staples;  
Three cheers we'll raise for Indian Corn,  
And nine for *Sugar-Maples*.

**To sugar off.** "Sugaring off" is the latter stage of the process of making maple-sugar; to approach granulation.

**Sugar-Orchard.** A collection of maple-trees selected and preserved in the forest for the purpose of making sugar therefrom. Comp. *Sugar-Bush*.

**Sugar-Tree.** The name much used in the West for the sugar-maple, in which connection the word *maple* is never used. Thus, in purchasing firewood, it is usual to bargain for hickory, sugar, ash, &c.

**To suicide.** To commit suicide. The "Boston Herald," Feb. 8, 1876, in speaking of a man who had taken his own life, says, "He *suicided*."

"What's the matter, Betsy?" For she looked as if she had been cryin' her eyes out. "Is your cousin no more? Has Ebenezer *suicided* himself?" — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 304.

**Suit.** In the Middle and Southern States especially, a head of hair is called, queerly enough, a "*suit* of hair," as in the following description by Dr. J. S. Cartwright, of New Orleans, of a "strong-minded woman:" —

Her head was large, and features prominent and rather masculine. But, in every other respect, her appearance was highly feminine: her form symmetrical; her skin fair, smooth, and soft; and her well-developed limbs tapering into unusually small hands and feet. She had a thick *suit* of black hair: and, although she had reached her fortieth year, it had not begun to turn gray, so active was her capillary circulation. — *Boston Med. and Surg. Journal*, Oct. 18, 1854.

The face of this gentleman was strikingly marked by a *suit* of enormous black whiskers that flowed together and united under his chin. — *Margaret*, p. 289.

**Bulky.** A two-wheeled carriage for a single person. So called from the owner's desire of riding alone. — *Webster*. A trotting wagon.

**Sulphur.** Bitumen. In Kentucky and Tennessee, the bituminous rocks abound in sulphur springs; and by a singular confusion the odor of bitumen, where no sulphur is present, is yet called *sulphur*.

**To summarize.** To make a summary of.

The "National Intelligencer," Aug. 31, 1857, in speaking of the publications of the Smithsonian Institution, says: —

Additional papers are *summarized* in the Report, all of them making considerable advances upon the heretofore unappropriated domains of science.

**To summons.** To serve with a summons. Applied to the courts and colleges. "He was *summonsed* to appear before the Faculty."

So the noun is "a summons" in common law. In old practice, it was a writ directed to a sheriff, requiring him to summon a defendant to appear in court.

Mary looked at me and winked, and says she, "You 're one of the court, you know, major; but jest go out until the court is *summonsed* before the throne." — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**To sum-totalize.** To give the total amount, the sum-total.

You hear a fellow sayin', I'm only a passenger. How little the critter knows of what he is talking when he uses that cant phrase! Why, every thing is *sum-totalized* in that word. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 44.

**Sun-Bonnet.** A home-made bonnet, with a large "cape," so as to shield both the face and neck, much worn by women and girls in the country.

**Sundown.** Sunset. Peculiar to the United States.

Although this word is said to be peculiar to the United States, Jamieson assigns it to the south of Scotland, whence we probably derived it. — *Scottish Dictionary*. See *Moondown*.

Solid men of Boston go to bed at *sundown*.

*Song, Solid Men of Boston.*

And sitting there birling, wi' a' the schaff and raff o' the waterside, till *sundown*, and then coming hame and crying for ale, as if ye were maister and mair. *Scott, Tales of my Landlord*, Vol. II. p. 114.

Daylight! do but hear the silly child! 'Tis but just *sundown*. — *Cooper, Lionel Lincoln*, Vol. I. p. 41.

At *sundown*, the bats, vampires, and goat-suckers dart from their lonely retreat, and skim along the trees on the river's bank. — *Waterton, Wanderings in South America*.

**Sun-Fish.** (*Pomotis vulgaris*.) A beautiful little fresh-water fish, so called from its glittering colors. From its shape, it is often called Pumpkin-Seed; and in some localities it is called Bream.

**Sun-Shade.** Parasol in England. Not in Webster or in Worcester.

**Sun-Shower.** A shower occurring while the sun's rays are not intercepted by the cloud whence the rain descends.

**Sun-Squall.** A term applied, on the coast of New England, to the Medusae, or Sea-Nettles. It appears to be a corruption of the Germ. *Schirmqualle* (lit. umbrella jelly-fish). See *Gull*.

About Boston harbor, they are called *Sun-fish*, a still further corruption.

**Sun-up.** Sunrise. More common at the South. When the Southern traveller starts on his journey before the appearance of the sun in the morning, he says he "put out bright and yarly, an hour (or half an hour, as the case may be) before *sun-up*."

One would think that such a horse as that might get over a good deal of ground atwixt *sun-up* and *sundown*. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 50.

And this was the way it was. It was night when I kem up here  
To say to 'em all "good-bye," for I reckoned to go for deer  
At *sun-up* the day they left. So I shook 'em all round by the hand,  
'Cept Mabel, and she was sick, ez they give me to understand.

*Bret Harte, Luke.*

**Supawn.** (*Saupá-un*, made soft by water.) An Indian name in common use in New England, New York, and other Northern States, for boiled Indian meal. It is also called *hasty pudding*, which see.

The common food of the Indians is pap, or mush, which in the New Netherlands is named *supaen*. This is so common among them, that they seldom pass a day without it, unless they are on a journey or hunting. We seldom visit an Indian lodge at any time of day, without seeing their *supaen* preparing, or seeing them eating the same. It is the common food of all; and so fond of it are they that, when they visit our people or each other, they consider themselves neglected unless they are treated with *supaen*. — *Van der Donck's New Netherlands* (1656), *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Collections*.

The flour [of maize] makes a substantial sort of porridge, called by the Americans *supporne*: this is made with water, and eaten with milk. — *Backwoods of Canada*, p. 189.

E'en in my native regions, how I blush  
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee mush!  
On Hudson's banks while men of Belgic spawn  
Insult and eat thee by the name *suppawm*.

*Barlow, Hasty Pudding.*

For many heroes bold and brave,  
From Newbridge and Tappan,  
And those that drink Passaic's wave,  
And those who eat *suppawm*.

*Major André, The Cow Chase*, 1780.

**Super.** Abbreviation of superintendent of factories, theatres, &c.

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. *Cor. Boston Journal*.

**Supple-Jack.** 1. (*Berchemia volubilis*.) A creeper growing in damp soils in Virginia and further south. "The vine," says Flint, "resembles that of the muscadine grape; but the olive color is deeper. It is well known to attach itself so strongly to the shrub it entwines as to cause those curious spiral curves and inner flattenings that gives its singularity and value to the supple-jack cane." — *Geogr. of Miss. Valley*.

2. A child's toy, a jointed manikin worked by a string. Called also a *Jumping Jack*.

**Supply.** A preacher who ministers to a congregation, especially one who does thus without a formal induction. See *Stated Supply*.

Rev. W. P. Cochran has become *supply* for a church at Millerstown, Penn. — *The Independent*.

**Sure.** Surely; certainly. "Are you going?" "I'm going *sure*," or "*sure and certain*" South-western.

"There, do you see that horse?" said Jack. "He's a d——d good horse. He's not much to look at; but, once get him a-going, and he'll go through h—ll itself, if you put him at it. Get on, Kendall, and I'll mount behind, and show you sights, — I will *sure*." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Sure-Enough.** Real; genuine. Used in the South and West in the same manner as *fair* is in New York; as, "This is a *sure-enough* egg," meaning that it is a real and not an imitation one. In a description of the absurd ceremonies observed on shipboard in "crossing the line," a writer says: —

The subject was seated in the chair, some six feet from the deck, where the barber, standing on a platform before him, thrust a whitewash-brush into a bucket of soap-suds, and lathered his face with great liberality; then, drawing from a canvas-bag his case of extensive razors (rusty iron hoops), went through all the movements of a *sure-enough* barber. — *U. S. Nautical Mag.*, Dec., 1855.

**Surface-Boat.** See *Battery*.

**Surprise-Candidate.** A fresh candidate suddenly put up and supported by the wire-workers of an election, to subserve purposes of their own.

In a judicial district, a "*surprise candidate*," scarce known as a lawyer or to the people beyond the local court in which he practised, was run, as since understood, to aid in breaking down one of two able and unobjectionable candidates for the Supreme Bench of the State, who had been nominated in the convention of the two opposing political parties. — *National Intelligencer*, Sept. 20, 1858.

**Surprise-Party.** A party of persons who assemble by agreement, and without invitation, at the house of a mutual friend, each bringing some article of food as a contribution towards a supper, of which all partake.

A *surprise-party* had been appointed. They had been havin' them all winter, and the children had been crazy to have me go to 'em: everybody went, but I held back.

Says I, Josiah, the place for old folks is to home; and I don't believe in *surprise-parties* any way. I think they are perfect nuisances. If you want to see your friends, you can invite them. . . . It would make me feel perfectly wild to think there was a whole drove of people liable to rush in here at any minute, and I won't rush into other people's housen. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 46.

**Surrogate.** In American law, a county officer who has jurisdiction in granting letters testamentary and letters of administration, and of other matters relating to the settlement of the estates of testators and intestates. — *Kent's Commentaries*, Vol. II. p. 409.

**Surround.** A frequent mode of hunting the buffalo by the Indians consists in making a "*surround*." This is done by enclosing a

large herd, and driving them over a precipice upon the rocks, or into one of the profound ravines which intersect the prairies in various directions. In this way, thousands are sometimes killed in a single day. — *S. F. Baird*.

**Surveyor.** One of the chief officers of the large U. S. custom-houses. It is the duty of the *surveyor* to superintend and direct the inspectors, weighers, gaugers, and measurers at his port; but he is, in all cases, to be subject to the collector. — *Act of March 2, 1799*.

**Susceptible.** The quality of easily falling in love; having nice sensibility.

**Suspenders.** Straps for holding up pantaloons; vulgarly called gal-lowses; in England, called braces.

**To suspicion, for to suspect.** Common among the uneducated at the South. "I *suspicioned* he was tricky." The New Englander would say, "I suspected he was tricky." Yet the verb to suspicion is sometimes heard in New York as well as in New England.

If he had a *suspicioned* I was thar, he 'd no more swore than he 'd dared to kiss my Sal on a washing day; for you see both on us belonged to the same church. *Mike Hooter, by a Missourian*.

**Sutor.** A syrup made from the juice of the fruit of the "pitahaya" (*Cereus giganteus*) by the Indians near the river Gila.

**Suzz!** A corrupt pronunciation of *sirs!* An exclamation much used in New England, as *sirs* is in Scotland. It is sometimes lengthened into *Law, suzz!* i. e. Lord, sirs!

**Swad or Swod.** In New England, a lump, mass, or bunch; also, a crowd. — *Webster*. It is an old English colloquialism.

There was a *swad* of fine folks, and the house was well-nigh upon chuck full. *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 35.

How is a colonist able to pay for this almighty *swad* of everlasting plunder, seein' he has no gold or silver? — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., ch. 6.

**Swaged.** Shrunk in seasoning. Southern.

When timber in drying decreases in size, it is said, in the language of the "poor white trash" of a certain district in Dixie, to have *swaged*, a corruption probably of *assuaged*. — *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1864, p. 569.

According to Halliwell and Wright, *swage* is an old English form of assuage.

**Swale.** A local word in New England, signifying an interval or vale; a tract of low land. — *Webster*. This word is provincial in Norfolk, England, and means a low place; and shade, in opposition to sunshine. — *Forby's Vocabulary*.



**To swamp.** To plunge into inextricable difficulties. — *Webster*. This use of the word is not in the English dictionaries. It is common in the United States, though not elegant. Ex.: "He invested a large sum of money in land speculations, which *swamped* him," i. e. ruined him.

**Swamp-Apple.** An excrescence found on the swamp-honeysuckle. In its early state, its taste resembles that of an apple. New England.

**Swampers.** Men who break out roads for hauling timber out of the woods. Maine.

**Swamp-Honeysuckle.** (*Azalea nudiflora*.) A plant flowering in April and May, which grows in the swamps from Massachusetts to Virginia. It is also called May-Apple and Pinxter Blumachy.

**Swamp-Huckleberry.** (*Vaccinium religinosum*.) A variety of the blueberry growing on a small bush in wet land. The term is also applied to the *blue-huckleberry*, which I have seen growing to the height of five feet or more. See *Huckleberry*.

**Swamping.** Very large; huge. The word *swapping* is used in the same sense in the west of England.

And there we saw a *swamping* gun,  
Large as a log of maple,  
Upon a deuced little cart,  
A load for father's cattle. — *Song, Yankee Doodle*.

**I swamp it!** A euphemistic form of oath.

Had that darn'd old vessel, that frigate there, bin a stone's throw farder off from land, I should never have swummed to shore, dead or alive, to all eternity, I *swamp* it! — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

**Swamp-Muck.** A black vegetable mould found near marshes and along loamy bottoms.

In the rich, black deposit commonly called *swamp-muck*, the snipe delights, above all. — *Bogardus, Field and Trap Shooting*, p. 148.

**Swamp-Pink.** (*Azalea viscosa*.) A popular name for the Swamp-Honeysuckle.

**I swan or swon!** A New England euphemism for "I swear!" *I swan to man!* is a heightened form of the same.

"Well, *I swan!*" exclaimed the mamma, giving a round box on the ear to a dirty little urchin, "what made you let the little hussy have your specs?" — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 29.

I took a turn round Halifax, and *I swan* if it ain't the thunderinest, drearyest place I ever seen, and the people they call Blue-noses. — *Hiram Bigelow's Lett. in Family Companion*.

I was dressed tarnation slick. I guess I rubbed two tallow candles or thereabouts into my hair, trying to make it curl; but *I swan to man* there warn't no curl to it, for it stuck out for all sense like porcupine quills. — *Hill's Yankee Stories*.

Well, I've jest come to New York, and it's the darndest place, *I swan to man*, that you'd wish to see. — *Story of Uncle Ben, recited by Hackett*.

It wasn't his fault, but the driver's. Drivers are the most aggravatin' class in New York, *I swan to man*. — *Grinder Papers*, p. 43.

**Swanga.** An African word used among the Negroes in some parts of the South in connection with *buckra*, white man; as *swanga buckra*, meaning a dandy white man, or, literally, a dandy devil. A friend in South Carolina informs me that the Negroes there apply the term to persons who carry themselves conceitedly. Thus, of one who is strutting about in a new suit of clothes, they will say, "He kin' o' *swanga* now."

**To swap or swop.** To exchange; to barter. — *Johnson*.

This word has often been noticed by English travellers in this country, and may perhaps be more common here than in England; but it is also used by the vulgar in that country. — *Pickering*.

Clocks, nutmegs, and whatever else,  
You call a Yankee crop.  
If you have cash, he 's glad to sell;  
If not, he 'll always *swap*!  
For he was born a merchant, sir,  
A Yankee trader bold,  
Who *swapped* his whistle for a knife  
When only four years old. — *Allin, Yankee Ballad*.

**Swash or Swosh.** In the Southern States of America, a name given to a narrow sound or channel of water lying within a sand-bank, or between that and the shore. Many such are found on the shores of the Carolinas. — *Webster*. In New York harbor is a so-called *Swash*.

After noon, I crossed the *swash* at the east end of the bay, and in the evening got into good quarters. — *Bartram's Florida*, p. 472.

**To swat or swot.** To strike, smite. A low word.

Tell me that again, and I'll *swot* you over the mug. — *Report of the Hunter Meeting in Albany*, June, 1848.

**Swathe.** See *Cut a Swage*.

**To swear in.** To induct, to be inducted, after the administration and making an oath required by law.

*Swearing in the new Mayor.* — The Hon. George Opdike, Mayor elect of New York City, took the oath of office yesterday. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To swear off.** To resolve to give up a habit, particularly drinking.

**Sweet.** *To be sweet on any one.* To have a liking or affection for one. Mr. M. was very *sweet on* Miss B. at the ball last evening; i. e., he showed her marked attention.

Yet she was *sweet* on the Judge, and stuck by him day and night,  
Alone in the cabin up yer, — till she grew like a ghost, all white.

She was only a slip of a thing, ez light and ez up and away

Ez rifle-smoke blown through the woods, but she wasn't my kind — no way.

*Bret Harte.*

**Sweet Hepper-Bush.** See *Alder*.

**Sweet Potato Pone.** Sweet potatoes grated, flavored with spices, and baked in a tin pan. See *Pone*.

**Sweet-scented Shrub.** See *Allspice*.

**Sweet Sop.** (*Annona squamosa*.) An evergreen shrub, which bears a greenish-colored fruit. It is also called Custard Apple and Sugar Apple. West Indies.

**Sweet-Tooth.** "He has a sweet-tooth;" i. e., he is fond of cakes, sweetmeats, and candy.

**Swell Head.** See *Big Head*, No. 2.

**Swill-Milk.** The milk of cows fed on the refuse of distilleries.

**Swimming Market,** in Wall Street parlance, is that condition when stocks are in demand, when money is plenty, and when every thing buoyant.

**Swim out.** Have done with it; retrace your steps.

*Swim out, ere you're over your head. — Comic Song.*

**Swing-Clear.** A woman's gown, tight at the neck, and falling to the ankles, not fitted to the figure, and swinging clear of the ground.

**To swinge.** To singe. Provincial in various parts of England. — *Halliwel*.

The weather has been monstrous hot here, and I don't think I ever did see things jest sprawled out and *swinged* up so with the sun before. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 185.

**Swingle-Tail.** (*Alopous vulpes*.) The popular name for the Thresher Shark, from the use it makes of its long, flexible tail, "with which," says Dr. De Kay, "it literally threshes its enemies." — *Nat. Hist. of New York*.

**Swingle Tree.** Vulgar for *single tree*.

**Swing-Station.** In the Far West, the station where teams are changed. In speaking of the coachman or driver, Mr. McClure says: —

When he arrives at a *swing-station*, where the teams are changed, he drops the lines and chats with the landlord or the passengers while his team is unhitched and another is attached. — *Rocky Mountains*, p. 103.

Not one half of the *swing-stations* had so much as a single gun of any kind to defend their stock. — *Ibid.*, p. 178.

**Switch.** The movable rails and appendages for turning the cars on a railroad from one track to another. The term is now getting into use in England.

Now, Tom, you skunk, this is the third time you forgot to set on that *switch*, and the last time there was twenty people went under, and the balance was bruised; so mind what you're about, and don't forget the *switch* again, or I'm darned if I don't tell the boss (station-master). — *Notes on Canada and the U. S.*, Blackwood, Sept., 1855.

**Switchel.** Molasses and water, to which sometimes a little vinegar is added. A common beverage in New England.

**Switched if I do.** Used to intensify an affirmation. Tennessee.

**To swot.** See *To swat*.

**I swow!** A New England euphemism for *I swear!*

**Sycamore.** See *Button-Wood*.

**Sympathizers.** A large body of persons, so called, in the United States, on the Canadian frontier, who sympathized with and aided the rebels in Canada in 1837-39.

**Syren.** A fog-horn. Signals for opening and closing the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia were given by the "American Steam Syren."

**To systemize.** To systematize. A word rarely used by good writers. *Worcester.* Dr. Webster, however, gives it the preference over *systematize*, which he denounces as "ill-formed." What would he have thought of *dogmize* and *stigmatize*, by way of "improving" the language?

## T.

**T. T.** Too thin. "The fraud is T. T.," i. e. too thin, too transparent.

**Tabernacle.** A place of religious worship with the seats arranged like those in an amphitheatre, in order to accommodate a large number of persons. Some of these places are able to seat from 5,000 to 7,000. New York, Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago, and other large cities, have these edifices.

The *tabernacle* prepared for Moody and Sankey at Boston was dedicated last night (Jan. 25, 1877) with impressive effect and in the presence of 5,000 people. . . . These *tabernacles* of the people meet a great popular demand, and there ought to be one in every community. — *Providence Press*, Jan. 26, 1877.

I asked at one of the theatres what effect the *Tabernacle* had on theatrical audiences. "Oh," said the ticket-seller, "it helps us." — *Boston Letter to Springfield Repub.*, March, 1877.

The *Tabernacle* movement already has reformed more ungodly men and inebriates since its dedication than has New England radicalism, dating from the time when its first notes were sounded by Theodore Parker. — *Townsend on Religious Revivals*, p. 243.

**To table.** 1. To lay on the table. "The bill for distributing the public lands among the States was *tabled* by a large majority."

2. To offer; to present. Used by Presbyterians, met in deliberative synods, &c.

**Tacamahao.** Another name for the Balsam Poplar, which see.

**To tackle.** 1. To harness; as, to *tackle* a horse into a gig, sleigh, coach, or wagon. — *Webster*. Local in England.

2. To seize, to lay hold of; as, a wrestler *tackles* his antagonist, a dog *tackles* the game. — *Webster*.

Well, I tell you what, it tuck a feller mighty wide between the eyes to *tackle* that tree, for it was a whopper. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 53.

I shook the two fellows off my trunks monstrous quick, and was going to *tackle* the chaps what had my carpet-bag. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

The people are no ways backward about discussing the subject of Mormonism, over-confident in their ability to demolish every Gentile against polygamy. One of the gentry *tackled* Governor Powell the other day, determined to make a convert. — *N. Y. Times*, Aug. 9, 1858.

**Tads.** *Little tads*, small boys. *Old tads*, graybeards, old men.

**Tag.** 1. A slight touch. A boy, touched by one who is in the first instance fixed upon to commence the game, is in his turn obliged to overtake and touch another of the party, when he cries, *Tag!* and so the game proceeds. According to Mr. Halliwell, the same game is played in Warwickshire, where it is called *tick*.

2. The leaves of a pine-tree, &c.

Pitching my tent on the soft, dry pine-*tag*, I enjoyed the most refreshing sleep. *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Tailings.** A term applied by miners to the refuse from stamping and crushing mills after the gold has been taken out. These *tailings*, under a second process, sometimes pay as well as by the first one.

Experience has shown that most of the earth will pay for a second process; and numberless are the *tailing* companies, whose labors are confined to washing by a more careful method the *tailings* or refuse from the end of the sluices. — *Harper's Mag.*, for April, 1860, p. 610.

**Tailor, Tailor Shad.** (*Pomoolbus mediocris.*) A fish resembling the shad, but inferior to it in size and flavor. It is peculiar to the waters of the Mississippi. In the towns on the Potomac, the Blue-fish is called a *Salt-water Tailor*.

**Tail up or down.** "He's got his tail up," said of one who is making a run at billiards, or playing well.

**Take.** 1. When the river St. Lawrence freezes so as to be firm and fixed for the winter, it is said to *be taken*. "The ice *took* last night;" i. e., the river was firmly closed. The expression, "The river froze," is never heard in Canada. Among the one hundred and thirty different senses given in Latham's edition of Johnson's Dictionary, we do not find one in the sense given.

2. To *take*. To understand. "Do you *take*?" i. e. do you comprehend. "I don't *take*," i. e. I don't understand. Shakespeare used the word in this sense, as:—

This, I *take* it,  
Is the main motive of our preparations.

*Hamlet*, Act i. Sc. 1.

**To take a Shute.** In the West, a person running away, or leaving in a hurry, is said to have "*taken a shute*."

**To take down.** To humiliate; as, "It *takes* him down terribly;" i. e. it affects him much.

Carlton, in speaking of several young men who had been jilted by a lady, says:—

And all of them was flustered, and fairly *taken down*,  
And I for a time was counted the luckiest man in town.

*Farm Ballads*, p. 19.

**To take on.** To grieve; to mourn, lament. Colloquial in England and the United States.

"Why, Polly, what's the matter, gal?" inquired he; "what in thunder makes you *take on* so? Come, out with the cause, or I shall get a blubberin' too." — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**To take the Back Track.** To recede from one's position.

The first law of self-preservation has admonished Mr. Douglas that he has gone as far in his 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*. — *N. Y. Herald*, Dec. 26, 1857.

**To take the Rag off.** To surpass.

How often I have laughed over the fun of the forecastle! I would back it for wit against any bar-room in New York or New Orleans, and I believe they *take the rag off* all creation. — *Sam Slick, Nature and Human Nature*, p. 28.

**To take the Shine off.** See *Shine*, No. 1.

**To take the Stump.** To start upon; to be engaged in making a series of electioneering speeches. "To *stump* it."

**To take to do.** To take to task; to reprove. Colloquial in England and in New England.

The "Life Boat," a weekly sheet in this city, *takes* the "Bee" *to do* for its course in relation to the Liquor Law. — *Boston Bee*, July 29, 1852.

**To take up.** 1. *To take up* animals is a common phrase in the language of the prairies, and means to bring them in and prepare them for a journey or the day's march, either by saddling them or harnessing them to a wagon.

2. To put up, as a traveller at an inn. Southern. In Pennsylvania, the expression refers to the opening of school; as, "What time does your school *take up*?"

3. To arrest, prosecute at law, &c. New England.

**To take Water.** To run away, make off. A Western expression, doubtless borrowed from sportsmen.

He quitted the wheel [of the steamboat] and made for his state-room, where he stayed till the boat reached Natchez, when he *took water*, and they do *say* moved to the North. — *Major Bunkum*, *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Talented.** Furnished with talents; possessing skill or talents. — *Webster*. This, says Todd, is "an old word, long disused, but lately revived." It is as correctly formed as *moneyed* or *landed*, which are regarded as unexceptionable; yet it is pretty generally condemned, and on each side of the water the responsibility of coining it is cast upon the other, as will be seen from what follows:—

The "London Monthly Magazine" (Sept., 1831) blames Mr. Stanley for using this word. "Sir Robert Peel referred it to his American associations, and prayed him never to employ it again, with all the strenuousness of Oxonian adjuration." The "Philadelphia National Gazette," in speaking of the above, adds: "Sir Robert was right in protesting against the word, but wrong in his reference. It is of London cockney derivation, and still more employed in Great Britain than in America."

Coleridge says, "I regret to see that vile and barbarous vocable, *talented*, stealing out of the newspapers into the leading reviews and most respectable publications of the day. Why not *shillinged*, *farthinged*, *tenpenced*, &c.? The formation of a participle passive from a noun is a license that nothing but a very peculiar facility can excuse. Most of these pieces of slang come from America." — *Table Talk*, July 8, 1832.

Mr. Bulwer is not yet "*talented*," a pseudo-particle, which no one will use who is not ripe for any atrocity; but he "*progresses*" at a fearful rate. — *Edinburgh Rev.*, Vol. LXV. p. 240.

The editor of the "*Edinburgh Review*," having criticised certain expressions used by Lord Macaulay, the latter, in reply, said: —

Such a word as *talented* it is proper to avoid: first, because it is not wanted; secondly, because you never hear it from those who speak very good English. — *Macaulay's Life and Letters*, Vol. II. p. 100.

**Talk.** Among the Indians of North America, a public conference, as respecting peace or war, negotiation, and the like; or an official verbal communication made from them to another nation or its agents, or made to them by the same. — *Webster*.

But snakes are in the bosoms of their race;  
And though they held with us a friendly *talk*,  
The hollow peace-tree fell beneath their tomahawk.

*Campbell, Gertrude of Wyoming.*

**Talking-Iron.** A comical name for a gun or rifle; called also a *shoot-ing-iron*, on the same principle that in flash language a pistol is "a barker," and a watch "a ticker," and sometimes "a tattler."

I hops out of bed, feels for my trunk, and outs with my *talkin'-iron*, that was all ready loaded. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**To talk Turkey.** To say pleasant things; to talk so as to please the hearer.

The story is an old one, — that an Indian and a white man, after a day's hunting, had only a *turkey* and a *partridge* to show for game. The white man proposed to divide them, and said to the Indian, "Take your choice. You can have the partridge, and I'll take the turkey; or I'll take the turkey, and you may have the partridge." "Ugh!" said the Indian, "you don't talk turkey to me any."

The "*New Haven Register*," May, 1864, speaking of some fellows out West, who, under pretence of buying turkeys for the soldiers, got them cheap, and sold them in Eastern markets at a high figure, says: —

They are not the only ones who *talk turkey*, and rob the soldiers of what is contributed for their benefit.

Polly Bean was not the first girl I run against, by a long shot; and I was plaguy apt to *talk turkey* always when I got sociable, if it was only out of politeness. — *McClintock, Beedle's Marriage*.

**Tall.** 1. Great; fine; splendid; extravagant. A flash word.

Stump straightened up, and started at a pace that would have staggered Captain Barclay, Ellsworth, or the greatest pedestrian mentioned in the annals of "*tall walking*." — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 398.

If we don't come out in force, and do things open and above board, we'll have a *tall* fight with the gang. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 129.



The ginerall found the next day a sight o' gold pieces and a whole pot full o' the *tallest* kind o' jewels. — *The Yankee among the Mermaids*.

Ohio warn't any great shakes twenty years ago; but let me tell you, stranger, it had a mighty big pile of the *tallest* kind of land layin' around waitin' to be opened up to the sunlight. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 211.

The live sucker from Illinois had the daring to say that our Arkansaw friend's stories smelt rather *tall*. — *Thorpe, Big Bear of Arkansas*.

2. Finely; exceedingly; highly; very much. Western.

I will walk *tall* into varmint and Indian: it's a way I've got, and it comes as natural as grinning to a hyena. I'm a regular tornado, tough as hickory, and long-winded as a nor'-wester. — *Thorpe's Backwoods*, p. 131.

I seed Jess warn't pleased; but I didn't estimate him very *tall*, so I kept on dancin' with Sally, and ended by kissin' her good-by, and making him jealous as a pet pinter. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

**Tallow-Dip.** A tallow candle, made by dipping, in distinction from one made in a mould.

**Tamal or Tamauli.** A peculiar Spanish-American dish, made up of a paste of crushed or ground maize, sometimes with minced meat added, when it is wrapped in the husks of maize and baked on the coals.

The mountebanks draw a crowd, and this attracts a few sellers of whiskey, tortillas, and *tamaules*, making a ruddy picturesque group. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

**Tamarack.** See *Hackmatack*.

**Tammany.** A term assumed by a branch of the Democratic party in the State of New York, sometimes called St. Tammany. It comes from an Indian chief of the Delaware tribe named Tamendy, or Tammenund. He was distinguished among his people. Early in life, he lived near the Delaware, whence he moved beyond the Alleghanies and settled on the banks of the Ohio. When he became old, he called a council to have a successor appointed, after which the residue of his life was passed in retirement. Why his name was chosen by the Democracy is not known. — *Wheeler's Noted Names of Fiction*. Tammany Hall was a well-known place where the party bearing the name met for many years.

The Americans sometimes call their tutelar saint "*Tamendy*," a corruption of the name of the renowned chief here introduced. There are many traditions which speak of the character and power of *Tamenund*. — *Cooper*.

**Tangent.** *To fly off on a tangent.* To make a sudden or unexpected movement; to act erratically. New England.

**Tangenty.** Inclined or liable to move off erratically. "Tangenty ministers," said of ministers leaving their congregation. — *The Congregationalist*.

**Tangle-Foot.** One of the Western figurative terms for whiskey.

A thirsty Vermonter hitched his horse to a freight-car standing on a side track, while he proceeded leisurely toward a neighboring saloon in quest of *tangle-foot*. *Hartford Courant*, March 17, 1871.

**Tangle-Leg.** 1. Whiskey.

Gum-tickler and chain-lightning,  
Eye-brightener and *leg-tangler*,  
And scores of other compounds known  
To each 'cute bar-room dangler.

[*London*] *Punch*, July 26, 1862.

2. A straggling shrub, also called a *hobble-bush*, which see.

**Tan-Toaster.** A great gale or tempest is so called at the Isles of Shoals, Maine. — *Thaxter, Isles of Shoals*.

**Tapioca.** A substance much used in the United States for puddings and other culinary purposes. It is extracted from the *manioc* (*Jatropha manihot*), a shrub indigenous to tropical America, and now cultivated from Florida to Magellan. It is said that an acre of manioc will nourish more persons than six acres of wheat. Its roots attain the size of the thigh. Every part of the plant is filled with a milky juice, which is a very violent and dangerous poison, producing death in a few minutes, when swallowed; yet human ingenuity has converted its roots into an article of food. This is done by grinding them in wooden mills, after which the paste is put into sacks, and exposed to the action of a powerful press. The poisonous juice is thereby extracted, and the residue is the substance known as *cassava* or *mandioca*, a nutritious flour, preferred by the natives to that from wheat. When kept from moisture, this flour will keep good for fifteen or twenty years. The *tapioca* is made by separating from the fibrous part of the roots a small quantity of the pulp, after the juice is extracted, and working it by hand till a thick white cream appears on the surface. This, being scraped off and washed in water, gradually subsides to the bottom. After the water is poured off, the remaining moisture is dissipated by a slow fire, and the substance being constantly stirred gradually forms into grains about as large as those of sago. This is the purest and most wholesome part of the manioc. — *Encyc. Americana*.

**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 borrowed from the shoemaker.

Your editor, when times are dull, must be "*on his taps*," as the saying is. When the mail comes through and brings news enough to make things look lively, why then he must work and cut and paste as though the world depended on him. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Tar-Kiln.** A conical heap of wood made and burned for obtaining tar. North Carolina. See *Box*.

**Tarnal.** A New England corruption of *eternal*.

Whate'er he tries, it is his rule,  
If once he fail to reach the "gool,"  
To rate himself a "tarnal fool,  
By golly!" — *Yankee Philosophy*.

**Tarve.** (Old English, *torve*, twisted; Lat. *torvus*.) A turn, bend, curve.

I can't say much for your axe, stranger, for this helve has no *tarve* to it; but, such as it is, down must come this elm. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*.

**Tattler.** The popular name of several species of *Totanus*. The species most common in New England are the "Yellowshanks" or "Yellow Legs," and the "Redshanks," both of which are called by sportsmen sometimes "plover," sometimes "snipe." The bird best known as "Tattler" is the "Greater Yellowshanks" or "Telltale," *Totanus melanoleucus* (Gmelin and Vaillant). The "Lesser Yellowshanks" (more common) is *T. flavipes*; the "Wood Tattler" or "Solitary Tattler" is *T. solitarius* (Wilson and Audubon).

Sand-snipe and grass-snipe (so called in the West) are not snipe, but some sort of *tattlers* or sand-pipers. They resemble the plover, but are smaller, or only the size of a true snipe. — *Bogardus, Field, Cover, and Trap Shooting*, p. 166.

**Taunton Turkeys.** The common herring, of which large quantities are taken near Taunton, Massachusetts. Comp. *Albany Beef* and *Marblehead Turkeys*.

Our fisheries o'er the world are famed,  
The mackerel, shad, and cod!  
And *Taunton turkeys* are so thick,  
We sell them by the rod! — *Allin, Yankee Ballad*.

**Tautaug or Tautog.** (*Tautoga Americana*.) The name of the Black-fish caught in the waters of Rhode Island. It is an Algonkin Indian word, and may be found in Roger Williams's Key to the Indian Language, where, however, he calls it the Sheepshead, which is an entirely different fish. In New York, it is called Black-fish, from the color of its back and sides.

For blue-fish merely, nothing can be as good as Edgartown. For blue-fish, bass, and *tautog* altogether, Seconnet is better. — *Daniel Webster, Private Cor.*, Vol. I. p. 339.

**Tavern.** A house licensed to sell liquors in small quantities, to be drank on the spot. In some of the United States, *tavern* is synonymous with "inn" or "hotel," and denotes a house for the entertainment of travellers, as well as for the sale of liquors, licensed for that purpose. — *Webster*.

**Tavern-Keeper.** One who is licensed to sell liquors to be drank in his own house, and to entertain travellers and lodgers, together with the horses and oxen composing their teams. — *Webster*.

**Tawkee.** The *Orontium aquaticum* (Golden Club): so called by the Indians of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, who used its root for food. The name was adopted by the Swedes. Otherwise written *Tawkim* and *Tackuim*. — *Kalm's Travels*, Vol. I. p. 389. See *Tuckahoe*.

**To tax.** To charge; as, "What will you *tax* me a yard for this cloth?" i. e., what will you charge for it, or what is the price of it? New England.

Job Clark was a wonderful pious pedlar, and wouldn't take advantage of a minister of the gospel. He, therefore, in tradin' with the clergy, only *taxed* his goods at half price. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 218.

**Team.** He's a *whole team*, or a *full team*, are slang expressions of admiration, meaning he is a person of great abilities and energy. See *Whole Team*.

**Tea-Fight.** A tea-party.

**To tear.** To drag; to pull along.

He *tears* along behind him a sleigh, . . . furnished with an ancient and fragmentary buffalo, which serves for robe and cushion both. — *Bristed, The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 17.

**Tear-Coat or Tear-Blanket.** (Often pron. *Tar-coat* in the West.) The *Arubia spinosa*, or Angelia tree, so called because its prickles *tear* the coats of hunters, or the blankets of the Indians, in passing.

**To tear round.** To make a fuss; to create a disturbance.

The swell with a spring style hat on  
Is the bloody chief Powhatan,  
And John Smith is the gent whose head he's going to cave.  
But the lofty chief's fair daughter  
Told her Pa he hadn't oughter;  
And the way she *tore around* induced him to behave.

*W. F. Brown, Capt. Smith and Pocahontas, 1867.*

**Tea-Squall.** A not over-respectful name for a tea-party.

**Teeter.** See *Peet-Weet*.

**To teeter.** 1. To see-saw on a balanced plank, as children for amusement. — *Worcester*. The English write and pronounce *titter*.

2. To bob the body up and down, as in saluting a person or taking a seat.

With a few fashionable phrases in your noddles, a face barbarously brutalized, a ridiculously genteel apparel, and a most audacious assurance, — you tip and *teeter* about, thinking that you excite the admiration of all, but of the ladies in particular. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 184.

**Teeth.** "He ought to have his *teeth* drawn;" i. e., he should be deprived of the power of doing mischief.

**Teeth-Ache.** An attempted improvement in the way of accuracy on the word *tooth-ache*. So "teeth-brush."

**Teetotaciously.** A strange Western term, meaning a little more than *teetotally*, if such a thing be possible.

He was, by——! I won't swear, 'cause it's wicked; but, if he wasn't, I hope to be *teetotaciously* chewed up! — *Western Adventures*, N. Y. *Spirit of the Times*.

**Teetotaller.** One who entirely abstains from the use of spirituous and fermented liquors. The term was first used in England in 1832.

I'm a man that will never refuse to take a glass of grog with a fellow-citizen because he wears a ragged coat. Liberty and Equality, I say. Three cheers for liberty and equality, and down with the *teetotallers*! — *Clavers*, *Forest Life*, Vol. II. p. 39.

**Teetotally.** Entirely; totally.

The meetin' houses on one side of the water, how *teetotally* different they be! *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 12.

Stranger, I'm powerful sorry, but we're *teetotally* out: he took every bit of food with him. — *Carlton's New Purchase*, Vol. II. p. 245.

Things weren't going on right; so I pretty nearly gave myself up *teetotally* to the good of the republic. — *J. C. Neal*, *Peter Brush*.

I wouldn't have you think that I am *teetotally* opposed to dancing in every shape, for the reason that I used to heel and toe it a trifle myself, when young. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I.

**Telegram.** A despatch by the electro-telegraph.

We claim this as an American word, it having been first suggested and its adoption urged as early as the year 1852. To the "Albany Evening Journal" belongs the credit of the first suggestion of the term, that paper having, on the 6th April, 1852, published the following, which emanated from Mr. E. Peshine Smith, of Rochester:—

A NEW WORD. — A friend desires us to give notice that he will ask leave, at some convenient time, to introduce a new word into the vocabulary. The object of this proposed innovation is to avoid the necessity, now existing, of using two words, for which there is very frequent occasion, when one will answer. It is TELEGRAM, instead of Telegraphic Despatch or Telegraphic Communication. The word is formed according to the strictest laws of the language from which its root comes. Telegraph means to write from a distance; *Telegram*, the writing itself, executed from a distance. Monogram, Logogram, &c., are words formed upon the same analogy and in good acceptance. Our friend, moreover, says that the House Line, if disposed to be precise, should call their communications Teletypes, as they are printed, not written. In a generous spirit of toleration, he proposes no action upon the last suggestion; but as to everybody else, except

the employers and customers of the House Line, he would have them "held and firmly bound" to speak, write, print, and telegraph **TELEGRAM**, instead of any two words signifying the same thing, under penalty of being considered verbose and tedious.

Immediately after this, probably from the suggestion in the "Albany Journal," there appeared in the "Daily American Telegraph," published in Washington, on the 27th of April, 1852 (a copy of which we have seen), the following from the editor, Mr. Thomas Connolly:—

*Telegram.* — Telegraph means to write from a distance; *Telegram*, the writing itself executed from a distance. Monogram, Logogram, &c., are words formed upon the same analogy, and in good acceptance. Hence, *Telegram* is the appropriate heading of a telegraphic despatch. Well, we'll go it. Look to our heading.

The telegraph despatches in the same paper were accordingly given under the heading of **TELEGRAMS**, and the heading continued for some time; but, the suggestion not being followed by the press, it was dropped.

In discussing the origin of the term in England, the London "Notes and Queries," of Nov. 21, 1857, asserts that it was used both in Liverpool and London four years before. But, even admitting the correctness of this assertion, — for it is only an assertion, — the date, it will be perceived, falls a year and a half short of the earlier American use of it.

**Telegraphic.** Appertaining to telegrams. An effort was made to introduce this word, but it is now seldom heard.

It is just in this connection that we should mention the service rendered to us and our readers by our *telegraphic* and general correspondents at Washington. — *New Orleans Delta*.

**Telephone.** A speaking telegraph or instrument by which vocal and musical sounds are transmitted, the invention of Professor A. Graham Bell, of Boston.

The two following verses are from "An old Man's Ballad" by John H. Yates, entitled "Blue Glass and Telephones," which appeared in the "Rochester Chronicle," March, 1877:—

I'll tell them [our children], — I'll not write it, my old hands tremble so, —  
Nor will I telegraph it, that's old style now, you know;  
I'll *telephone* it all the way, then they can sit and hear  
The poor old voice they haven't heard in many a weary year.

Well, what about the *Telephones*? That's harder to explain:  
You sit within a little room, and talk, or sing a strain,  
And men a thousand miles away can hear the word and tune,  
And tell you what you're singing, good old "Mear" or "Bonny Doon."

The term has already become a noun, a verb, an adjective, and adverb.

It will be something to say that one saw the first public *telephonic* exhibition in Boston, when *telephony* was merely a scientific curiosity. — *Boston Transcript*.

In addition to the singers announced for the *telephone* entertainment, . . . Mr. E. will sing several favorite pieces *telephonically* from the intermediate station. *Providence Journal*.

**To telescope.** A term applied to railway cars in case of a collision, when one car enters another and passes through it, as a telescope closes. Dr. O. W. Holmes, in a poem entitled "How not to settle it," read to the Harvard Class of '29, on the 4th Jan., 1877, thus alludes to the Presidential contest and the mode of settling it by Congress: —

"They fought so well, not one was left to tell  
Which got the largest share of cuts and slashes;  
When heroes meet, both sides are bound to beat;  
They *telescoped* like cars in railroad smashes.

**Tell.** 1. A saying; generally, however, a good one, or a complimentary one. A young lady will say to another, "I've a *tell* for you," i. e. I've a compliment for you, or I have heard some one speak highly of you. Not elegant.

2. *According to their tell*; i. e., "As they say."

When the news got out that I was sick, lots of folks came to see me, . . . and every one would name my disease by some new name. I told Josiah that, *accordin' to their tell*, I had got every disease under the sun, unless it was the horse-distemper. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 101.

In his dealings with the other sex, he is a little twistical, according to their *tell*. *Humphreys, The Yankee in England*.

**To tell.** To *tell* one good-by is the Southern phrase for to bid one good-by. "Before I leave town, I will come and *tell* you good-by."

**To tell on.** To tell of; to tell about. Vulgar.

"Well," says the General, "I am glad I didn't understand him, for now it stumps me considerable. Major, who was that?" "Why," says I, "General, he is the son of a man I've heard you *tell on* a thousand times." — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 29.

**To tend,** for to attend.

Most of the passengers in the cars were preachers what had been up to Augusta to *tend* the convention. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

**To tend out.** To attend; to be attending in a place distant from that where the person usually is.

An auction sale is advertised in our columns to-day, to take place in Hartford. . . . Country merchants should *tend out*. — *The Winsted Herald*.

**Tendsome.** Requiring much attendance; as, "A *tendsome* child." — *Webster*. This word is used in Connecticut.

**Tenement House.** In the city of New York, a house let to, or occupied by, a number of tenants.

**Ten-Pins.** Laws having been passed against the establishment of "nine-pin alleys," the name and the number of pins were at once changed.

**Ten-Strike.** A knocking down of the ten-pins at one throw of a ball; a thorough work.

You can rely upon the fact that, whenever he [General Sigel] sets the ball in motion, he will make a *ten-strike*. — *Baltimore Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Ten up.** The phrase used at the Stock Exchange in New York, when a broker's ability to keep his contract is questioned. It means that a deposit of ten per cent on the selling value of the stock bid for must be put up before the contract can hold good. — *Medbery*.

**Tepees.** The lodges or tents of the Indians of the Far West.

Before the Indians could get out of their *tepees*, the fire was down on them. . . . Some sixty *tepees* were consumed. — *Philadelphia Press*.

Large quantities of ammunition, especially powder, were stored in the *tepees*, and explosions followed the burning of every tent. — *N. Y. Tribune, Report of the Big Horn Expedition*, April 4, 1876.

When civilization becomes nearer [the Black Hills], the pine may be useful for rough lumber and fuel; but now and for a long time to come its only use seems to be that known to the Indians, — for poles to uphold their *tepees* on the prairie. *Rept. of the Com. of Indian Affairs for 1874*, p. 405.

**Terawohy.** This word is evidently of Dutch origin, and would seem to be *te ratje*, the little rat, an equivalent for the term "creep-mouse," which is used in a like manner. It is a very common word in the nursery, and is always accompanied by a peculiar motion of the fingers, with the palm of the hand presented to the child. It is as well known among the old English families of New York as among those of Dutch descent.

**Terrapin.** (*Palustris*.) A name given to a species of tide-water tortoise, common in Connecticut and the Atlantic States south of New York, and considered an article of luxury. It is found exclusively in the salt water, and always in the neighborhood of marshes. The most celebrated is the *diamond-back*; there are also the *yellow-bellies*, *red-bellies*, *loger-heads*, *snuff-boxes*, &c.

Campanius, in his vocabulary of New Sweden, gives "*túlpa*, *turpa*," a tortoise; Rasles, for the Abenaki, has "*toarebe*," tortue. Eliot, from the same base, writes *toonuppas-og*, for tortoise



(Lev. xi. 29). "Terrapin" is clearly a corrupt form of the Algonkin name.

A small kind of Turtle, or *Tarapins* (as we call them). — *Beverly's Virginia* 1722, p. 151.

Of *Terebins*, there are divers sorts. — *Lawson's Nat. Hist. of Carolina* (1709), p. 133.

I have caught with mine angle Pike, Carpe, Eele, . . . Creakfish, and the *Torope* or little Turtle. — *Whitaker, Good Newes from Virginia* (1623), p. 42.

**Terret.** A ring through which, set on a little standard (or in tandem-driving on the headstall), passes one of the reins by which a horse is driven. New England. Bailey in his Dictionary gives *Tyerets*, ornaments for horses.

**Territory.** A large district of country belonging to the United States, though not forming a part of any individual State, and under a temporary government. — *Worcester*.

**Tesquite.** An alkaline efflorescence of considerable value, which exudes from the earth around many of the lakes, ponds, and marshy grounds in New Mexico, California, and Arizona. (Natron, Carb. of Soda.) See *Alkali Desert*.

**Test-Paper.** A paper or instrument shown to a jury as evidence. A term used in the Pennsylvania courts. Called also a "standard paper." — *Burrill's Law Dic.*

**To tew.** To fuss and fret.

**Tew round.** To tew round is to spend time over one's household affairs without accomplishing any thing; to be busy without doing any thing. In the north of England, *tew* means to labor; to work hard. See *Putter*.

**Texan Hare.** See *Jackass Rabbit*.

**Texas.** The third story, so called, of a Mississippi steamboat. It includes the surroundings of the pilot-house, the whole "upper story" of the vessel.

The boiler deck, the hurricane deck, and the *texas* deck are fenced and ornamented with white railings. — *Mark Twain, in Atlantic Monthly*, for Jan., 1875.

His companion joined him, pausing a minute on the step-ladder which leads to the pilot-house from the roof of the *texas*. — *E. E. Hale, Adv. of a Pullman*, p. 45.

**Texas-Tender.** The waiter who attends passengers on the upper deck or *texas* of the Mississippi steamboats.

We had a tidy, white-aproned, black *texas-tender* to bring up tarts and ices and coffee during mid-watch day and night. — *Mark Twain, in Atlantic Monthly*, Feb., 1875.

**Thanksgiving Day.** A day set apart once a year (usually in the month of November), by the Governors of States, for a general thanksgiving to God for blessings enjoyed. The custom originated among the Puritans of New England, where, as a season of social festivities and family reunions, it has almost wholly usurped the place of Christmas.

E'en the ghosts of *Thanks-day* turkeys

Wander in the fields around,

Waking up the midnight echoes

With a frightful *gob'lin'* sound.

*Wm. Boyd, Oakwood Old, Cambridge (Mass.) Chronicle, 1857.*

**Thank-ye-Ma'ams.** Hollows or depressions in a road, with low heaps of earth or snow dug or thrown from the hollows. Sometimes they are caused by depressions made to carry off water. In winter, when there is deep snow, these hollows are made by sleighs. The plunging and rising of passing vehicles causes the rider to bend his body with every rise and fall; hence, the term of *thank-ye-ma'ams*. See *Cahot*.

The softening of so great a body of snow renders the roads slumpy and full of *thank-ye-ma'ams*, so that sleighing is not a blissful experience just now.

**That** is constantly used for *so* in Pennsylvania; as, "I was *that* tired."

**The.** American speakers and writers very commonly use the definite article in the French manner, and contrary to the genius of the English language, before the names of diseases.

There would be nothing questionable in the report that De Soto died of typhus fever, or some similar malady, if another account did not ascribe his death to *the* dysentery. — *Willmer's Life of De Soto*, p. 505.

**There.** (Pron. *thar*.) On the spot; on hand; at home. Western. The author of "A Stray Yankee in Texas," in speaking of this use of the word, says: "A man who accepts an invitation to a frolic or a fight, a wedding or a funeral, probably answers, I'm *thar*. A person wishing to imply that he is perfectly at home in any thing says he is *thar*; a good hunter or fisher is also *thar*."

**Thimble-Berry.** (*Rubus occidentalis*.) The Black Raspberry, so called by many from the naked receptacle, which has the shape of a thimble. In some districts, the red raspberry is so called.

**Thimble-Weed.** (*Rudbeckia*.) A tall plant, six or eight feet high, resembling the sunflower. It is one of the herbs prepared by the Shakers, and is used in medicine for its diuretic and tonic properties. Like the Thimble-berry, its receptacle resembles a thimble.

**Thin-skinned.** Exhibiting while seeming to conceal; accidentally ineffective; shallow; purposely deceptive; hypocritical.

The Cæsars were divine while they lived, . . . their apotheosis after death was a *thin-skinned* travesty: the Romans honored the live gods, but left the dead ones to look out for themselves. — *N. Y. Tribune*, May 8, 1877.

**Thirds.** "The widow's thirds." Dower. In law, the portion of a man's real estate which his widow is entitled to hold during her natural life. The term is quite as common as dower. Middleton used it in the same sense.

**This here and that there.** These vulgar pleonasms are often heard in this country as well as in England.

*This yere* is the common pronunciation in the South.

**Thomsonian Doctor.** A physician who follows the Thomsonian practice; also called Steam-doctor.

**Thomsonian System.** A peculiar treatment of diseases, so named from its inventor, Samuel Thomson, a native of Alstead, New Hampshire, who died at Concord, in that State, in 1840, aged 56 years. The medicines are labelled from No. 1 to 10, and are compounds of Cayenne pepper, lobelia, &c. His followers have discarded much that he adopted, and are now known as Eclectic or Botanic physicians.

**Thorny-Locust.** See *Honey-Locust*.

**Thoroughfare.** A low gap between mountains; as, "*Thoroughfare Gap*," in Fauquier County, Virginia. "*Thoroughfare Mountain*." Southern.

**Thoroughwort.** Another name for *Boneset*, which see.

I kinder mistrusted our Tirzah Ann had fallen in love with Shakspeare Bobbet, but I thought of Betsy. . . . Well, I gave her a good *thoroughwort* puke, and it cured her. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 328.

**Thousand of Brick.** *Like a thousand of brick* is a queer simile very often heard. It means, of course, very heavily, like brick dumped out of a cart; and then vigorously, vehemently.

A huge negro woman threw herself convulsively from her feet, and fell *like a thousand of brick* across a diminutive old man. — *Simon Suggs*.

The new "Yankee Doodle," by George P. Morris, created an immense noise. Nobody could sit still; hands and feet came into the chorus of their own accord, and the house was down "*like a thousand of brick*." — *New York paper*.

I see he was gettin' riled some, and I thought he'd bile over. You see that's the way with us Western folks. If folks is sassy, we walk right into 'em *like a thousand of brick*. — *Mrs. Clavers, Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 109.

Sweet is the melting fall of music, but not such music as nightly comes down upon us *like a thousand of bricks* from the balconies of museums, nor such as we sometimes hear at the opera. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 201.

So I pitched into Doodle *like a thousan' of brick*.  
 Mayhap it warn't proper to do it — on tick ;  
 But John Bull is almighty, he 'll see I am paid,  
 And my cargo of cotton will break the blockade.

*The London Times on American Affairs.*

**To thrap.** (Fr. *frapper*.) To strike, especially with some pliable article, as a strap.

**Through** is used in the West for swathe, or the cut of the cradle through grass or grain. Like "swathe," it is also used figuratively; as, "What a *through* he cut!" i. e. what a swell!

**Through the Mill.** A person is said to have been *through the mill* when he has had experience in a particular thing.

**To throw in.** To contribute; as, "I 'll *throw in* for a pony race."

**Thunder.** Vigor; efficiency; éclat.

Whatever *thunder* there can be in the present Southern policy [of President Hayes], it is not the *thunder* of those Republicans who oppose it. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Thundering.** Very; exceedingly. A vulgar colloquialism, used both in England and in this country.

Lord Hervey, in his "Memoirs of the Court of George II.," mentions Queen Caroline's indignation at the infliction of a "*thundering long sermon*."

I was told that Faneuil Hall was called the "cradle of liberty." I reckon old King George thought they were *thundering* fine children that were rocked in it, and a good many of them. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 61.

If a chap only comes from the North, and has got a crop of hair and whiskers, and a coat different from everybody else, and a *thunderin'* great big gold chain about his neck, he 's the poplerest man among the ladies. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 82.

**Ticket.** 1. Politically, it means a printed list of candidates to be used at an election. According to circumstances, a man is said to vote the *straight ticket*, i. e. the ticket containing the "regular nomination" of his party without change; a *scratch ticket*, a ticket from which the names of one or more of the candidates are erased; a *split ticket*, a ticket representing different divisions of his party; or a *mixed ticket*, a ticket in which the nominations of different parties are blended into one.

2. A "*hard ticket*," a man whom other people had better let alone; an unscrupulous man to deal with.

**Tickler.** 1. A common name among merchants and bankers for a book in which a register of notes or debts is kept for reference; also, for a book in which the daily balance of cash is entered, by the cashier or teller.

2. A small pocket flask in which to carry liquor.

Then he took out a *tickler* of whiskey; and, arter he'd took three or four swallows out'n it, says he, "Oblige me by taking a horn." — *Southern Sketches*, p. 33.

**Tick-Nation.** A name given to regions in which ticks abound; and, as the grasses and sandy soil infected by them are peculiar to the poorer parts of the country, it is sometimes used as a term of reproach.

**Tiddlies.** Boys say, "run tiddlies," i. e. run over ice after it has begun to break up on a sheet of water. See *Bendolers*, Addenda.

**Tidy, n.** A cover, usually of ornamental work, for the back of a chair, the arms of a sofa, and the like. — *Webster*.

From the old English word "tide," meaning time, as eventide, and closely connected with the German *zeit*. So tidy is *zeitig*, timely or seasonable. — *Smith, Curious Derivations*, p. 97.

Tusser uses the word in this sense, as: —

If weather be fair and *tidy*, thy grain  
Make speedily carriage, for fear of a rain.

*Husbandry*, for March, (1573).

**To tidy up.** To put things in order, or make them neat, as in a dwelling-house. — *Webster*.

I have *tilded* and *tidied* over again, but it's useless. — *Dickens*.

**Tie.** 1. The state produced by an equal number of votes on two opposite sides. — *Worcester*.

2. A pair that are alike; a match. "Them two hogs is a *tie*." Western.

**To tie to.** In Western phraseology, a man who "will do to *tie to*" is one who can be relied upon, an honest man.

**To tie up.** To make fast, as a vessel or steamboat. An expression peculiar to the West.

"It's foggy to-night," said the captain, "and you'd best run the boat till nine, and then *tie up*."

"*Tie her up!*" says Jim. "I *tie her up* in a horn! Do you reckon I can't run her in such a fog as this? No, sir! I'll keep her a bilin' till my watch is up, and then I'll *tie up*, as you're afeard to run. — *Major Bunkum, N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Tie Vote.** An equality in the number of votes given for two candidates, by which neither party is elected to the office for which the votes are given.

**Tiger.** In 1822, the Boston Light Infantry, under Captain Mackintosh and Lieutenant Robert C. Winthrop, visited Salem and encamped in

Washington Square; and during their stay a few of the members indulged in sports incidental to camp duty, when some visitor exclaimed to one who was a little rough, "Oh, you Tiger!" It became a catch-word, and as a term of playful reproach, "You're a Tiger," was adopted as one of the peculiar phrases of the corps. On the route to Boston, some musical genius sung an impromptu line, "Oh, you Tigers, don't you know," to the air of "Rob Roy McGregor, oh!" Of course, the appellation soon induced the Tigers by name to imitate the actions of the Tiger; and the "growl" was introduced, and at the conclusion of three cheers "a tiger" was invariably called for.

In 1826, the Infantry visited New York, being the first volunteer corps to make a trip from this city to another State; and, while there, the Tigers at a public festival awoke the echoes and astonished the Gothamites by giving the genuine howl. It pleased the fancy of the hosts, and gradually it became adopted on all festive and joyous occasions; and now "three cheers and a tiger" are the inseparable demonstrations of approbation in that city. — *Boston Evening Gazette*.

**Tiger-Cat.** See *Ocelot*.

**To fight the Tiger** is to gamble.

**Tight.** 1. Close; parsimonious; saving; as, "A man *tight* in his dealings." Close; hard; as, "A *tight* bargain." — *Webster*. To these American uses of the word is to be added another similar to the last. When money is difficult to be procured by discounting, &c., business men say, "The money market is *tight*," or "Money is *tight*." In this sense, it is the opposite of *easy*, which see.

The Deacon was as *tight* as the skin on his back; begrudged folks their victuals when they came to his house — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 30.

The money market, except on the best stocks, is getting *tight*, and there is a general calling in of loans upon the "fancies." — *N. Y. Tribune*.

2. Tipsy; drunk. Used mostly at the South. The question has been asked, "Can a man be considered a loose character who comes home *tight* every night?"

It's kinder discouragin' to lend a fellow that gets *tight* a good deal, — gets *tight* sometimes, any how; it's hard enough to get paid by folks that always keep straight. — *Habberton, The Barton Experiment*, p. 126.

**Tight Match.** A close or even match, as of two persons wrestling or running together.

**Tight Place.** To be in a *tight place* is to be in straits, to be short of money.

**Tight Scrouging**, i. e. hard squeezing. Said of any thing difficult to accomplish. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**Tight Squeeze**. A difficulty.

It's a *tight squeeze* sometimes to scrouge between a lie and the truth in business. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 217.

**Tile**. Cant term for a hat.

If they did not yet farther make the mistake of leaving in his hall a well-worn *tile* in the place of a new beaver. — *N. Y. Observer*.

**Tilly**. "Easy as tilly," i. e. very easy.

**Tilt**. 1. The black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus nigricollis*), a small bird found on our shores; the Sand-piper, also called a *Tilt-up*. See *Lawyer*, No. 1.

2. A see-saw.

**Tilter**. Used as, and probably shows the origin of, *Teeter*, 1. To see-saw on a plank. In common use in Eastern Massachusetts.

**Tilt-up** or **Tip-up**. The popular name of the Sand-piper. See *Peet-Weet*.

**Timber**. Throughout the West and South, this term is applied to woodland. A man going into the woods will tell you he is going into the *timber*.

After proceeding half a mile into the *timber*, we were suddenly brought to a stand by the dense undergrowth. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*.

**Timbered Lands**. Land covered with wood; forests. Land well-timbered means land covered with large trees.

Along the coast of Texas, as in the country west of Harrisburg, there stretches a prairie of from ten to twenty miles before reaching the *timbered* bottom-lands. *Guide to Western Texas*, p. 5.

**Timberheels**. A headlong fellow careless in walking.

**Time**. 1. "What *time* are you?" means, What o'clock is it?

2. "I've had a good *time*," i. e. I have enjoyed myself. "I went to the ball, and had a good *time*." A spree. "They went on a *time*," i. e. they had a spree. "A high old *time*," or debauch of the first class.

**Timothy**. (*Phleum pratense*.) The common name for the Herd's Grass; said to be derived from Timothy Hanson, one of its early propagators. — *Bigelow's Flora Bostoniensis*.

**Tinaja**. (Span., pron. *tindha*.) The word signifies, primarily, a large earthen water-jar, and is applied on the Mexican frontier to water-holes or cavities in rocks on the sides of mountains, where water accumulates. These are filled during the rainy season, and are the chief or only dependence of travellers for water at other times.

Permanent water is found under a cleft of igneous rocks, and does not properly deserve the name of a spring, but is rather a *tinaja* supplied by water trickling through the rocks from water-holes above. — *Schott's Obs. on the Country along the Mexican Boundary*, p. 69.

Eight of these *tinajas*, one above the other, the highest too difficult to reach [are found here]; as the water is used from the lower ones, you ascend to the next higher, passing it down by means of buckets. — *Lieutenant Michler's Report, Mexican Boundary*, p. 114.

**Tin Blickey.** (Dutch, *blik*, tin.) In New York, a tin pail.

**Tinker.** A small mackerel. New England.

**Tinner.** A workman who makes utensils of tinned iron plates; a tin-plate worker.

**Tipple.** Intoxicating liquors. Any "fancy drink" is a tipple. "I've got a new tipple," said a liquor-dealer to a regular customer.

Why not send them brandy in bombs? and Old Wheat under a flag of truce? Why not drop a bottle of *tipple* into their camps from our balloons — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**Tippybobs.** A contemptuous term for the wealthy classes.

**Tipsinah.** The wild prairie turnip, used as food by the North-western Indians.

**Tipteering.** A mincing gait in walking.

When you see a gentleman *tipteering* along Broadway, with a lady wiggling by his side, and both dressed to kill, you may say that he looks out for himself and takes care of A. No. 1. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 208.

**Tip-top.** The very highest part; the best of any thing; excellent; of the best quality. The building on the summit of Mount Washington is called "The *Tip-top* house." "These are the best goods made in the country. They are *tip-top*."

**Tip-up.** See *Peet-Weet*.

**Tisanne.** (Fr.) A decoction of spruce-tops, for "purifying the blood." Province of Quebec.

**Tithing-Man.** In New England, a parish officer appointed to preserve order at public worship, and enforce the proper observance of the Sabbath. — *Worcester*.

Greater men than Uncle Eliakim had to give up before the sovereign power of a laugh, and ere long he resigned the office of *tithing-man* as one requiring a sterner metal than he possessed. — *Mrs. Stowe, Oldtown Folks*, ch. v.

**To titivate.** To dress up. "To *titivate* one's self" is to make one's toilet. Colloquial in the north of England.

Well, I'll arrive in time for dinner; I'll *titivate* myself up, and down to drawin'-room. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 23.

The girls are all so *titivated* off with false beauty, that a fellow loses his heart before he knows it. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 151.



**Titter.** An eruption on the skin. This is merely another pronunciation of *tetter*. It is used in New England, and, according to Forby, is provincial in England.

**To.** 1. For *at* or *in*. An exceedingly common vulgarism in the Northern States. We often hear such barbarous expressions as, "He lives *to* York;" "He wan't *to* hum" (*i. e.* at home), while the opposite mistake of *in* for *into* is hardly less frequent.

I have forgot what little I learnt to night-school; and, in fact, I never **was** **any** great shakes at it. — *Sam Slick*.

When is charity like a top? When it begins *to* hum. — *Baltimore Sun*.

The boiler, instead of going upward, moved in a horizontal line, passed through the main building directly through the weaver's room, without injuring the workmen there, although men were *to* work on each side of where the boiler passed. — *Rome Sentinel*, Sept., 1858.

2. *To*, as the sign of the infinitive, is sometimes improperly omitted, particularly in such expressions as Meet days, Sing nights, Help make, Help transact; instead of "help *to* make," "help *to* transact," &c.

We found the medical student at his lodgings, sitting at a table in the middle of a very disorderly apartment, making believe [*to*] eat a late breakfast. — *Putnam's Magazine*, May, 1854.

**Toad-Fish.** (*Batrachus variegatus*.) This repulsive creature, and fisherman's pest, is called also "Oyster-Fish" on the New Jersey coast, from its frequenting the oyster-beds, and "Grubby" on the coast of New England.

**Toad-Grunter.** The toad-fish, so called from the noise it makes.

**Toad-Sticker.** A term for a sword, almost universal among our soldiers during the late war.

**Tobacco.** (W. Ind. *tabago* or *tobacco*, a cigar or pipe.) An American plant, the dried leaves of which are used for smoking, chewing, and for making snuff. The more common varieties cultivated in the United States are Hudson, Frederick, Thickjoint, Shoestring, Thickset, Sweet-scented, Orinoko, &c. Among the host of names given to it according to the various modes in which it is prepared for *chewing* are: Pigtail, Ladies' Twist, Cavendish, Honey-dew, Negro-head (pron. Nigger-head), Long Cut, Short Cut, Bull's Eye, Plug, Fig, Oronoko Leaf, Nail-rod or 32's, Roll, Fine Spun, Pound, Lone Jack, &c. There is, besides, *smoking* tobacco, put up in papers of various kinds, as Kanaster, Kite-foot, Cut-stems, &c. In the

form of *snuff* there are also many terms for it, as Maccoboy, Rappee (American and foreign, named after the places it is manufactured in), American Gentleman, Demigros, Pure Virginia, Copenhagen, Nachitoches, Bourbon, St. Domingo, Scotch, High Toast, Irish Blackguard, Irish High Toast, &c.

**Tobacco-Box.** A small fresh-water fish, called also Sunfish and Pumpkin-Seed.

**Tobacco-Root.** See *Kooyah-Root*.

**Tobogan or Tarbogan.** A sleigh or sledge used in Canada and by the Hudson's Bay Company, drawn by dogs used for travelling over snow, made of thin boards ten or twelve feet long, and from twelve to fifteen inches broad. These are cut thin at one end, about three feet of which is bent over, lashed and covered with raw hide to keep it in place. Inside of this curve, the *voyageur* carries his kettle. The dogs attached to the sleigh are generally decorated with collars from which bead-work and tassels are suspended, together with a string of small bells. Dall says they are used in Alaska, and gives representations of them. — *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 165. Hind, who calls them *carioles*, says they are used by the *voyageurs* of the Hudson's Bay Company. — *Red River Exploring Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 84. Smaller ones, from five to eight feet in length, are also used in Canada for sliding down hill over the snow.

The *tobogan* will turn in front to the side on which you press your hand. To steer one going down-hill at top speed needs nerve and experience. Weighted with two or three riders, gaining in speed, it seems to fly along like a highway comet as it flashes past you, . . . and your blood curdles in your veins at the seeming recklessness of the occupants. . . . Strap a dyspeptic to a *tobogan* on one of our Canadian hills, . . . and I would stake my life that I should either scare away or cure blue devils and dyspepsia. — *Canadian Sports in Scribner's Monthly* for Aug., 1877, p. 523.

The following is from a poem by Wm. Boyd, entitled "Swartzen, an Imaginary Montreal Fur-Advertisement," 1865. Many words in common use in Canada will be found in the extract.

Wouldst thou purchase

Moccasins from Indian wigwam,  
Black or yellow, plain or quill-worked,  
Or galoshed with India-rubber;  
Aboriginal *toboggan*,  
Excellent for coasting-party,  
Or for elk or red-deer hunter;  
Yengée sled or roomy traineau,  
For the boys from big to little,  
For the girls from teens to tiny;

Snow-shoes for suburban ramble,  
 Or for tramp around the Mountain,  
 Or for chasing in the forest, —  
 . . . . .  
 Go to Swartzen, famous furrier,  
 Chapelier renowned, immortal, —  
 Swartzen of the changing seasons,  
 Spring and summer, autumn, winter.

*Montreal Transcript, 1865.*

**Tobogganing.** Sliding down hill over the snow on a tobogan, a favorite amusement in Canada. In New England, called *Coasting*, which see.

*Tobogganing* is one of the favorite winter amusements on the Mountain. *Toboggan* has not yet found its way into the dictionaries, and there are other ways of spelling it; and it may be defined as a pliable board turned up at both ends, and used for coasting down the hills of Canada. — *Montreal Cor. Providence Journal*, July 2, 1877.

Quaint old Quebec is fit for *tobogganing* wherever you go. But one of the most unique rides is down the ice-cone of Montmorency Falls. — *Canadian Sports, Scribner's Monthly*, Aug., 1877.

**Toboganist.** One who indulges in the amusement of sliding down ice-hills on a tobogan.

The ice-cone of Montmorency Falls, seven miles from Quebec, is a great resort for the *toboganists* in winter. — *Scribner, as above.*

**Tod.** Rum, or any alcoholic beverage.

**Toddy-Blossom.** See *Rum-Bud*.

**To toe in.** To turn in the toes.

**To toe the Mark.** A phrase borrowed from the prize-ring, and meaning to come up to one's obligations.

**To tole.** To draw or cause to follow, by presenting something pleasing or desirable to view; to allure by some bait. — *Webster.*

We apply this old English word only to the alluring of animals. Thus, in New England the farmers *tole* sheep, and cause them to follow, by holding to them a measure of corn or some fodder. In the Middle States, wild ducks are *toled* within gun-shot, by causing a little dog to run up and down behind a brushwood fence, which excites their curiosity.

**Tom.** A wooden trough used by the California miners for washing what is known as "pay-dirt." *Tom stream* refers to the quantity of water used in the trough or *tom*.

**Tomahawk.** (Algonkin Ind. *tomehagen*.) An Indian hatchet or axe.

It was and is the custom of the Indians to go through the ceremony of burying the *tomahawk*, when they made peace; when they

went to war, they dug it up again. Hence, the phrases "to bury the *tomahawk*," and "to dig up the *tomahawk*," are sometimes used by political speakers and writers with reference to the healing up of past disputes or the breaking out of new ones. See *Hatchet*.

A great surly-look'd fellow took up his *Tomhog*, or wooden Cutlash, to kill Mr. Church, but some others prevented him. — *Church's Philip's War* (1716), p. 24.

Fierce the fight and short,  
As is the whirlwind. Soon the conquerors  
And conquered vanished, and the dead remain  
Mangled by *tomahawks*. — *Bryant, The Fountain*.

**Tomato.** 1. (Mexican, *tomatl*.) The well-known fruit of the *Lycopersicum esculentum*, formerly called love-apples.

2. The Winter-cherry sometimes so called, and, specifically, *Cherry-Tomato*.

**Tombs.** A name commonly given to the New York city prison, in allusion to its heavy Egyptian style of architecture.

**Tombs Lawyer.** A lawyer whose clients are the inmates of the New York city prison. A contemptuous term. See *Shyster*.

**Tom-Cod.** (*Morhua pruinosa*.) A small fish common to our coast, but which becomes very abundant after the first frost; hence the name of *Frost-Fish*, by which it is also known. — *Storer, Fishes of Massachusetts*.

Dr. J. V. C. Smith believes the *tom-cod* to be the same as a fish known in Europe as the *tacaud* of Cuvier, and that *tom-cod* is a corruption of the Indian name *tacaud*, i. e. plenty-fish, as this little fish was well known to our aborigines. Mr. Trumbull, of Hartford, who is the best authority on Indian words, assures us that he knows no such word as *tacaud* in any aboriginal language east of the Alleghanies.

The Hull merchant came under the frigate's stern, and volunteered to go and catch some *tom-cod*. — *Lieut. Wise, Scamparies*, p. 19.

The face of the mermaid was regular human, and it looked rather tawny and flabby like a biled nigger, with fleshy eyes, and a mouth like a huge *tom-cod*. — *Story of the Mermaid*.

**Tom-Dog.** Male dogs as well as cats take the prefix "tom," in some parts of the West. "Them *tom-dogs* howls awful to-night."

**Tongs.** A name for pantaloons and roundabouts, formerly in use in New England.

Children were playing on the green, the boys dressed in *tongs*; some in skirt-coats, &c. — *Margaret*, p. 34.

**Tonnage-Car.** A railway car for the conveyance of freight

**Toot.** "On a toot," i. e. on a spree.

**Toothache Bush.** (*Xanthoxylum fraxineum*.) Prickly Ash; so called from its pungent properties, made sensible when applied to an aching tooth.

**Toothache Grass.** (*Monocera aromatica*.) A singular kind of grass which grows in Florida, with a naked stalk four feet high. It affects the breath and milk of cows, which eat it when young and tender. The root affects the salivary glands. — *Williams's Florida*.

**Tooth-Carpenter.** A dentist.

**Too Thin.** Too plain or evident. The deception is "*too thin*," i. e. too apparent. Often expressed by the letters T. T. See *Too Thin to wash*, in *Addenda*.

**Tooting-Tub.** A puritanical term for a church-organ.

I've heard they 're subscribing around for an organ! Yes, an organ! What on earth will they do next? That ever I should live to see a Popish *tootin'-tub* stuck up in our gallery! — *Brooke, Eastford*, p. 22.

**Toozer or Twozer.** A marble.

**Tophet.** Defined originally as the place of abominations, the very gate or pit of hell; hence, boys used to say, "I'll see you in *Tophet* before I'll do it," meaning that they will see one in a very bad place. "Go to *Tophet*," go to the devil.

The "Stockton Independent," says Captain Weber took the Secession flag from his flagstaff, which he found floating on Sunday morning, put it into his cannon, fired it off, and blowed it to *Tophet*, and then gave three cheers for the Union.

**Top-Notch.** The highest point.

To-day the editor of the "Union" is cheered to the very *top-notch* of joyous exultation by a speech from some Democratic orator or a paragraph from some Democratic editor; to-morrow he is horrified by the atrocious sentiment of some rantipole Barnburner. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*, Oct. 16, 1848.

**Top Sawyer.** The man at the upper end of a whip-saw; hence, a man of great consequence; an "upper-crust" fellow. Western.

**Tore.** *Taw-er*, the place where the *taw-er* stands. The place where one stands to shoot marbles from. Used by the boys of New York.

**Tormentation.** Pain; torment; trouble. New England.

**Tormented.** Euphemism for damned, as "not a *tormented* cent."

**Tortilla.** (Spanish.) The well-known large, round, thin cake prepared from a paste made of the soaked grains of maize, having the hulls rubbed off before grinding the mass, and then baked on an earthen griddle. See *Hulled Corn*.

The corn for the *tortillas* is soaked with a little ashes in the water, until the outer husk or shell is peeled off, when it is ground upon an oblong stone called a "metate," a domestic utensil handed down from the aboriginal inhabitants.

The meal is then properly mixed and seasoned, and cooked upon small sheets of iron and copper. They are baked very thin, and always served up hot. — *Davis, El Gringo*, p. 341.

Hearing a continual slap, slap, slap, I looked round and saw a woman kneeling upon the ground, rubbing the metate, while a pretty girl was slapping a *tortilla* between her hands. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

A triangular piece of *tortilla* is converted into a spoon, and soup is even eaten in this way. Spoons are seldom met with even in the houses of the rich, the use of the *tortilla* being universal. — *Ruxton's Adv. in Mexico*, p. 145.

**Tory.** During the war of the Revolution, this term was applied to the royalists. Some years ago, when the term "Whig" was adopted by one of our political parties, that of *Tory* was given to the Democratic party. It is not now applied to any party.

It was said that the *tories* were arming and collecting in the Highlands, under the direction of distinguished officers, to aid the conspiracies formed by Gov. Tryon and his adherents. — *Irving, Life of Washington*, Vol. II. p. 371.

**Tote.** (Fr. *tout*, Lat. *totus*.) The whole; all. "The whole *tote*," a common pleonasm. Provincial in England and in New England.

**To tote.** To carry. A queer word, much used in the Southern States. It has been, absurdly enough, derived from the Latin *tollit*, but is more probably of African origin. A friend learned in philology insists that the word is from the Latin *tollere*.

The militia had everlastin' great long swords as much as they could *tote*. — *Major Jones's Courtship*, p. 39.

Here a boy was ferociously cutting wood, — there one *toting* wood. — *Carlton, The New Purchase*, Vol. I. p. 167.

The watchman arrested Mr. Wimple for disturbing the peace, and *toted* him off to the calaboose. — *Pickings from the N. O. Picayune*, p. 120.

My gun here *totes* fifteen buckshot and a ball, and slings 'em to kill. — *Chron. of Pineville*, p. 169.

"Goodness gracious!" said old Miss Stallins, "white servants! Well, the Lord knows I wouldn't have none on 'em about me. I could never bear to see a white gall *toatin'* my child about, and waitin' on me like a nigger: it would hurt my conscience." — *Major Jones's Travels*.

De 'possum and de coon are as sassy as you please,  
Since all de blooded dogs were *toted* off by fleas;  
De measles *toted* off all de cunuin' little nigs,  
An' de sojers ob de army hab *toted* off de pigs.

*Negro Melodies, Come back, Massa.*

**To tote fair**, in Texas, is to be honest and upright in one's dealings with people there, in order to avoid a serious catastrophe.

The predicament [of assassination] in Texas can be avoided by always "*toting fair*" with everybody. Indeed, if you *tote fair*, you need *tote* no weapons; that is, you can go unarmed. — *Texas Cor. Chicago Tribune*.

**Tote-Load.** As much as one can carry. Southern

**Totem.** A corruption from the Algonkin word, meaning "that which peculiarly belongs to him." The family mark or coat-of-arms of the North American Indians.

Speaking of the Iroquois, Mr. Schoolcraft says: "Nothing is more fully under the cognizance of observers of the manners and customs of this people, than the fact of the entire mass of a canton or tribe being separated into distinct clans, each of them distinguished by the name and device of some quadruped, bird, or other object of the animal kingdom. This device is called among the Algonkins (where the same separation into families or clans exists) *totem*, and we shall employ the same term here, as being already well known to writers." — *Notes on the Iroquois*, p. 126.

Think not that my blood shall mingle with the humble mark of the Awasees, — fit *totem* for fishermen. — *Schoolcraft, Algonic Researches*.

The Indian had made a representation of a rattlesnake drawn on his breast with yellow paint. This was to be the *totem* or arms of his tribe. — *Cooper, Oak Openings*, Vol. I. p. 163.

And they painted on the grave-posts  
Each his own ancestral *totem*,  
Each the symbol of his household.

*Longfellow, The Song of Hiawatha.*

**Totemic.** Relating or belonging to the totem.

To show how the aristocratic and democratic principles were made to harmonize in the Iroquois government, it will be necessary to go back and examine the law of descent among the tribes, together with the curious and intricate principles of the *totemic* bond. — *Schoolcraft, Notes on the Iroquois*, p. 126.

**Tottlish.** (From tottle, to walk in an unsteady manner.) Shaking, vacillating, unsteady.

Our little boat was light and *tottlish*; and, as I pressed the trigger of my rifle, it rolled slightly over, and my ball passed over the deer. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 207.

Sir Walter Scott thus used the word *totty* in the same sense: —

I tell thee, fellow, I was somewhat *totty* when I received the good knight's blow, or I had kept my ground under it. — *Ivanhoe*, ch. xxxiii.

**Touch.** "It is no *touch* to the other machine;" i. e., it will bear no comparison with it. "The latest *touch*," — the most recent style, or newest contrivance.

The children of Israel going out of Egypt with their flocks and their little ones is *no touch* to it [i. e. the first day of May in New York]. — *Major Downing*, p. 30.

**Touch and go.** A narrow avoidance of a contrary result. "Nothing to spare." Comp. *Rub and go*.

**Touch-me-not.** (*Impatiens*.) A plant found about brooks and in moist places. — *Michaux, Sylva*. A popular name for the common

Balsam, in allusion to the bursting of its capsules when touched with the fingers. It is also called *Jewel-weed*.

**Touse.** A noise or disturbance. A Dorsetshire word. Comp. *Kesouse*.

The Loch Katrin they [the Scotch] make such a *touss* about is jest about equal to a good sizable duck-pond in our country. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 30.

Marm Lecain makes such an eternal *touse* about her carpets that I have to go along that everlastin' long entry, and down both staircases to the door, to spit. *Sam Slick*.

When the rats rattle and kick up a *touse*,  
'Tis ominous always of woe to the house.

*Oracles of Mrs. Partington.*

**Tow.** That which is towed, as a boat or scow.

Our progress has been slow . . . on account of the heavy *tows* which some of the army steamers had to carry. — *Report from Roanoke Island*, Feb., 1862.

**Tow-Boat.** A vessel used exclusively for conveying freight. Fleets of barges and canal boats, sometimes numbering forty or fifty, towed by a single steam-vessel, are seen on the Hudson River.

**Tow-Head.** 1. A term applied to a white-headed urchin.

First, do you notice the girl? — the slim one helping her mother, —  
Tough little *tow-head*, spry as a catamount, freckled as birch-bark!

*Troubridge, Poems, The Emigrant.*

2. A white ripple or foam in a river produced by snags or other obstructions. Western.

An account of the blowing up of a steamboat on the Mississippi in 1858 says: —

The Pennsylvania drifted down about two miles and a half, where, being stopped by *tow-head*, she speedily burnt to the water's edge.

3. On the Ohio River, the term is applied to the small tuft-like islands, found in such numbers about Blennerhassett Island.

The *tow-heads*, as the queer tufts at the end of the cut-offs are called, the passage of the boat through a cut-off, &c., . . . all strange, keep the passengers on the look-out. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. 80.

**Towhee Goldhead.** See *Chewink*.

**Town.** 1. In New England, it is often used for *township*, or a small territorial district, whether densely or thinly inhabited. — *Worcester*.

2. The body of legal voters within a township. — *Laws of New England*.

**Town House.** 1. A house where the public business of the town is transacted by the inhabitants in legal meeting. — *Webster*.

2. A house in town in opposition to a house in the country. — *Webster*.

3. An almshouse. Connecticut.



**Town Meeting.** A legal meeting of the inhabitants of a town for the transaction of business. — *Webster*.

**Town Representative, Townsman, Select Townsman Seven Men, &c.** "1636." The thirteen men, called on our records the "Towne Representatives." This phrase has led to the mistake of supposing that such individuals were members of the General Court, instead of having only the oversight of the town affairs. Their number was equal to that of the colonial government here, prior to the arrival of Winthrop. It is likely that they were elected soon after the Court of Assistants left Naumkeag [1629], and that there were as many from that time to the year which heads this paragraph. Such authorities were twelve and seven, sometimes called "the Townsmen," "the Select Townsmen," and at others "the twelve men" and "the seven men, from the former part of 1637 to 1649. From the last year to 1654, they were, for part of that period, denominated selectmen, and afterwards entirely so called." — *Annals of Salem*.

**Township.** The district or territory of a town. In the United States, many of the States are divided into townships of five, six, or seven, or perhaps ten miles square, and the inhabitants of such townships are invested with certain powers for regulating their own affairs, such as repairing roads and providing for the poor. The township is subordinate to the county. — *Webster*.

In Canada (Province of Quebec), the districts or parts that are exempt from feudal laws are called townships. See *Seigniories*.

**Tow-Row.** A noise; a racket.

**Track.** The line of a railroad, or rather between the rails. "A man walking on the *track* was run over and killed." A car is said to be "off the *track*," when its wheels are off the rails.

**Trade.** Medicine; a medical prescription. A physician informs me that this use of the word is common in the country parts of Rhode Island.

**Trail.** 1. Footstep, track, left by man or beast. "A *trail* is a succession of marks left on the ground or grass by any thing moving to a definite end; as, a *trail* of troops, an *Indian trail*, a *deer trail*, a *wagon trail*. *Sign* is more or less positive that something has been present on the ground. A *trail* is made up of "sign;" but "sign" is, by no means, a *trail*. Feeding deer make "sign," but it may be impossible to trail them. There may be abundance of sign in and about an Indian camp; yet it may take the keenest eye

and closest scrutiny to detect the trail by which they left it." — *Colonel Dodge, Plains of the Great West*, p. 407. See *Sign*.

Hawkeye entered the water; and for near an hour they travelled in the bed of the brook, leaving no dangerous trail. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*

## 2. An Indian footpath or road.

It was the policy of the President of Texas to open a direct road to Santa Fé by a route much nearer than the great Missouri trail. — *Kendall's Santa Fé Expedition*, Vol. I. p. 14.

It is suggested that the respective locations for the Indians might be made, apart from the great Northern and Southern trails, thoroughfares of migration, and the settlements limited within certain prescribed boundaries, where the government might protect them from the encroachments of white men. — *Report of the Philadelphia Committee at a Meeting in behalf of the Indians*, March 31, 1848.

**Train.** (Fr. *traineau*.) A peculiar kind of sleigh used for the transportation of merchandise, wood, &c., in Canada.

**To train.** To carry on; to act wild. Almost peculiar to girls in New England. "She 's an awful one to train."

**Trainers.** The militia when assembled for exercise.

The gentler sex partake, by sympathy at least, in the excitement, by running after the trainers. — *Mrs. Clavers's Western Clearings*, p. 28.

**Training-Day.** The day when the militia are called out to be reviewed.

**Tramp.** A strolling vagabond; men without employment strolling about cities and in the country, begging food, unwilling to work, and often ready to steal. In England, a tramp is a foot traveller. It was believed that they had some signs by which they knew where they would be kindly received. The "Chicago Tribune" claims to have been informed of their signs, which are as follows: —

In the language of the tramps, the letter "H" on the gate-post means that the residents will give the caller a handful of grub; "S.," that he will get a seat at the table; "S. M.," that he will get a square meal; and "G. B.," that he will get the "grand bounce." Now, as the secret is out, let every householder bid himself to his gate-post, and dig in letters deep the mystic sign "G. B."

**To trampoos.** To tramp. Perhaps from the Fr. *trépigner*, to stamp with the feet.

I felt as lonely as a catamount, and as dull as a bachelor beaver; so I *trampousses* off to the stable. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

So we *trampoused* along down the edge of the swamp, till we came to a track *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 44.

When I get hum, I guess that my narration  
Will make some little stir among the nation.  
Some years ago, I landed near to Dover,  
And seed strange sights, *trampoosing* England over.

*D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England*

**Transient.** A *transient* visitor is one who stays a short time at a place. At a hotel there is a distinction between "steady boarders" who remain a length of time, and the *transient* ones who stop but for a day or two. In this sense, the word is not used in England.

**To transpire.** To happen. A sense common in the United States, but not so given in the latest English dictionaries.

**To trapes, trapesing.** Used in New England, in a somewhat different sense from the English, "to wander about," "slow," "listless." Here it commonly signifies a careless, *objectless*, or lawless going about; often used as synonymous with "gadding."

So away goes lunch, and off goes you and the "Sir" a-trampoosin' and a *trapesin'* over the wet grass agin. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

It has happened more than once to Meister Karl, during his tourifications, *trapesings*, tramps, trudges, and travels, . . . to be thrown into many a canny country corner of New England. — *Leland, Meister Karl's Sketch-Book*, p. 259.

**Trap-Fishing.** The trap for fishing is a line to which several baited hooks are attached at intervals, sunk and kept in place by an anchor and leads. This mode of catching fish is now much practised on our coast.

**Traps.** Clothes, baggage, and every thing appertaining to it.

We call clothes and other fixins "*traps*" here, and sometimes "duds" for shortness. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*.

A cheerful black boy followed with their other *traps*, and so they crossed to the platform of the through-train. — *E. E. Hale, Adventures of a Pullman*, p. 143.

**Trash.** 1. At the South, poor people are contemptuously called *trash*. The term is more frequently applied by the Negroes to the poor whites; as, "poor white *trash*," or "white *trash*." See *White Trash*.

From a poem called "The Black Wife's Testimony" is the following, which refers to a Negro:—

Haggard and tall and black was she;  
The kind of human *trash*  
That was bred around the sugar-mills  
Ere freedom robbed them of "guiding wills"  
Of owner and cofle and lash. — *New York Evening Post*.

Shakespeare thus applies the term to a worthless person:—

I suspect this *trash*  
To be a party in this injury. — *Othello*, v. 1.

2. The leaves of the sugar-cane, in the West Indies, stripped from the cane to permit it to ripen. These leaves are laid upon the ground, to prevent the sun's influence on the earth, that every moisture possible may be retained for the nourishment of the plant. *Trash* is also used for foddering cattle and thatching houses. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**To trash Cane.** To strip off the dry leaves from the sugar-cane.

**To trash a Trail.** An expression used at the West, meaning to conceal the direction one has taken by walking in a stream, or, in fact, taking to water in any way. The fox, deer, and other animals, understand this mode of escape as well as man.

**To treat.** To invite another to drink and pay for the liquor.

**To tree.** To take refuge in a tree, said of a wild animal; to force to take refuge in a tree, drive to a tree, said of the hunter. To *tree one's self* is to conceal one's self behind a tree, as in hunting or fighting. This hunter's word is purely American.

Besides *treeing*, the wild-cat will take advantage of some hole in the ground, and disappear as suddenly as ghosts at cock-crowing — *Thorpe's Buckwoods*, p. 180.

Forty-five years ago, there was an extensive religious excitement in Kentucky, produced by a man partially deranged, who had been a hunter and who believed himself inspired. His proceedings were characterized by the greatest fanaticism, and partook of the character of the man as a hunter. In order to resist the devil and make him flee from you, it was necessary, he contended, to give him chase, to *tree* and shoot him as you would a wolf among the sheep, who came but to devour. As the meeting was held in a grove, one individual suddenly started in pursuit, as he supposed, of the devil; and others of a peculiar nervous temperament, having no power to resist, involuntarily joined in the pursuit; and this was called the "*running exercise*!" One climbed up a tree; and others caught the mania. This was called the "*climbing exercise*!" Another was moved to bark; and soon others, even though they used every method to prevent it, fell to involuntarily barking like dogs, while others gathered round the tree praying for success. This was called "*treeing the devil*!" It was literally a devil chase! And such a time of running, climbing, dog-barking, and devil-chasing, was, perhaps, never known before or since. — *Evening (Wash.) Star*, May 4, 1854.

**Tree-Molasses.** Molasses made from the Sugar-maple tree; a term very common in the West.

**Tree-Sugar.** Sugar made from the Maple-tree. Western.

**Tricksy.** Trickish; practising tricks. This old English word is still used in the South and West, where "*a tricksy horse*" is a common expression.

**Trimnings.** The accessories to any dish.

A cup of tea with *trimnings* is always in season, and is considered as the orthodox mode of welcoming any guest. — *Mrs. Clavers, A New Home*.

The party luxuriated at Florence's [eating-house] on lobster and *trimnings*. — *Knickerbocker Mag.*, Aug., 1845.

**Troll.** A large seine.

**To troll.** A method of fishing, by a long line attached to the stern of a boat, which is set in motion by sails or muffled oars. A squid, a piece of tin, or a strip of red and white cloth, is attached to the

hook, which, passing rapidly along the surface of the water, is seized by the fish. Striped bass and Blue-fish are generally caught in this way.

Those who prefer the more active and invigorating practice of our much admired art will find *trolling* for this beautiful game fish [the Striped Bass] as exciting a recreation as any that comes within the angler's reach. — *Amer. Angler's Guide*, p. 237.

**To trot out.** To bring forward.

The friends of Alexander H. Stephens are making vigorous efforts to *trot him out* for the Presidency. Several Democratic county conventions in Georgia have already declared in his favor. — *N. Y. Evening Post*, Feb. 18, 1860.

**Truck.** 1. Stuff; and, especially, vegetables raised for market, called also *garden-truck* and *market-truck*. South and West. The term was formerly used in Massachusetts where it was applied to groceries.

About this time [1778] family stores were usually called *truck*. . . . She looked out of the window for the market people, to ask them if they would take *truck* for their produce. — *Annals of Salem*.

They purchased homespun, calico, salt, rum, tobacco, and such other *truck* as their necessities called for. — *Chronicles of Pineville*, p. 40.

The fact is, if the people of Georgia don't take to makin' homespun and sich *truck* for themselves, and quit their everlastin' fuss about the tariff and free trade, the first they 'll know, the best part of their population will be gone to the new States. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

Now they passed down into Punkatees Neck; and in their march they found a large wigwam full of Indian *truck*, which the soldiers were for loading themselves with. — *Church's Indian War*, 1716.

"What do the doctors give for the fever and ague?"

"Oh, they give abundance o' *truck*." — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 192.

2. A two-wheeled vehicle drawn by a horse, and used a few years since for transporting merchandise. In New England, the terms *truck*, *truckmen*, and *truckage*, are commonly used, instead of *cart*, *cartman*, and *cartage* elsewhere.

The Boston *truck* is constructed of two long parallel shafts, hewn from the best of oak, winter felled, well-seasoned, and free from faults. These shafts are twenty-five feet long, ten inches wide, and five inches thick, strengthened underneath, in the middle portion, with shorter pieces of the same width. The upper ends of the shafts are cut curving and shaped round, to fit the sides of the wheel-horse. They are then framed together by two transverse pieces: the well-compacted structure is placed upon a low axle, supported by wheels which are three feet in diameter, and thus the *truck* is complete. — *E. Everett, Mount Vernon Papers*, No. III.

These two-wheeled vehicles have been wholly superseded by *trucks* of four wheels.

**Truckman.** The driver of a truck.

The *truckman* is in keeping with his truck and his horses: regularly, six feet two in his shoes; stout in proportion; temperate, intelligent, patient.—*E. Everett, Mount Vernon Papers*, No. III.

**Truck-Patch.** A piece of ground devoted to rearing vegetables.

**Trump.** In the game of whist, a *trump* card has a greater value than the best card in any other suit; hence, figuratively, a man who is very expert in his profession, or in any way great, is said to be a *trump*.

Thingum, my boy, you're a *trump*, and take after your father in having a living soul. You have an immense head, and it must hold a great many brains. *Poe's Works*, Vol. IV. p. 211.

The editor sat in his sanctum, and brought down his fist with a thump:  
"God bless that old farmer," he muttered, "He's a regular editor's *trump*."  
*Carlton, Farm Ballads*, p. 86.

From a ballad addressed to the Honorable Gerritt Smith after his speech before the Union League Convention:—

Gerritt, old boy, your hand,  
We knew you'd take that stand!  
We've had our eye on you for several years.  
A rare bird on the stump  
Is an abolition *trump*:  
We've met confounded few these latter years.

**Trust-Deed.** A deed conveying property to a trustee. New England. In other States, called "*a Deed of Trust*."

**Trustee-Process.** The name given, in the New England States, to the process of foreign attachment. The strict trustee process extends to the goods, effects, and credits of the principal debtor in the hands of his agent, trustee, or debtor, and who, as trustee, is summoned to appear and answer. It does not extend to the real estate in the hands of the trustee. — *Cushing on Trustee Process*.

In personal actions, brought in the court of common pleas or the supreme court, the suit may be commenced by process of foreign attachment, or *trustee process*, in the manner prescribed by law. — *Laws of Massachusetts*.

**To try on.** To try; to attempt. "I'm too wide-awake to be cheated, so you need not *try it on*." A vulgarism of recent origin, from a popular farce called "Trying It On."

**Tuckahoe.** 1. (*Sclerotium giganteum*.) Algonkin, *petukgunnug*, a round loaf or cake of bread (*Eliot*) = *tauquaauh* (Mohican. *S. Barton*). The Virginia truffle. A curious vegetable, sometimes called by the name of Indian Bread or Indian Loaf, found in the Southern States bordering on the Atlantic. It is a natural produc-

tion, the origin of which has greatly perplexed naturalists, as it is commonly found several feet under the surface; and, like the truffle of Europe, has apparently no stem or leafy appendage connecting it with the external atmosphere. They are generally found through the instrumentality of hogs, whose acute sense of smelling enables them to fix upon the spot where they lie buried. They are usually of a globular or flattened oval shape, and rather regular surface, the large ones resembling somewhat a brown loaf of coarse bread. The size varies from an acorn to the bigness of a man's head. — *Farmer's Encyclopædia*. Kalm thinks the Tuckahoe of Carolina is the same plant which the Swedes of New Jersey call (from the Indian name) *Taw-ho*, *Taw-king*, or *Tuck-ah*,—namely, the Virginia Wake-Robin, *Arum Virginianum* [now *Pellandra Virginica*]; and says that he cannot learn that the *Lycoperdon tuber* (Truffles), though abundant in New Jersey, were ever eaten by the Indians. — *Travels*, Vol. I. p. 225.

A root . . . called *Tockawhough* growing like a flagg, of the greatness and tast of a Potato, which passeth a fierce purgation before they may eate it, being poison whiles it is raw. — *Purchas his Pilgrimage, from Captain Smith's MS.* (p. 635).

Out of the ground the Indians dig earth-nuts, wild onions, and a tuberous root they call *tuckahoe*, which, while crude, is of a very hot and virulent quality; but they manage to make bread of it, &c.—*Beverly's Virginia*, Book III. (1707).

2. The term *tuckahoe* is often applied to an inhabitant of Lower Virginia, and to the poor land in that portion of the State.

**Tuckered out.** Tired out. Used in New York and New England.

I guess the Queen don't do her eating very airy; for we sot and sot, and waited for her, till we got e'en a'most *tuckered out*. — *N. Y. Family Comp.*

How are you this morning, Mrs. Ashton?

Law sakes alive! I'm clear *tuckered out* with these young ones. They've had the agur this morning, and are as cross as bear cubs.—*Story of the Bee Tree*.

We fought until we were completely *tuckered out*. When we compared notes, he had got my right eye, and I had chewed off both his ears.—*Southern Sketches*, p. 123.

**To tuck on.** To unduly increase or enhance. "That horse is not worth half what you gave for him. The dealer has *tucked it on* to you pretty well."

**Tug.** Peat.

I was informed by several old persons that they well remembered when several *tug-bogs* were entirely dug out, and that by throwing back the loose turf the peat grew again in 40 years, so as to fill the bogs. — *Jackson's Geology of Rhode Island*, p. 117.

Attached to every dwelling [on Block Island], we find a *tug-house*, in which is stored the winter's fuel. — *Ibid.*

**Tuk**, for *took*. A vulgar pronunciation, common to North and South.

**Tular**. A marsh in which Tule abounds. Texas and California.

**Tule**. (*Scirpus lacustris*.) The Mexican name for a sort of bulrush covering immense areas in the Sacramento Valley, Klamath Basin, and on the Columbia River.

We enter the square of the Alamo, San Antonio. This is all Mexican. Windowless cabins of stakes, plastered with mud, and roofed with river grass or *tule*, houses of adobes, with groups of brown idlers round the doors.—*Olmsted's Texas*.

Now I found a comfortable house built by putting upright poles in the ground, thatching them with *tules*, and covering the sides with the same.—*Wood's Report to Postmaster-General Brown*, p. 25.

**Tulip-Tree**. (*Liriodendron tulipifera*.) A large tree bearing flowers resembling the tulip. Also called Whitewood.

The *tulip-tree*, high up,  
Opened, in airs of June, her multitude  
Of golden chalices to humming-birds  
And silken-winged insects of the sky.—*Bryant, The Fountain*.

**Tullibee, Tulibee**. (*Coregonus artedii*.) A congener of the White Fish (*C. albus*), common in the rivers and lakes of the North-west. From the Indian: Cree, *attonibis*; Chippewa, *odönabee*, "wet mouth" (according to Schoolcraft).

**Tumble**. A cock of hay; a heap. Connecticut.

**Tumble-Bug**. The Dung-beetle, called in England *Dumble-dore* and *Straddle-bob*.

It is strange, my hearers, that we mortals should be so attached to this mundane sphere of ours. . . . With all its frauds and deceptions, we cling to it, as it turns upon its axis, like a *tumble-bug* to his ball, when it accidentally rolls down hill.—*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 211.

**To tump**. Probably an Indian word. It means to draw a deer or other animal home through the woods, after he has been killed. "We *tumped* the deer to our cabin." Maine.

**Tumpline**. A strap placed across the forehead to assist a man in carrying a pack on his back. Used in Maine, where the custom was borrowed from the Indians.

**Tuna**. (Span.) The fruit of the prickly pear cactus or Indian fig. (*Cactus tuna*.)

Excellent pulque is made here, and a beverage expressed from the juice of the *tuna*, which I tasted for the first time.—*Ruxton's Adventures*, p. 69.

**Tunk**. A stroke; a blow with the fist. New England. Provincial in England.—*Wright*.

**Tupelo**. See *Pepperidge*.



**Turfman.** A man addicted to the turf; to races.

**Turkey.** A drunken man is sometimes said to have "got a *turkey* on his back." Perhaps the allusion is to his having won one at a raffle in a drinking-place.

**Turkey-Buzzard.** (*Cathartes aura*.) A common American species of vulture, having a distant resemblance to a turkey, and remarkable for its graceful flight in the higher regions of the air. They were formerly found as far north as Pennsylvania, but they are now confined to the Southern States.

The flight of the *Turkey-buzzard* is graceful compared with that of the Black Vulture. It sails admirably either high or low, with its wings spread beyond the horizontal position. — *Audubon, Ornithological Biog.*, Vol. II. p. 296.

**Turned up his Toes.** An expression applied to one who is dead.

**Turner.** (Germ.) A gymnast.

**Turnip.** A watch. A name originally applied to the old-fashioned silver watches, which were nearly as thick as turnips.

**Turn of Meal.** A quantity of grist sent to mill. Tennessee.

**Turnstone.** (*Streptilas interpres*.) The Brant Bird, or Calico Back. Also called Horsefoot Snipe, from its feeding on the spawn of the King Crab.

**Turpentine State.** The State of North Carolina, so called from the quantity of turpentine obtained from its pine forests.

**Turret-Ship.** There are two varieties of *turret-ship*, of which the earliest and best is that which was invented by Captain John Ericsson, of New York. The other variety — which in many of its features resembles the plan of Ericsson — is known as the system of Captain Cowper Coles, and this system has been adopted to some extent in the British navy; while the American navy has adopted the system of Ericsson, usually called the Monitor system, from the Monitor, the name of the first vessel of this kind that was constructed. — *Robinson, in Brande and Cox Dic. of Science and Art*. See *Monitor*.

**Turtle.** The application of this term to the common tortoise is peculiar to America. Although formerly, is not now so used in England. Its first use is in the account of the voyage of Captain Gosnold to Virginia, in 1602.

I commanded some of my companie to seek out for crabbes, lobsters, *turtles*, &c., for sustaying us till the ship's return. — *Brereton's Brief and True Relation* (1602).

**Twins.** Dinner and tea at one meal. New England. The English slang term is *Box-Harry* (Ducange, *Anglicanus*, ed. 1857). The custom of "having twins," in the short days of winter, was formerly very common among the farmers in New England.

**Twistical.** Tortuous, perverse. A factitious word.

He may be straight-going, farzino, manwards; but, in his dealings with t' other sex, he is a leetle *twistical*, according to their tell. I wouldn't make a town talk of it. — *D. Humphreys, The Yankee in England.*

**Twist on the Shorts.** A clique phrase of Wall Street, used where the shorts have undersold heavily, and the market has been artificially raised, compelling them to settle at ruinous rates. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street.*

**To twitch.** To draw timber along the ground by a chain. Used by lumbermen in Maine.

**Two-forty Pace.** With great speed. A 2.40 gait for a trotting-horse was, not long ago, thought to be very fast. Now a 2.15 gait would be the one demanded.

**Typo.** A contraction of *typographer*. A name sometimes given to compositors in a printing-office. Comp. *Jour.*

When a boy, the writer became acquainted with an old bookworm of a man who was in possession of a manuscript written in 1714–1716, by two ambitious *typos*, entitled "The Desultory Meditations of Two London Printers." — *The Printer*, Dec., 1858.

## U.

**Ugly.** Ill-tempered, vicious, cross-grained. "He has an *ugly* temper." A term applied both to men and animals. It is local in England, and colloquial in the United States. "Ugly" in England is "homely" in New England.

The questions of the spies were answered in a sullen, swaggering manner; so much so that Captain Caldwell at once remarked to his men, in a low tone and in English, that these fellows looked *ugly* and fighty. — *Kendall's Santa Fé*, Vol. I. p. 133.

**Umbrella-Tree.** (*Magnolia tripetala*.) The popular name of this tree in the Southern States, from the large leaves closely arranged around the ends of its branches.

**Uncle.** Used in the Middle and Southern States in accosting an elderly colored man. "Your uncle," for myself, is a very odd, yet common phrase. "Your uncle 's the man to do that;" i. e., "I'll do it for you."

**Uncle Sam.** The cant or vulgar name of the United States government; sometimes called Brother Jonathan. It is used as "John Bull" is in England. Mr. Frost, in his "Naval History of the United States," gives the following account of the origin of the name:—

"Immediately after the last declaration of war with England, Elbert Anderson, of New York, then a contractor, visited Troy on the Hudson, where was concentrated, and where he purchased, a large quantity of provisions, beef, pork, &c. The inspectors of these articles at that place were Messrs. Ebenezer and Samuel Wilson. The latter gentleman (invariably known as '*Uncle Sam*') generally superintended in person a large number of workmen, who, on this occasion, were employed in overhauling the provisions purchased by the contractor for the army. The casks were marked 'E. A. — U. S.' This work fell to the lot of a facetious fellow in the employ of the Messrs. Wilson, who, on being asked by some of his fellow-workmen the meaning of the mark (for the letters U. S., for United States, were then almost entirely new to them), said, 'he did not know, unless it meant *Elbert Anderson* and *Uncle Sam*,' — alluding exclusively, then, to the said '*Uncle Sam*' Wilson. The joke took among the workmen, and passed currently; and '*Uncle Sam*' himself, being present, was occasionally rallied by them on the increasing extent of his possessions.

"Many of these workmen, being of a character denominated 'food for powder,' were found, shortly after, following the recruiting drum, and pushing toward the frontier lines, for the double purpose of meeting the enemy and of eating the provisions they had lately labored to put in good order. Their old jokes accompanied them, and before the first campaign ended this identical one first appeared in print: it gained favor rapidly, till it penetrated and was recognized in every part of the country, and will, no doubt, continue so while the United States remain a nation."

Mr. Wilson died in Troy, New York, in August, 1854, at the age of eighty-four years; and the "*Albany Argus*," in noticing his death, referred to the circumstance above stated as the origin of the popular sobriquet of *Uncle Sam*.

For I have loved my country since  
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,  
And *Uncle Sam* I reverence,  
Partic'larly his pockets.

*J. R. Lowell, Biglow Papers.*

We are the sons of *Uncle Sam*, and natives to his land,  
Fighting for our country now, and side by side we stand.  
Oh! *Uncle Sam's* a hero, as the nations all do know,  
And when he 's on the battle field he strikes an awful blow.

*Song by Geo. Newton.*

**Unconscionable.** Enormous; vast. A low word. — *Johnson*. Used adverbially at the West, as in the following example: —

"That 's an *unconscionable* slick 'gal of your'n," says I; and it did tickle his fancy to have her cracked up, 'cause he thought her creation's finishin' touch, — so did I! — *Robb's Squatter Life*.

**Under-Coat.** A petticoat. North Carolina.

**Under Conviction.** To be under conviction (*scil.* of sin) is a common expression, applied to a person who feels a remorse for sins committed, and is desirous to be received into the pale of the church.

A chaplain at one of our State prisons was asked by a friend how his parishioners were. "All under conviction," was the answer. — *Newspaper*.

**Underground Railroad.** The means of conveyance by which fugitive slaves were formerly enabled to escape to the free States and Canada.

It is probable that nothing has awakened more bitterly the animosity of the slave-holding community than the existence, in the Northern States, of an indefinite yet very energetic institution, known as the *underground railroad*. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II. p. 302.

He [Connelly] regarded the *underground railroad* as a peculiarly Southern institution, taking away from the South every year thousands of the most intelligent, restless, and desperate Negroes, who would do infinitely more mischief if kept there. — *N. Y. Tribune*, June, 1858.

And now, if we may believe the promises made by the Democrats for two years past, we are on the eve of a political millennium. . . . There is to be no more "agitation" of the slavery question. The *underground railroad* is to suspend running, and rejoicing hosts of Negroes are to return from the bleak wilds of Canada to the luxurious delights of life on the plantation. — *Albany Evening Journal*, Dec., 1857.

**Underpinners.** The legs, which in English flash language are called *pins*.

**Under-Vest.** An under-shirt; a species of mail-coat worn by soldiers.

An officer of the 19th Massachusetts was "iron-clad" with a patent *under-vest*. A ball struck his breast, whirled him round, indented the plating, and rolled down his pantaloons. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Undisgruntled.** See *Disgruntled*.

**Unescapable.** That cannot be escaped. "Unescapable doom." — *John Neal*. "As an argument, it is unescapable." — *Congregationalist*.

**Unfellowshipped.** Not having fellowship; not recognized socially.

Why am I as one in a wilderness? Why is my soul *unfellowshipped* and alone? *H. W. Beecher, in The Independent*, May 8, 1861.

**Union.** In a political sense, the connection between the States of North America; also the body of States so connected.

Do the people of the South consider the present *Union* of these States as an evil in itself, and a thing that it is desirable we should get rid of under all circumstances? There are some, I know, who do; but I am satisfied that an overwhelming majority of the South would, if assured that this government was hereafter to be conducted on the true principles and construction of the Constitution, decidedly prefer to remain in the *Union* rather than incur the unknown costs and hazards of setting up a separate government. — *Speech of Hon. J. H. Hammond*, Oct. 27, 1858

**To unload Stock** means, in the language of the Stock Exchange, to sell out a stock which one has held for some time for the purpose of speculating in it.

**Unmitigated.** Not softened. — *Johnson*. Not mitigated; not lessened in severity. — *Worcester*. Undiminished; complete; thorough; consummate; as, "He's an unmitigated humbug." This very common word is not mentioned by Webster. Shakspeare uses it in the same sense as it is now used with us.

With public accusation, uncovered slander, *unmitigated* rancour. — *Much Ado about Nothing*, iv. 1.

**Up.** A common colloquialism, as in the phrase, "What is *up* for to-day?" i. e. what is going on, what is to be done. In the West, it would appear to have been used in a wider sense, from the following example taken from the circular of a school at Faribault, Minn. It is one of its wise regulations.

"If a snow-storm is *up*, the teacher takes the privilege to dismiss the school earlier in the afternoon than it otherwise would have been."

**Up and dust.** Hurry! Move fast!

**Up a Tree.** To be cornered; to fail in an undertaking.

You mustn't wander away, and you mustn't declaim: if you do, their attention is off, the public see it, and you are *up a tree*. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 24.

**Up-Country.** In New Hampshire, this is used adverbially on the coast: "to go *up-country*" is to go into the interior. At the South, it is used adjectively, as see at *Rice-Bird*. As a noun, it is in frequent use. "Many families have left Savannah for the *up-country*." *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*. "As the *up-country* editor, who said," &c. — *N. H. Palladium*.

**To up Jib.** To be off. A sailor's phrase, much used in familiar language in Nantucket, Salem, and other localities in Massachusetts.

**Upland Cotton**, as opposed to Sea Island, is not necessarily raised on high ground; but even near the sea the fibre is shorter than that produced in the limited region known as Sea Island.

**Up North.** Used instead of North, and adverbially.

**Upper Crust.** The higher circles; the aristocracy.

I want you to see Peel, Stanley, Graham, Shiel, Russell, Macaulay, old Joe, and so on. They are all *upper crust* here. — *Sam Slick in England*.

**Upper House.** A Senate. In New England and in some other States.

The names Upper House and Lower House originated about the year 1718, in Massachusetts, when the Representatives gave the designation to the Council "as a floor, and to intimate that they might consider themselves in another capacity than as a Privy Council." — *Drake's Hist. of Boston*, p. 558, n.

**Upper Ten Thousand** or, simply, **The Upper Ten.** The upper circles of New York, and hence of other large cities. A phrase invented by N. P. Willis.

The Biscaccianti troupe commence their season of Italian opera at the Chestnut to-morrow night. The seats for the first night are already many of them engaged, and engaged too by the very cream of our "*upper ten*;" while the moderate democratic prices of admission, which have been wisely adopted, will invite large slices of the honest and hearty masses. — *Letter from Philad. N. Y. Herald*.

Researches in some of the *upper ten* districts  
Reveal the most painful and startling statistics,  
Of which let me mention only a few  
In one single house, on the Fifth Avenue.

*Butler, Nothing to Wear.*

Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,  
Let that mob be the *upper ten thousand* or lower.

*Lowell, Fable for Critics.*

The expression is now used in England.

To provide for the well-being of the children of affluent parents, our social reformers urge that the mothers of the *upper ten thousand* should put their nurseries under the control of a superior nurse, &c. — *London Athenæum*, Nov., 1868, p. 719.

**Uppertendom.** The aristocracy; people of fashion. Comp. *Japonicadom*.

His rich relatives were always in such a panic lest *uppertendom* should discover that their cousins lived in an unfashionable part of the town, dined at one o'clock, and noticed trades-people and mechanics. — *Funny Fern*.

At a ball for the benefit of the poor was a co-mingling of *uppertendom* with lower twentydom, — an avalanche of exclusiveness in a torrent of mobocracy. — *Doesticks*, p. 131.

Mr. Duganne, in his poem entitled "*Parnassus in Pillory*," speaking of N. P. Willis, says: —

Gad! what a polish *uppertendom* gives  
This executioner of adjectives;  
This man who chokes the English worse than Thuggists,  
And turns the trade to trunk-makers or druggists.

**Upright.** A leg. Western.

**Up-River.** 1. The direction of the upper portion of a river, up the stream. Common use.

2. Situated in or near the upper portion of a stream.

All Thursday afternoon there was a continuous stream [*sic*] of floating timber going down the swollen current from the *up-river* lumber-yards. — *Philadelphia papers*.

**Up to Snuff.** Well informed; apprised of the current or recent affairs.

**Up to the Hub.** To the extreme point. The figure is that of a vehicle sunk in the mud *up to the hub* of the wheels, which is as far as it can go.

"You've hearn tell of the bank and tariff questions?"

"Yes," replied the new editor of the "Eagle" newspaper.

"Well, hoss, we expect you to be right co-chunk *up to the hub* on them thar questions, and pour it into the enemy in slashergaff style." — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 31.

"For my part," said Abijah, grimly, "if things was managed my way, I shouldn't commune with nobody that didn't believe in election *up to the hub*." — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. I. p. 311.

**Use.** (As *use* the weed.) This is common in the North in a phrase like this. "Take sugar in your tea?" "No, thank you, I don't use it." The French, in offering snuff, say, "En usez-vous?"

**To use up.** To exhaust, wear out.

Moving on the first day of May in New York has *used* me *up* worse than building forty acres of stone wall. — *Mayor Downing, May-day in New York*.

Well, being out night arter night, she got kinder *used up* and beat out, and unbeknownst to me *used* to take opium. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 192.

Hans has been really ill: five days down with severe pains of the limbs *have* left him a "little weak," which with him means well *used up*. — *Kane, Arctic Expedition*, Vol. II. p. 100.

**U-ster.** Used to.

## V.

**V.** Five. Five dollars. Much used in making bets; as "I'll bet you a V."

Says I, "Mate, I've a notion to go over and shake hands with him." Says he, "I think I see you doing it, Tom." Says I, "Mate, I'm a-going to do it." Says he, "Oh, yes, I guess so." "Maybe you don't want to bet you will, Tom?" Says I, "I don't mind going a V on it, Mate." Says he, "Put it up." "Up she goes," says I, planking the cash.

**Vacancy.** A parish having no minister or official connection with themselves.

He [Mr. McElroy] was sought by the vacancies. — *Presbyterian, Philad.*, Sept., 1876.

**Vacher.** (French.) The stock or cattle-keeper on the prairies of the South-west. His duty is also to break wild horses, to run cattle, and to brand calves. (Span. *vaquero*.)

**Valedictorian.** The student of a college who pronounces the valedictory oration at the annual Commencement. — *Webster*.

**Valedictory.** In American colleges, a farewell oration or address spoken at Commencement by a member of the class which receive the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and take their leave of the college and of each other. — *Hall's College Words*.

**Valinch.** A liquor-sampler. A utensil well known among grocers and coopers for drawing liquor from the bung-hole of a cask. The French call it *tête-vin*; the Spaniards, *bombilla de bodegas* or *cata-liquidos*. The word is mentioned by Worcester, but not by Webster, nor by any English lexicographer. It is figured in Orr's *Mechanical Philosophy*, where it is called a *Wine-taster*; and by Schoedler in his "Book of Nature," where it is called a "*Dipping Syphon*."

**To vamoze.** (Span. *vamos*, let us go.) Used, in the South-west chiefly, in the sense of to depart, decamp, be off. A curious grammatical perversion.

I couldn't stand more than this stanza, coming from a street voice compared with which the notes of a hand-saw are positively dulcet, and I accordingly *vamosed*. — *N. Y. Mirror*, May, 1848.

Yankee Sullivan's house, corner of Frankfort and Chatham Streets, is in a dangerous condition; its foundation walls having been partially undermined for the purpose of excavating a cellar. Its occupants received some very ominous premonitions of a downfall early yesterday morning, and forthwith *vamosed* with their baggage. — *Journ. of Commerce*, June, 1848.

On Sunday, our city was thrown into a state of intense excitement. Between seventy and eighty slaves had disappeared. Several Negroes who had made arrangements to *vamoze* were left behind, and gave the alarm. — *Washington paper*.

The devil wrote, and *vamosed*. The next night  
He came again, — this time a little tight, —  
And showed the name who served Jeff. Davis best,  
And lo! Bo Lition's name led all the rest.

*Parody on Leigh Hunt's "Abou Ben Adhem."*

**To vamoze the Ranch.** To leave the house, quit the spot, be off. Like the word *vamoze*, much used on the Western frontier and in the South. This is surely breaking Priscian's head with a vengeance.



The Camanches came within a league of us, but *ramosed the ranch* when they learned that the rangers were here. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 141.

**Vaquero.** (Span.) A man who has charge of cattle, horses, and mules; a horseman. See *Vacher*.

Behold the *Vaquero*! how dashing and bold  
In his broad sombrero. — *Joaquin Miller*.

**Vara.** (Span.) A measurement thirty-nine inches in length, used in Mexico, and hence introduced in the States bordering on that country. Thus, in California, in speaking of a piece of land, so many *varas* in length or breadth, instead of so many yards or feet.

Mr. S., a gentleman of wealth in San Francisco, has just completed his horse-palace at a cost of \$100,000, on a full fifty *vara* lot. — *San Francisco paper*, March, 1876.

**Various.** Several persons. "I talked for an hour with various of them." — *Cor. N. Y. Times*.

**Varmint.** A corrupt pronunciation of the word *vermin*, applied to noxious wild beasts of any kind. It comes to us from the north of England.

There are more than a hundred lakes and brakes in them diggin's, that hain't never been pressed by no mortal 'ceptin' *varmint*s. — *Traits of American Humor*.

I shot tolerably well, and was satisfied the fault would be mine, if the *varmint*s did not suffer. — *Crockett, Tour*, p. 125.

"These beavers," said old Ryan, "are industrious little fellows. They are the knowingest *varmint* as I know." — *Irving's Tour on the Prairies*.

Uncas, call up your father: we have need of all our weapons to bring the cunning *varmint* from his roost. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*, p. 104.

**Vegetable Ivory.** See *Ivory-Nut*, in Addenda.

**Vegetable Marrow.** See *Alligator Pear*.

**Vegetable Oyster.** See *Oyster-Plant*, in Addenda.

**Vegetarian.** A disciple of a strict dietetic school, in which animal food is prohibited.

**Vegetarianism.** The doctrines of the Vegetarians.

**Vendibility.** Salableness.

A great number of manufactured articles derive their *rendibility* almost entirely from the pattern of the design. — *Mr. Sheppard's Speech before Maryland Institute*, 1857.

**Vendue.** (French *vendre*, to sell; *vendu*, sold.) A public auction. This word is in use in the United States and the West Indies; but it is not common in England, though it is found in the recent English dictionaries of Knowles, Oswald, and Smart. — *Worcester*. It was used as early as 1754 in Pennsylvania (see *Mittelberger's Travels*, p. 22). The word is fast becoming obsolete with us.

**Verse about.** A verse or two by each reader in turn.

Reading the Scriptures verse about, . . . a custom common in many Christian families; . . . that is, each member of the families reading a verse or two in turn until the whole chapter is finished. — *N. Y. Observer*.

**Vest.** See *Pull down your Vest*.

**Veteran.** A term applied during the late civil war to soldiers, who, at the termination of the period for which they had enlisted, enlisted again; hence, there were thousands of *veterans* under twenty-two years of age. In the British army, a *veteran* is a soldier advanced in years, who has seen much service.

**To veteranize.** To make veteran soldiers by re-enlisting.

About this time, we were much embarrassed by a general order of the War Department, promising a thirty-days furlough to all soldiers who would *veteranize*; viz., re-enlist for the war. — *General Sherman's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 395.

**Vigilance Committee.** A portion of the citizens of a place who, assuming that the regular magistrates are unable or unwilling to execute the laws, undertake to watch over its safety, and to punish its criminals. The most notorious of these self-constituted bodies have been those of San Francisco and New Orleans.

Few people abroad, who had been trained from infancy to revere "the majesty of the law," and who had never seen any crime but what their own strong legal institutions and efficient police could detect and punish, could possibly conceive such a state of things as would justify the formation and independent action of an association which set itself above all formal law, and which openly administered summary justice, or what they called justice, in armed opposition and defiance to the regularly constituted tribunals of the country. Therefore, in other lands, it happened that the *vigilance committee* became often a term of reproach, and people pointed to it as a sign that society in California was utterly and perhaps irredeemably impure and disorganized. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 562.

A hand-bill having been posted in Richmond, Virginia, calling a meeting of the citizens for this evening, to form a *vigilance committee* to suppress certain secret movements among the colored population, and to stop outrages on private property, Governor Wise addressed a letter to Mayor Mayo, calling his attention to the movement, and adding that he would use force in prohibiting such meeting from being held on the Capitol square. The Mayor in reply states that, knowing the author of the hand-bill to be one of the few rowdies of that city, he considers himself a "*vigilance committee*" enough for him and his comrades, and therefore deems it unnecessary to adopt any unusual measures against the proposed movement. — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, July 1, 1858.

Last month, in the town of Maubeuge, in the north of France, a Protestant congregation was broken up and a part of its members marched on a Sunday from their place of worship to the town jail. The final proceedings of the civil authorities in the case were, according to our American notions of right and law, as gross a violation of justice as *vigilance committee* or lynching mob was ever guilty of. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Sept. 30, 1858.

**Vigintial.** Relative to, produced in (twenty years).

Shall society suffer that the slave-holder may continue to gather his *vigintial* crop of human flesh. — *Mr. Faulker in Legislature of Virginia, 1832.*

**Vim.** Spirit; activity; energy.

The "New York Herald," April 17, 1875, in speaking of Mr. Fullerton's cross-examination of Mr. Beecher at his trial, said: —

Mr. Fullerton figuratively jumped into the ring, rolled up his sleeves, and squared off with a *vim* and determination that sometimes makes victory half assured.

We are of those who believe that our system of school management can be improved, and made more efficient. We believe that more of *vim*, snap, or activity can be infused into it, to the manifest advantage of every interest — *Providence Press, Jan. 8, 1876.*

Mr. McClure, in speaking of the cities and towns of recent growth in Montana, says: —

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.*

**Virgaleu Pear.** So called in New York. A world-renowned pear, and one that has been, if it is not at the present time, more extensively cultivated than any other. It is the *Doyenné Blanc* of French authors, the *Butter Pear* of Philadelphia, and the St. Michael of Boston.

**Virgin Dip.** The flow of turpentine for the first year after making an incision into the pines. North Carolina. See *Box* and *Dip*.

**Virginia Creeper.** The ornamental woody vine *Ampelopsis quinquefolia*, cultivated for covering walls and fences. By some it is called Woodbine, and by others American Ivy.

**Virginia Fence.** A rail fence laid up in a zigzag manner; also called a worm-fence, which see. Hence the phrase "to walk a Virginia fence" is applied to a drunken man.

**Virginia Reel.** The common name throughout the United States for the old English "country-dance" (*contre-danse*).

**Virginny** or **Old Virginny.** The common negro appellation of the State of Virginia.

**Vly.** (Dutch.) In New York, a swamp, a marsh. See *Fly*.

**Voodooism.** In Louisiana, superstitious rites or observances among the Negroes.

**Voyage.** Among whalers, each man calls his share of the proceeds of the cruise, which he receives instead of wages, his *voyage*.

**Voyageur.** (French.) A Canadian boatman. — *Worcester.*

The Canadian *voyageur* is, in all respects, a peculiar character; and on no point is he more sensitive than in the just distribution of pieces among the crew forming a party. — *Sir John Franklin's Narrative*.

There is no form of wretchedness among those to which the checkered life of a *voyageur* is exposed, at once so great and so humiliating, as the torture inflicted by the musquitos. — *Back, Arctic Journal*, p. 117.

**I vum!** for *I vow!* is a euphemistic form of oath often heard in New England.

"*I vum*," said he, "I'm sorry; what's the matter?" — *Margaret*, p. 86.

The Rev. Mr. Dow, Jr., in one of his edifying discourses on profanity, not inaptly observes: —

What though, instead of saying, "I swear to God," you say, "I declare to goodness"? It is as much the same thing as a bobolink with a new coat of feathers. *I vum* is just the same in spirit as *I vow*, and a "diabolical falsehood" is synonymous with a devilish lie. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 265.

## W.

**To Wabash.** "He's *Wabashed*," meaning he is cheated, is an expression much used in Indiana and other parts of the West.

**To wabble.** In the Western States, to make free use of one's tongue; to be a ready speaker.

**Wagged out.** Tired; worn out (as if finished wagging). Massachusetts.

**Waggletail.** The larva of the mosquito, &c.; also called a wiggler.

**Wahoo Elm.** (*Ulmus alata*.) A native of Virginia and of the States farther south. It is known by its longitudinal ridges of cork-like bark on all its twigs and branches. — *Scott, Suburban Home*, p. 319.

**To wait upon.** To pay attention to a lady with a view to matrimony.

**To wake Snakes.** 1. To make a rousing noise; and hence to rouse up, get into action.

Well, here I be: *wake snakes*, the day's a-breaking. — *Southern Sketches*, p. 119.

Come, *wake snakes*, and push off with the captain, and get the fish on board. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 184.

So then, as Mexico's gone goose  
And *wakin' snakes*, it ain't no use;  
Agin old Bull let's vengeance vow,  
And take no action else just now.

*Mexico and Monroe, Lond. Punch, Aug., 1863.*

## 2. To get into trouble.

Hosea Biglow (introduced to us by his friend Lowell the poet), in speaking of military service, says:—

This goin' where glory awaits ye hain't one agreeable featur';  
And, if it warn't for wakin' snakes, I'd be home agin short metre.

*Biglow Papers.*

**Wake up.** Stir yourself. See *Clape*.

**To wake up the Wrong Passenger.** To make a mistake in the individual. A modern substitute for the old phrase, "To get the wrong sow by the ear." The allusion is to the custom on board steamboats of arousing or waking passengers at stopping-places at night, when frequent mistakes are made and the wrong person called up.

The tyrant coquette, as a matter of course,  
Thinks her lover must mind the rein, just like a horse;  
Discouraged, he leaves her, she sees her mistake,  
And laments that she did the *wrong passenger wake*.

*The Stage-driver's Ball, Comic Song.*

Sam Slick gives the following account of an interview between an abolitionist preacher and a contented slave. The former, addressing the slave, says:—

"Poor, ignorant wretch!"

"Massa," replied the Negro, "you has *waked up de wrong passenger* dis time. I isn't poor. I ab plenty to eat and plenty to drink. When I wants money, Missus gives it to me. When I wants wild ducks or venison, all I got to do is to say to dat Yankee oberseer, 'Missus and I want some canvas-back or some deer.'" — *Sam Slick, Human Nature*, p. 289.

Congress having passed a resolution of inquiry touching the occasional absence of President Grant from Washington, the latter made a prompt reply, showing that all previous Presidents had been absent more or less. In relation to the movement, the "New York Herald," May 4, 1876, says:—

The investigating busybodies at Washington "*waked up the wrong passenger*," when they called the President to account for his absences from the national capitol.

**Walk.** As "Ladies' Walk," "Gentlemen's Walk," i. e. a privy. This absurd piece of squeamishness is common at hotels and at railroad-stations.

**Walking Papers or Walking Ticket.** Orders to leave; a dismissal. When a person is appointed to a public office or receives a commission, he receives papers or documents investing him with authority; so, when he is discharged, it is said in familiar language that "he has received his *walking papers* or his *walking ticket*."

It is probable that "*walking papers*" will be forwarded to a large proportion of the *corps diplomatique* during the session of Congress. B—— and B—— are already admonished to return, and the invitation will be pretty general. — *N. Y. Herald, Letter from Washington*.

We can announce with certainty that the Honorable Mr. D—— has received his *walking ticket*, accompanied with some correspondence with his Excellency that has given him offence. — *Kingston, Canada, Whig*, Dec., 1843.

Mr. Duane was ordered to remove the deposits. He answered that his duty did not require it. In a few hours, he got his *walking ticket* that his services were no longer wanted. — *Crockett, Tour down East*, p. 30.

"If you ever question me again," said Mrs. Samson Savage, "you'll get your *walking ticket* in short order." — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 307.

**To walk into.** To get the upper hand of; to take advantage of; to punish. A common vulgarism.

To *walk into* a Down-East land-jobber requires great skill, and a very considerable knowledge of human nature. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Series, p. 122.

I went into the dining-room, and set down afore a plate that had my name writ on a card onto it, and I did *walk into* the beef, and taters, and things, about east. — *Hiram Bigelow's Lett. in Family Comp.*

The way in which the "Courier" and "Enquirer" *walks into* the character and reputation of some of their old associates in the Clay movement is a caution to respectable blackguards, and makes Wall Street journalism a rival to Five Point eloquence. — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept. 16, 1858.

**Walkist.** A professional walker; a pedestrian. The newspapers called Weston "the great walkist." The term has even been applied to fast-walking women.

Little Von Hillern, the *walkess*, is expected to set the fashion for all the Boston girls next year. Fashions will have to change some first. — *Providence Press*.

**Walk-over.** Complete and easy triumph. The "Vicksburg Herald" says: —

What a difference it makes to a candidate, when he knows he is offered a *walk-over* instead of a forlorn hope?

**To walk round** a person is to gain the advantage of him.

My ambassadors, said the President, may not dance as elegantly as European courtiers, but they can *walk round* them in a treaty, that 's a fact. — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 20.

**To walk the Chalk.** To walk straight, or rather to keep up to the mark.

"The Tallapoosa volunteers," said Captain Suggs; "so let everybody look out and *walk the chalk*." — *Simon Suggs*, p. 89.

**Wall Flower.** A term ungallantly applied to those of the fair sex present at a ball, who, for lack of invitation to dance, are constrained to remain in their seats. See *Sot*.

**To wallop.** To beat. Provincial in England and colloquial in the United States.

I grabs right hold of the cow's tail, and velled and screamed like mad, and *walopped* away at her like any thing. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 18.

There 's nothing like *wallopping* for taking the conceit out of fellows who think they know more than their betters. — *J. C. Neal, Orson Dabbs*.

All I know was *walopped* into me. I took larin' through the skin. — *Neal's Charcoal Sketches*.

**Wall Paper.** Paper hangings.

**Wall Rock.** Granular limestone, used in building walls.

**Walt.** Crank. A ship is said to be *walt*, when she has not her due ballast; that is, not enough to enable her to bear her sails, and keep her stiff. Hubbard, in his "History of New England," speaking of Lamberton's ill-fated ship, says that "she was ill-built, very *walt-sided*." — *Rev. Alex. Young, note to Chron. of Massachusetts*.

The next year brought a Flemish fly-boat of about 140 tons, which being unfit for a fishing voyage, and wanting lodging for the men, they added unto her another deck, by which means she was carried so high that she proved *walt* and unable to bear sail. — *White, The Planter's Plea*, 1630, p. 1.

In the north of England, *walt* means to totter, to overthrow. — *Halliwel*.

**Wamble-cropped.** Sick at the stomach; and, figuratively, crest-fallen, humiliated. New England.

There stood Captain Jumper, shaking General Taylor's hand when he came on board the "Two Pollys," trying to get a start in the address, but could not; and then I tried it. I never saw Captain Jumper so wilted down before, and that made me feel so *wamble-cropt* I could not say a word. — *Major Downing's Letter from Biton Rouge*, June 15, 1848.

The Captain looked so awful *womble-cropt* that I pitied him. I never saw such an uncomfortable-looking countenance. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 284.

**Wampum.** (A term in the Algonkin languages signifying *white*, the color of the shells most frequent in *wampum* belts.) Shells, or strings of shells, used by the American Indians as money. These, when united, formed a broad belt, which was worn as an ornament or girdle. It was sometimes called *wumpumpeage* or *wampeage* and *sewan*. See *Peage*, *Sewan*, and *Seawant*.

The Indians are ignorant of Europe's coin. Their own is of two sorts: one, *white*, which they make of the stem or stock of the periwinkle, when all the shell is broken off; and of this sort six of their small beads, which they make with holes to string the bracelets, are current with the English for a penny. The second is black, inclining to blue, which is made of the shell of a fish, which some English call *hens*, Poquahock; and of this sort three make an English penny. Their white money they call *wompam*, which signifies *white*; their black, *Suckau-*

hock, Sucki, signifying black. — *R. Williams, Key to the Indian Language* (1643).

Though the young Indian women are said to prostitute their bodies for *wampumpeak* and other such like fineries, I could never find any ground for the accusation. — *Beverly's Virginia* (1705), Book III.

A Sagamore with a humbird in his ear for a pendant, a black hawk on his occiput for a plume, good store of *wampumpenge* begirting his loines, his bow in hand, his quiver at his back, with six naked Indian spatterlashes at his heels for his guard, thinks he is all one with King Charles. — *Wood's New England* (1634), p. 66.

And there the fallen chief is laid,  
In tassell'd garb of skins arrayed,  
And girdled with his *wampum* braid.

*Whittier, The Funeral Tree.*

**Wangan.** (Indian.) On the rivers of Maine, a boat used chiefly by lumbermen for carrying provisions, tools, &c.

Among the dangers [of lumbering in Maine], where life and property are hazarded, is that of "running the *wangan*," — a phrase well understood on the river. — *The Americans at Home*, Vol. III. p. 254.

Among scenes like these the river-driver passes the day. Such are the vicissitudes of life for him who *runs the wangun*. — *Harper's Mag.*, Vol. XX. p. 450.

**Want to know.** Among the most common singularities of expression are the following: "I should admire to see him," for "I should like to see him;" "I *want to know*!" and "Do tell!" both exclamations of surprise, answering to our "Dear me!" These last, however, are rarely heard in society above the middling class. — *Lyell's Second Visit*, ch. ix.

**Wapatoò.** A name given by the Oregon Indians to the bulb of the *Sagittaria variabilis*, used by them as an article of food.

**Wapiti.** (*Cervus Canadensis*.) The American elk or stag. From the Cree *Wapitew*, "grayish" or "pale" as distinguished from the common moose, which is nearly black.

**War.** Was. Negro dialect. Sometimes a corruption of "was" and "were."

**Warden.** A town officer in two of the island towns of Rhode Island, New Shoreham, and Jamestown, with similar privileges and jurisdiction within his town that justices of the peace have throughout their respective towns and counties. — *Revised Statutes of Rhode Island*.

**War-Path.** A march to battle, warlike expedition of the Indians.

The Lenape would not go to the *war-path*, because they did not think it well. *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans*.

When on the *war-path*, more than ordinary care is taken to adorn the body, and the process of painting occupies a considerable time. — *Ruxton's Adv. in the Rocky Mountains*, p. 237.



The hunters walked in single file, following their leader, like Indians on a *war-path*. — *Mayne Reid, The Boy-Hunters*, p. 254.

This calamity threw these people [the Sioux] into such a state of gloom and sudden anger that it was almost impossible to keep them from taking the *war-path*. — *Report of the Commr. of Indian Affairs* for 1874, p. 358.

**Warm-us.** A sort of roundabout jacket made of homespun cloth, and worn without buttons, being tied across the body by the lower corners. (Dutch, *warmhuis*, a warmer, *chauffoir*.)

**Warrant-Trying.** The magistrate's monthly courts at the cross-roads. Virginia.

**War-Whoop.** The Indian cry of war; a yell made on attacking a foe.

. . . . . Ere dark pestilence  
Devoured his warriors, — laid his hundreds low, —  
That Sachem's *war-whoop* roused to his defence  
Three thousand bowmen. — *Durfee, Whatecher, Canto III.*  
The red men say that here she walked  
A thousand moons ago;  
They never raise the *war-whoop* here,  
And never twang the bow. — *Bryant.*

We must trust to the experience of men who know the ways of the savages, and who are not often backward when the *war-whoop* is howled. — *Cooper, Last of the Mohicans.*

**Washing**, in Wall Street slang, is where one broker arranges with another to buy a certain stock when he offers it for sale. The bargain is fictitious; and the effect, when not detected, is to keep it quoted, and, if the plotters buy and sell the stock to a high figure, to afford a basis for *bona fide* sales. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 138.

From the spring of '58 to '60, the Stock Board slowly recovered its old tone. The bear element was in its glory. Brokers had become fearful of forced quotations. *Washing* had become a constant trick before the panic, and bids were now closely scrutinized. — *Ibid.*, p. 327.

**Wastage.** The accidental waste of a barrel, box, &c.

**Watch out.** Look out. "Watch out for the stage." Pennsylvania.

**Water-Dogs.** The Western name for various species of salamanders, or lizard-shaped animals, with smooth, shiny, naked skins; sometimes called Water-puppies and Ground-puppies. In Pennsylvania and the Eastern States, they are called Spring-keepers and Man-eaters.

**Water-Lot.** A lot of building-ground covered by water.

An act passed by the legislature, ceding, for the period of ninety-nine years, all the right and interest which the State of California had in those parts of the

city called the Beach and *Water-Lots*, provided that twenty-five per cent of all moneys thereafter arising in any way from the sale or other disposition of the said property should be paid over by the city to the State. — *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 324.

**Water-Oats.** See *Canada-Rice*.

**Water-Privilege.** The advantage of a water-fall in streams sufficient to raise water for driving water-wheels, or a place affording such advantage. — *Webster*.

**Water-Proof.** A garment, especially an outer garment, designed to protect from rain. Used mostly by women. See *Scutum*.

**Water-Shed.** A word formed in imitation of the German *Wasserscheide* (water-divide), to denote a height of land which separates waters flowing in different directions; better termed "dividing ridge." See *Divide*.

The crests of the serpentine *water-sheds* gradually diverging towards the Tejon, where there is an impinging of the two masses to such a degree as to completely envelop the plain. — *Lt. Purke, Pacific Railroad Report*, Vol. VII. p. 5.

**To water Stock** is the hydraulic employed by modern managers to double the quantity of a stock without improving its quality. — *Medbery*. See *Stock-Watering*.

**Water-Witch.** 1. A person who pretends to have the power of discovering subterranean springs by means of the divining-rod, made once from the witch-hazel, but now more commonly from the peach-tree.

In many parts of the country, not a well is dug without a previous consultation with a *water-witch*; and one who attempts to run counter to the popular delusion is in danger of having his "common sense" doubted.

2. An aquatic bird. See *Dipper*.

**Wauregan.** (Ind. *wunnegan*, fine, showy.) Noticed by Miss Caulkins in her "History of Norwich," and by Dr. Bacon in his "Historical Discourses," p. 341, who cites Roger Williams's Key, where it means well or good, and Eliot's Bible, Gen. i. 10, *n* and *r* being interchanged dialectically. The word is still local in and about Norwich, Conn.

**To wax.** To overcome another, or surmount a difficulty by stratagem.

The Washington correspondent of the "N. Y. Herald," March 16, 1876, in speaking of the sale of post-traderships by Orville Grant, the President's brother, says: —

The trader at Fort Lincoln, fearing removal, Orville Grant's clerk at Standing Rock advised him to tell Grant, "he can *wax* you."

**Wax-Myrtle.** (Genus *Myrica*.) A shrub, of which there are several species, bearing a berry covered with a shining wax, which is prepared for commerce by the poor people along the Northern lakes. Also called Candleberry Myrtle.

**Wax-Plant.** (*Monotropa uniflora*.) A perfectly white, fleshy plant, looking as if made of wax. Before the fruit matures, the heads are bent over; hence the name "Indian Pipe."

**Way.** Away. Often heard in good society.

The deaf man drove them *way* off from the Erbey mansion into a wood. He drove through this wood, . . . *way* into a green circle, where . . . — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*.

**Wayfaring-Tree.** See *Hobble-Bush*.

**Ways**, for way, distance, space. A very common vulgarism.

It's only a little *ways* down to the village. — *Margaret*, p. 123.

**There's no Two Ways about it**, i. e. the fact is just so, and not otherwise. A vulgarism of recent origin, equivalent to the common phrase, "*There's no mistake about it*," or "*It's just as I tell you, and no mistake*."

Jist so, jist so, stranger: you are just about half right, and *there's no two ways about it*. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., ch. 7.

*There's no two ways about that*, sir; but ar'n't you surprised to see such a fine population? — *Hoffman*, *Winter in the West*.

**Weak Fish.** See *Squeteague*.

**Weak Sister.** A person that cannot be relied upon.

The rebels assert that the Union has no friends at the South. The assertion is false. There are white Unionists there, but they are *weak sisters*, — overawed, terrorized, silenced. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Dec., 1861.

**Wearables.** Something to wear; clothes.

**To wear the Collar.** In political parlance, to be subject to the control of another; to be directed in political matters.

**Weather.** "Fine *weather* overhead" means a clear sky. "We are going to have falling *weather*," means we are going to have rain, snow, or hail. "He's under the *weather*," is a figurative expression, meaning badly off; in straitened circumstances.

**Weather-Breeder.** A distant cloud portending a storm. In England, it means a fine day. — *Halliwel*. "Dowse the top-gallant sail, boys. See that *weather-breeder* ahead."

**Wed.** Sometimes vulgarly used for *weeded*; as, "He *wed* the garden." Comp. *plead* for *pleaded*.

**Weed.** A common term for tobacco; as, "Do you use *the weed*?" meaning, do you chew tobacco? See *Indian Weed*.

Those who were not dancing were seated around the room, some smoking others chewing *the weed*, still others drinking. — *Mysteries of New York*, p. 89.

By the appearance of the shirt-bosoms of some inveterate chewers of *the weed*, I should judge they had been squirting their juice in the face of a north-easter. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III.

**Weedy-Weedy.** A plant resembling spinach, much used in the West Indies. — *Carmichael's West Indies*.

**Weevil.** The name is given in this country to at least six different kinds of insects, two of which are moths, two are flies, and two are beetles. — *Harris, Insects Injurious to Vegetation*, p. 18.

**Well.** One of the most marked peculiarities of American speech is the use of the word "*well*" at the beginning of sentences, especially in answer to questions. Englishmen have told me that they could always detect an American by this use of the word. Mr. Lowell, so thoroughly comprehends the various shades of its meaning, by the manner in which it is pronounced, that we avail ourselves of his remarks upon it: "Put before such a phrase as 'How d'e do?' it is commonly short, and has the sound of *wul*; but, in reply, it is deliberative, and the various shades of meaning which can be conveyed by difference of intonation, and by prolonging or abbreviating, I should vainly attempt to describe. I have heard *ooa-ahl*, *wahl*, *ahl*, *wäl*, and something nearly approaching the sound of *le* in *able*. Sometimes before 'I' it dwindles to a mere *l*; as, 'I dunno.'" "A friend," continues Mr. Lowell, "told me that he once heard five '*wells*,' like pioneers, precede the answer to an inquiry about the price of land. The first was the ordinary *wul*, in deference to custom; the second, the long, perpending *ooahl*, with a falling inflection of the voice; the third, the same, but with the voice rising, as if in despair of a conclusion, into a plaintive, nasal whine; the fourth, *wulh*, ending in the aspirate of a sigh; and then, fifth, came a short, sharp *wal*, showing that a conclusion had been reached." — *Poetical Works, Int. to Biglow Papers, Household Edition*, p. 221.

When Zekle went a courting Huldy, the fair one, meeting him at the door, said: —

"You want to see my pa, I s'pose?"

"*Wall*, . . . no, . . . I come designin'," —

"To see my ma? She 's sprinklin' clothes  
Agin to-morrer's ir'nin'." — *Ibid*.

**Well to live.** 1. In easy circumstances; well off. This expression is of English origin.

I wanted to see how these Northerners could buy our cotton, carry it home, manufacture it, bring it back, and sell it for half nothing; and, in the mean time, be well to live, and make money besides. — *Crockett, Tour.*

2. In New England, a cant phrase to denote a person in that state of intoxication in which he drives dull care away, and fancies himself at the top round of fortune's ladder.

**Wench.** In the United States, this word is, except by the vulgar, applied only to black women and girls.

The blushing morn at length came travelling up from the oriental clime, and sowed the earth with pearls and diamonds, that glittered upon the dark bosom of night like jewels upon the brow of an Ethiopian wench. — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 111.

**Wendigo.** Among the Northern Indians, a hobgoblin.

"These Montagnais think," continued Pierre, "that the Wendigoes are giant cannibals, twenty and thirty feet high. They think that they can live on human flesh, and that many Indians who have gone hunting, and have never afterwards been heard of, have been devoured by the Wendigoes." — *Hind's Explor. of Labrador*, Vol. I. p. 59.

Schoolcraft, in "Algie Researches," mentions the belief of the Western tribes in these *Wendigoes*. In the Red River country is the *Windego*, or Cannibal Lake, so called from an unnatural deed committed by a band of Ojibways. A band of forty, unable to procure food, nearly perished by famine. The survivors lived upon the dead bodies of their companions. — *Hind's Canadian Exploring Exp.*, Vol. I. p. 64.

**Went.** Sometimes used by uneducated persons for *gone*. "Let her went" is a common slang expression. "Yesterday was Good-Friday, and you should have *went* to church." Pegge includes it among the London vulgarisms.

**Werowance.** Among the Indians of Virginia and Maryland, the name by which the head chief was known.

In some places of the country [Virginia], one onely town belongeth to the government of a *Wiroans* or chiefe Lord; in other some, two or three; in some, six, eight, or more; the greatest *Wiroans* that yet we had dealing with had but eighteen townes in his government. — *Harriot, Newfound-land of Virginia* (1590), p. 25.

When a *Werowance* dieth, his eldest sonne succeeds, and after him the second, and so the rest, each for their lives, and when all the sonnes are dead, then the sonnes of the *Werowance's* eldest daughter shall succede. — *A Relation of Maryland* (1635), p. 33.

**West.** The Western States of the American Union, especially those lying to the west of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina.

The enterprising, ingenious, and indomitable North; the substantial and magnificent Central States, the great balance-wheel of the system; the youthful,

rapidly expanding, and almost boundless *West*; the ardent, genial, and hospitable South, — I have traversed them all. — *Speech of E. Everett*, July 5, 1858.

**Westerner.** A native or resident of the West.

**Western Reserve.** A name formerly given to a tract of country reserved by the State of Connecticut, at the time of the cession of the North-west Territory to the United States. In 1800, jurisdiction over this tract was relinquished to the Federal Government, the State reserving the right to the soil and disposing of it in small lots to settlers (from which sales she obtained her magnificent school-fund), while the Indian titles to the rest of the soil were bought up by the General Government. — *Wheeler's Dictionary*.

**West-Pointer.** A student, a graduate of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point.

LIEUTENANT CHARLES H——. — The brilliant charge of this young *West-Pointer*, through Fairfax Court-House [village]. — *N. Y. Tribune*.

**To wet.** "Have you *wet* that new coat." A hint to "treat." *Grose* has *beverage*, as drink demanded of any one having a new suit of clothes. — *Classical Dic.*

**To whale.** 1. To thrash; to beat. Colloquial with us and in the north of England. "*Whale*," "wallop."

2. Usually to *whale away*. To talk vehemently; to harangue.

Professor Stubbins is always a *whalin' away* about the dignity of labor, and has been deliverin' a course o' lectures on the subject. — *Widow Bedott Papers*, p. 289.

I went to Baptist meeting. The elder, as usual, *whaled away* through his nose, thumped the desk, and went over and over the same thing, without ever making the most remote approach to any thing like the shadow of an idea. — *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Their masters can cuss 'em, and kick 'em, and *wale* 'em,  
An' they notice it less 'an the ass did to Balaam.

*J. R. Lowell, Biglow Papers*, I. p. 13.

**Whaler.** A big, strapping fellow.

"He's a *whaler*!" said Rory; "but his face is mighty little for his body and legs." — *Georgia Scenes*, p. 184.

**Whaling.** A lashing; a beating.

But it is possible that we may, at some future time. go to war with England, her writers and speakers having spoken disparagingly of us, while her actors, half-pay officers, and other travelling gentry, carry their heads rather high in passing through our country, — for which "arrogant" demeanor we are bound to give her a *whaling*! — *N. Y. Tribune*, Aug., 1847.

**Whangdoodle.** A humorously imaginary creature, whose precise nature, form, and attributes are left to every one's individual fancy.

Where the lion roareth and the *whangdoodle* mourneth for her first-born. — *The Harp of a Thousand Strings*.

**Whap!** An interjection expressive of a sudden blow, like *whack!*

But a day of payment is coming; and, if the money ain't forthcoming, out comes a Randolph writ, and *whap* goes your money and liberty. — *Crockett's Speech, Tour*, p. 109.

I began to think smokin' warn't so bad after all, when *whap* went my cigar right out of my mouth into my bosom. — *Sam Slick in England*, ch. 2.

**To whap over.** To knock over. New England.

**Whapper or Whopper.** Any thing uncommonly large; a monstrous lie. This word is provincial in various parts of England, and is common with us.

"Do you call them large turnips?"

"Why, yes, they are considerably large."

"They may be so for turnips, but they are nothing to an onion I saw the other day."

"And how large was the onion?"

"Oh, a monster! it weighed forty pounds."

"Forty pounds!"

"Yes: we took off the layers, and the sixteenth layer went completely round a demijohn that held four gallons!"

"What a *whopper!*"

"You don't mean to say that I lie?"

"Oh, no! what a *whopper* of an onion, I mean." — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

Before you lie, brethren, make up your minds to go it strong; for a little cal-low fib stands but a small chance among the big *whoppers* that are let loose now-a-days. As my friend Pope might have said: —

A little lying is a dangerous thing:

Go your whole length, or never make a spring.

*Dow's Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 91.

**Whapper-Jaw.** A protruding under-jaw; so *whapper-jawed*.

**Whapping or Whopping.** Very large.

We've got only one crib, and that's a *whappin'* one too. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 67.

A *whoppin'* big pan of mush stood in the centre of the table, and a large pan of milk beside it, with lots of corn-bread and butter. — *Robb, Squatter Life*, p. 61.

A few years ago, *whapping* great sleeves and big antecedents were all the rage; and what a funny figure our belles did then cut! — *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 21.

**Wharf-Boat.** On the Western rivers, the height of the water is so variable that a fixed wharf would be useless. In its place is used a rectangular float, in part covered, for the reception of goods, or for a dram-shop. It is generally aground on the shore side, and is entered by a plank or movable platform. This is a *wharf-boat*.

**Wharf-Rats.** 1. Rats that inhabit wharves.

2. Thieves that infest the wharves of seaport towns.

**To wharf up.** To bank up, pile against, as earth around an underpinning. New England.

**Wharves.** Mr. Pickering notices this form of the plural of *wharf*, as peculiar to Americans. The English say *wharfs*. In the Colony and Province Laws of Massachusetts, Mr. Pickering says he observed the plural *wharfs* (or *wharfes*) as late as the year 1735; but after that period the form *wharves* is used.

**Whatcheer.** The shibboleth of the people of the State of Rhode Island. When Roger Williams, the founder of this ancient colony, pushed his way from Salem, Massachusetts, in the year 1636, through the wilderness, he embarked in a canoe with five others, on Sekonk River, and landed near the present site of the city of Providence. As the party approached the shore, they were saluted by a company of Indians with the friendly interrogation of "What cheare *Netop*?" a common English phrase, which they had learned from the colonists, equivalent to the modern How do you do? and meant by the natives as Welcome! — *Key to Indian Language* (1643), p. 1.

It is amusing to see to what objects this word *Whatcheer* is applied, in Rhode Island, not one of which has the least connection with it.

The cove where the party landed is called "*Whatcheer Cove*," which term is also applied to the lands adjacent. Then there is in Providence a "*Whatcheer Bank*," a "*Whatcheer Church*," "*Whatcheer hotels*," a "*Whatcheer Insurance Company*," a "*Whatcheer Hall*," a "*Whatcheer Building*," and, last of all, a "*Whatcheer Lager Beer Saloon*!" A recently formed association in Providence also christened their ground for rifle-shooting the "*Whatcheer Park*," a most ridiculous term, which we think the association has since dropped for the beautiful and sonorous name of "*Narragansett Park*."

Judge Durfee, a Rhode Island poet, has rendered this event memorable by an interesting poem, entitled "*Whatcheer, or Roger Williams in Banishment*." In describing the landing of his hero, he says:—

And straight the kindling words burst on his ear,  
 Their shouts, embodied, sought the joyous sky  
 With open arms, and greeting of *Whatcheer*!  
 Lined all the shores and banks, and summits high.  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* resounded far and near,  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* the hollow woods reply;  
*Whatcheer! Whatcheer!* swells the exulting gales,  
 Sweeps o'er the laughing hills and trembles through the vales.

The Indians of Maryland are said to have used the expression *ke-tick-nitop*, meaning "How do you do?"



*Kekicknitop* the heathen cry'd :

How is it, Tom, my friend reply'd.

*Cook, The Sot-weed Factor, or Voyage to Maryland* (1708), p. 11, with note on the word.

**What for a** is frequently used by Pennsylvanians, instead of "What kind of a," in asking questions. It is a literal translation of the German idiom, "*Was für ein.*"

**To wheal.** To swell.

The father discovered a gainsome expression of face. . . . His cheeks *whealed* and puffed, and through his lips his laughter exposed his white teeth. — *Margaret*, p. 10.

**Wheat and Indian.** A mixture of wheat flour and the meal of Indian corn.

**Wheaton.** To *wheaton it*, among the West Point cadets, is to play sick. The term is derived from the name of old Dr. Wheaton, U. S. A., long stationed at West Point.

**Wheelbarrow-Boat.** A steamboat with a stern-wheel, used on some of the Western rivers, as well as in Canada and Oregon. See *Stern-Wheel*.

**Wheel-Horse.** An intimate friend; one's right-hand man; a leading man. Western.

It is probable that the only man put forward by the Republican's *wheel-horses* of Illinois for high appointment under President Hayes will be the Honorable John A. Logan. — *Lett. in N. Y. Tribune*, Feb. 26, 1877.

**Wheeling.** The act of conveying on wheels, or driving a wheeled vehicle. It is good or bad *wheeling*, according to the state of the roads.

It is mid-winter still, and there is snow on the ground; but the sleighing is not as good as it was, and the state of the streets admits *wheeling*. — *The Upper Ten Thousand*, p. 30.

At the North-west, wheeling is synonymous with *hauling*.

**Wheels.** To "grease the wheels," to furnish money necessary for the accomplishment of an object.

**Whelk.** A wale; a sore; a swelling; a pustule.

The Negro had been most unmercifully beaten; that he was but one *whelk* from his neck to his ankles. — *Richmond Enquirer*, Jan., 1862.

**Whetsaw.** The White-breasted Nut-hatch (*Sitta Canadensis*) is so called in Pennsylvania, from the resemblance its tones sometimes bear to the whetting of a saw. — *Nuttall*.

**Which is what.** "It is fun of a different sort *which is what* does harm." — *The Congregationalist*, May, 1877. It is not easy to

straighten out this remarkable expression. "Which is which" explains itself, as ordinarily heard. So does even the "but what" for "that," &c., as "I don't know but what."

**Whifle-Tree.** The bar on which the traces of a dragging horse are hooked, and by which he draws his load. In England, called a *whipple-tree*. — *Hallucell*. It is better known as a *swingle-tree*.

**Whig and Tory.** During the war of the American Revolution, the terms *Whig* and *Tory* were applied, — the former to those who supported the Revolutionary movement, the latter to the royalists, or those who adhered to the British government. *Tory* was then a stigma of the most reproachful kind.

**Whigs and Democrats.** It is very difficult to give a precise, accurate, and satisfactory definition of the principles distinctively held by the two great political parties into which the population of the American Union is divided, — one popularly styling itself the *Democratic*, the other the *Whig* party. In point of fact, the satirical definition of the *outs* and the *ins* would not be very far out of the way; for the doctrines of government and legislation theoretically advanced by the *Democratic* party, when out of power, are not so radically diverse from those of the *Whigs* in the same condition, as are the practices of either, when in power, from their professions. As times change, and circumstances, the demands or wishes of these parties change also; so that what was *Whig* doctrine in 1830 may be *Democratic* doctrine in 1850, and *vice versa*.

The nominal distinctions, some years ago, were, on the *Whig* side, a Protective Tariff, a National Bank, Division of the Proceeds of the Public Lands among all the States, and the duty of the General Government to carry on works of Public Improvement, such as Canals, Roads, &c.

The *Democrats* were for Free Trade, no connection of the government with Banking, distribution of the proceeds of the public lands among the States in which the lands lie, and non-interference by the government with internal improvements.

But all these questions have rarely been brought to the practical test. Absolute free trade has ever been impracticable, because it would deprive the government of the revenue derived from imposts. The government has always been obliged to carry on some kind of financial operations, differing more in name than in reality from a system of banking considered as a means of supplying a currency. The public lands have rarely yielded any proceeds beyond the wants

of the government. And the only real question, fairly at issue, has been that of improvement in public works.

The *Democrats* popularly charge upon the Whigs a desire to strengthen and centralize the National Government, declaring themselves to be in favor rather of strengthening the local governments of the several States, and of limiting, as far as constitutionally possible, the agency of the National Government, or government of the Union; but in practice the Democratic party is ready enough to assume power for the General Government when any thing is to be gained by so doing; and in this, as in most other instances, the difference between the two parties lies rather in words than in deeds.

The *Whigs*, on the other hand, popularly charge upon the Democrats an undue degree of subserviency to the Executive, especially since the elevation of General Jackson to the presidency in 1829; and this charge seems to have more foundation in truth. It is certain, at all events, that the three Democratic presidents, Jackson, Van Buren, and Polk, have found a more zealous and unscrupulous support in questionable measures than was ever given to a Whig president, or indeed to any of their predecessors.

Perhaps, on the whole, it may be truly said that the main practical difference between the *Whigs* and *Democrats* lies in the fact that the latter give a more unhesitating and thorough-going support to all measures which involve the question of party-measures, which become, by any means, party tests, whether emanating from the Executive or adopted by him under impulse from his adherents. — [J. Inman, 1848.]

**Whiggism or Whiggery.** Whig principles; the doctrines of the Whig party. These words have, in the United States, lost their original opprobrious meaning, and are frequently used by the Whigs themselves in speaking of their doctrines.

Professor Amasa Walker here came forward, and said they all stood together upon the same platform, and he had heard too much of *Whiggery* about their proceedings already; and, as they stood upon a broad platform, he as a Democrat protested against their throwing in so much *Whiggery*, and entertaining them about Gen. Taylor's white horse. — *Rep. of a Free-soil Convention at Worcester, Mass., June 28, 1848.*

The Whigs in Boston see by the movement in New York, and by accounts from Ohio, that there is a chance, at least, of General Taylor being vigorously opposed by some men of undoubted *Whiggery* in influential States. — *Letter from Boston, in N. Y. Herald, June 21, 1848.*

**While, for till.** "Stay while I come," instead of, Stay till I come. Used in the Southern States. — *Sherwood's Georgia.*

**To whip the Cat.** I can give no other explanation of the phrase than to quote the following passage by Mr. Goodrich, who, in describing the early customs of New England, says:—

Twice a year, the tailor came to the house and fabricated the semi-annual stock of clothes for the male members, this being called *whipping the cat*. — *Reminiscences*, Vol. I. p. 74.

Mr. Hart made shoes, a trade he prosecuted in an itinerating manner from house to house, "*whipping the cat*," as it was termed. — *Judd's Margaret*, ch. iii.

**To whip the Devil around a Stump.** To make false excuses to one's self and others for doing what one likes.

While Mr. Jones is describing his wants in the money line, and telling the president how "near through" he is, that officer is carrying on a mental addition, it may be after this manner: "Jones, you're a clever fellow, but Smith tells me you are engaged in a coal-stock operation. I have heard also that you have been dabbling in Erie. There is a want of candor now, I perceive, in the statement of your affairs. There, you are now *whipping the devil around the stump*: I see his foot." — *N. Y. Evening Post*, 1857.

**Whiskey.** 1. *Whiskey straight* is the pure, undiluted liquor.

Down in a small Palmetto State, the curious ones may find

A ripping, tearing gentleman of an uncommon kind;

A staggering, swaggering, sort of a chap, who takes his *whiskey straight*,

And frequently condemns his eyes to that ultimate vengeance which a clergyman of high standing has assured must be a sinner's fate, —

This South Carolina gentleman, one of the present time. — *Comic Song*.

When Hon. Frank P. Blair, then Democratic candidate for Vice-President of the United States, declared, in a speech from the steps of the Manhattan Club, that the main plank in the Democratic platform was *whiskey straight*, he probably shocked a few of his more orthodox and respectable hearers. — *N. Y. Times*, March 7, 1872.

Bourbon whiskey, it is known, is the best article, being made of rye, which see.

A man who had been drinking freely rushed into a bar-room:—

Who was thinkin' and thinkin' and thinkin',

And cursin' himself and his fate,

And ended his thinkin' as usual,

By orderin' a bourbon *straight*. — *The Bar-tender's Song*.

2. *Straight Whiskey* means the liquor upon which the excise duty has been paid. *Crooked whiskey* is that on which by frauds, or by the connivance of government inspectors, the payment of duty has been evaded. Immense quantities of the latter were distilled at St. Louis, Chicago, and other Western cities, in 1872-75, by which the government was defrauded out of millions of dollars. Several distillers and government officials, being convicted of these frauds, were heavily fined and sentenced to State prisons.

In the McKee trial, the manager of the Bingham St. Louis distillery testified to the general operations of the ring, the amounts of *crooked whiskey* made by their house, the sums of money paid to the ring fund, and the special assessments for the alleged purpose of buying off the revenue-officers, and to prevent seizures. *N. Y. Times*, Jan., 1876.

Half a dozen whiskey-dealers were arrested yesterday, and held to bail to answer a charge of neglecting duties imposed upon them by law with reference to the payment of taxes. These dealers had received a large amount of whiskey from the West, and it is suspected that they have been aiding the Western distillers in putting the "*crooked*" liquor upon the market. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Jan., 1876.

The three witnesses from Chicago who are to testify relative to the *crooked-whiskey* business as carried on in New York have arrived here, and under direction of Attorney Bliss go before the grand jury to-day. The books of several whiskey firms in this city, it is stated, have been recently seized. — *Philadelphia Press*.

Alfred Bevis, distiller, testified that Joyce showed him the Sylph dispatch from Babcock, in December, 1874, and that his understanding from it was that the revenue agents were not coming, and on the strength of the information preparations were made to run *crooked*. — *N. Y. Herald*.

**Whiskey-Bloat.** A person bloated from drinking whiskey. "Private pilferers, the *whiskey-bloats*, the bullies in Ward elections." *Cincinnati Com. Adv.*

**Whiskey-Jack.** A name for the Blue Jay (*Garrulus cristatus*). Canada and parts of New England. The name is a corruption of the Indian *Ouishcatchan*. See *Relation de la Nouvelle France*, 1634, ch. iv.

The *Whiskey-Jack* is numerous on the ridge, and in the spruce swamp were several ravens. — *Hind's Canadian and Red River Exp.*, Vol. I. p. 51.

**Whiskey-Mill.** In California and the Far West, a grog-shop; a grocery where whiskey is sold.

Platt City consists of one fair hotel, several small boarding-houses for operatives, several warehouses, as many stores, and about forty *whiskey-mills*, or small groceries where whiskey, tobacco, and portable eatables are sold at fabulous prices. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 55.

**Whiskey-Root.** A plant of the Cactus species possessing intoxicating properties, which is thus described by a correspondent of the "New Orleans Picayune:" "It is what the Indians call Pie-o-ke. It grows in Southern Texas, on the range of sand-hills bordering on the Rio Grande, and in gravelly, sandy soil. The Indians eat it for its exhilarating effect on the system, it producing precisely the same as alcoholic drinks. It is sliced as you would a cucumber, and these small pieces chewed, the juice swallowed, and in about the same time as comfortably tight cocktails would 'stir the divinity within'

you this indicates itself: only its effects are what I might term a little more *k-a-v-o-r-t-i-n-g*, giving rather a wider scope to the imagination and actions."

**Whiskey-Skin.** A drink made of whiskey, sugar, and mint, called otherwise *whiskey-smash*, perhaps on account of the crushed ice with which it is cooled.

**Whiskey-sodden.** Soaked, steeped in whiskey.

A babbling, brawling, *whiskey-sodden* preacher of rebellion. — *N. Y. Tribune*, March, 1862.

**White Fish.** 1. See *Menhaden*.

2. A certain fish abounding in the great lakes of the West.

**White Frost.** Hoar-frost. Western and New England.

**White League.** A military organization formed in New Orleans, in 1874, for the ostensible purpose of putting down the blacks, in consequence of a report that they were arming themselves and preparing for an uprising. Several thousand of the Democratic party enrolled themselves in response to a call, and ordered arms from New York. Upon the arrival of a steamer with these arms, the city authorities, fearing that the real object of the White League was to take possession of the State government, refused to allow the arms to be landed. On the 14th of September, the White League, having armed themselves as well as they could, proceeded to the levee in front of the city, where the steamer was lying, in order to take forcible possession of the arms. This action occasioned the riots of that date, causing the death of over one hundred persons, and was the origin of the White League, afterwards so famous in Louisiana politics.

Referring to the information filed against the members of the Louisiana Returning Board, a Washington despatch to the "New York Sun" says: —

Back of the Attorney-General, District Attorney, and Grand Jury, stands the powerful "*White League*," which will brook no interference by Nichols.

Another Washington despatch presents this view, which may suggest the query whether Tilden is aiding the murderous *White League*, or the *White League* is aiding Tilden.

**White Liner.** A political party in Louisiana.

Governor Stone was elected by the *white-liners*, aspires to be re-elected next fall, and must rely on this same class for his future success. — *Cor. of Washington Star*.

**White-Oak Cheese.** Tough, hard cheese made from skimmed milk.

**White Settlements.** The settlement of Kentucky, the first Western State, was by an emigration from Virginia through the Cumberland

**Gap.** The fertile soil, which was the temptation, lay in the middle of the State; and the surrounding region, being comparatively poor (except in coal and iron), was neglected, although traversed by the whole emigration. The centre, or "Garden Spot," was called "The *White Settlements*," while Indians still lingered on its outskirts.

Now that these comparatively poor regions of the State have become inhabited, the name is still retained, and without explanation would be deemed absurd; for all the Indians have disappeared long ago, and Negroes are only to be found in numbers on the large farms of these very *white settlements*.

The phrase seems to be used only by those who live between the mountains and the region so designated, in which the term is never used, although well understood. — [G. C. Schaeffer.]

**White Trash.** A term applied, especially by Negroes, to the poor white people of the South. See *Poor White Folks*.

In social relations, the Negroes are sensitive to the overbearing propensities of a proprietary who are accustomed to regard all neighbors out of their own class as *white trash*. — *Olmsted's Texas*.

Of all the pizen critters that I knows on, these ere mean *white trash* is the pizenest. They ain't got no manners and no bringing up. — *Mrs. Stowe, Dred*, Vol. II.

"The fact is," said Mr. Gordon, "what with niggers, and overseers, and *white trash*, my chances of salvation are dreadfully limited." — *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 271.

**Whitewood.** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*.) A large tree bearing flowers resembling the tulip. See *Tulip-Tree*.

Then in the woods rang the sound of an axe, and I was the chopper,  
Slashing away at the tops of a *whitewood* fallen in the forest.

*Troubridge's Poems, The Emigrant.*

**Whiting.** The name by which the Hake (*Merlucius vulgaris*, Cuvier) is generally known to fishermen, in New England. — *Storer*.

**Whit-Plotting.** A term used in Nantucket for visiting among relations and friends.

**Whit-Pot.** A kind of pudding. New England. It is the *White-Pot* of Devonshire.

**To whittle.** To cut or dress with a knife. The word as well as the practice of *whittling* for amusement is so much more common with us, especially in New England, than in the old country, that its use may not improperly be regarded as an Americanism.

Dexterity with the pocket-knife is part of a Nantucket education; but I am inclined to think the propensity is national. Americans must and will *whittle*. — *N. P. Willis*.

In the "Yankee Ballad" by Miss Abby Allin, in speaking of the New Englander, she says:—

No matter where his home may be,  
What flag may be unfurled,  
He 'll manage by some cute device  
To *whittle* through the world.

The Pierce administration, which came into power with a majority of eighty, has now been *whittled* down to ten, as appeared by the vote on the Ostend convention. — *Providence Journal*.

In the olden time of England, the days of Norman pride,  
The mail-clad chieftain buckled on his broad-sword at his side;  
And, mounted on his trusty steed, from land to land he strayed,  
And ever, as he wandered on, he *whittled* with his blade.  
O, those dreamy days of *whittling*.

The same poem, in alluding to the common people who overthrew the English government in the time of Charles I., thus continues:—

They *whittled* down the royal throne with all its ancient might,  
And many a tough old cavalier was *whittled* out of sight;  
They *whittled* off the king's head, and set it on the wall;  
They *whittled* out a Commonwealth, but it could not last at all.  
O, those fiery days of *whittling*.

*Anglo-Saxon Whittling Song, Congregationalist.*

Mr. McClure, in his travels through the Far West to California, tells a remarkable story of a jury in Montana, who

Complained that they could not get suitable sticks to *whittle*; and the deputy sheriff now passes a soft-pine board along the jury as soon as they are sworn, and each one splits off a piece corresponding with his appetite in that line. — *Rocky Mountains*, p. 411.

**Whittled.** Topsy, drunk. Perhaps in allusion to "cut."

**Whittler.** One who whittles.

Not an aged dame of Plymouth,  
Nor the oldest *whittler* known,  
Can the finger point to time-notch  
Chronicling his leave of home.

*Wm. Boyl, Oakwood Old, Cambridge (Mass.) Chronicle, 1857.*

**Whole Cloth.** A lie *made out of whole cloth* is one in which there is no admixture of truth.

Isn't this entire story about your Jersey grandmother *made out of whole cloth*, spun on your own wheel, with your tongue for the spindle? — *C. Matthews, The Motley Book*, p. 68.

Mr. R. W. Thompson, in a late work on "The Papacy and the Civil Power," states that Dr. Pusey in his History of the Councils fixes the number of the Nicene canons at twenty, yet "publishes a false and forged canon, which he calls the twenty-ninth, to prove



that the Council of Nice thereby declared the Bishop of Rome to be Christ's vicegerent in the government of the Church," and adds:—

The forgery, whenever and by whomsoever made, is bold and entire, and *made out of whole cloth*. There is not a single word by any of the early Fathers that can be tortured into such a meaning. — p. 318.

**Whole-footed.** Sound.

So Mr. D—— has shown his cloven foot to the South at last. I never believed he was *whole-footed*. I never had confidence in him. — *Richmond South*, Dec., 1857.

**Whole Heap.** Many; several; much; a large congregation. An expression peculiar to certain parts of the South and West. — *Sherwood's Georgia*.

**Whole-souled.** 1. Noble-minded. A phrase in great favor with persons fond of fine talking and fine writing, like the following extract from a rhapsody about a Fourth of July oration of Mr. Choate's:—

The soaring and revelling ideas, the *whole-souled* patriotism, the gorgeous word-painting, the flow and headway of resistless emotion, were all suited to the audience, which hung entranced upon the lips of the orator. — *Boston Journal*, July, 1858.

2. Generous; free-hearted.

**Whole Team.** To say that a man is a *whole team* signifies, in New England and Western parlance, that he is possessed of uncommon powers of body or mind. See *Full Team*.

Among other amplifications of the phrase is that of *a whole team and a horse to spare*, or *a horse to let*.

The author of a series of lively sketches, in "Blackwood's Magazine," on "Canada and the North-west States," says:—

I once heard a Yankee describe the greatest friend he possessed in the world as a "*hull team and a horse to spare*, besides a big dog under the wagon." — Vol. LXXVIII. p. 336.

In a sketch of fashionable society in New York, the writer thus speaks of a specimen of Young America:—

Here's the first curiosity of the place. He's just three years old rising; can drive a horse on a straight road; eats every thing he can get, and drinks every liquid in the house except ink. Isn't he a beauty? Isn't he a *whole team and one horse extra*? — *The Upper Ten Thousand*.

Rip van Hawser and his two splendid galls. Oh, my sakes! Weren't they *whole teams* of themselves, and *a horse to spare*? — *Sam Slick, Wise Saws*, p. 23.

**Whoosh.** A term used in New England in backing a horse or an ox. In Moor's Suffolk Glossary, it is defined as "an imperative commanding the fore-horse of a team to bear to the left." Mr. Forby,

on the contrary, in his Norfolk Glossary, says "*Woosh wo!*" means "Go to the right." Both authors derive it from the French *gauche*. Perhaps from *Whoa*, *Hush!*

**Wicket.** A place of shelter, or camp made of the boughs of trees, used by lumbermen in Maine.

**Wiloopy.** See *Leather-Wood*.

**Wide-awake.** On the alert; ready; prepared; to be on the watch for any thing.

Miss Harriet had more clothes and more money than the rest; because she was always *wide-awake*, and looking out for herself. — *Mrs. Stowe's Dred*, Vol. I. p. 210.

In the morning, and before sunrise, Bogard, who was a Yankee and a *wide-awake* fellow, thrust his head out from under his robe, exclaiming, as he grasped for his gun, "By darn, look at old Cale!" — *Catlin's North Am. Indians*, Vol. I. p. 71.

The Homeric Greeks were too shrewd and *wide-awake* a people to sow where they did not reap; and the increase of communication, and consequent frequency of visitors, were sure to close quickly the open door, and the unasked right of entry. — *Mahaffy, Social Life in Greece*, p. 48.

"Oh what is the good of a *wide-awake* boy,

Who whoops and halloos

As he ties on his shoes,

And who dances a jig

While he's combing his wig

And washing his face with a very poor grace;

Who whips on his jacket,

And makes all the racket

He possibly can?

Now, tell me, I pray, what's the good of this boy?

Well, a *wide-awake* boy makes a *wide-awake* man. — *Anonymous*.

**Wide-awake, n.** A kind of low-crowned felt hat, with a broad brim; a slouched hat.

**Wide-awakes.** The name of a political organization appertaining to the Republican party, whose object was to promote the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency. The order originated in Hartford, Conn. On the 25th of February, 1859, when the Hon. Cassius M. Clay was to address the Republicans of that city, certain young men got up a torchlight procession in his honor. Finding that the oil was liable to run down from the torches and injure their clothes, they prudently provided themselves with oil-cloth caps and glazed capes.

The party, meeting with some opposition from the Democrats on their return, resolved to form a club, to be equipped with swinging torches and black capes and caps, to act as an especial escort on

occasion of public parades of the Republican party. Accordingly, on the 3d March following, a club of fifty was formed, called the "Wide-awake Club," a Constitution was adopted, and officers elected. The organization became very popular, and similar clubs were immediately formed in various parts of the Union, so that it was estimated that before the Presidential election in 1860 their numbers exceeded half a million. At a general meeting in New York on the 3d October, 20,000 assembled and marched in procession with torches.

**Wiggle.** 1. To bend the body rapidly from side to side; to wriggle, as a fish or tadpole.

2. A twist, crook, irregular line.

A certain *wiggle* in my handwriting; an unusual but impressible *wiggle*, which you will ascribe to extraordinary pickings and shovellings in the treaches. — *Cor. N. Y. Tribune*, 1861.

**Wiggle-Tail.** The popular name for the larva of the mosquito.

Standing by a shallow, half-stagnant pool on a midsummer's day, the full development of any number of "*wiggle-tails*" to the mosquito state can be witnessed, and the origin of these disturbers of night's slumbers thus fully ascertained. — *Scientific American*.

**Wigwam.** Algonkin or Massachusetts *wek*, "his houses" or dwelling-place; with possessive and locative affixes, *wekou-om-ut* in his [or their] house," contracted by the English into *weekwam* and *wigwam*. — *Webster*. An Indian cabin or hut, usually made of skins.

Dark as the frost-nipp'd leaves that strew'd the ground,  
The Indian hunter here his shelter found;  
Here cut his bow and shaped his arrows true,  
Here built his *wigwam* and his bark canoe.

*Brainard, Connecticut River.*

**Wigwassing or Wequashing.** The Anglicized form of an Algonkin word, in use on the sea-coast of New England. "The Indians when they go in a canoe with a torch, to catch eels, in the night, call it *Weequash*, or, Anglicized, *Weequashing*." — *Hon. N. Freeman of Sandwich*, in 1 *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. I. p. 231.

The term is yet in use in New London County, Conn., and elsewhere.

**Wild-Bean.** (*Phaseolus diversifolius*.) A plant common in the alluvial bottoms of the West, the Wild Potato of the Sioux Indians, much used as food.

**Wild-Cat.** A bank in Michigan had a large vignette on its notes representing a panther, which animal is familiarly called there a *Wild-cat*. This bank failed, having a large amount of its notes

in circulation, which notes were afterwards denominated *Wild-cat* money, and the bank issuing them the *Wild-cat* bank. Other banks were compelled to stop payment soon after, in consequence of the want of confidence in them; and the term became general in Michigan, to denote banking institutions of an unsound character. The term *Blue-pup* money had a similar origin, as distinguished from *Red Dog*, which see.

We had to sell some of our land to pay taxes on the rest, — and then took our pay in *Wild-cat* money that turned to waste paper before we could get it off our hands. — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I p. 91.

The Leavenworth (Kansas) Ledger, in announcing that the American Bank in this city had suddenly exploded, remarks: "There are thousands of dollars of its notes in the hands of the citizens of this city and vicinity; how the notes obtained a circulation here is a mystery to us, and we know not to whom the blame, if any, attaches; certain it is that we are overrun with a *wild-cat* currency from all God's creation, and every day or two we notice batches of new issues scattered amongst us." — (*Balt.*) *Sun*, July 8, 1858.

Our banks are always willing to offer loans and facilities to speculators and *wild-cat* business men to operate with, and it is through their assistance that the business of the country is disarranged. — *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

When the Yankee mind stoops to criminal pursuits, it is likely to manifest itself in the way of bank forgeries, embezzlements, or the formation of petroleum bubbles or *wild-cat* banking institutions. — *The Galaxy* for 1877, p. 632.

**Wild Cherry.** (*Cerasus Virginiana*.) A large American tree, bearing a small astringent fruit resembling a cherry. The wood is much used for cabinet work, being of a light color and a compact texture. *Browne's Sylva Americana*.

**Wild Indigo.** (*Baptisia tinctoria*.) A plant found in the woods, yielding a small quantity of indigo.

**Wild Land.** Land which has never been settled and cultivated; forest.

• **Wild Oats.** (*Avena fatua*.) A variety of oats which grows wild upon all the hills and higher lands of California, furnishing the best forage. It was probably introduced by the Spaniards.

**Wild Potato Vine.** See *Mechoacan*.

**Wild Rice.** (*Zizania aquatica*.) A tall, tubular, reedy water-plant, found in abundance on the marshy margins of the Northern Lakes, and in the plashy waters on the upper courses of the Mississippi. Its leaves and spikes, though much larger, resemble those of oats, whence the French name, *folles avoines*. Millions of migrating water-fowls fatten on it before taking their autumnal flight to the South; while it furnishes the northern savages and the Canadian traders and hunters with their annual supplies of grain.

At the time of our visit, *wild rice* was growing abundantly over almost all the whole surface of Lake Koshkonong, giving to it more the appearance of a meadow than a lake. — *Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin*, p. 35.

**Wild Train.** A railroad train not on the time-tables of the road, and therefore irregular, and "not entitled to the track," as the railroad phrase is, as against a regular train.

**Will.** See *Would*.

**To wilt.** 1. To droop; to wither, as plants or flowers cut or plucked off. — *Halloway*. A word common in the United States, and provincial in England, where *welk* and *welt* are used in the same sense. *Worcester*.

Miss Amy pinned a flower to her breast; and, when she died, she held the *wilted* fragments close in her hand. — *Margaret*, p. 213.

2. *To wilt down* is a figurative expression, used of a person who hangs his head, looks sheepish.

Some cotton fellar here bid sixty dollars [for the slave], and she *wilted* right down. — *Robb, Squatter Life*.

"Doctor Peter Jones," ses he, "I interduce you to their Majestys the King and Queen."

Cousin Pete scraped about a while, and then dropt on one knee rite afore 'em.

"Rise, gallant knight!" ses Bill Byers, — "rise, we dub you knight of the royal bath."

Cousin Pete got up and bowed and scraped a few more times, and went to sit down between 'em, but they ris up jest as he went to set down; and the first thing he knowed, kerslosh he went, rite into a big tub of cold water, with nothing but his head and heels stickin' out. Pete got out as quick as he could, and I never seed a feller so *wilted down* in all my life. — *Major Jones's Courtship*.

**Windfall.** 1. The track of a whirlwind or tornado in a forest, where the trees are laid prostrate.

In the country around Angelica were what were called *windfalls*. . . . These *windfalls* were great places for rabbits and partridges, and it was no great thing to boast of to kill a dozen or two of these birds of an afternoon. — *Hammond, Wild Northern Scenes*, p. 220.

2. Fruit blown off by wind.

**To wind up.** 1. To close up; to give a quietus to an antagonist in debate. Also, intransitively, to shut up; to stop business.

John Bell of Tennessee, that unmistakable Whig, has rung out a clear and far-sounding note of alarm concerning this Mexican war. He is as serious as a preacher, and as downright as a sailor in the delivery of his sentiments. A lively dialogue, constituting a kind of interlude to his speech, sprang up between him and Mr. Cass, in which he pretty effectually "*wound up*" the senator from Michigan. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

2. To "*wind up his worsted*" is to give the very last turn of which an undertaking is capable.

Several of the Western banks will be compelled to *wind up* in consequence of their losses and the severe pressure. — *N. Y. Herald*, Sept., 1857.

**Wing Dam.** A dam extending but partly across a stream. Such dams are constructed in California to facilitate the operations of miners.

**Winkle-Hawk.** (Dutch, *winkle-haak*.) An angular rent made in cloth, &c. It is also called a *winkle-hole*. A New York term.

**Winrow.** The common pronunciation of *windrow*. Grass laid in rows after it has been cut, before it is gathered into cocks.

**Winter-Berry.** See *Alder*.

**Winter-Cherry.** See *Ground-Cherry*.

**Wintergreen.** (*Gualtheria*.) The common name of several species of plants of the Heath family; as, *False Wintergreen* of the genus *Pyrola*; *Spotted W.* of the genus *Chinaphila maculata*.

**Winter-killed.** Killed by the cold of winter, as wheat, clover, &c.

**Winter-Privilege.** Separate meetings from those in the central parochial church, allowed to be held by the people in out-districts. Former usage in Connecticut.

**To wipe out.** A phrase employed by the Indians and hunters of the West, meaning to exterminate, annihilate a person or tribe.

They [the Camanches, Apaches, and others] had met for the purpose of forming their own party, in order, as they in their strong language said, to *wipe out* all frontier Indians they could find on the plains. — *Report of Com. of Indian Affairs for 1854*, p. 90.

The Pima Indians have got up another quarrel with the Apaches, and have mustered upwards of a thousand warriors to give them battle. It is their determination to "*wipe out* the Apaches," or, as they express it, to eat them up entirely, which is a consummation devoutly to be wished. — *Alta Californian*, July, 1858.

"We are coming to Lawrence," said the Missourians, "in a few days, to *wipe out* the damned abolition city, and to kill and drive off every one of the inhabitants." — *Mrs. Robinson's Kansas*, p. 222.

The Mormon militia under Brigham Young intend to take a stand at the pass in the mountains near Bear River, with the certainty of *wiping out* the U. S. forces sent against them. — *Letter from Utah*, *N. Y. Times*, Nov., 1857.

The "Boston Pilot," in speaking of the "fight in the New York Democratic Convention between Tammany and anti-Tammany," says:—

The existence of a party within a party, and the inner one a close corporation controlling the other, is a dangerous principle, and one that should be *wiped out*.

*To wipe out a stock operator* is a Wall Street phrase, and means to entangle him in a stock transaction until he loses his footing and

fails utterly. It is one of the malignancies and cruelties of the street. — *Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street*, p. 138.

**Wire, Wires.** The electric telegraph; conveyance by means of the wires.

For a week past we have had no *wire* communication further East than . . .  
*N. Y. Tribune*.

**To wire.** To send a message over the telegraph wires.

**Wired up.** Irritated; provoked.

**Wire-Edge.** The *wire-edge* of a tool is that stage in the process of sharpening it, when a delicate roll or strip of metal resembling a fine wire still adheres to the edge, and which of course must be removed before the implement can be in proper order to cut. Some persons, however, seem to imagine that a *wire-edge* is a fine edge, and hence absurdly use the term in such phrases as to take off the *wire-edge* of one's appetite, of a horse's spirit, &c.

He trotted the first mile in 2.55, and the second in 2.45, and was then stopped. On commencing again, he had, of course, lost the "*wire-edge*" of his speed, yet he trotted nineteen miles in 57.43. — *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*.

**Wire-Pullers or Wire-Workers.** A term denoting those who, by their secret plots and intrigues, control the movements of the puppets on the political stage.

The coming contest is to decide whether the people have the privilege of electing a chief magistrate of their own selection, or only the privilege of electing one of two candidates whom self-elected cliques of nominators choose to designate. The Philadelphia Convention will assemble on Wednesday. Already that city is filled with *wire-pullers*, public opinion manufacturers, embryo cabinet officers, future ambassadors, and the whole brood of political make-shifts, who contrive to live out of the public purse by abusing public credulity. — *N. Y. Mirror*, June 5, 1848.

In another case, at a nominating convention, a "surprise candidate," youthful in age, and in all other qualifications far inferior to his competitors, obtained the nomination. There was no longer any surprise about the matter, when it was subsequently ascertained that the *wire-workers* in convention had a deep interest in a particular suit at law, to which their candidate was pledged to give a judgment in their favor, in case of being the judge. — *Nat. Intelligencer*, Sept. 20, 1858.

**Wire-pulling or Wire-working.** Political managing.

Those who were candidates for office in either house [of the legislative assembly of N. Mexico] and their friends began the system of electioneering, so prevalent in other sections of the Union; and the few days that intervened between the arrival of the members and the meeting of the assembly were spent in *wire-pulling*, log-rolling, and all the other strategic movements known in modern politics. — *Davis, El Gringo*, p. 251.

**Wire-Worm.** (*Elatér lineatus*.) The name Wire-worm is given by farmers to the larvæ of various species of beetles belonging to the genus *Elatér*, of which a large number are known both in Britain and in this country. These larvæ are exceedingly destructive, feeding upon the roots and the underground stems of wheat, Indian-corn, grape-vines, and most varieties of cultivated vegetables.

**Wisdom Tooth.** A large, back double-tooth; familiarly so called because appearing comparatively late, as it were after the person has arrived at the age of wisdom. — *Webster*.

**To wise.** A spinning top is said to *wise*, when it inclines from the perpendicular.

**Wish-Bone or Wishing-Bone.** The breastbone of a fowl is so familiarly called, especially by children, from a custom connected with it. The bone, after being dried, is taken by two persons, who hold each shank between their fore-finger and thumb, and then pull until it breaks, at the same time *wishing* for something. The one in whose fingers the larger portion remains, it is said, will have his *wish*. See *Pulling-Bone*.

**Wishy-washy.** Weak; insipid; trashy. — *Carr's Craven Glossary*. The term is often applied to poor literature; as, "This novel is a *wishy-washy* affair." Poor liquor is called by the same term.

**Witness-Trees.** In newly settled countries at the West, every mile square is marked by "blazed" trees, and the corners especially distinguished by stakes, whose place is pointed out by trees called *witness-trees*. — *Mrs. Clavers, Western Clearings*, p. 3.

**To wizzle.** To shrink up; to wrinkle; to be shrunk; to be wrinkled. New England.

**Wolfish.** Savage. A Western word.

You must fight or play; so take your choice, for I feel most *wolfish* and *savage*-rous. — *Sam Slick*, 3d Ser., p. 117.

They'd been fightin' the barrel of whiskey mightily comin' up, and were perfectly *wolfish* arter some har of the dog. — *Porter's Tales of the South-west*, p. 121.

**Wolverines.** The people of the State of Michigan; who are said to be so called from the large number of the mischievous prairie wolves found there.

**Woman's Rights.** A question involving the political, industrial, educational, and general social status of women, and their legal rights and disabilities. This movement began in the United States in the middle of the present century, in connection with the anti-



slavery agitation, with which it at first identified itself. For a clear statement of the question, see *Appleton's American Cyclopædia*.

*Wimmen's rights, wimmen's rights*, I wonder how many more fools are goin' a caperin' round the country preachin' 'em up. I'm sick of *wimmen's rights*, I don't believe in 'em. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 85.

**Woman's Rights' Convention.** An assemblage of persons who endeavor by public discussions to improve the social and political condition of women.

Thousands of parrots passed over, with their peculiar short and querulous note. In the morning and towards night, they kept up the most vehement chattering, all talking and none listening, after the manner of a *Woman's Rights' Convention*. — *E. G. Squier, Waikna*, p. 89.

**Women-Folks.** Women, especially the female members of a household. "The *women-folks* will be impatient till you come." This redundant expression is common in rural districts, and equally so is its counterpart, "men-folks."

**Wonders.** In Nantucket, a kind of cake.

**Wood-Beetle.** A large, coleopterous insect. A correspondent of the "N. Y. Tribune," writing from Cairo, Illinois, says:—

Its dank, deep forests generate *wood-beetles*, snakes, and all manner of creeping things: if in your bliss of ignorance you don't know what a *wood-beetle* is, picture an enormously exaggerated black bug, with shining shell and body long as the width of this "Tribune" column, who, uninvited, sails in at your evening window, and anchors himself by multitudinous legs to your arm.

**Woodbine.** See *Virginia Creeper*.

**Woodchuck.** (*Arctomys monax*.) The ground-hog, a rodent mammal of the marmot tribe. It burrows, and is dormant in winter.

Webster's Dictionary gives *Woodshock* as a name of the Pecan or Fisher (*Martes Canadensis*), and *Woodchuck* for the (*Arctomys monax*), with a reference to "*chuck*," as if the name was compounded from "wood" and "chuck." It is, in fact, a corruption (like woodshock) of the vulg. name of the *Fisher*, — misapplied to the Ground-hog. This name was formerly written "*woodshaw*," "*woodschock*," and "*wejack*." See *N. E. General Reg.*, Vol. XI. p. 219. Modern Chippewa, *o-jeeg* or *o-check*; Shawnee, *ócháikah*.

Yea, verily, this is like a *woodchuck* in clover. — *Margaret*, p. 48.

My dear hearers, I've been trying to beat [certain truths] into you with a sermonizing sledge-hammer; and you appear to be as stupid as *woodchucks* in winter. *Dow's Sermons*, Vol. III. p. 155.

**Wooding-Place.** A station on the banks of a river where the steam-boats stop to take in supplies of wood.

**Wood-Lot.** A piece of land where wood for fuel, &c., grows.

**Wood-Meeting.** The name given by the Mormons to a Camp-meeting.

**Wood-Rick.** A pile of wood.

From *wood-ricks* and stone walls the soldiers did good execution with their guns. — *St. Louis Democrat*.

**To wood up.** 1. To lay in a supply of wood, as a steamboat at a landing-place. The boats on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, in their long voyages, are obliged to make frequent stops for this purpose.

The process of *wooding-up* is one of the first the passenger is made acquainted with. The steamer approaches a dreary shore, without any thing to indicate that civilized man has ever set his foot upon it for many miles above or below, save the wood-pile and a small cabin of the rudest description. The terms are usually agreed upon before the boat touches the bank; and, when it does, fifteen or twenty hands throw on board from twenty to fifty cords, at a price varying from two to three dollars, for which the woodman pockets his money and seems a happy man although cut off from the world. — *N. Y. Tribune*, 1848.

2. To take a dram. Western.

The same term is used on railways where wood is still used for locomotives, but never when coal is used.

The New London Northern Railroad will return to coal burning in its passenger locomotives, and a saving of ten minutes will be gained by not having to stop to *wood up*. — *Norwich Courier*.

**Wool over the Eyes.** To draw the wool over one's eyes is to impose upon one, take one in.

Elder Sniffles ain't so big a fool as to have the wool drawn over his eyes by such trash as Sall Hugle. — *Widow Bedott Papers*.

**Woolly-Heads.** A term applied in the first place to Negroes, and then to anti-slavery politicians.

The law, it seems, it didn't work exactly as it ought,  
Though Greeley kept a sayin' so, and so his readers thought.  
They 're mighty bright, them woolly-heads; they think they find a prize,  
If they can only pull their wool o'er other people's eyes.

*New York paper.*

**Worm Fence.** A rail fence laid up in a zig-zag manner; also called a Virginia fence. See *Stake and Rider*.

Mr. Haskell, one of the delegates from Tennessee, told a story about a man in his "diggins," who was once struck by "Joe Larkins," by which he was knocked at least forty rods. He fell against a *worm fence*, and carried away about forty panels, rail-riders and all. — *N. Y. Mirror*.

We drove Master Jack about the common, until we had hemmed him in an angle of a *worm fence*. — *W. Irving, Wolfert's Roost*, p. 251.

**Worriment.** Trouble, anxiety.

The *worriment* we have lately had about money has set you a dreaming. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature.*

**Worrisome.** In the condition to be worried.

In her discussion with Mrs. Victoria W—— on the subject of free love and marriage, Miss Betsy Bobbet says: —

When a man realizes that he can, if he wants to, start up and marry a woman before breakfast, and get divorced before dinner, and have a new one before supper, it has a tendency to make him onstiddy and *worrisome*. — *Betsy Bobbet*, p. 326.

**Worst Kind.** Used in such phrases as, "I gave him the *worst kind* of a licking." Also adverbially; as, "I licked him the *worst kind*," i. e. in the worst manner possible, most severely.

**Would.** "Will" and "Would" employed instead of "shall" and "should;" and conversely. See *Shall* and *Should*.

**Wrapper.** 1. A loose dress or gown.

Her dress was a blue-striped linen short-gown, *wrapper*, or long-short, a coarse petticoat, checked apron, &c. — *Margaret*, p. 14.

2. An under-shirt.

**Wrappers.** See *Leggings*.

**Wrath.** Like all *wrath* is a Southern phrase, meaning violently, vehemently, angrily.

There ain't much to interest the traveller on the railroad from Hamburg to Charleston. Most of the passengers in the car were preachers what had been up to Augusta to attend the convention. They was the dryest set of old codgers I ever met with, till the jolting of the cars shook up their ideas a little, and then they fell to disputin' like all *wrath*. — *Major Jones's Travels*.

**Wrathy.** Very angry. A colloquial word. — *Webster*.

"Oh! you're *wrathy*, ain't ye? Why, I didn't mean nothin' but what was civil! — *Mrs. Clavers's Forest Life*, Vol. I. p. 103.

The general was as *wrathy* as thunder; and, when he gets his dander up, it's no joke. — *Major Downing's Letters*, p. 34.

**Wreckers.** A gang of Baltimore rowdies. They call themselves *Canton Rackers*, perhaps from their propensity of *racking out* a neighborhood.

**Wunst, for once.** To *wunst*, for at once. Vulgar.

If you acknowledge the usurper Hayes, you leave me stranded and helpless, and I might as well leave the corners at *wunst*. — *Petroleum V. Nasby*, April, 1877.

## Y.

**Yahoos.** Greenhorns; back country louts. South-western.

**Yaller.** A vulgar pronunciation of *yellow*.

**Yam.** (Genus *Dioscorea*.) A large esculent tuber or root of various climbing plants growing in tropical America, which forms a wholesome and palatable food. English people often confound this with sweet potatoes.

**Yank.** 1. A jerk. New England.

In some verses prefixed to the New-Year's Address of the carrier of "The Age," a weekly journal published in Maine, the Carrier Boy asks the spirit of Edgar A. Poe to write him a few lines:—

The poet looks wild at the blue-eyed child,  
Then clutches him by the hair,  
And makes him abide by the chimney-side,  
As he sinks back in his chair, —  
Pulls up the machine, and with dreadful mien  
He oils each rusty wheel,  
Then seizes the crank, and with many a *yank*  
Brings out a poetic squeal.

The Austin (Texas) "Leader" says that the grasshopper country would make a good poultry region, which reminds us of the old verse:—

A grasshopper sat on a sweet potato vine,  
When up came a turkey gobbler and *yanked* him off behind.

2. An abbreviation of *Yankee*; a term universally applied by the Confederates to the soldiers of the Union armies.

**To yank.** 1. To twitch or jerk powerfully. New England.

2. To snatch away unexpectedly.

**Yankee.** 1. The popular name for the citizens of New England, but applied by foreigners to all the inhabitants of the United States. The name [*Yengees* or *Yenkees*] was originally given by the Massachusetts Indians to the English colonists, being the nearest sound they could give for "English." It was afterwards adopted by the Dutch on the Hudson, who applied the term in contempt to all the people of New England. During the American Revolution, it was eagerly caught at by the British soldiers. — *Note to the Poetical Works of J. Trumbull.*

Mr. Heckewelder, a high authority on Indian subjects, has no doubt that the word was the first effort of the Indians "to imitate the sound of the national name of the English, which they pro-

nounced *Yengees*." Furthermore, he says, the Indians "say they know the *Yengees* [i. e. the New Englanders], and can distinguish them by their dress and personal appearance, and that they were considered as less cruel than the Virginians, or Long Knives. The English proper they call Saggenash." — *Indian Nations*, p. 132.

Judge Durfee, in his poem called "Whatcheer, or Roger Williams in Banishment," thus mentions the English under this name: —

"Ha! *Yengee*," said the Sachem, "wouldst thou go  
To soothe the hungry panther scenting blood?" — Canto III. 32.  
Base Wampanoag! we'll devour that clan,  
And drive the *Yengees* back o'er ocean blue. — Canto IV. 38.

An interesting article on this word in "Notes and Queries" (1852, p. 57), by Mr. T. Westcott, of Philadelphia, contains a letter from the Rev. Mr. Gordon, giving an account of the skirmishes at Concord and Lexington, in which he says: —

They [the British troops] were roughly handled by the *Yankees*, a term of reproach for the New Englanders, when applied by the regulars.

2. In New England, a glass of whiskey sweetened with molasses; a common beverage in the country.

You fine Miss Boston lady gay,  
For this your speech I thank ye,  
Call on me when you come this way,  
And take a dram of *Yankee*.

*Fessenden, Yankee Doodle Song.*

**Yankeedom.** A term, like the foregoing, applied at the South to New England.

At the celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, at Charlotte, North Carolina, in May, 1876, the Rev. S. S. Martin, D.D., delivered the oration, in which he made the following remarks: —

It is with mingled feelings of sorrow and satisfaction that I to-day recall the issues of 1860 and 1861. We all mourn the loss of our glorious dead and heroic fallen. The South is to-day ruled over by the miserable thrall of *Yankeedom*; but they cannot muzzle our chivalry and patriotic devotion to the lost cause. — *Cor. of N. Y. Times*, May 11, 1876.

*Yankeedom* region and rule of *Yankees*. Located as it is on the confines of Egypt and of *Yankeedom* in this State [Illinois], it has done a good work in both sections. — *Chicago Cor. of The Independent*.

**Yankee Doodle.** There has been much discussion as to the origin of the term *Yankee Doodle*, and of the well-known tune which bears this name, without coming as yet to any very satisfactory conclusion. In England, the air has been traced back to the time of Charles I.; and it appears that the doggerel verses that are sung

to it can claim nearly as respectable an antiquity. This, however, is not all. The song is said to be identical with one sung by the agricultural laborers in the Netherlands. Kossuth and his fellow Hungarians, when in this country, are said to have recognized it as one of the old national airs of their native land. And recently Mr. Buckingham Smith, our then Secretary of Legation at Madrid, has asserted that it is the ancient Sword Dance of the Biscayans.

You may talk about your "Dixie's Land,"

And sing it like a noodle:

The good old tune for North and South

Is famous *Yankee Doodle!* — *Song from the Rebellion Record.*

**Yankee Doodledom.** A term applied at the South to New England.

The following is from a poem on the "Death of Lincoln Despotism," which appeared in 1861: —

The Evans and his cavalry will follow in their track,  
And drive them in the Atlantic, or safely bring them back,  
And hold them till Abe Lincoln, and all his Northern scum,  
Shall own our independence of *Yankee Doodledom.*

*Richmond Despatch.*

**Yankeefied.** After the Yankee fashion; like a Yankee.

The Colonel whittled away at a bit of stick in the most *Yankeefied* way possible. — *A Stray Yankee in Texas*, p. 113.

**Yankeeland.** 1. New England. 2. The United States.

**Yardman.** A man employed in the yard of a railroad station.

**Yeath**, for *earth*. A vulgar pronunciation among the illiterate at the South.

Why, you don't look like the same man. I never should have know'd you. What upon *yeath* has brung you out so?" — *Major Jones's Sketches.*

**Yeathquake**, for *earthquake*. A Southern vulgarism, like the previous word.

The Girard College is all solid brick and marble. Fire can't get hold of wood enough to raise a blaze, and the walls are so thick and strong that nothin' short of Florida lightnin' or a South American *yeathquake* couldn't knock it down. — *Major Jones's Sketches.*

**Yellow.** A term applied to colored boys and girls whose complexion tends towards white; those of a darker hue are called "brown."

Law sakes, Miss Phillis, does you tink I has no sense? I hate a *yaller gal* as I do pizen. — *Sam Slick, Human Nature.*

**Yellow-Bird.** A small incessorial bird of the family of Fringillidæ, or finches (*Carduelis Americana* of Brisson). The summer plumage of the male is a rich lemon-yellow, with black wings and tail, the former tipped and edged with white. In winter, the yellow is changed to a brown olive. — *Wilson, Ornithology.*

**Yellow Boy.** Gold coin of any denomination.

**Yellow Cover.** (Pron. *yaller kiver*.) A notice of dismissal from government employment. So called from its being usually enclosed in a yellow envelope.

**Yellow-covered Literature.** The cheap sensation-novels and trashy magazines hawked by newsboys and abounding at railway stations; so called from the color of their covers, in which their publishers most delight to send them forth.

**Yellow-Hammer.** (*Picus auratus*.) The popular name of the Golden-winged Woodpecker, the most beautiful of the genus. It is known by other names in different parts of the country, as High-hole, Yacker, Clape, &c. See *Clape*.

**Yellow Jack.** A term for the yellow fever, which probably originated among seamen; a yellow flag (a flag being called a *jack*) being generally displayed at naval hospitals, or from vessels at quarantine, to denote the existence of contagious disease.

**Yellow Jacket.** A small wasp, well known for its terrible sting.

**Yellow Root.** (*Zanthorhiza apiifolia*.) A plant whose roots are used as a dye by the Indians, and for medical purposes. Also, *Hydrastis Canadensis*, Yellow Puccoon.

**Yellow-Throat.** A small singing bird of the warbler species.

**Yellow-Wood.** (*Cladrastis tinctoria*.) One of the handsomest flowering trees of the locust family, growing in mountainous regions of Kentucky and Tennessee. The wood is yellow, and is used for dyeing.

**Yengee.** The Indian form of "Yankee," being the nearest approach to the pronunciation of that word. See *Yankee*.

**Yerb.** Herb. Southern States. (Cf. Sp. *yerba*.)

**Yere.** A Southern pronunciation for *here*. The lower classes in England say "this 'ere thing." •

"Why is it, my son, that when you drop your bread and butter, it is always butter side down?"

"I don't know. It hadn't oughter, had it. The strongest side ought to be uppermost, hadn't it, ma? And this *yere* is the strongest butter I ever seed." — *Cairo (Illinois) Times*, Feb. 28, 1855.

**Yopon.** (*Ilex vomitoria*.) North Carolina tea. A plant indigenous to North Carolina; and when the leaves are dried by slow heat, and infused in water, it is used as a beverage. It is slightly intoxicating. It belongs to the same genus of plants as the celebrated *Maté* (*Ilex Paraguayensis*) of South America.

**You bet!** The most positive manner of affirmation. Be assured; certainly. The expression originated in California.

To little Harry, yesterday, —  
My grandchild, aged two, —  
I said, "You love Grandpa?" said he,  
"You bet your boots I do." — *Grandpa's Soliloquy*.

"Friend," said I to a Jehu, whose breath suggested gin,  
'Can thee convey me straightway to a reputable inn?'  
His answer's gross irrelevance I shall not soon forget,  
Instead of simply yea or nay, he gruffly said, "You bet."

*Buffalo Courier, A Mystified Quaker.*

Do you reckon a man has got as many lives as a cat? But *you bet* he's awful dead now. — *Mark Twain, Koughing It*, p. 333.

We find the following anecdote relating to the policy or measures of the new administration:—

"What we want is new men and new measures," said a politician to an old darkey. "Yes, dat's so, boss," said the ancient African: "de grocery man doesn't give us but bout nine quarts to de peck, and I goes in for de new measures, *you bet*."

**You don't!** For *you don't say so!* i. e. really! indeed! An exclamation of surprise. "Mr. Grimaldi threw a back somerset out of a three-story window." "Now, *you don't!*" or "You don't say."

**You'uns and We'uns.** For *you and we*. Developed during the late civil war.

We repeat the remark,  
And our language is square,  
That a man who is dark,  
And has kinks in his hair,  
Isn't coming to college with *we'uns*,  
And *we'uns* consent to be there.

*Princeton, of Princeton Coll., New Jersey.*

**Yuca.** The American name of the Mandioca or tapioca root; not to be confounded with the botanical genus *yucca* or Spanish bayonet (which see). A late book of travels in Mexico calls this plant "*eucre!*"

**Yucker.** See *Clape*.

## Z.

**Zanja.** (Span., pron. *than'-ha*.) A ditch or trench; sometimes used like the *acequias* for irrigating lands.

**Zanjero.** (Span., pron. *than-hé-ro*.) One whose duty it is to take charge of ditches, when used for purposes of irrigation.

**Zapote.** See *Sapote*.

**Zeewan.** See *Seawan*.



**Zu-zu.** A common name in the Union army for the *Zouaves*, during the late rebellion.

My love is a *Zu-zu* so gallant and bold;  
He's rough, and he's handsome, scarce nineteen years old.

*Comic Song.*

Once again! — the hours are fleeting;  
Drinking is the soldier's trick:  
Hark! the drum the roll-call's beating, —  
Scatter, *Zoo-zoos*, "double quick!"

*Song, The Zoo-zoo's Toast.*

## **A D D E N D A.**



## A D D E N D A.

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### A.

**Aboriginal.** A word often applied to an American Indian; and "aboriginals" for "aborigines." Comp. *Abergains*.

**Ahead.** To "get *ahead* of," to outwit or outdo, by superior sagacity or activity.

**Air-Hole.** Unfrozen spots in the ice in the main current of the St. Lawrence, which do not freeze. These openings left by nature enable the great ice-bridge at Montreal to hold.

**All-standing.** "He was brought up *all-standing*," i. e. was stopped suddenly and completely, when in full movement, after the manner of a ship running aground when under full sail.

**Anthracite.** See *Hard Coal*, in body of book.

**Apple-Sauce.** A sauce made of stewed apples. See *Apple-Butter*, in body of book.

**Astern of the Lighter.** An expression sometimes used to signify one's failure in an undertaking.

### B.

**Back Seat.** A position of inferior order. "He will have to take a *back seat*," said of a politician who has lost caste with his party.

**Backset.** Pressed upon from behind. — *Johnson*. A check to the progress of any thing. This obsolete word is coming into use again. Rev. Dr. Hopkins, in his letter to the "N. Y. Tribune," Nov. 24, 1877, on the advance of Ritualism, says:—

The popular view of the case is that the defeat of Dr. Seymour, and shortly after Dr. DeKoven, when successively elected to the Episcopate of Illinois, gave the whole Ritualistic movement such a *backset* that it is no longer dangerous.

He suffered the Israelites to be driven to the brink of the seas, *backset* with Pharaoh's whole power. — *Anderson, Exposition upon Benedictus*, fol. 71, 1573.

**Bad Egg.** An inveterate rascal; a hopelessly ill-disposed fellow; an irredeemably unfortunate speculation; in short, any person, animal, thing, or proceeding, devoid of any good feature.

**Bag of Wind.** A boastful, conceited fellow.

**Baker.** A small portable tin oven in which bread is baked. Mr. Webster calls this an Americanism.

**Bakes.** 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.

**Basilar.** Lower. "*Basilar* instincts;" "*basilar* powers." This is a great word with the Rev. H. W. Beecher. Originally with a physiological meaning.

**Bealmy.** A swelling. Pennsylvania (Ang.-Sax.) A boil, or a hot, inflamed tumor. — *Wright, Prov. Dic.*

**Begin.** "This fruit doesn't *begin* to compare with the other." "This novel doesn't *begin* to be as good," &c. These and similar expressions are very common.

No "breathing-ships" e'er will *begin* to supplant  
The ships rushed along by omnipotent steam.

*Wm. Boyd on Steam v. Hot Air, Boston Traveller, May 23, 1855.*

**Bell-Punch.** See *Gong-Punch*, in body of book.

**Bendolers.** "Running *bendolers*" is a phrase given by boys to the pastime of jumping from cake to cake of broken ice. See *Tiddlies*, in body of book.

**Better-best.** Any thing better than good, something better than the best. — *Rev. W. H. Channing.* This divine, in an address at the annual meeting, 1877, of the Boston Children's Mission to the Children of the Destitute, said:—

You know, Brother Collier put us second-best. I never like to be second-best. . . . Did you ever hear the word, "*the better-best*"? . . . And did not the question come to you, What was the *better best*? There is something better than good, something better than the best: it is the *better best*.

**Big Thing.** A grand speculation or profitable acquisition; an affair of special advantage.

**Black Diamonds.** Lumps, small or large, of anthracite coal.

**Blanket-waisted.** Cattle distinguished by a broad band of white hair completely encircling the body.

**Bloody Shirt.** (Omitted in its place.) See *Shirt*, in body of book.

**Blow-Bladder.** "A *blow-bladder* figure for it," a price inflated beyond all reason.

**Bob.** The carcass of a calf prematurely born; veal so immature that its sale is prohibited by law.

**Boston Crackers.** A favorite kind of cracker or biscuit made in Boston, which has a high reputation. See *Cracker 2*, in body of book.

**Bottle-Head.** (*S. Helvotica*.) The black-bellied plover; also called "beetle-head" and "green head."

**Bounce.** To get the *grand bounce* is to be dismissed from service; particularly from an office under government.

**To break for Taller Timber.** To leave one hiding-place for another more secure, as a wild animal or a criminal runs from a lesser covert to the woods.

**Brick-Top.** Same as *Sorrel-Top*, which see.

**Bullgine.** A cant term for a locomotive engine.

**Bull-Whacking.** Driving an ox-team.

You will find some graduate of Yale College *bull-whacking* his own team from the river to his mines, looking as if he had never seen soap and water. — *McClure, Rocky Mountains*, p. 102.

**Bureau.** (Fr., a writing-table.) A chest of drawers for clothes, &c., especially made an ornamental piece of furniture. This sense comes naturally from the original French word. — *Webster*. In England, the article is invariably called a "chest of drawers."

**To bushel.** (Germ. *büßen*, to mend.) To repair garments.

**Busheler, Bushelman.** From the verb *bushel*. A tailor's assistant, whose business it is to repair garments.

**Butter-Fingers.** A derisive term for a person awkward with the hands, as a lad unskilful in catching a ball.

**Butterfly.** A small bow of silk, satin, or other material, made for attachment to the collar-button, so as to serve the purpose of a cravat, without passing around the neck.

## C.

**To cadgel.** To cross-stitch. A familiar word in every household. Every woman who uses her needle knows what *cadgelling* is.

This very old English word is not found in any of the Dictionaries or Provincial Glossaries, except in those of Halliwell and Wright, who have *Cadge*, "to bind or to tie," a term in making bone-

lace. Both quote from Palsgrave: "I *cadge* a garment, I set lyses in the lynng to keep the plyghtes in order."

**Canada Thistle.** (*Cirsium (Carduus) arvense*.) A plant well known in Canada and in the United States. It first appeared in Canada, where it was probably introduced from France, as it is common in Normandy, and also in England.

**Cannuck or Canuck.** The following has been submitted as the meaning and origin of this word, as applied to Canadians:—

In the United States, the word "Yankee" means a New Englander; but, outside the Union, all the natives of the United States are so termed. So, in Canada, a "Cannuck" means a French Canadian, but, outside the Dominion, all the people of Canada. An intelligent French Canadian, on being asked, said: "The word 'Cannuck' is a corruption of 'Connaught.' 'Connaughts' are what we [the French Canadians] call the Irish."

**Carpet-Sweeper.** A roller to which hog's bristles are affixed for sweeping carpets.

**Carry me back.** Humorous way of saying, "Take me hence."  
At first from a negro song, which has this couplet,—

Oh, carry me back to Ole Virginny,  
To Ole Virginia's shore.

**Catch-Basin.** The receptacle beneath the grating of a sewer, to catch the dirt that is washed in.

**Cat's Foot!** An exclamation of disbelief. New England.

**Cattle-Ranch.** A plantation or farm where cattle are raised on a large scale, as in Texas and Colorado.

**Cavallada.** (Span.) The name universally given in Texas and along the Mexican frontier to a drove of horses or mules. Pron. *cavayard*. See *Cavallard*, in body of book.

**Cedar-Brake.** A dense thicket or wet place overgrown with cedar; also called a *Cedar Swamp*. Comp. *Cane-Brake*.

**Celestial.** A common term for the Chinese; China being called "The Celestial Empire."

**Cens et Rentes.** (Fr.) The annual rent or tax paid per agreement by the owner of land in a feudal district to the seigneur. Provenc. of Quebec. See *Censitaire* and *Lods et Ventés*.

(The feudal owner can now, if he chooses, compel the seigneur (*q. v.*, in body of book) to allow the property to be commuted, *i. e.* bought out and out, by the payment at time of sale of a certain

number of annual rents; the number, if the parties cannot agree, being settled by arbitrators.)

**Censitaire.** (Fr.) The owner of land which is subject to seigniorial or feudal tax. Province of Quebec. See *Cens et Rentes* and *Lods et Ventes*.

**Cheese it.** What bad boys exclaim to one another when a policeman is seen coming, i. e. run, scamper. It is an English slang expression, which Mr. Hotten thinks is a corruption of *cease*, "leave off or have done."

**Chin, Chinning.** Back-talk, impudence.

**Chin-Musio.** Impudent talk; flippant garrulity.

**Clatty.** Untidy. Pennsylvania. *Clattie*, nasty, dirty, defiled. — *Jamieson's Scottish Dic.*

**Cocky.** "He's *cocky*," i. e. he is aware of his importance. A college word.

**To coge or coag it.** One of the many phrases signifying the habitual and excessive use of ardent spirits.

**Cold Scald.** A double misfortune, as of a person who should be at once frozen and scalded.

**Colorado Beetle.** A bug, about half an inch in length, yellow striped with black. Usually called Potato Bug.

**Comb.** "To have one's *comb* cut" is to undergo mortification as a sequel to excessive pride.

**Come-as-you-come.** The name of a popular fireside amusement, wherein one person gives the others present the initial letter or letters of some object there visible, by which to guess to what object he refers.

**To come down.** To furnish money; e. g., "I would make the old man *come down* handsomely, if I was in Enoch's place."

"To *come down* a peg," to become less proud or less exacting.

"A great *come down*," a remarkable fall of price.

**Coming to Grief.** A sarcastic phrase significant of signal failure.

**Cord-Wood.** Wood cut and piled for sale by the cord, in distinction from long wood; especially wood cut to the length of four feet. — *Webster*.

**Corn-Balls.** Balls made of pop-corn and molasses, of which children are very fond.



**Corn-Crake.** (*Crex pratensis*.) A bird of the rail species, which frequents corn-fields; the Land-rail.

**Corn-Cutter.** A machine for cutting up the stalks of Indian corn for the food of cattle.

**Corn-House.** A wooden house, elevated about five feet above the ground, in order to keep out rats and squirrels, in which Indian corn is kept before it is shelled or taken from the cobs.

**Corn-Mill.** A mill for grinding Indian corn; a grist-mill.

**Corn-Popper.** An instrument the top of which is like a sieve, in which corn is held over a fire to roast or "pop." See *Pop-Corn*, in body of book.

**Cotton-Gin.** A machine invented by Eli Whitney, of New Haven, Conn., in 1792-93, for the separation of cotton from the seed.

**To crack.** To defraud by forging and by negotiating worthless checks and drafts.

It is said that certain New York rascals intend to *crack* the Quebec merchants this winter. — *Boston Journal*.

**Cracksman.** A man engaged in forging notes, bills of exchange, bank-checks, &c.

**Crawl through.** "To *crawl through* a knot-hole" is to get out of a difficulty in a mean way.

**Creep.** A stool. Pennsylvania. *Creepie*, *creepy*, a low stool. — *Jamieson's Scottish Dic.*

It's a wise wife that kens her weird,  
What tho' ye mount the *creepy*.

*Ramsay's Poems*, I. 273.

**Cut and Dried.** Contrived beforehand, in a secret or unfair manner. A phrase often used in reference to caucuses, and the like.

## D.

**Darn burn it.** A toned-down form of swearing in Texas. Comp. *Dod rot it*.

**Dead Loads** (of a thing). Great quantities or numbers of any thing.

**Demi-Meamelouc.** The variety of Negro which springs from a white and a meamelouc. See *Negro*, in body of book.

**To demonetize.** The act of rendering any description of money which by law had been a legal tender to be no longer so. Thus,

in June, 1874, Congress passed an act of which the following is a section:—

The silver coins of the United States shall be a legal tender at their nominal value, for any amount not exceeding five dollars, in any one payment.

This has been called the *demonetization* of silver. See *Remonetize*.

It is urged by many that silver was practically *demonetized* by the act of 1854, which undervalued it; by others, that it was practically *demonetized* by the act of 1853, authorizing subsidiary silver coins. . . . If silver was then already *demonetized*, the persistency of the efforts to secure the passage of a law to *demonetize* it appears remarkable. — *Report of Monetary Commission to Senate of U. S., March 2, 1877, p. 91.*

As money, the silver dollar had become obsolete years before the "*demonetization*," of which we hear so much. But we do not need statistics to prove that so inconvenient a coin could never be used in large amounts as currency. — *Philadelphia Times*, Nov. 17, 1877.

**Discount.** Disparity between the reality and the representation made, for the most part used in connection with a negative; as, "There is no *discount* on THAT statement."

**Doe-Bird.** (*Numenius borealis*.) The Esquimaux Curlew. New England.

**Dollar of the Fathers.** A cant expression used in the Congress of the United States (Nov., 1877) by the advocates for the "*remonetization*" of the silver dollar and making it a legal tender. This sentimental catch-phrase, which has been the battle-cry of the movement, expresses its absurdity.

Of all the unreasoning agitations of recent years, the demand for the *dollar of the fathers* has been the most unreasoning and absurd. . . . There are people who must have "cheap money" of some kind, and, when they could not get cheap greenbacks, they hit upon silver as a cheaper thing; and the "*dollar of the fathers*" is to be put through [Congress] with a shout. — *Philadelphia Times*, Nov. 10, 1877.

The cry of the "*Dollar of the Daddies*" has not been a fortunate one for those who reiterated it. The case is far too serious for ridicule. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1877.

Three-fourths of the people of the South and West are in favor of silver money, and they clamor for the "*dollar of our fathers*." — *N. Y. Herald*.

The "*Philadelphia Times*" (Nov. 17) in an article on what they call the "*Silver Swindle*" says:—

It is commonly assumed in the discussion of the silver question that the old silver dollar, the *dollar of the fathers*, was a very popular coin; that the people have been unjustly deprived of its use, and that it ought to be restored to them. The truth is, that there never was any real demand for silver dollars as currency; and it is not possible that there ever can be, except in semi-barbarous countries, where the value of money is estimated by its bulk.

**Dry up!** An admonitory exclamation, sometimes uttered by the audience, especially at public gatherings, when a speaker is tedious or otherwise offensive, which thus abruptly requires him to cease speaking.

**Dunky.** Ill proportioned; of clumsy shape, in the special sense of over-thickness.

**Dust.** Money. Used in the phrase, "Down with your *dust*!" Common in England, and a very old expression.

Dean Swift once took for his text, "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." His sermon was short. "Now, my brethren," said he, "if you are satisfied with the security, down with the *dust*."

**To dust.** The equivalent of "to make tracks." "*Dust* out of this!" i. e., go off! In England, they say "to raise a *dust*."

## E.

**Easy-going.** Said of a person who is careless of contingencies, slow to take offence, and in his habits carries to an extreme the proverb that "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

**Ebony.** A common term for a Negro.

**Emptyings.** "To run *emptyings*" is where a speaker or a writer continues to speak or write after he has delivered himself of every thing of any consequence. See this word in body of book.

## F.

**Fat.** Any thing desirable, as a *fat* office under the government.

**Feel pale.** To *feel pale* is a humorous way of saying that one is sick.

**To flint in.** To begin doing something, as to work or to eat, energetically and without ceremony.

## G.

**Gang-Saw.** A collection of large saws hung together in a frame or sash, and set at fixed distances apart corresponding with the thickness of the log to be cut. They are now used at all large saw-mills in Maine, Canada, and the West, and do great execution. The logs pass in endless procession from out the water, through the gangs; and thence forward as lumber, from the mill to the dock, ready for shipment.

**Garden Truck.** Vegetables raised for market. See *Truck*, in body of book.

**Gas-Bag.** A person who habitually parades and prates of his own importance or cognate topics.

**Gear up.** To harness. Pennsylvania. *Gears*, horse-trappings.—*Wright, Prov. Dic.*

**Get off.** To utter, to deliver. “He *got off* a great speech in Congress.”

**Ghost of a Chance.** Not the least probability. “Mr. Hayes has not the *ghost of a chance* of being our next President;” i. e., he has no chance at all. A common expression of the President’s opponents.

**Glakid.** Dull, stupid. Pennsylvania. *Glaikit*, unsteady, giddy, stupid.—*Jamieson, Scottish Dic.*

Quhattane ane *glakit* fule am I,  
To slay myself with melancholy,  
Sen weill I ken I may nocht get hir?

*Scott, Chron. S. P. iii. 170.*

Hear me, ye venerable core,  
As counsel for poor mortals,  
That frequent pass dounce Wisdom’s door  
For *glakit* Folly’s portals!

*Burns’s Address to the Unco Guid.*

**Gone where the Woodbine twineth.** “Up the spout.” Pawned; hypothecated. A noted character, the late James Fisk, Jr., is credited with the authorship of this oft-quoted expression.

**Granger.** The origin and use of this word, now so frequently met with, are substantially as follows: A few years since, throughout the “grain-growing States,” a movement was initiated for the organization of the agricultural interests, with the professed object of benefiting them both directly and indirectly. This was proposed to be effected by so purchasing various needful supplies as to dispense with “middlemen;” by taking measures to enhance, by friendly legislation and otherwise, the *net* avails of his products to the producer; and in other ways to lessen his burdens and increase his revenues. The associations formed on this basis were called “Granges” (from *grange*, a granary, &c.), and the members were termed “Grangers.”

These societies multiplied, and their membership was very extensive. They became “a power in the land,” often nominating distinctive candidates, and frequently electing them; while on some occasions they favored nominees put forward by the political parties of the day, whose success was not seldom due to the support thus

derived. At the present time (close of 1877), the political importance of the "Grangers" has become largely diminished.

With their accustomed aptitude for giving a flippancy term to a new word, the newspapers of the cities soon began to use this one to signify a *countryman*; and it is now often employed instead of the familiar paraphrase, "a gentleman from the rural districts."

**Great Plenty.** Well supplied; enough. "Shall I help you to another cup of tea?" "No, thank you: I have had *great plenty*."

**Griffe.** See *Negro*, in body of book.

**G. T. T.** More than a generation ago, a common joke—one of the commonest—represented that when an insolvent debtor, or a rough who had been engaged in an "unpleasantness," or any other loafer who had changed his home, wished to leave warning behind him where he had gone, he chalked upon his door the letters G. T. T. These letters were in no sort mysterious: they meant, and were understood to mean, "Gone to Texas."—*E. E. Hale, Wonderful Adv. of a Pullman*, p. v.

**Gums.** See *Rubbers*, in body of book.

## H.

**Handle.** *To slip off the handle* is to die.

If Old Cranberry was to *slip off the handle*, I think I should make up to [his daughter], for she is a most heavenly spice.—*Sam Slick, Attaché in England*, p. 177.

*To fly off at the handle* is to lose one's temper on a slight provocation.

**The Hardest fends off.** A phrase signifying that, if a conflict *must* take place, he who has most endurance will fare the best.

**Hard Names.** Calling people hard names is abusing them in words.

**Hay-Tedder.** A machine for spreading grass after it is cut.

**Hellion.** A rascal so thoroughly and inveterately bad that he ought never to be out of confinement.

**Hen-Clam.** The Broad Sea-clam. (*Macta gigantea*.) Common on the shores of New England.

**Highbinder.** In California, a spy, a detective. "What do you mean by *highbinders*?" said Senator Sargent to a witness before the committee on Chinese emigration. *Ans.* "I mean men who are employed by the China companies here to hound and spy upon the Chinese, and pursue them. I have often heard it applied to bad

men. Sometimes they are employed to assassinate Chinese." — *Report on Chinese Immigration*. See also this word in the body of the book.

If a Chinaman has broken his contract, and attempts to leave San Francisco, . . . he will be forcibly stopped at the steamer on the day of sailing by the large force of the company's *highbinders*, who can be always seen guarding them. — *Report of Committee on Chinese Immigration*, 1877, p. 94.

**Hog-Ranch.** A ranch or farm where particular attention is given to the raising of hogs. Texas. Comp. *Cattle-Ranch*.

**Homely.** Of plain features; not handsome. — *Webster*. In England, it means that which appertains to home; also plain, unpretending, rude in appearance, as a *homely* garment. Yet we have an example of English use precisely like our own.

It is observed by some that there are none so *homely* but loves a looking-glass. *Swiŕ.*

**Hoodlum.** Since the article on the Hoodlums of San Francisco, which appears in the body of this work, was written, the following accounts of the origin of the term have appeared: —

The Los Angeles (California) "Express" (of Aug. 25, 1877), on the authority of a reporter of a San Francisco paper, says: "A gang of bad boys from 14 to 19 years of age was associated for the purpose of stealing. These boys had a place of rendezvous; and, when danger threatened them, their words of warning were, "Huddle 'em, Huddle 'em"! An article headed "Huddle 'em," describing the gang and their plan of operations, was published in the San Francisco "Times." The name applied to them was soon contracted into "*Hoodlum*."

The San Francisco "Morning Call," of Oct. 27, 1877, has a communication from a "Pioneer," who thus describes the origin of the word: —

Before the late war, there appeared in San Francisco a man whose dress was very peculiar. The boys took a fancy to it, and, organizing themselves into a military company, adopted in part the dress of this man. The head-dress resembled the fez, from which was suspended a long tassel. The *gamins* called it a "hood," and the company became known as the "hoods." The rowdy element in the city adopted much of the dress of the company referred to, who were soon after designated as "hoodlums."

Another writer in the same paper says the term was first applied to certain girls who always wore a covering for their heads which resembled a hood, from which they were called the "hoodlum girls."

**Hope I see you.** I am glad to see you.

**Hornswoggle.** Foolery, deception. Western. The "Philadelphia Times" (Nov. 5, 1877), in defining the word *skullluggery*, says, "Its best Eastern equivalent is *shenanigan*, although the less complicated word *hornswoggling* rather directly translates it." See *Shenanigan*.

**Horse-Rake.** A rake worked by horse-power, now in general use, especially where mowing-machines are used.

**House-Raising.** The operation of setting up the frame of a wooden building. See *Raising Bee*, in body of book.

**Humility.** (*Limosa*.) The marbled Godwit, a bird that frequents fens and the banks of rivers. New England.

**Hung on Wires.** Said of a nervous or fidgety person.

**Hypantol.** An imaginary ailment; hypochondria.

## I.

**Inflationist.** A term applied to those who favor increased issues of paper money; who are opposed to the resumption of specie payment in 1879, as provided by law; and of those who advocate the remonetization of silver, in order to make it a legal tender. See *Remonetization*.

The New York "Tribune" of Nov. 20, 1877, says:—

Publish the names of the *inflationists*. . . . Let a list be printed of all those Senators and Representatives who have voted and will vote in favor of *inflation* and repudiation in any form, all opponents of the Resumption Act, all advocates of Bland's Silver Bill, and so on. . . . I would have them placed in this public pillory as men who have betrayed their trust and their country.

**Ink-Slinger.** One who habitually writes for publication; particularly an editor or reporter of a newspaper.

**Inside Track.** Some advantage peculiar to the person in connection with whom the expression is used; as, "Robinson had the *inside track* in the whole speculation."

**Ivory Nut.** A species of palm, the *Phytelephas macrocarpa*. When young, the seed contains a fluid which gradually hardens into a whitish, close-grained, albuminous substance, resembling the finest ivory in texture and color, and is often wrought into ornamental work. The nuts are known in commerce as *Corosso nuts*. — *Webster*.

## J.

**Jack-Stone.** A metal toy, consisting of several arms with globular termini. It is so tossed and caught that the player may keep as many of the toys as possible in motion at the same time.

**Jack-Straws.** Slender bits of wood, bone, or ivory, fashioned into various shapes, for playing a game of the same name. They are marked with different numbers, and are dropped in a promiscuous heap, from which each player draws in turn, until he moves some other "jack-straw" than that which he attempts to extricate. The winner is he whose aggregate of numbers is the highest. "Spellikins" or "Spellicans" is another term for this amusement.

**Jeff.** Among printers in their workshops, to throw "quads,"—a certain kind of type which they use as dice. See *Shake*, in body of book.

**Jump.** "On the jump" is to be occupied in a manner requiring constant activity.

## K.

**Kingdom Come.** "He's gone to *kingdom come*," i. e. he is dead.

**Knight of the Yard-Stick.** A retail dry-goods clerk; a "counter-jumper."

**Knowledgeable.** Educated, intelligent. — *H. W. Beecher*. Common among the uneducated of Ireland.

## L.

**Labor.** (Span.) One of the land-measures of Texas, where the Spanish measures of leagues, labors, and varas are universal.

A *labor* is equal to  $177\frac{1}{4}$  acres, or one million square varas.

**Leaky Vessel.** A person who does not keep secrets.

**To lie low.** To keep quiet and reticent till all occasion for so doing has passed.

**Light here!** Come here! A phrase particularly in use on the Western rivers.

**Live Man.** One who is remarkably active and energetic. "We want a *live man* for the place, — none of your moping, indolent sort."



**Live Oak.** (*Quercus vivens*.) A variety of oak growing in the Southern States, of great durability and much used in ship-building.

**Live Paper.** A term applied to business notes-of-hand. The banks, in discounting, prefer "*live paper*," meaning notes that will be paid at maturity, and not such as will be renewed, or their payment prolonged.

**Lods et Ventés.** (Fr.) When an owner of land which is held under feudal tenure sells the same, one-twelfth of the proceeds goes, by old French law, to the seigneur. This is called *lods et ventes*. Province of Quebec. See *Censitaire* and *Cens et Rentes*.

**Low-Gear.** A vehicle of which the portion to receive the load is placed below the axles, in order that heavy articles may be put on and off with greater facility.

## M.

**Magnolia.** So called after *Pierre Magnol*, Professor of Botany at Montpellier, France. A tree bearing large, fragrant, white flowers, growing in the Southern States. Michaux mentions thirteen varieties of the tree, of which eight belong to North America and five to China and Japan. In China, it figures as the symbol of candor and of beauty. — *North Am. Sylva*.

**Make-up.** The whole as distinguished from the several parts composing it; the equivalent of the French *tout ensemble*.

An actor's *make-up* means the artificial manner in which he is is apparelled, painted, &c., for the stage.

**Man-Fashion.** In a manly, straightforward manner.

Also, riding astraddle, in distinction from the feminine use of a side-saddle.

**May-Flower.** A flower that blooms in May. In England, it is the hawthorn; in New England, it is the trailing arbutus (*Epigæa repens*).

**Meamelouc.** The offspring of a white and métis or octoroon, being  $\frac{1}{16}$  black. See *Negro*, in body of book.

**Mesquit-Grass.** *Barbed Mesquit*. A species of grass, from two to three feet in height, found in Western Texas. It is a favorite winter grass, and is much sought for by stock of all kinds.

*Hog-Wallow Mesquit*. A species of grass, used only to be found in the hog-wallows of Texas, but which is now rapidly spreading

itself along the road-sides, and carpeting all the old roads and other spots and places of ground which have been denuded of other grasses, with a thickly crowded coat of extremely fine, nutritious pasturage for every type of graminivorous animals. In appearance, it closely resembles the Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*). Except on suitably moist grounds, it is not large enough to make hay of; as it does not, on ordinary soil, exceed three to six inches in height. — *Emigrant's Guide to Western Texas*, p. 44.

See this term in body of book.

**Métice or Métif.** See under "*Mestee or Mustee*," in body of book.

**Minute-Man.** A man enlisted for service wherever required, and ready to march at a moment's notice, — a term used in the American Revolution. — *Webster*.

**Miss.** To miss a figure is to commit a serious blunder. The newspapers, in speaking of Mr. Ewing's plans to get through his bill for the repeal of the "resumption act," said, "He missed a figure that time," i. e. he failed to carry his point.

**Moons.** *Moon of Bright Nights*, April; *Moon of Leaves*, May; *Moon of Strawberries*, June; *Moon of the Falling Leaves*, September; *Moon of Snow-shoes*, November. — *H. W. Longfellow, in Hiawatha*.

**Mournsome.** Sad, dejected, mournful.

As we were shoving off, the old man came down the hill and stopped us, — "guessed" as we were doctors we ought to be paid. "Well," said he, "you done us a heap of good, and we was kind of mournsome before you come." I felt that the new word *mournsome* was worth many fees, so guessed, in reply, that we wouldn't take any thing. — *S. W. Mitchell's Nurse and Patient*, p. 52.

**Mud-Hook.** An anchor. "Drap mud-hook," i. e. cast anchor.

**Mustafina.** Same as *Meamelouc*, which see. See also *Mulatto*, in body of book.

**My! or Oh, My!** An exclamation used chiefly by women.

## N.

**New Orleans Moss.** (*Tillandsia usneoides*.) A moss which hangs from the boughs of trees in Louisiana, giving to the landscape a weird-like appearance. The fibre, which it yields in abundance, is an excellent substitute for curled hair, and is used in the South almost exclusively for mattresses, cushions, &c. After being rotted, a process which requires five or six months, it is cleaned, dried, and

baled for market. Cattle eat the moss with avidity, and thrive upon it. Also called Texas Moss, as it is equally abundant in that State. In common parlance, it is called *Old Man's Beard*.

**Not Much.** "He is *not much*," i. e. of no consequence, or, as they would say in England, "no great shakes."

## O.

**Old Man's Beard.** A moss hanging from the boughs of most trees in Louisiana and Texas. See *New Orleans Moss*.

**Oneida Community.** A society of Communists living in Oneida County, New York; founded by John Humphrey Noyes, a native of Vermont, who, after studying theology at Andover and New Haven, announced himself a "Perfectionist." He is the author of several books illustrative of his peculiar faith, one of which is called "Bible Communism." The society practises community of women as well as of goods, maintaining the equality of women with men in social and business life; the members are engaged in manufactures, and carry on a profitable farming. They support two printing-offices.

**Oughtness.** The Rev. Joseph Cook defines the office of conscience to be "the determination of rightness and *oughtness* in human affairs."

**Owe you One.** "I *owe you one*" means that I will retaliate for some advantage which another has obtained, or for an injury done.

**Oyster-Plant.** (Genus *Tragopogon*.) Salsify; a plant, the root of which, when cooked, resembles the oyster in taste. Also called *Vegetable Oyster*.

## P.

**Parient.** A humorous way of saying "parent." It was much used by song-writers during the late civil war.

Oh, sorely, sorely did they grieve!  
The cruel *parient's* heart  
Inflexible as stone remained,  
And they were torn apart. — *St. Nicholas*.

**Patron.** One who gives business patronage or countenance to a particular railway, steamboat, hotel, &c.; who buys his liquors, cigars, &c., or who encourages any particular establishment, is called its patron. The original meaning of a patron is one who countenances, supports, or protects.

While one of the best-read lawyers in Worcester County was reading a brief to the Supreme Court at Worcester the other day, he used the phrase "patrons of the Boston and Albany Railroad." "What do you mean by the word *patrons*?" inquired Chief Justice Gray. The lawyer explained that he meant people who patronized the road,—its customers. The Judge then suggested that he should use a word that conveyed that idea, and explained that "patron" had no such signification, and that the State is, strictly speaking, the only patron of the road. — *Boston paper*.

**Peltrist.** A seller of finished peltries; a vendor of manufactured furs. *W. Boyd, in Swartzen, a Fur-Poem, 1865.*

**Period.** "*The Period*;" the present time as distinguished from all other ages of the world, past or future. The terms "Girl of the *Period*," "Youth of the *Period*," &c., are employed in a sarcastic sense.

**Pigeon English.** The dialect of the English which is peculiar to the Chinese.

**To pigeon-hole.** To put away memoranda, documents, or other papers for ready access, although it may be long before they are wanted. The Departments at Washington receive applications and complaints which they are said to "*pigeon-hole*," i. e. lay them aside, never to be removed or acted upon.

**To pineapple the Head.** To trim the hair of the whole head very close and uniformly; to "shingle" the hair.

**Pine-Knot.** (*Mergallus alle.*) The Little Auk. New England.

**Plenty.** The antithesis of the term *Scarce*, in its cant sense, which see. "He has not been very *plenty* round here lately;" that is, "He has seldom or not been here recently."

**Podunk.** A term applied to an imaginary place in burlesque writing or speaking.

**Post Oak.** (*Quercus obtusiloba.*) An oak found in the Middle States, used for knees in ship-building.

**Pull through.** To escape disaster by a combination of energy and fortitude, notwithstanding difficulties.

**To put a Head on.** To bruise one's head; and, figuratively, to swell. See same expression in body of book.

Gave utterance to whines and frets;  
Nay, there were times when he made threats  
That on you he would *put a head*,  
Or he would "bust your snoot" instead.

*Albert R. Cooke's Poems.*

**Put-up Job.** A proceeding injurious to one party, and the result of the secret machinations of another, especially when the former has relied on the good faith of the latter.

**Put up to.** Instigated, incited.

## Q.

**Quateroon.** Same as *Quadroon*. See *Negro*, in body of book.

## R.

**Racker.** A kind of pacing horse.

**Rag.** A jesting or contemptuous term for a flag. Thus, the Confederate flag was often termed by Unionists "the Rebel rag."

**Rag Baby, The.** A burlesque term for the policy advocated by the "Greenbackers" (q. v.); a designation applied in ridicule to currency inflation as a panacea for financial ills, and advocated on that ground by a faction, as a matter of surpassing importance.

**'Rah! 'rah! 'rah!** The formula for a cheer by the students of Harvard College, Cambridge.

**Rattle-Trap.** A building or house of poor construction, or one in a decayed condition.

**Reach.** The pole, or its equivalent, connecting the forward with the hinder wheels of a wagon or other four-wheeled vehicle.

**Reaper.** An instrument drawn by horses or mules for cutting various kinds of grain; sometimes called a Reaping-machine.

**Red Coats.** British soldiers.

**To remonetize.** To restore and make a legal tender any description of money which had at a previous time been such tender. By an act of Congress of June, 1874, silver ceased to be a legal tender on all sums above \$5. *To remonetize* silver is to make it again a legal tender, by restoring it to its former value.

Mr. Bland, of Missouri, in discussing the bill before Congress for the *remonetization* of silver, with a committee from New York, said:—

You bankers had better accept my bill to *remonetize* silver; for I warn you that, unless this bill becomes a law, we will come to the next Congress, and, as with a sponge, we will wipe out all your bonds. — *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 16, 1877.

Senators Conkling, Kernan, and Bayard are decidedly opposed to the *remonetization* of silver, and will do all in their power to prevent the passage of a silver bill that does not protect the honor and credit of the Government. — *Ibid.*

**Restorator.** The keeper of a restaurant, or house of refreshment.

**Rip.** "An old *rip*." A rake, a libertine. Corruption of *reprobate*, English. A person, reading the letters R. I. P. (*Requiescat in Pace*) on the top of a tombstone as one word, said, soliloquizing: "Rip! well, he was an old *rip*, and no mistake." — *Cuthbert Bede*.

**Rocking-Chair.** A chair mounted on rockers, so as to swing backwards and forwards.

Before [the fender], swinging himself in a *rocking-chair*, lounged a large gentleman with his hat on. — *Dickens, Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xvii.

**Ropes.** To "know the *ropes*" is a figurative expression for being well versed in a given matter, as sailors on ship-board are fully acquainted with all parts of the rigging.

**Rough.** In the nature of a hardship or of an imposition; as, "That was rather *rough* on Jones, about his son's going off without letting him know of it."

**To rough.** To chaff. "You're *roughing* me."

**Round in.** In Texas, they say "round in" for take in, include. "In my tour, I will *round in* Espartero's ranch."

**Rub and go.** Nothing to spare. "The Cambridge boat came in ahead; but it was a *rub and go*." A narrow avoidance of a contrary result. Comp. *Touch and go*.

## S.

**To salt down.** To make provision for the future; as, "When they opened the will, they found he had *salted down* some 5-20's that he had not told them about."

**Sand in the Wheels.** Unexpected difficulties preventing the execution of a project.

*To throw sand in the wheels.* To cast obstructions in the way of an undertaking.

**Sang-Méle.** The offspring of a white and octoroon, being  $\frac{1}{4}$ th black. See *Negro*, in body of book.

**Sap-Boiling.** The boiling of sap from maple-trees, for the purpose of making sugar, is a great event among farmers who possess a sugar-bush or sugar-orchard, which see. "The boys are all going to the *sap-bilen* next week."

**Scalping-Knife.** A broad-bladed knife worn by frontiersmen and Indians.

. . . . He dashed the weapon down,  
And, leaping from the rock upon the glade,  
With glittering *scalping-knife* and haughty frown,  
Before the assailant stood.

*Durfee, Whatcheer, Canto VII. 53.*

At night, before his bed he'll seek,  
With countenance forlorn  
He takes his *scalping-knife*, and eke  
He trims the Indian corn.

*Burlington Hawkeye, Nov., 1877.*

**Sap-Gag.** A trifling, empty-headed fellow.

**Say!** or **I say!** An exclamation by way of calling attention to subsequent words of the speaker; as, "*Say!* Boy, throw that whip up here." "*I say!* Stranger, won't you give us a lift here a minute."

**Scapulaire.** (Fr.) A small, consecrated image of metal, suspended from the neck next or near the person, as a supposed preservative against accident or harm. Province of Quebec.

**Set up.** Intoxicated. "He came from the liquor-shop pretty well *set up*."

**Seven-Shooter.** A revolver with seven barrels, now much used on the Western frontier. See *Shooter*, in body of book.

**Sewing-Machine.** A machine of American invention for performing the labor of sewing. The most important part of the machine is the placing of the eye of the needle near the point.

**Scribblement.** Either a contemptible or a humorous way of naming writings. Comp. *Hurrygraph*.

**Scuff.** To rub the feet against the ground or floor, either while walking or standing.

**Shaded.** A term frequently used in market reports, to signify a slight falling off in prices, without a definite reduction; as, "Prices were somewhat *shaded* at the close."

**Shaker.** One of a religious denomination, styled the "United Society," which first rose in Lancashire, England, in the year 1747. In the account which the Shakers give of themselves, they mention the Quakers in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and the French prophets of a later date, as being the first who had a peculiar testimony from the Lord to deliver to the Christian world. But they complain that the former degenerated, losing that desire of love and power with which they first set out; and, the latter being of short continuance, their extraordinary communications have long ago ceased. This

testimony was revived in the persons of James Wardley, a tailor by trade, and Jane his wife, who wrought at the same occupation. They had belonged to the society of Shakers; but receiving the spirit of the French prophets, and a further degree of light and power, by which they were separated from that community, they continued for several years disconnected from every denomination. During this time, their testimony, according to what they saw by vision and revelation from God, was, "That the second appearing of Christ was at hand, and that the church was rising in her full and transcendent glory, which would effect the final downfall of Anti-Christ."

From the shaking of their bodies in religious exercises, they were called *Shakers*, and some gave them the name of *Shaking Quakers*.

In 1757, Ann Lee joined the Society by confessing her sins to Jane Wardley. In 1772, she professed to have received a revelation from God to repair to America. Accordingly, as many as firmly believed in her testimony, and could settle their temporal concerns, and could furnish necessaries for the voyage, concluded to follow her. They arrived in New York in 1774, and in 1776 removed to Watervliet, near Albany, where a society was established, which still exists. From this society have grown communities at New Lebanon, N. Y., Wayne county, N. Y.; one in Connecticut; two in Ohio; two in Kentucky; and one in Indiana. — *Rapp's Religious Denominations in the U. S.*

**Shaking Quaker.** A member of the religious sect called *Shakers*, which see.

**Sharpey.** A species of boat used on some portions of the Atlantic coast. Long Island.

**Shook up.** "He 's considerably *shook up*," i.e. greatly agitated.

**Should die.** Among immature maidens, a common exclamation, at the recounting of almost every trivial occurrence, is, "I laughed so that I thought I *should die*."

**Sight.** Prospect, favorable probability; as, "Hopkins has no *sight* for getting the office;" "Smith thought he had a good *sight* for selling his horse."

**To sing out.** To shout lustily; *e. g.*, "When Bill found the horse was too much for him, he *sung out* like a good fellow for Tom to help him."



**To sing small.** To substitute a subdued tone for a previous blustering manner; *e. g.*, "Jenkins commenced to order everybody round, but the 'Squire made him *sing small* after he came."

**Sit.** A situation. A printer's short term for steady employment.

**Sixty.** For some occult reason, this number is used by many persons, apparently to supply the lack of a ready comparison; as, "He scolded like *sixty* because the job wasn't done."

**Skin of his Teeth.** A narrow chance; a very close escape. "He got in by the *skin of his teeth*." The phrase "skin of my teeth" occurs in Job xix. 20.

**Skullduggery.** Nonsense, foolery.

This word having been employed by a letter-writer in Washington, much curiosity was manifested by the press to know its meaning. The "Philadelphia Times" (Nov. 5, 1877) says: "It is a very good and very common word in the West. It is a favorite in the best society there; and the meaning is very simple, and well understood by educated minds. Its best Eastern equivalent probably is *Shenanigan*," which see in body of book. See also *Missouri-isms*, in same place.

**To slip up.** To completely fail in any undertaking.

**Sly-Boots.** A nickname applied in *quasi* good humor to a person who is reputed to be as cunning as he is demure.

**To snap up.** 1. To take angry and unreasonable exception to another's remark; as, "Jenkins *snapped me right up* for saying any thing about those potatoes."

2. To possess one's self of something promptly and eagerly, upon opportunity given; as, "Brown *snapped up* every pound of butter that came to market."

**Soft-Horn.** A weak, credulous person.

**Soirée.** A church "sociable;" also any public social gathering. Canada.

**Sore-Head.** A political term applied to those who, from disappointment in selfish aims, are disaffected towards the faction with which they have previously been identified.

**Sorrel Top.** A derisive appellation for a red-haired person.

**Spindigo.** Overtaken by a disastrous result; *e. g.*, "He came out *spindigo*," said of a person who entered into a speculation.

**Spoiling for a Fight.** Impatient to fight some one for the sake of fighting; eager for a contest.

**Sponge.** *To throw up the sponge* is an expression which belongs to the slang of prize-fighters; to the "ring" proper, or circle around which pugilists assemble for a fight. On these occasions, a sponge is used to wipe the blood as it flows from the bleeding contestants. Hence, to "throw up the sponge," in the language of the ring, is to use it no longer, thereby acknowledging a defeat, and that the party which ceased to use the sponge is vanquished. The following example will show that the expression has been adopted by religious contestants:—

In a letter from the Rev. Dr. J. H. Hopkins to the "N. Y. Tribune," Nov. 24, 1877, on the advancement of Ritualism, that eminent writer and divine says:—

The leading Ritualistic parishes go on with their Ritualistic services, and teach their Ritualistic doctrines without molestation. Bishop Stevens tried to coerce St. Clement's, Philadelphia (not under the Ritual Canon, however), and finally *flung up the sponge* in despair.

**Spudgel.** To rush; to move swiftly; to dash off.

**Squeal.** To give up in any undertaking or game; to "throw up the sponge," which see.

**Squealer.** (*Charadrius Virginianus*.) The Golden Plover. New England. See *Tattler*, in body of book.

**Squunch.** To stoop or lie down; to squeeze one's self within the smallest compass.

**St! boom! ah!** These syllables or characters stand for the sounds by which the students of Princeton College end a series of cheers. The sounds uttered are intended to represent the loud fizzing through the air of a rocket, the rocket's subsequent explosion, and the clamorously expressed surprise of the spectators at such explosion.

**Stand Sam.** To "Stand Sam" is to pay for liquor, refreshment, or any thing else; to pay for the entertainment of one's friends. The expression was much used by our soldiers during the late civil war. By "Sam" was meant "Uncle Sam," i. e. the United States. Hotten says the expression was used in England as early as 1827. — *Slang Dic.* See *Stand Treat*.

**State's-Prison Bird.** A criminal who has been sentenced to the State's Prison; notably, one whose career renders him liable to and emphatically deserving of constant confinement.

**Steady by Jerks.** This is explanatory of itself.

**Stick a Pin.** "I'll *stick a pin* there," i. e. I'll make a note of it, I'll bear it in mind.

**Straight-haired.** Honest, upright, reliable, "square."

**Street-Yarn.** *To spin street-yarn*; to gad about in an idle manner; to frequent the streets without any definite object.

**Sub.** A substitute. A word in constant use among printers to denote one engaged by another to fill the permanent situation of the latter while he is temporarily off duty. "He *subbed* in Boston for a while;" that is, obtained casual employment there in this way.

**Suds.** *In the suds* is to be actually engaged in a manner unsuited to receive visitors, as a woman would be at the wash-tub.

**Sweat.** A condition of great mental excitement, reacting upon the physical system; a degree of concern so deep as to induce perspiration; as, "I will make him *sweat* for his conduct." Used in the same sense in England.

Nor did he ever once repeat

The prank that gave him such a *sweat*.

Albert R. Cooke's *Poems*.

## T.

**Taking.** Excitement, undue emotion; as, "I found Jerry in a terrible *taking* about his brother's failure."

**Territory.** In the United States, a portion of the country not included within the limits of any State, and not admitted as a State into the Union, but organized by a separate legislature, under a territorial governor and other officers appointed by the President and Senate of the United States. — *Webster*.

**Tip-Cart.** A two-wheeled vehicle, so constructed as to "dump" its load by tipping up the forward end of the body.

**Too Thin to wash.** Too evident. See *Too Thin*, in body of book.

The attempt at legislation was judiciously made under the language of friendliness, and an express desire to "increase the efficiency" of these institutions by a little canonical legislation. But the veil was *too thin to wash*. — *Rev. Dr. J. H. Hopkins on Ritualism*, *N. Y. Tribune*, Nov. 24, 1877.

**Trade Dollar.** A silver dollar, coined by act of Congress, Jan. 12, 1873, containing 420 grains Troy, and made a legal tender at its nominal value for any amount not exceeding five dollars, the "standard dollar of previous coinages weighing but 412½ grains."

It is called the "trade dollar," being coined expressly for export to China and India. At first, it was received with hesitation in China; but, upon repeated tests of its weight and fineness being made, its intrinsic value became fixed, and at the present time it is received with great favor at the ports of Canton, Swatow, Amoy, and Foo-Chow. "Indeed," says Mr. Low, our Minister at Pekin, "so reliable has this coin proven, that the viceroys of the provinces in which the ports named are situated have ordered that they be received in payment for duties in payment of customs duties, at their standard value, as compared with the tael."

**Traineau.** (Fr.) A farmer's working-sleigh. Province of Quebec.

**Tumble to or Tumble.** Understand; as, "Do you *tumble to it*?" "Yes, I *tumble*."

## W.

**Wammikin.** A raft of square timber or long logs, on which is built a comfortable shanty, with cooking and sleeping facilities, used by lumbermen in Maine. See *Raft*, in body of book.

At night, the men seek their several *Wammikins* for supper, sleep, and breakfast; and, when the "drive" finally arrives at its destination, the timber of these portable hotels comes into good use for booms and other purposes. — *Scribner's Monthly* for December, 1877, p. 151.

**Water-Witch.** (*Podiceps*.) A name applied to the whole family of grebes. They are also called *Hell-divers* and *Tinker-loons*.

**Wringer.** An instrument worked by hand for forcing or wringing water from clothes after they have been washed, thereby saving great labor.

## Y.

**Yahoo.** (Additional to this word in body of book.)

A word first used by Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* to designate a race of beings, degraded men subject to the Houyhnhnms. The name and the character attracted the wits of the day, especially those of Swift's party, who, like him, were disposed to be out of sorts with the order of things and the men at the head of affairs. In July, 1726, Lord Bolingbroke writes from Dawley Farm to Swift, Pope, and Gay, under the designation of "the three *Yahoos* of Twickenham, Jonathan, Alexander, and John." Mrs. Howard, too, in writing to Swift in allusion to an impostor of the name of

Mary Tafts, calls her a *Yahoo*; and Gay writes, "We are afraid that B. hath been guilty of that crime that you (like a Houyhnhnm) have treated him as a *Yahoo*." — *Dr. Waller's note to Gulliver's Travels, Cassel's Ed.*, p. 279.

Art thou the first who did the coast explore?  
Did never *Yahoo* tread that ground before? — *Pope*.

**Yankee Doodle.** (Additional to this term in body of book.)

You know, my dear Freddy, how oft if we would,  
By the laws of Session we might have done good:  
We might have told Ireland we pitied her lot;  
Might have soothed her with hope, but you know we did not;  
We might have withheld our political noodles  
From knocking their heads against hot *Yankee doodles*.

*Tom Moore, Twopenny Post Boy.*

**Yawp.** The cry of a sickly bird, or of one in distress. — *Jamieson, Scottish Dic.*

The "Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1877 (p. 744), in speaking of the author of "Leaves of Grass," says: —

The indictment preferred against [Walt] Whitman has three counts: first, he is nasty; second, he is tedious and prosaic; third, his singing is a barbaric *yawp*.

"Now as to the barbaric *yawp*," continues the critic, "I maintain that there are passages of his poetry which show him to be one of our very first masters of verbal melody and harmony, and do not find it surprising that he should have attracted toward him two such diverse, but veritable singers as Swinburne and Tennyson."

**To yawp, yaup.** To cry out like a child; to whine. — *Jamieson, Scot. Dic.* Noticed also by Webster, who adds "Scot. and U. S."

## PROVERBS.

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A small house well filled is better than an empty palace.

A cold manner never covered a warm heart: hot water imparts a glow even to a silent teapot.

A college education shows a man how devilish little other people know.

A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse.

Seeing is believing; but it is not those who stare most who see the best always.

When ponds dry up, the pokes get the pollywogs.

When grasshoppers are so plenty as to make the pastures poor, gobblers grow fat.

Never draw on to-morrow. It is like anticipating one's income, and making the future bear the expenses of the past.

To carry care to bed is to sleep with a pack on your back.

Thundering long words aint wisdom, and stopping a creature's mouth is more apt to improve his mind than his understanding.

Love is like the small-pox: it comes in the natural way, and one can't help it.

Swapping facts is better than swapping horses any time.

Hope is a pleasant acquaintance, but an unsafe friend. He'll do on a pinch for a travelling companion, but he is not the man for your banker.

Where there is great strength, there aint apt to be much gumption.

A handsome man in a general way aint much of a man.

The world is like a baked meat-pie: the upper crust is rich, dry, and puffy; the lower crust is heavy and underdone. The middle is not bad generally, but the smallest part of all is that which flavors the whole.

Nicknames stick to people, and the most ridiculous are the most adhesive.

Conceit grows as natural as the hair on one's head; but it is longer in coming out.

Brag is a dog that everybody hates, but nobody fears, for he only bow-wows.

There is cant in politics as well as in religion, and hypocrites of either kind are rascals.

Piety aint found in pot-houses, nor patriotism in mobs or mob-meetings.

Blushing for others is the next thing to taking a kicking for them.

Those who do the most bragging about their independence before marriage do the least of it afterwards.

I have never known a second wife but what was boss of the situation.

Whiskey is a hard thing to convince, therefore never argue with a drunken man.

Idleness is the great bane of life: the devil always enters the idle man's house without knocking.

Dandies are a quick study: after you have looked one over, you have got the size of the whole.

Don't despise your poor relations: they may become suddenly rich, and then it will be awkward to explain things to them.

A woman always prefers to look up to her husband, and never looks down on him unless she is obliged to.

Pet children are tyrants; and a pet deacon wants as much watching as a pet coon.

A pet wife soon gets to be captain, and a pet baby rules the whole household.

Young fools are comparatively harmless: it is the old fools that make most trouble in the world.

It is time enough for a man to laugh at his own wit after others get through.

Those who begin by believing too much generally end by believing nothing.

Experience is a good teacher, although a slow one: before we get half through her lessons, the bell rings, and we are summoned to judgment.

The goose, like other fools, always seems anxious to prove that he is a goose.

Any man who can swap horses or catch fish and not lie about it is just as pious as men ever become in this world.

The shortest way to a woman's heart is to praise her baby and her bonnet; and to a man's heart, to praise his horse and buggy.

There are no women so much abused as mothers-in-law, and none seem to stand it so well.

Early genius is like a cabbage: it doesn't head well.

Sharpers are like hornets, — intimate on short acquaintance.

Secrets are like the measles: they take easy and spread easy.

When you see a doctor who always travels on the jump, you can bet he is looking for a job.

Self-made men are almost always apt to be a little too proud of the job.

There aint much fun in physic; but there is a good deal of physic in fun.

It is a very small spot in a lightning-bug's tail that shines; it is the darkness of the night that makes it so brilliant: it is just so with virtue.

Disease and pills, when they enter a man's body, are like two lawyers when they undertake to settle his affairs: they compromise the matter by laying out the patient.

Sewing societies are generally places where women meet to rip and so — up the neighborhood.

Advice is like castor oil, — easy enough to give, but dreadful uneasy to take.

Error will creep through a crack, while truth will get stuck in a doorway.

Take the humbug out of the world, and you wont have much left to do business with.

The interviewer has just brains enough to keep his impudence active; and, though he has but little malice, he will hunt you sharper, and worry you worse, than a canal-boat bed-bug.

Death is no escape from the interviewer; for they will hang around the departure till they get an item, and then go for the widow.

When a man runs his head against a post, he curses the post first, all creation next, and something else last, and never thinks of cursing himself.

An enthusiast is an individual who believes about four times as much as he can prove, and who can prove about four times as much as anybody else believes.

It is easy to manage our neighbors' business, but our own sometimes bothers us.

People who are trying to get to heaven on their creed will find out at last that they didn't have a through ticket.

The thinner the ice is, the more anxious is every one to see whether it will bear.

Be merciful to all dumb animals: no man can ride to heaven on a sore-backed horse.



The dog that will follow everybody aint worth a cent.

Ambition is as hollow as the soul of an echo.

Tides, steam-boats, and soda-water will wait for no one.

Big feet, like a leather shirt, are more for use than ornament.

Money slips from the fingers like a watermelon seed, travels without legs, and flies without wings.

It is the lot of humanity to err at times, as the drunken man said when he mistook the pigpen for his bedroom.

A good deed will stick out, with an inclination to spread like the tail of a peacock.

Evil actions, like crushed rotten eggs, stink in the nostrils of all.

One might as well undertake to whistle a grape-vine from a white-oak as to induce a girl to relinquish her lover.

Vice is like a skunk that smells awfully rank, when stirred up by the pole of misfortune.

Obstinacy is like red hair: there is no cure for it but to die. B.

Time isn't of more account than an old setting hen. B.

A hen's time aint much. B.

All deacons are good, but there's odds in deacons. B.

It's a poor belly that can't warm its own pie. (Cape Cod.)

I never eat the calf in the cow's belly.

Believe all things that you hear, but put your faith and money in but few. B.

Clubs are places where most people go to get rid of themselves. B.

Waiting to be whipped is the most uninteresting period in boyhood life. B.

The man who is reckless of his life holds it at just about its market price. B.

The most critical people to suit are those who board at almshouses. B.

Don't parade your sorrows before the world; but bury them as dogs do their old bones, and then growl if anybody offers to dig them up. B.

The middle course is the best: even a moderate deacon is better than a ret-hot one. B.

Woman has always been a match for man: Adam held the best cards, but he didn't play them well. B.

There are no weeds in the world that wilt so quick as the weeds of the widower. B.

The man who lives the life of a toady is a kind of human spit-box. B.

If you would escape envy, abuse, and taxes, you must live in a deep well, and only come out at night. B.

It aint whistlin' makes the plough go.

Wishers and woulders make poor housekeepers.

You can't make a fog-horn out of a pig's tail: the squeal aint in that end.

Perseverance is a whole team in itself; but, tackled with Patience, "Jordan is a slow road to travel."

It is more respectable to be seen with a dirty shirt on one's back and a clean moral reputation beneath it, than with an oath-stained character wrapped in broadcloth. D.

Whatever your conscience dictates to be done, do it, and tell the devil to go home and attend to his domestic affairs. D.

Deal justly with all men: if your neighbor steals a sheep of you, consider it an act of necessity on his part, and furnish him with funds to buy his mutton in future. D.

Animated by the invigorating influence of love, a young man will climb higher and steeper acclivities than a Rocky Mountain ram, leap farther at a hop than a kangaroo, crawl through a smaller hole than a weasel, assume more colors than the chameleon, and dive deeper into danger than avarice ever dare venture for the sake of the all-puissant dollar. D.

To test your luck, don't throw dice nor buy lottery tickets; but put your hand to the plough, and hold on. D.

Don't suppose that good luck will keep company with a loafer who is too lazy to work. D.

Life is like a kiss that does not last long enough for a fellow to ascertain how good it is. D.

Let a man be minus his brains and plus brass, and he is sure to slide through the world as though he was greased from ear to ankle. D.

Money, like manure, is of no earthly use until it is spread.

Keep cool; be busy; clarify your conscience, and exhibit a clean shirt. D.

Idleness eats big holes through one's coat, jacket, and trowsers, and never provides means to mend them. D.

The longest pole fetches down the persimmons.

Let every man skin his own skunks [*i. e.* do his "own dirty work"]. S. S.

Tease not your own gizzard; fret not your own mizzard.

Let well enough alone.

The bread of idleness in a general way is apt to be stale, and sometimes I consait it is a little grain sour. S. S.

The mind is like a slate, — one thing gets rubbed out for another. S. S.

Republics, like some apples, thrive only in certain places. S. S.

Grumbling spoils the relish, and hurts the digestion. S. S.

Bashfulness rubs off in America long before the beard comes. S. S.

When you see a politician extra full of patriotism and stuffed with stump speeches, you may take it for granted he wants office either for himself or some friend. D.

Hope's brightest visions absquatulate with their golden promises before the least cloud of disappointment, and leave not a shinplaster behind. D.

Politics are nothing more or less than a race for a purse, a game for the stakes, a battle for the spoils. D.

No man nor woman can be a general favorite and be true. S. S.

Hypocrisy has enlisted more people for "Old Scratch" than any recruiting sergeant he has. S. S.

The moment a fellow has a woman's secret, he is that woman's master. S. S.

No atheist, with all his boasted bravery, has ever dared to advertise his belief on his tomb-stone. B.

When a man is old enough to travel a good gait on his experience, death taps him on the shoulder and wants him just around the corner. B.

The man who can't find any thing to do generally hunts with great caution. B.

Beauty has won many a victory, but seldom has succeeded in keeping it long. B.

The man who has never been cheated doesn't know as much as he will some day before long, perhaps. B.

A careless man in a family is a nuisance, but a sluttish woman is worse than a blister. B.

He who has nothing to do in this world but to amuse himself has the hardest job on hand that I know of. B.

There is nothing that we make so many blunders about and the world so few as the actual amount of our importance. B.

He who works for notoriety had rather be insulted than not noticed at all. B.

One half the troubles in this world can be traced to saying "Yes" too quick, and to not saying "No" soon enough. B.

When the fox turns preacher, the geese had better not go to night-meetings. S. S.

There is no security where there is a committee of safety. S. S.

Fellows who have no tongues are often all eyes and ears. S. S.

## S I M I L E S.

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Like bricks.  
Like all fury.  
Like all nature.  
Like all possessed.  
Like hot cakes.  
As cute as a fox.  
As drunk as a loon.  
As crazy as a bed-bug.  
As mad as all wrath.  
As long as a thanksgiving sermon.  
As straight as a loon's leg.  
Mad enough to eat snakes.  
As dry as a lime-burner's wig.  
As meek as a sucking dove.  
As innocent as a sucking turkey.  
As hot as the devil's kitchen.  
As quick as greased lightning.  
As crooked as a Virginia fence.  
As tight as the bark of a tree.  
As thin as the last run of shad.  
As happy as a clam at high water.  
Thicker than bees in a buckwheat field.  
As smiling as a basket of chips.  
As outspoken as a north-wester.  
As hungry as a graven image.  
As handy as a pocket in a shirt.  
As dry as the clerk of a lime-kiln.  
As busy as bees in a tar-barrel.  
As small as the little end of nothing.  
As popular as a hen with one chicken.  
Hopping about like pop-corn on a hot shovel.  
He pricks up his ears like a filly in fly-time.

Mean enough to steal acorns from a blind hog.

Stingy enough to skim his milk at both ends.

Head and tail up like chicken-cocks in laying-time.

As proud as a mulatto in a negro congregation.

Hot enough to fry pitch out of a palm-leaf hat.

To feel as mean as a rooster in a thunder shower.

To grunt like an old sow when she hears the swill running. D.

As fresh in my memory as butter just from the churn.

As mad as a bull among bumble-bees.

As forlorn as an unmated coon.

As forlorn as a musquash when his swamp has been drained.

She looks like a scalded shoat on the last day of hog-killing.

As big as what hogs dream of when they 're too fat to snore.

As cold as the north side of a January grave-stone by moonlight.

As miserable as roosters in a rain, heads down and tails half-mast.

So thievish that people have taken in their stone walls at night.

As silently as a snail slips over a cabbage-leaf on a dewy morning.

To look as solemn as though a stone wall lay on one's grandmother.

As busy as a negro in a sugar-cask.

As busy as a hen with fifteen chickens in a barn-yard.

It stinks worse in the nostrils of Heaven than a dead horse on the top of Mount Ararat.

He sticks like a Comanche on a mustang: the worse it jumps, the tighter he sticks.

Like a dog at a churn, — working hard, with no prospect of a lick at the butter.

The pigs were so poor that the owner was obliged to tie knots in their tails to keep them from crawling through the cracks of their pens. D.

A miser has a soul so small that a million like it could go through the eye of a cambric needle abreast. D.

To feel as if one could lick the spirit out of a dozen 76's in less than two shakes of a lobster's liver. D.

He bawls loud enough to make a dead horse turn over in his grave.

She looks like an angel rammed through a brush-fence into a world of wretchedness and woe.

I see many that permit the worm of corruption to gnaw at their moth-eaten morals! Their name is Legion; and the way they are streaking it down the dark road to ruin is sorrowful to steam locomotives. D.

I felt like a speck of dust cut up into homœopathic doses for a child two minutes old.

As interesting a sight as a shimmy (chemise) in a wash-tub; and whispers of purity, love, harmony, and peace. D.

I can strike as hard as fourth-proof lightning, and keep it up rough and tumble as long as a wild-cat.

As much out of tune as a corn-stalk fiddle is in the hands of a plough-boy. D.

As forward and saucy as the devil himself.

As fierce as a ram-cat.

He doesn't know enough to chew gum.

He doesn't know enough to throw potato-apples over a fence.

I'm in an unfortunate position, as the toad said when he found himself under a harrow which was about to go over him.

Like a singed cat, — better than he seems.

As natural as grinning is to a hyena.

As tough as old hickory, and as long-winded as a tornado.

As lonely as a catamount, and as dull as a bachelor beaver.

Like a pea in a hot skillet.

Better than pone and 'lasses.

Great on small wheels, *i. e.* large pretensions on a slight basis.

Cheaper than bull-beef at a penny a pound.

As scarce as hen's teeth.

With all its frauds and deceptions, we cling to the earth as it turns on its axis, like a tumble-bug when it accidentally rolls down hill.

You may scent your persons with the richest perfume; but they will no more compare with the rich fragrance that youth and beauty emit, than the atmosphere which surrounds a wounded skunk can equal the odor of an orange-grove. D.

As important as a militia officer on a training-day.

As useless as whistling psalms to a dead horse.

As melancholy as a Quaker meeting-house by moonlight.

Thrashing round like a short-tailed bull in fly-time.

When frightened, a coward will shake like a shirt in a hurricane.

Hash is, like faith, the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

He does not need it any more than a toad does a pocket.

Like shoemaker's wax, we are bound to admire goodness and stick to it, whether found in the dunghill of humanity or in hearts of angels. D.

As for taking a good man's name from him, you might as well undertake to pull goose-quills from the wings of an angel. D.

When a woman's affections are once fairly fastened upon a fellow, they stick and hang like tick to a sheep. D.

As easy as rolling off a log.

He 's a whole team and a dog under the wagon.

The lustre that surrounds good deeds will as much outshine the light of a candle as the noonday sun surpasses the feeble, phosphorescent glow emanating from the tail-end of a lightning-bug. D.

Time may scribble decay over the whole vegetable world; but he can no more make a mark upon the unalterable ocean than a school-boy can cipher upon a buttered slate. D.

The world has been rolling in sin and corruption, like the ball of a tumble-bug through manure, till it is ready to flatten beneath the weight of its squashy abominations. D.

So indistinct, that I can no more see it than I can see the shadow of an idea.

The thing is as impossible as it would be to fire a joke from a cannon.

To disappear as suddenly as ghosts at cock-crowing. S. S.

As tender as a porter-house steak. B.

As full of twitter as is a canary-bird on a perch. B.

Like a streak of yellow sunshine. B.

Like the balm of many flowers. B.

Like a Scotch terrier at a rat-hole. B.

As full of wit as a ginger-beer bottle is of pop. B.

As serious as a white mouse in a wire-trap. B.

As proud of her as a third lieutenant is of his first epaulettes. B.

As welcome as a dandelion in the bosom of winter. B.

As sleek and slippery as though he had been taking a hip-bath in a tub of soap-grease. D.

As rough as the back of a hedgehog, and as foul as Zebedee's hen, that laid three rotten eggs to a good one. D.

Of no more use than it would be to stop up a rat-hole with an apple dumpling. D.

All talking and none listening, after the manner of a Woman's Rights' Convention.

As clamorous for food as the boys of a district school just let out to play at lunch-time. B.

Some men have so little backbone, that you might as well undertake to help them as to stand an angleworm on end and ask him to dance a jig. B.

I would sooner face a square mile of grasshoppers, or cross the Newark marshes by moonlight in August, when mosquitoes are in their glory, than have a newspaper critic who writes for eight dollars a week get after me. B.

The jokes of an auctioneer are generally as level as a cold slap-jack. B.

Mean enough to steal the coppers from a dead nigger's eyes.

She leaned against him like a sick kitten against a hot brick.

He should be kicked to death by lame grasshoppers.

As impracticable as it would be to employ learned spiders to span the Mississippi with cobweb bridges suitable for railway purposes.

We can make a new application of an old story, as the schoolmarm said when she spanked the little boy with "Robinson Crusoe."

To leave stains as conspicuous as the traces of candy about the handles of a young candy-sucker's mug. D.

Her hair it hung about her cheeks like seaweed round a clam.

In youth's lovely spring-time, thought, reason, and philosophy are as much strangers to us as is piety to a plaster-o'-Paris Christian, or patriotism to Powers's Greek Slave. D.

News borrows the wings of lightning, and darts to the uttermost ends of the earth in less than two throbs of a scared kitten's liver. D.

Just as confident as I am sure that lawyers will never go to heaven any other way than by degrees. D.

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NOTE.—Proverbs and Similes marked B. are from the writings of "Josh Billings" (Henry W. Shaw); those marked D. are from the sermons of "Dow, Junior" (Elbridge G. Page); and those marked S. S., from the writings of "Sam Slick, the Clock-maker" (Judge T. C. Haliburton). Doubtless, others in the list are by the same writers.



# STATES, PEOPLE, AND CITIES, THEIR ABBREVIATIONS AND NICKNAMES.

NAMES OF STATES.	Abbreviations.	NICKNAMES OF STATES AND PEOPLE.	NAMES OF CITIES.	NICKNAMES OF CITIES.
Alabama . .	Ala.			
Alaska Ter. .	Alas.			
Arizona Ter. .	Ariz.			
Arkansas . .	Ark.	Bear State. . .		[Gate.
California . .	Cal.	Golden State . . .	San Francisco	City of the Golden
Connecticut .	Conn.	Land of Steady Habits	New Haven	City of Elms.
" . .	"	Blue-Law State . .		
Colorado . .	Col.	Centennials.		
Columbia, Dist.	D. C.		Washington	City of Magnificent
Dacotah Ter. .	Dac.			[Distances.
Delaware . .	Del.	Diamond State.		
" . .	"	Blue Hen's Chickens.		
Florida . .	Fla.	Peninsula State.		
Georgia . .	Ga.	Crackers . . . . .	Atlanta . .	Gate City.
Idaho Ter. .	Id.			
Iowa . . . .	Ia.	Hawkeyes . . . . .	Keokuk . .	Gate City.
Illinois . . .	Ill.	Sucker State . . .	Chicago . .	Garden City.
" . . . .	"	Prairie State . . .	Springfield .	Flower City.
Indiana . . .	Ind.	Hoosiers . . . . .	Indianapolis	Railroad City.
Kansas . . .	Kan.	Jay-hawkers.		
Kentucky . .	Ky.	Dark & Bloody Ground	Louisville .	Falls City.
" . . . .	"	Corncrackers.		
Louisiana . .	La.	Creole State . . . .	New Orleans	Crescent City.
" . . . .	"	Pelican State.		
Maine . . . .	Me.	Pine-Tree State.	Portland . .	Forest City.
Maryland . .	Md.		Baltimore .	Monumental City.
Massachusetts	Mass.	Bay State . . . . .	Boston . .	Modern Athens.
" . . . .	"		" . . . .	The Hub.
Michigan . .	Mich.	Wolverines . . . . .	Lowell . .	City of Spindles.
Minnesota . .	Min.		Detroit . .	City of the Straits.
Mississippi . .	Miss.	Bayou State.		
Missouri . .	Mo.	Pukes . . . . .	St. Louis . .	Mound City.
Montana Ter. .	Mta.			
Nevada . . .	Nev.	Silver State.		
New Jersey . .	N. J.	Jersey Blues.		
Nebraska . .	Neb.			
New Mexico Tr.	N. M.			
New Hampshire	N. H.	Granite State.		[Lakes.
New York . .	N. Y.	Empire State . . .	Buffalo . .	Queen City of the
" . . . .	"	Knickerbockers . .	New York . .	Gotham.
" . . . .	"		Brooklyn . .	City of Churches.

NAMES OF CITIES.	Abbreviations.	NICKNAMES OF STATES AND PEOPLE.	NAMES OF CITIES.	NICKNAMES OF CITIES.
North Carolina	N. C.	Old North State.		
"	"	Turpentine State.		
"	"	Tar-Heels.		[West.
Ohio . . .	O.	Buckeye State . . .	Cincinnati .	Queen City of the
" . . . .	"		" .	Porkopolis.
" . . . .	"		Cleveland .	Forest City.
Oregon . . .	Ogn.	Web-Foot State.		
Pennsylvania .	Pa.	Keystone State . . .	Philadelphia	Quaker City.
" .	"		"	City of Brotherly
" .	"		Pittsburgh .	Iron City. [Love.
Rhode Island .	R. I.	Little Rhody.		
South Carolina	S. C.	Palmetto State.		
Tennessee . .	Tenn.	Mudheads . . . .	Nashville .	City of Rocks.
" . .	"	Big-Bend State.		
Texas . . .	Tex.	Lone-Star State.		
" . . . .	"	Beet-Heads.		
Utah Ter. . .	Uh.	Mormon State.		
Vermont . .	Vt.	Green-Mountain State.		
Virginia . .	Va.	Old Dominion.		
" . . . .	"	Mother of States.		
West Virginia	W. Va.			
Washington Tr.	Wash. T.			
Wisconsin . .	Wis.	Badger State.		
Wyoming Ter.	Wyo.			
CANADA.				
Ontario . . .	Ont.	K'nucks . . .	Toronto . .	City of Colleges.
Quebec . . .	P. Q.		Montreal .	City of the Moun- [tain & the Rapids.
" . . . .	"		Quebec . .	Gibraltar of Amer- [ica.
" . . . .	"			
New Brunswick	N. B.	Blue Noses.		
Nova Scotia .	N. S.			
Pr. Edw. Island	P. E. I.			
Newfoundland	Nfld.			
Manitoba . .	Man.			
N.-W. Territory	N.W. Ter			
Brit. Columbia.	Br. Col.			

















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